**Reports for Annual Parochial Church Meeting 14th May 2025**

**ABBOTSBURY CHURCH - WARDEN’S REPORT**

1. Abbotsbury continues to add to the diversity of worship styles in the Parish by holding Sunday morning services every week with more contemporary music and songs. The numbers of attending church each week has remained constant at around 40 adults and 12 children. The Christmas Journey event attracted nearly 200 school children. Abbotsbury has witnessed 10 baptisms. A monthly youth group has started to meet. The building continues to be used by various other groups, including Homestart, the Girl Guides, and it is used as a music venue and as a polling station.

2. Outside the building, repairs were carried out to the stonework and to some stained glass windows. Nevertheless, various limestone window surrounds continue to degrade. Water ingress can be clearly seen at various points, especially on the building’s west elevation. Further degradation, leakage and storm damage may be expected as the adverse impacts of climate change becomes more frequent and apparent. A building condition survey should be carried out to assess the resilience of the building in the longer term, and the cost and viability of remedial work.

3. Around the building on the narrow grassed margins a tree and extensive ivy and bramble growth along the boundary walls and over the adjoining streets was cut back. In accordance with the C of E’s Living Churchyard programme, there is an opportunity to enhance local biodiversity by planting appropriate species of shrubs and trees but the success of that would depend on a proper maintenance regime being established.

4. Inside the building the hall has been repainted, old and faded screen curtains removed, and the malfunctioning fluorescent lights replaced with low energy LEDs. The hall is now much brighter and welcoming. The transition to low energy lighting throughout the building should be continued. The toilets and kitchen are out dated and in need of modernisation to provide better accessibility and hygiene standards. A very considerable number of unwanted items accumulated over the years were removed and donated to the Salvation Army, to Homeless in Teignbridge and to the Teignmouth Baby Bank. Four substantial wooden doors were sold for one hundred and fifty pounds to Toby’s Reclamation at Exminster. Other items were recycled. An agreement has been made with the Girl Guides for them to keep their extensive quantity of equipment in a tidier state and contained in 16 large storage boxes on the mezzanine level.

5. Abbotsbury is registered with the C of E’s Eco Church programme which aims for all church buildings to achieve Net Zero Carbon by 2030. An Energy Efficiency Audit has been carried out. The principal recommendation is to replace the building’s two gas boilers with a heat pump and overhead infra red heating at a cost of seventy thousand pounds. It is considered that the main gas boiler should be retained as it is working well. However unless those changes, and others, are made Abbotsbury will not achieve Net Zero and therefore fail to qualify as an Eco Church.

6. Finally as my term as Warden ends and the opportunity becomes available for others to take on the role, I would like to thank the Council for the privilege of serving in this way.

**Douglas Machin**

**All Saints’ church – warden’s report**

It has been a steady and encouraging year at All Saints’, with a regular congregation of around 30 people attending our twice-monthly services. We remain a small but faithful community, committed to worship and fellowship in our beautiful village church.

A standout moment of the year was our Carols by Candlelight service at Christmas, which was very well attended and created a wonderful atmosphere of celebration and community. It was a joy to welcome both familiar faces and visitors into the church.

We are also looking ahead with hope and excitement as we plan the installation of a new kitchenette and a fully accessible disabled toilet. These much-needed facilities will make our church building more welcoming and more usable for a wider range of events and people in the years to come.

I would like to thank all who contribute to the life of All Saints’ — from those who prepare the church for services, to our clergy, musicians, and everyone who quietly helps in countless ways. Your dedication is deeply appreciated.

**Michael Gillibrand**

**St Bartholomew’s Church – wardens’ report**

It has been an interesting year in St Bartholomew’s. The tower has been repointed and a new cover made for the tower roof. The church has been redecorated and the wooden floors have been restained. The only outstanding work remains the Victorian tiles. These need stripping and repair. Hopefully this will happen in the near future. Unfortunately there is evidence of damp coming through recent decoration which needs investigation.

Recently we lost Simon Le Pyne Williams who was a great supporter of our congregation and a Reader for the whole benefice. He will be greatly missed. We look forward to the ordination of Jon Bealey, at the end of June.

Numbers are low for services. Between 20 to 30 is usual. Coffee and cake is well received. Christmas services and funerals attract large crowds. We hold monthly coffee mornings for different charities.

Ogwild is taking a monthly look at the church yard to see what wildlife and fauna exist. We are on the waiting list for swift boxes

**Gwyn Hughes**

**St Mary’s church - warden’s report**

Sidepeople: Denise Lloyd, Paul Hewson, George Frost, Sharon Lawrence

Authority to assist with the chalice: Dave Waterhouse, Paul Hewson, Sharon Lawrence

We’ve had a good year at St Mary’s although we are still a small congregation. The carol service was well attended, as were the benefice and Easter services – so much so we ran out of orders of service!! Printing more is in hand – thanks Mel. We had three weddings, three baptisms and ten funerals.

Some electrical work has been carried out and we are awaiting the arrival of the new floodlights. No major work has been done but we are waiting for some repairs to the arch by the children’s corner and a few other plaster repairs, then hopefully a redecoration of the church next year.

I would like to thank the clergy team and everyone at St Mary’s who support and help me. During the year John Blanchard, a faithful member of our congregation, and well known in several organisations in the town, died. He was instrumental with others in opening St Mary’s on Wednesdays in the summer raising funds and allowing visitors to view our lovely historic building. Sadly Ken Purchase died recently and I’d like to say what a great friend and deputy warden he’s been to me. All their hard work for St Mary’s will be greatly missed.

**Sharon Lawrence**

**St Paul’s church - warden’s report**

In the last year we have been blessed with new members of the congregation and continued systematic Bible teaching. It was a joy to have Bishop James with us in July for baptism and confirmation of four candidates. We have also commenced a junior church twice a month, and a weekly women’s Bible study. We hosted a Christmas gathering for our neighbours and reached out to the community through Easter activities including an egg hunt and display of Lego models. The Craft Group continues to meet. The monthly fund raising coffee mornings which take place in the hall continue to be well attended.

Considerable work has been involved with managing the parish hall and the paying car park on behalf of the parish, and my thanks are due to everyone who has helped with the cleaning, redecoration and general maintenance of these spaces. We also have teams of volunteers who maintain the green area around the church, and who clean church premises.

The temporary remodelling of the worship space has been positively received and we hope this will be made permanent in the near future. Plans are in process to improve the front steps and north door entrance, enhancing our presence in the area and giving us a more welcoming aspect.

My thanks are due to everyone who assisted with any role that helps church run smoothly and contributes to a warm and welcoming environment for all.

**Lorna Tresidder**

**Safeguarding Team report**

I’ve been asked to give a brief report on safeguarding across the Parish over the last year and I’m struggling to know how to summarise it. I can point to progress, getting our CoE Level 1 safeguarding signoff (no easy feat!), implementing new safer recruitment policies and putting systems in place to try to ensure everyone who works or volunteers with us is appropriately checked and trained within 3 months.

But we’ve still got a long way to go.

Systems and policies are very well and good they are meaningless unless there is a proper safeguarding culture. The next step for us as a Church and PCC is to try and work out how we can improve our behaviours and culture to emphasise the importance of safeguarding, and this isn’t something which can be done quickly or easily. It takes time and it takes effort. We need to see greater consideration of safeguarding issues, we need to better understand our responsibilities around other who use our premises and we need to be more aware in our communications, prioritising the voices of the victim, the weak and the powerless.

We want to be a Church and community where everybody feels welcomed and everybody feels safe. We want those who may have experienced (or be experiencing) abuse to be confident in coming forward, knowing they

will be listened to and any allegations be treated with the utmost seriousness and concern; whomever the other party may be.

I know we’re not there yet because my phone and email have been largely silent. The statistics tell me many of you have experienced (are currently experiencing) abuses of all forms and that silence means we’ve still got plenty work to do.

If anybody wants to discuss any safeguarding issues or concerns, or any improvements they would like to see us make, please know you can reach out to me, or any of the safeguarding team, at any point. We are here for you and you will be listened to.

I’d like to finish by expressing my massive thanks to Jonathan and Bernice for their help and support over this last year. Its very, very much appreciated. Bernice is now stepping back from the role of safeguarding training coordinator and I’d ask you all to consider if this is something you would consider you may be equipped to help with going forwards

God bless.

***Rob 07792081776***

**Secretary’s Report on the work of the Parochial Church Council in 2024/25**

This is how the parish’s five key values have been worked out in PCC meetings during the year.

**Welcoming**

*We offer a warm welcome and rich hospitality to people of all ages and backgrounds, wherever they are on their journey of faith.*

* Introduced a safe recruitment policy for volunteers
* Refurbished the church noticeboards with up-to-date information
* Agreed to the installation of a new heating system at St Bartholomew’s as well as work to the tower.
* Allocated funds to ensure Abbotsbury is watertight and warm, and make repairs to avoid the danger of falling masonry
* Agreed guidelines for rental of the Parish Hall
* Agreed to a safeguarding review for bellringers

**Loving**

*We are dedicated to loving, serving and encouraging each other, following the pattern of Jesus, bearing with one another with grace and kindness*

* Agreed eligibility criteria for allocating the limited space in Wolborough and Highweek churchyards
* Ensured our Parish Share was paid in full
* PCC members have prioritised completing their safeguarding training
* Agreed a new data privacy policy for the website
* Reflected on the advantages and challenges of being five churches in one parish
* Consistently high level of attendance at PCC meetings

**Faithful**

*We believe God’s Word is revealed through the Bible and we value preaching and teaching that encourage us to grow as disciples of Christ*

* We have supported Keith Butler’s relicensing as a lay minister
* Ben Maynard’s contribution to the life of the parish was acknowledged
* PCC meetings begin and end with prayer and we have continued our study of the 39 Articles of Faith

**Varied**

*We seek to be a prayerful community offering a rich variety of worship styles across our churches to ensure that there is a home for everyone*

* Eco church and Living Churchyard projects have been piloted by Abbotsbury
* Agreed to loan a set of vestments to the Parish of Clevedon
* Received a report on joint youth work at Abbotsbury in collaboration with other local churches

**Active**

*We are committed to being active in word and deed making a positive difference in our communities and proclaiming the gospel to each generation*

* Heard advice on building security from a serving police officer
* Agreed to adopt Christians Against Poverty (CAP) as a mission partner
* Monitored the ongoing plans for a major refurbishment of St Paul’s and agreed to apply for release of capital and for planning permission
* Repairs to All Saints’ and plans to improve the kitchen area are ongoing
* Agreed to the gullies and gutters being inspected and cleared in all churches as preventative maintenance

**Youth Work report**

One good news story from this year is our collaboration with The Avenue Church to enable monthly youth work for the young people of our Parish. From February we have started hosting youth nights on the last Friday of each month, alternating between hosting at Abbotsbury and The Avenue. We’ve had a good group of youngsters from across Newton Abbot and hung out, played games, messed about with spray paints and eaten a lot of pizza. Hopefully this will continue to develop over the next year and we will be able to create an environment where the young people can safely explore their faith and spirituality whilst having a whole load of fun. A big thanks to Anna, Sarah and Sue for helping us get this started and please look out on the whatsapp groups, facebook and the website for more details of upcoming events.

**Rob Palmer**

**Electoral Roll officer’s report to Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2025**

This year saw the complete revision of the electoral roll.

The number on the new roll is 146.

Over the last six year, the make-up of the parish has changed considerably. This year we particularly remember John Blanchard, Mary Calderwood and Simon le Pine Williams, faithful members of our congregations who have died during the year. There has also been an influx of new members. Please note that names may be added to the roll from now on throughout the year.

**Barbara Garrick**

**Deanery Synod reps report 2024/2025**

The deanery synod meets three times a year, acts as a channel of communication between the parishes and the Diocesan synod, and elects representatives to the Diocesan and General synods.

In the past year we have received reports from General Synod reps on Living in Love and Faith; discussed the implications of the financial state of the national church; received a presentation from the diocese on Giving and Generosity (remember that survey in the weekly newsletter?)

The parish has three reps, one is Jon Bealey who will be standing down when he is ordained next month.