Annual Report 2025



Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Incumbent:
The Revd. Canon Clive W Jones

Principal Address:

The Vicarage
Hermitage Road
Higham
Rochester
Kent
ME3 7NE

Registered Charity No.: 1169926

Independent Examiner:

Mr Martyn Burt
Adventus Accounting Solutions,
10 Walnut Lane, Grimsby,
DN37 7BY.
BSc (Hons) ACMA, CGMA

Banks:

Barclays Bank PLC
Dartford Group
Gravesend

National Savings Bank
Glasgow
Scotland

Santander PLC
Merseyside

CAF Bank Ltd
West Malling
Kent

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Report on the proceedings of the Council

Aim and Purpose

St. John's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the Priest in Charge, the Reverend Canon Clive W Jones, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical to the Glory of Almighty God.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to use and worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St. John's. The PCC collaborates with the Parish Priest and Churchwardens in decisions made about acts of worship particularly with a view to involving the groups and organisations that operate within the parish. Our pattern of worship is hinged on the regular celebration of Mass and Morning and Evening prayer. Our worship puts faith into practice through prayer, scripture and Sacrament in accordance with the Great Commission (Matthew 28)

Public Benefit

When planning our activities for the year, the Parish Priest, Churchwardens and PCC have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, and particularly the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship, prayer and bible study.
- Provision of pastoral care for both those who live within the parish and non-resident worshippers
- Leading our Church into Growth – Missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of St. John and its churchyard and the churchyard of St. Mary's, Higham.

Administrative Information

St. John's Church is situated in Higham, Kent. It is in the Deanery of Gravesend, part of the Church of England Diocese of Rochester, and under the shared Episcopal care with the Bishop of Richborough.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers and Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2025), and a charity registered with the Charity Commission. The PCC takes regard of the Charity Governance Code and is working towards compliance with the Code where it is relevant to the PCC's activities.

PCC members who have served during 2025 are:

Ex Officio:

Parish Priest	The Revd. Canon Clive Jones	Chair
Churchwardens	Mrs Helen Walker	Vice-Chair – Stepped down April 2025
	Mrs Teresa Joblin	Vice Chair – Elected April 2025
	Mrs Sarah Wright	Elected April 2025

Fr Clive remains Bishop of Richborough Rep for Rochester, Chairman of The Society in Rochester and has been elected to Diocesan Synod for the current quinquennium.

Representatives on the Deanery Synod:

Miss Lynne Chesterton – Elected May 2023.
Mr Neil Jerome – Elected September 2023.

Elected Members

Mrs Valerie Laurens	Asst. Hon. Treasurer & Data Compliance Officer
Mrs Carole Rough	DBS First Recruiter
Mrs Anne Tammas-Williams	Hon. Treasurer
Mrs Nancy Hughes	DBS Second Recruiter.
Mrs Elizabeth Croker	
Mrs Tracey Jerome	Parish Safeguarding Officer
Mrs Catherine Ody	Stepped down September 2025

Parochial Church Council of Higham with Merston

Mrs Claire Howes
Mr Stephen Tomsett — Electoral Roll Officer - Elected April 2025

Recruitment and appointment of New Trustees

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

Induction and training of New Trustees

All new members of the PCC are mentored by serving members and are advised of their duties and responsibilities.

Committees

To manage its time in an effective way, the PCC operates several committees, which meet as appropriate throughout the year. The Parish Priest is an ex officio member of all committees including one or both of the Churchwardens. Committees have the power to co-opt non-PCC members for a specified period of time as appropriate.

Standing Committee: is the only committee required by law. It has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. The Churchwardens are ex officio members and usually the Secretary, Treasurer (and/or the Assistant Treasurer) and one other PCC member. This should equate to about one third of the PCC.

Finance Committee: oversees the general financial dimension of the work of St. John's by monitoring income and expenditure and preparing budgets for future expenditure. It is responsible for the co-ordination of the annual review of Planned Giving, which usually takes place during February. They also normally provide a recommended plan for the PCC's charitable giving each year. The committee usually comprises the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, Stewardship Recorder and both Churchwardens.

Social Committee: is responsible for the organisation of various fund-raising events throughout the year, refreshments after special services and any other social aspects of life at St. John's to bring together our Church and our community in fellowship.

Policies Committee: was established to ensure that matters which require a standard response to any possible enquiries are agreed by the Parish Priest and the PCC, e.g., baptism, burial, St. Mary's Church and Churchyard, marriage, blessings, St. George's School, content in principle/management of St John's website, etc.

Social Media & Communications Committee: was established to co-ordinate and oversee all aspects of media used by St. John's as tools in furthering the Church's work in the Community.

Volunteers

Members of the PCC act in a voluntary capacity and very much rely on the assistance of people outside of the Council. It has not been possible to quantify the value of volunteers.

Church Attendance

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on the 27th April 2025 it was reported that the number of names on the Electoral Roll stood at 66.
Sunday attendance of adults, together with the number of communicants, has been stable over the year. Children's attendance remains variable week to week but a core group of children with their families do attend.
Zoom Masses remain available throughout the year, and the aim is for these to be an ongoing offer while there is a need. Some Parishioners still use the Zoom Mass offer e.g. when unwell, away on holiday.
The Remembrance Sunday Mass was very well attended, especially from among the uniformed organisations this year.

Achievements and Performance

A total of 6 PCC meetings took place between January and December 2025 on a bi-monthly basis with an average of 12 members in attendance. There has been 1 Extraordinary meeting, with 1 Standing Committee meeting in person and other decisions taking place via email.

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Episcopal Care: Formal application was made to the Bishop of Rochester in 2015 to ask for arrangements for episcopal care to be made in accordance with the House of Bishop's Declaration on the ministry of Bishops and Priests. The PCC reviewed its resolutions with regard to the ordination of women as bishops and priests in July 2021 and agreed that its position was unaltered.

Suspension of Living - Fr Clive has written to our Patrons & Diocesan Bishop to ask for support in having the patronage of the Living lifted in order to be Vicar rather than Priest in Charge. This remains under review.

Worship and Prayer: Except for Thursdays, the daily celebration of Mass continues to form our main act of worship at St. John's. The opportunity to request weekly intercession and thanksgiving prayers has continued to be made available. The chance to light individual, votive candles in memory of deceased loved ones on All Souls Day continues to be popular. The Church, being open for prayer, is used by others as well as members. Lighting prayer candles is a frequent occurrence most days.

As well as our regular services, we enable the wider community to celebrate and thank God at life events. 10 candidates were prepared for confirmation by St John's – 2 people were confirmed on 29th September at St Michaels's Beckenham by the Bishop of Richborough and 8 people at St John's on 5th October also by the Bishop of Richborough. We have also celebrated .... 6 Baptisms, 0 Marriages and 1 renewal of vows in our Church and have led 5 funerals for the Community, 3 of these at the crematorium, and 2 in Church; 4 burials of ashes have taken place.

Music: We do not have a contracted Organist at St John's. Mr Andrew Linn is our main supporting organist, playing at services and working with the Singing Group.

Mission and Evangelism: has continued to be at the forefront of the PCC's discussions. The Monthly Prayer Cycle continues to be used, ensuring that every road within the village is prayed for along with various village organisations and businesses. The cycle of prayer for the 'Richborough family of Parishes' is also used daily. The monthly Coffee and Conversation sessions which provide a meeting place on a Saturday morning for anyone in the village wishing to get out of the house, meet/make friends and have a good chat took place. Lent Lunches have again been held on Saturdays in Lent 2025, raising money to support Christian Aid.
There continued to be members among the congregation who serve the village community e.g. Friends of St Mary's, Higham History Group, Knit and Natter.
Church members and the wider parish are invited to donate to a food collection at St John's, at least once a month, which is then taken to a foodbank in Gravesend. The generosity of donors has been amazing.
In these ways, the people of God are working for the benefit of the entire community.
The Lent Group met on Wednesday mornings after Mass and followed an online course about the Nicene Creed. It was mainly led by Fr Clive.
Fr Roger held a bible study class after Wednesday Mass in November for four sessions on the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. Average attendance was 10-12 people.
A Community Carol service was held on the fourth Sunday of Advent which was well attended. The Crib service on Christmas Eve was also well attended. Both events drew in a number of participants from outside the usual Congregation.
Fr Clive continues to build links with Higham Primary School and Gads Hill School. He ran an Easter 'messy church' event for Higham School's Year 4, funded by Rolfe's Charity. He conducts some class work and Collective Worship and was delighted to welcome KS1 from Gads Hill to St John's for an educational visit.
In Spring 2025, Gads Hill performed a concert in St John's Church demonstrating their Marimbas. This was a free concert for villagers with a collection sent to The Children's Society. Fr Clive attended Higham School's Nativity play and welcomed the school to church for their Easter and Christmas services.

Children and Youth work: All activities for children and young people throughout the year are approved by the PCC and subject to the usual permission being granted. All volunteers working with children require the approval of the PCC and are DBS checked, where necessary. We follow Diocese & Parish guidelines for safeguarding and social media. The safeguarding contacts for children are publicised throughout St John's and on our website.
We were saddened to lose Nancy Hughes from our team, but at the same time, we were delighted to welcome Rebecca Kazzaz to our teaching team, so we remain at 3 leaders. This means leaders too can participate in Mass, which is essential for our own spiritual growth and ministry. The move to using LOOK sheets has been excellent. Junior Church now follows the themes of the Mass, creating joined-up thinking and enabling meaningful discussion with parents and families. Our Junior Church board reflects the teaching in Mass for everyone. We value opportunities to share what we have learned at the end of Mass.

This helps children and families to feel part of the church and reminds the congregation that Junior Church is an integral part of parish life. The planned outdoor activity day at Creed Adventure Centre in October half term was cancelled due to bad weather but was replaced with an indoor worship and music session followed by games. It was wonderful for the children to have more ownership of the Crib Service this year. Our Christingle-making event was shaped into a Messy Church-style gathering - families made Christingles, explored the meaning of Christmas, and enjoyed a sociable time together, building community and belonging.
One exciting development is our commitment to encouraging children to become servers and training them for this important role. Progression from boat level to other roles provides a natural pathway into deeper involvement as they grow older.
We extend heartfelt thanks to Nancy for her legacy and to our committed leaders who give their time to this vital ministry. Together, we look forward to continuing to nurture faith, community, and belonging among the children and families of St John's.
After nearly 28 years Nancy Hughes stood down in July from Junior Church in order to take up a ministry along with Fr Clive with the secondary school age youth, a number of whom transitioned out of Junior Church this year. It has been a challenge getting them all together on a regular basis, but we have held several events, all which include elements of worship and fun. In August Nancy joined Fr Clive and two clergy from other parishes in leading a group of 14 teenagers at the Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage, none of them from St John's but one from All Saints Perry Street. We hope to inspire our youth to join us in 2026. We believe it is important to keep a connection with our young people and to find ways to support them in their faith and the challenges of life. Please keep all our children, families, and ministry leaders in your prayers.

The Men's Fellowship Group: The Men's Fellowship Group exists to provide a supportive environment for men to connect with God, develop spiritually and enjoy the fellowship of one another. It is an ecumenical group with additional members from the Higham Congregational church.
It met five times in 2025 and organised the parish BBQ in August. Our meetings included a visit to the Higham Congregational church, where we learnt of the history and witness of the congregation for over a century, and talks from a range of speakers - Revd Captain Paul Fitzpatrick spoke to us of his life and calling in the Church Army and prison fellowship. He provided a powerful testimony of the transformational nature of Christ's witness in his own and the lives of others; Steve Fouch, of the Christian Medical Fellowship, talked to us about health issues relating specifically to men, including prostate cancer and mental health; the Deputy Lord Lieutenant for London, Simon Ovens DL, gave an informative talk on the role of the Lord Lieutenancy and how it acts as the King's representative amongst local communities; Deacon John Fogarty of the Stella Maris chaplaincy, the regional port chaplain for Kent and Medway. He explained his role as providing expert information, advocacy and spiritual support to seafarers who visit the county and southeast London.
Whilst the number attending each meeting has varied from a dozen to just over twenty the group has maintained momentum into its second year increasing the average attendance and has a varied programme planned for 2026.

Social Media and Communications Committee: The Higham Bridge - this magazine continues to provide a link between St John's and the village, with some local organisations providing content. The number of copies printed each month was 219 and the digital version had 21 subscribers. Subscription renewals took place in October and November with a reduced take up and is now 200 printed copies and 20 digital versions. The typesetting was outsourced to St Winifred's Press during the year for a modest charge and this has been working well. The Editor role was successfully handed to Christina Gladwell in September. There is a reliable team of volunteers who produce the magazine and others who distribute it to the subscribers. Without them it would not be possible to produce this village magazine. Additional distributors are always needed. 2 new advertisers have been recruited, and additional articles are always sought to add more content. The magazine provides a valuable financial contribution to the income to maintain the church.

The St John's Church Website –The church website is updated weekly or monthly with the weekly bulletin and monthly Requiem lists made available for all to read, especially those who are unable to attend Mass. It provides a place for reminders of special Mass celebrations, foodbank collection dates, and a source for daily readings, etc. A deputy webmaster was recruited in September to cover when the webmaster is not available.

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Facebook & Bluesky – Our social networking sites enable us to engage with the congregation, the community and the wider church with news/announcements, seasonal celebrations and campaigns, and inspirational content. We follow Diocesan policy and guidelines for adults and children, and respect those who do not wish to appear on social media. Visits to our Facebook page have increased this year by 9.5% over last year.
We closed our Twitter/X account and moved to Bluesky, but as many of our church/Christian network organisations have yet to make that move, we are less active on this site than we would like to be, but we expect this will increase in time.

Welcome Pack – a cover has been designed and produced but needs further development both in use and content.

Social Committee: This group continues to organise food following major feasts and solemnities, to facilitate, encourage and foster a greater ministry of welcome and hospitality e.g. St John's Dedication Day.
This year, fund-raising events were organised for Burns Night and Harvest.

The Policies Committee: This committee did not need to meet this year.

The Vestry Hall: Is generally available to be used by the wider community for family celebratory events, outreach groups, exercise groups, meetings etc. Some local groups normally use the facilities most weeks, as well as the hall being used for study groups and church social events which the wider community is encouraged and invited to attend. Users of the hall follow the Vestry Hall Guidance document.

No.17 Hermitage Road: Letting agents M&M continue to manage the property under a fixed- term tenancy which was reviewed in October. The Renters Rights Act 2025 will come into force on 1 May 2026 so changes are expected to the tenancy agreement as all fixed-term tenancies will transition to periodic agreements. The tenants that moved into No. 17 in October 2022 continue to rent the property. Mrs Wright, Churchwarden, keeps a log of all work and/or repairs carried out at the property.

St. Mary's Church and Churchyard: Usually four services are held each year. This year the following services took place - Mothering Sunday, Mass, Assumption and the Dedication Festival.
The programme of vegetation clearance, to keep the Churchyard accessible to the Higham community and other visitors, has continued, funded by Rolfe's Charity. Also, a volunteer who lives locally has been supporting with nettle clearance.

General Church Repairs: General maintenance and repairs have taken place at St John's Church over the year. Work took place to – re-lay the church path with new gravel, install a new kitchen in the vestry hall, decorate the kitchen, vestry hall and lobby area and replace a broken window in the vestry hall door.

Bell Tower: Our group of bell ringers continue to improve and practise. Fr Clive and the Tower Captain are working on improving safeguarding arrangements in the tower, especially in regard to visiting ringers. The clock faces were removed for repainting and gilding in line with The Church of England guidelines. The pendulum still needs repair work to be done.

Financial Review: Thank you for your continued financial support. In 2025, our income was £115102.90 and our expenditure was £117038.97 which means that we spent £1936.07 more than we got in. However, as noted below, refurbishment of the kitchen was paid for this year from money received previously.
Our biggest expenditure this year was the refurbishment of the vestry kitchen. We were fortunate that we had money from legacies received in previous years to pay for this. The tower clock was also refurbished, partly from a donation from Lockett's Trust and partly from PCC Funds. We were also most fortunate that a lot of the work on the clock was carried out by volunteers who did not charge for their time. The church path was re-laid. This was paid for from PCC funds and past legacies. Aside from these items, our biggest expenditure is on gas, electricity and the Parish offer.
Further income has been received from fundraising, and we are fortunate to have a band of people who are willing to put time and effort into raising funds for the church and so we thank them and those who support our fundraising events. We are also very grateful to William Rolfe's Charity and Lockett's Trust charities who support us. Without these donations, our financial situation would be a lot worse.

It is the policy of St John's to maintain unrestricted funds which are the free reserves of the PCC which equates to 2 months unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations.
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Away-Giving: It is the policy of the PCC to work towards being able to give away to charitable causes a sum equal to 5% of our disposable income, less expenses beyond our control, e.g., Parish Offer, rates and taxes, and restricted funds.
Each of the causes listed below received a donation during 2025:
Christians Against Poverty (£706.75), Elliot Holmes Memorial Fund (£706.75) and Diocese of Rochester Poverty & Hope Appeal (£1413.50).

In addition to this:

£337.26 was sent to the Children's Society following the Gads Hill concert.

£77.08 was raised for Mary's Meals following their talk at Mass.

£1124.12 was sent to Christian Aid as a result of Lent Lunches.

£627.77 was raised during Christian Aid week.

£540.92 was raised for Mary's Meals following the Harvest Lunch, raffle and bucket appeal.

Planned Giving: Mrs Cheryl Robins continued with her role as Stewardship Secretary.

Risk Management: It is the PCC's intention to identify the major risks which impact on the work of the Church in the Parish. We already have in place, a policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders, a set of financial procedures, a grievance procedure for employees, a Health & Safety Policy, a policy on Domestic Violence and Lone Working Guidance. The PCC has also adopted the diocesan Dignity at Work policy. Health and safety risks are monitored on an on-going basis and are dealt with as they are identified, and a risk analysis is updated annually.

The Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The PCC has appointed Officers to deal with the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service and Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection.

Safeguarding: Mrs T Jerome continues in her role of Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO). She is a PCC member so any needed information or updates can be shared during meetings. Mrs Jerome receives updates regarding safeguarding via the Diocesan Safeguarding Newsletter. An excel spreadsheet has been compiled to support ensuring all key people/ volunteers have completed the correct safeguarding training. All re-elected Members and Officers of the PCC have completed the required level of online safeguarding training. Newly elected members will be supported to access this training if needed asap. Mrs Jerome monitors the safeguarding information presented on the Church website to ensure it is up to date.
Mrs. C Rough continues in her role as the Lead Recruiter and Mrs. N Hughes continues in her role as Second Lead Recruiter. The PCC receives regular updates from Mrs C Rough regarding DBS.
Safeguarding is a standing item on each PCC agenda. All members have undergone DBS checks and newly elected members will be DBS checked.
The PCC accepts and implements the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church Policy Statement' and adopts the same as its own policy as a Godly duty.
A Parish Safeguarding Handbook is kept in the Safeguarding folder in the church for easy access to all.

Health and safety: We have a CCTV system to help minimise the risk of leaving the Church building unlocked during the day. An asbestos check and a fire risk analysis on the church buildings have been completed and recorded. Fire evacuation procedure is outlined on occasion to the Congregation and large groups, and there are signs and notices on display. Full details of this procedure are also given to organisations using the church building for events. All Sidesmen are aware of the procedure. Maintenance of fire extinguishers and PAT testing of electrical items is carried out on an annual basis. A full electrical inspection and a lightning conductor inspection take place every five years.

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Policies and Guidance: The PCC has agreed and recorded local policies and/or guidance regarding burials, baptisms and marriages, the use of St Mary's Church and Churchyard and St John's Churchyard, which are additional to the Diocesan Regulations. Local policies have also been agreed regarding the signature by the Parish Priest of application forms for entrance and free travel to St George's school, and the use of social media. Also, policies regarding the personal safety of lone workers and legacies to St John's are in place.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): The PCC takes into account GDPR that became law in May 2018. The Parish's Data Controller is the Incumbent in conjunction with the PCC. Mrs V Laurens is the appointed Data Compliance Officer. Policies, consent forms and privacy notices were produced in compliance with the regulations. A GDPR Annual Return form is completed by key volunteers to inform Mrs Laurens of how the various lists of contact details (databases) that leaders keep for groups attached to the Church have been used during the course of each year.

Cheryl Robins

Secretary (Non PCC member)

The Reverend Canon Clive W Jones

Priest in Charge

PCC ACCOUNTS

Year Ending 31 December 2025

Higham with Merston PCC

Receipts & Payments Accounts

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2025 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2024 £
Receipts									
Voluntary income	2a	71,517	685	7,489	**79,690**	64,997		2,727	**67,725**
Activities for generating funds	2b	7,416		2,711	**10,127**	7,424		2,359	**9,782**
Investment income	2c	14,398	632		**15,030**	13,498	1,160		**14,658**
Church activities	2d	7,938		2,050	**9,988**	9,596		1,815	**11,410**
Other incoming resources	2e	268			**268**				
		101,536	1,317	12,249	**115,103**	95,514	1,160	6,901	**103,575**
Payments									
Costs of generating voluntary income	3a	66			**66**	64			**64**
Fund-raising trading costs	3b	837		86	**923**	679			**679**
Church activities	3c	103,417	1,781	10,852	**116,050**	75,394	1,976	12,386	**89,756**
Total resources expended		104,320	1,781	10,938	**117,039**	76,137	1,976	12,386	**90,499**
Excess of Receipts over Payments		(2,784)	(464)	1,312	**(1,936)**	19,377	(816)	(5,485)	**13,076**
Transfers between funds - transfers in			700	263	**963**	4056	700	806	**5,562**
Transfers between funds - transfers out		-963			**(963)**	-4851		-711	**(5,562)**
		(3,747)	236	1,575	**(1,936)**	18,582	(116)	(5,390)	**13,076**
Bank current and deposit accounts 1 January 2025/24		73,446	9,317	6,838	**89,600**	54,864	9,433	6,152	**70,449**
Bank current and deposit accounts at 31 December 2025/ 2024	4	69,699	9,553	8,413	**87,664**	73,446	9,317	6,838	**89,600**

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

	Notes	General Fund £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Fund £	Total £	2025	General Fund £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Fund £	Total £	2024
Cash and bank deposits													
Current accounts		47,905											
Deposit accounts		21,794				£	**47,905**	£ 32,536		£ 951		£	**33,487**
Diocesan diary account			851	8,413		£	**31,058**	£ 40,910	£ 1,547	£ 5,888		£	**48,345**
Church repair fund			124			£	**124**		£ 120			£	**120**
			8,578			£	**8,578**		£ 7,649			£	**7,649**
	4	£ 69,699	£ 9,553	£ 8,413		£	**87,665**	£ 73,446	£ 9,316	£ 6,838		£	**89,601**
Other monetary assets													
Interest for 2025 not received			124			£	**124**						
Gift Aid debtor		10,300				£	**10,300**	8250	123				
		£ 10,300	£ 124	£ -		£	**10,424.39**	£ 8,250	£ 123	£ -		£	-
Investment assets													
						£	-						
		£ -	£ -	£ -		£	-	£ -	£ -	£ -		£	-
Assets retained for Church Use													
No 17 Hermitage Road			375,000			£	**375,000**		£ 350,000.00			£	**350,000**
						£	-					£	-
		£ -	£ 375,000	£ -		£	**375,000**	£ -	£ 350,000.00	£ -		£	**350,000**
Liabilities													
Fees for Independent Examiner		405					405	385					**£385**

Description of any Assets .....
Semi detached 3 bedroomed house rented to tenants, estimated market value

Please see note 4 on page 7 for further information regarding restricted funds

Approved by the Parochial Church Council and signed on its behalf

Chair

28 March 2026

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

1 Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts & Payments basis. Receipts and payments include income as received and expenditure when irrevocably paid.

The accounts include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups which owe their main affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Funds

Unrestricted funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes. These include designated funds which can be redesignated.

Restricted funds represent (a) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object, and (b) income from trusts and endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust of bequest. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund.

Endowment funds are funds, the capital of which must be maintained; only income arising from investment of the endowment may be used either as restricted or unrestricted funds depending upon the purpose for which the endowment was established.

The following assets are recognised but not necessarily valued in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Movable church furnishings held by the Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal; Land and buildings held on behalf of the PCC.

The following assets are recognised and a monetary value given as part of the description in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Bank and deposit accounts; Amounts owing from HMRC where a formal claim has been made; Investment assets.

Liabilities are recognised and a monetary value given in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities where the supply had been received by 31 December.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

3 Receipts

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**TOTAL FUNDS 2025 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**TOTAL FUNDS 2024 £**
a *Voluntary income*								
Planned giving by standing order	42369			**42369**	39546			**39546**
Planned giving envelopes	8722			**8722**	7054			**7054**
Income tax recoverable	13508			**13508**	10710			**10710**
Collections	2301			**2301**	1570			**1570**
Charity Collections			3055	**3055**			2242	**2242**
Donations and appeals	2727	231	4299	**7257**	6117			**6117**
Legacies/Grants	1890	454	135	**2479**			485	**485**
	71517	685	7489	**79690**	64997		2727	**67725**
b *Activities for generating funds*								
General fundraising	4854.41		100	**4954**	4718			**4718**
Parish Magazine/VotiveCandles/Flowers	2562		2611	**5173**	2706		2359	**5065**
	7416		2711	**10127**	7424		2359	**9782**
c *Investment income*								
No 17 rent	14271			**14271**	13401			**13401**
Dividends and interest	127	632		**759**	97	1160		
	14398	632		**15030**	13498	1160		**13401**
d *Income from Church Activities*								
Church Hall rental	4549			**4549**	5497			**5497**
Fees from weddings, funerals, etc	2557		263	**2820**	3385			**3385**
DBF element of fees			1787	**1787**			1815	**1815**
Refreshments	832			**832**	714			**714**
Social Committee								
	7938		2050	**9988**	9596		1815	**11410**
e *Other incoming resources*								
Sundry	268			**268**				
Other income								
	268			**268**				
Total receipts	101536	1317	12249	**115103**	95514	1160	6901	**102318**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

3 Payments

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	FUNDS 2025 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	FUNDS 2024 £
a *Costs of generating voluntary income*								
Stewardship costs	66			**66**	64			**64**
	66			**66**	64			**64**
b *Fund raising costs*	837		86	**923**	679			**679**
	837		86	**923**	679			**679**
c *Church Activities*								
Missionary and charitable giving (Note 6):	2927		3055	**5982**	1815		2247	**4062**
Ministry Costs								
Diocesan Offer	53000			**53000**	45000			**45000**
Expenses	1276		2	**1278**	1441		60	**1501**
Vicarage costs	3484			**3484**	3153			**3153**
Other Benefice account costs			1382	**1382**			2258	**2258**
Other Ministry costs								
Church running expenses								
Utilities	6990			**6990**	7425			**7425**
Refreshments	1062			**1062**	878			**878**
Insurance	3535			**3535**	3477			**3477**
Church maintenance	21287	1781	3306	**26374**	3774	1976	2413	**8162**
Major Structural work								
Upkeep of services	1606		2510	**4116**	1486		2392	**3878**
Organ Tuning and Playing	4518		220	**4738**	3614		585	**4199**
No. 17 Hermitage Road								
Maintenance								
Insurance	321			**321**	272			**272**
Administration	1202			**1202**	1381			**1381**
Training/Childrens Church	318		252	**570**	151		514	**665**
Other costs	1891		125	**2016**	1525		1918	**3443**
	103,417	1,781	10,852	**116050**	75,394	1,976	12,386	**89756**
Total payments	104,320	1,781	10,938	**117039**	76,137	1,976	12,386	**90499**

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

4 Statement of Fund Movements

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2025	Receipts	Payments	Transfers, Investment gains	Transfers between funds	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2025	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Unrestricted Fund							
General fund	73,446	101,536	(104,320)		(963)	**69,699**	
	73,446	101,536	(104,320)		(963)	**69,699**	
Designated Funds							
Church Repair Fund	7,769	234	0	0	700	**8,703**	CRF and CRF Diary
Restoration Fund	1,547	852	(1,781)	0	0	**618**	income is Interest on CAF Gold
Organ fund	0	231	0	0		**231**	
	9,316	1,317	(1,781)	0	700	**9,552**	
Restricted Funds							
Shaves	5,287	0	(150)	0		**5,137**	
Mission Direct Grant	316	136	(317)	0		**135**	
Electrical work	0	988		0		**988**	
Legacy 2(Church Purchases)	150	0	(162)	0	12	**0**	
DBF fees	140	1,787	(853)	0		**1,074**	
War Graves	0	135	(150)	0	15	**0**	
Charity Appeals	0	3,055	(3,055)	0		**0**	
St Mary's Churchyard	400	200	0	0		**600**	
Flowers	110	998	(872)	0	60	**296**	
Cleaning	135	405	(371)	0		**169**	
Lamps	0	1,613	(1,789)	0	176	**0**	
Church clock	0	2,500	(2,500)	0		**0**	
Music	0	70	(70)	0		**0**	
Christmas fayre	0	100	(86)	0		**14**	
Kitchen	300		(300)	0		**0**	
Clergy expenses	0	2	(2)	0		**0**	
PTO Fees	0	261	(261)	0		**0**	
	6,838	12,249	(10,938)		263	**8,413**	
Total bank and current accounts	89,600	115,103	(117,039)	0	0	**87,664**	
Total funds	**89,600**	**115,103**	**(117,039)**		**0**	**87,664**	

The **General Fund** is available to the PCC for day to day income and expenses. Its assets are held in Santander, Barclays and CAF Cash Current Accounts.
The **Church Repair Fund** has been designated by the PCC for the repair of that building. The monies are held in a deposit account with Rochester Diocese Board of Finance.
The **Restoration Fund** is held for the purpose of any restoration work required to the church building or grounds and is financed by donations, fund raising events and interest on funds already held

Shaves was a charity that has now closed. The funds have been passed to the PCC's bank account for use in cases of need in the village. Use of the funds is solely at the incumbent's discretion

Legacy This was given to St John's for the purpose of buying items for use within St John's church. The funds were used to buy oils and linens

Mission Direct Grant was successfully applied for last year and these funds are for children and young people

Charity appeals are our bucket appeals and profits made on events such as our Lent lunches.

Flowers - these are funded from donations specifically for the cost of flowers to decorate the church, often for special festivals

Cleaning - St John's is fortunate to have the cost of church cleaning covered by the Lockett Trust

Lamps - Shrine Lamps are sponsored by members of the Congregation on a weekly basis. Also memorial candles for All Souls Day

Electrical work - a donation from the Lockett Trust to go towards further necessary electrical work

DBF/PTO/ fees and clergy expenses - these are from weddings and funerals and are sent on to the Rochester Board of Finance and the stand-in priests

War Graves - this grant is used for tending the war graves at St Mary's

St Mary's Churchyard - this has been set up by a parishioner for the upkeep of St Mary's churchyard

Kitchen - we received a donation to go towards the refurbishment of the vestry hall kitchen

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HIGHAM WITH MERSTON

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

4 Statement of Fund Movements

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, investment gains	Transfers between funds	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Fund						
General fund		95,514	(76,137)		(795)	18,582
	0	95,514	(76,137)		(795)	18,582
Designated Funds						
Church Repair Fund	6,821	248	0	0	700	7,769
Restoration Fund	2,612	911	(1,976)	0	0	1,547
	9,433	1,159	(1,976)	0	700	9,316
Restricted Funds						
Shaves	5,756	0	(479)	0	0	5,287
Mission Direct Grant	0	350	(34)	0	0	316
Electrical work	0	2,000	(2,000)	0	0	0
Legacy 2(Church Pu	150	0	0	0	0	150
DBF fees	0	1,815	(1,675)	0	0	140
War Graves	0	135	(150)	0	15	0
Charity Appeals	0	2,242	(2,247)	0	5	(0)
St Mary's Churchyar	200	200	0	0	0	400
Flowers	36	618	(543)	0	0	110
Cleaning	0	398	(263)	0	0	135
Lamps	0	1,741	(1,789)	0	48	0
EH Memorial Fund	0	1,918	(1,918)	0	0	0
Music	0	557	(585)	0	28	0
Sanctuary	0	60	(60)	0	0	0
Kitchen	0	300	0	0	0	300
Clergy expenses	0	60	(60)	0	0	0
PTO Fees	0	583	(583)	0	0	0
	6,153	12,976	(12,356)		95	6,838
Total bank and cun	15,585	109,650	(90,499)	0	0	34,736
Total funds	15,585	109,650	(90,499)		0	34,736

The **General Fund** is available to the PCC for day to day income and expenses. Its assets are held in a
The **Church Repair Fund** has been designated by the PCC for the repair of that building. The monies
The **Restoration Fund** is held for the purpose of any restoration work required to the church building or
grounds and is financed by donations, fund raising events and interest on funds already held

Shaves was a charity that has now closed. The funds have been passed to the PCC's bank account for

Legacy: This was given to St John's for the purpose of buying items for use in St John's church. These
Mission Direct Grant was successfully applied for and these funds are for Children and Young People

Charity appeals are our bucket appeals and again the PCC round up the figures from general funds.
Flowers - these are funded from donations specifically for the cost of flowers to decorate the church.

Cleaning - St John's is fortunate to have the cost of church cleaning covered by the Lockett Trust

Lamps - Shrine Lamps are sponsored by members of the Congregation on a weekly basis. Also memorial candles for All Souls Day

Electrical work - the installation of a new lighting board and new LED security lights in the churchyard plus a new lantern over the main entrance was funded by a donation from the Lockett's Trust for this purpose

DBF/PTO/ fees and clergy expenses - these are from weddings and funerals and are sent on to the Rochester Board of Finance and the stand-in priests

War Graves - this grant is used for tending the war graves at St Mary's

St Mary's Churchyard - this has been set up by a parishioner for the upkeep of St Mary's churchyard

Kitchen - we have received a donation to go towards the refurbishment of the vestry hall kitchen

Sanctuary - this was a donation from Rolfe's for the printing of new mass sheets

Memorial Fund - this purchased the end of pew candle lights

5 Staff costs and payments to PCC members

There are no employees and we have made no payments to PCC members apart from reimbursement of expenses. During the year, Mr Walker, husband of Mrs Walker, a PCC member, carried out work to the value of £1520.00.

6 Missionary and charitable giving

	2025		2024	
	£ Undesignated	£ Special Collections	£ Undesignated	£ Special Collections
Christian Aid		1,124		800
Rochester DBF Poverty and Hope Appeal	1,414		454	323
Mary's Meals		569		331
Additional Curates Society			5	145
Gravesham Food Bank				323
Mission to Seafarers		175	454	
St Luke's for Clergy Wellbeing			454	
Gravesham Street Pastors			454	
Confirmation Collection	100			100
Christian Medical Fellowship		104		
East Peckham Silver Band		500		
Children's Society		337		
Elliott Holmes Memorial Fund	707			
Christians Against Poverty	707			
Charity appeals expenses		246		221
	2,927	3,055	1,820	2,242

7 Reserves policy

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on liquid unrestricted funds which equates to approximately 2 months' unrestricted payments, to cover administration, maintenance and support costs and to respond to emergency situations. Reserves were maintained at this level during the year.

adventus accounting solutions
Supporting Charitable Organisations

23 March 2026

Independent Examiner's report to the Member/Trustees of St John's Church - Parish of Higham with Merston Registered Charity No 1169926

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2025 which are set out on the pages following.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Independent Examiner

The church's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The church's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

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

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the 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 disclosures 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.

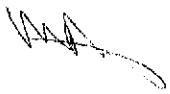
Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Yours sincerely



Martyn Burt

B.Sc.(Hons), ACMA, CGMA

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