

The Parish of Chilthorne Domer



**Annual Report
and
Financial Statements
of the Parochial Church Council
for the year ended
31st December 2025**

Rector:
Vacancy

Bankers:
Nat West, Yeovil

Independent Examiner:
Mr P Moore
Wilmary Paddock
Chilthorne Domer
BA22 8RD

The Parochial Church Council is an Excepted Charity

The Parochial Church Council of St Mary, Chilthorne Domer

Annual Report

for the year ended 31st December 2025

The aims of S Mary's church council

St Marys Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, presently a Vacant position, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church building of St Mary's church building.

When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable this through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Ensuring that the church building is both an accessible and welcoming environment and fit for purpose in people's explorations of 'their gifts in service of others and their worship of God in Christ Jesus'.

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of St Mary's.

2025 – Our Celebrations and Challenges

Some might think St Mary's is out on the edge of the community, but that would be wrong. Be it through the teams who help with the upkeep of the church and its surrounds or, more so, the volunteers who join with the church community acting in and for the wider community.

Our organist Philip, the churchyard grass and hedge cutters, those who clean and arrange flowers. The choir and readers at Christmas, the village carol and crib services. The helpers at the Village Monday afternoon teas, the Easter café and the joint School bingo night. Again this year we celebrate you, one and all!

We also celebrate our regular services, including in 2025 our new monthly 'Morning Praise' service designed for all ages, as well as the termly school services and festivals – Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Remembrance. As well as our regular services, we look to serve and care for our community as they celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through baptism we thank God for the gift of life, in marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing and through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life which is now complete in this world and to commend the person into God's keeping. We have celebrated 1 baptism and held 3 funerals/memorial celebrations in church.

Whilst we celebrate many things we do have some challenges, not least keeping the roof watertight.

Safeguarding

“Safeguarding is a Christian imperative and a responsibility that we all must undertake with thoughtfulness, commitment and care. The gospel affirms that every person is made in the image of God and that everybody is therefore valued and loved by God”

No concerns of safeguarding were reported in 2025

The Parish is registered on the Diocesan Dashboard (for easy record keeping). The PCC has adopted the Diocesan Safeguarding policy, but has no Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) at this time. ‘Basic Awareness’ and ‘Foundation’ level safeguarding training remain the expected level of training and all PCC members are up to date with their training. Details of how to make a report of a Safeguarding issue are displayed in the church

Deanery Synod Report

It had been hoped that the legal scheme through which we would become one of the partner parishes in a new benefice (Ivelmeads benefice) would have been finalized in 2025; alas not! Whilst still awaiting the ‘full transfer’ it was decided that we would transition over to our new Deanery Synod, that of Ivelchester (we say new, however in decades gone by we used to be a part of this deanery; so in some ways this is going home). As such these notes relate to the new deanery.

You may be wondering what a Deanery is all about and why the details of its meetings feature here in the Parish Annual Report.

Deaneries are small geographical divisions of the Diocese, within which parishes are grouped under the care of an Area Dean; Ivelchester Deanery is known to have been in existence since 1242!

Each deanery is governed by a Deanery Synod. The deanery synod is a statutory body, yes as it sounds they are set up and enabled by Parliament (The CofE is Parliament’s church for the nation) and operate through the Synodical Government Measure 1969. Deanery Synods have a significant role in the synodical system. They are located between PCCs at parish level, and the higher the synodical levels of Diocesan Synod and The General Synod. The task of the deanery synod, as set out in the Measure is as follows:

- to consider matters concerning the Church of England, to make provision for such matters locally, and to consider and express their opinion on any other matters of religious or public interest;
- to bring together the views of parishes on common problems, to discuss and formulate common policies on those problems, to foster a sense of community and interdependence among those parishes, and generally to promote in the deanery the whole mission of the Church;
- to make known and so far as appropriate put into effect any provision made by the Diocesan Synod;
- to consider the business of the Diocesan Synod, and particularly any matters referred to that synod by the General Synod;
- to raise matters, as the deanery synod consider appropriate, with the Diocesan Synod.

Each parish is able, every 3 years to elect a number of representatives to sit on Deanery Synod and can find themselves to consider and vote on matters of national importance. Yeovilton with Podimore is able to return 1 representative.

Ivelchester Deanery Synod met 3 times in the 2025; February, July and October.

Tuesday 18th February, 2025,

We began the year looking at Shared Local Ministry through a presentation by the Area Dean looking at, and learning from creative approaches being applied across the Church of England, and the wider Anglican church and other denominations across the world on this form of 'being church' in our local community.

Members worked in groups to looking at the statistical reality of the parishes we live in and how it might be we look at being church differently in different locations; whilst we are all the Anglican church how we engage in our worship and service of the community will differ by dint of the people we live amongst.

Discussion followed around this on creative ways we might engage with families, singles, working and retired peoples. The challenge is always to 'know the land', but seek to view it with God's eyes, being intentional in our love of neighbour but without assuming anything.

A practical guide, "*Learning from other's creative thinking and planning for rural multi-parish ministry and mission*" was left with synod members to take on for use in their benefices/parishes as they might wish.

Wednesday 16th July, 2025, 7.30pm

Yesterday, today and tomorrow – Lament, Anxiety and Hope in our worshipping communities. This was led by Susan Laycock (Lay Dean). This was a very good time of discussion about, post Covid, thinking on the things we *lament* in our changed churches and communities, on what is making our churches *anxious*, and what we are also *hope filled* about the future.

There were several sheets of flip chart paper filled with reflection from folks on:

- What has caused lament or anxiety in the past in your church?
- What is causing your church to rejoice?
- What gives you hope for the future?

All of the reflections were gathered up and compiled, fed back and assisted Synod at the first meeting of 2026 in looking further to matters of prayer for one another and our communities through 2026. It also enabled the revision work of the Deanery Plan by the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group, with the aim of having a plan developed locally that together we can engage with and support one another in our local service of the gospel.

Thursday 16th October, 2025, 7.30pm

'Listening to the silent member of your worshipping community' – and evening with Mark Lidster, the Diocesan Church Buildings Advisor.

Mark gave a very interesting and informative talk which raised a number of questions. Here are some of the salient points ...

- Our church building is the silent member of our community. It is there for people when they need it but it needs to serve its purpose. How many people in the broader community actually use it?
- The mathematical proportions make each church unique. The design of each church is based around the 'golden proportions'. Everything is based around circles, possibly 3,5 or 7. There is a big spiritual impact of decorations in our churches. Everything has a meaning, created by medieval workmen. Research around the history of our church buildings can encourage members of the community back into our churches. Mark can help you find out more about your own church.

- It is widely thought that we would spend more time in church if it was warmer. Where did this thinking come from? Early civilisations used open hearths but it was the Romans who expedited heating in public places by blowing warm air through. Most 'modern' heating systems are from the twentieth century although often referred to as Victorian and it was during this period that many of our churches were initially heated. However, heating systems have caused much destruction to the fabric of our churches. We have gone away from dressing warmly to go to church (domestic expectation). When central heating appeared, clothing changed and moved away from the warmth that wool offered. *Perhaps we should be asking 'are we expecting too much of this building to heat it?'*
- The cost of heating our, often large, churches infrequently causes problems. Warm air will process more moisture than cold air. Dry air will give the impression of warmth but the building needs to be well ventilated to avoid water remaining in the air and condensation forming. *The building should be ventilated (ie doors left open) for 3 or 4 times the length of time the heating was on.* Trying to retain heat is virtually impossible. *It is ok to have conversations about why we need to be warm.*
- Church repairs should be done with lime mortar. We need to allow a 'managed decline' of stonework where possible. Even if previous repairs were wrong (eg the use of concrete) they should be left alone if they aren't causing a problem.
- There is a challenge to dwelling in our church buildings.
We should ask 'how can we be enabled to be what our purpose is?'
How did the building used to be used?
Is it about making a community space to help community thrive?
What has been the impact of church and faith in our communities?

PCC Structure, governance and management

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a Registered Charity.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At St Mary's the membership of the PCC consists of the Churchwarden and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services / members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

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

The full PCC met x3 times during the year with an average level of attendance of 95%.

Thank you to all the PCC members, for meeting, prayers and practical assistance in the Lord's name.

Administrative information

St Mary's Church is situated in Main Street, Chilthorne Domer, BA22 8RD. It is part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells within the Church of England. The address for correspondence is PCC Secretary, Mrs A Clothier, Pound Farm, Chilthorne Domer, Yeovil.

PCC members who have served at any time from 2024 until the date this report was approved are:

Ex Officio members:

Incumbent: Vacant

Wardens: Mrs Angela Clothier

Elected members: Mr Mark Batstone; Mrs Jillian Coe; Mr Ian Gardner; Mrs Sallyann Batstone (Reader welcomed on PCC by the Annual Meeting)

Treasurer: Mr Ian Gardner

Safeguarding Officer: Vacant

St Mary Chilthorne Domer

Financial review and Statements for the year ended 31st December 2025

Review of 2025

Each parish church is a charity in law (although exempted from registration) and, whilst many people think the CofE is a 'corporate' entity, the reality is that each and every church has to generate its own income through donations, regular giving directed by people straight to the bank, fundraising and what interest any reserves the PCC holds can generate. Thank you to each and every one who has donated, given through fundraising raffles and Monday Teas, and to the grant made by the Parish Council!

Total receipts were £9,162.51 (*an increase on 2024 of £34.30*). Income over expenditure saw a surplus of £1,405.54. Parish share contribution requested for 2025 was £9,804 and the PCC managed to contribute £6,000 towards this amount.

Insurance costs for the church were up by £264 on 2024 to £1,345. Whilst the church has to pay a 'business' rate for electricity (we are a not for profit charity!) careful usage saw our charges for power drop by £174, to £655 for the year. Statutory Fees for Weddings and Funerals in the year generated £1,228. Gift aid recovery and interest brought in £1,376.

Reserves policy

The balance of the free reserves at the yearend was £31,623 an increase of £1,405 on the previous year.

Thank you to Mr Ian Gardener for all his work as treasurer.

St Mary Chilthorne Domer: Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2025

Chilthorne Domer Parochial Church Council
Accounts for 2025

2024		2025
£	<u>Income</u>	£
787.81	Church collections	1,413.05
	Donations:	
1,207.55	Gift-aided donations	1,729.90
461.55	Gift aid tax recovery from HMRC	600.62
1,350.00	Post Office Teas, Raffle etc	1,246.00
617.60	Other donations	840.20
1,152.85	Events	828.42
2,032.00	Fees	1,228.00
450.00	Parish Council Grant	500.00
1,068.85	Interest and Dividends	776.32
	Other	
9,128.21	Total income	9,162.51
	<u>Expenditure</u>	
632.00	Organist / Visiting clergy	-620.00
4,500.00	Parish share	6,000.00
829.20	Electricity	655.12
1,081.00	Insurance	1,345.40
247.70	Charitable donations	273.00
	Expenses of clergy etc	
	Newsletter	
3,364.92	Maintenance	103.45
	Capital items	
	Other	
10,654.82	Total expenditure	7,756.97
-1,526.61	Surplus / (Deficit)	1,405.54
31,744.82	Opening Funds	30,218.21
30,218.21	Closing Funds	31,623.75
	<u>Bank Reconciliation</u>	
2,485.23	Current Account Statement	3477.25
3,196.77	Capital Reserve Account Statement	3232.46
22,738.92	Liquidity Manager Account Statement	23293.91
2,115.91	Add: December takings credited in following year	1,964.05
-318.62	Less: Uncashed cheques	-343.92
30,218.21	Total funds	31,623.75