Annual Report of the Hanborough PCC for 2025

1. RECTOR'S REPORT FOR 2025-26

The last year, as ever in the benefice of Hanborough and Freeland, has been hallmarked by godly, servant-hearted, committed and Holy Spirit-filled brothers and sisters in Christ ministering both publicly and "behind-the-scenes" to ensure that the good news of Jesus Christ is shared among us and offered to the communities among whom we live and serve. The Holy Spirit has gifted us so generously with all that is promised, not least in Romans 12: "*For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us*" (Romans 12:4-6).

I give great thanks to God that we are extraordinarily blessed with a team of excellent preachers committed to proclaiming biblical truth in the love of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit – and the last year has seen new preachers added to this team. It is our task not simply to *proclaim* the gospel but also to *protect* it, and this team has done a great job of that fundamental shepherd-guardian task of feeding and caring for the sheep. To that end, we have enjoyed preaching series on 1 & 2 Timothy; Mark's Gospel; Colossians; James; the life of King David through 1 & 2 Samuel and Psalm 51; and are currently looking at Luke-Acts.

And in turn, this has fed and given birth to so many other ministries among us, illustrated by the wonderful breadth of all that has taken place in the churches of Hanborough and Freeland over the last year or so (and forgive me if I miss anything out): First Steps baby and toddler group; social evenings with Christian speakers; a wide variety of funerals taken; the launching of church quizzes at the pub in Long Hanborough; the beer festival; BeSpace at St Mary's; 2025, Easter Escape Room; a wide variety of regular and occasional prayer meetings; housegroups; Advent and Lent reflection groups; our Alpha Course; baptisms; school assemblies; many whole-benefice occasional services, such as Choral Evensongs; Maundy Thursday agape meal; weekend away in Dartmoor; First Steps summer party at the Rectory; Bible Fun Clubs; Safari supper; the wonderful wedding of George and Jessany; schools' Easter, harvest and Christmas events; Light Events; bring and share lunches; bereavement service; the ladies' wreath making; men's curry evening; a very wide range of extremely well-attended Christmas events and services across the benefice; showings of *The Chosen* at Christ Church; and more besides! For the sizes of churches that we are, this is an extraordinary range of events, made possible only by the devoted commitment of you all.

All these events are of course besides the wonderful Sunday morning worship services we enjoy, and I give enormous thanks to God for all who make our worship possible – not just the preachers and service leaders, but children's work teams, those who do refreshments, welcomers, Bible readers, those who lead prayers, and more. And our services are only made possible in the buildings by the brilliant work of those among us who care for them. There are of course so many who do this, but I want to give particular thanks to our churchwardens Saskia Emma Merry and Steven Young, as well as all who serve so faithfully on our PCCs. We are blessed with an excellent team of leaders across our two parishes.

In terms of comings and goings, we said goodbye in 2025 not only to our wonderful curate Heather McCulloch, but also to our Associate Rector Mike Madden and his wife Mandy as they retired and moved up North. As we give great thanks for their ministry among us, their absence is also deeply felt. But God in his grace has provided: it has been a great joy to welcome on board Matt Cripps as Parish Worker at St Mary's, and it was so exciting to be able to announce the appointment of our new curate Rachael Bell who will start in September 2026.

In terms of challenges, we continue to experience, work with and pray through the changes in our congregations with people coming and going – being called to new pastures, moving within the benefice, or even simply being called home to Glory as with our dear John Fox. Churches are ever-changing and the process of being ever-adapting is never an easy one. We experience not only the changes of people, but significant practical challenges, not least the enormous task of planning and fundraising for the spire repair at St Peter and St Paul, plus many more. Thank you to those who have been forbearing and patient with me, and with other leaders in the benefice, as we have tried to navigate these complex waters.

Being God's people in a world hostile to the gospel of Christ crucified for the forgiveness of sins and risen from the dead – as ever it has been – is no small challenge. To be part of the people of God, with all of our differences, aspirations, weaknesses, giftings, hopes and failings, just as we see among the followers of God and disciples of Jesus Christ throughout the Scriptures, is a tough call indeed. But God has not left us bereft. Through the grace of Christ he has given us his Holy Spirit, first as the sign and seal of Christ's salvation of us. The Holy Spirit gives also the very power of God in our lives, through whom our characters are transformed, and the "*fruit of the Spirit*" pours out: "*love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control*" (Galatians 5:22-23). And so, as Paul then prays for and exhorts the Ephesians, "*Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit*" (Galatians 5:25).

As I move into my sixth year at Hanborough and Freeland, my love for you continues to grow and I hold you in my prayers each day with much thanksgiving. You are a great blessing to one another, to me, to my family, but most importantly to our loving God.

With my love and prayers for us all in Christ Jesus,

Steve

Rev Dr Steve Stewart, Rector of Hanborough and Freeland, May 2026

2. AIM AND PURPOSES – Pam Berry

Hanborough PCC is responsible for working with the Rector to promote the ecclesiastical parish and the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It has met four times since the last APCM, with attendance ranging between 70% and over 90%. Minutes or reports from Area Leads, committees and other meetings were received and responded to as necessary.

3. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES – Pam Berry

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship God in our Parish of Hanborough. The PCC has an overview of the worship throughout the parish, with all services and worship in the parish seeking to nurture faith through the faithful teaching of the Bible, prayer, scripture, music and sacrament. This is done through the careful planning of activities for the year, having consideration for the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. We try to enable people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- worship, teaching and prayer

- provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish;

- missionary and outreach work through Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals, as well as services for special occasions, special events and providing help to those in need.

We are grateful for all the services provided by our Rector (Steve), Mike and Heather who left us during the year and our retired clergy. It is also good to have many other members of our churches taking leading roles. In order to facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of St. Peter and St. Paul Church in Church Hanborough and Christ Church in Long Hanborough and this is ably overseen by our Churchwardens.

4. THE LIFE AND WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH

4.1. Sunday services – Steve Stewart

In 2025-2026, we have continued to enjoy a regular pattern of 10 AM services in all three churches across the benefice, with occasional joint or whole-benefice services. Although in 2025, with Heather and Mike moving on, we became two down in clergy, it has been wonderful to continue to be blessed by the leading and preaching of our two retired clergy, Steve Bellamy and Nigel Knights Johnson. Of course in addition to Steve B., Nigel and myself, we are also greatly blessed to have a very wide range of other service leaders and preachers, and have welcomed two new regular preachers-in-training into the team this year. We also look forward of course to Rachael Bell joining us as our curate in September.

The commitment in Hanborough and Freeland is very much to “every member ministry”, and it is wonderful to see so much participation in services from members across the congregations, whose ministries include service leading, preaching, leading prayers, assisting at communion, Bible reading, children and youth work leaders, testimonies, musicianship, sidespersons, welcomers, people on audiovisual and other tech – and of course those who so graciously put the rotas of ministries together season-by-season. Thank you, everyone, for the great work that you all do.

Hanborough and Freeland is also exceptionally blessed with gifted musicians, talented across a number of instruments. These include choral to keyboard, organ to cajon, and from guitars to flutes. The dedicated work of our musicians enables us to praise God in a variety of styles – and all driven by the principle that worship style is determined by the gifts of the church family members rather than a fixed “ought” of what Christian praise of God has to look like.

The servant ministries and gifts of so many enables us to continue to provide an extraordinary variety of types of worship: informal band-led, Eucharistic, choral Evensong, informal all-age, formal seasonal, and carols traditional and modern. Although generally providing a Sunday morning service at all three churches each week, it is encouraging to see that our joint and whole-benefice services have been a joy and are always well-attended.

Huge thanks to all who make our Sunday worship joyful, biblical, accessible and full of great fellowship. And this year I want to give a special thank you to all who offer that extremely important gift of hospitality, be it through warmly welcoming people at the start of our services, or simply making sure that everybody feels spoken to and brought into the fellowship at the end of our services. That is key work in building God's kingdom.

4.2. Area - Children and Youth - Denise Ball and Sarah Knights Johnson

Children

First Steps, Hanborough and Freeland Church's Baby and Toddler group takes place on a Wednesday morning at Christ Church and is run by a team from across the benefice. Each session includes free play, activities including a craft, refreshments, a Bible story and song time. It is a joy to share the Bible stories each week and introduce some songs linked to those stories, as well as familiar suitable children's songs. Steve Stewart attends several sessions during the year and takes the song time. A new initiative during this year was the Teddy bear's picnic held at the Vicarage on the last Wednesday of the Summer term, which proved to be very popular.

Attendance at First Steps increased again during the Autumn term and early Spring term and therefore the advance sign up system has continued. This system was reviewed in the Autumn term 2025 and a decision taken to continue with the sign up system.

Some of the families from First Steps have attended other Church events such as the Light Parties, Christmas services, and Bible Fun Club events. The Good Friday Bible Fun Club event was particularly successful and attended by some of the First Steps families.

Thanks go to all the volunteers currently involved in the weekly running of the group, the planning, the administration and preparation of craft materials. A small group of six volunteers run the weekly sessions. During the year there has also been help from two other volunteers but, because of work commitments the numbers are now back to the core group of six. More volunteers are needed as currently three of the volunteers who help with the sessions are having to commit to being there every week - problematic in the case of illness, or occasionally, other commitments. Appeals have been made in the past, but more needs to be done to try to increase the number of helpers from the churches across the benefice. Finally I would like to say that First Steps is a happy, supportive group appreciated by those who attend and those who volunteer. Those that attend the sessions often comment on the lovely atmosphere that exists at First Steps.

Youth

Occasionally youth have attended a service and either helped with the screen and sound system or joined in worship in the congregation.

4.3. Area – Home groups and small groups – Tom and Alice Harden

There are currently six fellowship groups that meet and are made up of people from across the benefice. All leaders are welcoming to new members and have a desire to encourage and nurture faith. Groups use different formats and meet at different times.

Leaders met once this year to eat and pray together; to share resources, good practice and our hopes for the future.

If anyone would like to try a group, which can be transformative in friendships and in developing your faith, please contact the Rector.

4.4. Area – Benefice-Wide Social events – Laura Hutchins Payne

I organised a Safari Supper on 12 September 2025. This involved 4 homes across the benefice, and 20 people travelled around, enjoying food and fellowship at the different houses.

Emma Young invited all the ladies to her house in Cassington for Pizza and Wine on 12th of June 2025. This was a lovely event with locally produced pizza and entertaining conversation in the Young's beautiful garden.

I organised a Bring and Share Lunch for the benefice, which was held at Christ Church on Sunday November 16th, 2025. This was held at 12 o'clock after the service. It was very well attended, with a wide range of food and drinks provided by the congregation.

Emma Young organised an evening of Christmas wreath-making on Monday 1st December 2025. Groups of us collected greenery and foliage, Emma supplied mince pies and nibbles and drinks, as well as material to decorate the wreath. We were led by a woman from St Andrew's church in north Oxford, and the event was attended by our congregations, friends, and families who attend First Steps. The atmosphere was lovely, with music, candles and happy conversations.

On Thursday 12th February 2026, we screened the first episode of the Chosen, Season One, and continued each week showing the whole of Season One before Easter. I had the idea of a group screening, and suggested it to Steve Young, who was keen, and has been so supportive. He has provided all the technical back-up, and he and Sarah Knights Johnson have organised refreshments each week so that it is like a proper movie night! We have averaged about 20 people each showing, and welcomed members of our congregation, friends and neighbours from other villages.

After Easter we will change to Monday evenings to suit some of the audience and we will restart on Monday 13th April 2026, screening Season Two.

Looking forward

I am organising a Bring and Share Lunch for the benefice, to be held at Christ Church on Sunday April 26th 2026. This will be held at 12 o'clock after the service.

4.5. Area - Prayer in the churches – Mands Stewart and Nigel Knights Johnson

Prayer in the Benefice - Mands Stewart

We have enjoyed three half nights of prayer and three children and youth prayer meetings throughout 2025, moving across our three churches. These have been on the whole well attended where we have prayed for our Churches, villages, nation and the world. They have been wonderful and encouraging times of seeking the Lord and praying for God's kingdom to come here on earth. Seeing prayers answered has helped to spur us on in our work for the Lord. We will continue these two events until the summer of 2026 before prayerfully reassessing what God is calling us to do.

The Open House Prayer group in Freeland continued meeting until July 2025. We were blessed in our times together as we sought God's face and prayed for revival. It was a precious group but due to people's changing situations and what we sensed from the Lord, we decided to bring the group to a close. We saw many prayers answered and lives changed.

There has been a weekly time of prayer for St Mary's and outreach into the community since September led by Matt Cripps.

Prayer Ministry in the benefice: this has been on hold for the moment as we seek the best way forward. Do pray for doors to be opened so prayer ministry teams can be set up and run across our churches. Thank you.

Monthly Benefice Prayer Meeting – Nigel Knights Johnson
The monthly benefice prayer meeting has continued throughout the year on the first Wednesday of the month, even during the July and August holiday season. We have had some new 'regulars' in Chris and Celia though have lost Clive and Pam for obvious reasons. Over the year, a good 20 different people have attended at different times.

The structure remains the same. We start with praise and confession. We then move on to different concerns, both within the benefice and outside, but focussing on the former.

Afterwards there is always a sense of having been involved successfully in a spiritual battle on the Lord's behalf, which is palpable and we hope and pray moves angels.

4.6. Finances – Treasurer's Report based on 2025 Accounts – Wendy Bayliss

Figures from page 2 - Statement of Financial Activities (circulated as paper 3b):

Unrestricted funds received are: £286,010, which includes £216,000 from an unrestricted legacy given to Hanborough PCC. This has helped to increase funds held as the underlying giving has decreased. The decrease in giving can be attributed to people moving to other parts of the country for various reasons. (The breakdown of the funds received is shown on page 4 – note 2 Incoming Resources.

Restricted Funds received: £4,633

Total funds received in 2025: £290,643

Unrestricted Expenses: £155,059 of which £56,000 was donated to SMVF PCC from the legacy to be used in works that benefit the whole benefice, £52,046 for Parish Share and salaries of £8,352 being the largest of unrestricted expenses.

The payment breakdown made to missions and charities is found on page 5 and a report on this is in section 4.10.

Restricted / Designated expenses: £33,660 of which £26,453 being from the designated building fund, £3,252 towards medical surgical equipment for Nepal which closed that restricted fund and then restricted gift including from the rector's discretionary fund. Preparation works and repairs at St Peter & St Paul of £28,009 have been paid out in total of which £26,453 as mentioned above has been allocated from the designated building fund, some of this will be able to be reclaimed from the St Peter & St Paul Building Trust during this year.

Total expenses: £188,719

The bottom line on this sheet (p2) shows increase in funds held of £101,924 plus 2024 funds carried forward of £90,851 = £192,551

The balance sheet on page 3 shows where these funds are held and the split of the funds is broken down on page 6.

Funds held 31/12/2025

Unrestricted funds: £174,779

Designated Funds: NIL

Restricted Funds: £17,996

Totals Funds: £192,775

I would like to register my thanks to the clergy and church wardens for their support to me in this role, and also thanks to you all who support the church in their giving.

4.7. Pastoral care in the parish – Rob and Alison Feast and Nick Wood

The pastoral care team leaders for the benefice remain as last year in St. Peter and St Paul and Christ Church. With the reduction of the Clergy Team, Nick Wood has joined the Rector in offering pastoral care at St. Peter and St. Paul. The team leaders are listed in the benefice News email and can be contacted at any time if someone has a concern. The team leaders are supported in their role by a wider team at each of our churches. The pastoral care team help to ensure that members of our churches are supported appropriately as need arises and that the clergy are kept up to date so that no one is missed.

A meal rota has been organised and a What's App support group continues. In addition to Clergy, some members of the pastoral team also make pastoral visits to people at home from time to time. In this case, an enhanced DBS and a risk assessment are required in addition to the Basic and Foundation, and Domestic Abuse levels of safeguarding training. Pastoral Care leaders have met up with Steve Stewart to review roles and support one another and future meetings are planned. The pastoral care team continue to develop this role and strengthen the pastoral care across our churches.

4.8. Schools' work - Steve Stewart

Collective Worship: As a clergy team along with the Methodists and Catholics, we have continue to provide weekly Christian Collective Worship in both schools based on the schools' theme for the term. However, we are currently somewhat down on the team of service leaders with Mike and Heather having moved on and with Father Martin, our Roman Catholic colleague, now having retired from leading collective worship in the schools.

We have continued to run seasonal services at Christmas, Easter, and Harvest for both primary schools, and host these in our churches. It would be great to see some more people from our churches join the collective worship assembly team, and that is something we could be praying for.

It is good to have not one but two Church of England primary schools in the benefice, and to have such a great relationship with the head teacher and staff, enabling us to share the good news of Jesus Christ and the truth of the Bible with children and staff alike on a regular basis.

4.9. Weddings, baptisms, and funerals – Steve Stewart

Christ Church:

Number of weddings in 2025: 0

Number of funeral services in 2025: 0

Number of memorial services in 2025: 0

Number of interments of ashes in 2025: 0

Number of baptisms in 2025: 0

St Peter and St Paul:

Number of weddings in 2025: 2

Number of funeral services in 2025: 6

Number of memorial services in 2025: 0

Number of interments of ashes in 2025: 0

Number of baptisms in 2025: 0

4.10. Supporting mission in the U.K. and overseas – Wendy Bayliss

The Designated Mission and Charities Fund is calculated as 10% of the previous years unrestricted income under note 2a of the accounts. Of this money 80% is allocated between eight charities: Church Mission Society, Innovista, J Abu Bakker, Open Doors, Salvation Army, The Besom, The Porch and Good News For Everyone (Oxford Branch). The remaining 20% is discussed and donated by the PCC.

WORLDWIDE	
Church Mission Society	841
Innovista 841	
J Abu Bakker Christian School India	840
Open Doors	840
Nepal restricted fund	3252
NATIONAL	
Salvation Army	840
LOCAL	
The Besom	840
The Porch	840
Good News For Everyone	815
TOTAL 9949	

For 2025 the Mission Fund calculated based on unrestricted income received in 2024 of £84,040 @ 10% = £8,404 of which 80% is allocated by quarterly pmt to eight charities (£840.40 each) (£25 outstanding to Good News For Ever) and then leaving £1,681 plus £1208 c/f = £2,889 now brought forward to 2026.

4.10. Structure, Governance and Management: Administrative Information – Pam Berry

Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected by the Annual Parish and Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. During the year the following served as members of the PCC:

Description of role	**Name**
Incumbent (Rector):	Rev Dr Steve Stewart
Associate Rector:	Rev Mike Madden[1]
Curate	Rev Heather McCulloch[2]
Elected members:	
Churchwardens:	Dr Steven Young and Ms Saskia Emma Merry
Representative on Deanery Synod:	Dr Steven Young

Elected Members:	Dr Amanda Madden[1]
	Dr Michael Hetherington
	Mrs Gillian Hunt
	Mr Roger Parrott
	Mr Clive Berry
	Mrs Liv Singlehurst
Appointments by the PCC:	
Vice chair:	Rev Mike Madden[1]
Treasurer:	Mrs Wendy Bayliss (co-opted)
Secretary:	Dr Pam Berry (co-opted)

[1] until August 2025

[2] until June 2025

4.11. Standing Committee, Roundtables, and Christ Church Vision Group – Steve Stewart

Standing Committee

The functions of the Standing Committee have been carried out by the clergy and wardens who have met around every 4-6 weeks. (Church Representation Rules M.31).

Christ Church Vision Group (CCVG)

This team, as a subcommittee of PCC, looks not only at the day-to-day practicalities (e.g., rotas, unlocking, audiovisual, music, hospitality) required for Christ Church for regular 10 AM Sunday services, but also the "vision …and mission of needs of Christ Church in any given season", and to "serve, help fulfil, and shape the mission and vision of Christ Church". The CCVG meets approximately monthly.

St Peter and St Paul (P&P-RT)

The P&P-RT for 2024 was made up of the Clergy Team plus members of P&P. It meets on a regular basis, to provide an informal framework for communication focussing on local issues relevant to P&P. This has included work on the building, operational and pastoral concerns, and exploring and developing P&P's mission in the parish of Hanborough.

4.12. PCC Meetings – Pam Berry

Items for PCC discussion (many of which are covered more fully elsewhere in this report), have included: repair of the spire at St Peter and St Paul, better access to the church and the associated issues of lighting and lowering of the North porch, as well as the (remote) control

of the heating system and repair of the hearing loop amplifier. For Christ Church, discussion of renovation of the back of church for children and youth work continued and the work completed. Other items included the replacement of the external noticeboard, securing the silverware and a shed for storage. The PCC also considered and supported Emma Young's proposal for benefice mission in 2026.

4.13. Electoral Roll Report - Sinead Andrews

Following the full revision in 2025, when we had 36 people on the roll, the 2026 roll has 38 people, including three new people.

4.14. Others who serve in various ministries – Pam Berry

With the exception of our Rector, Rev. Dr. Steve Stewart, our Curate, Heather McCulloch, the Benefice Administrator and our organist and church cleaner, all the other people who minister and serve the churches, including our Associate Rector Rev. Mike Madden, work in a voluntary capacity. The PCC is very grateful to all these people who work in so many different ways to enable the mission of the church.

4.15. Churchwarden's Report 2025 – Saskia Emma Merry and Steven Young

The maintenance and upkeep of the church buildings may be the responsibility of the churchwardens, but the many activities and tasks that are ongoing and necessary for our churches are carried out not just by us, but with the help of lots of people across the congregations. We, as churchwardens, are very grateful to everyone who contributes time and effort to keeping our churches in working order and presentable as living active spaces where people can encounter and worship God.

In the past year work has continued on the spire project at St Peter and St Paul. As reported last year, through the amazing generosity of the local community and God's gracious provision the initial target of £350,000 was quickly reached.

The full project team met with Peter Preston, our church architect, in July 2025. Inspections and discussions with the Quantity Surveyor indicated that the original funding target would need to be raised as the QS was concerned that we would find more stones would need to be replaced when the spire is dismantled stone by stone. Our desire is that we will be able to complete a thorough repair that will safeguard the spire for future generations; however ultimately what we will be able to do will depend on the funds available.

Like many other major church projects, we were negatively affected by the closure of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (LPWGS), so the Securing the Future of St Peter and St Paul (SFSSPP) fundraising committee, of which we are both a part, is applying for additional funds to make up the tax shortfall and to fund additional potential costs. A new scheme the Places of Worship Renewal Fund is expected to be launched this year (2026) and the Committee will be looking into this carefully to see if we are eligible to apply. We are

also appointing a grant funder in order to make an application to the National Lottery under various criteria as the application is lengthy and complex. For example, the National Lottery has a specific education grant stream; with such a once in a lifetime project, this is an opportunity to train future stonemasons and church architects.

As with some other grant funding bodies, the National Lottery will only make grants prior to work beginning. The Hand and Shears was bought – great news for the village - and the original stated aim was that it would reopen at Easter 2026. This would have meant we would be starting spire works as it opened. For both reasons we decided to postpone the start of the spire works until 2027, which will allow the pub to open and establish itself without a major building site opposite and us to continue to raise funds against what might be found.

We are greatly blessed by the good relations that we have established with the new owner of the Hand and Shears and his generosity in offering yard space for heavier machinery and portakabin, so the village parking area will be impacted as little as possible.

The 2025 bat survey revealed no endangered species, which was good news. 2026 will see a slightly reduced programme of bat surveys (internal and external) from April through to the end of September. This has to be repeated as there is a tight window in which an application for a bat licence has to be made in relation to start of actual works (i.e. boots on the ground).

As we want to secure the future of St Peter and St Paul long term, the Friends of St Peter and St Paul was relaunched. Nick Wood is the new chair of the Friends and Saskia Emma is on this committee. Ideas for Friends events include a concert by St John's College Choir.

Improving accessibility for all is a vital part of our focus, and so work is afoot to improve the path at St Peter and St Paul, including adding bat-friendly low level lighting and trunking to enable broadband installation in the future (and to prevent any more cables being cut by over-enthusiastic mowing and strimming!). For various reasons, including funding, it has proved practicable to roll the path project into the spire project as preparatory work.

Drains are also part of this work, so we just managed to get in ahead of the nesting season this year (March 2026) to clear an extensive area near the west door to create a space for a soakaway and for the surveyors to be able to accurately plot that section of the churchyard boundary.

Apart from the spire and path work, there are a number of other activities that have taken place in the last year. Over at Christ Church work on the back room was completed to make it into a more practical and comfortable space for nursing mothers and children's work. Work continues on looking at an external storage solution to enable the chancel to be cleared of extra chairs, First Steps equipment, and also at a better storage solution for the church silver.

If there are things that require attention or that you may want to discuss about the churches in our parish, then please do talk to one of us.

4.16. Occasional Festivals – Pam Berry

This year the joint Remembrance Sunday service with the Methodists was held at St Peter and St Paul's. A family carol service for the village and a Christingle service was held at Christ Church. Exultate Justi have sung choral evensong and contributed to the Christmas service of Nine Lessons and Carols at St Peter and St Paul's.

4.17. Church Flowers - Denise Parrott

Fresh flowers have continued to be arranged on a weekly basis at St Peter &Paul by myself, with the aid of Gill Hunt, who also ensures that the water is topped up during the week and takes over when I am on holiday. On special celebrations, such as Easter, Harvest and Christmas, the small team have chosen flowers and accessories to suit the occasion. Margaret and Richard Wilkins always help with the Easter Garden, they get the Christmas tree and decorate it, while Gill puts on her wellies and goes down the woods to collect plant material. There have been some weddings and funerals, for which the parties concerned have either asked me to become involved in arrangements or have carried them out themselves. I am quite happy for people to do their own thing but please inform me, in order that I do not turn up with flowers when not needed. We have received some generous monetary donations for flowers at Christian festivals throughout the year and I thank those people concerned.

I do now feel that it is time to hang up my flower scissors and let someone else take over. Remember, if you can put a bunch of flowers in a vase, that is all that is really needed. Please come forward and volunteer.

4.18. Sacristan Report – Gillian Hunt (SS Peter & Paul) and Sarah Knights Johnson (Christ Church)

SS Peter and Paul – Gillian Hunt

All is in good order at SS Peter and Paul. The altar frontals, burse and veil are changed according to the liturgical season. All linen used at Holy Communion is washed and ironed after every use. The altar cloths from the three altars are usually laundered 3 times a year. All Holy Communion vessels are washed after use and stored in the locked cupboard in the vestry. A gluten free roll is used at Holy Communion. All candles used at Christmas and on the altars are stored in the vestry. A new transfer is annually adhered to the Easter candle.

Christ Church - Sarah Knights Johnson

At the end of May 2025, Pam Berry handed over the duties of Sacristan to Sarah Knights Johnson. Many thanks to Pam for her faithfulness in this role over the last four years. All was handed over, and continues to be, in good order and the linen used at Holy Communion is washed and ironed after use. The cloths on the communion table are washed as necessary. All linen is stored in the vestry, as are the Holy Communion vessels and candles for Christmas.

4.19. Annual Safeguarding Report for the Benefice of Hanborough – Pam Berry

The high levels of compliance with DBS certification and Safeguarding Training, especially online, across the Parish have continued. We are grateful for the speed with which people are renewing their DBS certification if needed, and for Colin Griffiths' (Freeland) invaluable work in processing the renewals very quickly.

Anyone who has a role in church leadership, such as PCC or leading a house group, should expect to take part in Safeguarding Training, in the same way as all those who work with children and vulnerable adults expect to undergo a DBS check and training.

The PCC is committed to the Safeguarding Policy provided by the Diocese "Promoting a Safer Church". A copy of this is available from the Parish Safeguarding Officer at any time. The PCC is committed to the Safeguarding Action Plan, through which the various access of the policy are worked out and monitored. It has also (re)adopted the Hanborough and Freeland Electronic Communication And Social Media Policy and the Parish Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders.

Recently we have experienced delays to some DBS checks because of a change of service provider. Colin Griffiths has now completed the training he needed, and has arranged the necessary DBS checks which were outstanding.

There have been no reports of Safeguarding related incidents in the Parish. Thank you to everyone for rapid compliance. Pray that we continue to make the churches in Hanborough safe places for everyone.

4.20. Deanery Synod Annual Report 2025 - Stephanie Lacey, Woodstock Deanery, Lay Chair

Area Dean: Revd Dr Andrew Bunch

Lay chair: Stephanie Lacey

Secretary: Maria Coonick

Treasurer: Mike Sinfield

Deanery synod meetings

We had three meetings in 2025. All of these meetings were preceded by a short act of worship, which helped us to focus on God's love and the work of the church in the deanery. A regular item at these meetings is 'news from the parishes' and we have heard from Revd Harriet Orridge of Steeple and North Aston, Tackley, Revd Dr. Steve Stewart of Hanborough and Freeland and Revd Gemma Ferrier, the curate at Woodstock and Bladon.

We have also had talks on Christian Aid and Christians Against Poverty (CAP), as well as a useful sharing of parishes' work with children and young people across the deanery.

Comings and goings

In 2025 we had a full complement of incumbents until Revd Jane Wright from the Barton Benefice handed in her resignation in October to take up a post in the Shiplake and Harpsden Benefice near Henley on Thames. We wish her every blessing in her new role.

We have three new members on the diocesan synod: Revd Oliver Petter, Revd Gemma Ferrier and Maria Coonick, who joins Mike Holmes as our lay representatives.

Other things to mention

We have carried on our programme of triennial archdeaconry inspections and since the last APCM all the churches in the Yarnton Benefice, St James Nether Worton and St Mary's Woodstock have had a visit. The Barton Benefice will be visited at the end of this year (2026) or the beginning of next.

Work is progressing on mapping 'Pilgrim Paths' in the deanery – led by Melanie McGregor and Richard Francis.

Maria Coonick is sending out a regular news sheet to all church wardens highlighting special events across the deanery that could be of interest to all, such as concerts, courses or special services.

A small group has been set up to look at the provision for children and young people in our churches.

Oliver Petter presented a proposal, known as the Woodstock Proposal, to the Autumn Diocesan Synod on behalf of our deanery, which was to be:

The Woodstock Deanery Synod proposes a motion that in multi-parish benefices (three or more), where there is only one stipendiary priest, that the diocese funds additional administrative support so that the priest is freed to fulfil their missional objectives in relation to serving and caring for the people of God

David Tyler, our archdeacon, put forward an amendment:

Instead, we propose that the Diocese should focus on:

• Support and training to encourage parishes to adopt technology and collaborative models

• Providing accessible training and expert guidance

• Facilitating peer support among clergy and key officers

• Continue to ensure requests for information are only made of parishes where the data is essential and cannot be obtained from any other source

These measures offer a more sustainable and equitable approach to reducing the administrative burden across all benefices, which is recognised as a serious issue of concern.

This was carried and the good news is that 'The Woodstock Proposal' is being mentioned at meetings across the diocese. For example, at the lay chairs and area deans' conference in

January. We hope that eventually this will all make life for clergy in rural parishes much easier.

This year at the APCM we need to elect new deanery synod reps. The existing rep can stand for another term if they wish to do so.

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER :

1183002

RECTOR	**TREASURER:**
REV. STEVE STEWART	WENDY BAYLISS
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER:	**BANKERS:**
ANDREW GOWER	BARCLAYS BANK PLC OXFORD CITY CENTRE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

INCOMING RESOURCES		**Note**	Unrestricted £	Restricted/ Designated £	2025 £	2024 £
Incoming resources from generated funds:						
Voluntary income		2a	274,474	4,571	279,045	87,995
Activities for generating funds		2b	9,434	-	9,434	6,528
Investing activities			2,102	62	2,164	1,867
Total incoming resources			286,010	4,633	290,643	96,390
RESOURCES EXPENDED						
Parish Share			52,046		52,046	50,045
Utilities	Peter & Paul		4,373		4,373	3,068
	Christ Church		2,265		2,265	2,036
Buildings costs	Peter & Paul		1,556	26,453	28,009	4,757
	Christ Church		1,609		1,609	2,786
Insurance	Peter & Paul		3,934		3,934	3,966
	Christ Church		1,251		1,251	1,117
Missions and charities		3	6,697	3,252	9,949	7,548
Gifts & Donations			56,000	1,360	57,360	1,626
Rector's expenses			3,082	1,472	4,554	2,824
Other ministers' expenses			846	390	1,236	2,149
					-	-
Stationery, Printing & Postage			816		816	1,177
Equipment			554		554	-
Young People's Ministry			294	90	384	766
Salaries		Admin/Cleaner	8,352		8,352	5,859
Beer Festival			3,467		3,467	500
Sundry expenses:		Fees	1,934		1,934	1,868
		Miscellaneous	4,640		4,640	5,983
		PCC events	1,343		1,343	404
		First Steps 2c		643	643	201
Total resources used			155,059	33,660	188,719	98,680
Net incoming (outgoing) resources			130,951	- 29,027	101,924	- 2,290
Funds at 1 January			53,828	37,023	90,851	93,141
		Transfer	- 10,000	10,000		
Funds at 31 December			174,779	17,996	192,775	90,851

HANBOROUGH PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR TO 31ST DECEMBER 2025

BALANCE SHEET

		Unrestricted £	Restricted/ Designated £	2025 £	2024 £
Current assets					
	Central Board of Finance	3,718	17,906	21,624	20,688
	Debtors	9,990	75	10,065	11,067
	Bank balances	161,143		161,143	59,495
	Petty Cash		15	15	15
		174,851	17,996	192,847	91,265
Current liabilities					
	Creditors	- 72	-	72	- 414
		174,779	17,996	192,775	90,851

These accounts were approved by the P.C.C. on 16/03/2026 ,
for presentation to the A.P.C.M., and signed on its behalf by:

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the SORP 2015 on "Accounting and reporting by Charities" and the following are the accounting policies which have been applied in dealing with material items:-

(a) Donations and Charitable Grant income

Donated income without conditions attached, including that gifted under gift aid, is taken into account when received by the PCC. Income received in circumstances where a claim for repayment of tax has been or will be made to the HM Revenue & Customs is grossed up for the tax recoverable. Any amount of tax not yet reclaimed from HM Revenue & Customs is shown within the PCC's debtors.

(b) Restricted and unrestricted funds

Restricted funds are those received for use on specified purposes. Expenditure which meets those criteria is allocated to that fund. Unrestricted funds are those received or generated that can be used for the general purposes of the PCC.

(c) Income and other expenditure

Interest income is taken into account when receivable and expenditure when incurred by the PCC, regardless of when payment is made.

2. INCOMING RESOURCES

(a) Voluntary income

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Direct to bank	21,220		21,220	40,495
Envelopes	863		863	1,134
Collections and wall safes	1,101		1,101	702
Donations/Grants received	1,820	3,540	5,360	5,062
First Steps		941	941	291
Legacy	216,000		216,000	
Parish Giving Scheme	29,743		29,743	33,989
Tax recoveries	3,727	90	3,817	6,322
	274,474	4,571	279,045	87,995

(b) Activities for generating funds

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Church lettings & land	618		618	568
Fees	4,873		4,873	4,420
Beer Festival	3,943		3,943	1,540
	9,434	-	9,434	6,528

(c) First Steps breakdown

	2025	2024
Donations (in 2a above)	941	291
Expenses	-643	- 201
Net surplus (loss)	298	90

(d) Employee Emoluments

	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages	9,958	5,859
	9,958	**5,859**
Average No of employees:	2	2

3. MISSIONS AND CHARITIES		2025	2024
		£	£
WORLDWIDE			
	Church Mission Society	841	944
	Innovista	841	944
	J Abu Bakker Christian School India	840	944
	Open Doors	840	944
	Nepal (Restricted Fund) for surgery	3,252	
NATIONAL			
	Salvation Army	840	943
LOCAL			
	The Besom	840	943
	The Porch	840	943
	Good News For Ever	815	943
TOTAL		**9,949**	**7,548**

4. DESIGNATED FUNDS, UNRESTRICTED FUNDS AND RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Note	1 January 2025	Income	Transfers	Expenditure	31 December 2025
		£	£	£	£	£
Restricted Funds:						
Churchyard		1,083	49			1,132
Ducker Bequest		280	13			293
First Steps		110	941		643	408
Lunch Club Funds		1,488				1,488
Ministry Fund		10,506	450		390	10,566
Nepal Fund		3,252			3,252	-
Rector's Discretionary Fund		3,851	1,730		1,472	4,109
Youth Events			90		90	-
Gifts & Donations		-	1,360		1,360	-
Total Restricted Funds		20,570	4,633	-	7,207	17,996
Designated Quinquennial Building Fund		16,453		10,000	26,453	-
Other unrestricted fund		53,828	286,010	- 10,000	155,059	174,779
Total Combined		90,851	290,643	-	188,719	192,775

The Churchyard Fund comprises capital of £500 & accumulated income after expenditures of £632 held in Trust by the Rector and Churchwardens. The accumulated income is to be used to keep the graveyard of Christ Church in good order and repair the graves and gravestones of F G and A Thompson, E H, A E and AL Jakeman and to keep the lettering thereon legible and to have the lettering recut from time to time.

The Ducker Bequest Fund is to be used for the Sanctuary at the Parish Church.

First Steps - Moneys held for the First Steps Mums and Toddlers group.

The Ministry Fund is a restricted fund towards ministry and/or curate costs.

The Nepal fund is giving towards cost of surgery for children in Nepal , this fund is now closed.

The Rector's Discretionary Fund is able to be used at the Rector's discretion to assist him in his work.

Youth Events Fund - restricted money was donated in 2025 and also spent , this fund is now closed.

Gifts & Donations are restricted funds received towards gifts and donations to specific people & paid out in 2025

Designated Quinquennial Fund for annual building costs with an aim to build up the fund for future repairs.

HANBOROUGH PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 31ST DECEMBER 2025

Independent Examiner's Report to Hanborough PCC

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2025, which are set out on the previous pages.

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of accounts; you 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 these records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning such matters.
The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence which would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

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
i) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
ii) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the requirements of the Act, 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.

A G. Gower — A Gower

20/4/2026 — Dated

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER :

1183002

RECTOR	**TREASURER:**
REV. STEVE STEWART	WENDY BAYLISS
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER:	**BANKERS:**
ANDREW GOWER	BARCLAYS BANK PLC OXFORD CITY CENTRE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

INCOMING RESOURCES		**Note**	Unrestricted £	Restricted/ Designated £	2025 £	2024 £
Incoming resources from generated funds:						
Voluntary income		2a	274,474	4,571	279,045	87,995
Activities for generating funds		2b	9,434	-	9,434	6,528
Investing activities			2,102	62	2,164	1,867
Total incoming resources			286,010	4,633	290,643	96,390
RESOURCES EXPENDED						
Parish Share			52,046		52,046	50,045
Utilities	Peter & Paul		4,373		4,373	3,068
	Christ Church		2,265		2,265	2,036
Buildings costs	Peter & Paul		1,556	26,453	28,009	4,757
	Christ Church		1,609		1,609	2,786
Insurance	Peter & Paul		3,934		3,934	3,966
	Christ Church		1,251		1,251	1,117
Missions and charities		3	6,697	3,252	9,949	7,548
Gifts & Donations			56,000	1,360	57,360	1,626
Rector's expenses			3,082	1,472	4,554	2,824
Other ministers' expenses			846	390	1,236	2,149
					-	-
Stationery, Printing & Postage			816		816	1,177
Equipment			554		554	-
Young People's Ministry			294	90	384	766
Salaries		Admin/Cleaner	8,352		8,352	5,859
Beer Festival			3,467		3,467	500
Sundry expenses:		Fees	1,934		1,934	1,868
		Miscellaneous	4,640		4,640	5,983
		PCC events	1,343		1,343	404
		First Steps 2c		643	643	201
Total resources used			155,059	33,660	188,719	98,680
Net incoming (outgoing) resources			130,951	- 29,027	101,924	- 2,290
Funds at 1 January			53,828	37,023	90,851	93,141
		Transfer	- 10,000	10,000		
Funds at 31 December			174,779	17,996	192,775	90,851

BALANCE SHEET

		Unrestricted £	Restricted/ Designated £	2025 £	2024 £
Current assets					
	Central Board of Finance	3,718	17,906	21,624	20,688
	Debtors	9,990	75	10,065	11,067
	Bank balances	161,143		161,143	59,495
	Petty Cash		15	15	15
		174,851	17,996	192,847	91,265
Current liabilities					
	Creditors	- 72		- 72	- 414
		174,779	17,996	192,775	90,851

These accounts were approved by the P.C.C. on 16/03/2026 ,
for presentation to the A.P.C.M., and signed on its behalf by:

REVD DR STEVE STEWART

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the SORP 2015 on "Accounting and reporting by Charities" and the following are the accounting policies which have been applied in dealing with material items:-

(a) Donations and Charitable Grant income

Donated income without conditions attached, including that gifted under gift aid, is taken into account when received by the PCC. Income received in circumstances where a claim for repayment of tax has been or will be made to the HM Revenue & Customs is grossed up for the tax recoverable. Any amount of tax not yet reclaimed from HM Revenue & Customs is shown within the PCC's debtors.

(b) Restricted and unrestricted funds

Restricted funds are those received for use on specified purposes. Expenditure which meets those criteria is allocated to that fund. Unrestricted funds are those received or generated that can be used for the general purposes of the PCC.

(c) Income and other expenditure

Interest income is taken into account when receivable and expenditure when incurred by the PCC, regardless of when payment is made.

2. INCOMING RESOURCES

(a) Voluntary income

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Direct to bank	21,220		21,220	40,495
Envelopes	863		863	1,134
Collections and wall safes	1,101		1,101	702
Donations/Grants received	1,820	3,540	5,360	5,062
First Steps		941	941	291
Legacy	216,000		216,000	
Parish Giving Scheme	29,743		29,743	33,989
Tax recoveries	3,727	90	3,817	6,322
	274,474	4,571	279,045	87,995

(b) Activities for generating funds

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Church lettings & land	618		618	568
Fees	4,873		4,873	4,420
Beer Festival	3,943		3,943	1,540
	9,434	-	9,434	6,528

(c) First Steps breakdown

	2025	2024
Donations (in 2a above)	941	291
Expenses	-643	- 201
Net surplus (loss)	298	90

(d) Employee Emoluments

	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages	9,958	5,859
	9,958	**5,859**
Average No of employees:	2	2

3. MISSIONS AND CHARITIES		2025	2024
		£	£
WORLDWIDE			
	Church Mission Society	841	944
	Innovista	841	944
	J Abu Bakker Christian School India	840	944
	Open Doors	840	944
	Nepal (Restricted Fund) for surgery	3,252	
NATIONAL			
	Salvation Army	840	943
LOCAL			
	The Besom	840	943
	The Porch	840	943
	Good News For Ever	815	943
TOTAL		**9,949**	**7,548**

4. DESIGNATED FUNDS, UNRESTRICTED FUNDS AND RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Note	1 January 2025	Income	Transfers	Expenditure	31 December 2025
		£	£	£	£	£
Restricted Funds:						
Churchyard		1,083	49			1,132
Ducker Bequest		280	13			293
First Steps		110	941		643	408
Lunch Club Funds		1,488				1,488
Ministry Fund		10,506	450		390	10,566
Nepal Fund		3,252			3,252	-
Rector's Discretionary Fund		3,851	1,730		1,472	4,109
Youth Events			90		90	-
Gifts & Donations		-	1,360		1,360	-
Total Restricted Funds		20,570	4,633	-	7,207	17,996
Designated Quinquennial Building Fund		16,453		10,000	26,453	-
Other unrestricted fund		53,828	286,010	- 10,000	155,059	174,779
Total Combined		90,851	290,643	-	188,719	192,775

The Churchyard Fund comprises capital of £500 & accumulated income after expenditures of £632 held in Trust by the Rector and Churchwardens. The accumulated income is to be used to keep the graveyard of Christ Church in good order and repair the graves and gravestones of F G and A Thompson, E H, A E and AL Jakeman and to keep the lettering thereon legible and to have the lettering recut from time to time.

The Ducker Bequest Fund is to be used for the Sanctuary at the Parish Church.

First Steps - Moneys held for the First Steps Mums and Toddlers group.

The Ministry Fund is a restricted fund towards ministry and/or curate costs.

The Nepal fund is giving towards cost of surgery for children in Nepal , this fund is now closed.

The Rector's Discretionary Fund is able to be used at the Rector's discretion to assist him in his work.

Youth Events Fund - restricted money was donated in 2025 and also spent , this fund is now closed.

Gifts & Donations are restricted funds received towards gifts and donations to specific people & paid out in 2025

Designated Quinquennial Fund for annual building costs with an aim to build up the fund for future repairs.

HANBOROUGH PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 31ST DECEMBER 2025

Independent Examiner's Report to Hanborough PCC

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2025, which are set out on the previous pages.

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of accounts; you 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 these records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning such matters.
The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence which would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

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
i) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
ii) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the requirements of the Act, 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.

A G. Gower — A Gower

20/4/2026 — Dated