



2025

Report and Accounts

for the

Parochial Church Council of St Nicholas Hardwicke

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ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS (AMP) AGENDA

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Minutes of the AMP 2025**
- 3. Election of Church Wardens**

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING (APCM) AGENDA

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Minutes of the APCM 2025**
- 3. Financial Statement for the year ending 31/12/25 and Treasurer's Report**
- 4. Report on the Goods, Fabric and ornaments of the Church – Church Wardens**
- 5. Electoral Roll**
- 6. Deanery Synod Report**
- 7. Secretary's Report**
- 8. Election of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) (9)**
- 9. Election of Deanery Synod Representatives (2)**
- 10. Election of independent examiner**
- 11. Election of Parish Safeguarding Officer (1)**
- 12. Safeguarding Report**
- 13. Chairman's closing remarks**
- 14. Closing Prayer**

Benefice of Hardwicke and Elmore with Longney

PARISH OF ST NICHOLAS HARDWICKE

Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday 14 April 2024, in the Church

Minutes

Opening Prayers at 12.14pm

Apologies for absence: Mike & Marion Williams, Nick Denman, Wendy Hollis, Pat Gilbert, Vanessa Mowett, Michelle & Paige Hendy.

Annual Parish Meeting (*anyone on the Electoral Roll or who lives in the parish and is on the Local government Electoral register may vote*) 15 Number present.

Election of churchwardens: Richard Flower and Neil Hollis had been duly proposed and elected; All in favour.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting (*Only those on the Electoral Roll may vote*) 15 Number present.

1. **Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held 7 May 2023** : were accepted with no amendments. All in favour.
2. **Matters arising** : None
3. **Reports** :
 - 3.1. **Electoral Roll** (Claire Trafford Electoral Roll Officer) has risen by one, 38 residents and 29 non-residents. Claire is retiring; therefore we need to find someone else for next year. Thank you to Claire for her work over the past few years.
 - 3.2. **Financial report** : We have kept our head above water this year. Spent more than came in this was due to the work on the bells, most of the works were paid by grants with the PCC agreeing to paying £2000. Thanks to involved in the coffee mornings, very much appreciated as this has brought in extra monies. The 'Tithe' (10% from Sunday Service, card machine on Sunday, Parish Giving Scheme) this goes to support Jane Edwards, who went to Hardwicke School and attended Church with her family here. Most of the Gift Aid collected pays for our fuel for heating. Thank you to Wendy our treasurer your work is very much appreciated.
 - 3.3. Churchwardens' Fabric report. Much appreciated of those who spend time during the week tidying up, not easy when Churchwardens have full time jobs!
 - 3.4. Deanery Synod report concentrating on Strategic plan.
4. **Elections and appointments**
 - 4.1. Deanery Synod representatives (2) Justine Sullivan + one vacancy (Marion has stood down due to ill health)
 - 4.2. Election of PCC members we are allowed 9 elected Members.
 - 4.2.1. Current Elected members - Mark Walters, Jenny Bell, Linda Cook, Anita Russan, Glenn Duff. Proposer Neil; Seconder Sarah. All in favour.

Thanks to the members who have stood down Nick Denman and Paige Hendy.

- 4.2.2. New PCC Members : Kate Roxborough, Proposed Pam Lewis, second Mark Walters all in favour. Angela Peters Proposed Jenny Bell and seconded by Anita Russan, all in favour. There are still 2 spaces.
- 4.3. Appointment of Parish Safeguarding Officer and Lead Recruiter : Anita Russan has stood down as Safeguarding Officer. Is anyone interested in taking this on please speak to Rev Richard. Thank you to Anita for all the work in the past. George Parfit will continue as Lead Recruiter.
- 4.4. Appointment of Data Protection Officer : Neil Hollis will continue.
- 4.5. Appointment of Independent Examiner : David Edwards will be asked for next year.
- 4.6. The Vicar thanked all people for all they do.

5. Priest-in-charge's comments –

I hope you've had a chance to read the 2023 Annual Report. God has been good to us this year. Thank you to all of you for the part you play in his work here.

Looking to the future, I have 2 very simple, connected thoughts to offer.

First, anything we plan to achieve can only come to fruition by the grace of God. So the heart of our Church life continues to be prayer. Please continue to protect and treasure the time you set aside each day for prayer, both to deepen your own relationship with God and to root all we do together in a searching for his will.

If you would like any suggestions as to how you might enhance your prayer life please ask! There is a wealth of wisdom available. It's certainly not one size fits all. If you're getting stale or bored, there's lots of options.

So, number one – let's continue to be a Church of praying people.

And secondly, Let's be a people who pray for the Church – all of it.

It's easy at an APCM or at a PCC to forget that we are a tiny part of the worldwide Church. When we have our intercessions and pray for "The church", that's what we are being reminded about. And when we pray the Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done on earth" we are reminded that God's love embraces all the world, not just our part of it!

So today I'm asking each of you to pray for **the** Church, not just this Church.

It starts by remembering that we are a Benefice. Here is a new Benefice prayer diary. On a monthly cycle it enables us to pray for all the Churches and people in this Benefice. Please take it and use it!

Then, we are part of a Deanery. The deanery of Gloucester City. That includes Quedgeley, which was once part of this Benefice and who knows may be again one day. But also far-away parishes like Upton and Hucclecote, inner-city, multi-cultural ones like Barton Street, deprived areas like Matson, and city centre ones like St Mary de Crypt, not to forget the Cathedral. So please pray for the Deanery.

The deanery is part of Gloucester Archdeaconry, which with that of Cheltenham forms the Gloucester Diocese. Our diocese is part of the Province of Canterbury, within the worldwide Anglican Communion. Pray for its leaders, its unity, its wrestling with issues like same-sex marriage and the legacy of slavery.

And that's just the Church of England! Don't forget the many other expressions of Christian worshipping communities! There are about 80 in Gloucester alone! Some are part of global structures, like the Roman Catholics and Methodists, others are proudly independent. All of them our brothers and sisters. Please pray for them, in Gloucester, elsewhere in the UK, and in every country around the world – some affluent and thriving, some poor and struggling, some persecuted and fearful.

Here we are on this day of our APCM. Thanking God for what he has done here in 2023 and reaching out in faith to him for the future. This Church is where God has called us to be, to pray, to serve, to give - of our time, our expertise, and our money. It is right that sometimes our focus is here.

But let's keep our spiritual eyes open to the Church in its broader, fuller sense. As the prayer book HC service puts it, "The Church of God militant here in earth". Let's especially commit to praying for each Church in this Benefice – being interested in their different challenges and opportunities, sharing their joys and sorrows. As St Paul says, we are all members of the one body of Christ – if one suffers, we all suffer, when one rejoices, we all rejoice.

6. **Priorities for 2024-5**

- 6.1. **Re-ordering** – This is ongoing priority get to DAC to Approved and start fundraising.
- 6.2. **Social Events** – Coffee mornings continue monthly, Ukelele Concert very well received and raised money, and another Choir concert booked for the 27 July.
- 6.3. **Nurture** – Become clearer on prayers of blessing for use on same-sex relationships "Prayers of Love and Faith" – decisions need to be made at PCC and then shared with the congregation before we move forward.
- 6.4. **Out-reach** – Jamie, new to the Church found some interesting stories in the Bible and said we should encourage those who do not read the Bible to read it, they may not necessarily join us but sowing the seed. Posters, website etc.
- 6.5. **'For Jesus and You in Hardwicke and Hunts Grove'** – strapline – logo being developed.

7. **Any Other Business**

- 7.1. Sarah said on behalf of everyone - thank you to Rev Richard for another year. Also thank you to all on the rota, much appreciated for all you do.

8. **Closing Prayer and finished with the grace at 12.37pm**

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31/12/2025

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH HARDWICKE							
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES							
For the year ending 31 December 2025							
	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
INCOMING RESOURCES							
Voluntary income	2(a)	16,315	5,190	2,718	24,223	20,508	27,461
Activities for generating funds	2(b)	4,244	0		4,244	4,070	1,738
Income from investments	2(c)	475	0	0	475	384	359
Church activities	2(d)	1,985	0	0	1,985	3,895	3,700
Other incoming sources	2(e)	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		23,019	5,190	2,718	30,927	28,857	33,258
RESOURCES EXPENDED							
Cost of generation of voluntary income	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Church activities		20,751	5,097	2,729	28,577	27,129	35,285
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		20,751	5,097	2,729	28,577	27,129	35,285
NET (OUTGOING) RESOURCES BEFORE OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS & LOSSES							
		2,268	93	-11	2,350	1,728	-2,028
Gains on investment assets:							
on disposal		0	0	0	0	0	0
on revaluation		0	0	0	0	0	
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		2,268	93	-11	2,350	1,728	-2,028
Balance b'fwd start of year					26,883	25,155	27,182
Balances C/fwd at end of year					29,233	26,883	25,155

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH HARDWICKE					
Balance sheet as at 31st Dcember 2025					
		2025	2024	2023	
		£	£	£	
Current Assets		18,770	16,895	15,552	
Short Term Deposits		10,461	9,987	9,603	
Cash at bank and in hand		29,231	26,882	25,155	
Liabilities					
Creditors - amounts falling due in one year			-	-	
CURRENT ASSETS / (LIABILITIES)		29,231	26,882	25,155	
TOTAL NET ASSETS		29,231	26,882	25,155	
PARISH FUNDS (Note 5)					
Unrestricted		9,075	6,834	3,714	
Restricted		4,408	3,006	1,620	
Designated		15,748	17,042	19,820	
		29,231	26,882	25,154	
Approve by the Parochial Church Council on					
and signed on its behalf by					
(PCC Chairman)					

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas Church, Hardwicke

1. NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Notes to the financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2025

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the SORP (2005).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Restricted funds represent a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest, and b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of each year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund. The PCC does not usually invest separately for each fund. Where there is no separate investment, interest is apportioned to individual funds on an average balance basis.

Unrestricted funds are general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes

Designated funds are general funds which the PCC have designated towards specific purposes, although the income was received as per Unrestricted funds. These funds could be reverted to Unrestricted funds by agreement of the PCC.

Incoming resources: Planned giving, collections and donations are recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is received. Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is legally entitled to the amounts due. Dividends are accounted for when receivable, interest is accrued. All other income is recognised when it is receivable. All incoming resources are accounted for gross.

Resources expended: Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded, if that award creates a binding or constructive obligation on the PCC. The diocesan parish share is accounted for when due. Amounts received specifically for mission are dealt with as restricted funds. All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

Investments are valued at 31 December 2025

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas Church, Hardwicke

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2025

			Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total	Total	Total
			Funds	Funds	Funds	2025	2024	2023
			£	£	£	£	£	£
2	Incoming Resources							
2(a)	Voluntary Income	<i>Code</i>						
	Planned giving	Gift Aid Donations	1	12,143	1,060	13,203	14,012	13,253
		Tax Recoverable	7	0	0	1,198	1,337	2,270
	Collections (open plate) & Other		2,3,5	4,172	5,190	9,822	5,159	9,438
	Grants		9 & 10	0	0	-	-	2,500
	Donations, appeals etc Leagacy		8			-	-	-
		Tax Recoverable	6			-	-	-
				16,315	5,190	2,718	24,223	20,508
								27,461
2(b)	Activities for generating funds							
	fund raising		11	4,244	0	4,244	4,070	1,738
2(c)	Income from investments							
	Dividends and interest including tax recoverable		12	475		475	384	359
2(d)	Income from church activities							
	Church fees		14	1,985	0	1,985	3,895	3,700
2(e)	Other incoming resources		21	0	0	0	-	-
	Total Incoming resources			23,019	5,190	2,718	30,927	28,857
								33,258
3	Resources Expended (outgoing)							
	CHURCH ACTIVITIES	<i>Code</i>						
	Missionary and charitable Giving		31	45	0	1,128	982	1,284
	Diocesan parish share		32	15,300	-	15,300	18,800	16,300
	Deanery costs		57	0	0	0	40	40
	Clergy Expenses		34	52	0	52	205	180
	Church running expenses		38,39,43,45,46,47,48	2,589		1,602	4,524	5,494
	Church maintenance		41,44	0	0	0	344	1,407
	Cost of raising funds		30	0	0	0	-	-
	MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION							
	Salaries		33	960	0	-	960	960
	Support Costs						0	-
	Administration costs		42	1,163	70	0	1,233	4,220
	New Organ & Electric wind for tower clock		52	0	0	0	-	-
	MAJOR EXPENDITURE		61	642	5,026	0	5,668	
	Repairs to church buildings Bells		59	0	0	0	-	5,400
	Repairs to other property		55				-	-
	Fees Paid to visiting clergy		52	0	0	0	-	-
				20,751	5,096	2,730	28,577	27,131
	Excess of Receipts over Payments			2,268	94	-12	2,350	1,726
								-2,027

4 During the year the PCC employed an organist but no payments were large enough to attract social security cost.

Parochial Church Council of St. Nicholas Church, Hardwicke

Notes to the financial statement for the year ending 31st December 2025

5 Analysis of Net Assets by Fund			Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total	Total	Total
			Funds	Funds	Funds	2025	2024	2023
			£	£	£	£	£	
Investment fixed assets			£ -	£ -	£ -			
Current assets			£ 9,075	£ 15,748	£ 4,408	£ 29,231	£ 26,882	£ 15,253
Liabilities:								
Creditors: Amounts falling due in one year			£ -	£ -	£ -			
Creditors: Amounts falling due after one year			£ -	£ -	£ -			
			£ 9,075	£ 15,748	£ 4,408	£ 29,231	£ 26,882	£ 15,253
6 Parish Funds								
			Designated	Restricted	Total	Total	Total	
			Funds	Funds	2025	2024	2023	
			£	£	£	£	£	
Fabric Fund and Reordering			17	1,100	1,117	17	17	
Bell Fund			0	0	0	0	-	
Music fund			2,020	0	2,020	7,117	7,054	
Bell Repair Fund			0	-166	-166	-823	- 1,872	
Tithe/Special Projects/MW/Legacy			13,711	2,636	16,347	12,898	11,041	
Youth			0	838	838	838	1,039	
Total			15,748	4,408	20,156	20,047	17,279	
7 Planned Giving								
					2025	2024	2023	
					£	£	£	
Tax efficient planned giving			1		13,203	14,012	13,253	
Other planned giving			2		1,385	1,443	1,376	
Collections at services			3		2,143	2,280	1,998	
All other recurring giving			4			-	-	
All non-recurring giving/donations (special appe			5, 11		10,538	5,505	7,024	
All tax recovered through Gift Aid			7		1,198	1,338	2,270	
					28,467	24,578	25,921	

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH HARDWICKE

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE PCC

This report on the financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2022, which are set out on pages 1 to 5, is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") and s.43 of the Charities Act 1993 ("the Act")

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner.

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements; you consider that the audit requirement of the Regulations and section 43(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

Basis of this report.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's statement

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

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act and to prepare financial statements, which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations have not been met; or

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

Examined By: Richard Hills



Address: [Redacted]

ANNUAL FINANCE REPORT FOR 2025

Once again we have managed to pay our full parish share to diocese as a result of good stewardship and a number of fundraising events during the year. The coffee mornings continue to provide a steady form of income each month (however this should not be seen as their sole function, that is one of fellowship and outreach), that along with other events during the year have enabled us to keep a steady balance over the year. It is very much appreciated the giving that takes place within the church, not only in the collection plate but also in time and talents to enable these events to happen.

Finances continue to be tight, not just in the church but in the world at large, therefore it is important that we continue to manage our finances appropriately.

Report on the Goods, Fabric and ornaments of the Church – Church Wardens

This year has had its challenges for the Church Wardens, Richard's departure has meant that once again we are in a period of vacancy, the wardens would very much like to thank all of those that have volunteered to help during the year, whatever job you do, big or small, is one less for us as wardens to do. A chunk of our time has been spent, with members of the congregation and benefice developing the Parish / Benefice Profile – our 'shop window' for any new vicar to look at. We continue to work with the diocese on finding a new vicar to lead us here at St Nicholas.

One of the big changes within the fabric of the church has been the moving of the organ from us up to Elmore, we had not used the organ in a considerable period of time and we would far rather it was being used than sat doing nothing, and obviously very nice that it stays within the benefice. I think it caught all of us 'on the hop' when we saw really how big the space was where the organ sat and that has allowed some rethinking around the re-ordering plans where progress is slow but we hope to have that firmly moving forward into the next phase over the coming year.

As ever in such an old building the weather continues to offer challenges and we continue to monitor the position with the west wall and the join between the central roof and south aisle.

Events during the year

We have continued with our regular round of events with coffee mornings, and the summer fete continuing, both offering a source of income to us and an outreach to the community. In addition the Ukelele Evening and Wide Valley Singers concerts have been fun enjoyable evenings that allow us to open our church to a wider group whilst offering fun evening

Church Yard

We remain grateful to the Parish Council and their contractor, Dale, who continue to maintain the church yard, keeping it tidy and welcoming (even through the hot, dry weather of last summer

Outreach

We continue with our regular services at St Nicholas court, that are always gratefully received, along with the joy of the toddlers coming into our church one a month (see report later) – once again the Church Wardens are grateful to those who continue to facilitate those services.

Services

In addition to our regular services through the year we continued to celebrate the various festivals, it was wonderful to have the uniformed organisations with us for the Harvest Festival and then a few months later the Remembrance Service, always a wonderful if slightly sombre service.

We were able to facilitate our full range of Easter and Christmas services which once again saw a number of new faces and a busy church for the Crib Service.

Finally

The year has not been without it's challenges, we started the year with a vicar and an Assistant Priest on secondment to us (Duncan), somewhere down the year we lost both of them but are grateful that George has returned from his 6 month sabbatical and continues to be with us. In addition it has been wonderful that Linda and Justine have joined the leadership team as licensed leaders of worship – a great help where we struggle to cover services.

Once again a huge thanks to all that give of their time and talents to help this church.

General Data Protection Rules

The Church aims to be fully compliant.

Structure, governance and management

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the PCC Powers Measure. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church representation rules. The PCC membership consists of 3 ex-officio members, and up to six others elected at the APCM by those members of the congregation who are on the Electoral Roll. All those who attend our services are encouraged to join the electoral roll and to stand for election to the PCC.

PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish, including deciding how PCC funds are to be spent.

Administrative information

St Nicholas's Church and grounds are situated on Pound Lane, GL2 4RP. It is part of the Benefice of Hardwicke and Elmore with Longney, in the Deanery of Gloucester City within the Archdeaconry of Gloucester in the Gloucester diocese, whose Bishop is the Rt Rev Rachel Trewick. The correspondence address is Church House, Cornfield Drive, Hardwicke, GL2 4QJ. The Benefice's website is <https://www.hardwicke-elmore-longney.church>

Electoral Roll Report

There are 50 members, 31 resident and 19 non-resident

Deanery Synod Report

Our reps are Justine Sullivan (Hardwicke) and Doff Stone (Elmore) – we have a vacancies at Hardwicke and Longney. If you are interested in filling one of these you'll find the Synod a good place of co-operative spirit as we seek to work together more and more.

The Synod convened 3 times during 2025 March, July, and November. There were other gatherings for worship and discussions open more widely to our PCCs/members of our congregations

During the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity there was an opportunity for prayer and praise as guests of Gloucester Community Church at St Luke's, Stroud Road. The service was well attended by representatives from churches across the deanery. An invitation was extended to prayer-walk the city <https://www.pray4gloucester.uk/>

20 March Synod met at St Nicholas Church, Hardwicke. The Rev'd Richard Martin had recently retired and moved away. Jo Pestell, Area Dean (AD) sent him our prayers and very best wishes for a long and happy retirement. We had a warm welcome from the team there and were treated to an extensive array of beautiful home-made cakes at the refreshment break.

There was no invited speaker for this meeting as we wished to focus on the next steps to implementing the DSP, noting that our deanery was in line for early funding to support finance and administration. The roles of a Deanery operations lead and an oversight team, relative to those Deanery Standing Committee and the AD needed defining; and terms of reference were drawn up. The synod was broadly in favour of the progress made so far and approved the terms of reference.

Before the next Synod on 8 July there were 4 opportunities for worshipping together.

The Way of the Cross 18 April Good Friday Cathedral and City Centre

Sunrise Service at 6 am Easter Day 20 April Robinswood Hill.

Ascension Day 29 May, a Eucharist service to celebrate the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ and a social get together at St George's Church, Tuffley.

31 May, ecumenical service at the Cathedral with 36 worshipping communities taking part, and young people leading prayers. During this we celebrated the success of the prayer walking challenge as 100% of Gloucester had been prayed for by those who had taken part since January. And the prayerwalking app was reset with people encouraged to keep praying.

Alongside prayer and praise gatherings, interested parties have met to discuss the Parish Share. The City Deanery is heavily subsidised by the other deaneries plus the Diocese as we seek to increase our contribution (currently we give roughly 50% of the

cost). Parish representatives/incumbents/ treasurers/churchwardens were invited to meet with members of the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) and Archdeacon Hilary on 7 May in Church House to discuss the new approach to their allocations for 2026. There was tension and defensiveness as we all took our seats with copies of the accounts at the ready to state our case. Thankfully, anxieties were soon relieved as there was understanding on the part of the DBF of where we were as parishes. There was transparency in the allocations which were based on what we had said we could afford. There were also of course warnings against complacency and requests that we make every effort to raise our commitments. The phrase we came away with was “realistic generosity”,: response to the generosity we each had received at God’s hand with the very best we could manage.

8 July This Synod was held in the Church of St Barnabas where members of synod and our speakers enjoyed a generous finger buffet prepared by a team of volunteers as we held our annual social event at the beginning of a new synod year. The Rev’d Sarah Todd thanked her team and opened the meeting with prayer.

The speaker for the meeting was Rev’d Kate Stacey, Collaborative Ministry Lead (Life Long Learning) from the Department of Mission and Ministry. As her title suggests she was responsible for the development and learning for both clergy and laity as both are called by God to service and to work collaboratively in the mission of the church within their wider communities. Consequently, training and development are essential for working together and need to be offered in easily accessible ways, such as bite-sized modules rather than 16-week courses as the Pastoral Assistants course had been. To thrive, parishes need called and committed laity, respected and valued in implementation.

In the business meeting that followed members were told of the progress in implementation of the DSP. This was especially so with the Youth Connector, Rev’d Helen Champion and in the moves towards appointing a Deanery Operations Lead.

Deanery Evensong on Sunday 7 September was led by Rev’d Mark Siddall at St James’ Church, Quedgeley. The congregation was small however the sermon and prayers were uplifting.

19 November Rev’d Steve Saville, newly appointed priest in charge at St James’ Church Upton Street welcomed the members and opened the meeting with prayer.

Jo (AD) welcomed the members of Synod and also welcomed Lydia Knight, the Deanery Operations Lead for Gloucester City Deanery. She would be starting work in January but was eager to get to know us. Lydia shared a bit of her background and her first reflections on the role she had recently accepted. Each parish and benefice then shared the joys and challenges of their ministries.

The meeting was well attended as members were asked to bring other people from their PCCs and congregations, This is a part of a policy to have more open meetings.

The feedback on the Parish Share meeting with the DBF was very positive. The ongoing treasurers meeting with Jane (deanery parish share coordinator) are proving helpful and mutually supportive.

The Deanery calendar for 2026 was circulated and members were asked to note that on 14 March there would be a Deanery Day and we could review our progress over last 3 years, reflect on Lydia Knight's first couple of months with us and share our thoughts on priorities.

We also spoke of the need to give some thought in our parishes to the elections to the new Deanery Synod which would happen at our APCM, and the effort we should make to encourage enthusiasm around this role.

Over the year we have **Done Something Positive** with our DSP.

Youth work in the deanery has had a terrific boost,

We have a more realistic approach to finance but of course much more to do

The Deanery Operations Lead is in place

Collaboration across the city with prayer walking

We need more volunteers from the laity to step up at this exciting time and make the voices of their parishes and worshipping communities heard.

We are allowed 2 representatives to join the Deanery Synod, if anyone is interested, please speak to Justine for more information.

Justine Sullivan (Deanery Representative) May 2026

PCC Secretary's Report

The PCC met 6 times this year. Initially at Church but now have made the Royal British Legion Meeting Room our regular meeting place. We have been focussed on our Vacancy Profile and re-ordering project.

Again 2025 we have had a coffee morning organised by the Tuesday Group every month, we had extended one in June and October. Again, we have had a Ukelele Evening, and the Wide Valley Singers, all raising money to varying extents. These events are very much appreciated and the PCC thanks all who are involved for the work they do. If anyone is interested in helping organise events, please let a member of the PCC know. Jenny, Edna and Justine represented Hardwicke Church and took part in the annual Ride & Stride in September (Gloucestershire Historic Churches Trust), 50 % of the monies raised comes back to the church.

January: We started a year with updating on where we are with the re-ordering and pushing that forward with the Architects. Also started to look at Vacancy Planning. Hardwicke and Huntsgrove was well attended over the Christmas period. Huntsgrove going from strength to strength.

March: St Nicholas Church hosted the Deanery Synod meeting, with the Tuesday Ladies providing cakes and refreshments. Elmore agreed to re-home our organ and agreed to all costs to remove, transport and install the organ. The weekly Wednesday Service at Hardwicke Church ceased, all who attend were invited to join Quedgeley for their Wednesday mid-week service. The Monthly first Wednesday of the month with the toddlers continued with Judy Cheshire leading. Vanessa kindly agreed to take on the newsletter, for our weekly Sunday Services.

May: We have had a monthly Service at Hardwicke School for about 3 years on the 3rd Sunday of the month. Numbers vary, those from the community only come when their children are in the choir, with the setting up and dismantling time it was decided to reduce to 4 times a year. Sportily continues to work in Huntsgrove and Hardwicke Schools and its Friday afternoon community coffee Hub (Huntsgrove) is well attended and good conversations happening.

July: Our vacancy meeting with the Arch Deacon and Area Dean was postponed and rescheduled for September before the Benefice Preliminary Vacancy meeting. We continue to find cover during our Vacancy.

September: The organ has been removed to Elmore Church; the space is larger than expected and we can now see the stained-glass window.

Discussion on the Parish Profile thinking of what we want to include. We all heard the proposal to sell the current vicarage and build / procure a new one, whilst this is required to bring the vicarage up to date as the Church House doesn't meet the requirements of a modern vicarage (e.g. there should be a separate external access to the 'office space' for people coming in to see the vicar rather than going through the 'family' part of the house). There are concerns, Neil has expressed these to Hilary and the diocese property

department, the obvious location is going to be the new houses over at Hunts Grove however that could present challenges:

- i) Parking – like all new housing estates there is very little room to ‘on-street- visitor parking’, any meeting with more than two cars is likely to going to present challenges / annoy neighbours.
- ii) Aligned to the above, putting it on Hunts Grove will require, basically, anyone visiting from the church side of the A38 to drive.
- iii) Again, aligned with the above the A38 puts a big ‘physical’ barrier between the vicarage and rest of Hardwicke, Longney and Elmore.
- iv) Whilst it will provide a physical presence over in Hunts Grove I think there are more challenges to overcome, not least that although Hunts Grove is in Hardwicke ecclesiastical parish it is its own civil parish and therefore residents over there will feel very little link to Hardwicke, indeed when Haresfield Lane is back open again they will probably find that Haresfield is the easier church to physically get to.

November: We met for the first time at The Royal British Legion in Hardwick. More work done on the Parish Profile almost complete, waiting on questionnaires to come in from Church and community. We have paid our parish share in full for this year.

Justine Sullivan, PCC Secretary 2026

ELECTION OF PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC)

Current PCC Members wishing to continue

Ex-Officio members:

Churchwardens: Neil Hollis and Richard Flower

Wendy Hollis (Treasurer)

Deanery Synod representative: Justine Sullivan

Licensed Reader: Judy Cheshire

Elected members (9)

1. Linda Cook
2. Angela Peters
3. Kate Roxborough
4. Mark Walters
5. ?
6. ?
7. ?
8. ?
9. ?

After many several decades of service to the PPC Jenny Bell has decided to step down. We thank her for all that she has done throughout this time. She will be missed.

Election of Deanery Synod Representatives (2)

Current Deanery Synod Members wishing to continue

1. Justine Sullivan
2. ?

Election of independent examiner

Current Independent Examiner: David Edwards

Election of Safeguarding Officer

Janear is stepping down from this position.

Safeguarding

The Parochial Church Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults.

Some members of the PCC have completed The Basic Awareness online training course; others require an update. Some relevant PCC members and clergy have completed the Foundation, Leadership and Safer Recruitment training while others need to update this. A review of the accuracy of our current training records should be scheduled.

During 2025 I became Safeguarding Officer for the Hardwicke Parish at the request of the active vicar. After one year in the position, I have decided to step down, taking effect at the conclusion of our APCM meeting.

No disclosures were made during my time as Safeguarding Officer from 2025 to 2026.

Janear Kelly, Safeguarding Officer 2026

Readers' report

This year we have been missing Mike's contributions as an active Reader, after his well-deserved retirement. He has, of course, not left us, he and Marion are very much still part of our congregation, indeed he still reads and leads our intercessions.

Towards the end of last year, Pat Buckland also retired, and, although she was more active at Elmore and Longney, we still saw her from time to time.

This means that the only active licensed Lay Reader is Judy. She has been very active in the Ministry Team in all roles, and much valued. Her easy-going style and quizzes are much loved.

The other news is that Rich Flower was accepted as a Reader-in-Training. This meant that February-April he was on placement at St George's Tuffley (and St Margaret's Whaddon) as part of his training. Consequently, he has increased his involvement in up-front ministry, with preaching stints at Hardwicke and Elmore (no doubt Longney will suffer in due course). At the moment it is unclear if he will be licensed this year or next, but he will be continuing in his ministry as required in the interim. When the date of licensing becomes clearer the information will be disseminated so that anyone who wishes to support him at that time can attend.

Judy and Rich 2026

Hardwicke Parochial Primary Academy

Ex-Officio Foundation Governors' Report

Hardwicke Primary school has grown in strength over the last year under the leadership of The Headteacher Sharon Cole and her staff. Many thanks for everything they do for the children and families in the school. Numbers of children in the school are increasing. Myself and members of St Nicholas church helped with the children's Holy week activities. I look forward to helping the school with other activities through the year.

Anita Russan.

For information about the school please visit <https://www.hardwicke.gloucs.sch.uk/>

Hardwicke Tower Report

Hardwicke tower has continued to hold popular monthly practices on the first Monday of the month, attracting ringers from the local area to ring methods of increasing complexity.

We also continue to ring for Sunday services once a month and for special occasions, wherever possible.

A primary school aged boy came along 3 or 4 times in the summer to try out ringing and use the Ellacombe (the one handed bell pulling system on the right hand wall). His cousin came along to one session too.

Stroud district had their striking competition at Hardwicke last summer, and the Gloucester & Bristol youth team also use our bells for occasional events.

We are a popular destination for visiting bands in and out of the County. Last year, a descendent from the Tyre family, brought a group of friends and family to ring the bells of his ancestors.

Thanks to the generosity of regular ringers and visiting bands during 2025, we have received £183.62 in donations to the Bell Fund, held by the church.

The rope on the tenor bell developed a worn patch which has been removed and respliced by one of our experienced ringers. This repair will last for a while, maybe years, but at some point, the rope will need to be replaced.

I'd like to finish by thanking Sarah Walters for her support in helping to organise the booking and hosting of visiting ringers.

Sue Beynon April 2026

The Music Group (Worship Band) and Simply Singers

Music Group – As mentioned for a quite a number of years now, we could really do with a (rhythm) guitarist, or even a drummer! If you, or someone you know, may be prepared to play once or twice a month, please have a word with me/them. It would also be good to have additional singer who is happy to sing harmony.

As our repertoire of worship songs is now fairly well established, the Simply Singers only practice very occasionally, however new songs are added to our repertoire now and then. New members are always welcome.

As always, my sincere thanks to all in the Music Group and the Simply Singers for their support and contribution to our worship.

Mark Walters 2026

HUNTS GROVE & SPORTILY

2025 was another year of watching God work in only the way he can in Hunts Grove. As we still battle with the unique lack of community facilities in a community that is growing at a rapid rate, we seek to look and celebrate at what is happening rather than lamenting on what we have not got. Although we would love to have building to call 'home' I am always stuck by the fact God can and does work in any space where people are. The everyday spaces of the community have become platforms for us to connect, eat together, explore faith and offer an opportunity to encounter the living Christ as we seek to turn some soil in our little patch of the garden and help build the Kingdom of God here in Hunts Grove.

We have managed to sustain our weekly rhythms that include being a settled presence in Hunts Grove Primary School offering lunch time clubs, P.E support and after school clubs as well as allowing a space to have great conversations with staff.

Our weekly youth hangout continues to grow in numbers, so much so that sometimes the school hall is not big enough, which is a real answer to prayer and encouragement that the young people keep returning and indeed bringing friends with them. In the hangout space we now have 4 young leaders who as part of the Duke of Edinburgh award volunteer with us every week.

The weekly community detached sports session is alive with noise, football and great conversation, allowing us to create a space which is covered in the ethos of kindness and care towards one another as play sport

Throughout the spring and summer term, we ran a 'community coffee hub' where we partnered with a local portable coffee vendor and every Friday we set up at the park in Hunts Grove and offer coffee, put up a prayer board, and a talk life question, put out chairs and picnic blankets, games for young people to play, and effectively turned a little green patch of the green space in to an outdoor café. We ran our first 'fun in the sun week' in August where we took a different activity into the Hunts Grove community every day for a week. We had a climbing wall, a street football pitch, outdoor Pilates and Fitness classes and a community picnic and rounders match throughout the week. My highlight was watching two members of the community who didn't know each other praying together as they sat and chatted at the picnic.

Termly community breakfast cafés have been joined by the Hunts Grove community running toy and book exchanges and at Christmas a Christmas craft workshop was offered in the space which has fostered some amazing community connection opportunities.

Sportily community carol service ran again, which saw people of faith and of no faith join together to celebrate the birth of Jesus in what still is one of the only acts of public worship on Hunts Grove.

We have ran youth Alpha for the second time, with a group of young people, none of who go to church and would call themselves Christians, but these young people kept turning up week after week and we have had some amazing conversations about God and the Christian

faith, resulting in one young person inviting Jesus into their lives for which we give all praise and glory to God.

As well as the work in Hunts Grove, Sportily continue to be a presence in Hardwicke Primary school. We have been offering Play leader leadership development course, delivering collective worship assemblies, helping with Experience Easter and running a spirituality day. I currently hold the role of school chaplain and go in once a week to offer a space for staff if they need to talk.

Our vision is that in all that we do people know that they are loved, and we look after each other in the way that Christ looks after us. This has allowed for many a positive conversation with families and young people about how they can care for the community they live in.

I praise God how the work he is doing in Hunts Grove, and I sit here excited of what is to come. I also sit in complete praise and awe of the God we serve and how he works in so many different ways.

Tim Fletcher 2026

OPEN THE BOOK

For many different reasons, personal and other, the Open the Book team have been unable to go into either Hardwicke or Longney schools this school year; September 2025 to-date.

We pray that we will be able to return again as soon as possible.

Our time together when we meet to arrange/rehearse each story is a lovely time of fellowship. We would SO welcome anybody else who feels they would like to join us!

PLEASE come and have chat with any one of us.

Anita, Derek, Claire or Sarah

Sarah Walters 2026

Wednesday Toddler Group

If you come to St Nicholas Church on the first Wednesday each month at 10 o'clock, you will hear children's voices filling the building. Whatever the weather, Jo and her daughter Georgina and Catherine M-W make the journey along the lane with the children they mind during the weekdays. The children's ages range from babes in arms to four years old and it's easy to see how much they enjoy the hour of play in the church. Sarah Walters is always on hand to help and ensures that the children have a variety of toys to play with- large blocks and lego bricks, wooden tracks and small cars, crayons and paper. We stop for a short time for refreshments, a story from the Bible (child friendly) and several songs which the children choose. Incy Wincy Spider is very popular and the actions are approached with tremendous enthusiasm. The children love coming to church and relish the opportunity to play in the special environment. At Christmas, they learned about the Christmas story and the significance of the Christingle. They were able to make their own and take it home, with all the sweets intact ...for at least 10 minutes!

Judy Cheshire 2026

GENERAL CHURCH ROTA

As always, this is the time to say thank you so much to everyone who remain on this rota and give their time and support to St Nicholas Church.

My personal thanks again too, to everyone for their patience when changes have to be made, sometimes last minute !

If you would like to/could join us on the team, however small you feel your commitment could be - once a month or less is fine (!), please get in touch.

We are more than happy to talk through anything first and support/help.

email: marksarah1980@gmail.com - or phone/text: 07757944137.

The main duties on the rota are:

Sides-person: a chance to welcome everyone as they come into our church - give out hymn books, service sheets etc.

Reader: usually the Epistle of the day.

Prayers: the preparation of, and, leading us in our time of prayer during the service.

Sacristan: preparing the altar, checking/lighting candles and other small duties alongside this, before and after the service.

- and ! - Coffees/teas to be served after the service - speaks for itself !

Sarah Walters 2026

PRAYER LINE

Our church prayer line still remains a special opportunity, alongside many friends, to hold those we know, and those we don't, in our prayers.

We can reach more than several friends very quickly to enable us to link together in prayer, especially when urgent, immediate prayer is needed.

Praying for others, however close, or far away they are, even the other side of the world, can feel very humbling, and we should not/cannot underestimate the power of prayer – often beyond words. When we feel so helpless in what we can do to support/reach out, never stop praying.

'prayer is as simple, and as vital as breathing'

'Stop for a moment and begin to pray. Just a few words, any time of the day. God will always listen to what you have to say. 1 Thessalonians v17

Prayer requests are followed through on either:

Text Sarah on 07757944137.

or, email: marknsarah1980@gmail.com

Sarah Walters 2026

Tuesday Prayer Group

Originally set up as The Saint Nicholas Prayer Shawl ministry, we now meet every Tuesday morning for Prayer and Fellowship. We pray for the church, our parish and our place in the world.

We still knit or crochet blankets and shawls to comfort and support local people in need, and we have the items blessed in church before delivery. We also however craft items to support the church ministry like prayer squares for Baptism, hearts for weddings and crosses for bereaved families. We also provide prayer squares for anyone who visits the church to take as they wish.

We have used crafted items to decorate the church for Easter and Remembrance Sunday.

All things are done in prayer

We run a monthly Coffee Morning to help with finances but primarily to give the parish a meeting point, a place of safety and a listening point if needed especially for those who are lonely. Sometimes these coffee mornings are made into larger events to encourage more people to come from the parish and to encourage more church people to get involved; This year we held a mini fete in June and in October a Christmas fundraiser and sale

We also meet at the church to help with the cleaning and upkeep of the church. Cleaning the brass needs more volunteers please see Vanessa or Sarah if you could help at any time.

The Tuesday group ladies do the flowers for church at festivals as well as normal time. As we have less arrangers now (and those we have are getting somewhat older), we have put in church some vases to make it easier. We now encourage anyone who would like to remember a birthday or special time of a loved one to join in, there are plenty of vases so please bring along a bunch or two of flowers and put them in a vase, place on a window or table and if you would like, add a card to show who the flowers are for. This will help the ladies immensely.

This year the group has taken part in various activities i.e. Coffee at the village hall to support a new business. A lent course including a lent Lunch at Sandra's (thank you). A lunch at the Little Thatch. An advent course run by Judy and an Afternoon Tea at Christmas.

Last but not least this year we had to say goodbye to a beloved member of our group, Alma Weekes. She was a founding member and loved by all, we will miss her beautiful crafted shawls and items to sell, and we miss her advice and wisdom in our meetings and prayers, and we miss the welcome we got any time we called to see both her and John in their lovely home. God Bless you Alma, may you rest in peace.

Vanessa Moore 2026