

The Astwell Benefice Annual Report 2025

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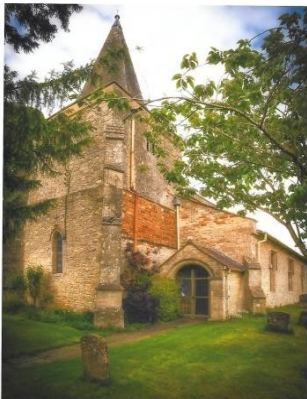
St. Mary Magdalene, Helmdon



St. Lawrence, Chapel of
Ease, Radstone



St Mary & St. Peter, Lois Weedon
& Weston with Plumpton



St. James the Great, Syresham



St. Mary the Virgin, Wappenham



St. John the Evangelist, Whitfield

Vision Statement:

Whilst always respecting the individual histories and identities of our six ancient buildings and their communities, we work as one, together as a united Benefice, in governance, in mission and in ministry. Our aims are:

- **to grow disciples, to reach out into our communities and beyond and to serve Christ in all we do**
- **to increase church attendance, involve children of all ages, share our knowledge, experience and enthusiasm and do all this as one Church in the body of Christ**

We are working together to face each new challenge through Christ, with Christ and in Christ.

The Astwell Benefice - six churches, one Mission

**The Astwell Benefice Parochial Church Council
2025 Annual Report**

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1. The Rector's Report 2025

Like 2024, 2025 involved for me the over-consumption of cake and coffee in the cause of being among people in the villages, churchgoers and non-churchgoers alike. The cause involved alcohol too; I continued to frequent The Crown and The Fat Landlord and I have now made it into the King's Head and Syresham Sports and Social club. I need to apologise to Wappenhamers, though, for still never having attended a Pub Night there. Must try harder!

Community-wise, a Rector ought to have to do with local Schools. Over the year I was part of the strong Church and Chapel presence at Syresham School. I took assemblies each week at St Loys in Lois Weedon - and it is very sad that that School has ceased to function. Thanks to the staff of the school, and particularly to headteacher Kathryn Crawford, for all they have done over the years. Groups from Helmdon School (not a Church School, of course) came occasionally to Helmdon Church and I hope the relationship between School and Church in this village will be strengthened over the next years.

As to Church life in Astwell, I continue to rejoice in the congregations' willingness and ability to run services, committees, social events, etc., without requiring much clergy input into making the arrangements. This requires very considerable effort on the part of those who lead their churches. I'm full of gratitude for what they do, as well as for the strong contributions made by many other congregation members in leading services, doing the readings and intercessions, readying the churches for worship, cleaning them, arranging flowers for them – and, indeed, to non-congregation members who help out with some of these tasks as well as ringing bells and looking after churchyards. I'd like to celebrate, too, the prayer groups there are in the Benefice and the study groups that convene at Advent and Lent. It's very good that we have a Benefice-wide Pastoral Care committee which seeks to keep an eye on those who may be in difficulties; very good, too, that we have many individuals who put themselves out to help neighbours in need.

We spent some time in the course of the year discussing whether becoming a single parish might allow us to work more efficiently together and achieve more by way of our service to our communities – and encourage our communities to become more engaged with their churches. The jury is out, for the moment, on that particular issue. However, we certainly achieved community impact through the *Let's shine Together* Festival and we raised over £11,000 for distribution to local good causes. This was an extraordinarily creative venture for a Benefice to undertake and huge congratulations are due to those involved in making the Festival happen. It's greatly to be hoped that the 2026 Festival is as successful as the first one or, indeed, more so. The way the parishes worked together on *Let's shine* was highly impressive. Our cohesion as a Benefice was also strengthened, I think, by the increase in the number of Benefice services. The usual services in each of the churches are fine, even though attendance is not particularly high, but worship with larger congregations can be particularly uplifting. It's has been very good to have the Benefice Choir to lead worship regularly once or even twice a month as well as to enhance the special seasonal occasions. My thanks to all our musicians for their outstanding commitment.

We didn't, however, get all that far with exploring different styles of worship and I still feel the younger generations get a slightly raw deal in our services. It's good to be able to celebrate a growing number of young people coming to our churches – but that growth perhaps ought to lead us to make children and families more central in our worship. For me, there's a very strong case to be made for appointing a paid person to develop our offer to the under-sixties in our churches as well as seeking to reach out to young people who don't come to church.

The effort that went into *Let's shine* led to a reduction in the number of fundraising activities for the churches (Let's shine monies are not available for the use of Astwell parishes) and often the Benefice service collections went to a charity about which we were told by an invited speaker. Nevertheless, the Benefice was able again to pay its full Share to the Diocese; I'm grateful to those who have arranged fund-raising occasions and to all who contribute financially to the churches, particularly to those who responded to the special appeal put out before Christmas. My sense is that, were we to decide we needed to pay a person to take charge of our mission to young people, the money would become available. And we shall continue to explore the Parish Nurse possibility, too. I'm hoping that the increased number of Benefice PCC meetings will enable us not just to talk about possibilities but to make possibilities realities.

2. Benefice Committee Reports for year ending December 2025

2.1 Finance Committee Summary 2025

The Finance Committee met in June, December and January. Audited accounts were shared and put together for the APCM by email during February & March.

During meetings we shared the financial positions, highs and lows of each parish, discussing fundraising, regular giving, plans for each church and details of reporting and plans to show income and expenditure using pie charts. We reported to the BPCC at each of their meetings. Details are shown in individual finance reports.

We ensured that all the benefice and parish accounts were prepared for examination in January. All quarterly returns and parish share contributions were submitted to the diocese in a timely fashion. Finance parish returns for 2025 are 80% complete and are due at the end of June.

We were able to pay 100% of our parish share this year thanks to several parishes contributing more than their allocation and to the contribution from Rogation and generous donations.

PARISH SHARE	Target	Paid so far	Owed	%
Helmdon	£24,861.00	£ 26,661.00	-£ 1,800.00	107%
Wappenham	£10,204.00	£ 11,204.00	-£ 1,000.00	110%
Syresham	£18,182.00	£ 18,550.00	-£ 368.00	102%
Lois	£10,204.00	£ 11,204.00	-£ 1,000.00	110%
Whitfield	£ 5,556.00	£ 3,510.00	£ 2,046.00	63%
Benefice	£ 5,204.00	£ 3,089.56	£ 2,114.44	59%
	£74,211.00	£ 74,218.56	-£ 7.56	100%

2026	Target	%
Helmdon	£ 27,000.00	35.45%
Wappenham	£ 12,000.00	15.76%
Syresham	£ 19,000.00	24.95%
Lois	£ 12,000.00	15.76%
Whitfield	£ 3,500.00	4.60%
Benefice	£ 1,000.00	1.31%
Shortfall	£ 1,661.00	2.18%
	£ 76,161.00	

We set the Benefice Budget for 2026 and set Parish Share amounts for the coming year as requested by the BPCC. There is a shortfall which will be made up at the end of the year either by parishes that have excess or by a Benefice Event of some kind.

The Benefice carry forward, which helps pay for benefice expenses, has reduced again to £2528, last year it was £4345. The rest of the expenses are covered by fees for Weddings and Funerals, these came to £5179. Benefice expenses were £7592.

Alice Palmer
Chair, Finance Committee

2.2 Pastoral Care Committee Report 2025

We met six times during 2025, to discuss the welfare and needs of those, known to us, within the Benefice.

I am delighted to say that Fiona Mason has joined us and thanks to her kindness we now have a new venue for our tea parties. This enables us to invite about ten people at a time. So far we have had two very successful parties and we already have one planned for April 2026.

We would love to welcome anyone who feels they might enjoy being a Pastoral Care Team Member.

We do rely on the Church Councils to provide us with information of those in need of a chat and a visit.

I would like to thank all our team members and Hugh for all they do.

Wiggy

Karin (Wiggy) Smith
Chair, Pastoral Care Committee

2.3 Social & Fundraising Committee Report 2025/26 (including the 'Let's Shine Festival')

The organisation of the 2025 Let's shine Festival plus fundraising events needed in Wappenham meant I had no spare time to run events through the SFC. I think everyone else on the BPCC felt the same and the SFC has 'fizzled' out.

This is not ideal, but the SFC committee could easily be resurrected if a keen chairperson can be found. Fundraising ideas for the Benefice are being considered by Guy Rodger, one of the BPCC members.

The Let's Shine Festival, however, is running for its second year from 30th May – 7th June incl. The website is now live, and bookings are being taken. Grand Draw tickets are now on sale. All events remain free of charge with inclusivity and kindness being at the heart of the purpose. It is seen as an opportunity for this church to work amongst our communities with no financial gain for the church itself. However, the Festival in 2025 was such a success that we ended up with a considerable sum of money at our disposal. The Let's shine Community Grant Fund was established with a board of 5 'trustees'. Grants can be applied for through the website and several have been awarded. You will see the funds ring-fenced in Alice's Benefice Accounts report.

Many thanks to Alice Palmer for doing the Let's shine accounts and especially to Ruth Tyson who works so hard on the website design and graphics. Ruth lives in Silverstone and has given her skills, expertise – and time - free of charge over the last two years.

Thank you to the rest of the committee – Paul and Louise Stothard, Frank Hunter and to Rev. Hugh for his initial inspiration. Also to all the helpers, contributors, donors and sponsors which has helped to make this project so unique.

Sheena Warren
Chair, Social & Fundraising Committee

2.4 Safeguarding Report 2025/26

I'm aiming for the worst safeguarding officer in the Diocese award but getting better...
I'm going to Northampton for training on the 6th May so will be in a better place to help everyone else.

As I understand it, I need everyone who needs CRB and / or safeguarding training to give me email and phone contact details so that I can add them to the diocese Dashboard, which is a database recording everyone's training status.

People who need training include:

All PCC members including church wardens
Children's church leaders
Bell tower captains

This is a work in progress. As I understand it, the Benefice all need to take responsibility for promoting a Safer Church to recognise and know how to report, abuse including sexual and domestic.

The second issue that needs to be discussed is the inclusion in church of previous offenders so that I can draft a policy. Please can the council give its views. The issues to be thought out include sexual and non-sexual offences, and whether the Benefice is happy to accept previous offenders in positions of Trust (eg PCC) or general worship.

I hope that by the next meeting I can give more information on where everybody is on the data bases.

Fiona Mason
Benefice Safeguarding Officer

2.5 Deanery Synod Report 2025/26

Four meetings are held every year one is a communion service followed by a bring and share supper.

The other 3 are a brief service followed by a talk by an invited speaker. These are usually interesting except for the safeguarding one which did not include safeguarding but a career history of the new diocesan safeguarding leader.

Many churches hold the meeting which allows us to see other parts of the deanery and compare our churches and problems when we mingle for tea and coffee afterwards.
It is disappointing that usually only Helmdon attend representing our Benefice.

Bill Elkington
Deanery Synod Representative

2.6 Hope Centre Run Report 2025

Our wonderful volunteers continue to transport food from Faith Dimensions in Wolverton to the Hope Centre kitchen in Northampton on Tuesdays. We have some new volunteers but **always welcome more**.

Thanks to Andrew North for coordinating this work.

2.7 Choir Report 2025/26

Although the Choir has suffered from some depletion of its numbers, mainly owing to health issues, I'm pleased to say that this has been offset by two welcome additions: Jane Rymell (soprano) and Helen Tarratt (alto).

In addition to our Advent, Christmas and Holy Week contributions, we've begun to sing some anthems during Benefice services, about once a month, and hope to continue this trend.

At the end of November, we rose to the challenge of singing a piece in a plainsong style, entitled 'Advent Prose', as an Introit for the Benefice service at Helmdon. as well as revisiting the popular anthem 'People look East'.

For the range of Christmas carol services in the various parishes, we sang Graham Kendrick's 'Like a candle flame', a new piece entitled 'Gold for a manger bed ', the lovely Bach harmonisation of 'O little one sweet', John Rutter's 'Sans Day Carol', based on an old Cornish folk song; and last but not least, a Latin carol of medieval origin called 'Gaudete!' (Rejoice!), which proved very popular with the Choir.

During Holy Week recently, the Choir's music was used to echo the themes and mood of the Maunday Thursday and Good Friday liturgy: 'Wash me thoroughly' by David Halls, and the Taize chant 'Eat this bread, drink this cup' on the Thursday, the Latin anthem 'Populae Meus' by the 16th century composer Victoria, on the Friday.

The Choir has also been asked to sing the John Rutter anthem 'A Clare Benediction' for a forthcoming Wedding Blessing on May 3rd. Beyond this, we hope to sing at one or more of the May to July Benefice Services, and possibly an Evensong later in the year.

Finally, we wish Jean Simmonds, Judith Elkington and Gerald Holt a full recovery after their recent surgery and other procedures.

David Wright
Benefice Organist and Choir Master

The 2025 Annual Report of the Church Council for the parish of

St. Mary Magdalene, Helmdon with St. Lawrence Chapel at Ease, Radstone



Church Council Meetings - 2025

We began our 2025 PCC Meetings with a Minute's Silence, as we remembered Ann Smith, and her invaluable contributions over many years to the work of Helmdon Church and to village life in general.

There was some exciting news, as Jenny and Chris Saunders very generously offered to buy a replacement organ for the church. This led to our architects being asked to work up some drawings to accompany the necessary Faculty application for replacing the existing organ and re-ordering the vestry area. The plans were put on public display, with favourable comments put in an accompanying notebook.

Subsequently, the Diocesan Advisory Committee came to church with our architect for a site visit. We remain engaged with the DAC team on detailed aspects for the Faculty application, which has also been extended to cover proposed safety improvements to the main path into church.

The Let's Shine Benefice Festival running between 30 May and 8 June included a Picnic in Helmdon and a Hats Stand operatic performance in the church. The Festival certainly made a positive impact right across our villages.

The churchyard wall partially collapsed into the road at the very top of Church Street. Substantial repair costs were met in part by the Friends of Helmdon Church, and by the Parish Council grants to village organisations. Unfortunately, other parts of the extensive wall will need repair before long.

Fundraising events included an Open Gardens afternoon in July, which was hard work for our dedicated team of Committee Members as well as guests walking the steep slopes of Helmdon in the July heatwave. The November Race Night proved popular, as did the late November Christmas Fair. However, we had to cancel the planned September French Evening due to lack of interest locally.

Easter services across the Benefice had been spiritually refreshing.

Consternation was caused in the village by the Rector's possible enforced retirement when he reached the age of 70. In the event, our bishop was able to issue a Form of Direction for a specified extension for a two-year period beyond the Rector's birthday.

Church Fabric Report

Archdeacon Richard gave permission to our new electronic organ being placed in a temporary prominent position in church. Already this has made a remarkable difference to the musical content of our services.

Externally, we continue to inspect the church roof and rainwater systems on an annual basis and keep a wary eye on the extensive churchyard wall. Non-urgent works identified in the last Quinquennial Report have yet to be tackled but our top priority is to make the flagged path to the north porch safer for use in all weathers.

In early November the Friends of St Mary Magdalene Churchyard sadly lost their Chair, Judy Cairns, who had led the team for many years and who has been greatly missed. We have also missed the extensive mowing input from Andrew Pitt who no longer lives in Helmdon. Our volunteers spend long hours mowing the main paths through the churchyard and keeping the area tidy while allowing cowslips and other wildflowers to flourish in their seasons to the delight of local people and visitors alike. I am very grateful for their dedication.

Electoral Roll

Last year, Niki Phillips stepped down from her position as our Electoral Roll Officer and the Church Council is very grateful to her for her years of service. At the time of writing this Report the Electoral Roll is being updated by Judith and Bill Elkington..

A revised Electoral Roll will be displayed in the Helmdon Church Porch and will also be found on the Helmdon section of the Astwell Benefice website.

Sidesmen and other duties

There are currently fourteen people on the Sidesmen's roster for 2026:

Audrey Beattie, Sarah Stubbs, Judith Elkington, Di Tope, Bob Israel, Lynn Walmsley,

Ann Netten, Hugh Walmsley, Cliff Netten, Gill Watson, Jenny Overson, Niki Phillips, Pat Woodhams and Janet Snow.

We always welcome more volunteers for this important "outward face" of Helmdon Church, particularly when we have visitors to our service. If anyone felt willing and able to lead our intercessions from time to time, that would be very welcome – do, please, let me know.

Less formally, perhaps, help with the refreshments served after the church services plays an important part of those events. If you would like to join the monthly rota it would greatly help our planning process!

Our flower arranging team have produced some marvellous displays for the major services held during the Church Year, as well ensuring that we have a warm and welcoming atmosphere for everyone on arrival. Thank you very much for this work.

A very big thank you to all those who have helped with the various duties in the church and to all members of our congregation for their support and positive contributions to our church life generally

FRIENDS OF ST MARY MAGDALENE CHURCH, HELMDON

The Friends held a successful Safari Supper in June which raised more than £750, thanks mainly to the sterling work of Angela Goodall and Rebecca Mount as organisers, but also to those hosting the courses. This was the only event during the period but other income came from the Helmdon 200 Club which provides £1300 each year. Donations were made to the PCC of £1450 for repairs to the damaged wall and £1000 towards insurance. The Friends finances remain healthy.

Events planned for 2026 include a Music Quiz, another Safari Supper and a car treasure hunt later in the year. These have to be carefully planned to avoid conflict and “event overload” now that the Lets Shine Festival is becoming an annual event.

Cliff Netten
Churchwarden, Helmdon

Report for St Lawrence, Radstone 2025

As per normal not a lot to report.

The Bat mitigation work still seems to have been successful thankfully as little evidence of residents in the church.

The churchyard is mown and cared for by Ian & Michael Wilmot, unfortunately it has come to light that the last bit of clearing undergrowth has opened up a new problem. The badgers have been resident in the churchyard for a very long time. Bones have been appearing in the churchyard and it now appears that they are resident amongst some very old graves, as a headstone was discovered amongst the undergrowth that they did not know existed.

I have looked into the possibility of getting the badgers moved under Special Licence, but as expected this involves Natural England and specialist ecologists.

I am not sure of the way forward now,

Penny Bonner
Parish Representative, Radstone

**The 2025 Annual Report
of the Church Council for the parish of**

***St. Mary & St. Peter
Lois Weedon & Weston with Plumpton***



Churchwarden's Report to the Astwell Benefice

As the person responsible for producing a report to the BPC for the contribution and progress of a Parish within the Astwell Benefice I realise there is no specific format.

As indeed there is no definition of a Single Parish. Helmdon, who are bit like our eldest sibling always have lots of well-prepared facts and policies that reflect the proper business of a Church Council. However, their well organised, (in a good way) approach is difficult to match. So my perspective is a little more idiosyncratic.

There are two things that stand out from 2025, one is that the burden and seemingly suffocating problem of meeting our Parish Share has eased. As a participating Parish we are no longer the poor relation and as a Benefice family we have regained a confidence that we will fight off the snarling wolves of the Diocese. I came to realise some time ago that the Diocese' veiled attempts at encouragement masks a brutal reality that they are custodians of a shrinking organisation that will mean a reduction in the number of churches that can be supported by an equally reducing number of priests.

My perspective is that many of protentional churchgoers, in their later years, having been relieved of the day today pressures of raising children in this modern world, may be recalled by early encounters with the Church. They may now have the luxury of relatively peaceful reflection. And as we are all living longer, maybe the churches will benefit.

Our gift to those few who join us rather earlier in life is to embrace them and reassure them that all will be well. Although it is inevitable that all things will disappear, we are reassured there will be a second coming. Our mortal lives are so brief in eternity's perspective that it ain't gonna happen any time soon.

I am always delighted when I find people in our community who roll their sleeves up and get stuck in. The Let's Shine Together thing was an absolute joy. I find myself a modest part of it and it is such a validation of a truly Christian community. You will notice that we are distancing ourselves from the snarling wolves and reclaiming our right to simply do good in our community. Our dear Reverend Hugh had a moment of rebellious zeal when he suggested it should all be for free. It's not about the money. I hope he's read his contract of employment.

I am optimistic about the future simply because in my life the bad stuff seems to fade away and weirdly good stuff comes along. Most of the people who read this are probably aware of who I am. Unconsciously or deliberately I have made it my mission to make every encounter with my fellow man an enjoyable if maybe disconcerting experience. Even if it is in sad circumstance. We should all try it.

So, to conclude, as a Parish we've nailed it. The Diocesan Archaic Council have demonstrated their Dead Hand credentials by delaying our initiatives, but I have retrospectively given permission for the removal of a dead piano and a contraption for moving the dead.

I hope that by now everyone is aware of this year's Lets Shine Together Festival.

I can't emphasise enough how this is the way to persuade people to embrace the fundamental thing that we all understand, as a Christian church community our aim is to bring joy to our fellow man. To love one another.

Here endeth the Annual Report.

Frank Hunter,
Churchwarden, Lois Weedon

**The 2025/26 Annual Report
of the Church Council for the parish of**

St. James the Great, Syresham



Worship: We continue with a pattern of services including Morning Prayer, Communion and Praise and Prayer. Our *Praise and Prayer* services are an opportunity for different members of the congregation to share their thoughts and research on different topics. This year we have enjoyed worship around St Margaret, the “I AM” statements of Jesus, John Newman, “Judging by appearances” and our Harvest celebration featuring the work of Christian Engineers in Development.

Messy Church topics have included Frozen, The Saints & Remembrance, The Big Picnic and Easter.

Services including *wider community invitations* were Harvest, All Souls Remembrance, Carols by Candlelight, Christingles and Mothering Sunday.

We continue to work closely with the chapel sharing services and schoolwork.

We hosted a Benefice service on Palestinian Advocacy.

Community: We do our best to support folk in the community, delivering Mother’s Day plants, Harvest gifts and Hammond Trust Christmas gifts as well as invitations to All Souls and visits throughout the year.

SCC: Syresham Church Council met in June, September, January & March.

We continue to support our school, plan fundraising and special services such as Harvest, discuss building works & finances and receive reports from our Friends and Trusts groups.

Current members of the SCC are:

Alice Palmer (Chair & Treasurer & Friends rep)
Kathleen Brunning (Pastoral rep)
Nicola Billingham
Brenda Faragher
Margaret Miller (Giftaid)
David Wright (Hammond fund rep)
David Billingham (Electoral Roll)

Safeguarding: is on the agenda at each meeting, Messy Church leaders and SCC members are reminded to do the necessary training.

Building works. The work on our steeple was completed and we are working on the rest of the Quinquennial actions prior to the next inspection later in 2026.

Church Helpers

We are forever grateful to the church members and our friends who help us to run the church by cleaning, decorating with flowers, completing odd jobs, reading in services, leading intercessions, serving coffee, leading services, playing the organ, ringing bells, lighting candles, setting up for services and welcoming folk coming to worship – it wouldn't work without you.

Churchyard Working Party

Our CWP of around 15 good folk continue to work hard on the first Saturday of each month (and in between) to improve and maintain the churchyard. We had a visit from the Wildlife Trust in October and met in the pub to discuss their report in January. This has produced plenty of actions for 2026.

Friends of St James The committee have arranged an exceedingly well received re-enactment of A Christmas Carol by James Hornsby, a Quiz, Pancake Lunch and the 200club this year alongside Christmas and summer parties. The Poppies looked spectacular again for Remembrance - including some along the churchyard railings. The Friends contributed tree works in the churchyard, a new hoover, a table store, fixing the back gate to the churchyard and lights for the Christmas Churchyard Trail. We give grateful thanks to Antoinette and all the team.

Fundraising: We ran the teas at the Syresham Open Gardens in lieu of a fete this year. We were treated to another excellent performance by Note-Ability in June. Our Christmas Fair was a wonderful community event, thanks largely to support from the school choir.

We hosted the Benefice Quiz, Let's Shine Disco and enjoyed taking part in the Flower Festival.

Trusts: The Madge and Maud Payne trusts have continued to support us with our maintenance work. Our income and funding are running smoothly and we hope to have enough in hand to cover our 2026 Quinquennial Actions. The Hammond Trust enables us to deliver plants or hampers to folk at Christmas time and buy bibles for year six and Christmas books for the school children as well as occasional treats for staff. This year we also helped out with supporting families to send children on a school trip.

The Bell Tower: We enjoy having our Bells rung to welcome folk to special services. Many thanks to Andrew North for leading the tower and encouraging folk to join in.

Electoral Roll: There were 32 people on our Electoral Roll in 2025.

Our grateful thanks: To Rev Hugh and Paul Stothard for all their leadership and care.

Alice Palmer
Parish Representative, Syresham



**The 2025/26 Annual Report
of the Church Council for the Parish of**

***St. Mary the Virgin
Wappenham***



Wappenham Church Council

Including additional activities related to the Church

1. Churchwardens' Report

Our thanks are expressed to all members of the Wappenham Church Council during its fourth year of operation. Chaired by Sheena Warren, these included Edwin King, Philip Thompson, Jane Mordue, Cassie Brough, Guy Rodger, Angus Wade, Michael Bath and Howard Mordue. During the year Edwin King stood down as churchwarden and members expressed their gratitude for all his service. The Council continued to benefit from his professional expertise as he remained a member.

The parish's Church Councils continued to hold bank accounts and were responsible for fund-raising and expenditure on fabric.

1.1 Building and repairs

The upkeep continues of the closed churchyard and grass cutting regime as agreed with the Parish Council, including areas of wildflowers. Our gratitude also to all those who give their time to do the flower arrangements, clean the church, and fulfil numerous other jobs which ensure the church continues to have an attractive aspect. Our interest as owners in the repairs to the Village Hall roof by their committee was maintained by checking their insurance policy. They have now agreed to raise funds for the necessary repairs.

Quotations had continued to prove difficult to obtain for repair of the boiler roof damaged two years ago by falling stone from the tower crenellation. Agreement had been obtained from the insurers and repair companies nominated by them but a timetable is still to be agreed. The boiler room roof is scheduled for repair on the 20th April. As TVB house their equipment in there this is a huge relief and long-awaited.

1.2 Fabric

There have been no additions or removals from the Church.

The Church continues to house equipment providing high speed broadband for the village and surrounding area.

1.3 Worship and attendance

The Church is open daily for services or private prayer and reflection. A regular pattern of services has been maintained including Holy Communion, Morning Prayer, Village Prayer and Praise and Breakfast Church. Attendance has remained steady by the usual congregation with broader community support at Christmas and Easter time. An informal, lay led service for children and their families before Christmas and again on Mothering Sunday proved popular.

We thank the other members of the team for their ministry and pastoral support.

Sheena Warren
Churchwarden, Wappenham

2. Electoral Roll for Wappenham

The Electoral Roll for Wappenham was renewed in 2025. Total Roll - 36 names.

3. Eucharistic Assistant(s)

There is currently one Eucharistic Assistant, Rick Cullen, to whom warm thanks are expressed.

Anybody else who would be interested in becoming a Eucharistic Assistant please speak to our Church Warden Sheena Warren.

4. Funding

4.1 Expenditure

Donations: A total of £1,852 (2024 £1,457) was donated to charitable organisations from the general fund.

Benefice: £11,204 (2024 £9,845) was paid to the Benefice in lieu of Parish share and Benefice expenses, and a Diocese certificate of thanks received, confirming this was 110% of that requested.

4.2 Income:

Collections from services totalled £2,473 (2024 £3,162). Regular covenanted giving was £15,824 (2024 £14,634). Gift Aid £3,560

5. Fund-raising

5.1 Church

Events raised £1,174 (2024 £2,208) through a Christmas concert (£174) and helping at the Wappenham Beer Festival (£1,000) all of which were much enjoyed by everybody. Thanks are expressed to all the organisers and all those who helped.

5.2 The Friends of St Mary the Virgin Wappenham

The Friends is a registered charity (number 1116889) established as a trust to enable fund raising and fund management for the maintenance, repair and restoration of the fabric, grounds, graves, graveyard boundary walls and gates of the Grade II* Church of St Mary the Virgin, Wappenham. The Friends trustees are Jane Mordue (Chair), Anthony Tucker (Secretary) and Alastair Judge (Treasurer) with the Rector *ex officio*.

5.3 Friends' Treasurer's Report

The Friends' funds stand at £7,450.99 (2024 £7,455.99)

Income in 2025 was £20 and outgoings were £25– bank fees – now suspended.

In recent years, as the Church had undertaken its own fund-raising events, the Friends has focussed on supporting these and receiving regular donations. The trustees have agreed that this makes the charity inactive and have resolved to deposit its funds into the ring-fenced Church Fabric Fund and close the Friends charity. This would be a saving on administration including bank charges.

Jane Mordue,
Chair, Friends of St Mary's

Additional Activities linked to the Church

6. Link Charity reports

The Wappenham Thomastide Charity

(formerly known as the Wappenham Pools and Church Charities)

Statement of Accounts for Year ending 2025

Date	Details	Withdrawn	Received	Balance
January 2025	Opening Balance			£3,806.16
December 2025	Gifts x 8 Jenny	£441		£3,362.16
	Gifts x 3 Barbara	£61		£3,301.16
	Gifts x 1 Jenny	£35		£3,266.16
	Received from Wappenham Pools Charity Trustees			£4,466.16
			£1,200	
December 2025	Closing Balance			£4,466.16

Details of the recipients are confidential but are available to any person - in confidence-nominated by the Parish Council. The Chairman confirms that all gifts were safely received and the Trustees thanked for their continuing support.

The Distribution Committee is led by Jenny Spillett. Other committee members are Barbara Gundle, Philip King and Revd Hugh White.

This year there were 14 recipients, the gifts ranging from hampers to plants, chocolates and vouchers. There were 3 cash gifts distributed.

Other than gifts handed out in December there were no other calls on our resources.

We were very pleased to receive a larger sum of £1,200 from the Trustees;

The total amount distributed in 2025 was £537.

Jenny Spillett
Chair of Distribution Committee

7. St Mary's Coffee mornings report 2025

Set up to provide a regular community 'get together' following the closure of the village shop in 2011, the coffee morning is normally held on the first Wednesday of each month. Although set up by the late Rev Will Adams and facilitated by St Mary's Church Council, the Coffee Morning is a secular event for the village. During 2025, the coffee morning was held on twelve occasions and raised just over £1228 which was distributed to the following charities:-

- £280 for Macmillan Cancer Support from October.
- £375 for the Northampton Hope centre.
- £400 for 'our hosts', Wappenham Village Hall.
- £96 for the 'Let us shine' festival from the June event
- £77 for the Royal British Legion from the May 'VE' day event

Anthony Tucker

8. Bell ringers

The bells are available to be rung and bell ringing practice is every third Wednesday from 7.30 till 9. The set of bells at Wappenham, where the bell ropes are of a good length, is rated as more challenging.

Philip Thompson

**The 2025/26 Annual Report
of the Church Council for the parish of**

St John the Evangelist, Whitfield



1. Whitfield Church Council Representative(s) Report

Church Council Members - Claire Bonner (Church Representative & Chair); Sue Timmis (Church Representative & Secretary), Nick Goodwin; Carol Rhodes; Jane Rymell; Richard Smalley; Bo Wallace. Acting Treasurer – Alice Palmer.

The Church Council met 4 times during the year. Brenda Faragher retired as Treasurer at the end of the financial year after many years of dedicated service, we are extremely grateful to Brenda for keeping our accounts in order, her support for Whitfield Church, her friendship and guidance given selflessly. Thank you to Alice Palmer who has stepped into the breach until a new Treasurer is appointed. We are pleased to welcome a new member to the council, Richard Smalley.

Our income from regular giving and collections no longer covers expenses. Added to which fewer fund-raising events have been held over the summer. However, a Breakfast Café was held in May, although turnout was low a small profit was raised for Church funds.

We are very grateful for the support of The Friends; donations received have covered the building part of the insurance premium, the QQ inspection fee, fire extinguisher servicing and service and maintenance to the organ.

We have only been able to pay 63% of our Benefice Parish Share target. We are indebted to the Benefice 'family' for enabling the total Share to be paid to the Diocese in full.

A letter was delivered to every house in the village asking 'Is the Church in Whitfield important to you?' and a meeting held in March to explain the problems faced both financially and practically by Whitfield Church; the numbers attending and support shown was encouraging, along with many offers of help. The next step is to follow this up with another letter setting how people can sign up to help and make financial and/or practical contributions.

Sadly, we have lost two key members of our community this year, Rev. Adams and his wife Linda. Will served as Church Warden before his ordination, then as rector to the Benefice, he was also a member of the bell ringing team. Linda also served on the PCC, a sacristan and organist. They are greatly missed in our community for their friendship and support.

Claire Bonner
Chair

1.1 Fabric - Repairs and Maintenance

Huge thanks are due to Ian and Sara Chapple for their work in the Church yard, also coordinating a team of 'mowers', and undertaking many external maintenance works. Thanks to Nick Goodwin has for painting the Church gate and Stephen Brooker for all the chainsaw work trimming back the base of the lime trees recommended by the tree surgeons. Thanks to all the kind volunteers who have undertaken some of the smaller tasks highlighted in the QQ report. Not least a major clean and tidy up in preparation for a wedding.

1.2 Services

Whitfield services are reduced to one Holy Communion service on the 4th Sunday of the month. The average congregation for regular services of Holy Communion is 6. Special and festival services are well supported, with congregations over the Christmas period averaging 45-50! Donations to charities include, Farming Community Network (Harvest Festival), The Royal British Legion (Remembrance), and The Children's Society (Christingle). Three Pillars Northampton Feeding the Homeless (Benefice Communion). We hosted the Benefice service for Plough Sunday and our Patronal Festival for St John the Evangelist was held at the end of January as part of the normal service pattern.

1.3 Summary & Thanks

We were pleased and relieved to receive confirmation that Reverend Hugh White will be licenced to the Benefice for a further 2 years; thanks to him for his support and guidance during this difficult time. We would also like to thank Paul Stothard for his advice and support as we look secure a more stable future for the Church in Whitfield.

Huge thanks to Sarah Rudkin for her work in the Benefice, especially for producing the Pew News; Alice Palmer for managing the Benefice finances and to BPCC for the group support.

Thank you for the support of The Friends of St John and Whitfield Church Council members.

Thank you to Sara and Ian Chapple for all they do in the Churchyard, the Bell Tower and all the general maintenance jobs quietly undertaken and completed, as if by magic!

Thank you to the teams of cleaners, readers, flower arrangers, Sacristans, Sidesmen, Ringers, mowers and all the other people who are just there to help when needed.

Claire Bonner & Susan Timmis
Church Representatives

2. Electoral Roll

A new Electoral Roll was prepared in 2025. Total Roll - 14 names

Claire Bonner
Electoral Roll Officer

3. Eucharistic Assistant

Claire Bonner

4. Whitfield Bell Tower Report

We were saddened by the death of Will Adams in November. He was a founder member of the band. However, we are delighted to welcome Alison Jarvie McHattie as a new ringing member. This brings the total of village ringers back to six, although the state of health of some is not 100%.

Friday practices continue with the support of ringers from Syresham, Brackley, Evenley, Lois Weedon and Eydon.

A full set of new ropes is on order and delivery expected shortly.

We also have a new (second hand) carpet for the ringing chamber courtesy of Ian and Sue Timmis.

Sara Chapple, Tower Captain

4.1 Whitfield Churchyard Report

A loyal band of mowing volunteers has kept the churchyard looking good. They are Sara and Ian Chapple, Paul Cooper, Bill Dodd, Rob Harman, Roy Spittal, Ian Timmis, Jo Taylor, Mark Vallis and Erik van Kampen.

Paul, Bill and Ian C have kept the hedges trimmed, and Steve Brooker pruned back another lime tree during the winter.

Work is in hand to sort a blocked drainage pipe, although the associated down pipe has been unblocked and is no longer overflowing down the church wall

Sara Chapple April 26

5. The Friends of St John the Evangelist, Whitfield

An Easter coffee and Hot X bun morning was held on the driveway of The Old Rectory on 12th April. This was a very enjoyable gathering of villagers who gathered in glorious sunshine to drink coffee and sample Laura Brown's now famous sausage rolls, as well as biscuits, cakes and of course, toasted Hot X buns. The Friends are grateful to everyone who supported and especially to those who baked for the event. A sum of £310 was raised.

On Saturday 22nd June, The Friends held their second Whitfield Open Garden Day. Seven gardens opened, tea was held at The Old Rectory and £239 was raised. The Friends were again very grateful to all those who opened their gardens and to the many bakers who made cakes, but we were sadly disappointed with the actual number of villagers who visited any gardens.

Nick Goodwin kindly made a donation to fund a new heater and Carol Rhodes kindly donated her payment for delivering Silverstone GP information leaflets. Tim Walton held two vegetable and flower sales outside The Old Rectory during May, raising approximately £215, of which £92 was given to The Friends.

Expenditure comprised the buildings insurance premium of £1293, roof repairs of £150, organ maintenance of £149 and Quinquennial Report fees of £370 (net of grants received).

The bank balance at the year-end was £2229.00.

The Friends very much support the recent meeting about the future of the church that was held in the village hall, and The Friends hope that further action will help to assess what the village actually wants from its church and help to increase village support for fund-raising events.

I would like to thank the other members of the Friends committee, Nick Towers our Treasurer, and Jo Brooker, our Membership Secretary. Nick has been a long-term master of the books for us and Jo has been an amazing support helping us to keep on top of membership payments (that went a bit awry during and post Covid) as well as encouraging new members to join. I would also like to thank Claire Bonner for getting quotes and organising all the church repairs, and a big thanks to Sue Timmis who is always on hand to help at events.

Hilary Walton
Chair of The Friends

6. Whitfield Charities

Trustees

Tim Walton (Chairman), Sue Timmis, Claire Bonner, Ian Timmis (Treasurer), Bo Wallace, Sheila Brownsell

Election of trustees is every five years and as such not required for at least 3 more years – new nominations have been sought but there are none presently.

The Charities: Background

Income derives from the rental of a number of small parcels of land owned by the charities and some investments

Whitfield Forest Allotment

Origin dates to 1826 and was formed to replace the rights of the villagers to collect firewood from common land after the acts of enclosure. Historically this was interpreted to mean to assist those in need with the cost of fuel. More recently it is used to buy small gifts for those in the village that have had a difficult year.

Whitfield Old Church School

Origin dates to 1764 and was formed to pay for a schoolmaster to instruct the children in reading writing etc and assist with books etc. This was updated following the closure of the school to enable books or clothes to be purchased for the children of the parish. In previous years children over the age of 4 have been identified and either a Bible or other educational book has been presented to them as a one-off gift. As records are not complete and we rely on members knowledge of the village, we may well have missed some children. Please advise us if you know of eligible children that have not received this small token/ acknowledgement.

Whitfield Listers Charity

Origin dates to 1708 and was formed for apprenticing children under the age of 21 or for their advancement. As there are a declining number of apprenticeships these days, this has been interpreted to mean the provision of sums of money to help children with the purchase of books, lessons, coaching sessions or school trips if it is for their “advancement”.

For this award we would ask individuals to approach a member of the committee with specific requests

6.1 Treasurers Report

The total balance across the 3 charities has increased from £7995.36 to £11,747.71 (mainly due to sale of land) with annual income increasing to £964.59 from £642.48 in 2024

Old school expenditure was a one off high of £495 after £480 for the new tenancy agreement.

Total expenditure in 2024 has increased to £1,481.30 from £1080 in 2023 – Brackley Foodbank (£250), Seasonal Gifts £370, Ukrainian Families (£210), BYHP (£250)

Tim Walton

Chair

7. Whitfield Coffee Morning 2025

Our coffee mornings are held on the first Tuesday of each month and continue to be well attended.

We are still saving 5p pieces (there seem to be fewer of these) and 20p pieces which will be counted when the jars are full and donated to charity (the charities will be voted for at that time). In 2025 £150 was split evenly between Brackley Food Bank, The Cinnamon Trust and Helen & Douglas Hospice for children.

In June we supported the Let's Shine Together Festival and £97.60 was donated November was for MacMillan cancer support and this year £250 was raised.

The coffee morning pays £25 for a wreath for Remembrance Day

December was for the church and £35.50 was raised.

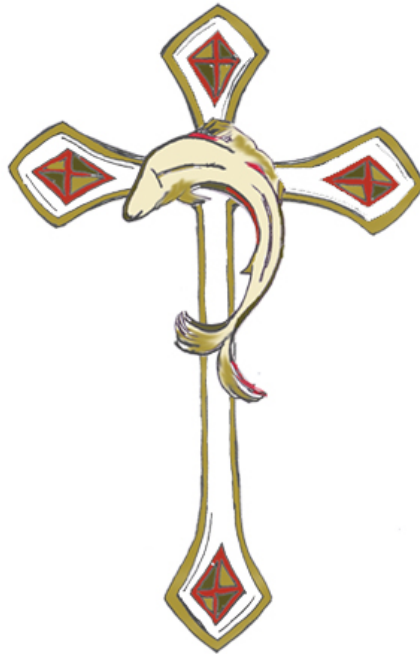
£160 was paid for hire of the village hall.

Many, many thanks to everyone who helps set up the hall, bakes delicious cakes, washes up and also to those who support this community activity.

Sue Timmis

Church Representative

ASTWELL BENEFICE FINANCIAL REPORT 2025



Summaries, Balance Sheets & Assets statements for:

The Benefice
Helmdon & Radstone
Lois Weedon
Syresham
Wappenham
Whitfield

The Astwell Benefice

Financial Statement Report for the year ending December 2025

During 2025 the Benefice paid £74,211 to the diocese as our Parish Share. This is 100% of our full share. Several parishes paid more than their allotted share to help us achieve this.

Other costs were paid in full funded by £5,179 from Wedding & Funeral fees and carry forward of £4,435 from 2024.

The balance in the books at the end of the year was £20607.10, of this £447 is ring fenced for the choir, £5950.89 belongs to Let's Shine, £11,672.82 is in the Let's Shine Community Fund and £7.56 is held towards next year's Parish Share. This leaves a carry forward of £2,528.82 to help fund Benefice expenses in 2026.

We have agreed a Benefice budget of £8,440. This covers secretarial pay, organist, and mission and ministry costs. Any income from Rogation will go towards the parish share and other benefice fundraising is under discussion. Income from fundraising was down to £466 this year.

Accounts prepared by Alice Palmer

Approved for examination by the Astwell Benefice Finance Committee on 19th January 2026

Accepted by the Benefice Church Council 19th January 2026

Examined by Gill Swinford, Broad Street, Syresham

Alice Palmer

Benefice Treasurer

Astwell Benefice

2025

2024



Financial Statement 2/9/26

BENEFICE ACCOUNT

Income		£		£
Contributions from CCS		71,129.00		64,981.00
Gift Aid		460.00		150.37
Donations	290.00	753.00		0.00
Benefice events	605.97	1,586.10		2,259.28
Benefice Fundraising		790.53		6,425.74
PTO claims from Diocese		0.00		422.10
Let's Shine	41,114.52			
Community Fund	15,746.45			
Sundry		4,000.00		50.00
Fees		9,027.80		9,167.95
Choir		0.00		0.00
TOTAL INCOME	57,756.94	87,746.43	145,503.37	83,456.44
Expenditure		£	£	£
Travel		657.45		946.78
Mission & Ministry		672.65		1066.70
Office expenses		202.80		123.40
Printing		475.42		510.60
Secretary		3,538.75		3331.00
Church expenses		359.50		443.94
Copyright		178.44		175.44
Website		295.00		313.00
Benefice events		596.60		578.36
Fundraising		324.63		859.56
Charity		896.00		662.28
Diocese		74,211.00		71599.00
Fees		3,848.80		3217.95
Choir		0.00		0.00
Organists		400.00		400.00
Let's Shine	35,163.63			
Community Fund	4,073.63			
Visiting Ministers		105.75		156.60
Sundry		4,109.98		38.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	39,237.26	90,872.77	130,110.03	84,422.61
Excess receipts over payments		15,393.34		- 966.17
Start Balance				
Bank Balance start of year		5,194.76		6,176.55
Cash in hand		19.00		3.38
Balance brought forward		5,213.76		6,179.93
Balances today				
Balance in bank		20,593.06		5,194.76
Cash in Hand		14.04		19.00
Closing balance		20,607.10		5,213.76
*Bank Reconciliation				
Bank Balance at 24/12		£45,243.89		£20,459.07
Add uncleared income		£3,840.00		£3,922.00
		£49,083.89		£24,381.07
Less unrepresented cheques		£28,490.83		£19,186.31
		£20,593.06		£5,194.76
	£0.00			
Bank Allocation				
Contributions for Diocese		£ 7.56	£ 74,218.56	£ 421.19
Outstanding fees		£ -		£ -
Let's Shine		£ 5,950.89		
Community Fund		£ 11,672.82		
Ringfenced for choir		£ 447.01		£ 447.01
Actual balance		£ 2,528.82		£ 4,345.56

I have examined the Receipts and Payments account as at 31st December 2025. In my opinion the Account gives a true record of the state of affairs of the Astwell Benefice as at 31st December 2025.

Signed:

Date:

28-1-26

25

LET'S SHINE

2025

Financial Statement

31st December 2025
BENEFICE ACCOUNT

Income

£

<i>Raffle</i>	6,223.82
<i>Raffle online</i>	1,775.41
Raffle Total	7,999.23
Foundation Donation	11,000.00
Foundation Gift Aid	2,750.00
Event Sponsor	180.00
Sales	1,119.63
Donations	8,280.66
Restricted Community Fund	3,000.00
Gift Aid Community Fund	750.00
Loan	6,035.00

TOTAL INCOME

41,114.52

Expenditure

£

£

Event Costs	12,212.92
Raffle	238.50
Publicity	315.76
Community Fund Donations	3,950.45
Community Fund Transfer	11,361.00
2026 Advance Payments	1,050.00
Loan	6,035.00

TOTAL EXPENSES

35,163.63

Excess receipts over payments

5,950.89

Start Balance

Bank Balance start of year	-
Cash in hand	-
Balance brought forward	-

Balances today

Balance in bank	5,950.89
Cash in Hand	-
Closing balance	<u>5,950.89</u>

RAFFLE DONATIONS 2025

Charity/Group	Amount	Comment
Breast Cancer	£15.00	Syresham Shop sales
Brackley Community Hospital	£50.00	
Syresham Sports & Social	£42.50	
	£107.50	

LET'S SHINE COMMUNITY FUND

	Income	Expenditure	Reconciliation
2025 FUND fm Lets Shine	£11361.00		c
Afghan Cricket Team	£3950.45	£3950.45	c(pd by Lets Shine)
Community tea party		£25.00	c
Tea Invites		£29.24	c£123.18
Silverstone Methodists	£435.00		c
Afghan Crafts		£68.94	c2281
Total	£15746.45	£4073.63	
BALANCE	£11672.82		
uncleared	£0.00	£0.00	

Helmdon and Radstone's Financial Statement Report for the year ending December 2025

The closing balance at the end of 2025 was £15,468. Of this £11,970 is reserved for the Organ and Vestry fund. Over £600 donated to the church is also designated for Children's Church. The end balance for churchyard expenses was £375 and Radstone's balance stood at £281.

During 2025 Helmdon and Radstone paid £26,661 towards the Parish Share - £1,800 more than our required contribution.

Donations received included a very generous contribution of £12,000 to pay for a new organ. Friends donations plus grants from the Parish council covered the cost of repairing the churchyard wall. Regular giving was £14,410, with collections and wall box contributing a further £4,181. Over £4,000 was raised during the year through a variety of activities including an Open Gardens event, a Race Night, and Christmas Fair.

£758 was donated to charity, primarily reflecting donations to British Legion from collections made on Remembrance Sunday plus £146 to the Children's Society from the Christingle service. Expenditure also included architects fees for design of the reordering of the church to accommodate the new organ and vestry area.

Accounts prepared by Ann Netten

Approved for Audit by Helmdon Church Council on 13 January 2026 and Astwell

Benefice Finance Committee on 19 January 2026

Audited by Chris Thorpe, Station Road, Helmdon NN13 5QT

Ann Netten

Treasurer St Mary Magdalene Helmdon Church Council

St Mary Magdalene Helmdon

31 December 2025



Financial Statement:

Income	2025		2024
	Restricted	Non-Restricted	
Regular Giving		14,409.78	14,355
Collections & wallbox		4,180.69	4,236
Gift Aid		7,444.96	4,711
Donations		4,017.94	14,005
Fundraising		4,002.44	3,973
Organ & Children's Church	12,030.00		820
Grants	900.00		
Churchyard	211.51		559
Restricted Income			
Radstone	176.50		1,008
Sundry		267.00	1,060
TOTAL INCOME	13,318.01	34,322.81	44,726
		47,640.82	
Expenditure			
Benefice & Diocese		26,311.00	23,601
Radstone Benefice Contribution		200.00	0
Insurance		2,268.63	2,209
Fabric		4,806.68	2,044
Organ & Children's Church	15,240.00	0.00	
Utilities	0.00	1,305.83	1,743
Churchyard	262.66	0.00	959
Charitable Donations		757.80	596
Radstone	0.00		1186
Events		306.20	286
Sundry		411.28	1,152
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	15,502.66	36,367.42	33,776
		51,870.08	
BALANCE		-4,229.26	10,950
Start Balance 1/1/25			
Bank		19,697.37	8,747
Outstanding cheque		0.00	
Balance brought forward		19,697.37	8,747
Balances Today			
Bank Balance		15,468.11	19,697
Cash			
Closing Balance		15,468.11	19,697
Actual Bank balance		15,468.11	
Add uncleared lodgements			
Less unrepresented cheques			
TOTAL		15,468.11	
Bank Allocation			
Churchyard		375.75	
Radstone		281.29	
Organ & Vestry		11,970.22	
Children's Church		631.43	
Actual balance		£2,209.42	

**Helmdon and Radstone
Financial Statements**

For the year ended 31 December 2025

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2025

	Unrestricted General fund	Restricted funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
Assets				
Current account	£ 2,461	£ 13,007	£ 15,468	£ 8,747
Churchyard Fund - 158 shares at valuation		£ 3,507	£ 3,507	£ 3,653
Churchyard Trust - 97 shares at valuation		£ 2,153	£ 2,153	£ 2,243
Mission fund- 97 shares at valuation		£ 2,143	£ 2,143	£ 2,232
CBF Deposit Funds		£ 3,106	£ 3,106	£ 2,826
Total	£ 2,461	£ 23,917	£ 26,377	£ 30,538

Liabilities None

St Mary & St Peter Lois Weedon Financial Report for the year ending December 2025

As at the 31st December 2025, our total cash reserves stood at £16,048.65.

INCOME

Total income for the year amounted £22,041.33, compared to £19,827.03 in 2024 (when excluding exceptional one-off grants, donations and VAT reclaim for the 2024 Chancel repair project).

Regular Giving, that is those who give by periodic standing order or collected by direct debit, has stabilised on a monthly basis and in 2025 provided a full year total of £5,541.48 compared to £5,007.00 in 2024.

Collections taken during services have remained relatively stable over the year when compared to the previous year, giving a slight increase of circa £280 year on year.

Donations towards our operating costs were augmented again this year by the regular monthly contribution from Abthorpe Broadband Association Limited. This is in recognition of the facilities provided by the church building to enable them to run their broadband services to the community. However, the value of all Donations in 2025 is down on 2024 but only because in 2024 we were recipients of more than £9,000 in specific donations for the repair to the Chancel window.

Fund Raising events raised £3,140.27 and included contributions from the Village Coffee Mornings, an afternoon tea party and the Harvest Supper evening. This valuable support shown by our community has been set aside to our

Restoration & Fabric fund for future use on the repair and maintenance of the building.

EXPENDITURE

Total expenditure for the year amounted to £19,976.85.

Fabric expenses this year included the cost of a tree survey within the church grounds to determine necessary works, cleaning of all the windows inside and out, plus some drainage investigative work in respect of the damp in the northwall of the church.

Having met our required Parish Share in full at £10,204.00, we were also able to support our Benefice by contributing a further £1,000 to assist those other parishes within our benefice who were unable to meet their full share.

Our accounts show unusually inflated figures under Sundry Credit and Sundry Debits. However, the net position between the two categories resulted in a Sundry Debit of just £120.59, representing the Independent Examiner's fee plus minor bank charges.

SUMMARY

Financially, our cash accounts are currently on a much firmer footing than in previous years. But we still have a lot to do.

In 2026 our aim is to start and complete repairs to the north parapet wall, replaster certain areas within the church and overcome the damp issues - all with the intention of full redecoration in 2027. What a challenge!

We also celebrate that we have fully met our Parish Share target in 2025, the second year in a row. Not only that, but we were also able to contribute more to help our Benefice to reach its overall target.

The continuing support from all our parishioners and from the community has been invaluable this year. The incredible efforts of all those who have provided financial help must be acknowledged and in particular, those that continue to provide help and support for the monthly Village Coffee Mornings, which we hope will continue.

St Mary & St Peter, Lois Weedon Church Council

St Mary & St Peter Lois Weedon Financial Statement

31/12/2025



31/12/2024

		Rest&Fabric <u>Restricted</u>	General <u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Total</u>		<u>Total</u>
Income	Regular Giving	360.00	5,181.48	5,541.48		5,007.00
	Collections & Wallbox	44.74	3,198.00	3,242.74		3,061.29
	Gift Aid Reclaimed		5,395.52	5,395.52		2,158.35
	Donations		859.64	859.64		9,738.53
	Donations from AbBA		3,600.00	3,600.00		3,000.00
	Fund Raising	1,811.17	1,329.10	3,140.27		3,786.91
	Floodlight Sponsorship		150.00	150.00		120.00
	Grants Received					4,650.00
	VAT Recovered					1,846.00
	Internal Transfer	1,000.00		1,000.00		
	Interest Received	111.68		111.68		
	Sundry Credit		597.84	597.84		1,667.00
			<u>3,327.59</u>	<u>20,311.58</u>	<u>23,639.17</u>	
Expenditure	Benefice & Diocese		11,204.00	11,204.00	Paid 109.80%	9,845.00
	Charitable Donation		154.00	154.00		
	Insurance	0.00	2,465.19	2,465.19		2,401.80
	Fabric	1,419.60	1,537.22	2,956.82		16,279.98
	Utilities		986.72	986.72		813.80
	Function Expenses	168.00	323.69	491.69		357.50
	Internal Transfer	1,000.00		1,000.00		
	Sundry Debit		718.43	718.43		1,771.49
		<u>2,587.60</u>	<u>17,389.25</u>	<u>19,976.85</u>		<u>31,469.57</u>
Net Income/(Expense)		739.99	2,922.33	3,662.32		3,549.99
Start Balance	Bank Balance #####4652	1,476.53		1,476.53		8,836.34
	Bank Balance #####1286	5,019.48		5,019.48		
	Bank Balance #####7848		5,890.32	5,890.32		
	Cash Held	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00
		<u>6,496.01</u>	<u>5,890.32</u>	<u>12,386.33</u>		<u>8,836.34</u>
End Balance	Bank Balance #####4652	2,681.91		2,681.91		12,386.33
	Bank Balance #####1286	4,554.09		4,554.09		
	Bank Balance #####7848		8,812.65	8,812.65		
	Cash Held	0.00	0.00	0.00		
		<u>7,236.00</u>	<u>8,812.65</u>	<u>16,048.65</u>		<u>12,386.33</u>
Reconcillation	Actual Balance	7,236.00	8,812.65	16,048.65		
	Total Cash Held	0.00	0.00	0.00		
	Uncleared Cheque	0.00	0.00	0.00		
	TOTAL	<u>7,236.00</u>	<u>8,812.65</u>	<u>16,048.65</u>		
Allocated	Buildings Insurance		0.00	0.00		
	Electricity Cost		0.00	0.00		
	Remaining Parish Share 2025		0.00	0.00		
		<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>		
Due to us	Gift Aid to be reclaimed	0.00	110.68	110.68		
	Available	7,236.00	8,923.33	16,159.33		

The Priory Church of St. Mary & St. Peter, Lois Weedon

Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 December 2025

Statements of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2025

	General Fund	Restoration & Fabric fund	Restoration & Fabric Saver	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£		£	£
Assets					
Bank Account 07807848	8,812.65			8,812.65	5,890.32
Bank Account 07804652		2,681.91		2,681.91	1,476.53
Bank Account 76291286			4,554.09	4,554.09	5,019.48
Cash account					
Total cash	8,812.65	2,681.91	4,554.09	16,048.65	12,386.33

Other Monetary Assets

HMRC - Gift Aid tax debtor £110.68

Liabilities

Independent Examiner's fee £120.00 (Inc. VAT)

Approved by the Church Council on 19 February 2026 and signed on its behalf by

H.R.D. White

.....
Revd. Dr. Hugh White
Rector

Francis Hunter

.....
Francis Hunter
Chairman & Churchwarden

The notes on Page 10 form part of these accounts.

St James the Great Syresham Financial Report

Year ending December 2025

As at the end of 2025 we had £6708 in our bank accounts. Of this £5680 is committed leaving £1027 available in our general account.

Income

We received £39221 restricted income and £19,875 unrestricted. Most of the restricted income comprised of donations, grants and VAT reclaims for the steeple, we also received £7403 transferred from our Trust fund for church and churchyard maintenance and £681 in restricted collections.

Regular giving from Standing Orders and through the PGS giving scheme increased to £11261 leading to Gift Aid of £2,926 with a further £169 expected from the PGSs.

Our fundraising was less than usual due to not being able to run the summer fete. We did raise £1963 serving teas at the village Open Gardens, running the excellent Note-Ability concert and at our wonderful Christmas Fair.

Collections are down slightly, this is due partly to folk moving to standing orders and partly to less services.

Expenditure

Total expenditure this year came to £75,701 restricted and £21445 unrestricted. The restricted expenditure was largely due to the completion of works on the steeple at around £66,500. We still have an outstanding loan of £12,998 on the steeple works.

We also spend £4312 on works in the Churchyard, a large part of this was the mowing for which we received a late bill for 2024 and an early one for 2025.

Charitable donations were sent to The Children's Society from Christmas, CED from Harvest, The British Legion from Remembrance, Friends of Bulgaria from card recycling and the Gaza advocacy group after a benefice service.

Our utilities bill was higher than usual this year, this was largely due to expensive electricity needed for floodlighting the tower during steeple works - and insurance necessity.

We managed to pay just over our required contribution to the Parish Share - £18550 this was due, partly to the success of the Christmas Fair which raised £200 more than expected, also some extra contributions from regular givers to help the Benefice meet the full share.

The sundry income and expenditure is largely due to some cheques from 2024 that were lost and reissued this year.

Bank Allocation

We have £5088 reserved towards remaining Quinquennial work (we have accepted a quote for over £8000 to complete this work). £369 came from our Carol Service to be donated to the Brackley Food Bank. There is £25 in our Bell Tower Fund.

Summary

We are forever grateful to our Trust Funds and Friends of St James for the help they give us with maintenance and improvements to our church and church yards. Our general fund is still very much just scraping through with a deficit of £1569 this year and higher costs expected next year.

St James the Great Syresham

Financial Statement: December 31st 2025



Income	2025		2024	
	Restricted	Non Restricted	Restricted	Non Restricted
Regular Giving		11,260.56		10,505.21
Collections	681.19	1,733.68		3,128.79
Gift Aid		2,926.60		2,494.38
Donations inc Wall box	950.60	1,206.83	0.00	608.62
VAT Reclaim	13,607.99		3,086.85	
Loan	0.00		32,414.08	
Steeple Fund	374.19		9,348.53	
Grants	12,000.00		13,000.00	
Events		50.00		222.00
Fundraising		1,948.26		2,752.23
Transfers from Trust	11,607.50		6,260.00	
Sundry		580.14		123.79
Totals	39,221.47	19,706.07	64,109.46	19,835.02
TOTAL INCOME		58,927.54		83,944.48
Expenditure				
Benefice & Diocese		18,400.00		16,500.00
Insurance	2,121.35		2,066.58	
Fabric	67,519.86		36,200.39	
Churchyard	4,312.47		2,098.95	
Utilities		2,073.35		1,372.23
Community Donations		150.00		
Charitable Donations	1,747.30	0.00		482.00
Fundraising		297.60		260.86
Printing		40.09		0.00
Sundry		484.15		110.34
Totals	75,700.98	21,445.19	40,365.92	18,725.43
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		97,146.17		59,091.35
balances	-36,479.51	-1,739.12	23,743.54	1,109.59
BALANCE		-38,218.63		24,853.13
Start Balance 1/1				
Bank		44,757.29		19,441.47
Cash		0.00		462.69
Balance brought forward		44,757.29		19,904.16
Balances Today				
Bank Balance		6,538.66		44,757.29
Cash		0.00		0.00
Closing Balance		6,538.66		44,757.29
RECONCILIATION				
Actual Bank 31/12		3,184.22		14,548.43
Savings Account		5,595.01		30,115.53
Add uncleared lodgements		0.00		462.79
Less unrepresented cheques		2,240.57		369.46
TOTAL	0.00	6,538.66		44,757.29
Bank Allocation				
Quinquennial		5,088.90		
Tower Fund		25.00		
Steeple		185.19		
Carol Service		369.48		
Maintenance Fund		11.74		
Actual balance		£858.35		

I have examined the Receipts and Payments account as at 31st December 2025. In my opinion the Account gives a true record of the state of affairs of the church of St James the Great Syresham as at 31st December 2025.

Date: 06 February 2026

Signed

LOAN

12,998.08

Syresham St James Church

**Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 December 2025**

Statements of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2025

	Unrestricted General Fund	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
Assets	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>
Current account	3099	5680	8779	44,415
Madge Payne Trust Untouchable		859,158	859,158	767462
Madge Payne Trust Available		18,896	18,896	11,476
Maud Payne Trust Untouchable		32,860	32,860	30,380
Maud Payne Trust Available		712	712	149
Hammond Trust		4,620	4,620	4,182
TOTAL	3099	921926	925,025	858,064

Liabilities

Uncleared cheques £2240.57
 Quote accepted for Quinquennial Works £8133.
 Carol Service Collection to be paid to charity £369.48
 Steeple Loan £12,998.08
 Hammond Trust Payments £488.78

Assets

Uncleared Lodgements £169.13

Leaving available balance in the general account at £1027

St Mary's, Wappenham Financial Statement & Report for the year ending 31st December 2025

Income

Fundraising for St Mary's was lower in 2025. However, we again received a £1,000 contribution to the fabric fund from the Wappenham Beer & Music Festival committee in June, for which we are very grateful. Regular giving increased compared with the previous year, partly due to a contribution from TVBA towards electricity and rent. Service collections were lower than last year, although a higher proportion was allocated to charitable giving. We also received a Gift Aid refund, which included an element from the previous year.

The Fawsley Singers kindly performed a Carol Concert at the end of November. The event was well attended, helped by it coinciding with Pub Night, and raised a net £164.26, which was donated to the benefice.

Expenditure

The churchyard was our largest expense in 2025. Although responsibility for the closed churchyard has now passed to Wappenham Parish Council, with day-to-day maintenance delegated to the PCC, some costs were incurred prior to the handover. These included significant tree work and the replacement of a large cemetery gate, an expensive but necessary repair. A budget has been agreed for the Parish Council's contribution, which will be spent entirely on churchyard maintenance. We are very grateful to WPC for taking on this responsibility and to the volunteers who help keep costs as low as possible.

Other expenditure included planned maintenance to the roof alarm system, installation of a new lightning conductor, and extensive cleaning and repair of the church windows. Previous quinquennial work to the south roof and masonry remains to be completed, although a new quinquennial inspection will be required in the coming year.

Charitable Giving

We were able to send charitable donations in support of the following charities:

Children's Society - £348.50. Cancer Research - £150.00. Ripple Effect (Send a Cow) - £100.00 & Royal British Legion £182.00, International Animal Rescue £100.00 and £100.00 to Brackley Food Bank together with produce donated at our Harvest Festival Service. Total £980.50

Our coffee morning team also raised a fantastic total of £1,222.47 which was all donated - £375.00 to Northampton Hope centre, £280.00 to MacMillan, £400.000 to Wappenham Village Hall, £96.00 to Let's Shine Festival and Royal British Legion £76.00

Accounts prepared by Philip Thompson (Treasurer)

Approved for Audit by Astwell Benefice Finance Committee on 19/01/2026

Approved by Wappenham Church Council on 15/01/2026

Examined and certified by Ian Kinman FCCA of Bradden on 20/01/2025

St Mary the Virgin, Wappenham



Financial Statement: 31 December 2025

Income	12 Months		Dec-25		12 Months		Dec-24	
	Restricted	Non Restricted	Restricted	Non Restricted	Restricted	Non Restricted	Restricted	Non Restricted
Regular Giving	0.00	11,024.00	0.00	10,633.93	0.00	10,633.93	0.00	10,633.93
TVBA	0.00	4,800.00	0.00	4,000.00	0.00	4,000.00	0.00	4,000.00
Collections & wallbox	690.20	1,783.50	389.77	2,772.06	389.77	2,772.06	0.00	2,772.06
Gift Aid	0.00	3,560.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Donations	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Fundraising	1,174.36	0.00	2,208.76	0.00	2,208.76	0.00	0.00	0.00
Coffee Morning	1,222.92	0.00	759.64	0.00	759.64	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bell Fund	30.00	0.00	40.00	0.00	40.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Clock	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Investment interest	0.00	164.66	0.00	353.71	0.00	353.71	0.00	353.71
VAT Grant	0.00	299.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Churchyard Maintenance WPC	1,000.00	0.00	500.00	0.00	500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub Totals	4,117.48	21,631.86	3,898.17	17,759.70	3,898.17	17,759.70	0.00	0.00
TOTAL INCOME		25,749.34		21,631.86		21,631.86		21,631.86
Expenditure								
Benefice & Diocese	0.00	11,204.00	0.00	9,845.00	0.00	9,845.00	0.00	9,845.00
Insurance	0.00	2,195.13	0.00	2,130.87	0.00	2,130.87	0.00	2,130.87
Fabric	3,525.30	0.00	2,359.60	0.00	2,359.60	0.00	0.00	0.00
Utilities	0.00	1,720.84	0.00	1,856.80	0.00	1,856.80	0.00	1,856.80
Charitable Donations	1,852.97	350.00	1,155.25	302.00	1,155.25	302.00	0.00	302.00
Churchyard	1,000.00	4,714.03	220.00	58.00	220.00	58.00	0.00	58.00
Alarm & Fire Maintenance	2,438.40	0.00	1,797.60	0.00	1,797.60	0.00	0.00	0.00
Organ	194.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bell Ropes	0.00	0.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bank Charge	0.00	40.40	0.00	64.80	0.00	64.80	0.00	64.80
Subtotals	9,010.67	20,224.40	5,682.45	14,257.47	5,682.45	14,257.47	0.00	0.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		20,224.40		14,257.47		14,257.47		14,257.47
BALANCE		29,235.07		-3,485.73		1,724.31		1,724.31
Start Balance 01/01/2025								
Bank Balance		15,390.04		11,961.52		11,961.52		11,961.52
Cash		706.80		866.85		866.85		866.85
Coffee Morning Account		3.03		9.39		9.39		9.39
Sub Total		16,099.87		12,837.76		12,837.76		12,837.76
Unpresented Cheques		2,252.45		2,764.50		2,764.50		2,764.50
Closing Balance		13,847.42		10,073.26		10,073.26		10,073.26
Balance at bank and in hand		13,847.42		10,073.26		10,073.26		10,073.26
Balances 31/12/2025								
Bank Balance		11,203.44		15,390.04		15,390.04		15,390.04
Cash		874.69		706.80		706.80		706.80
Coffee Morning Account		0.00		3.03		3.03		3.03
Sub Total		12,078.13		16,099.87		16,099.87		16,099.87
Unpresented Cheques		431.00		2,252.45		2,252.45		2,252.45
Closing Balance		11,647.13		13,847.42		13,847.42		13,847.42
RECONCILIATION								
Balance at bank and in hand		11,647.13		13,847.42		13,847.42		13,847.42
BANK ALLOCATION			2,024.00					
Quinquennial		1,800.00		1,800.00		1,800.00		1,800.00
South Roof Repairs		4,000.00		4,000.00		4,000.00		4,000.00
Flag Pole & lightning conductor		0.00		949.00		949.00		949.00
Masonry Repairs		500.00		500.00		500.00		500.00
Alarm upgrade		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00
Churchyard		0.00		2,500.00		2,500.00		2,500.00
Window Clean and Repair		0.00		1,380.00		1,380.00		1,380.00
		6,300.00		11,129.00		11,129.00		11,129.00
ACTUAL BALANCE		5,347.13						

I have examined the Receipts and Payments account as at 31st December 2025. In my opinion the Account gives a true record of the state of affairs of the church of St Mary the Virgin, Wappenham as at 31st December 2025.

Date:

20/1/26

Auditor

IAN KINMAN
FCCA

Signed

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, WAPPENHAM

Financial statement for the year ending 31st December 2025

Statement of Assets as at 31/12/2024

<u>Assets</u>	General Fund	Coffee Mornings	Fabric Fund	Bell & Clock Funds	Churchyard Fund	Share Account	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Bank Current Accounts	£ 11,203.44	£ -					£ 11,203.44
Cash held at 31 Dec	£ 874.69						£ 874.69
Bank Deposit Account			£ 1,447.74				£ 1,447.74
Churchyard Deposit account					£ 711.78		£ 711.78
Coffe Morning Account		£ 3.03					£ 3.03
							<u>£ 14,240.68</u>
CCLA Deposit Accounts							
Bell				£ 2,177.56			£ 2,177.56
Clock				£ 19.94			£ 19.94
Churchyard					£ 236.64		£ 236.64
Deposit Fund							£ 214.64
Share Account						£ 1,436.17	£ 1,436.17
							<u>£ 4,084.95</u>
Total	<u>£ 12,078.13</u>	<u>£ 3.03</u>	<u>£ 1,447.74</u>	<u>£ 2,412.14</u>	<u>£ 948.42</u>	<u>£ 1,436.17</u>	<u>£ 18,325.63</u>
CCLA Investment Management							
Britten Bequest							£ 1,038.84
Fontaine Trust							£ 3,329.74
							<u>£ 4,368.58</u>
Total Assets							<u>£ 22,694.21</u>

WHITFIELD
FINANCIAL STATEMENT REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 2025

INCOME

Regular giving decreased from £2880 in 2024 to £2520 this was due to the loss of two contributors. Gift Aid increased, two years worth was claimed.

We received, with thanks, donations from the Whitfield Friends to cover the buildings part of our insurance and other fabric costs. Some of which we returned after a refund from the diocese to pay for our Quinquennial inspection.

Fundraising raised £232.88 this year.

EXPENDITURE

We paid £3510 towards the Parish Share this represents 63% of the amount we were targeting.

Charitable donations increased to £719 these were paid out to: British Legion and Farming Community Network, The Children's society (two years payments), Three Pillars (benefice service donation) and Brackley Food Bank.

BALANCE

We were ended the year with a balance of £2,329.79

Accounts prepared by Brenda Faragher & Alice Palmer

Approved for examination by the Astwell Benefice Finance Committee 19th January 2026

Approved by the Whitfield Church Council 15th January 2026

Examined by David James Wappenham Road Syresham

Brenda Faragher
Treasurer St John's Whitfield Church Council

St John the Evangelist Whitfield



Financial Statement: 31st December 2025

	2025		2024	
	Restricted	Non Restricted	Restricted	Non Restricted
Income				
Regular Giving		2,520.00		2880.00
Collections & wallbox	498.09	656.90		1032.79
Gift Aid		1,215.41		633.07
Donations	1,498.02	195.50	1,256.42	212.23
Events		195.00		0.00
Fundraising		232.88		942.05
Insurance	1,293.16		0.00	
Grants				
Sundry		50.00		
Sub Totals	3,289.27	5,065.69	1,256.42	5,700.14
TOTAL INCOME		8,354.96		6,956.56
Expenditure				
Benefice & Diocese		3,270.00		4760.00
Insurance	1,293.16	558.91	1,256.42	558.91
Fabric	1,225.52		0.00	
Utilities		184.76		196.92
Charitable Donations	719.09	0.00		203.2
Events		0.00		0
Printing		0.00		0
Repayment to Friends	189.00			
Sundry		12.00		68.52
Subtotals	3,426.77	4,025.67	1,256.42	5,787.55
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		7,452.44		7,043.97
BALANCE		902.52		-87.41
Start Balance 1/1/25				
Bank		1,427.27		1514.68
Cash		0.00		0
Balance brought forward		1,427.27		1,514.68
Balances Today				
Bank Balance		2,329.79		1,427.27
Cash		0.00		0.00
Closing Balance		2,329.79		1,427.27
RECONCILIATION				
Actual Bank 15.12		3,123.79		3,427.7
Add uncleared lodgements		0.00		0.00
Less unrepresented cheques		794.00		2,000.00
TOTAL	0.00	2,329.79		1,427.27
Bank Allocation				
		Fr Insurance		
		Children's Soc		
		Share		
Actual balance		£2,329.79		£1,427.27

Date:

Signed

Whitfield St John the Evangelist

Financial Statements For the year ended 31 December 2025

Statements of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2025

	Unrestricted General Fund	Capital not available for use	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
Assets	£	£	£	£	£
Current account	3124			3124	1427
Churchyard account		500	34	534	534
TOTAL	2330	500	34	5658	1961

Liabilities

Uncleared cheques £794

Assets

Leaving available balance in the general account at £2330