



St James
Hampton Hill

Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2026

Agenda

Reports for 2025



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Dear Parishioner

Notice of APCM – Sunday, 10 May after the 9:30am service

I hereby give notice that the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) of St James's Church will be on the above date, following the 9:30am service. You are invited to join the meeting and, provided you are on the Electoral Roll (ER), stand for office and/or vote in the proceedings.

If you are not on the roll email me and I will send you a form. You won't be able to vote or stand this time (to count, you must have completed an application at least 14 days before the meeting), but if you count St James's as *your* church, you should be on our 'membership list'. You will find nomination papers to stand for the Deanery Synod, PCC and churchwarden on Derek's weekly email.

What will happen at the APCM?

Our annual meeting is the church's equivalent of a company AGM and will be reviewing 2025. We will receive a financial report from the treasurer, hear about how the church has operated in the past year, and Derek will set out some of the challenges that lie ahead.

Will you play a part in our future?

Part of the meeting will also be to elect two wardens and up to seven members of the Parochial Church Council. Could one of these be you? Could you bring your life experiences or talents to the table to help us flourish? If you would like to know more about the roles, please speak to me or a current member without obligation.

On the following pages you will find reports of the various church teams or groups associated with us. You have also been sent an agenda and the minutes of last year's meeting. To save resources, only copies of the agenda and minutes will be available on the day.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Nick Bagge
PCC Secretary



**Meeting of Parishioners
 for the Election of Churchwardens
 and
 Annual Parochial Church Meeting
 Sunday 10 May 2026 after the 0930 service in the hall**

Agenda

11.00am

1	Prayers	DW	
			See attachments/actions:
2	Apologies for Absence	NB	
3	Declarations of Interests / Fit and Proper Persons	DW	
4	Minutes of the last meeting: 25 May 2025 <i>Errors should be reported to the secretary prior to meeting to enable any corrections to be made</i>	DW	To note: Minutes 25 May (separate attachment)
5	Election of Churchwardens In the event that more than two applications are received by 0900 today, an election will be called	DW	

11.10am

			See attachments/actions:
1	Apologies for Absence	NB	
2	Minutes of the last meeting: 25 May 2025 <i>Errors should be reported to the secretary prior to meeting to enable any corrections to be made</i>	DW	To note: Minutes 25 May (separate attachment)
3	Matters Arising <i>From 25 May 2024 not otherwise covered in agenda</i>	DW	
4	Notice of Any Other Business (See item 13)	DW	
5	Presentation of the Electoral Roll This is used to calculate the number of places on the Hampton Diocesan Synod.	NB	
6	Election of up to eight members of the Parochial Church Council In the event that more than eight applications were received by 0900 on Sunday 10 May 2026, an election will be called.	DW	To elect/appoint: Up to eight members

7	Election of two members of the Hampton Deanery Synod In the event that more than two applications were received by 0900 on Sunday 10 May 2026, an election will be called.	DW	To elect/appoint: Up to two members
8	Election of members of the Welcome Team Derek on behalf of Linda Cargill to make oral recommendations	DW	
9	Annual report and Accounts of the Parochial Church Council 2025 Treasurer Sarah Selvanathan and Finance Team chair Laurence Sewell to give an account of the year	SS	To note Annual Report and Accounts of the PCC 2025 (separate attachment)
10	Appointment of Independent Examiner Sarah Selvanathan to make an oral recommendation	SS	
11	Churchwardens' Report, including the Fabric of the Church A written report was prepared by Bryan Basdell, Chair of the Properties' Team, and Susan Horner and Nick Bagge, Churchwardens	SH/ NB	To note Reports are part of APCM Reports
12	Consideration of written reports Comments about any of the reports on the different aspects of church life	DW	To note APCM Reports
13	Vicar's Report Derek to report back to the congregation	DW	To note Derek's report to be given orally
14	Any Other Business For items to be considered they must be sent to the secretary by Wed 6 May 2026	DW	
15	Closing Prayer	DW	

Ark Playgroup

The Ark playgroup for carers and pre-school children sets sail every Monday morning during term time. Fortunately, for those leading, not for forty days and nights!

The church transforms into a large play area with space for children to use a wide variety of educational and tactile toys. There is a table for arts and crafts, some of the results were on display on St James's day last year.

Over the past year Sha Armstrong, pictured with some of the children, has joined the team to provide some fantastic music and singing, introducing new songs and reworking old favourites. Some children have even been prepared to sing a solo!



It is a very happy environment where up to 30 toddlers learn to play together whilst their parents, grandparents and carers enjoy some social time over a cup of coffee and a biscuit!

Carol Bailey, Jon Holloway, Graham McHutchon & Liz Wilmot

Bell-ringing Team

Bells have been rung every Sunday before the 9:30 service and also for the Christmas Midnight service, at New Year and for a wedding.

As usual, we had many visitors up the tower on our annual open afternoon to learn about the bells and try their hand at ringing, before continuing up to see the view.

We have lost three ringers from the team during the year (for A-levels and other reasons) but are now training two adults and two Scouts and their parents, and hope that they will join the team in the summer.

I am grateful to all the team for their continued commitment to keeping the bells ringing week by week.

Susan Horner

Care and Contact (Parish Visitors)

One of the strengths of St James's is the care members have for each other, but supporting our mutual care, we have a team of 'pastors' who watch out for those

who need extra care or contact. In one way, it's a backstop for the informal caring. In another way, it's making the church's care visible.

The group meets every few months to consider together whether the church can offer particular help, such as visiting, lifts, or other encouragement. If you need a helping hand, do not hesitate to be in touch with the team through me. Although we've asked before, we would it helpful to have contact details of your next of kin should anything happen to you.

Home Communion is provided for several members who cannot come to church.

Derek Winterburn

Charity Support Team

Even Greater Success

The story about the money raised for charity in 2025 is a nice one. In 2024 we raised £7,467 in total, traditionally excluding Christian Aid and the Children's Society, and this represented an increase over previous years. In 2025 the total was £10,307. This is an all-time high, even slightly higher than when the church paid all charitable donations from church funds (£10,000).

As in previous years the PCC approved £1,500 from church funds for Welcare (£1,250) and Bishop Wand School (£250). The Lent Appeal raised £3,950, a spectacular result and much higher than 2024 and this went to the Diocese of London 'Climate Justice' appeal.

The Upper Room also saw a big increase to £2,000, and this was 100% match funded by The Big Give, so the total was £4,000, another tremendous result. As in previous years, a large collection of goods, both food and non-food, came from St James's and local schools and was consolidated at St James for onward transportation.

The Upper Room wrote personally to thank us for our generous contribution to their *Big Give Christmas Challenge*. This went mostly to their UR4Driving course to continue to provide a positive, nurturing and learning environment for ex-offenders and young people at risk of criminality, to gain a driving licence as a means to employment.

The ever-popular Charity Quiz Night was run in November for 68 people and raised a total of £1,578, again a tremendous increase on 2024. This went half to the London Churches Refugee Fund and half to our link parish of St Luke's, Mecuburi, Nampula, Mozambique. This £789 is to be added to £187 carried forward from last year and remitted to Mozambique.

So you can see the pattern above - all our charities saw substantial increases. This was not a big increase from just one charity but an across-the-board increase indicative of overall increased generosity. Thank you all and long may it last. Also a big thank you for all the people involved in organising events.

Dennis Wilmot
Chair, Charities We Support Team

Children and Families

In term time, there is something for children and families on Sunday afternoons at 3.30. Once a month, this is Messy Church, which is a fun afternoon with craft and other activities. I'm grateful for the team members who give time to prepare and lead those activities.

On the other weeks, there is a simpler service including readings, songs, stories, and prayer. Numbers have held steady this year. We are also looking forward to the confirmation of two young people.

After the Scout leadership consulted with their families, it has now been agreed that they will come to the Act of Remembrance in our churchyard on Remembrance Sunday, but not at other times as 'Parade Services.'

I'm grateful for Paul Fitchett's work reaching out to the units and share with him disappointment at the outcome.

In the same vein, working with the schools has proved less fruitful this year, although, of course, Hampton Hill Juniors and LEH Juniors enjoyed Christmas in the church at their concerts.

Derek Winterburn

Churches Together around Hampton

There are two occasions when *Churches Together around Hampton* is most visible. The first is the *Songs of Praise* service. This year it was held at St Theodore's Catholic Church in January. The other occasions are the Acts of Remembrance at various locations on Remembrance Sunday. The service in Hampton is very large and very clearly ecumenical. The service in Hampton Hill is largely organised by St James's, with a contribution from the United Reform Church; it still draws a good number of people from the community.

An additional ecumenical event, of course, is the World Day of Prayer (formerly Women's World Day of Prayer). This year, St James's hosted it with material produced by the women of Nigeria.

The ministers have continued to meet, if rather erratically. There is now a new chair of the group, Father Philip Baptiste, the parish priest at St Theodore's

Derek Winterburn

Churchwardens' Report

As Nick said last year, our role as churchwardens is to have general oversight of everything, to support the clergy and to act as liaison between clergy and congregation. As always in this, we have been supported by many volunteers in numerous roles, and the church just would not function without them.

Building

We recently carried out a fabric inspection with Bryan Basdell, who chairs the Properties Team, and you can read his detailed report. Overall, the church is in reasonably good repair considering its age. The re-roofing of the north aisle is complete and temporary repairs to the south aisle roof have so far stopped the ingress of rain, though it must be realised that complete re-roofing here will be needed before too long and the necessary funds raised.

Bryan and the team also carry out routine maintenance jobs throughout the year, as well as he and Lou having oversight of the churchyard .

A new memorial has been installed in the Garden of Rest. Graham has installed more lights in the church which have especially been appreciated by the outside groups who hire the church for concerts and meetings.

Services

Services have continued throughout the year, with a small but regular group attending the 8:00 service on Sundays and around 50 at 9:30, although attendance at Morning Prayer and midweek Holy Communion is low. We continue to offer the Together service on Sunday afternoons during term-time for younger families, with Messy Church once a month.

Volunteers

The church was full for the Carol Service and on Easter morning. We thank Thom and the choir for providing music throughout the year, and all those who assist our worship by welcoming, reading, leading intercessions, serving, arranging flowers, ringing the bells, operating the sound and streaming desks , and providing refreshments afterwards.

In addition to our streamed services, the Care and Contact Team keep in touch with those who are housebound or unwell, and Lesley Mortimer takes home

communion to those who are unable to attend church. We also hold regular services at Laurel Dene for the residents.

We are pleased that Sarah Selvanathan has now joined the finance team as our treasurer, and together with Laurence Sewell and Carol Bailey ensures that bills are paid, accounts are produced and that keeps a careful eye on our budget. Dennis Wilmot keeps us in touch with the charities that we support.

Summer open day

Our festival weekend was well supported, with many visitors to the church on the Saturday and our usual service followed by a barbecue lunch on the Sunday. Most unusually, for the second year running, we had to have the lunch in the church, but the damp weather outside did not dampen our enjoyment of the occasion.

Groups

We continue to reach out to the community with the Ark for young children and their carers on Mondays during term-time and Connections Café on Tuesdays, (which is moving to Fridays from June) and we thank those volunteers who keep these running.

We held several events to raise money for our charities, including a quiz evening and meals. Our social events calendar, raising money for the church, has expanded thanks to Graham and his team. In addition to the annual ceilidh we now hold concerts, the most recent of which was the Kiki Dee concert. These attract both members of the congregation and the local community.

The church and hall are also well-used by local groups, providing both a welcome to these and income for the church.

Website and magazine

Additional contact with the community is achieved through the website, thanks to Prill Hinckley, and the Spire magazine, overseen by Janet Nunn.

Thank you

As I said at the start, none of this would happen without you, our congregation, too many to mention you all by name, and many of whom undertake multiple roles, but your input is greatly valued.

Above all, we are grateful to our clergy, Derek, Jacky, Tim and the late Julian. Unfortunately, Jacky's health has prevented her from being with us for much of this year, but we have been delighted to see her whenever she has been able.

As you know , we sadly lost Julian in September and his pastoral care, help with study groups and presence in the choir and congregation are much missed. Tim has been a great support with services and study groups. We also value the support of their spouses, Sandra, Alan and Jane, who do so much work in the background.

Finally, of course, we must thank Nick, who has just stepped down as churchwarden after five years, as well as a previous stint of six years, from 2011 to 2017, quite a marathon! Nick will be continuing as our parish administrator.

So thank you all for your friendship and support throughout the year and for keeping our worship, social life and outreach going.

Susan Horner & Nick Bagge

Connections Café

Attendance has been gradually increasing over the year with a mix of people, some coming every week, others every two to three weeks. – the current record is 18!

Typically these are older members of the congregation and for some the café is the highlight of their week. Not surprising therefore most are happy just talking over coffee and cake. Some are happy to serve drinks or help with the washing up.

From June we are moving to Friday mornings, still 10.30am-12.30pm, when Nick Bagge is normally in church and could help in the event of an emergency.

Dennis Wilmot

Diocese of London

The Diocese

The Diocese of London is the largest in the Church of England, with over 400 churches serving a diverse population of 4.2 million north of the Thames and west of the Lea, with a vision for every Londoner to encounter the love of God in Christ.

In 2025, the Church continued to grow according to indicative statistics, contributing to attendance increases of around 20% since 2022.



Oliver Home

The London Diocesan Fund (LDF) serves, supports and resources all parts of the Diocese by funding around 540 paid clergy and providing essential services so every parish benefits from strong pastoral and missional leadership.

Clergy

The Ministry Team supported the formation and development of 540 paid clergy (including our vicar, Derek), 204 self-supporting clergy (including our Associate Priest, Jacky Cammidge), 114 Licensed Lay Ministers (including Our Assistant Priest, Tim Marwood), as well as over 100 exploring ordained or lay ministry.

Most stipendiary clergy are housed by the LDF. The Housing team completed over 3,000 repairs and planned maintenance tasks, alongside major retrofitting to improve housing quality and energy efficiency, contributing to net zero goals.

Parishes received wide-ranging practical support for ministry. The Property and Fundraising team helped secure nearly £16 million of external investment towards building renovations, community engagement and mission.

Safeguarding support

Safeguarding practice was strengthened further, with 95% of parishes, including St James's, now using safeguarding dashboards. INEQE carried out an independent audit of diocesan safeguarding, which will provide recommendations for how to build on progress made to create a safer church.

Common Fund

This work was funded through parish contributions, including St James's, via the Common Fund (£24.3 million) and LDF generated income (£12.8 million) from grants and investments.

The LDF has also generated additional funds for mission-focused projects, now totalling £40 million across their collective lifespan. Great progress was made in 2025, including:

- Hackney & Islington Programme: 24 parishes supported, four new worshipping communities launched, lay leaders trained, and significant attendance growth.
- Southall & Hounslow Project: strengthening intercultural ministry across 13 parishes with new multilingual congregations adding over 100 new disciples.
- Tower Hamlets Mission Project: 89 young people came to faith and nearly 9,000 residents were engaged through new worshipping communities and outreach.

The future

The Diocese also celebrated Bishop Sarah's appointment as Archbishop of Canterbury, giving thanks for her eight years as Bishop of London, marked by committed support for parish ministry, mission, safeguarding, and the diocesan priorities of becoming younger, safer and more racially just.

*Oliver Home, General Secretary
London Diocesan Fund*

Eco-Church

The churchyard is actively maintained, in partnership with the Local Authority, to provide a peaceful and beautiful area for the local community, and sensitive to the needs of a diverse wildlife.

St James's has a proven track record of environmental care and awareness of justice issues. A team monitors and develops our care for creation, within A Rocha's Eco Church scheme.

We have been pleased to host 'Climate Chat' meetings for Hampton Hill, with Monica Saunders. The next event is on Wednesday 20 May. Tickets £5, bookable online at: <https://bit.ly/StJChat26>.

The PCC has commissioned work to install modern electrical hand dryers in the hall toilets, which will save a great deal of paper use.

The Church and the Hall now both run on renewably generated electricity, and 'green' gas (in that carbon emissions are offset).

Derek Winterburn

Flower Team

As always, a huge thank you to the team of church members who keep the floral arrangements and plants looking fresh and attractive throughout the church year.

The use of floral foam has been minimised, and attractive displays have been created using jugs and vases. The tradition of larger arrangements at our major festivals, such as Christmas and Easter, continues and these are always appreciated.

We are able to augment bought flowers with a variety of foliage from the church garden and churchyard. St James's is a beautiful church, and we all love to embrace the opportunity to complement the wonderful lighting that now enhances our building.

Linda Cargill, Patricia Newton, Coryn Robinson & Liz Wilmot

Gardening Club

The churchyard is 'closed' for new burials and consequently general maintenance responsibility rests with Richmond Council. They undertake grass cutting and general tree works in line with their ecological policy. The Gardening Club provides the 'icing on the top of the cake'. The churchyard is especially attractive in the spring when it is covered with cyclamen, snowdrops, daffodils and bluebells.

We have met several times this year. Our aim is to:

1. Maintain and improve the churchyard for those who visit the graves, and for those who enjoy walking through this beautiful open space
2. Maintain and improve the area for wildlife and the environment

We have concentrated on the edges of the churchyard and the canopy of the trees so that there is a good view across the churchyard from all angles. This has been noticed by local residents, and we now have a couple of neighbours who come and help.

We continue to have a good relationship with the council's contractors, but they do require us to remind and follow up on issues. The large oak lost a bough which needed treatment. The council engaged tree surgeons, but they required reminding on several occasions to remove their safety barriers. They also have not yet resolved the problem of rebalancing the tree, and it has several dead boughs. We continue to follow this up.

The Garden of Rest has been extended to include more donated plants. The family of the late vicar Rupert Brunt requested we instal another bench and memorial stone. The family paid for both of these.

The bench was installed and, after much correspondence with a stonemason and the family, the Diocesan Advisory Committee approved the memorial stone and inscription. A Gardening Club day was used to prepare the area. The memorial is extremely fitting and blends in well with the surroundings. The Garden of Rest is overshadowed by a beautiful but large copper beech. Due to its size it has meant that the bereaved now have to consider shade-loving plants instead of roses.

The hover fly is now on the red list of endangered species, so to encourage more to the area we ensure that there is a good number of plants with flat lace-type flowers, such as viburnum, brambles and cow parsley. We have also added two more bird feeders making four in total. Both of these initiatives should encourage more birds to the area. This in turn will help control the number of the aphids in the churchyard and reduce their impact on the roses. We are mindful of the RSPB guidance on bird feeders, so will not include seed or peanut feeders during the summer period, i.e. from 1 May to 31 October.

The shrubbery and Garden of Rest is mulched regularly with organic manure. The ash from the bonfires we have following our churchyard clear ups is also distributed across the flower beds to ensure recycling of the materials generated from our regular maintenance.

Lou Coaker

Good Guys

The men's group has had a successful year of get-togethers over a meal or drink. We meet most months and have visited a number of local restaurants in Hampton, Hampton Hill and Teddington, and always end the year with a Christmas meal. Attendance is regularly 8-10 members, and we always welcome new faces. Drop me an email in the office and I can add you to the mailing list for future dates.

Nick Bagge

Hampton Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod met twice in the past year, instead of the usual three times due to the resignation mid-year of the Area Dean. Rev Derek Winterburn acted as interim Area Dean until the appointment of the new Area Dean early in 2026.

The **first meeting** took place on 21 May 2025 at Holy Trinity, Twickenham Green, chaired by the Area Dean, Rev Ben Lovell, vicar of St Mary's, Hampton. There were updates on vacancies, recent appointments and the Common Fund. Public worship was to cease at All Saints, Twickenham, at the end of June 2025 because of the poor state of the building.

The main item on the agenda was 'School Governance and Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs)', introduced by Daniel Aldridge, CEO of Instanter Learning Trust and Executive Head of Bishop Wand CE Secondary School, Sunbury. St Mary's CE Primary School, Hampton, and Bishop Wand were now part of a MAT providing education from 0 - 19 years. Daniel explained how a MAT was run - responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school was handed over to a company. Governance was 'mission' and discussion followed on the values and characteristics expected of a church school.

The **second meeting** was held on 5 February 2026 at St James's Church, Hampton Hill, chaired by new Area Dean, Rev Debs Wignall, vicar of St Richard's, Hanworth. She welcomed the new incumbent of St Augustine's, Whitton, Rev Helen Calner.

Tony Dixon, Lay Chair, spoke about how to encourage new and/or younger members to stand for the upcoming elections to the Deanery Synod. He also updated Synod on the Common Fund. He thanked churches for meeting their 2025 pledges. An invitation was shared from the Kensington Area Director of Ordinands for volunteers to serve as lay assessors within the CofE's Shared Discernment Process for potential ordinands.

The main topic was a presentation on Safeguarding by Sarah Dale, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (Kensington Area). She outlined the Five Safeguarding

Standards – Culture, Leadership and Capacity; Prevention; Recognising. Assessing and Managing Risk; Victims and Survivors; Learning Supervision and Support. Members were then asked to comment on the standards via a table activity, followed by feedback and questions.

A full report of each meeting, including finance and appointment updates, is available from the Secretary to the PCC.

Lesley Mortimer

Hampton Fund (Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity)

St James's is closely associated with this local charity which was originally established in 1811 to support the needs of residents in our parish and the wider local area. Hampton Fund is successfully implementing its current strategy (for the period 2024-27) with its emphasis on 'relieving hardship (financial, physical, emotional) and creating opportunities to live well'; at the core of this strategy is a focus on achieving impact, and we produced the first Impact Report earlier this year (available on the website at www.hamptonfund.co.uk).

Hampton Fund helps individuals and families in need with the cost of their electricity and gas bills through fuel grants; the provision of essential white goods and household items; and school journey and uniform grants. Secondly, community grants are made to cover the costs of a range of services and activities provided by the local voluntary sector. These address the needs of disabled people, carers, children & young people, those living with poor mental health, elderly, vulnerable people, homeless people and many more.

In 2024/25 we made grants valued at £2.66m, which is around the same level as the previous year, having seen demand from both individuals and community groups remain consistently high. These funds were derived from the Charity's investment returns. Trustees awarded individual grants amounting to £1.298m (2023/24: £1.253), and 47 community grants (2023/24: 49) amounting to £1.360m (2023/24: £1.434m).

Hampton Fund is managed by a small team of five: a Chief Executive Officer, Operations Manager, Individual Grants Manager, Community Grants Manager and an Administrator, and is overseen by a board of twelve trustees. Further details and information can be obtained from Laurence Sewell, who chairs the Community Grants Committee, and is the nominated trustee from St James's Church.

*Laurence Sewell
Trustee, Hampton Fund*

Hampton Parochial Charities

Hampton Parochial Charities (HPC) oversees two almshouses: Jubilee House, Ashley Road and the War Memorial Cottages, Oldfield Road – as well as two grant-making funds: Relief in Need and the School of Industry.

St James's provides three trustees: Dr David Wile, Sarah Selvanathan and Rev Derek Winterburn (Chair). The trustees have seen to it that as flats fall vacant, they are upgraded to new standards. There has been remedial work to gardens at the War Memorial Cottages.

Sarah has been instrumental in negotiating with the Regulator of Social Housing to be removed from its regulations and with Homes England regarding an ancient loan.

The Clerk, Nicki Hall, looks after the wellbeing of the residents. As people age, some, especially those without family nearby, need more and more care, which can be time consuming. She also administers the buildings: keeping on top of the myriads of safety checks and maintenance tasks.

For more information about the charities go to: www.hamptonparochial.org.uk
Chair, Derek Winterburn

Kitchen Team

The Kitchen Team is responsible for providing refreshments after the 9.30 service on most Sundays of the year, and its members are also willing volunteers for other occasions, including the Lent Meal, St James's Day, and Harvest Festival lunch.

At the end of 2025 Patricia Newton stepped down as organiser of the Kitchen Team. She had run it for several years, making sure that rota ran efficiently and handling any gaps in the schedule, often stepping in herself.

Some of the volunteers stepped down, but an appeal enabled us to find replacements, including church newcomers Margaret Grose and Penny Phelps. With 8 teams alternating through the year the system mostly works. We know how valued coffee time is to parishioners, so if you could offer an extra pair of hands do speak to Carol or Nick.

Thank you to all the volunteers.

Carol Bailey

Music

Music during 2025 was directed to amplify and further St James's mission.

Early in the year, we hosted the Churches Together around Hampton *Songs of Praise* service, at which seven hymns and songs were introduced by their 'sponsor' from each congregation, and sung with great enthusiasm.

St James's choice of *Amazing grace*, with Val's notable family connection to the writer, was particularly welcome. The value of occasions like this, to nudge us out of the familiar and into the not-yet-familiar, cannot be overstated.

Over 70 services held in and around the church had musical elements supported by combinations of organ, piano and choir, and an *ad hoc* music group convened by ordinand Joy Wheeler Beauchamp.

Overall in the year over 300 hymns were sung. We used over 200 individual titles, set to 118 tunes (some tunes *really* put the work in). And we continued, and continue, to explore new possibilities for hymnody, adding suitable texts and accessible music in careful ways.

The choir worked tirelessly throughout the year on the widest possible range of music.

At the Christmas Carol Service we introduced Thomas Hewitt-Jones' haunting 21st century setting of *What child is this?*, alongside ancient plainchant antiphons, and music from the 16th century onwards; and the choir also gave us soaring descants and rich harmonies in the congregational carols.

In Holy Week we sang for seven services in eight days; here and in Advent, the intimate sung Compline services provided a welcome close to busy days.

For the future, we're thinking of ways to strengthen our numbers, recruiting to all voice parts and especially the tenor and bass departments.

The baby grand piano became unplayable during the year; consideration was given and advice taken as to a suitable instrument for our context. An incredibly generous donor undertook to support the full purchase cost of a successor instrument, that might act to attract professional musicians to St James's as well as support our own requirements.

Thom Stanbury,
Choir Director and Organist

Parochial Church Council (PCC)

This was Derek's eighth full year as vicar. The PCC has 16 members, including the vicar (chair), Associate Priest, two churchwardens, and two Deanery Synod representatives, who sat as ex-officio members. Three vacancies were unfilled.

It met seven times in 2025 and attendance averaged 11 people or 66%. PCC members are trustees of St James's, which is a registered charity, and can serve a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms of office without a break, either starting or standing down after the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. Only churchwardens must stand for re-election every year. They can serve a maximum of six consecutive years without a break.

The year began looking back and forward at an Away Day in January. Derek asked members to look at all the church's activity, reviewing what was currently taking place, what had been achieved in the previous year, and what we wanted to achieve in the next.

After break-out groups and a wider discussion, the list of considerations comprised: the viability of midweek communion, a broader range of contemporary songs in services, a broad range of social events, collaborating with other local churches for events for children, growing the Ark playgroup and Connections, more speakers from our charities at services, new ideas for midweek groups, a major event to signal our presence to the community, building on St James's Day weekend, and reconnecting with local schools.

The meeting also agreed a budget for the year, reflecting a hoped-for increase in planned giving, and the loss of several regular hall users, and expectations for Common Fund.

Safeguarding and 'getting it right' was a key focus for the Church of England. As a consequence a new central hub resource had been launched, and parishes now had more targets to achieve, and there was a greater emphasis on PCC members' training.

In March the PCC made some minor changes to accounting and accepted a new Environmental Policy for the church, part of its commitment to Eco Church and the Church of England's net zero carbon pledge. Elsewhere, the church agreed to develop a new income stream by running events that would find audiences from the local community and beyond. These events would include concerts and a revival of ceilidhs.

April's meeting signed off the Annual Report for 2024, to be presented at the 2025 Annual Meeting. The headline 'deficit' of £162,000 was largely due to using investments to pay for urgent roof repairs and repointing.

In May we appointed a new treasurer, Sarah Selvanathan. The church also completed a test of all the electrics, a requirement every five years. The bulk of the meeting was taken up with safeguarding matters. Besides ensuring that all PCC members and others in volunteer roles had up to date training and DBS certificates, Annalea Gratton, our parish safeguarding officer, had worked through a series of checks and balances required by the Church of England.

June's focus was our Safeguarding policy and how the Church of England's overhaul would affect us. Money matters included our 2025 Common Fund offer to the Diocese. For many years St James's had been able to contribute more than the average cost of employing a priest, but our contribution for 2024 had covered only 77% of this. Faced with pressures in many directions, members settled on a further reduction for 2025, but with the promise to use our new fundraising initiatives to reverse this as soon as possible.

In July the PCC agreed to maintain its Common Fund offer of £73,500 for another year. Finance was also on the agenda in September, when the Finance Team set out the new schedule of meetings for the year, along with a plan to bring the budget for 2026 to the PCC in November. The rest of the meeting was taken up with maintenance work, and the news that the family of Rev Rupert Brunt, a former vicar of St James's, were intending to finance a bench and memorial stone as part of a wider plan to renovate the Garden of Rest.

November's meeting did indeed agree a budget for 2026. Cost issues were bearing down on the church, however, and other income streams, such as events, could not be relied on to cover the shortfall. A cautious approach was agreed, and some savings were found to reduce the deficit, including a reduction in the number of issues of the *Spire* magazine. As an illustration of the need to keep spending under control, the properties team had painted a resin on the roof in the south aisle to prevent further ingress of water. This was unlikely to solve the problem in the longer term, however.

Nick Bagge
PCC Secretary

Properties Team

Responsibility

The Properties Team has the responsibility to the PCC for the maintenance, upkeep and care of the church, the hall, the vicarage, the garage, the shed and all other structures; apart from the moveable items that are the legal responsibility of the Churchwardens. The churchyard is maintained by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, overseen by the committee.

The Church - Summary State & Quinquennial Survey

A Quinquennial Survey was formally issued by the architect that concluded that 'the building is generally in a good state of repair'. However, it states that the age of the building is such that persistent maintenance and repairs are required to the external envelope to keep the building safe and watertight. The report identifies 11 items of Category 1 (Urgent, to be addressed within 6 months), 26 Category 2 (to be addressed within 12-18 months), 31 Category 3 (to be addressed within 5 years) and 23 Category 4 (Desirable). In terms of the Category 1 items, 4 are procedural and, therefore, not considered in the context of this report. In terms of the 7 structural Cat 1 items, all have now been addressed. With respect to the Category 2 items, 3 are procedural and 3 relate to the Churchyard and are the responsibility of Richmond Council; of the remaining 20 items, 8 have been addressed.

Routine Maintenance and Works

As reported in recent years, the building is subject to significant regular use that entails an ongoing level of maintenance work. Heating, electrical services, fire appliances, lighting, the clock, the bells, the lightning conductor and the drains all have regular professional inspections that have been done in line with their service/inspection schedules. All records of inspections and certificates are recorded and filed in the Church Logbook held in the Office.

In line with normal practice, maintenance activities have been conducted as and when required. In line with our agreed policy of only replacing light bulbs when they fail, a number have been replaced in the chandeliers and globes with, in all cases, the failed bulbs being replaced with more efficient LED equivalents. The "configurable" lighting within the building has been subject to further enhancement, including the Baptistry. All window cords to the high-level iron casement windows in the side aisles have been replaced but the iron casements themselves exhibit differing signs of corrosion.

Following the earlier installation of the new gas fired central heating boiler, IR heaters have been retained to augment capacity in more extreme conditions, temporarily affixed to the nave columns as necessary.

Modifications/enhancements to the configuration of electrical sockets have taken place as required, including the installation of external sockets on the West Porch. Formal certification of our electrical installation was finally received after all 'reordering' remedial work was completed. As power usage increases, there is a need to rationalise the power circuits within the building. Whilst recognised as a requirement, work is being deferred as it is not considered urgent. In preparation for St James's Open Day 2025, damaged balusters were replaced on the spire's first viewing level. Repairs have been made to the main aisle after an area of tiling became dislodged following heavy use.

Damage is now evident to a number of panels of the stained-glass windows. Initiatives are being progressed to effect repairs by local craftsmen. With increased use of the church for secular activities, the communion rail is frequently removed that has highlighted the insecurity of its fixing to the dais. Alternative, secure fixings are under investigation.

In line with usual practice, the building was subject to an annual 'spring clean' in readiness for Easter. The annual leaf-sweep and gutter clearance was undertaken in December 2025. All gutters around the courtyard were also subject to more frequent clearances in the autumn as necessitated by the build-up of leaves from surrounding trees. As is now standard practice, these activities are augmented by a commercial company that clears and inspects the state of gutters on the church, hall and vicarage; the resultant report did not identify any areas that required attention.

Church Roof

The persistent leak on the roof on the South Aisle, long evident, worsened during the year, resulting in water ingress during every rainstorm. Inspection by a professional roofer identified the probable cause to be a failing joint on a valley gutter, compounded by its unusual construction. A repair has been applied that appears to have addressed the immediate problem, with monitoring continuing. However, the repair is not considered the permanent solution that entails the complete refurbishment of the roof to mirror what was done on the north aisle roof.

As highlighted in the last report, the cast iron hoppers affixed to the north aisle wall are subject to significant corrosion and some fixings are displaced. Inspection and repairs undertaken by a specialist contractor proved unsatisfactory and alternative solutions are being sought.

Church Hall

A major overhaul of the lighting has been completed, including the replacement of some internal manual switches with PIRs. Routine maintenance work has been undertaken including to leaking cisterns and water heaters. New electric hand driers are being installed to replace paper towel dispensers.

Graveyard and Environs

As mentioned above general maintenance of the graveyard is the responsibility of Richmond Council and is undertaken by its contractor, Continental Landscapes. The Properties Team works with other church groups, both jointly and independently, in the general development of the graveyard, where its efforts are focussed particularly on the more manual activities. The new bench donated by the Brunt family has been installed as part of the re-configuration of the Garden of Rest and support has been provided during the selection and creation of the new Brunt Memorial, together with support to its recent installation.

Membership

The team meets four times a year, with routine work being undertaken as required outside these meetings. If you have an interest in the maintenance of old buildings, some special knowledge or expertise, or simply enjoy practical challenges and you feel that you could contribute, please contact me via the office.

*Bryan Basdell
Chair, Properties Team*

Safeguarding

I am pleased to report that there have been no safeguarding concerns raised over the past year.

Safeguarding continues to be a standing item at each PCC meeting, ensuring that it remains visible and regularly reviewed. As a parish, we are committed to following the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy *Promoting a Safer Church*, and to keeping this under regular review.

As Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) my contact details are clearly displayed in various locations around the church and church hall, ensuring that all members of the congregation and visitors know who to contact should they have a concern. We also signpost various charities and helplines which can offer additional support and guidance for those with safeguarding concerns.

All current members of the PCC are up to date with their safeguarding training and DBS checks. Training is monitored using the safeguarding dashboard, where

records are kept up to date. Automated reminders are sent to Nick, Derek, and me approximately three months in advance of any training expiry dates, helping to ensure that renewals are completed in good time. Any new PCC members will be required to complete the relevant training and checks in order to remain in line with diocesan expectations.

We continue to follow safer recruitment practices, including the use of role descriptions, appropriate checks, and oversight of those serving in roles within the church.

Over the past year, significant work has been undertaken to strengthen our safeguarding practices. This has included updating risk assessments, person specifications, and establishing clearer supervision arrangements for all PCC-approved church activities. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this work. In particular, special thanks go to Nick and Derek, who have been instrumental in drafting and circulating these documents.

Although there have been no safeguarding concerns this year, we remain committed to ensuring that all members of the congregation know how to raise a concern and feel confident that it will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

While good progress has been made, there is an opportunity to deepen our approach in the coming year. I would like to move beyond safeguarding being a largely procedural or “tick-box” agenda item and instead encourage more meaningful reflection and discussion within the PCC. This may include focusing on particular safeguarding themes and considering more deeply what it means to create a safe and supportive church environment for all.

I would like to close by reminding all church members that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. It is not limited to children, but also includes adults, particularly those who may be vulnerable. Creating a safe church community is a shared commitment, and one that we must all continue to take seriously.

*Annalea Gratton,
Parish Safeguarding Officer*

Servers’ Team

Six/seven servers were available for regular duty April 2025 to March 2026. We have been able to provide two servers each Sunday at 9.30am and on the main festival days. We were delighted to welcome back Janet Nunn in the latter part of

the year but were very sorry to lose Josh Whale in March. He has made a valuable contribution to the team over the past three years.

St James's is fortunate to have a very reliable and professional group of servers - my thanks to all of them for their work throughout the year and for their flexibility in the face of ongoing constraints.

We are always seeking new servers to add to the rota - none of us is getting any younger! The more of us there are, the easier it is to fit serving duties around people's other commitments. **I would be pleased to speak to anyone who feels that they would like to offer their services by assisting at the altar on a regular basis.**

Lesley Mortimer

Spire Team

Janet Nunn - Chair and Editor; Nick Bagge - Design and Sub-editor
Derek Winterburn - writer; Susan Horner - Proofreader and Distribution
Dennis Wilmot - Charities

Catherine Gash is also a proofreader but does not attend meetings.

Susan Horner, who for many years now has received the copies from the printers, has sorted them into areas and distributed them to the church and to the road stewards. Susan also makes sure that the Post Office and church are kept stocked with the *Spire*. This is sterling work every issue.

As usual we published nine issues of the magazine, with a circulation of 500 copies with double issues in April/May, August/September and December/January.

We ran the annual appeal in June and raised £2,000 including Gift Aid, which was an excellent result going towards the annual cost of the *Spire* which the PCC continue so generously to fund. Our printers, Paul and Julie Venn, have continued their excellent service.

We are continually grateful to all the regular contributors who very rarely need a gentle reminder about deadlines! These include Richard Melville and Tim Marwood. Sadly Canon Julian Reindorp, who had written his *Opinion* column for 11 years, passed away in September, but he had still been writing articles up to the end, even when recovering from hip surgery.

As the magazine is so popular locally, we have made a conscious decision to try, where possible, to make the articles interesting to the parish as well as to church members.

Mindful of rising costs and various other issues the team took the decision to produce only six copies a year going forward in 2026, making it bi-monthly.

We are a small team which meets regularly to produce and plan each edition. We enjoy our work and are grateful for all the positive feedback we receive from parishioners and the local community.

Janet Nunn, Editor

Teaching and Nurture

On Wednesday evenings in Lent 2025 the evening group followed the Diocesan Lent Course on *Climate Justice*. The daytime group focussed on *Turning Points in Scripture*. Through the summer and autumn, the evening group worked through Paula Gooder's book on *Heaven*, and the afternoon group explored *Hard Questions*. In the autumn the evening group gained from Pete Greig's course on *Lectio Divina*, and the afternoon group studied Advent themes.

In the summer there was a sermon series studying the Nicene Creed, which was 1700 years old. In the autumn giving and generosity was considered for three Sundays.

Time to Pray has read through 1 and 2 Corinthians, as well as some Sunday lectionary readings.

Derek Winterburn

Walking Group

Since last year's AGM, there have been five Saturday walks: Puttenham, Walton, Sunningdale, Epsom Downs and Reigate. We have enjoyed good weather, and I don't think we got lost once this year!

Although the length of the walks has varied, they are usually less than four miles and conclude with lunch at a convenient pub. We are very grateful for Gill Powell (with others) who conducts a preliminary visit to check the suitability of the walk and the hostelry. There is always room for more people. Lifts arranged. Join us!

Derek Winterburn

Welcomers' Team

The Welcomers' Team is a group of volunteers from the congregation who continue to provide the vital function of greeting people as they arrive at church, mainly for the 9.30 am service, to answer any queries and invite people to stay for refreshments afterwards.

I would like to thank the Welcomers for their ongoing support, flexibility and humour in maintaining what may be a small, but arguably important, role in the life of St James's.

We are always looking for new members of the congregation to join the team, so if you would like to take on this role, please do contact any one of the team who will tell you what is involved.

The team currently consists of the following members, and we request that they be reappointed at the annual meeting for the coming year:

Wendy Baker
Susan Horner
Jenny Wright
Linda Webb

Jon Holloway
Moya Meredith-Smith
Liz Wilmot
Darrell Webb

Linda Cargill
Ann Peterken
Dennis Wilmot
Sarah Selvanathan

Linda Cargill