

St Peter's Church, Grandborough



Annual Report and Financial Statement of the Parochial Church Council for 2025

Priest-in-Charge

Rev Phil Price

BANK

CAF Bank
23 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent ME19 4JQ

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Mr A Robinson
School Street
Churchover
CV23 0EG

St Peter's PCC has a duty to work with their Incumbent in the Parish in promoting the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, ecumenical, evangelistic and social.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL AND OFFICERS 2025

Ex Officio members

Priest-in-Charge

Rev Phil Price

Deanery Synod Representative

Alex Suffell (resigned 1/9/25)

Elected members

Phil Blundred

Tom Crane

Dorothy Johnson

Dave Proctor

Alex Suffell (resigned 1/9/25)

Charmaine Williams

Officers appointed by the PCC

Secretary

Tom Crane

Minute Secretary

Dorothy Johnson

Safeguarding Officer

Alex Suffell (resigned 1/9/25)

Treasurer

Dave Proctor

Electoral Roll Officer

Charmaine Williams

The PCC met six times during 2025. In view of the small number of members there are no sub-committees

Electoral Roll - The present total is 16

Occasional Offices

During 2025 the following were recorded for the Parish:

Weddings:	N/A
Funerals:	Haydn Williams David Thompson
Memorial:	Sarah Chiverton
Baptisms:	Scott Dobson-Smith Scott Cannon Danny Pechap Jonathan Jackson Ronald Houpholet (All at HMP Rye Hill)

Church Attendance Figures

	2024	2025
Easter	No service	30
Christmas Carol Service	300	240
Christmas Day	No service	No service
Holy Communion (9.00 am)	13	16

Breakfast Service	12	15
Remembering Service	39	33
Remembrance Service	47	67
Harvest Festival	42	36
Good Friday (Messy Church)	18A + 10C	No service

1. Chair's Introduction

2025 was a successful year for our church. The worship pattern is now well established and forms part of the broader arrangements in place across the Leam Valley Benefice. We continue to be grateful for the ministry team in their efforts to bring God's word into our community. All of this supports our wider aim of sustaining St Peter's as a place of worship, heritage and community life.

The church also held a number of special services which were well supported, including both the Remembrance and "Remembering Services", and a new format for the Easter Sunday service, which combined communion with breakfast. We also held our first ever "Pimms and Hymns" service in August 2025, which was very well attended.

Other regular events continued to bring together the whole community, in particular the Farmers' Market, which continues to thrive. In addition, we held two one-off events during the year — the Rugby Male Voice Choir in April 2025 and a Church Open Day in July — both of which were very well supported.

A key focus of activity during the year was securing funding to support the restoration of important elements of the church building, reflecting the ongoing need to address the ageing condition of parts of the building and its historic fittings. During 2025, restoration of the Reredos was successfully completed. In addition, the PCC secured a number of grants and launched a local fundraising appeal, which was very generously supported by the community. The success of this appeal enabled the PCC to unlock further funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund towards the end of 2025.

As a result, a programme of works will take place during 2026, including the restoration of the church clock, repairs to the churchyard walls, and conservation works to the war memorial. Funding has also been secured for a revised and updated website, which will make the history of St Peter's more accessible to a wider audience.

More details on the work completed in 2025 are set out in the Fabric Report below. Once these works have been completed, the PCC will assess whether a reordering of the church building would be appropriate and will consult with the local community before progressing this further.

In relation to the work of the PCC, we met six times during the course of the year. During the year we said goodbye to Alex Suffell, who has moved to Durham with our prayers and best wishes to study to become a vicar. Alex made a fantastic contribution to both the PCC and our parish. In early 2026, Helen Ireland joined the PCC and we are very grateful to her for taking on this role.

In relation to governance, the PCC approved a formal scheme of delegation put forward by Rev Phil Price, designed to better align governance arrangements across the Benefice and support more effective and consistent decision-making. The creation of a new Joint PCC for the Benefice was also supported by the PCC.

The PCC has also continued to manage the church's finances carefully during the year, balancing the need to maintain the building and support ministry while ensuring long-term sustainability. More details on this are set out below in the Treasurer's Report.

In closing, my thanks go to everyone who helps make St Peter's such a unique place: the Leam Valley Ministry Team, the members of the PCC who contribute in so many different ways, and the wider Grandborough community, which has so generously supported the church and its recent fundraising appeal.

Tom Crane

2. Mission and Community Engagement

The PCC continues to support the mission of the Church through both worship and wider community engagement. Regular services, occasional offices, and special events provide opportunities to engage with those in the parish and beyond. Community activities such as the Farmers' Market, concerts, and seasonal services play an important role in maintaining the church's presence within village life and creating accessible ways for people to connect with the church.

3. 2025 Fabric Report

The fabric of St Peter's has been a major focus for the PCC during 2025, with particular emphasis on addressing priority conservation issues and developing a programme of longer-term repairs and improvements.

Completed Works in 2025

The principal fabric project completed during the year was the restoration of the Reredos, which has significantly enhanced the appearance of the chancel and forms an important part of the church's historic interior. This work was made possible through a combination of grant funding and generous local support.

Routine maintenance has also been undertaken throughout the year to ensure the church remains safe, weatherproof, and fit for purpose.

Projects Developed in 2025 (for delivery in 2026)

A significant amount of work has been undertaken to develop a wider programme of fabric improvements, supported by successful grant applications and community fundraising. The PCC has prioritised these works based on urgency, risk to the historic fabric, and the availability of external grant funding.

These projects are expected to be delivered during 2026 and include:

- **Clock Restoration:** Following detailed specialist inspections and consideration of proposals from multiple specialist contractors, the church clock has been identified as requiring a full overhaul together with replacement of the existing automatic winding system and installation of an automatic regulator. This will ensure the long-term reliability and accuracy of the clock while preserving its historic mechanism in accordance with conservation best practice.
- **Churchyard Wall Repairs:** Sections of the churchyard boundary wall have deteriorated and require careful repair and partial rebuilding. A conservation-led approach will be adopted, using appropriate materials and methods to retain the character of the existing structure.

- **War Memorial Conservation and Setting:** Conservation works will be undertaken to clean and preserve the war memorial. In addition, the PCC arranged for the removal of the existing railings surrounding the memorial in 2025, which were designed to both improve its visual setting within the churchyard and enable the act of remembrance to take place more appropriately, while also allowing easier ongoing access for cleaning and maintenance.
- **Heritage Interpretation and Website:** As part of the wider project, an updated website will be developed to improve access to information about the history and heritage of St Peter's, supporting both community engagement and visitor understanding.

Roof Repairs (Priority Works)

A further and more immediate priority is the repair of the **north and south aisle roofs**, following a leak during a storm in December 2024 affecting the north aisle in particular and evidence of increasing water ingress in the south aisle.

The PCC has been working throughout 2025 to develop an appropriate scheme of repairs capable of being approved by the Diocese. Following extensive consultation with the Diocese, the proposals are being refined by specialist architects to ensure they meet diocesan requirements and conservation expectations. It is hoped that a revised scheme will be approved and that works can proceed as soon as practicable in 2026.

Approach to Conservation

All works are being developed in accordance with the Church Buildings Council Code of Practice and will be subject to the appropriate faculty approvals. The PCC has taken care to ensure that proposals follow a conservation-led approach, prioritising:

- retention of historic fabric wherever possible
- reversibility of interventions
- use of appropriate materials and techniques
- long-term sustainability and ease of maintenance

Looking Ahead

Once the current programme of works has been completed, the PCC intends to review the longer-term needs of the building. This will include consideration of whether any reordering of the church interior would support the mission and use of the church, with appropriate consultation undertaken before any proposals are developed.

Acknowledgements

The PCC would like to record its thanks to all those who have supported this work, including grant funders, professional advisers, and members of the local community whose generosity has made these projects possible

4. Churchyard

We are very grateful to Peter Johnson and Phill Davis for the work they do in keeping our Churchyard neat and tidy, cutting the grass at least every two weeks. They try to have two tidy-ups in the year, Spring and Autumn, when people from the village are invited to volunteer and come along with hedge cutters, wheelbarrows and a selection of gardening tools in an endeavour to cut back hedges, etc. We are very appreciative of all the voluntary help we get.

In 2025 the PCC commissioned a professional tree assessment, and no matters of concern were raised.

5. Church Rotas – Readings/Sidesperson/Cleaning/Flowers

We are very fortunate to have an excellent team of volunteers to help with church cleaning and arrange flowers for the festivals at Easter, Harvest and Christmas. The rotas are prepared every six months and are reviewed at our bi-monthly PCC Meetings.

6. Christian Aid Coffee Morning/Lent Lunch

We were very pleased to receive a total of £459 to donate to Christian Aid. This was raised by having a coffee morning, donations by e-envelope, including gift aid, and donations from the Café at Farmers Market.

We also held a Lent lunch at the church and were delighted to receive £125 which was donated to Crisis, the charity sponsoring homelessness.

7. Farmers Market

The market is still very popular. Our stallholders seem to be very happy with their regular commitment and we have had a couple of new stallholders during the year. The Café is thriving and usually very busy. The total received during 2025 amounted to the sum of £2,822, which is a small increase on 2024. We average about £220 per month. The Christmas market is very popular when we serve complementary alcoholic and non-alcoholic wine. We also have a raffle table and a church table selling home baked Christmas cakes and pies and the total raised at this market was £650.

8. Web Page/Facebook

Our website, www.stpetersgrandborough.co.uk is updated when required. **Facebook** is used to advertise our Church services, Farmers' Market, or any other events.

9. Easyfundraising

We raised £127 through Easyfundraising in 2025, which is down from £220 in 2024.

We are very grateful to all the volunteers who help with any of the above duties, and also to those who support us with their donations. On your behalf we would like to thank them all. We couldn't do it without them.

Dorothy Johnson

10. Safeguarding report

The PCC continues to operate in accordance with the Church of England's safeguarding policies and guidance, and safeguarding remains a standing item at PCC meetings throughout 2025.

During the year Alex Suffell served as safeguarding officer for the parish from the 2025 APCM until her resignation from the PCC on 1 September 2025. No matters of concern arose during Alex's period of serving in this role.

Subsequently this role was not filled, but Phil Blundred kindly volunteered to act in this role and Rev Price was working on getting the various formalities completed to enable this appointment to take place, which is likely to be completed by April 2026.

11. Deanery Synod

Alex Suffell served in this role in the period between the 2025 APCM and Alex's resignation from the PCC. This role was subsequently vacant for the remainder of the year.

12. Electoral Roll Report

In 2025 the PCC was required to prepare a new Electoral Roll. This was a diocesan requirement which has to be repeated every six years and meant that all names were removed from the roll and anyone who considers our parish to be their 'home church' was asked to join the roll as if for the first time. Following this process the Electoral Roll stood at 16 in 2025. In 2026 the numbers remain the same at 16.

Charmaine Williams. Electoral Roll Officer

13. Finance Report

The accounts for the year ended 31 December 2025 have been independently reviewed and will be presented to the APCM Meeting. These show that we have made a surplus of income over expenditure of £16,773 in the year to 31 December 2025. The main constituent elements that contributed to this were:

- The increase in collections at services:
- The grants we have received towards restoration work to the altar and clock; and
- Interest received on the donations and grants for the restoration work.

We applied for a refund of VAT from the Listed Places of Worship for maintenance works on the church and for the restoration of the Reredos. This totalled £4,810 and has been paid. Unfortunately, this scheme will close in March 2026, resulting in us not being able to claim back the VAT on the majority of the work to refurbish the clock and churchyard.

We have paid all of our Parish Share in 2025. For 2026 our share remains at £9,300. This along with the insurance, contribution to the benefice expenses and our energy costs are not covered by our income from collections, covenanted giving, fees for weddings and funerals and any gifts and donations we receive. We effectively rely on grants that we apply for, gift aid and the refund of VAT to undertake any major maintenance to the fabric of the church.

We had a fixed price contract with SSE for our electricity until December 2024. During 2025 we entered into a two fixed price contract with British Gas at rates that were considerably higher than the previous contract, which was let before the spike in energy costs. However, we continued to receive compensation from Pozitive Energy of £200 following a complaint raised with them.

We contribute £80 a month to the Draycote benefice. The account is used to pay Phil's expenses, and items which are common to all churches in the benefice such as the website, Zoom licences, printing and materials for Bible study/lent services/ advent services.

Bank charges and interest rates - following the introduction of digital giving first through QR codes and then through our card machine which was provided by the Diocese, this has resulted in an increase in our bank charges, which is mitigated slightly by the increased amounts that we collect this way.

We paid **Parochial fees** to the Diocese totalling £608 for 2025 during the year.

Gift Aid - we claimed Gift Aid on our covenanted giving, collections and gifts and donations in April and received £2,125. The reduction in this is a result of the HMRC reclaiming a double payment by the HMRC of our 2023 claim which was paid in 2024.

The Farmers' Market continues to be well supported and in 2025 contributed £2,822 towards our operating costs.

Dave Proctor, Treasurer