

**ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS
&
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**
Monday 28th April 2025, 7pm
at St Bartholomew's Church

***Annual Report of the
Parochial Church Council for 2025***

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MEETING AGENDAS

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

Election of Churchwardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the APCM 29th April 2024 – results of elections
3. Electoral Roll
4. Thanksgiving
5. Elections and appointments
 - a. Election of Deputy Churchwardens
 - b. Election of Parochial Church Council members (max 11 – up to 5 proposed)
 - c. Appointment of Independent Examiner (Karen Anderson-Wallbridge ACA)
6. Financial Matters
 - a. Presentation of Accounts
 - b. Budget for 2025
7. Reports

The Annual report includes sections from the officers of the parish, subcommittees and volunteer groups, which you are encouraged to read prior to the meeting. Any questions can be directed to the report author directly or submitted to the Parish Office before the meeting.
8. Presentations

RECTOR'S REPORT FOR 2025

In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised up above the hills. Peoples shall stream to it, and many nations shall come and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.' (Micah 4:1-2)

That is quite a quite a dramatic quotation from the prophet Micah, with which to open my annual report and this collection of many reports! If you think I'm alluding to something by choosing these words you would be correct. A stream of people sounds like many – just like our parish really. What we can certainly say about these *days* is that we are *establishing* higher things, creating *paths*, and *for the many*. The prophet Micah is bringing attention to God's hope, and it will be fulfilled. If that was once a word given in a vision, then I would like also to make the claim that our ministry is inspired by a similar vision – a comprehensive vision for *people* – and that shall be fulfilled too. Throughout the pages of this report book you will read of many things which require leaders and servants inspired by God. Here is the evidence of sacrifice - of time given as dedicated gifts and talent being offered to God's service. But they are all just people. Therefore, I would like you to read these reports not simply as a list of things achieved (although much has been!) but more as a list of what has been given in God's glory.

You will not be surprised if I start by reflecting on the Link Community Hub Project. What a year it has been.

The date of our Annual Parochial Church Meeting this year is Monday 28th April, but the very next day is also significant because on that Tuesday the Link will be finally shut from normal use, in preparation for the building works to begin a week later. To find ourselves in this position was our great hope, just one year ago. To remind you of the big phases of work that have had to happen in order to realise that hope, we should include the completion of all the funding work, the detailed design work, the tender and contract work, and all the planning needed for the transition. Each of these is a considerable undertaking in its own right, but together they make a challenging programme. Each of these must be seen both practically and spiritually – we work hard, but we pray also and never lose hope. As we now can see, the team has never felt anything less than God's hand being upon them. At each stage of the project the many risks and pitfalls all seemed to go our way, and in such a fashion as to make it feel like a true blessing. With the skill of the team, the support of the church, the good will of the community, and the hand of God, we shall be opening for the community in 2026.

Later this summer when all the building work has settled into its long months of work, we shall begin turning our minds towards the integration of our ministry with the newly completed Hub. What that means is a reminder of the entire point of the Link Community Hub Project as we first wanted it to be heard. Once again come my familiar calls for us to look at the reputation of our of churches and the relationships we can build. If we get these two fundamental imperatives right, then all else will follow. Think of it this way - many

more people are going to have many more reasons to come on to the St Bartholomew's site, and many more people are going to serve the community from there. How can that all accumulate to the serving and caring heart we need towards our community, and how can the hope we have in Christ be brought near to those who need such hope? All of this needs to be fulfilled as the newly completed Link Community Hub is itself revealed.

I try not to drop too many names into my annual report, lest I go and forget some others. But for the three superstars of the Link team, there is no risk of forgetting them - Andrew Culshaw, Cathy Moore and Debbie Peet. To the extent it's possible to be celebrities in church, they are! Everyone knows them now and their stunning achievements over in this last year. We are thankful beyond measure for them but must be reminded also of how God's word seems to be seen and heard through them. Together they have brought the vision to reality.

Across the life of this and any parish there are the ranks of the quiet disciples too - those whose service is not usually seen and can easily go unnoticed. These are the angels who 'make good' the churches by way of cleanliness and flowers, repairs and needlework. Their practical work is at the same time spiritual and prayerful for them. To spend time in our churches on any task is to place oneself closer to God, from which the work done is a holy service given to His glory. To be quite honest I do not know who they all are, or even what they all do. You may be the same. But there is one amongst their ranks whose name deserves very special attention this year, even though she herself is perhaps the least likely to seek it. Dear Roscelin Rees has decided to step down from the St Bartholomew's Church Care Team, after leading it for 47 years! The deep thanks and appreciation we give to Roscelin is so much less than she deserves. Do join with me in congratulating her for such amazing commitment.

Whilst many continue to serve faithfully for many years there are also those who have joined the ministry leadership team in more recent times, where their contributions are already being felt and appreciated. In December we welcomed Karen Bardens into new her role as Children and Families Work for Early Primary Years. Karen's work is with the Sunday Morning Families and the Family Seasonal Specials which we run (such as Christmas, Easter, Mothering Sunday, Harvest Festival and other annual events for children). Karen has made wonderful start. For some years I have been less than satisfied with the connection between our churches and St Bartholomew's school. A significant part of Karen's new role shall be as an embodiment of an improving school connection. Whilst that has begun, it remains to be seen how it will settle and the fruits it will bring.

An important piece of work completed by the PCC this last year has been to place a more complete definition around the chance for parishioners to leave a legacy in their personal wills. These things are not as well understood or as obvious as we might think. As a church leader, I myself have known the significant difference that legacies can make to the work of the churches in the parish. The biggest costs our churches can face are usually around the maintenance and development of our church fabric. When the big bills arrive, so also do the risks of needing to divert precious funds from other important areas of church life, such as mission and worship. Legacies given to our churches are put towards the long-term

wellbeing of both St Bartholomew's and St Christopher's as maintenance and improvements, but in support of the full work of our outward facing ministry. There are ways in which legacies can best be set in our wills, and such important work has been done to help us place that most efficiently for our families, estates and to the glory of God. If we find ourselves reviewing our personal arrangements, it would be good to get in touch.

A further important financial change which we have put in place since the beginning of this year is the way in which the parish supports local charities. For some years, our methods to set aside or raise funds for charities have been somewhat disjointed, confusing and in some cases unfair. We are ourselves a charity with an ambitious and expanding ministry to meet local needs. Alongside the financial picture is also a moral picture, which must consider why individuals give to this parish and other local organisations in their financial support and practical service. At various points in the past our churches have raised funds through programmes of activity, and/or by setting aside an annual proportion. Both of these approaches have their merits and imperfections that have led to difficulties and a lack of funds raised. What has suggested change in our recent review is that we are now going to be committing a very considerable subsidy to some of our local charities in the form of support through the Link Community Hub Project. What we can now offer is so much more than money. There is always more that could be said about outward giving, but I am of course more than happy to discuss or explain if anyone wishes to have a chat. Let us continue to promote the work of a range of local charities and invite them to come and present to us on chosen Sundays. From that promotion comes the chance for individuals to give as they feel led to do.

Another annual ritual which might be coming into regular charitable service is the Advent Sleepout. Here was a new challenge for the Summit youth group, so wonderfully staged in early December when we slept outside St Christopher's. Yes, it was cold, wet and uncomfortable, but also wonderful fun! The sleepout is intended to raise funds for the homeless support through the Church Urban Fund (a Church of England social charity). The fundraising target was £500, but in the end was nearer to £2,000! There is a super video about that adventure on the parish website (look under the Community page). I can't tell you how much I'm looking forward to it again!

Our civic ministry remains strong, with the many ways to engage with the town. Almost a year ago the D-Day commemoration went ahead in early June with a very creative and thoughtful presentation at St Christopher's. For 2025 the civic remembrance remains as recognise 80 years since the celebration of VE-Day. Increasingly we are working civic festivals with other churches in Haslemere. Once again, emphasising the parish-centric view of our ministry, Justin and I take every opportunity to host plan, lead and host civic events in a whole host of different settings.

Second only to the Link project is the *Welcome Project*. You may have heard me refer to this in a number of different ways, but in summary it's about setting ourselves as best we can for attracting visitors to worship and helping them to settle into a relationship with our parishioners and our ministry. We are actually not too bad at those things already, but I feel we can bring many improvements to our culture of welcome. The most reliable way to

grow the church is to help visitors to settle and become part of our serving community. To do that we must present a warm but respectful welcome to everyone, and a means to help people serve in response to their faith in providing that welcome. We have a good reputation in the town, and so we can expect visitors. If we are good with welcome and hospitality, so we shall continue to grow as a parish.

In other ministries, I have mentioned already the strengthening of the relationship between St Bartholomew's School and our churches. I wish also to consider how we can further engage young families into the central life of the church. My feeling is that we have lost some ground on that need over these last two years.

An excellent health barometer for any church is the way in which we make space for new leaders to emerge. Healthy churches give rise to healthy leadership. Once again, it's important to be ambitious in our ministries, so that there are chances to both lead and serve. This month – April 2025 – could be a milestone for a number of individuals in our congregations, as they make big steps towards licenced ministries (and in this case I mean ordination). These are exciting times for new leadership.

As I've already mentioned briefly, a very refreshing effect has begun to surface across the churches of Haslemere in the shape of a return to greater cooperation between leaders and congregations. The civic side of town life has been a catalyst for that, as festival gatherings and annual markets have given reasons to work closer together. At the most recent Advent Sunday the Christmas market stall we have run for several years was able to morph into a new team cooperation between St Stephen's, ourselves, the Methodist church and 3 Counties. It seemed to work very well, from which there is now greater interest in working together on other ideas. Personally, I am especially interested in teaming with the churches of Haslemere on youthwork. Some many remember how that has worked well in the past, so let's hope it can work well in the future too.

Before I bring my report to close there is one more thing to mention, which is more of a personal matter. For over two years now I've held the responsibilities of the Area Dean of Godalming and as a member Bishop's Council. For those who are not sure what they mean I'll quickly explain. The Area Dean is in effect an area manager of local parishes (14 in fact). The work of the Area Dean varies but can be quite heavy when there are vacancies for new clergy, or local difficulties. This last year has been very busy in those respects and continues to be. The Bishop's Council is best thought of as the senior group of trustees for the diocese – a bit like a PCC for the diocese. I'm one of four clergy on the council, where I meet monthly with the bishops, archdeacons, and the legal\financial authorities. The work of the council is to govern the management of the diocese and to ensure its major decisions are made well. The reason I share this with you is to give a certain amount of explanation as to why I'm often so busy and distracted with things which seem less about the parish and more about the wider Church of England. Nevertheless I try to keep my feet on the ground with my core work of being a clergyman – worship, teaching, prayer and care. I only wish I could do more.

Finally, if you are reading this report before Monday 28th April, then do please take up the invitation to come along to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting that evening. It's more

than just a set of votes and speeches – in fact I’m more interested in the social gathering where we can celebrate our good ministry and all of our good people. Indeed, there is much to celebrate.

To all who serve in the parish, I give my thanks. May it all be to the glory of God.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Rector Chris

CHURCHWARDEN REPORT

It is with great pleasure and gratitude that the Haslemere Parish Churchwardens present this short summary of activity from our perspective. This year has been marked by stability and safety in terms of the church worship activity and the beginning of a transition to a new era in the use of church infrastructure for the wider community good.

Firstly, we would like to extend our thanks for our Rector, Chris, whose unwavering leadership, practical ability, dedication and spiritual guidance have been the bedrock of our parish, which the Wardens are here to support. Additionally, we are deeply grateful to Rev. Justin for his leadership and invaluable contribution to a wide range of parish activities.

The Wardens are assisted by and assist the activities of various well-organised committees and talented individuals who have shown exemplary commitment and ability throughout the year, playing a vital role in the smooth functioning of parish operations and the successful execution of countless initiatives.

We are blessed with the services of an outstanding administrator, Kari Hayden in the Parish Office, who is efficient and talented and a source of advice and counsel to us. Her displays of initiative and decisive independent action are attributes that we are grateful for and rely on as we pursue various initiatives and maintain the basic routines and duty rosters that exist to allow us to worship and thrive as a church community.

Although major Quinquennial fabric work has been slowed as the focus shifted to preparing for the Link upgrade, we have conducted a survey of outstanding tasks and set them in priority order ready for an active 2025-6 effort to address the relatively few issues highlighted by the architect’s 2022 report.

Of note this year has been the clearing of trees overhanging adjacent houses on the St Christopher’s perimeter. Once again we are indebted to the stalwart and tireless activity of Richard Reincke as head of the Fabric Committee.

A full fire safety inspection was conducted, which is something that had apparently not been done before. It resulted in a thorough report which, although not flagging up any critical

safety shortcoming, did suggest improvements to our equipment and policies; these will be applied in the coming year.

An energy audit was conducted under the expert guidance of Simon Ingram. This is our parish showing a willingness to support the diocesan Net-Zero policy; some recommendations were made which will be introduced to the PCC progressively in the course of 2025.

Our churchyards and cemeteries continue to be maintained in excellent condition, thanks to the dedicated efforts of Philip Hunt, Peter Clarke, and David Simmons along with a number of volunteers who generously give their time. Their leadership has inspired the youth of the church to participate in projects which both beautify our surrounds and provide them with a superb education in the value of conservation and horticulture.

The Link project is well underway, with planning and initial work advancing smoothly. This project promises to provide a versatile space for a variety of parish activities, fostering greater community engagement and outreach. The Wardens have played a supporting role to ensure that the transition to temporary facilities has been made as painless as possible.

Thank you all for the encouragement and support you show the churchwardens. May we continue to be blessed in our endeavours during the coming year?

Howard Body, Gareth David and David Simmons, Churchwardens

PCC OFFICERS AND SUB-COMMITTEES:

PCC Secretary

The PCC has met six times in the past year. Much focus has been spent on reviewing and considering the work being undertaken on the development of the Link Community Hub Project, including decisions on funding proposals, planning applications and the tender process. We continue to explore the expansion of the Youth and Families work, the music provision within the church including the Junior Choir and Adult Choir, plus a lot of wider work on our welcome and inclusion to new members of the parish.

We welcomed several new members to the PCC in April, all of whom have settled quickly and made valuable contributions to our meetings. We are fortunate that this year we have no members stepping down, although there are several standing for re-election for a second term. As always, we are so very grateful to all those who serve on the PCC and give their time to assist in the work of the Parish.

Katie Morgan, PCC Secretary

Electoral Roll

The previous electoral roll was established in 2019 and updated each year until 2024. Every 6 years the electoral roll must be renewed where everyone is taken off the role and must re-apply to be on it.

In April 2024, the electoral roll contained 208 names of which 34 were resident outside the parish.

The new Roll for 2025, contains 158 names, of which 30 are resident outside the parish.

All addresses have been checked using the Church of England website parish finder service, to ensure correct reporting of those on the Roll and resident outside the Parish.

Kari Hayden, Electoral Roll Officer

Building and Fabric Committee

As ever there has been plenty of work done around the parish in the last 12 months and a huge amount of it done by volunteers.

- **Committee members and parishioners.** As always a huge thank you to the FABCOM team and those that have supported it over the year. To Philip Hunt for his unstinting attention to the churchyards and unerring persistence to ensure Waverley and Continental Landscapes are doing their job in the St Bartholomew's, the Derby Road and Weycombe road churchyards. To Roger Davies for his continuing willingness to pay attention to a number of tasks around the Link and St Bart's. To Robert Fox for keeping St Christopher's in excellent order throughout the year and for being the invisible man of action all around the parish with incredible practical skills without whom the parish would be a poorer, unkempt place. To David for all his work in the last year in the St Christopher's churchyard and elsewhere. To Howard and Gareth for general support and helping out with chasing up all the craftsmen who provide skilled work in the parish. To Dominic for his continuing advice and support despite not being a member of FABCOM, and to all those around the parish who point out the problems and keep a sharp eye out for any problems or issues. And, of course, my thanks are due to Andrew for being such an efficient treasurer and keeps this report shorter than it would be otherwise! The fact that both churches and the Link and the churchyards are in such good order is because we all care about them. And massive thanks also go to all the volunteers who do so much work at St. Christopher's, a growing number of dedicated people who are the go to team to rise to all the challenges and exciting activities held there throughout the year. And a particular thank you to Verity for all her continuing, inspiring and creative work in the upper room of St Christopher's and bringing the church to life for all the young in the parish.
Without the work of all these people - overseeing the work of others and exacting a high standard from them and their own hard work - our Churches and the Link would

not be in the fine state of repair and cleanliness that they are today. You are all Godsenders.

- **Progress on works.** At the risk of making the FABCOM report longer than the whole of the APCM report put together I will be brief on the work that has been done over the past year! I keep an excel spreadsheet (soft copy available in the Link office but NOT for removal as it is constantly changing) including the quinquennial (report done by the architect every 5 years and last done in September 2022) of items for the two churches, the Link (Now no longer in my remit due to the imminent reconstruction project) and some info of work carried out in the church cottage. The latest excel spreadsheet actually incorporates the Quinquennial requirements from the QQ report done in 2022 by John Bailey. This was an astonishingly detailed account of the churches and in it he was very complimentary about the condition of both churches which was a reflection of the loving care given to them by us parishioners.

I will not itemise the details of all the works required as this is contained in the excel spreadsheet a copy of which is in the parish office. However, there are a number of maintenance items which I will summarise below. 28 for St Bart's and 5 for St C's. In summary . Together with the wardens we will try to keep up with the minor maintenance issues as much as is practical

St Bartholomew's

There is still some stonework to be dealt with and Chris Anstey has quoted but this will not be done until after the completion of the Link project.

There is also some work required on the north and south porches which should be done in the next year by Roland Locke. Whilst he no longer lives in Haslemere he still has various jobs here and so visits regularly. Thanks to Gareth for continuous chasing.

Routine Maintenance and repairs.

Items needing attention 28. 13 not yet done. These are almost entirely minor issues with rainwater goods and the brick channel and some work is required on the leaded lights on top of the outer vestry and in the tower. Other issues being the clearance of debris such as the bottom of the stairs to the entrance to the boiler house, the roof gulleys. Have attempted to contact Russell Wishart who had been recommended by Kalglass who no longer do this type of work.

St Christopher's.

Fall arrester rope for ladders. This has now been installed. And thanks to Robert, Justin and Lucy for being the intrepid pioneers for trying out the equipment which appears to be working well.

It has just been discovered that the tower parapet needs a considerable amount of work done as some of the coping stones have suffered from frost damage and pieces of masonry are beginning to fall off them. Chris Anstey has done a full inspection and has given a rough indication of the costs involved. The Quinquennial Report required this work to be done

within the 5 year period so it is still, as it were within the allowed timescale. However due to the expected costs several quotes will be required.

Routine Maintenance and Repairs

Some minor maintenance jobs are required on the windows and clearance of roof gulleys and the odd missing tile.

The flagpole still needs painting and this should be completed by the end of the summer if not earlier.

Derby Road Potholes

The part of Derby road outside the church boundary is often in need of repair and as it was never adopted by Surrey County Council. And the yellow stripes on the speed bumps need to be painted regularly. Thanks to Robert and David for assistance in this work.

Please note that the prioritising in the new worksheet will follow the advice of the architect. However RR only gives his opinion on the urgency of any work and reports to the PCC Standing Committee on any work considered requiring immediate attention.

Both the new and old worksheets are on file with the parish office and available for inspection or review by parishioners if required but they do not form part of this report and they are a dynamic record of the work and progress of various works and projects and the costs involved around the parish so constantly changing

Richard Reincke

Churchyards

It has been a good year in the churchyards. Much has been achieved through a combination of volunteer effort and regular maintenance (during the main growing season) by Waverley Borough Council (WBC)'s contractor. I have endeavoured to record major developments throughout the year in my regular *Churchyard Jottings* column in the parish magazine.

There have been three volunteer working parties in the main churchyard during the past year and one working party in Derby Road. Work has typically involved clearing graves, and sometimes walls, of ivy, holly etc., pruning and cutting back shrubs, lopping low lying branches, clearing bramble, tidying the war memorial garden and trimming lawn edges. On each of these occasions, we have been fortunate in having WBC's contractor, now renamed Krinkels Ltd, collect all the green waste from these working parties free of charge. In some cases, the amount of green waste generated was considerable.

The past year has seen a number of longer term projects come to fruition.

- The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has now erected its familiar plaques, denoting the presence of war graves, at the entrances to all three churchyards. There are eleven such graves in total.
- The somewhat delayed restoration of the grave of former Rector, the Revd Sanders Etheridge, has been completed by specialist memorial masons, Stonecrest Ltd. The new Celtic Cross is now a striking presence near to the path and the Derby Road entrance to the main churchyard.
- A contractor has been successfully employed to tackle the overgrown areas in Derby Road churchyard and to remove bramble, in particular along the far boundary, and in highly visible areas close to the centre path. The result is a neater and more accessible churchyard and the pressure is now on to maintain it in a steady state. With the co-operation of WBC, the intention is that their own contractor will increase the grass cutting area so as to keep the newly cleared areas as neat as possible.
- For the very first time, the main churchyard at St Bartholomew's was entered into the churchyards category of the South and South East in Bloom competition. Despite our lack of experience in this field (some organisations are a well oiled machine, submitting entries year after year) we were awarded a Silver Gilt with 169 points out of a possible 200. A contributory factor to our success was undoubtedly the role played by The Den Youth Group in their planting of the Derby Road verge and the area near to The Link. Special thanks must go to Peter Clarke and to Verity Sutherland for inspiring the children and executing the work.

Four meetings have taken place during the past year with Ann Hayward, Waverley's Green Spaces Contract Officer, who manages the contract with Krinkels Ltd (formerly called Continental Landscapes Ltd). The last such meeting was on 12 March. These sessions provide an opportunity to discuss the performance of the contractor in carrying out its grass cutting role and maintaining the hedge on the north side of Derby Road bordering that churchyard. They also allow for a thorough walk around to assess any upcoming issues. The very good rapport that has been built up over the years has meant that WBC continues to be very supportive of the efforts of volunteers and the wider community, to enhance the main churchyard and increase biodiversity.

Enquiries from people searching for graves, or carrying out wider research, continue to flow in from time to time. Some of these are straightforward, but others are more time consuming, particularly if the dates or names provided are inaccurate. The results of these enquiries can be beneficial to both parties, as useful knowledge can often be gained which can be helpful on a future occasion.

There was a problem in Derby Road churchyard in January, when a deer was traumatised by a dog which had been let off the lead and the gate had been closed. The gate to Derby Road churchyard is now left open, although well meaning people still shut it on occasions. Although we do not want a proliferation of notices, we might consider one at the entrance to Derby Road churchyard to say that dogs must be kept on leads.

Philip Hunt

The Link Community Hub

This time last year we wrote that we had just been awarded £400,000 by Waverley Borough Council and that we were waiting to hear from Your Fund Surrey(YFS) regarding our £1m grant application.

As most readers will know not only were we successful with YFS we were also awarded £100,000 by Haslemere Town Council! Together with £400,000 from the Haslemere Fund (the long term invested proceeds of the unusable half of the Weycombe Road burial ground) we were sufficiently confident to move forward with the project in May, instructing our architect to produce the detailed (100 plus) drawings needed for us to engage with potential contractors and to understand the likely cost.

At the same time we asked our parishioners to pledge their support and in a matter of weeks £180,000 had been pledged alongside funds raised by Thursday Coffees, Richard and Ken's very wet sponsored run amongst others. We also received £62,000 from the Benefact Trust.

By mid-December we were ready to go to tender and by mid-February we were able to start evaluating the tender responses, selecting MCS Ltd of Woking as our preferred contractor in March with a planned start on site in early May.

The expectation is that the Link Community Hub will be complete by Easter 2026.

We are grateful for all the support we have received – especially the funds given and the prayers received.

Andrew Culshaw, Debbie Peet and Cathy Moore

Finance Report

The most significant feature of 2024 was the progress with fundraising for the **Link Community Hub Project**. The following grants were awarded:

Your Fund Surrey	- £1m
Waverley CIL	- £400,000
Haslemere Town Council	- £100,000
Haslemere Fund	- £420,000

These will be drawn once the construction, which is planned to start in 2025, is underway.

A grant of £62,000 was received from the Benefact Trust along with **donations from the congregation** who have pledged gifts of £180,000.

Professional fees relating to the project of £97,676 were incurred in the year.

Together in Christ, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love

Operating Position – it is our aim to cover day to day running costs (the Parish Share, utilities, staffing, minor repairs etc) from regular giving, lettings and fees with a small surplus in hand. A fall in regular giving of £12,783 (after tax recovered) following the death of generous donors resulted in the parish **just breaking even** rather than generating the small surplus we had anticipated at the start of the year. **Continued attention will need to be given to regular giving in the coming years.**

Childrens' and Youth Work – this continues to be **funded in full by the Haslemere Religious Education Fund** with £42,863 received in the year (2023 - £44,629). We are most fortunate that this charity which owns the old Chestnut Avenue school can fund this essential work with the rental income derived for letting of the building.

Other expenditure – the Building Fund, which is funded by legacies of which £15,192 was received in the year (2023- £18,692), funded a **new nave altar** at St Christopher's (£7,188) and major tree work also at St Christopher's costing £4,200. A **new electric piano** for St Christopher's was bought at a cost of £1,399 this being funded by the unused Choir Robes Fund. Work was also undertaken to the **roof and vestries at St Bartholomew's.**

My thanks are due to Geoff Martin as Gift Aid Secretary and also to Kari for her administrative support.

Andrew Culshaw

St. Christopher's Committee

Lighter-weight altar

The new lighter-weight altar for St Christopher's was delivered in September 2024. It has been generally well received and admired. Not only does it look attractive but it is much easier to move and lift.

Church building

A fall arrester has been installed in the church tower to improve the safety of those climbing the ladder to the tower roof.

Garden benches

The garden benches have all been restored and there are now five benches in the church garden.

Tree work

The height of trees at the east end of the church grounds were causing concern to the residents of the adjoining flats. So, steps were taken to reduce their height and prune them back. This has not only improved the amount of light in the church garden but also made the church more visible from the main road.

VE Day celebrations

The poppy cascades which have been hung on the church tower at remembrance occasions since 2018 are now life expired. To mark the VE day celebrations in May 2025, two large

poppy wreaths have been built and will be hung on the tower in place of the cascades. We hope to reuse these for future remembrance days.

Historic Altar Frontal

During recent refurbishment of altar frontals at St Christopher's, an old highly decorated frontal in art and crafts style was rediscovered. It dates from about 1910 and is known as the "Peasant Frontal" An embroidery specialist has been asked to quote for restoring the frontal so that it can be used for services on appropriate occasions. The Friends of Haslemere Parish have agreed to fund this work if the cost is not unreasonable.

The church as part of the community

During the year the church has seen a lot of use by community activity including First Steps, The Den, concerts, coffee mornings and commemorations (e.g. 80th anniversary of D Day). The garden too is popular for celebrations and barbecues.

Last but by no means least

Thank you to all the volunteers that make St Christopher's such a fine place of worship.

Chris Lemar, Secretary to the St Christopher's Committee

Safeguarding

I took over as Safeguarding officer at the APCM last year and it has been non-stop ever since!

We have a new system called the Dashboard that was introduced just before I took over and which holds everyone's training and DBS records all in one place so my first order of business was to upload everyone's training onto it. That was fairly laborious but, now we are up and running, the system is great and sends me updates and reminders of when people's DBS checks and training is coming up for renewal.

Over the course of the last year, my predecessor, Cathy Moore has helped me to run several in person lunch and learn sessions. These are a great opportunity for those who are not quite as tech savvy to come along and do their training whilst enjoying a delicious lunch and a bit of company.

We are in a good place with the safeguarding training with a large percentage of our volunteers keeping up to date and understanding the importance of keeping safeguarding fresh in everyone's mind.

Our children and families team, in particular Karen, Verity and Victoria are great at doing risk assessments and keeping safeguarding at the forefront of all their planning. A big thank you goes to Cathy Moore who has been a great mentor and support over the last year.

My focus for the year ahead is to continue to ensure everyone who needs to be, is up to date with their training and to really focus on ensuring that our parish is a safe and welcoming environment for everyone.

If anyone has any concerns about our activities or an individual at risk, please do not hesitate to contact me, or those listed on the Safeguarding notices that are on display in each of our Church buildings.

Kari Hayden, Safeguarding Officer

Pastoral Care Report

There's very little to report as the work of our pastoral teams goes forward month by month, largely unseen by the majority in our community, but hugely valued by the recipients of their care. As an example, a chronic long-term pastoral issue, that has involved many over several months has been carried out quietly and diligently, with much love and compassion. This is a ministry of sacrifice and patience, that does go unnoticed and we are extremely grateful for everything that is done.

Rev Justin Manley-Cooper

The Care Home Team

The Care Home Team has also been very stable this year, once again going quietly about its monthly role of conducting services at Redcot, The Hunter Centre, Oak Hall and Whisper's village reaching about 50 or so people, most of which are unable to join us at our church services, this of course makes no mention of all the individual visits that are made to these care homes and others, both in and outside the parish. Whilst everyone is doing a fantastic job, it would be wrong not to thank Peter Sellars and Shirley and Michael Bawtree, who do a lot of the heavy lifting.

This is an extremely worthwhile and rewarding ministry, that is much valued by the care homes and their residents. Thank you.

Rev Justin Manley-Cooper

Town Chaplaincy Report

Very little need be said about a ministry that grows by tentacles gradually making new contacts. Having established the retail ministry, we are now extremely visible with the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, sports clubs and the whole community through activities such as the Christmas Windows Competition and the Christmas market stall, not to mention the community Lenten prayers initiative.

This ministry is all about taking the church to the centre of the community and drawing the strands of our contacts together which is a congregational activity and I think has played a significant role in securing all round community support for the Link project.

Rev Justin Manley-Cooper

Pop in Coffee Morning Report

Having completed three years the Thursday Morning Coffee Morning not only continues to exist but goes from strength to strength. We are now seeing some who are not regular church goers but having heard about it, often via the Hearing Aid Clinic, continue to return to meet and chat. The combination of Hearing Aid Clinic and Coffee Morning has been an excellent partnership.

We do not charge but only ask for donations and have now raised over £1000, which will go towards equipping the new kitchen in the forthcoming Link Community Hub. The book and card stall which is increasingly popular. It has now raised £400 for the local Macmillan Palliative Care Team at Midhurst. We are grateful for all the donated books but please do not donate any more whilst the building work goes on. We have a storage problem.

None of this would be possible without the great Coffee Morning Team who welcome, serve coffee and tea as well as the home baked cakes and biscuits which are made by various volunteers. Thank you all very much.

The coffee morning will continue throughout the Link building project. We will be in St Bartholomew's church. It will be a challenge initially but please do not be put off. Come and join us Bring your friends PLUS your own MUG.

Sarah Mulliner

Hearing Clinic Report

Are you aware that most people leave taking a formal hearing test until it is at least 15 years too late? Just another extraordinary fact that you learn on the Hearing Champions training course. Hearing Aids can make such a difference to people's lives, but they do need regular maintenance and cleaning at least once every three to four months. In the past, residents had to make long journeys to the big NHS hospitals for maintenance services.

For nearly 3 years now we have been running a free NHS service in partnership with the Diocese. A regular hearing Aid maintenance clinic every 2nd and 4th Thursday alongside the pop in coffee morning. Sarah Mulliner and her wonderful team are there supporting us and welcoming our clients and are on hand to help in anyway needed. We would like to thank the pop in coffee ladies for their ongoing support with our hearing clinic.

We have developed good relationships with our local Care home Oakhall, Redcot and Holy Cross convent and have regular clinics and offer support when needed. This partnership has been very rewarding and a great benefit for those people who attend the hearing clinic, as they can socialize and have a chat over a cuppa. Attendees can also receive pastoral support if needed. Our attendance has been growing each month, some visitors attend regularly, often just seeking a friendly chat with a Champion, to help grow their confidence in wearing their hearing aids or general support and advice.

The Haslemere Hearing Champions team is lead by myself, Sophie Bessant. This is my 10th Year of being a hearing Champion and I am hoping to share my experience as a hearing champion in the parish magazine. The rest of the team comprises of Sue Foster and Victoria Vaughan who have been champions for 2 years. They have both been brilliant with their regularly commitment. We are a good strong team together with our lovely Jenny Simmonds who is amazing welcomer and keeps everyone happy. She has been with us nearly a year and has been a real asset to the hearing team.

We all must complete training with the Guildford Audiology department working with the partnership of the Diocese, doing safeguarding training and we all have DBS. Our team is growing in confidence to help and support the hearing needs of our community.

This last year the Team have seen over **350 +++** people either at the pop in clinics, home visit (housebound) or in one of the three care homes; Oakhall, Redcot and Holy Cross convent. The last few months have been super busy with 16 people attended one Thursday.

The hearing champion can deal with many people, some of whom are just lonely, whose only conversation that week might be their friendly chat with the Hearing Champion. Some want talk about recent bereavements and other difficulties they are struggling with. As you can see, being a Hearing Champion is not just about servicing hearing aids, it's more about just being there for people and giving them support.

The hearing clinic is a free service for NHS hearing aid users, but we do have a donation box for supporting a Children Special Needs charity for people wanting to make a little donation for the service that they have received. We have been able to give the charity over a £100 this year.

I believe it is wonderful gift to be able to help & support someone with hearing loss, to make them feel less isolated.

We are hoping to get a New Champion soon (hopefully) anyone who might be interested in becoming a hearing champion, please do come and have a chat with me.

A small thank you to Jenny Sugden & Vera Ruane who have helped cover the welcome table when needed.

Sophie Bessant (Haslemere Parish Hearing Champion lead)

Bereavement Report

This has been a fairly busy year with 15 church funerals and of these 5 had no local next of kin, which sadly seems to be seen more often nowadays.

I would like to thank both Sarah Mulliner and Wendy Neate who have both been a tower of strength during this last year with contacting the next of kin and visiting those in need.

As usual we are giving out the Easter Baskets. These are made by the children under the guidance of Victoria Martin. They are beautifully made of raffia and then filled with real (as opposed to chocolate!) eggs, decorated and delivered to all those who have been bereaved during the year. They are always gratefully received, and it gives the visitor a chance to see people and how they are getting on.

In November we once again we held our popular All Souls Service. This is when people are invited to come and light a candle in memory of their loved ones. Once the candles are in place, the names of the deceased are read out. Afterwards there is tea and cake in the Link, and this year we made 73 cups of tea! It seems to be a service which is much appreciated especially the chance for a chat afterwards.

I would like to thank all those who have helped during the year especially Victoria Martin and all her team.

Linda Donaldson, Bereavement Team Co-ordinator

Children and Families

Sunday Morning Families-

On the 5th January I took up the reins for this group and it has been an amazing start!

In addition to appropriate visually engaging screen presentations, I try where possible to use sensory objects or props to draw the children into the story provoking imagination and encouraging discussion. A song and a prayer are always included and a game if time permits. Related crafts are made in support of the learning objective. A colouring sheet with the Bible story printed is given as a handout to take home!

We began the year with Epiphany and the Visit of The Magi talking about Jesus being the Greatest Gift and how he came for everyone not just the Jews. Crowns and stars were made aplenty and a gift collaged on the back with the gifts we could give back to Jesus such as our love and talents.

At Candlemas we imagined all the sounds and smells that would have been at the Temple on the day of Jesus' presentation. We talked about the importance of waiting just like Anna and Simeon and all things 'light' related, not least ourselves and how Jesus' light shines through us which others see when he is in our lives. The flickering candles the children made were a great success!

Our last Sunday tackled The Transfiguration – a tricky one for primary years. A very engaging video ‘Glory Mountain’ helped the understanding. Bright shining faces with masks and our gold plates with a silhouette caused much particular as she shouted ‘Jesus shines’ when she held her plate in front of the light!

Mighty Oak - Little Acorns our intergenerational special at Oak Hall for 19th February sadly had to be postponed - I am trying to rearrange this for as soon as possible.

‘The Lost Sheep’

Families @ 4 special took place during February half term. An engaging service and talk by Rev Chris was followed by looking for lots and lots of sheep hidden in the church for the children to find - there was always going to be one missing! It was eventually found and returned showing how Jesus always looks for the lost one and never abandons us. Flocks of cotton wool sheep and door hangers were made in support of the theme. Great fun was had by all and we finished the day with a lovely bring and share tea with a selection of cakes very generously made by ladies in the congregation- delicious and many thanks to all.

Our Summer Sizzler BBQ Picnic will take place at St. Bartholomew’s School on the afternoon of Saturday 21st June - Further details to follow - ALL ARE WELCOME SO PLEASE SAVE THE DAY.

I am extremely humbled by the warm welcome and support extended to me since taking up my post by Reverend Chris, Reverend Justin and the congregations at both churches and Kari, where would we all be without you!

Special thanks go to Victoria and Verity for their continuing support and of course the time graciously given by the volunteers which is invaluable.

Finally, I have been blessed with an amazing group of children, and it is an absolute honour to be part of their spiritual journey.

Karen Bardens, Children’s and Families’ Worker

First Steps

Numbers for the past year have been good; a trend has emerged showing that numbers peak during the summer term with a tapering off during the Autumn term. This is likely due to a number of children ‘moving on’ to school or playgroups at the start of September. New families are joining, at most sessions, with the majority returning and staying. The First Steps volunteer team is extremely strong – there are at present 15 members of the team – I am so grateful for their dedication and the wonderful welcome that they bring to every session for the families. In September I am hoping to have another one or two join the team both are parents whose children will be moving on to school at that time.

In July 24 First Steps once again welcomed the Basil and Crew farm to our last session before the summer holidays. This was as ever a truly wonderful morning with such a wide array of animals for the children to pet and feed. This has become a very popular event for the year with all 60 places being filled! Families are asked for a donation towards the farm and as such

the majority of the costs were covered. The farm has been booked again for this July and bookings have now opened.

On Monday the 16th December, after our usual hour of playtime, St Christopher's Church was transported to Bethlehem as we retold the Nativity Story using the wonderful, knitted figures and stable scene. Each child was given a different figure and asked to bring their figure up, to place in the stable scene, at the appropriate point in the story. After Circle Time we all enjoyed a wonderful Christmas party together – parents/carers had each generously brought along a plate (or in some cases many plates!) of food to share which made up quite a feast!

Christingle Services

Around 500 people attended across the two services which was amazing – a little bit down on last year but at the 4.30pm literally every seat was taken.

To prepare the 275 Christingles and service packs for the services a wonderful team gathered, in the Link, on Monday 23rd December.

On Christmas Eve, after a wonderful welcome, from Rev Chris, the concept of Christingles was explained and the importance of the Christingle Society. A lively re-telling of the Nativity Story followed – at which point the children were asked to open their service packs and find out which character they would be playing in the Nativity Story. (Each character had their own 'line' to shout out when they were mentioned in the story, for example if you were a King you needed to point upwards and shout 'superstar!') an added element this year came in the guise of children volunteering to come out to the front and don a suitable headdress for their character and act as a character representative thus spurring on everyone else! Many Christmas carols were sung throughout the service interspersed between the action – enthusiastically sung by all!

After the fun of the Nativity Story the lights were turned down and the Christingles were lit at which point we all held our oranges high and sang, 'Away in a Manger' together which was a lovely ending to the Christingle Service.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers, who help to ensure that the children's ministry continues to thrive.

Victoria Martin, Younger Children's and Families' Worker

The Den

Our church youth group for 8–12-year-olds continues to remain popular, with 14 children attending and 2 more about to join, all of whom come from a variety of schools in the local area. A large group of our eldest Den members, many of whom have been with us from the beginning of the group, permanently transitioned into Summit at the end of 2024 and beginning of 2025, having turned 13 years old.

We continue to have positive feedback from both the children and their parents and those new to the group this year have settled in very well.

Lara Butler continues to be a great assistant leader, and the group has a small but dedicated core team of volunteers. Danie Meyers, who is the mother of one of our Den attendees, stepped into the breach to help as a volunteer while Lara was on leave due to an operation at the end of last year and has continued to help whenever needed, which has been wonderful.

Members of the wider church congregation often support sessions relevant to their interests, skills or experience. Some come to share their powerful testimonials or stories, such as Andrew Culshaw who came to talk to the children about his life-threatening experience and amazing recovery, when we were discussing God's miracles, past & present.

We have also been blessed to have people from the local community give their time and skills to the Den group. For example, Sarah Dodd from Brilliant Bricks (Haslemere Lego club) has helped with two sessions, bringing in her Lego expertise to assist with craft such as our Lego Easter Gardens.

Thanks to our team and this wider church & community support, we have been able to continue to support all aspects of the children's health, including their spiritual, physical, mental, emotional, social, and environmental health. Each term consists of a mix of church sessions, outings, fundraisers, and mission projects to help the children grow and live out their faith and make a difference in the local community and environment.

Helping people in the local community continues to be important to The Den. After the previous two years of success, the group teamed up with Tesco's for another amazing Food Bank Challenge. Their Random Acts of Kindness session around Valentines Day, also focused on sharing God's love through love themed crafts (e.g. Lego hearts, & heart wax wraps with Jam & keyrings etc) all with inspiring bible verses on. These special packages were hand delivered to the residents of the Kiln Avenue Estate this year. The Den & Summit got stuck into a car wash Fundraiser (and cake bake sale) for the RNLI last summer and helped raise an amazing £650 despite heavy rain. The Den also undertook a litter pick around Haslemere Recreation Ground and did some requested pinecone clearing in the tennis courts, the efforts of which were rewarded with a free tennis session from the Head Coach Josh. We welcome and try and nurture and develop these new relationships in the local community through this mission work. For example, The Den spent a session helping out in the Cancer Research Charity Shop in Haslemere, and we now have a great connection with Bridget Davies, Manager of the store.

We have also strengthened existing relationships with businesses and organisations, having welcomed back The Rocksteady Music School, whose practical music session we tied in with a discussion on worship and why it is important in our faith. The Guildford Lush Team also returned recently having first visited us 2.5 years ago. We made bath bombs for Mother's Day and thought about all our mothers do and Mary Mother of Jesus.

The Den kids have got involved in community events this past year and enjoyed creating another Christmas Window display for the Christmas Windows Competition. Their display this year was in the dry cleaners, Laundry Assistant where they created a Jesse Tree.

We have also strived to involve and connect the children to the wider church. One such way has been through 'prayer hands'. The children created two painted handprints and on one of them we added their name and on the other, the name of someone in/or known to the church who needed prayer. Members of the congregation chose a hand/child to pray for through the year, and the children have been praying for the person on their other painted hand. The Den kids also made Harvest Wreaths at Imbhams Farm as decoration for the church's Harvest Tide Lunch, which some of them assisted at, and they joined in with

volunteers from the church to make Christingles at Christmas, as well as reading at the Carol Services.

Some of the spiritual topics the group have covered include The Power of Words & God's Word, The Power & Importance of Worship, Pentecost & The Holy Spirit, Prejudice & The Good Samaritan, Jesus's Baptism, Gratitude to God for the World around us, The Parable of the Prodigal Son, Growing with God & making changes in our lives, Saints like Superheroes, Mary Mother of Jesus & God as a mother, Jesus as the light of the world, David & Goliath, Jesus's promise to return and how we must be ready, the parable of the wedding banquet, building strong foundations with God & the parable of the two builders, God's miracles past & present, Candlemas & the presentation of Jesus in the temple, Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday & Lent, to name just a few.

The Den also continues to focus on safeguarding and nurturing God's creation. They continue their efforts Derby Road Verge Garden and churchyard Wild Area at St Bartholomew's. As well as further planting of native bee friendly flowers and the sowing of wildflower seeds (including some into a cross carved into the wild area), they also created a bug hotel to create a safe habitat for insects and pollinators to support biodiversity and the natural ecosystem. The young people decorated slate signs to help the public understand what we are doing with these areas.

As part of our focus on the fifth mark of mission, we also had our first 'Muddy Church' session, with the Den focusing on gratitude to God for the incredible world He has created and how we can help protect & nurture it. The children helped sow wildflower seeds at St Christopher's and rake the freshly cut wild area to help spread the seeds. We hope to do more 'muddy church' sessions in the future.

As well as learning and helping, much fun has been had over the past year. From treasure hunts, home-made sling shots, worship song writing, dress up relay races, Jesus's baptism pool party, water fun, games night, paper outfit making, prayer sand jars, building constructions out of natural materials, acting out bible stories in costume, den making, Pentecost kite making, night jars painting, slime making, toothpaste challenges and marshmallow toasting. We have enjoyed our Den specials such as the Light Party, Progressive Supper, Christmas Special, Summer in Winter Party, Summer Party with traditional 'funfair games', Harvest at Imbhams Farm and most recently our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Olympics and Easter Special.

South & SouthEast in Bloom Competition

On Monday 1st July last year, a judge came around to look at St Bartholomew's cemetery as part of the South and Southeast in Bloom competition. We had four of the Den kids attend from St Barts school to represent the Den group and show the judge their wild area in the cemetery and the Derby Road Verge wild garden. They walked the judge around and pointed out the trees they had planted and wildflowers they had helped seed, which all support the local environment. Using printed photo montages as a reference, they also showed the judge how the project has progressed since the first seed laying in October 2022, and the work they had done each year. It was wonderful to hear that St Bartholomew's Churchyard was awarded a Silver Gilt award and a massive well done to the churchyard team who worked so hard throughout the year. The churchyard has been entered again this year and hopefully The Den's continuing contribution will help once again.

Summit – This group for 12-15-year-olds continues to meet every second Wednesday of the month, and in February this year, Summit celebrated its second birthday. The group has 12 young people attending and our most recent member has settled in well.

The Summit has more in-depth spiritual discussion than The Den, but still includes a mix of socials/outings and community projects/fundraisers. This past year Summit have undertaken two youth take-over services at St Bartholomew's Church. The first in May 24' and the second on Advent Sunday. Each take-over requires a preparation session whereby adult members of the church congregation & Parish team, mentor and guide the young people in the various aspects of the service. Both services were very well received, and the Summit did exceptionally well.

During our Summit sessions, we try and combine each of our spiritual discussions with complementary and engaging/fun activities. For example, when discussing God as our Guide (trusting the Holy Spirit to guide us & 'make our paths straight'), we created a 'nightline' activity whereby the youth were blindfolded and had to follow a string line through an obstacle course around the church guided only by the voice of their teammate. We also spoke about God's Word, understanding the bible (and how to use it), and how it can help us to navigate our lives.

Another recent example would be our discussion on Self-Defence (physically, mentally & spiritually) & the Armour of God, after which we had a free Judo taster session with local teacher, Fiona Chan. We have also been blessed to have special guests at Summit during our discussion time. When talking about Grace recently, we had Lucy's mum, Joanna Patrick, come to speak to us about the work she does with people who live in sheltered accommodation and the power of kindness grace. We then made special easter gifts (birds made from paper cups with a chocolate egg inside) as gifts to the vulnerable individuals Jo works with.

This session tied in with our focus on supporting the homeless having raised £2011 for the Church Urban Fund in December through Summit's Advent Sleepout Challenge which was a huge success, and which we hope to repeat again this December. The Church Urban Fund were so impressed with their efforts (which was captured in a video of the event), that they sent them each a certificate and a medal.

Following this fundraiser, Kirsty Jones (Jessica's mum), who works to support those experiencing homelessness through Waverly Council, also spoke to them about the work she does and helped them to see those experiencing homelessness in a different light. She shared some inspiring stories of how simple acts of grace, love and kindness can have had a huge impact on people's lives and shared simple things the young people can do to help. We thought about how Mary & Joseph were also 'homeless' once – little did the innkeeper realise the impact of his kindness in their time of need. We hope such discussions adds further meaning to the young people's fundraising and community efforts, and for them to feel a deeper connection with the charities and people they are supporting.

Summit have also undertaken other community work, raising funds for the Link Project last summer with a sponsored bike ride. But it is not all discussion and fundraising, they have also had a lot of fun this past year sailing at Frensham Pond, having a board games & burgers night. There has been pizza & communion flatbread making, crafting (such as glass

painting & clay prayer spoons) and bellringing. This last activity, made possible by Paul Bagshaw and his team, has led to a young ringer's group, whereby 5 of the Summit have been training in bell-ringing every week on a Monday evening.

The Summit have also been serving in the church in various ways this past year, from helping at the Harvest Tide Lunch (serving food and drink, taking payments, clearing plates and helping in the kitchen & set up) to reading at services such as the Carol Services, making Christingles at Christmas, to helping to prepare and participate in the Passover Meal most recently.

Duke of Edinburgh Helpers

Two of our young people, Matilda & Florence, have recently begun volunteering within the CAF team for their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award. Matilda will mostly be assisting within The Den group, while Florence will be assisting Karen with the Specials and Sunday Family sessions focused primarily on the younger members of the congregation. Most recently Florence helped at the Families Good Friday event and both Matilda and Florence were a massive support in the preparation and readings at the Passover Meal. This past year, Yasmin completed her Bronze Duke of Edinburgh volunteering with The Den.

Young Leaders

Alastair Etheridge & Emma Coy from the Guildford Diocese are no longer running the original Young Leaders forum that Yasmin & Phoebe attended last year but have developed a new approach in order to attract a larger number of young people, from more churches. The diocese team have begun running larger youth conferences such as 'Youth Catalyst Central', alongside smaller 'Youth Catalyst' events, one of which is coming up in May locally. We will be sharing information about this event to the Summit youth as we hope they will attend.

Despite the changes to the Young Leader forum, our 'Young Leaders' continue to help throughout our church. Yasmin is a Young Leader at the Den (even though she is still counted as a 'child' in session for safeguarding), and her and Phoebe gave a wonderful sermon during the Summit's first take-over service. They are often first in line to help at church events, assisting at both Christingle services as well as with the Christingle making. Both girls, supported by their family, laid the tables for the Passover Meal and helped with preparations throughout the day and during the event. Even though Lucy didn't get a chance to experience the Young Leaders Forum as it was, she is also very proactive with serving in the church, helping with the Women of Worth sale along with Anna, Maclaren and Maison, and setting up the Harvest Tide Lunch and serving during the event to name just a few examples. We hope to provide them with more opportunities this coming year.

Weyhill Montessori Assemblies

Weyhill Montessori continue to visit St Bartholomew's Church for special assemblies. Rev. Justin and Verity ran an interactive service for Harvest, and Justin dressed as Father Christmas for their December visit as 'Santa' got to learn the true meaning of Christmas and the Nativity story with the help of some knitted nativity characters and Verity and Karen. Justin was back in costume again for their Easter service as Verity's Jesus puppet taught 'Bouncy Bunny' the real meaning of Easter.

Verity Sutherland, Older Children's Worker

PARISH ACTIVITIES AND GROUPS

Music and Choirs

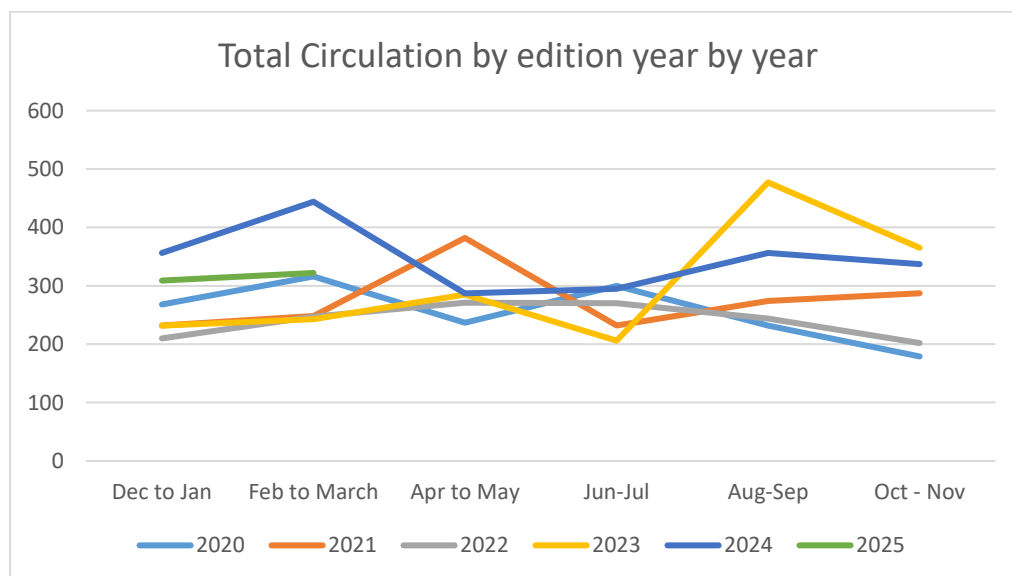
Music continues to be an important part of the church, with many different performing groups. The junior choir, now in its fourth year, continues to go from strength to strength, with about 14 choristers currently on the books. The children regularly join the adults to sing for services in St Bart's as well as singing by themselves in St Christopher's. They have also given a Christmas concert, as part of the Friends Saturday Coffee Concert series and Hunter centre. As part of the forthcoming Haslemere Festival the junior choir will be joining the Haslemere Town band for a concert and joining the adults for a Festival Evensong. The fourth Sunday of the month in St Christopher's, has continued to welcome a variety of different groups on the, including the Junior choir, the Winterbourne singers and Quarta dominicae.

Clive Osgood, Director of Music

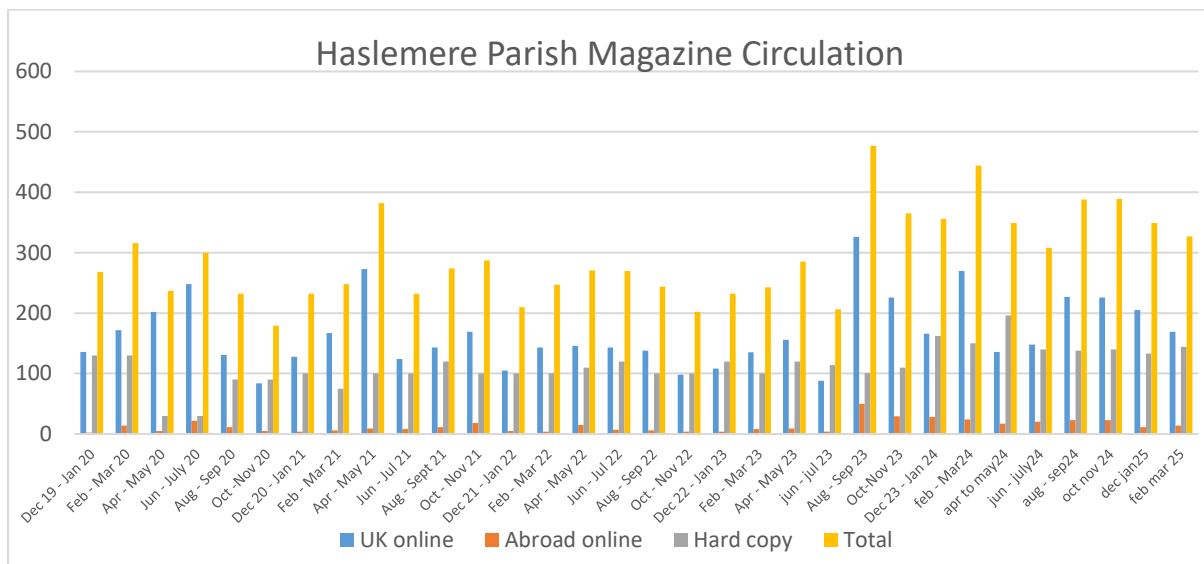
Haslemere Link Magazine

Circulation:

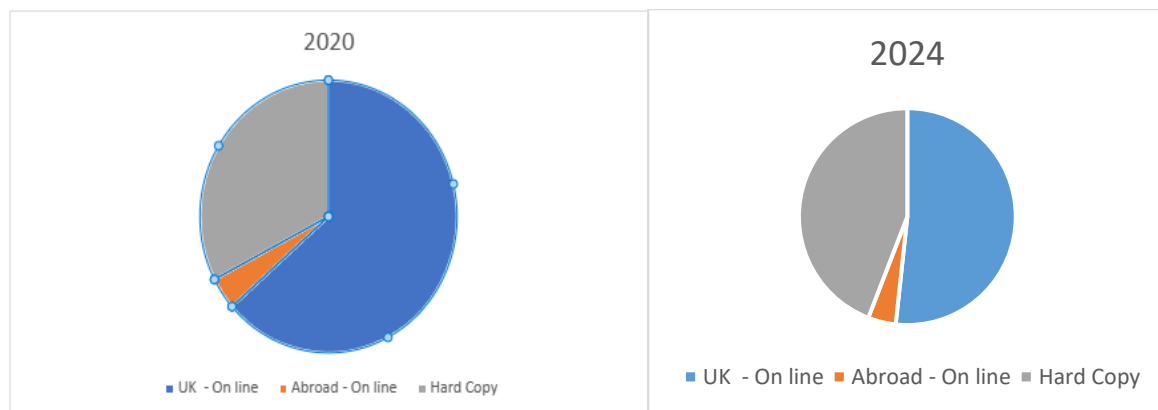
We have been tracking our circulation statistics for some time. Kari notes the number of hard copies printed of each edition as well as the distribution points. Debbie analyses the data from our on-line publishing platform and collates the data on a spreadsheet to provide a graphical presentation.



The above graph shows that of the six editions published during any one year, 2024 circulation has increased in four of the six publications and was in 2nd place for the other two.



The above graph splits out the number of hard copies printed for each edition and also the number of on-line reads both in the UK and abroad. Since 2023 our overseas readership has been increasing. The general trend for hard copies is increasing whereas on-line readership remains constant. As demonstrated by the pie charts below.



We encourage everyone to offer a copy to any newcomers in the Parish, as the magazine provides parish contact numbers, as well as information on our regular service times and what's on locally. It provides a good introduction to our Parish life.

We would appreciate further outlets for hard copies and people to deliver to potential new outlets, if any parishioners would like to help with this, please contact the editorial team (Jane Slevin-07949 633979).

Increasing our circulation is a key target for two main reasons.

Primary Consideration - Outreach into the wider community.

Secondary Consideration - Covering the costs of the magazine through increased donations and advertising.

The Team:

The core team meets six times a year where we review our previous edition and plan for the next one. We also consider costs, advertising, and ideas for future development. There is then a period of frantic activity as we pull together our next edition ready for publication at the end of the month.

Regular contributors make up the rest of the team and whilst they do not attend the meetings are very much part of what makes our magazine so widely varied and informative. Our ongoing thanks to them for being the backbone of the parish Magazine.

Succession planning is of concern, and we would be interested in ideas about who might take over as editor when Jane steps down. Whoever is interested would need to have MS 365 and good office skills. We use MS publisher to typeset and format the final magazine, which can be self-taught but does take a bit of time. It took Ann four years to train Jane, so we really do need to start training Jane's successor soon!

Content:

The Link magazine endeavours to be an interesting and informative parish magazine with a mixture of regular articles ranging from our church school, through families and youth groups, cooking, gardening and all the way to the gravestones. Every aspect of life in the parish from the personal to what's on locally, alongside one-off features and views.

We welcome contributions from all the parish and are always delighted when we get a one-off article, on whatever topic. It would be helpful if we had more contributions of this nature.

Whilst we vary rarely get any written feedback, every member of the team has reported very positive encouragement and praise from the parish during the year. We were delighted to hear that the small article about a painting, originally given to Ray Harris, was snapped up by someone who picked up the magazine at the Haslewey centre, demonstrating that we are reaching those outside our immediate congregations.

The high point was of course winning an achievement award from the Association of Church Editors.

Advertising & Costs:

Geoff and Kari manage our paid advertising which has increased from five to eight pages during 202. We also promote local charity events for free.

With the increase in advertising revenue, donations (which remain sadly static, despite increased circulation) and the reduction in printing costs, (due to the new printer), we are delighted to report a small profit in the region of £500.

We are a not-for-profit publication but do regularly review our income and costs and aim to be able to cover our publication costs. We expect to at least break-even next year but hope to once again make a small financial contribution to the Parish.

Discussion within the team and feedback from the PCC members on the team lead us to believe that our priority is outreach in the community, rather than income generation.

We now include a QR code on the cover of every publication to enable donations to be made electronically. This allows people to donate via their smart phones when picking up the magazine around town.

The Team (in alphabetical order): Sue Davis, Kari Hayden, Geoff Martin, Debbie Peet, Frances Reincke and Jane Slevin.

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S GROUPS

St Bartholomew's Church Care Group

We have 16 members at present and I wish to thank them most warmly for all their excellent, reliable and conscientious support in keeping our lovely Church in such good order. It is always tidy, clean and most welcoming to us all and it is regularly commented on by our many Visitors.

The Group has been running since 1970 and members choose a job when they join us and fit it in with their own timetable when the church is open daily. We welcome new members and do let us know if you would like to join us.

I just wish to inform you that I am retiring after many years doing a job that I have really loved and so enjoyed the heartwarming experiences and the challenges to keep everything running smoothly. My successor is a kind, friendly and very competent lady, Mrs Celia Marshall who has offered to take over the Leadership of this Group for which I am extremely grateful and give her enormous thanks.

Roscelin Rees

St Bartholomew's Bell Ringers

We have, as last year, changes on the personnel front with more little and not so little absences offset by further additions to the band. The absences have certainly focussed the mind on the future and how to keep ourselves refreshed. Our best source of recruits of course is church members and the younger the better. It will come as no surprise that competence and more particularly enjoyment gained is better the younger you start and so that is the direction to go.

Last year we had given a session for the smaller children at Families@4 where for us the main target was the parents - none caught the bait! This year we aimed at the eldest, The Summit group, led by Verity, the Childrens Minister who immediately gave it her strong support. From an initial presentation to ten, four have now made the enormous progress we were expecting and will hopefully join us on our annual outing to other towers which is their next challenge and a considerable achievement six months or so into their training. One has also signed up for their Duke of Edinburgh's award. All have persisted magnificently

with what at this stage can be a repetitive tiring process. Enormous thanks go to Verity for giving it such a boost and to Tom Raggett and Sue Wreford who have led the training. When checking on the street cred we were told “Oh no it’s cool, no one else does it”!

Our other key recruitment has been of a very experienced ringer John Mayle whose depth of knowledge and belfry management we have only learnt a little. Needless to say he has helped us provide even better benchmarks so improving everyone’s ringing.

Following from all this I am pleased to report that we rang for all morning services, special services and for six weddings and a funeral (sorry!) during the year, as well as for most Evensongs.

We continue with our attempts at quarter peals before Evensong on the second Sunday of each month organised by Tom Raggett. These take about forty-five minutes and have to be rung continuously without mistake and are then recorded nationally. Our success rate is in line with national averages – always a learning experience. We continue to allow a band of experts from the Farnham District to come every six months or so and ring a quarter peal on all ten bells (ours use only six to date) due to Farnham bells being out of action. They are usually of very high quality and well worth listening to (for a while!).

Next month (May 18th 3pm) as usual we hold an open day as part of the Haslemere Festival. This year it is free with just a cup of tea and a biscuit in the church due to the Link project.

As mentioned above we are planning an outing at the end of May probably to some local towers so that the youngsters can join us for part (it can be very tiring). We also hope to enter the district striking competition. For the second year running Tom Raggett was invited to help win the Guild inter-district eight bell and ten bell striking competitions. Sue Wreford also took part in the District quarter peal weekend ringing on eight for the first time. We also hosted the District ADM and were very grateful to the Rector and to Sarah Mulliner and team who organised the service, and the tea.

Finally we are planning a very late Christmas Dinner including Chris and Justin if possible at The Stag at Balls Cross where we are taking over the whole restaurant.

As ever we thank Chris and Justin for their support. I hope we remain near the core of church life aided as always by the regular interactions of members of the band with the leadership team. My thanks go also to the other ringers for their fantastic support, particularly Tom Raggett, my deputy who conducts a lot of the ringing, trains the youngsters and stepped in perfectly when I was away.

Paul Bagshaw, Tower Captain

Church Flowers Report

There have been no major events to report on over the past year compared with last year's memorable Coronation but there have been a few weddings including one at St Bartholomews when the date had to be brought forward and organised within a fortnight. Both flower teams had some involvement and all passed off beautifully thanks to such willingness to help out in times of need.

Other than the weddings and occasional funeral when something special has been requested we have continued with a weekly couple of pedestals at St Barts and window arrangements at St Christopher's with much more at Easter, Christmas and Harvest but nothing in Lent and Advent.

We are now much more proficient at doing sustainable arrangements without floral foam although flower arches for the occasional wedding still prove too difficult but we will endeavour to manage those as well in the near future.

A small committee are working on the next big floral challenge. A Flower Festival from June 12th -15th at St Christopher's Church. It is to raise money for the soft furnishings in the new Link Community Hub. Many local groups as well as various churches in the vicinity of Haslemere and some professional florists are involved with the Festival. The theme is Courage, Wisdom and Spirituality which seemed apt for the Link Project. Please come along to support it.

We are always looking for new members to join the flower teams whether experienced or not. You only need a love of flowers. If interested, please contact either Frances Reincke at St Christopher's or Sarah Mulliner at St Bartholomew's or the Parish Office.

Sarah Mulliner and Frances Reincke

PART 2 MEETING DOCUMENTS FROM 2024 APCM

Minutes of APCM Monday 29th April 2024 – election results

The 2024 APCM was held at 7.00pm at St Bartholomew's Church, chaired by Rev'd Chris Bessant. Katie Morgan, PCC Secretary was in attendance to help facilitate the meeting, and the Church Wardens and more than 40 parishioners attended in person.

The following positions were advertised as vacant. As the number of candidates put forward did not exceed the vacancies there was no requirement for contested elections, but in each case the candidates were supported by a show of hands at the meeting, and with no objections.

CHURCHWARDENS

Howard Body

Gareth David

David Simmons (deputy churchwarden)

ELECTED PCC MEMBERS

Richard Parker

Jamie Harle

Linda Feliati

CO-OPTED PCC MEMBERS

Noel Cullen

LAY MEMBERS OF THE DEANERY SYNOD:

No elections

Rev'd Chris thanked those volunteers who had given so much time, energy and experience to the smooth running of the parish in the past year.

Haslemere Parish
St Bartholomew's and St Christopher's

