

Church of St Mary the Virgin
Annual Parochial Church Meeting April 2026
Report for the Year 2025

The PCC of St Mary the Virgin Church, Wheatley, has the responsibility to promote, in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church – pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has the responsibility for maintaining the fabric of the Church.
The incumbent from 8th May 2025 is the Rev'd Clare Joyce. Alexandra Hewitt is licensed to serve as LLM to preach, lead worship and assist with pastoral work in this benefice.

Administrative Information

St Mary the Virgin Wheatley is situated in Church Road, Wheatley. It is part of the Diocese of Oxford within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Vicarage, London Road, Wheatley, Oxford, OX33 1YA. Registered Charity Number 1159100. Church number 270127

Worship

BCP Holy Communion**:** Sunday 8.00am
Parish Eucharist**:** Sundays at 10.00am with a Family Service on the first Sunday of each month.
Holy Communion: Wednesday at 12 noon in Church
Evensong 5.30pm
Morning prayer: Monday - Saturday at 9am. This is held in St Mary's as well as on Zoom.

Attendance:

Our attendance at services on a normal Sunday caters for about 57 adults and 6 young people.
Easter Eve and Easter Day:
We had an attendance of 115 adults and 5 young people
Christmas Eve and Christmas Day combined: We had an adult attendance of 236 with a further 41 young people attending the Crib Service on Christmas Eve.
Village Carol Service: There was an adult attendance of 204 and 11 young people. The heavy attendance resulted in standing room only.
Baptisms, Marriages & Funerals
Baptisms: 4 Baptisms
Marriages: 1 Marriage.
Funerals: 4 Funerals in Church, 1 At Crematorium & 6 burial of ashes.

Parochial Church Council

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

The Full PCC has met 6 times during the year with an average attendance of 91%. The minutes of the meetings are available at the back of the church.
The Standing Committee met 6 times and is authorised to transact PCC business between meetings, but the PCC remains the decision-making body and will continue to sign off any proposals from the Standing committee. The minutes of the PCC meetings are available at the back of the church.

PCC members are:

Ex Officio members.

Incumbent: The Rev'd Clare Joyce (Chair from July 2026 prior to this the Chair was Zannifer Mason warden until the APCM 2025)

LLM and Deanery Synod representative: Alexandra Hewitt

Bishop's representative on the Oxford Diocesan Synod: Ryley Ray

Churchwarden: Mrs Jane Fanning (Vice Chair)

Elected Members

Peter Fanning (Treasurer), Samantha Knight (Sacristan), Howard Stones, Faith Axten (PSO, PCC Secretary) Tony Wigley, Zannifer Mason, Sable Godwin, Margaret Jackson and Angela Morrison

As we approach the APCM 2026 there are vacancies for a churchwarden and two deanery synod representatives. One-third of the elected PCC need to stand down, thus Peter Fanning, Tony Wigley and Samamtha Knight need to seek, if they wish, re-election at the 2026 APCM. With an electoral roll between 50 and 100 we are allowed 9 elected members of the PCC who serve for a term of three years, but others may be co-opted for a term of a year.

Electoral roll since the APCM2025

The Electoral Roll has 85 members and is displayed on the church notice board in the porch. No names have been removed this year, but three new names have been added. These are members of the congregation who attend services on a regular basis and have chosen to be included.

Elaine Parsons

PP David Parsons Electoral role Officer

Deanery Synod Report

The Parish was able to send a representative to two of the three meetings this year. A summary of the proceeding is as follows.:

The theme of the January meeting was 'Taking the church forward' and the meeting discussed the formation of New Congregations with the Dorchester Parish development adviser and clergy who had experience of doing this. Ideas of ways to provide for diverse groups were discussed. The Parish Development adviser spoke of the practical steps parishes should take in setting up New Congregations and the resources available to them.

Other matters included the reappointment of Maureen Underdown as Lay Chair and Mike Powell as Treasurer. Four parishes had not paid their parish share for 2024 and it was acknowledging the share was a huge problem for some parishes, especially now that the loan scheme has been stopped. This scheme had worked well, as the Deanery had not lost any more stipendiary posts, or house of duty posts.
The Main topic for the June meeting was Christian Aid and included a talk by Phil Evans, who is the Church Engagement and Fundraising Officer-Home Counties. This made an immediate impression on the meeting with a power-point presentation of various countries that are presently suffering terrible conditions. Phil finished his talk by saying he would be delighted to be invited to come to individual parishes.
The Area Dean referred Synod members to the final version of the Deanery Plan for children and young people which had been circulated. Helen Lamb, Member of General Synod gave a summary of diocesan synod proceedings and then spoke about the forthcoming General Synod in July.
The Treasurer Mike reported that 50% of the Apportioned Share needs to be paid by 30 June and, unfortunately, Mike reported that the Deanery might have difficulty in reaching this target as there is short fall at the present time. He requested, urgently, that Treasurers pay their Share as soon as possible. The meeting agreed a £10 levy payable per year for each synod representative. There followed the election of Standing Committee/Officers for the year.
The main speaker at the October meeting was James Wood, who is a Discipleship Enabler for Buckinghamshire as well as a mission advisor for schools. Mike Powell gave the Treasurer's Report plus a report on how the Parish Share Process works and Helen Lamb gave a report on the general Synod.

The Vicar's report

It is a great privilege to be writing this report for you all in my first year here as vicar of St. Mary's Church. Since arriving and being licensed last May I have hugely enjoyed getting to know the congregations, the wider church community and the community of Wheatley and the surrounding villages. Whilst in some ways the job started immediately- because life doesn't stand still! and this is a role that is deeply connected with the everyday real-life journey of us all- in other ways I have found that the past months have afforded space and time to listen, learn and understand more about your stories- both collectively and individually. In short, I feel encouraged and inspired.
My weeks here are both routine and unpredictable as you would expect so I thought it might be helpful if I paint a bit of a picture of what a week in this vicar's role looks like…!
Every day starts with Morning Prayer, said where possible with others either in church or via zoom. This is a real joy and such an encouragement to me that all that we are, and all that we do here, is held in prayer consistently by a group of us, every

day.
Every week begins with the delight that is **Monday** admin! This includes updating our website, service information and our notices. This also regularly includes governance meetings, finance meetings, administration of funerals, weddings and baptisms and keeping on top of emails.
Tuesdays begin with two 'collective worship' assembles every week at Wheatley Primary School which has been a highlight of the past 9 months for me. Our headteacher, Gill and I have worked together to form a student worship leader team along with resources that enable the children to have more ownership of the worship times. Tuesdays then continue with ministry team meetings and prayer and then other community engagements such as care home services and visits.
Wednesdays start with a Church Warden's meeting to chat through any issues, ideas, needs etc. and then usually the focus for the rest of the day is on pastoral care and home/ hospital visits, as well as our mid-week said communion at 12pm. This service, in particular, has been such an encouragement to me- we regularly have between 5 and 10 people attending and some of those are people who for various reasons would find it difficult to attend a Sunday service.
Thursdays are generally kept for preparing the Sunday services, writing sermons, newsletter articles, reports, reviews etc.
And then **Friday** is a rest day
Saturday is a day that I try to keep as clear as possible to be home for my children, although obviously it is also often a really important day for attending community events, taking weddings and last minute tweaks to sermons- so expert juggling as a parent is required!!
And then there are our **Sunday** services – which I cannot talk about without beaming!
- Our 8am BCP communion service is regularly attended by between 15 and 20 people, it manages to combine calm simplicity with a depth and richness of tradition… and at the same time is incredibly welcoming. I believe that this is largely down to those who attend- the friendship and care shown to each other and openness to others.
- Our 10am service is Parish Eucharist most weeks and Parish Praise usually on the first Sunday of the month. This service is gently thriving- there is a beautiful balance of reverence and relaxedness and a culture created by all those who attend of kindness and acceptance which I believe is a real treasure. Numbers are generally between 40 and 50 with a nice mix of long-term members and newer faces. This service would not be what it is without Alexandra's ministry and talent, and our choir and musicians- we are very fortunate to have such a willing and talented bunch of people involved in our worship services. This includes Samantha our sacristan, and our servers (at all services), and all those busy behind the scenes.
- Then of course is our 5.30pm Choral Evensong led by Alexandra, Sable and our junior choristers. This is a service which provides an incredible opportunity for these

children to train as young choristers and experience regular evensong and we are exploring ways of expanding this ministry. I'm currently involved in leading this service once or twice a term.
So that is roughly what a regular week looks like for the vicar! **And then**… There will also be a couple of evening meetings per week and other regular commitments such as monthly meetings with Alison Sercombe, chair of the parish council, Wheatley Area Churches meetings, Deanery Synod, Holiday Club planning meetings, various governor and trustee meetings… with of course the unexpected needs and challenges that pop up, including funerals and end of life visits.
Life is busy! **Life at St Mary's Church Wheatley is busy AND exciting!** I am in awe of how you have managed these last few years through the refurbishment of the church building and the interregnum at the same time. I am aware that even now we are all still settling back into this new space and still figuring things out, and you have been incredibly patient with one another and with me- thank you! There is so much for which to be thankful, and also a need for continued gentleness and care for one another- you have all carried a lot over recent years and done incredibly well to get us to where we are now.
Thank you ALL and a huge thank you to those who are part of the ministry team and all who have taken on various roles over this past year- you are amazing and we are so thankful for you.
My prayer for this coming year is that we grow into a deeper, clearer understanding of who we are as a church, our purpose, and how we are present in our community. This will mean looking at the ways in which we communicate both internally as a church community, and also with the community around us. It will also mean exploring ways in which we can meet the needs of our community and so best worship and serve God. Where there are niggles, anxieties, differences, tiredness, frustrations and concerns among us (which is very normal!) I pray that we will continue to hear each other and deal gently, safely and lovingly with each other. And I pray that this coming year we may grow in faith and love.
St Mary's Wheatley- you are a delight and I'm glad to be with you!
The Reverend Clare Joyce

Music Report

The year in numbers

Adult choir

1 new regular adult singer
1 new guest singer
14 'regular' (ish) singers
25 guest singers
<3 singers on average on a Sunday morning

We have a large pool of singers, so festivals are celebrated with gusto and we are able to tackle more exciting repertoire. It is, however, increasingly difficult to choose music that will

interest and challenge the choir on an ordinary Sunday, when we can have anything from 2 (including me) to 6 singers. The mysterious lack of basses in the village remains the biggest issue (there are plenty of tenors), but more singers in all parts would be most welcome.

Praise!

1 new member
3 children
3 singers on average on a Sunday evening
1 medal
6 settings of Evensong Canticles (of which at least 2 are known by heart by the children)

Choir attendance at the evening service is surprisingly marginally higher than in the morning, thanks to the enthusiasm of the children and the support of Caroline, Elina and Julia. They are making good progress towards their Light Blue medals. Now that they know so much repertoire, we're trying to spend more time on medal-work each week. We are planning a recruitment drive during Lent, aiming to gain some more singers after Easter.

Services

1 Choral Eucharist
2 Festal Choral Evensongs (with full choir of adults and children)
3 Carol Services
95 sung services

As well as an adult choir on Sunday mornings and major festivals, the Praise! choir sing evensong every week in term-time, and we now have a Taizé service at half terms. A highlight this year has been reinstating occasional full choir Choral Evensong services. The children found the transition from Common Worship to BCP language quite straightforward, particularly as they already knew some BCP texts. The Choral Eucharist for Ascension Day was much enjoyed by the small congregation.

Music

6 new choir carols
7 new anthems
1 specially composed choir setting of the Morning Canticles
3 further sets of specially composed seasonal responses
83 different choir anthems and carols
330 different congregational hymns, songs and carols (approximately: my data goes by church year not calendar year!)

As always, the Advent and Village Carol Services were the musical high points of the year. We particularly enjoyed singing Britten's 'Hymn to the Virgin', with a fantastic solo quartet. Other memorable occasions include a last-minute change of plan to sing Mendelssohn's 'Lift thine eyes' when I realised we had 9 upper voices signed up. For the rest of the year, we have continued to rely heavily on the Oxford Books of Flexible Anthems owing to the lack of basses. We hope that the congregation enjoy the wide range of hymns and worship songs that we sing each week.

Special Events

1 Benefice Epiphany Carol Service

1 Licensing Service
1 Lay Ministers' Service
3 Praise! choir tours
We finally completed our tour of Benefice churches for Epiphany with our carol service at Albury, where we sang from the gallery. The Praise! choir have sung at Waterperry twice, where they enjoy the treat of gluten-free brownies from the café, and also at Holton. (Given the length of the afternoon rehearsal and activities, the absence of toilet facilities unfortunately prohibits visits to Waterstock and Albury.) The Remembrance Service at Waterperry was well-attended by the village and they really appreciated having a choir. Clare's licensing was a wonderful occasion; we were delighted to welcome some of her friends into the choir. As always, a few singers from Wheatley supported the annual Lay Ministers' Service at Christchurch, enabling us to field a full choir for this important event.

Practical Issues

The organ seems to be on its last legs and 2026 will require some serious fund-raising to buy a new one. The grant for the Praise! project has enabled us to buy Common Worship Psalters and some new anthem books – sufficient for the small regular evening choir. Individual donors purchased new music for the Carol Service.

Acknowledgements

A special thank you to Julia Stutfield for her unstinting support for the junior choir, including standing in last minute as conductor. We are also grateful to Caroline Dalton and Elina Screen for their regular support when Julia is unavailable. We are grateful to John Buckley for deputising and occasional singing in the choir, and to all the choir for their support and excellent singing throughout the year. Finally, as last year, a massive thank you to Sable Godwin for their support, enthusiasm, encouragement and laughter; for their work with the children and inspirational sermons; and, of course, the sheep**.**

Alexandra Hewitt, Organist and Director of Music

Sacristan and servers

I have been a Sacristan at St Mary's for quite a number of years, first with Carol Newman, then Charles Pignagy came on board for a short while and a very brief time with Juliet Vale. Unfortunately, I have been doing this job on my own for many years, occasionally managing to persuade Melvyn to give me a hand.

The job of Sacristan is to try to make the vicar's life easier with the set up for each church service. In my job as sacristan, I prepare the elements for the services. Setting up the silver for the two Sunday services 8am & 10am and the midweek Wednesday eucharist services; this involves preparing the silver for communion, wafers for the ciborium- numbers differ depending on time of year/festivals eta, preparing the chalices, priest's wafers, & topping up communion wine. This is all stored back in the safe once prepared...

The church goes through several colour changes in the church calendar depending on the church season-Gold/white, Purple, Red and Green, it can be tricky to do these on my own, so this is when Melvyn lends a hand. Easter and Christmas have the most changes close

together. At Easter for Good Friday, I strip the Altar completely, replacing them for Easter Day.
I change the hymn numbers and set up the readings each week for Sunday services, it can be a bit tricky at times trying to locate the correct readings.
Two to three times a year, depending on how messy it gets, I clean the votive stand. This is a time-consuming job, taking unto two hours, involving hairdryers to melt the wax and paper towels, as scraping takes the black paint off.
I also place the orders for the sundries we use- candles, Easter, Christmas & Votive stand candles, communion wine & communion wafers, palm crosses and most other sundries we use.
A Server's duties are very simple. As a Server it is my responsibility is to ensure the priest taking the service has everything they need for the Holy Communion service and to try to make sure that everything is on hand to help them with the Communion. Making sure all the elements are prepared, and ready for the Eucharist, be ready to hand the priest the elements as needed and to assist them with clean up after communion. I also help the priest with the wine chalice, normally with another person. Those who help serve the wine chalice must have been approved by the bishop first. If we have people in the congregation who cannot make it up to receive communion, we take the offering to them and the priest will tincture the bread and wine before giving it to them. I make sure the candles are lit, and am ready for the Gospel reading procession, into the congregation.
As I am now the sole Server, we no longer have a procession with the Crucifer cross. Melvyn will normally be at the Votive stand to assist with lighting.
Samantha Knight

Sidesmen

There are currently 12 people who volunteer to act as sidesmen at the 10 o'clock services each week, working in pairs, about eight or nine times each year.
They perform an excellent service by welcoming regular worshipers and visitors alike to the Church, handing out orders of service and anything else that is required to be circulated that day. They always arrive on time and perform their duties in a most efficient and friendly manner. At the end of the service, they ensure that everything is returned to the appropriate storage container for use another time.
The rota is produced on a six-month cycle and if I am informed beforehand, I try to incorporate planned holidays or other dates that are not possible for sidesmen to do but there are always others on the rota prepared to swap dates for which I thank them very much. Often this will be recorded by those involved on the rota on the noticeboard in the porch.
Apart from a short period when I moved away, I have been involved in preparing the rota and acting as sidesman with my wife Susan, for about fifty years. Should anyone wish to take on this role I would be very willing to offer as much help as required.
John Allmond

Churchwarden report

The New Year started with the wonderful news that Rev Clare Joyce had accepted the post as our next incumbent. She started on May 8th following the Licensing Service presided by Bishop Gavin.

Until May, our Sunday services continued to be taken by Bishop Humphry, Associate Archdeacon Jane Haslam, Lucy Gardner, Caroline King and David Bendor Samuel. Hugh Lee, Malcolm Surman and Judy French, the previous Archdeacon, also helped. Simon Kingston took Morning Prayer on several occasions and Alexandra and Sable Godwin continued taking the monthly Praise services.

We managed to get most of the building back to normal by the 8th May although we continued to have gremlins with the fire alarms, speakers, the organ and various heating issues and of course finding missing items.

Together with Wheatley Area Churches (WAC) the Easter celebrations included a 'Stations of the Cross' walk around the village and a Dawn Service and breakfast at Whiteacres, home of Michael and Carol Clements, followed by services in our respective churches.

We had our AGM on Sunday 4th May with many thanks to Faith for organising it. Thank you again to Zannifer for her fellowship and huge contribution during the last 3 to 4 years. We all gave a collective sigh of relief when Clare took charge the following week.

On 21st June we held a very well attended Bring and Share Lunch in the church to introduce Clare to the Parish and larger community and to thank all those who had helped us during our interregnum and refurbishment project.

Our mission to create 'a welcoming place of worship and meet the needs of the wider community' is being fulfilled. Our footfall continues to grow substantially not least because the Church is a warm, safe space and we keep the doors open between 7am and 7pm. We have many visitors calling in on spec, some of course as refugees from the weather or to use our amenities.

Christmas services were back to pre-Covid attendances, with standing room only for late comers to WAC Carol Service. The Crib Service, Midnight Mass and Christmas Day services were all very well attended.

Over the past 10 months attendances have increased. On average there are 16-18 at the Sunday 8am and 43-45 at the 10 am services and 5-7 at Evensong, which continues under the staunch leadership of Alexandra and 3-5+ at morning prayer services.

Important occasions such as baptisms, funerals and weddings, not least Samatha and Mel's, have taken place. The primary school has continued to hold Easter, Harvest and Christingle services.

The weekly Larder and Meg's cafe with her £1 table continues to draw people in and is a much looked forward to social occasion. Many people come in for a quiet time of solace or prayer, or to quietly focus on the jigsaw. There have been rehearsals, concerts, plays,

parties, lunches, children's groups, a Harvest lunch, all drawing in the greater community. We hold regular PCC and F&GP meetings and sometimes host Ukraine Group and Parish Council meetings in the church.
Above all we are grateful to Clare for giving us gentle and thoughtful leadership and managing to get much of the administration and organisation on 'I Know Church' with the help of Chris Clements. Thank you too to Jane Haslam who continues to provide the knowledge of regulations and be a great source of support.

Fabric

Robert Mongomery undertook the quinquennial inspection in May 2025. Fortunately, the only urgent item was unblocking a down pipe on the east wall which has been dealt with. Secondary issues were the weathering of the stonework, roofs and window frames. These issues are ongoing and on our long-term list. We are grateful to the Friends of St Mary's for their support in building maintenance and emergencies. A suggested quick win is to remove weeds and add more gravel around the outside walls to help with the drainage.
The church is in better condition than it has been for a long time.
We are particularly grateful to Richard Cosier for taking care of the Quinquennial issues and David Benny and Adam Churchley in providing the locking and monitoring systems which allow us to keep the church open from 7am-7pm and much else.

The churchyard

The two gates require attention. We are waiting for a faculty for the north gate, which a family have offered to repair. The Lych gate is in poor condition as it is constantly sprayed by passing traffic. However, until the blocked drain in the road is repaired, there is little point in repairing it. We have been asked to remove as much ivy as we can from the walls.
Very many thanks to Michael Lancashire and his gang of mowers for keeping the churchyard safe and tidy.

Memorial Garden

We hope to have a memorial garden made where ashes will be interred around an ornamental tree and have some form of recording the internments nearby.
As the original permission for opening the churchyard had not been properly recorded, both the church and the Parish Council will be responsible for its maintenance, despite being closed for future burials. The Council will oversee the tree pruning and we will oversee the mowing.

The Graves

Many of the older graves outside the west door are in very poor condition and are a health and safety risk. We hope to organise an ancestor's day to draw families' attention to the problem and start to remove some of the surrounding curbs to make them safe.

The Vicarage

Very many thanks to the DAC who have spent a huge amount of money on the vicarage, providing a heat pump, new triple glazed windows, solar panels, insulation and repainting both the interior and exterior.
The PCC has agreed to maintain the lower part of the garden for events and activities. We

hope to provide a fence and gate to provide greater privacy for Clare and buy a shed for excess church storage.
Jane Fanning.

Finance See separate report and audited accounts.

Wheatley Area Churches

Cooperation between the different Christian church denominations in Wheatley continues to thrive, assisted by the Wheatley Area Churches (WAC) committee. A number of events and activities are routinely organised by WAC each year. These include the Remembrance Sunday Service, the village Carol Service, the service as part of the week of prayer for Christian Unity, various Easter and Christmas activities and the production and distribution of welcome cards with church service information at Christmas and Easter. In addition, this last year, all the churches have taken joint responsibility for the provision of care home worship in both the new Wellford Gardens Care Home and the Triangle Care Home. We warmly welcome the installation of Tim Hinks as the new pastor of Wheatley Community Church (WCC).
Michael Worthington.

Pastoral Care

Our pastoral care within the parish runs smoothly with home, hospital & care home visits. We probably lack a very fixed procedure, but everything seems to drop into place with several of the congregation circulating the necessary information to one another. It is hoped that the Group will take up half yearly meeting again now life at St Mary's has settled into a regular pattern.
With two Care Homes to visit arrangements have been made to visit Wellford Gardens on the second Tuesday of the month and the Triangle on the third Tuesday. St Mary's, the URC and the Wheatley Community Church (WCC) share the arrangements for holding the Wellford Gardens Service. St Mary's take the responsibility of arranging the Triangle Service as they have done for many years. We very much hope that the other Churches will join us in sharing the responsibility for the Triangle service in the not-too-distant future.
Tony Wigley

Safeguarding

The Safeguarding team consists of the Vicar (from May onwards), the Benefice Safeguarding Officer and the DBS administrator. Safeguarding is an item of every PCC agenda, and the parish complies with the requirements imposed by the code of practice under section 5A of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure2016
At the first meeting of the year Jan 2025 the Wheatley PCC voted to adopt the CofE safeguarding policy 'Safer churches', the policy on the Recruitment of ex-offenders and the

procedure for responding promptly to any safeguarding concerns or allegations. These had been held over from the Nov 2024 meeting and will be renewed in Nov 2026.
The PSO has updated the PCC with the proceedings of the General Synod and their discussion of the different models of safeguarding. This followed several well publicised incidences of failure leading to the resignation of Archbishop Welby
All the PCC and several others within the parish have completed the Basic Awareness safeguarding course. The problem of delivering Foundation training has been discussed, most people preferring this to be done with a trainer rather than online. However, despite contacting the diocese safeguarding team for help an offer this has not been forthcoming. It is hoped that in 2026 we can work out a way of doing the training individually, online, but together.
The 2025 Holiday Club team were compliant with all the safeguarding requirements, and I am grateful for their understanding and cooperation. It resulted in a flurry of DBS applications, and I am extremely thankful to Tony Wigley for his work as DBS administrator and further for his handling of the data breach by APCS. The PCC has now taken out an agreement with Verifile as recommended by the diocese. .
Faith Axten

Health and Safety

- An annual PAT check was conducted in November 2025 on all electrical appliances and everything passed except for a decrepit multi adaptor which was deemed to be unsatisfactory and thrown out. A cleaning and checking log is maintained for the freezer and refrigerator.
- On October 28th, 2025, David Newcombe from West One carried out a half yearly check and maintenance exercise on the Fire Alarm and six portable extinguishers and they were all in good working order.
- The Horizon 4 yearly test on 23rd March 2024 on the lighting conductor was satisfactory.
- Eco- Electrical fixed system installed in 2024 will be due its five yearly checks in 2029
- What is long overdue is the clock, bells and the Quinquennial Report.
- Fire Evacuation Drill: this was successfully conducted on12th October 2025 at the 8am and 10am services.

John Almond has been approached to carry out a Health and Safety Audit which was last done in September 2024.
In November 2024, a church inspection was carried out by two members of the Diocese which passed but there was no indication of a repeat exercise for the future. However, we were asked to photograph and catalogue all items in the sacristy cupboard, and this is a work in progress.
Richard Cosier has agreed to continue the Fire Alarm testing on a weekly basis with cover to be considered in his absence.
The hazard tapes which are in three areas: doorway to the Edward king room, entry into the vestry and step down to the vestry external door are worn and they will be renewed soon.

The annual Health and Safety Policy was rigorously reviewed and adapted to reflect the changes in the church's use in September 2025 and a copy is available on the noticeboard in the porch.
The votive candles are regularly used and snuffed out when not in use. All matches and/or lighters are kept in a safe place.
No recent accidents / incidents have been noted, and the First Aid box is replenished on a weekly basis. The grit container is kept securely behind the main south door.
Storage issues which remain problematic are yet to be addressed. In the meantime, exit areas are kept as free as possible.
Our gardeners do an excellent job in the maintenance of the churchyard and of course, it is everyone's responsibility to be mindful of their own safety when using the surroundings.
Finally, with thanks to everyone who volunteers their time, knowledge and expertise in making St Mary's such a happy and peaceful place.
Zannifer Mason

Youth and Children's work

Xplore

Three students took over leading the group in January. Graham West and I have been impressed with the confidence with which they lead Bible Study. From September they decided to look to the Oxford Schools Chaplaincy for support, and have changed the day of the meeting, so that I am no longer able to attend. This means that 15 years of St Mary's presence has come to an end, although we continue to pray for the young people attending.

Summer Holiday Club

24 primary school children attended the Landlubbers Holiday Club for 3 mornings from 19th – 21st August 2025. The vast majority of the children had no church connections. Under the hilarious but sensitive leadership of Pirate Bucket and Pirate Spade, the children learned that God loves them as they are, while having a *whale* of a time with games and crafts as well as discussion and songs. It was a great joy to see people of all ages from 7 to 80+ enjoying their time in church. The benefits of the reordering were clear: a safe open space for the activities, two toilets, and the field (formerly the lower part of the vicarage garden) for games. A huge thank you to all the team, from the young adults leading groups to the senior pirates manning the door and refreshments, as well as the core team and crafters.

Praise!

This is also covered in the Music Report, but from the point of view of Youth Work we note that 3 children aged between 8 and 11 attend almost every week, often with their families. We follow the lectionary for most of the year, but took the opportunity in September and October (ordinary time) to have a sermon series working through the Apostle's Creed, choosing readings and music to reflect each section. The children were able to explain the key elements some months later, and we now use the Apostle's Creed with the more informal, shorter creed interchangeably. Next year we are planning to create an independent sermon series in the summer period of ordinary time as well as in the autumn.

Alexandra Hewitt

Wheatley C E Primary Academy School

On arriving in the parish in May I discovered that Alexandra had very generously continued to build the strong relationship that Revd Nigel had put in place with Wheatley Primary school during the interregnum. This includes weekly 'collective worship' assemblies with both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. I'm so grateful to Alexandra for keeping this going and it has been a joy to take this on and to get to know the school- the staff and the students. Over the past 9 months I have worked with Gill Standing to form a student worship leader team along with resources that enable the children to have more ownership of the worship times. We have been using the liturgical calendar as a structure for our worship and have also been learning about the Lord's Prayer which we all say now every week in sign language too! Feedback from the school has been really positive and I meet with Gill termly to review and plan. Last year the whole school came to St. Mary's church building for Harvest and a Christingle service and are planning to come in a couple of weeks' time for a Palm service. My hope in coming months is to form a team to lead our regular weekly assemblies together. I have already heard from a few people that they would be interested in joining for this and I think it is really important for the children to see different people representing the church and not just the vicar!

I have also been in discussion with Gill and other governors about taking on the role of foundation governor which I will hopefully do during this coming year.

The Reverend Clare Joyce

Social and Fund-Raising Group

We held a very successful Plant Stall and raffle in May, raising £590. In October, we had our annual Harvest Lunch which was much enjoyed by all. It was a good chance to get together as a congregation. We have continued to work with Wheatley Area Churches to provide soup lunches over the six Saturdays in Lent. In December we had a craft stall at the Larder Christmas Market which raised much needed funds for St Mary's.

Angela Morrison

Bell Ringers

We have been able to call on a full band of 6 ringers for most of the year, including the major events in the church year - Christmas, Easter and Remembrance Day.

We now have 10 regular ringers:

Adrian Coates, Wendy Keely, David Benny, Zillah de Paiva, Phil Glanville, Celia Pagel, Peter Bayliss, Jenny Stonard, Juliet Vale and Rachel Cave.

We also receive less frequent, but invaluable support from Kevin Harris and Katie Lane.

From 7th July to 31st December the bells were rung for most planned services, including Remembrance Day tolling, Easter events, and all Christmas services.

We held our annual Bell Ringers' dinner at the King's Arms on 6th February 2026.

Peter Bayliss Tower Captain

Parochial Church Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wheatley

Registered Charity: Number 1159100

Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2025

Page

1 Statement of Financial Activities

2 Balance Sheet

3 Notes to the Financial Statements

4 Independent Examiners Report

72 Church Road
Wheatley
Oxford
OX33 1LZ

Parochial Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wheatley

Charity No. 1159100

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2025

	Ministry	Wheatley Suppport	Project	Depreciation	Friends of St Mary's	Total	2024	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Income								
Congregation income	3,680					3680	1,932	
Monthly standing orders	56,976		120			57,096	54,913	
Other planned giving	14721		11,021		2550	28292	41,538	
Gift Aid receipts	14,468		2,638		637	17,743	18,328	
Grants	-						107,122	
Legacy	2,000		500			2500	2,000	
Other income							7,486	
Vat recovery	-						45	
Bank interest			186			186	3,640	
Wheatley Support		3,570				3570	3,337	
Savvy - reduced debt*			2,707			2707		
16373 (due)-13666 (paid)								
Total income	91,845	3570	17,172		3187	115,774	240,341	
Expenditure on								
Buildings	10,576		3,712		1327	15,615	30,347	
Charity donations	330					330	493	
Fees ODBF	1,719					1719	992	
IT costs	652					652	432	
Ministry	6,252					6252	7,054	
Office	1,311					1311	1,983	
Parish share	65,440					65440	60,876	
Utilities -P+L=£17262 less £5061 on 2024 a/c	12,201		2,000			14201	5,702	
Grants							2,532	
Sundry expenses							135	
Project 20-20 Architect fees							2,787	
Consultants fees								
Other costs			331			331	2,266	
Depreciation - Fixtures and fittings				1500		1500	1,500	
Revival; Savvy				26196		26196	26,196	
Wheatley Support		5943				5,943		
	98,481	5943	6,043	27696	1,327	139,490	143,295	
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year	(6,636)	**(2,373)**	**11,129**	**-27696**	***1860***	-23,716	97046	(23,716)
Transfer						-		
			Deficit for All Restricted Funds					
Net movement in funds	(6,636)		(17,080)			-23,716	97046	
Funds brought forward	20,047		669,123			689,170	592124	
Funds carried forward	**13,411**		652,043			**665,454**	689170	

Parochial Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wheatley

Charity No. 1159100

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2025

Balance - Year ending 2025

			2025	2024
				£
Fixed Assets	*(*after depreciation (27696)*	*	**604019**	631,715
Current Assets				
Bank account - Current account			13,552	28,515
Friends of St Mary's			37247	35,586
Project 20-20			348	4,723
Wheatley Support			4,070	3,559
Coventry Building Society			5,235	6,048
Skipton Building Society				
Bath Building Society				
Debtors			6,991	458
Less: Current Liabilities				
Sundry creditors			-6,008	(21,434)
Net Current Assets				
Net Assets			665,454	689,170
Represented by				
Unrestricted Funds			13,411	20,047
Restricted Funds			652043	669,123
			665,454	**689,170**

These financial statements approved by the Parochial Church Council on

Peter Fanning (Hon. Treasurer Wheatley PCC)

Clare Joyce (Chairman Wheatley PCC)

Parochial Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wheatley

Charity No. 1159100

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2025

1. Accounting Policies

a) Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost convention and in accordace with accounting standards, the Charities SORP and comply with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations issued under the Charities Act 2011

b) Recognition of Income

Income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when:

the charity becomes entitled to the resources;

the trustees are virtually certain that they will receive the resources; and

the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

c) Investment Income

Investment income is included in the accounts when receivable.

d) Liability Recognition

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

e) Depreciation

Depreciation aims to write off fixed assets over their estimated useful life as follows

Furniture and fittings	20% straight line
Revival at St. Mary's (Project 20-20)	Will be depreciated straight line over 25 years once building work is complete.

2. Fixed Assets

	Revival at St. Mary's £	Fixtures and Fittings £	Total £
Cost brought forward	654,911	7,500	662,411
Additions	0	0	
Accumulated depreciation brought forward	- 26,196	-4,500	-30,696
Net Book Value 31st December 2024	628,715	3000	631,715
Depreciation for year	- 26,196	-1,500	-27,696
Net book value at 31 December 2025	**602,519**	**1,500**	**604,019**

Revival at St. Mary's (Project 20-20) represents improvement work to the fabric of the church including replacement of the flooring, with underfloor heating, new radiant heating, rewiring, new lighting, new toilets with a finish to the King Edward room (west end). The contract price for this building work is £648,332 and work is expected to be completed in June 2024.

3. Debtors

Current a/c	Xmas Fayre*	55
	DoM	580
	HMRC Gift Aid	942
	Holiday Club	100
	Hire	168
	HMRC Gift Aid	768
Project	VAT - LPW	2733.15
	HMRC GA (Project)	1008
Friends	GA	637
	Total	**6991**

4. Sundry Creditors

Current a/c		
Current a/c	Vicar	216.15
	OBDF	283
	Porch	255
	Children's	10
	Society	
	EDF (Dec)	388.52
	Be Free	20
	Shelter	24.94
	DoM	280
Project	EDF (Dec)	2000
Wheatley Support		2530
	Total	**6008**

Parochial Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wheatley

Charity No. 1159100

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2025

I report on the financial statements of the Parochial Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wheatley for the period ended 31 December 2023 which are set out on pages 1 to 5.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act').

The Charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Act and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

.

Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act

To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 145(5) (b) of the Act, ;

To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiners report

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosure in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present "a true and fair" view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which give me cause to believe that in any material respect:

the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or

the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or

the accounts did not accord with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination.

q

Parochial Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wheatley

Charity No. 1159100

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2025

Balance - Year ending 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
Fixed Assets	604,019	631,715
Current Assets		
Bank account - Current account	13,552	28,515
Friends of St Mary's	37,247	35,586
Project 20-20	348	4,723
Wheatley Support	4,070	3,559
Coventry Building Society	5,235	6,048
Debtors	6,991	458
	67,443	78,889
Less: Current Liabilities		
Sundry creditors	-6,008	-21,434
Net Current Assets	61,435	57,455
Net Assets	665,454	689,170
Unrestricted Funds	13,411	20,047
Restricted Funds	652,043	669,123
	665,454	**689,170**

These financial statements approved by the Parochial Church Council on

Peter Fanning
(Hon. Treasurer Wheatley PCC)

18/3/26

Clare Joyce
(Chairman Wheatley PCC)

18.03.26

Parochial Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wheatley

Charity No. 1159100

Financial Statements for the period ended 31 December 2025

I report on the financial statements of the Parochial Council of St Mary the Virgin, Wheatley for the period ended 31 December 2025 which are set out on pages 2 to 5.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act').

The Charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Act and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 145(5) (b) of the Act, ; and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiners report

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosure in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present "a true and fair" view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

b b

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which give me cause to believe that in any material respect:

the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
the accounts did not accord with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this respect in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Graham Colverson