

PARISH CHURCH OF BARBOURNE ST STEPHEN

2025

ANNUAL REPORT



*(Left) Eco-Champions Lynda & Chris showing our Bronze and Silver Eco Awards
(Right) Our Eco-Team at work creating the raised beds*

Michelle Walsh - Parish Administrator & PCC Secretary
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1137099

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The Parochial Church Council of Barbourne St Stephen

Annual Report for the year ending December 31st 2025

The PCC presents its annual report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2025. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS 102) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011, the Charities Act 2022 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published in October 2019.

Reference and Administration details

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Barbourne, St Stephens, (also known as St Stephens PCC), St Stephens Church, St Stephens Street, Worcester, WR3 7HS is registered with the Charity Commissioners, number: 1137099.

Current PCC members (until 2026 Annual Parochial Church Meeting)

Ex officio:

Chair/ Priest in Charge: Revd Lindsey Coulthard*

Churchwardens: Ruth Scotson & Kevin Maltby (Elected May 2025)

Deanery Synod

Paul Kennet, William Harwood & Nigel Wake (to APCM 2026)

Elected Officers, Members and Representatives of the PCC

Elected Officers:

Lay Vice Chair: William Harwood

PCC Treasurer: Richard Hemmings

Electoral Roll Officer: Paul Kennett

Safeguarding Officer: Carol Amos*

Health & Safety Officer: Pat Kendall (with Nigel Wake supporting).

Elected Members (with varying terms of office)

Richard Hemmings (to APCM 2026), Rob Holdsworth (to APCM 2026), Pat Kendall (to APCM 2026), Judith Gerrard (to APCM 2026), Carol Amos (to APCM 2027), Richard Poppleton (to APCM 2027), Beryl Thorp - resigned from post April 2025: Replaced by Colin Magee (to APCM 2027), Kirstie-Anwyl Hughes (to APCM 2028), Phillipa Boulter (to APCM 2028).

Representatives of the PCC:

PCC Secretary: Michelle Walsh**

Independent Examiner: M K Skellum FCA (Ballards LLP, 11c Kingswood Road, Hampton Lovett, Droitwich, Worcestershire, WR9 0QH)

*Trustees to whom responsibility has been delegated for the reporting of serious safeguarding and other incidents to the Charity Commission.

** Appointed Officer not PCC Member

Structure, Governance and Management

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

The work of the PCC is carried out at regular meetings, throughout the year. We met seven times during 2025. The work of the PCC was also undertaken through meetings of various sub-groups:

Standing Committee: Revd Lindsey Coulthard, Kevin Maltby, Ruth Scotson, William Harwood & Richard Hemmings.

Community Support Group: Revd Lindsey Coulthard, Richard Poppleton, William Harwood, Ruth Scotson, Kevin Maltby and Adrian Everett.

Joint Oversight Committee for Children Youth and Families (combined with Claines & St George's churches)
Representing St Stephens: Sarah Smith & Robyn Rooney.

When they have met, these groups have provided reports to the full PCC meetings. These are in addition to regular reports and updates to PCC in relation to; Fabric, Family, Children & Youth, Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Finance. Regular reports are also received from our Deanery Synod representatives.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

We began 2025 with a full PCC and we are very lucky to be blessed with experienced and committed members who collectively ensure St Stephen's runs efficiently with much thought and care. I would particularly like to mention all those who's duties go beyond PCC meetings and who dedicate much time behind the scenes; In particular I would like to thank: Carol our Safeguarding officer, Richard our Treasurer, Paul our Electoral Roll Officer and Ruth and Kevin our wonderful Churchwardens. This year in particular our Community Support Group have worked tirelessly to progress our Health & Sustainability priorities regarding Compassionate Church and this would not happen without the great efforts given by Revd Lindsey, Richard (P), William, Ruth, Kevin, and also Adrian Everett, who as our Fabric Lead gives so many hours to the safe keeping of the church overseeing fabric matters. Thanks also to our marvellous ministry team, led by Lindsey and ably assisted by an ever-growing team of clergy, readers and trainees. We really appreciate your hard work and efforts in making St Stephen's such friendly and welcoming church.

In April 2025 Beryl Thorp made the decision it was time for her to step down from PCC duties. Beryl has been one of our longest ever serving members, serving 12 years on PCC and before this as churchwarden. Beryl had given it much thought before making this difficult decision, but she felt she could not fulfil her duties as she wanted. I would like to thank Beryl for the dedicated service she has given to PCC over so many years. Beryl having served a one year of a three-year term left a casual vacancy of 2 years. Colin Magee was elected to PCC to fill this 2-year post during May's APCM.

During the PCC meeting in May, Margaret Mandrell position on PCC was evaluated. Margaret was originally asked by Stuart Currie to join PCC in 2011 as an Ex-Officio member and after 13 years on PCC Margaret requested to be relieved from PCC duties. (Church Representation Rule - M15(h) states that Readers do not have to be on PCC but can be elected if the annual meeting decides they should be. PCC fully supported Margaret's request to step down from PCC duties, with there being no obligation that she remains on PCC. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Margaret for her many faithful years service to PCC.

During July's PCC meeting a change was made to how we discuss fabric matters at PCC. The fabric of the church is such a huge part of PCC decisions and with much time being taken up with Fabric matters during PCC meetings, it was agreed that we implement new and dedicated meetings purely for fabric issues. New

fabric meetings would take place bi-annually in October and April and our first PCC Fabric meeting was held on 22nd October.

On 6th September we had a much-needed Away Day, which was a wonderful day spent at St. Nicholas Barn including a homemade lunch and walks around the historic St. Nicholas Church and grounds. The theme of the day was Pause, Clarify & Connect which held many discussions, activities, thoughts and the sharing of ideas including the direction of Our Health & Sustainability plan. We also asked questions including; Where do we see God at work in our church? and Why does the PCC exist? These discussions moved us to create and agree our first PCC Code of Conduct. We had a very enjoyable and productive time together.

I am so very grateful to Rev, Lindsey and all members of the PCC for their continued help and support over that past year.

Michelle Walsh
PCC Secretary

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

We entered the Year 2025 with an Electoral Roll numbering 154.

2025 saw the complete rebuild of the Roll in accordance with the C of E rules which happens every 6 years. This took effect for the 2025 APCM.

After the rebuild and with further revisions during 2025 we left 2025 with a Roll of 143 people.

It is interesting to note that still more than 47% of members of the Roll live outside the Parish Boundaries!

It is only Electoral Roll members who are eligible to vote for and stand for election to the PCC and other offices within the Parish.

The Roll complies with Data Protection Regulations as they stood at the APCM in 2025 and will be updated to any new Data Protection standards as necessary.

Access to the Electoral Roll is restricted on a “need to know” basis and is controlled by the Roll Officer and the Priest-in-Charge to who any queries should be addressed.

The Roll is for Church purposes only.

Paul Kennett
Electoral Roll Officer

The Parochial Church Council of Barbourne St Stephen PCC Decisions 2025

Meeting Date	Decisions made
22 nd January	Present: Lindsey Coulthard, Ruth Scotson, Richard Poppleton, Paul Kennett, William Harwood, David Anwyl-Hughes, Lynda Niccolls, Margaret Mandrell, Beryl Thorp, Carol Amos, Kevin Maltby, Nigel Wake, Richard Hemmings, Pat Kendall, Judith Gerrard, Michelle Walsh, Adrian Everett. Agreed: To pay an outside contractor (quoted c£500) to tackle the much overgrown and out of control hedges before the birds begin nesting. Agreed: To move the 9 Lesson & Carols Service from the (extremely busy) 2nd week in December to the 3rd week in December; to commit more energy and with the hope of also serving refreshments afterwards. Approved: Safeguarding and Vulnerable Adults policies.
26 th March	Present: Lindsey Coulthard, Ruth Scotson, Richard Poppleton, Paul Kennett, William Harwood, David Anwyl-Hughes, Lynda Niccolls, Robert Holdsworth, Beryl Thorp, Carol Amos, Kevin Maltby, Nigel Wake, Richard Hemmings, Pat Kendall, Judith Gerrard, Michelle Walsh, Adrian Everett, Heather Murphy, Brother Michael of Mucknell Abbey. Approved: South Porch repairs to proceed under CWC contractors. Starting mid-August to finish by end October. Proposed by Rob Holdsworth and seconded by Carol Amos. Approved: (Unanimously). For a Baby changing facility to be placed in the North porch including curtain and light. Approximate costs c£300. Agreed: To replace the old and small Open church sign on Droitwich Rd, replacing with tall fabric banner(s) successfully used before. Cost c£100.
APCM 18 th May	Present: Revd. Lindsey Coulthard (Chairman), 52 parishioners plus 1 Zoom attendee. Elected: Churchwardens: Ruth Scotson, Kevin Maltby Elected to PCC: Kirstie Anwyl-Hughes & Philippa Boulter (3-year term) Colin Magee (Casual Vacancy/2-year term) Reports Received: Clergy, Secretary, Churchwarden, Electoral Roll, Treasurer, Safeguarding, Fabric, Deanery Synod, Serving Team, Family, Youth & Children, Good Companions, Sunday Morning Refreshments, Open Church, Craft and Chatter, Bell Ringers, Pastoral Visitors, Sunday Stars, Little Stars, Bishop Allenby Hall, Home Groups (x2).
28 th May	Present: Lindsey Coulthard, William Harwood, Kevin Maltby, Richard Hemmings, Richard Poppleton, Paul Kennett, Rob Holdsworth, Pat Kendall, Judith Gerrard, Carol Amos, Kirstie Anwyl-Hughes, Philippa Boulter, Colin Magee, Michelle Walsh. <u>Election of officers</u> <u>Election of Lay Chair</u> William Harwood was proposed by Richard Poppleton and seconded by Richard Hemmings. <u>Election of Secretary</u> Michelle Walsh was proposed by Kirstie Anwyl-Hughes and Seconded by Richard Hemmings. <u>Election of Treasurer</u> Richard Hemmings was proposed by Judith Gerrard and seconded by Paul Kennett. <u>Election of Electoral Roll Officer</u> Paul Kennett was proposed by Richard Hemmings and seconded by Philippa Boulter. <u>Election of Standing Committee</u> Lindsey Coulthard, Kevin Maltby, Ruth Scotson, William Harwood & Richard Hemmings. Richard Hemmings was proposed by Kevin Maltby and seconded by Richard Poppleton

	William Harwood was proposed by Philippa Boulter and seconded by Pat Kendall. Agreed: Margaret Mandrell, after 13 years on PCC had requested to be relieved from PCC duties. (CRR- M15(h) states that Readers do not have to be on PCC and Margaret was fully supported by PCC to step down. Approved: Phase 1 - Compassionate Church - Access and inclusion. PCC discussed and approved the updated to the Health and Sustainability plan, including returning the iron gates to the porch. Agreed: (unanimously) To present Organist Nick Dunster with an Honorarium gift. Approved: Updated Fire Evacuation Procedure Approved: The use of (Diocesan approved) Online Dashboard to keep track of volunteers, DBS checks and training.
23 rd July	Present: Lindsey Coulthard, William Harwood, Rob Holdsworth, Pat Kendall, Judith Gerrard, Carol Amos, Nigel Wake, Kirstie Anwyl-Hughes, Philippa Boulter, Colin Magee, Michelle Walsh. Agreed: (Unanimous) To buy a brand-new dishwasher which could be left unattended whilst mid-cycle. The risk of anything untoward happening mid-cycle whilst unattended would be extremely rare. Agreed: Wrist alarms to be purchased and worn for each individual keyholder for additional safety when opening the North door, especially when dark. Cost £7.50 each. Agreed: The following 6 charities were agreed (unanimously) - To split the annual 3K of charitable giving funds equally between: Our Partner Parish - St Mark's, Mafisa in Tanzania, Worcester Snoezelen Project, Acorns Trust, Behind the Smile, Magg Day Centre and the Woodland Trust. Approved: (Unanimously) New worshipping group – Forest church, to be 'based' at St Stephen's, 4-5 times per year and to alternate with Messy church at St George's. Approved: Safeguarding Annual Approval. Path of God (POG) based at St Stephens, three-church group. Approved: St Stephen's privacy notice was approved subject to amending the contact details from Judy Hood to Michelle Walsh. Agreed: New PCC meetings, purely for Fabric issues - To take place bi-annually in October and April. First Fabric Meeting will take place Wednesday 22nd October. Approved: (Unanimously) To employ a part-time cleaner; to advertise a paid cleaning position, in-house to begin with.
24 th September	Present: Lindsey Coulthard, William Harwood, Ruth Scotson, Kevin Maltby, Richard Poppleton, Paul Kennett, Pat Kendall, Judith Gerrard, Carol Amos, Nigel Wake, Kirstie Anwyl-Hughes, Philippa Boulter, Colin Magee, Michelle Walsh. Agreed: Lone Working Policy. The policy was agreed in principle with Risk Assessments to follow. Agreed: (Majority) (Michelle Walsh not present) to increase Michelle Walsh's rate of pay for her duties as Parish Administrator - To take effect from 1st October.
22 nd October Fabric Meeting	Present: Lindsey Coulthard, William Harwood, Ruth Scotson, Kevin Maltby, Richard Poppleton, Paul Kennett, Pat Kendall, Judith Gerrard, Carol Amos, Richard Hemmings, Philippa Boulter, Colin Magee, Kirstie Anwyl-Hughes, Adrian Everett, Michelle Walsh (MW). Agreed: Ecclesiastical Risk Management Report - Hot Works. Any worker/contractor completing hot works will need to remain on-site for 30 minutes following completion, the following 60 minutes of recommended watch time would be completed by someone 'trained' on-site and to be agreed beforehand. Agreed: A new proposal plan and architect drawings had been created with some modifications. The PCC were happy with the proposed modifications and agreed we send the plans to the DAC as they currently stand, with comments for preliminary approval.

	Agreed: (Majority) QI Report – Summary of recommendations. To focus our attention on priorities 1,2 & 3, only looking at priority 4 (currently) if works happen to coincide with other high priority work that would save on future costs. It was also agreed we would exclude priority 3 works on the pinnacles as this would coincide with a National Lottery Heritage funding application that would include the Phase 1 works.
26 th November	Present: Lindsey Coulthard, William Harwood, Ruth Scotson, Kevin Maltby, Rob Holdsworth, Paul Kennett, Pat Kendall, Judith Gerrard, Carol Amos, Kirstie Anwyl-Hughes, Colin Magee, Michelle Walsh, Lynda Niccolls. Agreed: PCC agreed numerous changing of wording to the proposed Environmental policy. Agreed: (Unanimously) The Clearly Simpler Safeguarding Hubs Service Agreement was reviewed. All voted in favour to adopt the policy. Approved: (Unanimously) PCC voted on a resolution to agree the location, model and dimensions of new bicycle racks. Proposed by Carol Amos and seconded by Rob Holdsworth.

Michelle Walsh – PCC Secretary

CLERGY REPORT

Dear friends,

As we gather for this year's Annual Parochial Church Meeting, I want to begin by offering my heartfelt thanks for the love, faithfulness, resilience, and generosity that continue to characterise our life together at St Stephens. Our APCM is not simply a legal requirement; it's a moment to pause, to look honestly at where we have been, and to discern where God is calling us next. This past year has brought its share of joys and challenges, but through it all, I have been continually encouraged by the depth of commitment within this parish and the quiet, steady ways in which God's grace has been at work among us. We continue to live up to our strapline: *'Praising God and Serving the Community'* and we do this in so many wonderful ways.

Our worship remains the beating heart of our common life. Sunday by Sunday, Thursday by Thursday, in person and online, we gather to offer praise and to be nourished by God's word and Holy Sacrament in the Eucharist. Attendance has been steady with the usual increase at major festivals. Christmas and Easter were particularly uplifting this year, not only because of the numbers present but because of the palpable sense of reverence and joy that filled the church. My grateful thanks to Pete Scotson and Michelle Walsh for enabling our Zoom community to worship with us.

We also took the opportunity at Christmas to introduce donations via a QR Code which was well received and got our fundraising for accessible toilet facilities off to a good start. Our Daily Office of Morning and Evening Prayer continues to be the steady pattern that enables us to come together with our neighbouring churches to pray for the world, the Church and for each other's communities; so my grateful thanks to all who share in the leadership of this too.

I want to express my gratitude to Nick Dunster our organist, our choir and other musicians, whose ministry enriches our worship immeasurably. Their dedication helps us lift our hearts to God. Likewise, our altar party, servers, readers, intercessors, welcome team and those who prepare the church week by week all contribute to the beauty and dignity of our worship. Thank you for your faithfulness.

This year we have continued to deepen our commitment to discipleship. Our joint Lent and Advent courses were well attended and sparked thoughtful conversation, and the two thriving home groups that meet

throughout the year have provided space for prayer, fellowship, and honest exploration of faith. I am most grateful to those who host and lead these groups.

Our presence in the community remains strong and our twice weekly Open Church continues to be a much-loved place of welcome and companionship, particularly for those who live alone along with Craft and Chatter on the fourth Saturday of each month. Good Companions also draws folk in from all walks of life to enjoy wonderful speakers and trips out together. All of these expressions of love for one another and especially for the lonely and vulnerable are part of our wonderful identity in Christ.

Whilst it's important that we draw people into church I'm aware of the many ways in which a great number of you serve our community beyond the walls of our worship space – again, a true reflection of our strapline – *'Praising God and Serving the Community'*. At risk of missing some folk out, I won't name any names here but I do include just some of the charities and organisations that I know some of you champion or volunteer at: Worcester Talking News for the Visually Impaired, Christians Against Poverty, Christian Aid, Worcester Repair Café, Worcester Wheels Community Transport, The Good Soil Trust, Behind the Smile, Worcester Cathedral Volunteer Guides and Stewards, Worcester Street Café and Worcester Foodbank.

Our links with our local schools continue to flourish and I'm immensely grateful to those that share in this ministry either through Godly Play, Open the Book or assisting with large school visits for 'Experience Church' Events – all of which provide the opportunity to introduce young people to the love of Jesus. We also have a wonderful team of volunteers for joint Children, Youth and Family events so my thanks also to those of you that give your time to Messy Church, Junior Stars and Path of God Youth Group.

The care of our church building is both a privilege and a responsibility. This year has seen significant progress on essential maintenance, including the installation of an accessible ramp outside the West Porch Door and the restoration of the stonework to the South Porch. I want to thank our fabric lead, Adrian Everett and team for their tireless work in ensuring that our building remains safe, welcoming, and fit for purpose. I also wish to thank Richard Poppleton, William Harwood, Adrian Everett, Ruth and Kevin who form the Community Support Group and give of their time and expertise in helping to keep us on track with each phase of our vision for Compassionate Church.

Financially, we are stable, but we don't have huge reserves so will need to embark on some serious fundraising to assure any grant making bodies of our commitment to Compassionate Church. Rising costs, particularly for utilities, have affected us, as they have affected all households across the country. I want to thank our treasurer Richard Hemmings for his careful stewardship and clear reporting. A special thanks to Richard who is stepping down at this APCM after many years faithful service. I also want to express my gratitude to all of you who give so generously of your talents, time and finance; whether through regular planned giving, one-off donations, or fundraising efforts. Your generosity sustains our ministry and enables us to serve our community. As we look ahead, I encourage us all to reflect prayerfully on our giving; since stewardship is not simply about meeting budgets, it's an expression of our gratitude to God, and our commitment to the mission of the church.

We've been blessed with so many good things this past year not least, a gloriously long, hot summer which enabled us to gather outdoors for Strawberries and Wine at Meriel's and for Hymns and Pimms in the churchyard where we sang our top ten favourites; there was even a Christmas Carol in the mix! We also enjoyed another wonderful Autumn Fayre in collaboration with Sticky Fingers which brought many faces, old and new to the church and grounds. One of the best highlights for me, personally, was the acquisition of our Silver ECO Church Award so my very grateful thanks to Lynda Niccolls and Chris Allen for driving this agenda forward and keeping us focused on creation care.

The year ahead will bring further opportunities for collaboration with our neighbours at Claines and St Georges Churches, and for growth, renewal, and deeper engagement with our community as we move forward with our reordering and development. We will continue to review our Health and Sustainability Plan on a regular basis to ensure that we remain focused on our priorities whilst continuing to be rooted in prayer and open to the Spirit.

Finally, I want to express my deep gratitude to Michelle Walsh, our Parish Administrator and PCC Secretary, each member of the PCC, Ruth and Kevin our churchwardens, Revd. Ann, Revd. Stephen, Revd. Rob, Margaret Mandrell and all who serve in leadership roles. Your ministry, wisdom, patience, and commitment make my ministry possible. To everyone who contributes in ways large and small—through leading worship, prayer, practical help, or simply by being present—thank you. You are the body of Christ in this place, and it is a privilege to serve alongside you.

As we move forward, let's do so with hope, trusting that the God who has been faithful in the past will continue to guide and sustain us. May we be a community shaped by love, committed to sharing the light of Christ with all whom we encounter – *'Praising God and Serving the Community'*.

Revd. Lindsey Coulthard
Priest-in-Charge

TREASURER'S REPORT TO THE APCM **(YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2025)**

The Accounts show that we managed a small surplus of £719 in respect of the unrestricted (or the general) funds of the Church and excluding the unrealised surplus in the year on the value of the investments. We managed to pay the full sum of the Ministry Share during the year. The small surplus was after writing off the full cost of £4,605 for the changes to the porch ramp and the full reimbursed costs by the insurance company for the roof repairs. Turning to the Accounts and starting at page 17 which gives details of the items of income and expenditure:

- a) The total money received under planned giving (that is the money paid by standing order or under the Parish Giving Scheme) has shown a slightly movement from the previous year of £71,605 to £70,348. The move to use the Parish Giving Scheme helps to reduce the administration time dealing with the monthly receipts and to automatically recover the gift aid on a monthly basis without having to do the work ourselves.
- b) The grants and donations in the main relate to monies received for specific purposes.

Whilst the accounts appear to show a healthy position, but they do not account for potential substantial quotations for works to the buildings to carry out basic repairs, particularly from the Quinquennial review and the PCC is prioritising the works with the funds available.

If you have any questions on the accounts, please ask me or e-mail your question to Richard.hemmings211@btinternet.com

Richard Hemmings
Treasurer

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

The one thing you can rely on being a Churchwarden is that life is never dull. In addition to our regular duties at services, compiling daily prayers and devising rotas and displays, we have enjoyed a wide variety of activities this year. They have ranged from inspecting wasp infestations in the tower, to participating in Church Huddles with our Mission Accompanier and in discussions with Worcester City Council about the maintenance of the Churchyard.

The other thing we are certain of is that it is a privilege to work alongside so many talented, dedicated and willing volunteers. Painting the Church railings under the guidance of George Cummings and assisting at the Autumn Church fete were two of the highlights of the year. Our thanks to all the team: welcomers, tea and coffee makers, cake bakers, church cleaners, eco-church flower growers and arrangers, bell ringers - and any others we may have forgotten who make our lives so much easier! We are aware of the vast amount of time and effort and resource that goes into the maintenance of our Church and its fabric. The projects involving improving access via the ramp outside the West Door and the repair of the Church porch are testament to the skill and dedication of the Community Support Group and our fabric team. Thank you!

We are pleased to note that in both the 'traditional' and 'Connect' services congregation numbers are healthy and consistent, It has been a delight to work alongside the young people of the parish whether at events in Church, or in activities at our local school through the 'Open the Book' programme. We feel blessed for all the work of Heather Murphy and for the direction and energy she has provided.

We are also enjoying our developing links with St George's and St John the Baptist at Claines and to have the opportunity to participate in worship at a different Church is something from which we can all benefit and enjoy. There have been so many special services at St Stephen's this year that have enriched our pattern of worship, from our Easter Vigil to the visit of the Bishop of Morogoro.

There have been many personal challenges, and we are aware that new issues will emerge as we seek to welcome new office holders and develop our Church buildings in the year ahead. However, through prayer, continued support for each other and by keeping our eyes fixed on our ultimate goals of praising God and serving the community, we remain very optimistic and look forward to the year ahead with confidence.

Kevin Maltby and Ruth Scotson

SERVING TEAM REPORT

We are most fortunate at St. Stephen's to have a small team of experienced versatile individuals who undertake serving, sacristan, verging and training duties.

Members of the team are involved with virtually all services during the course of the year They robe and assist clergy by being part of the altar party either as deacon or sub-deacon. The team regularly provides a crucifer at services and when needed a thurifer.

In addition, several members of the team are authorised to assist with the administration of the Eucharist.

Much of the team's work is undertaken before and after a service takes place. Ensuring that the church altars are correctly dressed for the liturgical season, supplies of wine, wafers, linen/purificators and candles are available along with laundry work and looking after church silver and vestments, are all part of a very varied workload.

Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Advent and Christmas are all busy times with several services and liturgical colour changes. Thankfully, the pace is somewhat slower at other times of the year.

I am extremely grateful to all the team for their continued support and commitment not just at the busy times but throughout the year.

David Anwyl-Hughes

20th April 2026

CHURCH FABRIC REPORT

Another interesting year with two big repair projects and one new facility project successfully completed.

We fixed the Nave roof damage (the aftermath of December 2024's Storm Darrah), the repair requiring 1245 new tiles that were double pinned to their batons: this technique appears to be coping with the recent storms to date.

The new ramp to the West Porch approach has made a massive improvement to our accessibility and emergency egress facilities.

The South Porch stonework repairs has put smiles on everyone seeing its rejuvenation.

The Fabric Team have also supported a number of Eco-Church Team's initiatives.

As part of the Community Support Group, Fabric Team members are helping with the development of our Church to meet the current and future needs of our congregation and the local community, and throughout the year we have been looking at improving the Church's facilities further and the much-needed repairs to the Tower as a major project in the near future.

The main works and surveys undertaken this year included:

- January: Hedgerow trimmed along St Stephen's Street. Lady Chapel lighting changed to all new LED lamps.
- February/March: Church Nave Roof repairs undertaken fitting 1245 new tiles plus 6m of new guttering. Raised beds installed along east wall of churchyard.
- March: New glass panes installed in Tower staircase. New carpet fitting extended to Church North Aisle pew platform.
- May: Baby Changing unit installed outside Church toilet.
- May/June: West Porch Ramp installed with handrailing using local contractors. Walkway roof gap with church was closed.
- July/August: HB Room - New dishwasher installation. New larder fridge installed on worktop.
- August: Hall Kitchen walls / window frame repainted. Churchyard wall iron railings painted.
- September: South Porch Iron Gates re-instated. Water Butt installed. HB Room - new water heater installed replacing leaking unit.
- October: Church West Porch temporary Air Curtain installed.
- Oct/Nov/December: South Porch stonework refurbished.
- November: Bike Stand installed
- December: South Porch Gutters refurbished.

Other works undertaken through the year include: servicing/testing of gas boilers, Church clock, PAT Testing, Annual Fire & Emergency Equipment Inspection, replacing failing lights/batteries, minor plumbing maintenance, clearing gutters and roofs, rodent control measures, Churchyard maintenance. The Hall's toilets have required numerous minor repairs throughout the year highlighting the need to refurbish these in the near future.

We have not been able to secure funding for Net Zero Carbon projects as yet; our plans are to make some small changes with noteworthy advances towards this goal.

My sincere thanks go to those who have assisted me in the above undertakings through the year, particularly Richard Poppleton and Paul Kennett.

Adrian Everett
Fabric Lead

COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUP REPORT

The Community Support Group has been meeting regularly to ensure the Compassionate Church Project progresses as laid out in the vision statements provided to the congregation over the past few years. Compassionate Church you may recall was part of our Health and Sustainability Plan – to make our church fit for the future and broaden our usage for the wider community - a repurposing and reordering if you like.

The main focus over the last year has been the building works to help get St Stephen's towards a more flexible and welcoming community space as well as a strong focus for worship. We feel that we have achieved 3 major milestones this year and have a further vision for additional works.

1) The West Door Ramp - The steps on the West Door were successfully updated to a ramp in Summer 2025, thus improving access between the Bishop Allenby Hall and St Stephen's as well as providing a better access point for all comers. With additional railing installed, it has been deemed a great success in keeping with the rest of the building.

2) The South Porch Renewal - This has been the work to repair the stonemasonry, secure the flooring and re-install the gates (to reduce anti-social behaviour). This work was completed in December 2025 in time for the major Christmas services and it has been really good to see the South Porch be a better welcoming entrance for our church.

3) The Permanent Faculty for the North and South Aisle pew removal - This application is currently with DAC to finalise the removal of the church pews to enable a more flexible space for the many groups that use the church and to better communicate the next phase of works. The Temporary Faculty for just the North Aisle pews has been deemed a major success with a further improvement of the North Aisle space with new tables and chairs facilitated (as well as new additions to the children's area) to help bring the space to life. It is seeing a significant amount of use.

Next Steps: Our attention now turns to the Tower Project. This has become an amalgamation of the Quinquennial Report recommendations for the tower alongside the Compassionate Church plan to improved the facilities. This project is likely to be an extended project due to the scope and scale of the works. More information will be displayed in the South Aisle once the Faculty is approved, but we now have an early preliminary figure of £250,000 for the full program of works including:-

- 1) Additional of new toilet facilities inside the Tower
- 2) New storage above the toilets to store equipment
- 3) Addressing the exterior of the tower, including stonework, repointing, and pinnacles

A programme of fundraising is now being considered so any ideas are welcome. Full details (including plans, example images and further ideas) are to be provided to the congregation after the Permanent Faculty is approved and implemented, but we have included a copy of the update from March 2026 regarding the Faculty.

Please speak to William Harwood, Ruth Scotson, Kevin Maltby, Richard Poppleton, Adrian Everett or any PCC member if you have any questions.

William Harwood

ECO-CHURCH REPORT

2025 was a wonderful year for Eco Church and with support from many people we made great progress.

Two raised beds have been established with the intention of supporting Barbara's aim to be more self sufficient with church flowers. They have the added bonus of brightening things up for people waiting at the bus stop. We marked off a corner of the churchyard to have a no mow meadow area which struggled due to the hot dry summer, but this will be an ongoing project. A compost bin helps to retain green waste on site and increase recycling while a water butt collects rainwater from the church hall and can be used for the raised beds and memorial flowers. Cycle racks have been installed by the church hall, while within the church we aim to use Fairtrade tea and coffee, environmentally friendly cleaning products and avoid use of disposables for church functions wherever possible.

We are grateful to the fabric team for their commitment to work with consideration for the environment wherever possible. At regular intervals we meet with members from Claines and St George's for a joint approach to working towards the Church of England's goal of net zero by 2030.

The high spot of the year was of course the achievement of our A Rocha Silver Award and we thank everyone for their support in this. We hope that the whole congregation will make caring for God's Creation part of their lives.

Lynda Niccolls

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

Currently St Stephen's is at 95% compliance with safeguarding requirements which, in comparison with 76% across The Diocese means that we are doing well.

All volunteers at St Stephen's have relevant the DBS clearance where appropriate including those who took on new roles during the last year for Open the Book and Messy Church.

From May 2025 I have started using The Parish Hub in conjunction with the Parish Dashboard. Apart from it being a much more secure way of holding data, it is a much easier and efficient way for me to keep track of volunteers' DBS and training status. My thanks go to The PCC for approving my use of it. Up to now 28% of PSOs across The Diocese are using The Hub and with the very positive feedback received from those of us who are, that is likely to increase over time.

After a safeguarding talk given to the congregation in July, stressing among other things the mandatory requirement for all volunteers, whatever their role, to complete safeguarding training, I was very encouraged to find that several people contacted me to ask how they could access the Basic Awareness Safeguarding Course. Thank you to those of you who took the time to do this.

I encourage anyone who hasn't completed the training to get in touch, and I'll send you the link. I would be very happy to provide any support necessary to help with this.

Safeguarding remains a standing item on The PCC agenda.

My Thanks go to Lindsey and The PCC for their continued support.

Carol Amos

Parish Safeguarding Officer

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES REPORT

2025 was a year of significant growth, deepening relationships, and creative mission across the Children, Youth & Families Ministry. Serving across Claines, St Stephen's, and St George's, the ministry continued to build bridges between church, school, and community life, offering spaces where children, young people, and families encountered faith, experienced belonging, and grew in confidence and connection. The following reflects the breadth and depth of that work over the past year.

Partnerships with local schools flourished throughout 2025, becoming one of the most fruitful and consistent areas of ministry. We worked particularly closely with six primary schools—St George's, Riversides, Tudor Grange, Northwick Manor, Claines CofE, and North Worcester Primary—as well as Sticky Fingers Nursery. These relationships grew in trust, visibility, and mutual support. Regular assemblies, RE lessons, Godly Play sessions, and Experience events offered children opportunities to explore Christian stories and values in creative and reflective ways. Many schools requested multiple visits each half term, and several invited us to support Harvest, Remembrance, and Christmas services. The reintroduction and expansion of Open the Book was a particular highlight. A new team was trained at St Stephen's, supported by volunteers from across the churches and the wider community, and a second Claines team was trained with the hope of taking Open the Book into North Worcester Primary Academy. Thanks to everyone involved in our school ministry, with particular appreciation for all Open the Book volunteers; to Gill Parkin and Rachel Cramp for delivering Godly Play; to our school governors; to everyone involved in our Experience Days; and of course, to Rev Lindsey and Rev Sarah.

POG developed into a vibrant and stable youth community made up of young people from across our three churches and parishes. Meeting fortnightly during term time, the group settled at St Stephen's Church Hall, a venue that offered consistency and accessibility. With a mixture of fellowship, food, games, and Bible study, attendance grew, with many young people returning regularly and new faces joining through outreach events such as the Bring a Friend Quiz Night. A committed volunteer team emerged, offering reliable leadership and pastoral support. The sense of community and belonging within POG continued to grow throughout the year. Special thanks go to Rev Lindsey, Rev Sarah, Becky, Colin, Naomi, Elisabeth, and Rachel.

Seasonal events played a significant role in strengthening visibility and offering accessible entry points into church life. These gatherings drew families from across the parishes and beyond, often through school and nursery promotion. Easter Trails were set up across the three churches, signalling to passersby and the wider community that our churches value children and provide for them. Holy Week activities—including an Easter

Craft Morning and Sensory Stations of the Cross—welcomed around 50 people. Thank you to everyone involved in volunteering as part of this outreach throughout the year.

Our partnerships with the uniformed organisations continued to strengthen throughout 2025, with Brownies, Guides, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, and Explorer Scouts engaging with our churches in a variety of meaningful ways. We are grateful that Rev Lindsey continues her chaplaincy role with the cadets, strengthening our pastoral presence among young people in the wider community. These relationships remain an important part of our ministry, helping young people encounter the church in positive and memorable ways.

Messy Church continued to be a joyful expression of cross-church collaboration throughout 2025, offering creative, hands-on worship for families from across the community. Sessions earlier in the year welcomed over 40 attendees and created opportunities for children and adults to explore faith together through craft, story, and shared hospitality.

Communication improved with the development of a monthly CY&F round-up, which reached a growing mailing list of almost 200 people and included resources such as *Your Baptism Journey* and *Thrive*. This helped families stay connected and informed, even if they were not regular Sunday attenders.

The year laid strong foundations for the future: strengthening school partnerships, discerning the future of early-years groups, and continuing to nurture a culture where children and families were not only welcomed but celebrated as part of our shared life of faith. Thank you again to everyone involved in all ways and thank you for all your prayers.

Heather Murphy

SUNDAY STARS REPORT

Sunday Stars, the monthly toddler church, continued to offer simple worship, story, and play for young children and their families. Attendance fluctuated, particularly over the summer, and the widening age range prompted reflection about the group's future shape. Towards the end of the year, it was proposed that Sunday Stars would be replaced by **Junior Stars**, a new Sunday School scheduled for the fourth Sunday of each month. We said goodbye to Sunday Stars in November and began building a volunteer team for Junior Stars, led by Lindsey, Heather, and Robyn. Many thanks to Rev Lindsey, Robyn, Dot, Catherine, Michelle, Rob, and Julia for all you did for Sunday Stars during 2025.

Heather Murphy

LITTLE STARS REPORT

The early-years groups across our three-churches (Little Stars/ Little Fish & Little Friends) remained a vital point of connection for families across the parishes. Each group has its own character and routine, and together they formed a network of welcome, pastoral care, and gentle faith exploration. Little Stars navigated natural transitions as children moved into school and nursery but welcomed several new babies and continued to be a warm and welcoming group offering free play, toys, crafts, activities, singing, stories, and snacks free of charge. A particular highlight was our teddy bears' picnic to mark the end of the academic year and wish our older children farewell. Special thanks to Michelle, Angela, Margaret, Poppy, Jean, Chris, and Rev Lindsey. If joining our team of volunteers at Little Stars is something that interests you, please get in touch with Lindsey or Michelle at any time.

Heather Murphy

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

The Worcester Area Deanery met for three Synods during 2025, with an average attendance of around 39 members, alongside a well-supported Ascension Day service and a widely attended Deanery Prayer Event. The year has been marked by strong participation, thoughtful learning and a shared commitment to prayer, mission and mutual encouragement across our churches.

Our March Synod focused on ministry with children and young people, with contributions from Simon Hill (iSingPOP), local youth leaders and parents, highlighting the importance of creativity, partnership and realistic expectations across the Deanery. In July, hosted at Martley, we welcomed our new Area Dean, Revd Kalantha Brewis, and explored Climate Justice and the Diocese's Net Carbon Zero commitment, with input from Revd Sue Adeney (Eco Church) and practical discussion about sustainable buildings and lifestyles. Our November Saturday gathering centred on the themes of Fellowship, Discipleship and Stewardship, with contributions from parish leaders and Chris Ottershaw, Diocesan Stewardship Officer, introducing the Cornerstone resources to support financial sustainability. Throughout the year we also received diocesan updates on safeguarding, racial justice and ministry share, with parishes contributing over 71% of the requested total. We give thanks for a year of collaboration, leadership transition and renewed vision as we continue to grow together in faith and service.

Paul Fulbrook

PRAYING TOGETHER REPORT

This first started in June 2025 and has taken place on the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month ever since, from 9.30-10.10am. We met in the Church during the hot Summer but otherwise we group in the Hartley Brown room – entering through the back door of the Church. Its purpose is for each of us to journey together in our prayer life, provide a foundation to our Church life, and collectively support concerns about wider issues on our hearts. There are no experts in prayer which involves listening as much as talking, and silence is an essential element so we can hear God's "still, small voice". So there is not only an opportunity for open prayer (and no pressure to do so) but also for silent praying. Different people have come at different times, and it would be lovely to welcome more people, so please consider coming and growing together in our prayer life.

Diana Fulbrook

OPEN CHURCH REPORT

Hebrews 13v2

**Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers,
for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.**

Open Church happens every Thursday and every Saturday from 10:30am – 12:30pm. Our Church doors are open wide, to welcome anyone who would like to come in, to enjoy refreshments and a chat. Some people prefer to sit quietly on their own, in the pews, or go to the Lady Chapel, to light a candle and, of course, are welcome to do so.

We have 17 enthusiastic "Sitters" (i.e. welcomers/refreshment servers), with three or four on duty at each session. We are very pleased that we now have a dishwasher in the Hartley Brown room – this has meant less time spent on washing up and more time to sit with our visitors.

Thursdays are usually very busy, partly due to people staying on after the 10 o'clock Service. The number on Saturdays varies, depending on weather, holidays, etc but there are always enough people to provide a welcoming, friendly atmosphere. Conversation topics vary greatly, depending on the mix of people and there is much laughter.

Since the removal of pews in the North Aisle, we have had more room, which has been very welcome. We tried having separate small tables (as in a café), but found that, generally, people wanted to continue sharing one table. With more space we've been able to make the table bigger and it's usually filled.

It's been lovely to see friendships formed round the table and people helping each other by, for example, offering lifts to hospital appointments. As a result of coming to Open Church, some people now attend Church Services.

Open Church has enabled regular members of our congregation to get to know each other better. As well as talking to the person we are on duty with, other regular worshippers quite often call in, sometimes just for a chat and sometimes to do a "job" and enjoy a cup of tea/coffee. All this has drawn us closer together and made Church seem even friendlier and happier.

In October we had a "Sitters Lunch" in Church. This was preceded by talks from Lindsey and Carol covering subjects such as personal safety, fire evacuation and safeguarding. We all enjoyed a delicious lunch, at which we were kindly waited on by Lindsey. There was a warm and friendly atmosphere, and it was lovely to have the time to sit and chat to each other.

We really need more people to help with Open Church – so if you are at all interested in joining us, please talk to Lindsey or Sue. You can do as little or as much as you want. Many of the Sitters just do one "session" a month.

I am extremely grateful to all our Sitters, who give their time, so happily and willingly, to keep our Church open and welcoming. Many thanks, too, to the cake makers and biscuit providers. "A great team" – as one of our visitors said!

Sue Gething

CRAFT & CHATTER REPORT

Craft and Chat continues to be well attended from within and outside the church. Ladies bring their own projects and enjoy the company of like-minded people. (We have yet to have a gentleman join us but they would be most welcome). It is open to all ages and all crafts so if you have thought about coming along for a look, please do and you can always bring a friend. And just as a reminder we meet on the **fourth** Saturday of the month.

Kim Neale

SUNDAY MORNING REFRESHMENTS REPORT

Serving Sunday tea and coffee in Church after the 10 am service is a lovely way to get to know worshippers better, whether they are regulars to Church or are visiting us for the first time. Over the past year we have also served refreshments in the hall for special birthdays, joint Church services and special events, such as the visit from the Bishop of Morogoro.

Having additional cups in storage boxes has meant that we are more flexible and it is easier to move crockery from one venue to another. Our tasks have also been made easier by the purchase of both a dishwasher for the Hartley Brown room and two new lever action drink dispensers.

We are really grateful to our regular band of sixteen dedicated volunteers and to additional helpers who have stepped in, often at quite short notice. Special mention and thanks must also go to Iris Crittenden who has finally decided to hang up her apron after numerous years of loyal service.

If you might be interested in joining our rota and serving refreshments approximately once every eight weeks, please do have a word or send a message to ruth.scotson@gmail.com

Ruth Scotson

ST STEPHEN'S VISITORS /PASTORAL CARE GROUP REPORT

The members of the team have continued our work throughout the year, and we have been very well supported by Lindsey in all that we do. It's a privilege to be part of this team, and we're all conscious of how important it is for everyone still to feel connected to St Stephen's when they are unable to come to church.

There are two main areas for us: visiting individuals, and taking communion to our Care Homes.

Visits to an individual may be needed on a long-term basis or just for a brief period of time, and either is fine for us; we bring communion, but equally if what's needed is only a chat, that's fine too.

Our Care Home visits with communion happen on Thursdays once a month, and two of us lead a service in one of the Home's main rooms, with a hymn, a bible reading and a short 'thought for the day', followed by communion, using wafers already consecrated at church. We are also happy to repeat this for an individual in their room if they can't come to the main room.

It's also right that we have regularly met together as a team with Lindsey, for mutual support, to pray together, and to have a catch-up.

I know it's been in the weekly news sheet, but if you are ever aware of someone in need of a visit, do let one of the clergy know and they'll make sure that the request is answered.

Rob Holdsworth

A team of five visit Noele Court, the flats for "older people", next to the Church. They provide a monthly Afternoon Tea in the lounge, for any residents who would like to attend. It gives those who come, an opportunity to chat to each other and to the visitors from Church, while enjoying light refreshments. Lindsey usually comes too, and the afternoon ends with a short reflection, hymns and prayers. In December there was a special Christmas Tea and Carol Singers from St. Stephen's, Claines and St. George's Churches joined the festivities. The residents really enjoy these visits and the Manager is very supportive. She encourages new residents to join the "Tea Timers" (the name suggested by a former resident).

"Open Church" on Thursdays and Saturdays provides a welcome to anyone who would like to come in for refreshments and a chat or just sit quietly in the pews.

Sue Gething

GOOD COMPANIONS REPORT

Looking Back over 2025...

It has been a privilege and delight to arrange an interesting programme of the events which we all enjoyed. We continue to attract in the region of 24 folks. Looking back over 2025, it was another busy year.

So here is a reminder of the highlights. There were -

10 talks; 6 outings; theatre visits to Dirty Rotten Scoundrels by WODs then Shine by WMTC; and at least 3 socials such as board games and cream tea.

Thanks to Rick driving a minibus we had 3 outings to Leominster; Wythall Transport Museum; Hop Shed;

Then a shared car trips to Swan pub at Wychbold; Bonnies at Grimley and not forgetting our tour around the Cathedral with Margaret, who pointed out many special features.

I'm hoping to make the focus for 2026 advertising our group to recruit new members. Now the parish wide Messenger has finished, we need new ideas of how to promote the group. Thanks to Michelle for adding our meetings to the Notice sheet each week.

Christine Allen

FLOWER REPORT

Thank you to all who supplied lovely flowers to enhance our Worship during 2025, all your efforts are really appreciated by the congregation. We do endeavour to arrange in a sustainable way, we ditched the use of floral foam a number of years ago now and we appreciate the use of local flowers and foliage. The Church yard has a number of shrubs which can be pruned for use in your arrangements and two raised beds were installed in the Church yard for growing our own flowers. I nurtured Paperwhite Narcissus bulbs which kindly flowered for the Christmas season and remained in flower until the middle of January.

A number of members of the team and congregation attended a very informative and helpful demonstration held in St George's Church, demonstrator, "Kathryn Hurst, Camomile Cornflowers" and a founding member of The Sustainable Church Flowers Support Group. She demonstrated using foliage, branches, seed heads and berries reflecting the late Autumn / Winter season, offering to the Lord what is seasonal and available.

We do have a number of vacant weeks on the rota for 2026 and if you feel this is something you are called to do either speak to me or pencil your name in a vacant week on the rota.

Barbara Everett



MUSIC REPORT

"It has been such a joy to support the music at St Stephen's this year. The choir has gone from strength to strength, enthusiastically taking on new hymns (with 'I saw the grass' becoming a firm favourite) and supporting the consolidation of two musical settings of the eucharist, meaning we can switch between them with confidence at different times in the liturgical year.

Musical variety is brought by having lively and engaging Connect services at the start of each month.

Choral highlights this year include an unaccompanied rendition of 'In the Bleak Midwinter' for our Nine Carols and Lessons service and many poignant moments singing the hymns at communion around the piano.

Future challenges include adding to the number of settings and further extending the repertoire by gradually introducing new hymns."

Nick Dunster

HOME GROUP REPORT – MONDAY EVENING

The house group has continued to meet faithfully over the past year, and it has been a real joy to journey together through some challenging and thought-provoking studies. We've explored Revelation, Ezekiel, 1 & 2 Peter, Jude, and the Apostles' Creed, all of which have helped deepen our faith and broaden our understanding of Scripture. One of the highlights of the year has been celebrating with Rob as he was ordained deacon, and we look forward with great excitement to his priesting in the coming months. The group remains a place of prayer, learning and fellowship, and we are grateful for all who take part.

Colin Magee

HOME GROUP REPORT- FRIDAY AFTERNOON

The Friday House Group meets for tea, coffee, cake and good-humoured chat; prayer, fellowship, serious reflection, discussion and exploration of Scripture – this year we have looked at the Parables and are currently studying Paul's epistle to the Ephesians.

You are very welcome to join us.

Kevin Maltby

BELL RINGERS REPORT

We have an enthusiastic friendly group who meet every Thursday to practice and every Sunday to ring for the 10am service. We are a group of 11 dedicated bellringers.

More experienced ringers from other towers often join us and share their knowledge with us as well as offer encouragement. Several of our band go to practice at other towers and are sometimes asked to make up numbers for weddings etc.

We always ring for special occasions such as Christmas and half muffled for Remembrance Sunday.

The bells at St. Stephen are popular with visitors and we have to limit the number who come as we are aware of our neighbours.

We have our own bell fund for expenses such as the annual maintenance of the bells, new ropes etc. and raise money by selling homemade marmalade and jam and at Christmas we donate to St Richards instead of giving Christmas cards.

We are all supportive of each other and are pleased to be part of St Stephen's church and do our part to welcome people to church. We enjoy having visitors and everyone is welcome to come and see us so long as they can climb up the tower steps!

Beryl Thorp

Tower Captain

BISHOP ALLENBY HALL REPORT

The BA Hall, as ever continues to be busy with multiple weekday evening activity throughout the year. Chess Club and Brownies continue to hire the hall on a weekly basis. Somers Folk-club and Camera Club continue their hire on a fortnightly basis, whilst Camera Club are beginning to add in more sessions. WI continue on a monthly basis with Cubs still continuing to use our hall as a 'temporary home' on the other available Wednesday evenings as their own Scout hut continues its structural repair.

Sticky Fingers Pre-School have had another strong year as they remain a very popular setting providing exceptional care and education to local young people. We are extremely fortunate to have a great relationship with Sticky Fingers and work so closely with them, sharing many things together.

Sunday Stars has gone from strength to strength at the BA hall; on the first Sunday of each month where the space provides the perfect setting for the young children and families who attend, I am sure this will continue as Sunday Stars evolves into Junior Stars next year. It was great to see the POG Youth group settle at the BA Hall this year beginning fortnightly meetings on a Sunday evening. We wish them all the best using the hall space as they continue to grow.

Weekend single bookings and party hire were solid this year, with multiple people using us again and again. We saw multiple weekend bookings for a local 'ladies' days group and also for 'all day' board game events. The hall was also used for multiple fundraising sales for both St Stephen's and other local charities, and yet again was used to make our Autumn Fayre the best it can be for the local community. It is great to see our church hall being used so diversely.

The hall and kitchen are still in need of a refurbishment and we await for approval and plans from PCC to move these forwards. Thanks to Claire Thomas for her continued care of the hall each week and also to Adrian Everett and Paul Kennett for their much-valued hall maintenance.

Michelle Walsh







