



**ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS
&
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**
Monday 27th April 2026, 7pm
at St Bartholomew's Church

***Annual Report of the
Parochial Church Council for 2026***



Parish of Haslemere
ST BARTHOLOMEW'S AND ST CHRISTOPHER'S

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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 28th April 2025 – 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. Election of Representatives to the Deanery Synod (max 5 members)
 - d. Appointment of Independent Examiner (Karen Anderson-Wallbridge ACA)
6. Financial Matters
 - a. Presentation of Accounts
 - b. Budget for 2026
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 2026

My warm greetings to all who are reading this booklet of reports for **Haslemere Parish**. It's quite normal for us to dip into these reports according to the particular connections each of us might have with areas of ministry that appeal us. Speaking for myself, I'm always a bit challenged in that way because I'm interested in everything and everyone! I am sure I speak for us all when I say how grateful I am for the gifts people bring in all ways.

'To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever.'
(Ephesians 3:21)

The greatest asset the Church holds is its people, or rather I should say 'disciples' for that is what you are. Our purpose is to worship God, and to serve Him by our service to others. I can see that happening every day in the talents and commitment across all we do. Those who serve both God and their neighbour are both citizens of Haslemere Parish and the Kingdom of God. I'm sure that God smiles upon us.

My overall summary of this last twelve months would be that we *'staying on track'*. Perhaps more so than any other time since my arrival in 2019, this year has been one of holding the line, waiting and watching. That is not to say that great efforts have not been made, or that interesting things have not happened (they have!), but it is to say that our plans have been clear, and we have made great efforts to try and stick with them.

I tend to describe Haslemere Parish as a **visionary place** which likes to challenge itself. We should be too, because the alternative – a maintenance of routine where nothing changes – is a hazardous place for any church to be, usually leading to a slow decline. I'm one of those ministers who likes to keep an eye on how the Church of England is getting on nationally. The evidence shows how parishes can slip into an attitude of inevitable decline, whilst being either unable or unwilling to face the changes. That is not where we are heading! These last twelve months have been a time to review and reestablish our **Parish Vision** for the future – set in our **Church Development Plan**. I won't provide too much here, but please do see the following article, later in this report booklet.

My own set of responsibilities has been changing too. Until the beginning of this year, I had been a long-term member of the Bishop's Council, which is best thought of as the main trustee group of the Diocese of Guildford. Additionally, I have been Area Dean since 2023. My work there is quite involved, especially where parishes are in vacancy (looking for a new Vicar!). I convene the clergy chapter for fourteen parishes, provide pastoral support for leaders, and generally deal with the issues as they arise. I have now put down both of these roles in my wish to concentrate on my more traditional work as parish priest. These changes allow me to spend more time on pastoral visiting, supporting our group leaders, prayer, teaching, and taking part in the children's work. Most especially, I like to help new people to feel welcome and settle down as members of our congregation.

I am resisting the temptation to bring you my report as a summary of everything in this booklet. You can read it all for yourself – and please do so with thanksgiving for all the ministry, people and services we have. God loves them all, and I do too. I would like however to share a few thoughts which really matter to me.

Kari has been a tower of strength in the Parish Office. With her calm nature, she has managed so well the temporary move into the St Bartholomew's vestry. That was not without its complications! Kari wears many hats, with her work on the Parish Magazine, Parish Safeguarding Officer and as part of the Link transition team. I know I speak for Justin

Together in Christ, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love

also, when I say that we are so grateful for her wisdom, guidance and creativity. I know we don't work for the plaudits, but if anyone deserves more praise than they receive – it's Kari.

Working with children brings its own built-in changes, because the children are growing and developing themselves. This last year has seen a very welcome effect in two of our older youth groups – The Summit and the Junior Choir, many of whom have been with us more than five years. Few things give me as much pleasure as seeing **young people flourishing with confidence and taking the first steps towards leadership**. This is what we are seeing in the **Den, Summit and Junior Choir** teams, so Verity Sutherland, Clive Osgood, Liz Chapman and Sally Hollyer.

Over the recent Easter festival, a great highlight for me was the Good Friday morning gathering we provided for children and families. The work to prepare and the response we saw from all the families was a joy - over thirty children with their parents. All had a wonderful time. The team which surrounded Karen was encouraging to see – a huge effort with over fifteen Easter activities and crafts, all so creative and cleverly thought through. We always see new families coming to join us.

Sadly, we have seen the loss of some dearly beloved friends in these last twelve months. Their lives had been lived in and around the local community and the churches for many years. We know that this is to be expected, but still always feels sudden. The love which surrounds the church is remarkable, especially from the **Pastoral Team**, who can bring a real strength of care towards those in need. Part of that is a **Pop-In Coffee Morning** and the **Hear Here** team, both of whom have been able to encourage new leaders and helpers this year.

The Link Community Hub Project is the most ambitious project we have seen in the parish for years. Such an undertaking tells of how we are a parish of vision and determination to serve with the community. I know that I speak for us all when I say how grateful I am to the team, for what has been four years of work so far. The ups-and-down have been considerable, mostly not seen by the rest of us as the progress continues. Understandably the team are all too aware of the heavy load they have been carrying, so I will be pleased when building phases is completed. We all owe them an incredible debt of thanks.

The new Link offers a considerable increase in space and facilities for use of the church and its ministry. I would like us all to think carefully about how we might make best use of it ourselves. God leads us on with our first calling to serve as the best parish and churches we can be for all the people of Haslemere.

Once the building is complete it will take time for the transition and new arrangements to settle down, so I expect us all to be patient as that happens. On Sunday 14th June at the 10:00am service we shall celebrate a special opening day, with Bishop Paul Davies coming to lead us in worship and blessing. That is a service open to everyone, followed by refreshments.

Just as you should expect to have this report in your hands each April, so it is around the whole Christian year. The rhythms of worship and the seasons are expected and loved by all of us. The **Parish Magazine** is one more part of that understanding – as we expect it arrive each second month. I hardly need to tell you how wonderfully it is put together. You can see in its pages everything which is going on and what is coming up soon. Yet behind the scenes is a dedicated team whose work is to get it ready to print – it's no small matter. The current issue is the final one under the skilful hands of Jane Slevin, who has been on the team for many years. I know we are all so thankful and appreciative of her time. Can I

please ask that we do not allow ourselves to fall into complacency that the magazine and its faithful team, are always there. I have put a call out on several occasions for those who might wish to support the team with some of their time. I now need to make that call again – you just need to be able to read and write – so that is all of us, I'm sure.

Significant things have happened at **St Bartholomew's School**, which I'm pleased to report. Beginning last Summer, I had reached an agreement between headteacher Simon Avenell and Karen Bardens that she would spend six hours weekly in the school as part of our need to strengthen our cooperation. Initially we have seen some nice displays put up inside the church, and in the Derby Road churchyard. Karen's time has been so well received in the school that it's becoming difficult to stop her being asked to do more and more! Amongst other projects Karen has reviewed and reorganised to Christian content of the school library and is well on the way to re-establishing the Spiritual Garden. I remain committed to services and assemblies twice monthly, to support the major festivals of the Christian year and the school's core values.

I'm sure you will also be pleased to hear that the long-awaited Ofsted inspection was completed in early March. It has become almost a national understanding how hard teachers have to work, so a really positive Ofsted report is very welcome. I can't tell you how relieved the staff and governors were. A big thanks must be offered to Laura Walliss, the voluntary Chair of Governors for her incredible commitment.

Having just mentioned Ofsted for schools, I can recall when I was given a list of those areas that you might expect to measure if you wanted to test if your parish, churches and ministry are healthy. Somewhere near the top of that list would be **encouraging leadership**, by which I mean ordained leadership. I'm delighted that we have, Victoria Martin and Marion Thomas currently in academic training toward their calling. Each of them is supported by Justin and myself, plus a small support group that meet periodically. Gone are the days when we import curates for a few short years. It is my policy that we encourage our own, to live a serve in the community.

Finally, I would like to let you know that I am preparing a **stewardship campaign** for the early autumn this year. It has been over four years since the last time we brought a focus upon financial health of the parish. Our ministry is strong, with many opportunities to serve and contribute in faith. Over the summer I will be working with a small team to present a message that celebrates all we share together but also brings a focus on how we can strengthen our support.

If you are reading this before Monday 27th April, then the gathering for the **Annual Parochial Church Meeting** is an invitation for you to come along and give thanks for all which we share. The meeting is at St Bartholomew's Church at 7:00pm, where there will also be some time share a little hospitality.

May God's blessing be upon you all.

Rector Chris

OUR PARISH VISION

Each three years Haslemere Parish refreshes its vision and ministry, to keep ourselves attentive and agile to towards our parishioners. You may be surprised to know just how many ministries we are engaged with. The grid below tells a very fulsome story. There is like to be yet more still!

A Summary of Our Ministries, Teams and Opportunities

<i>Weekly 8am and 10am Services</i>	<i>Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals</i>	<i>Civic Services</i>
<i>Praying on Sunday</i>	<i>First Communion and Confirmation</i>	<i>Town Ministry</i>
<i>Choral Evensong</i>	<i>All Souls Memorial</i>	<i>Key National Dates</i>
<i>Sunday Morning Families</i>	<i>Remembrance Sunday</i>	<i>Autumn Fundraisers</i>
<i>Bell Ringing</i>	<i>Good Friday Witness</i>	<i>Town Christmas Windows</i>
<i>Choir</i>	<i>Hearing Clinic</i>	<i>Festivals - Christmas, Easter</i>
<i>Junior Choir</i>	<i>Pop-In Coffee Morning</i>	<i>Mothering Sunday</i>
<i>Sides persons</i>	<i>Pastoral Team Visiting</i>	<i>Passover Supper</i>
<i>Flower Arrangers</i>	<i>Bereavement</i>	<i>Harvest Festival</i>
<i>Servers</i>	<i>Nursing Home Services</i>	<i>Town Christmas Fare</i>
<i>Church Care Group</i>	<i>Parish Magazine</i>	<i>External Concerts (HHH, etc.)</i>
<i>First Steps Pre-School</i>	<i>Children's Specials</i>	<i>House Groups</i>
<i>School Services and Assemblies</i>	<i>Den Youth</i>	<i>Courses</i>
<i>School Governance</i>	<i>Summit Youth</i>	<i>Carpenters Breakfast</i>
<i>School Link Worker</i>	<i>Sleepout Challenge</i>	<i>Green Team</i>
		<i>Mother's Union</i>
		<i>Solo's Lunch Group</i>
		<i>Friends of the Parish</i>

Programmes and Projects for the Future

These are the priorities that the parish will be focusing on from 2026-2029. This by no means the only things we shall be doing, but we hope to make good progress in these areas:



CHURCHWARDEN REPORT

I am almost at the end of my four-year term as a Churchwarden, and as I prepare to pass on the baton to Robert Fox, it is a great pleasure to be able to reflect on another year of development in our churches, and to thank my fellow Churchwardens, Howard and David, as well as the very many people who support our Rector Chris, and Rev. Justin in maintaining and developing the work of our Parish.

Having just attended the joyful Passover Supper at St. Christopher's and then the two Easter Day services at St. Bart's, it was truly heartening to hear the words of one visitor to our Parish at the end of the 09.30 service, who spoke to me and wanted to express her thanks for the joyous and uplifting nature of that service.

That joyous sense comes in no small measure from the presence of a growing number of youngsters, both in the junior choir and in the numerous activities such as the Den and Summit, for which we owe a debt of gratitude to the team of volunteers, and particularly to the devoted and capable leadership of Verity, Victoria, and Karen

The past year has been another one of progress and growth in the Parish, with an increasing congregation, some huge attendances at Christmas and Easter services, and it is pleasing to note how well the support team at St. Bart's has coped with the inevitable disruption caused by the need provide space for the choir and to serve refreshments in church, while work on The Link has continued.

As this £2m+ project nears its conclusion and we prepare to establish a major new facility both for church use and for the benefit of the wider community, it is a timely moment for the Churchwardens to express their gratitude to the Link team of Andrew, Cathy and Debbie for their tireless devotion and commitment to this exciting project.

Focusing our resources on The Link has inevitably meant delays to some outstanding, but relatively minor, remedial work to our churches, as was outlined in the quinquennial review of our buildings, but will be now dealt with, thanks in large part to the diligence and efforts of Richard Reincke and the practical support of individuals, including Robert Fox and David Simmons.

In our role of supporting Chris and Justin, one challenge we were set was to have at least one Churchwarden in attendance at every regular 08.00 and 10.00 service. After carefully managing our rota for the past couple of years, I am pleased to say that we have successfully met that challenge, ably supported by the team at St. Christopher's and by the newly extended and enthusiastic Sidesman team at St. Bart's.

Supporting all of us, from the clergy to all those involved with everything from flowers to cleaning, catering, the PCC and the churchyards, are our loyal Verger, Carol Skeates, and our outstanding administrator, Kari Hayden. Kari not only ensures the smooth running of our Parish but is also a key member of the team producing our splendid Parish magazine and will soon have an important new management role to play as The Link Community Hub begins to fulfil its intended purpose and becomes home to numerous local charitable organisations.

Gareth David, Howard Body and David Simmons, Churchwardens

PCC OFFICERS AND SUB-COMMITTEES:

PCC Secretary

The PCC has met six times in the past year. Significant time this year has continued to be given to the ongoing work on the Link Community Hub Project, which remains a central element of our mission to strengthen community outreach and provide an accessible, multi-use space for the Parish and local groups. 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 have two members standing down this year. Andrew Culshaw concludes six years of service as Treasurer, and we are immensely grateful for the care, skill and dedication he has brought to this role, as well as for all he has contributed—and continues to contribute—to the Link Community Hub.

Also standing down is Gareth David, who reaches the end of his second term on the PCC and has made a significant contribution through his service as Churchwarden. We are deeply thankful for the time, expertise, and commitment he has given throughout his term.

Several members are standing for re-election this year, and we are thankful for their willingness to continue serving. The PCC remains grateful to all who serve, recognising the considerable time and commitment given in support of the Parish's work.

Katie Morgan, PCC Secretary

Electoral Roll

Every 6 years the electoral roll must be renewed where everyone is taken off the role and must re-apply to be on it. That happened last year and this year we have updated the existing roll.

In April 2025, the newly established electoral roll contained 158 names of which 30 were resident outside the parish.

The updated Electoral Roll for 2026, contains 160 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 (who have now taken the upkeep of the churchyards in house) 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 items around St Bart's. To Robert Fox and David Simmons for keeping St Christopher's in excellent order throughout the year both outside and in and for being the invisible men of action all around the parish with incredible practical skills without whom the parish would be a poorer, unkempt place. To David for his work at St Bart's where he has helped considerably with maintenance items – mainly rainwater goods. To Howard and Gareth for general support and helping out with chasing up some of the craftsmen who provide skilled work in the parish. To Dominic for his continuing advice and support despite no longer being a member of FABCOM, and to all those around the parish who 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 the beating heart of the parish.

Progress on works.

I will make the usual futile attempt at making the FABCOM report as short as possible – good luck with that one I hear you cry. I will (try to) 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 and due to be open in a matter of weeks) 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. However, the work has been quoted and I have been instructed now to obtain alternative quotes from stonemasons recommended by the architect, John Bailey.

The work required on the north and south porches has now been done by Roland Locke. So, the structures of north and south porches are now sound.

Secondly after discussions with Russell Wishart about the requirements of the quinquennial certain of the small windows in the tower have been repaired and the triangular window above the outer vestry has also had its putty replaced and looks in a lot better shape.

These minor works were completed as they were small items in terms of cost.

Routine Maintenance and repairs.

Items needing attention 28. 14 not yet done. These are almost entirely minor issues with rainwater goods and the brick channel. Window maintenance has been carried out by Russell Wishart. Other issues being the clearance of debris such as the bottom of the stairs to the entrance to the boiler house, the roof gulleys.

St Christopher's.

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. This work was on hold during the completion of the Link Project. A quote has now been received from John Rye, a stonemason recommended by the architect John Bailey and a further quoted is awaited from Ashley Chamberlain who is also quoting for this work.

There is one serious issue with the west window where the lead frames are failing, and the glass will eventually fall out. The three panels will have to be removed for any work required. This work is not something that Russell Wishart can do.

There is also the issue of secondary glazing required in the upper room. A combination of Russell Wishart and a carpenter called Darren who can build a frame on which to fit the glazing will be used to solve this issue. Darren still to quote.

Routine Maintenance and Repairs

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

The flagpole has now been painted but the lead is leaking around the pole and DPM Leadwork has been requested to attend.

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. There are now several potholes needing repair. Some of these were actually repaired although we are not sure by whom.

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

The churchyards are generally in good order. Although, at the time of writing, the grass is still waiting to be cut by the maintenance contractor, of which more later. The construction work on the Link Community Hub has had minimal impact on the churchyard, but the lack of facilities during the work has been felt by The Den, whose horticultural efforts along the Derby Road verge and in the main churchyard have been much appreciated.

Four volunteer working parties were held in 2025 with work spread across both the main churchyard and that in Derby Road. The latter has improved considerably following concerted efforts and it is hoped that this momentum can be maintained. Keeping graves clear and accessible to family members or visitors is deemed essential. We have been fortunate that following all these working parties, the considerable piles of green waste have been removed by Waverley BC at no cost to ourselves.

Until October 2025, the regular grass cutting in season was carried out by Waverley's contractor, Krinkels Ltd. This contract has now been terminated and from 1 November 2025 the work has been brought in-house. A new direct labour force is being established by Waverley which brings it in line with Guildford Borough. Clearly there will be teething difficulties and this may be why the grass had still not been cut by 15 April. Equipment needs to be purchased, and local government procurement can be protracted as public money is at stake. Very good relations are enjoyed with Waverley's Greenspaces Contract Officer, and one can be confident that the grass cutting regime will be put back on track.

The main churchyard was entered, for the second time, into the South and South East in Bloom (SSEiB) competition. Following the somewhat unexpected Silver Gilt award in 2024, we capped this in 2025 with a Gold award. This is a great credit to the volunteers and to The Den children so ably led by Verity Sutherland. David Simmons and Peter Clarke accepted the award at a ceremony at RHS Wisley last autumn. As reported in my *Churchyard Jottings* column in the Parish Magazine for April/May 2026, we have taken the decision not to enter the competition in 2026. A number of factors led to this decision. The preparations for the opening of the Link Community Hub will be heavy on resources and concentration on the competition could draw away those resources. The involvement of The Den has been pivotal to our success, but the unavailability of The Link for them to use at a crucial time (March to June) limits what they might be able to achieve. The continued presence of the construction teams also makes it difficult to consider any refreshment of the churchyard. Judging of entries also takes place around mid-June, just at the time that activity around the Hub will reach its peak.

The completion of the building works does potentially pave the way for enhancements in the churchyard and thought is already being given as to how the area around the new building can be set out. Possibilities include new seating for visitors, careful new planting and possibly attention to the grassed area on the side of the building next to the vestry path. All of this might well add up to a further entry to SSEiB in 2027 or, perhaps more realistically, in 2028.

There continues to be a steady stream of enquiries from family members and researchers anxious to locate graves and for further information about them. 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.

Towards the end of last year, the pergola in Derby Road churchyard had been looking somewhat worse for wear, with damaged or missing timbers. With financial approval, a set of ten, heavy duty 10cm (4 inch) diameter poles were ordered and delivered from AVS Fencing in Milford. The objective was to have the repairs completed before Advent Sunday so that Karen Bardens would be able to erect an Advent/Christmas display. The constant rain kept this deadline in jeopardy but one welcome sunny day, at the right time, enabled David Simmons to make a splendid job of completely refurbishing the pergola. This was then host to a wonderful Advent/Christmas display produced by children from St Bartholomew's School, making use of the full length of the pergola. This was greatly appreciated by

parishioners and visitors alike. Following on from this success, Karen masterminded with the school a further display for Easter 2026 and no doubt others will follow throughout the Church's year.

I am most grateful to all the volunteers who attend our working parties and brave sometimes less than perfect weather. I continue to thank Linda Stevens for keeping such a regular eye on the various floral tributes left on the interment ground and ensuring that it looks its best. I am most grateful for the assistance provided by David Simmons and Peter Clarke as a result of their knowledge and expertise.

Philip Hunt

The Link Community Hub

With completion of the Link just six weeks away at the time of writing it is hard to imagine that at the beginning of 2025 we were still in the process of selecting a builder and that a year ago work had yet to start!

The initial phase of stripping out was a journey of discovery revealing a number of uncoded issues – failed damp proofing, internal cracks to the walls and rotten roof timbers being just some.

The building we see today was built in four phases from 1860 to 1896 so getting measurements exactly right for the complex roof structure has been a particular challenge!

Whilst the builders have been getting on with construction we have been focused on decorative schemes, kitchen design, choosing furniture as well as securing additional funding to cover the increased costs.

We are particularly grateful to Haslemere Town Council for providing an additional £100,000 giving £200,000 in total as well as a number of charities for smaller grants.

An Operational Management Group has been created to oversee the running of the Link and to support Kari our Administrator, rental prices have been agreed, policies written and opening events designed.

Our thanks to all have supported and encouraged us throughout the year, for your generosity, for those who have arranged events (I hope we will be forgiven a special mention for the Flower Festival) and your prayers.

We are looking forward to welcoming you to the Link not just for regular church events but also for your special family celebrations.

Andrew Culshaw, Debbie Peet and Cathy Moore

Finance Report

The most significant feature of the 2025 accounts is that as a result of the **Link project**, PCC income and expenditure has exceeded the £1M threshold for an audit of our accounts being required. As this is a “one-off” year we have sought an exemption from the Charity Commission for an audit of our accounts and for us to have an Independent Examination as usual. We are awaiting their decision.

In the meantime, we have produced accounts in the format required by the Charities Act.

Key points:

- The **Link Community Hub** project is the most significant feature of the accounts with income of £1.486M and expenditure of £1.294M in the year.
- It is our long-established policy that Day to Day income should cover Day to Day expenditure with a reasonable surplus. **In 2025 we recorded a shortfall of £12,112** largely as a combination of the inflation which affects us all and a continued fall in regular giving through the loss of established givers.
- We were fortunate to be able to draw on some of the **Church Cottage rental income to cover this shortfall**, instead of our usual practice of allocating it in full to the Building Fund for future major repairs and improvements.
- We are grateful to all who have contributed through regular giving and donations throughout the year.

Children’s and Youth Work

- We are extremely fortunate that the **Religious Education Fund** supports this work in full, providing a grant of £54,976 in the year.

Other Expenditure

- This has been limited in the year whilst we focus on the Link. £3,394 was spent on clearance works in the Derby Road Churchyard.

I am grateful to **Geoff Martin** who has kept watch over Gift Aid donations since 2017 and to **Kari Hayden** for her support with the administration of fees and rentals.

Andrew Culshaw

St. Christopher’s Committee

Flower festival

A very successful flower festival was held in St Christopher’s in June 2025. The flower displays were of exceptional quality. It was very well attended and especially good to welcome many into the church who had not visited before. The festival raised over £8,000 for the Link/Hub project.

VE/VJ Day poppies

The two large poppy wreaths hung on the tower as part of the VE/VJ Day celebrations were widely admired. The exercise involved input from local schools, scouts and sea rangers. A large wooden cross was also raised in the garden for individuals to fix poppies on.

The Peasant Art altar frontal

In early 2025, the Peasant Art altar frontal was found languishing in a cupboard during some routine repair work to the altar frontals generally. It was much in need of repair and restoration. As the frontal was of considerable historic importance, The Friends of Haslemere Parish agreed to fund the £7,000 cost of the restoration by a highly skilled professional embroiderer. The work was completed in February 2026, and the frontal was rededicated at the Palm Sunday service. The service was attended by the embroider, Sonia Lee, and Richard Hunter, representing the Hunter Family. Edmund and Dotothea Hunter had designed, woven and donated the frontal in 1903 for the then new St Christopher's Church.

Youth activities

The church continues to host First Steps, the babies and toddlers' group, and The Den and The Summit groups for older children.

New shed

It is hoped to be able to build a small wooden shed at the back of the church mainly for housing youth activity equipment. This will be subject to a successful application for planning permission from Waverley Borough Council and then a Diocesan Faculty.

Lighting

At the request of HHH, who use the building very regularly for their concerts, brighter lighting has been installed in the chancel area. At the same time, opportunity was taken to instal a new light switch panel and to change all the light bulbs in the Nave area to a consistent warm white.

Kitchen

A new oven with an induction hob has been installed in the kitchen replacing the old one which had failed.

Chris Lemar, Secretary to the St Christopher's Committee

Safeguarding

At the beginning of this year, we had a visit from a Safeguarding Caseworker from the Diocese. Dean Else came to conduct a Parish Safeguarding Health Check. The aim of this was to go over what we are doing in the parish with regards to safeguarding and, if there is anything we could improve on. I am happy to report that we scored very highly with only a few minor suggestions on where we might enhance what we already do.

I am still working with the Dashboard system which holds everyone's training and DBS records all in one place sends me updates and reminders of when people's DBS checks and training is coming up for renewal. This works on a percentage score, and our score is consistently at 100% or just under.

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. We have run several in person training sessions and hope to be able to offer these again when enough people need to do the training.

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. Recently the PCC have been asked to look over our Risk Assessments (this was suggested during our Safeguarding Health Check) which has added a fresh perspective.

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

The two pastoral care teams of the parish continue with their ministry of love, care, patience and sacrifice month by month, largely unseen by the majority in our community, but hugely valued by the recipients of their care. At our annual pastoral care meeting in January, it was decided to amalgamate the two teams and their care lists, which will streamline the rotas, avoid duplication and hopefully make life easier.

There has been little change to the personnel involved apart from the very welcome addition of Stella Mills. The combined new rotas are currently being put together, and a draft format will be sent to the team for their perusal shortly.

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 who has retired from the team after years of service and Shirley and Michael Bawtree, who do a lot of the heavy lifting. A huge thank you to Chris who has stepped into Peter's shoes to lead the monthly services at Redcot.

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 also extremely visible with the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Haslemere Cricket & Bowls Clubs and the whole community through activities such as the Christmas Windows Competition, the Christmas market stall and the community Lenten prayers initiative.

This ministry is all about taking the church to the centre of the community and has led to many Christ-like conversations of compassion with people who would not think of finding help in a church but are very grateful of a ministry that meets them, where they are. This ministry 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

The Pop In Coffee Morning started in April 2022 continues to take place every second and fourth Thursday of the month. In the last couple of years the Hearing Aid Clinic, run by Sophie and her team of Hearing Aid Champions have run alongside us which has been a very successful partnership. Our clients may come for a coffee and chat with friends and there are several regulars but frequently it might be coffee and homemade cake whilst waiting for a hearing aid to be serviced. They may well come again just for coffee and cake, a catch up with friends or just for some company.

There is also a 2nd hand book stall which raises donations for Care the palliative care team in Midhurst. We have sent them £583 over the years.

This year the team have had to adapt to holding the morning in St Bartholomew's church without the facilities of the kitchen. There was a concern that people would be put off coming into church, but these worries were unfounded and made the church much more familiar to many. Soon we look forward to adapting again to new surroundings in the Link Community Hub but importantly we will continue with our partnership with the Hearing Aid Clinic.

Our team is quite informal, and we are always looking forward to hearing from would be volunteers who can welcome, make and serve coffee. Anyone who enjoys baking is very welcome. We try to have two different homemade cakes each session so if you enjoy baking, we would love to hear from you. It is never a large commitment and the more volunteers the less of a commitment it becomes.

There is always a weekly reminder of the next coffee morning date. If you have not been before, please try us out. We would love to see you.

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 have had to make long journeys to the three big NHS hospitals for maintenance services. Our Pop-In Hearing Clinic is to support individuals with NHS-issued hearing aids. The clinic provides essential maintenance services, including hearing aid cleaning, basic troubleshooting, and the provision of replacement batteries.

For nearly 4 years now we have been running a free NHS service in partnership with the Diocese - every 2nd & 4th Thursday we hold Hearing Aid maintenance clinics. The clinic has moved from the Link into St Bartholomew's church while work is being carried out and the team have adapted brilliantly.

Alongside the Hearing Clinic service, there is the social drop-in Coffee Morning where attendees can enjoy free refreshments and engage in informal conversation. This dual approach promotes both hearing health and social wellbeing. Sarah Mulliner and her wonderful team are there supporting us and welcoming our clients and are on hand to help in anyway needed. A big thank you to the wonderful pop-in coffee volunteers, whose warm welcome, refreshments, and friendly conversations play a vital role in creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all attendees. Being in the church this last year together, has brought us closer in working and supporting each other and the people who attend.

In addition to the pop-in clinic, our service extends its support to local care home settings, including Oak Hall, Redcot, and Holy Cross nursing homes. Regular visits are carried out to assist residents with hearing aid maintenance and support.

Furthermore, around 20 home visits have been conducted for housebound patients, ensuring that individuals who are unable to attend the clinic still receive essential hearing care.

The Haslemere Hearing Champions Team are Sophie Bessant (lead champion) -this is my 11th Year of being a Hearing Champion. Sue Foster and Victoria Vaughan who have been champions for 3 years, as well as a new Hearing Champion who has joined our team this year- Alistair Manning. They have all been brilliant with their regularly commitment. We are a good strong team together along with our lovely Jenny Simmonds who is amazing welcomer and keeps everyone happy and makes them feel welcomed. She has been with us nearly 2 years and has been a real asset to the hearing team.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the Hearing Team—Victoria, Sue, Alistair and Jenny, for their professionalism, dedication, and ongoing support in delivering this service.

This last year the Team have seen over **400 +++** people either at the pop in clinics

20 Home Visits, **3-4** visits to each of the **3** Nursing Home.

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

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)

Children and Families

Sunday Morning Families

SMF under a gazebo in the churchyard at St. Bartholomew's between May and September, no session August. The Breakfast Room at the school has been made available to us until conclusion of the Link project and was utilised in Nov /Dec 25 and Jan/ Feb/March 26.

Numbers fluctuated throughout these sessions but averaged 10 children monthly.

The Lectionary was followed at each session and supported by age-appropriate Bible teaching, props, crafts, handouts/colouring pictures to take away.

May saw the children making watercolour paper flower bunting/table decorations which decorated the marquee/tables at the Flower Festival at St. Christophers in June.

June bought earthquake sound effects as Paul and Silas were broken out of prison.

July discussed packing suitcases as Jesus sent out the 72.

September counted the cost of discipleship.

October (20 children) – We remained in church for a Harvest Family Service where pumpkins were crafted to hold 'thankful for all we have' prayers.

November talked about God's upside-down Kingdom and the last being first- not what we expect!

December was devoted to 'The Grumpy Owl and The Joy of Christmas a delightful book recommended by the Diocese wherein Mary and Joseph pick the wrong barn for the birth but how in the end the resident Owl changes his tune!

January bought Epiphany and the journey of The Magi.

February glowed with candles and we baptised dolls with an explanation of Jesus presentation in the Temple.

March gave us 'The Bread of Life' complimented by heart shaped jam sandwiches.

April – Easter Sunday We remained in church and children decorated blown eggs with fabric flowers and placed in baskets to be given those suffering bereavement in the community.

SMF Seasonal Specials

'Summer Sizzler BBQ' 21st June - St. Bartholomew's School Field 54 plus children and accompanying adults. Traditional fete games/stalls/craft stations/Face Painting/Ice Cream decorating station/toddler play area all under gazebos and live entertainment from children

made for a very successful day. Children won prizes throughout the day and left with a gift at the end all of which had been kindly donated.

The BBQ throughout was generously provided by Katie and Alistair Morgan and kind volunteers went the extra mile to ensure the day was enjoyed by all.

Our tombola raised £81 for 'Place to be Youth' charity and 'Raise the Roof' sponsoring Link roof tiles raised over £200.

Light in the Dark Party - 31st October - St. Bartholomew's church 4-6.15pm – charged at £5 per ticket

26 children (maximum sign up 30) joined us for a hugely successful evening with spectacular lighting (provided by Tim Purdue) Christian music, UV photo fun and an interactive science show with light related experiments as the main event.

Brightly coloured frothing eruptions, rainbow spiral effects with sweets and gurgling lava lamps were created. Pinhole torches reflected light onto walls and Lego shadow play produced colour spectrums. Spirits were high before the ensuing excitement of making glow in the dark slime! Snack time over, everybody partied to a final song with flashing glow batons before departing for home with goody bags containing Christian messages/sweets and lanterns to light the way!

Christingle making Monday December 22nd at St. Bartholomew's church

We had a good turnout for the Christingle making at the church and made over 230 in total ready for the Nativity services. Tesco kindly donated the jelly tots. Many thanks go to all those who kindly volunteered and made the afternoon so enjoyable and the congregation who generously donated chocolate coins for the children's bags at the Nativity Services.

Mothering Sunday- March

On Mothering Sunday, children collaborated to produce little 'bags of love' to be handed out to all mother figures along with the flowers at the church.

Good Friday 3rd April 10.30am -12 noon- St.Bartholomew's Church

Over 50 children and their families joined us for a special Easter session filled with creativity, discovery, and joy. Together, we took an interactive, craft-based Journey along the Way of the Cross, exploring the Easter story in a hands-on and engaging way. 15 stations from The Last Supper to the final visit to the life-size tomb plus engaging screen presentations and a talk from Rev Chris formed the basis of the morning. Children added crafted/related items to a bag provided with a checklist as they progressed through the stations including mini Easter Gardens. All ages were warmly welcomed with a dedicated pre-school craft area. Drinks and Hot X buns were popular and of course, no Easter celebration would be complete without some well-deserved Easter eggs!

I am currently planning for the Baptism Reunion Service at St. Christophers at the end of April.

School Role

I continue to go into school on alternate Wednesdays during Term Time to support RE generally where I am officially timetabled and give 6 hrs of my allocated 18hrs weekly to school involvement.

I attended: Guildford Cathedral ECO Day with Year 2

: Yr 6 Leavers Service at Guildford Cathedral

: Library Visit with Reception

I continue to meet with the school and worship teams regarding my ongoing role within school and attend school/church services time permitting.

I will be attending year 4 residential to Chichester (Christian Youth Enterprise Centre) from Monday 18th- Wednesday 20th May.

This year Rev Chris and I will be running a stall at the School Summer Fair at the end of June.

Several projects planned have been or are nearing completion:

New Reception Starter Bibles 50 children and parents- supported by church volunteers

Reception classes presented with Storybook Bibles in early December.

Informal affair in the church. Absolute joy to see the church full of inquisitive children not having to sit on their bottoms, ticking church items off their scavenger lists to jolly music and parents and school staff all joining in. The whole event was extremely well received and feedback was exceptional. I have had children tell me since that parents have read some of the book to them and it's very good, I couldn't agree more!!!! I very much hope that given the feedback from everybody involved that this will be an annual event.

Spiritual Garden

The REF pledged £2500 to a £5000 project subject to raising funds for the remaining £2500. I am delighted to say that I personally have managed to fundraise to meet that sum and materials have now been ordered. The Link Builders have generously offered to provide the labour for the groundwork for fencing etc at no cost and work will begin in the next few weeks. This is a very exciting time for us all and the garden will be fully completed over the coming months once the builders are finished.

Altar Cloth – School Hall

Funded from my C&F budget - Completed in March – Thanks go to Celia and Sue for their help.

School Library

The new list of Christian books both reference and storybooks across the range of ages to refresh the outdated library section is completed and will be presented to the REF for funding in May.

Installations Derby Rd Cemetery

Collaborations between the school and I have produced displays of artwork/planted pots as appropriate to tell the relevant stories on the pergola in celebration of:

Pentecost/Harvest/Christmas and Easter

The displays have been well received by all at church/school and commented on by the public.

Display Boards in St. Bartholomew's Church

A recent addition is the display board which so far has displayed school artwork/photographs:

The Miracles of Jesus

Easter artwork/Photographs

The boards will be regularly refreshed.

As always, I am extremely grateful for all the support generally but particularly from the volunteers without whom none of these events for the children would be possible.

I continue to pray for guidance in my role with the school and thank our churches for their ongoing prayers and support

God Bless,

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 14 members of the team – I am so grateful for their dedication and the wonderful welcome that they bring to every session for the families. We are always looking for new volunteers to join our team!

In July 25 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 will soon be opened.

On Monday the 15th 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 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!

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, all of whom come from a variety of schools in the local area. 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.

The Den has a small but dedicated core team of volunteers and a few of the parents have stepped forward to help out as Lara Butler has had to step back from her role as assistant leader. We are still looking to fill this role.

Yasmin continues to be a much-valued young leader at The Den and has been joined by other members of Summit. Tilly and Florence joined us in Spring/Summer 2025 for 3 months, and Lucy and Anna are currently in our young leaders' team. Volunteering at The Den is part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Members of the wider church congregation and community have also come forward to help and support sessions relevant to their interests, skills or experience. Thanks to these amazing people, 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.

As always, each term consists of a mix of church sessions, outings, fundraisers, and mission projects to help the children learn, grow and live out their faith and make a difference in the local community and environment, whilst also bonding together as a group.

Spiritual Topics – Spiritual teaching is at the core of what we do. Some of the topics the group have covered this past year include being a Peacemaker (Matthew 5:9) & Abigail from the Bible, the Parable of the Rich Fool & the Real Treasures (Fruits of the Spirit), Jesus as the Light of the World & being a Light for Jesus, Parable of the Sower, The Parable of the Mustard Seed, Jesus's Miracles, 'Is Seeing Believing?' & Doubting Thomas, How Faith works? Truth & Lies, Ephesians 4:15 and how 'the truth will set you free'. The Holy Spirit as our support & guide and 'making our paths straight', Forgiveness, creative nature inspired prayer, how Jesus cares for our whole being (mentally, emotionally, spiritually & physically etc) & the body as a temple for the Holy Spirit, caring for our mind, body & spirit and how God can be our 'tap' when our inner stress buckets are overflowing. Elijah's mental struggles and how God helped and guided him. What it means to famous/popular and if it's always good, and who to follow (Jesus). We also focus in on Harvest, All Hallows Eve & Day, Christmas & the Nativity, Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday & Lent & 'Green Monday' (having an 'inner spring clean'), Palm Sunday & Easter.

Community Work - Helping people in the local community continues to be important part of The Den. For example, after three years of success, the group teamed up with Tesco's for their fourth Food Bank Challenge at Harvest time and broke their record with 4 full trolleys of food donated for the food bank.

The Den returned to Tesco's at the beginning of this year to give out their handmade gifts as part of their annual Random Acts of Kindness session, which focuses on sharing God's love and light to members of the public (beaded holding crosses, hand-made stress balls & heart chocolates and decorated 'pocket hug' gifts, each with a label and bible verse on about God's love for them).

In February, The Den & Summit teamed up to do a cake bake sale (& lemonade stand & raffle) after the Sunday Service to raise funds for Brain Tumour Research. They raised an

incredible £305.75. Professional baker, Charlotte Hammond from the Crumby Bakery, kindly came to help the Den children make gingerbread and decorate cupcakes ready for the sale the Wednesday before. During last summer The Den also got creative and decouped & planted some flowerpots for the Link fundraiser at the Flower Festival.

As part of their community work, The Den have also helped at Cats Protection, and at Christmas, dressed up in nativity outfits and sung carols for the residents of Kiln Avenue Estate, whilst handing out gingerbread and service leaflets. We also asked Imbhams Farm & Surrey Hills & Rivers if they needed any assistance, and they got them. busy feeding sheep, watering plants and sweeping out tents for the residentials they run for vulnerable & refugee children in the summer.

The Den also continues to focus on safeguarding and nurturing God's creation, as it is the Fifth Mark of Mission. Each year they continue their efforts with the Derby Road Verge Garden and Churchyard Wild Area at St Bartholomew's Church. Their efforts to create a safe habitat for insects and pollinators, to support biodiversity and the natural ecosystem, helped St Bartholomew's Churchyard receive a Gold Award at the last South & Southeast in Bloom Competition. A group of Den children got to meet with the judge in June and showed him their wild gardens and used printed photo montages to demonstrate how the project has progressed since the first seed laying in October 2022, and the work they had done each year since. Special thanks to Peter Clarke, Philip Hunt and David Simmons for their hard work & support. At our most recent session, the Den will be doing some 'nature bathing' to feel closer to God through nature and are making seed balls for birds and wildflower seed bombs to further support the wildlife and environment on Earth Day.

Community Engagement - The Den kids continue to get involved in the local community and enjoyed creating another Christmas window display for the Christmas Windows Competition. They teamed up with R Miles Hardware Shop to create some Christmas cheer whilst also reminding people of the real gifts at Christmas. Thanks to Den dad, Dean and our helpers, they were able to have a go at some woodwork at Imbhams Farm, and together they made and painted a sleigh for the display. The children also decorated pretend presents with words such as 'Jesus', 'love', 'faith', 'hope', 'kindness', 'generosity', 'joy' etc – the real gifts at Christmas.

In October, we had a police officer visit from PCSO John Savage who came to talk to the children about his community police work and keeping safe. He brought along his special equipment and did a Q&A before letting the children explore his police vehicle and show them how the speed trap worked on passing cars (much to their amusement).

We have also strengthened existing relationships with businesses and organisations, such as The Rocksteady Music School, Surrey Hills & Rivers, Frensham Sailing Club, Imbhams Farm, ASK Italian, Tesco's and the Hunter Centre. It was wonderful to see some of The Den and Summit perform at their carol service at Christmas.

Engaging & Fun Activities – As well as learning and helping, much fun has been had over the past year. Activities usually link in with the discussion topics and have included Peace Flag printing, bible story re-enactments, positive pumpkin decorating (light session), tie dye 'be the light' t-shirts, face painting, slim making, prayer sparklers, balloon volleyball, laser quest, s'more making, celebrity catwalk dress up & Palm Sunday recreation, magic tricks ('is seeing believing?'), baking, an easter egg hunt, kite flying (Holy Spirit), pancake fling, relay races, apple bobbing, water games, bible themed escape room challenges, woodwork, prayer calm jar making, scavenger hunts, blind 'nightline' obstacle course (Holy Spirit). Muddy Church

Prayers stations such as 'arrow prayer' archery, prayer labyrinths, Lord's prayer lavender bag making, prayer beads, mustard seed jar with prayers and a prayer tree, and 'the real treasures' night light making, to name just some.

Outings – We have had some fun social outings and activities this past year including Ninja Warrior UK, taster sailing at Frensham ponds, a Judo session with Fiona Chan, summer pool party (thanks to the Grattons) and a number of trips to Imbhams Farm.

Summit

My old youth group for 12-15/16-year-olds has grown this past year and we have up to 14 Summit members, even though not all can always attend every session. They have become a well bonded group, who support and encourage one another.

Scheduling - There have been some changes to the scheduling since September last year as we added in an extra Summit session every month due to demand. We now have the normal Summit session on the third Wednesday of the month (5:45-7pm, unless specified) and a 'Summit Late' (7-8:15pm) on the first Wednesday of the month straight after The Den. The normal Summit session is more focused on community projects and any other fun outings or activities, and the Summit Lates are focused on spiritual discussion (with food). We are utilising the Youth Alpha course material, which is made up of short engaging videos made for youth, by youth, covering some of life's big questions, which we watch (whilst eating) and then discuss afterwards in a relaxed fashion. So far, these changes are working but we will adapt if needed at any point.

Spiritual Teaching – The Summit has more in-depth spiritual discussion than The Den and we encourage a deeper exploration of faith. With our Summit Lates we are covering the Youth Alpha material, which so far has included topics such as - finding fulfilment and hope in life through faith, Who is Jesus? And 'What does Real Love Look like?'. We have also had a session on how we use humour as Christians and how God has a sense of humour. We spoke about Jesus's great wit, wordplay and skill in storytelling and hyperbole throughout the bible, which he used with care and purpose to teach, heal, convert and save. In our take-over service preparation sessions, they also explore all of elements of a church service and their spiritual significance.

During our Summit sessions, we try and combine each of our spiritual discussions with fun activities, crafts and games, whether it be playing 'laugh one laughing', doing quizzes, making and racing wind-up toys, gingerbread house creations, truffle making for the cake bake sale, party games, scavenger hunts, macrame, three king toilet roll races to name, just a few.

Serving within the Church & Diocese - Summit are truly such a great group of young people and we are very proud of them. Most of them regularly serve and engage in other areas of the wider church, which is wonderful to see. Polly, Lucy, Felix continue as young bellringers (I believe ringing in their first service on Easter Sunday), whilst Felix also joined the acolyte team in January this year alongside long-serving acolytes and Summit members, Maclaren, Maison, Phoebe, Yasmin & Tilly. As mentioned earlier, Tilly, Yasmin, Lucy & Anna have all been helping as young leaders at the Den, and Lucy is also in the Junior Choir. Summit also helps at Church events such as the recent Passover Supper. Maclaren, Maison, Polly, Lucy & James got stuck into making the charoset paste & preparing the seder plate ingredients and then prepared the tables for the evening event. During the evening, Polly, Lucy and James

(alongside Skylar from the Den) read out the questions. They also got involved in the church quiz night and Felix led the 'youth round', while a few of them got involved in Christingle making in December. Phoebe and Yasmin are on the intercession prayer rota and a number of Summit also read at the carol services, including Jessica (our 'Young Parish Poet') who wrote and read a poem at the St Bartholomew's Service (and another for Hunter Centre Carol Service).

Yasmin, Phoebe & Felix also got stuck into running the cake bake sale fundraiser at church (alongside Nate & Skylar from The Den) and did us proud at the Diocese Net Zero Conference in January when they shared on stage about their passion for caring for God's creation and the environmental projects they had been involved in. Felix also helped lead the worship at the same event, and since then, the Net Zero Team at the Church of England have requested further quotes and video from them to help inspire others.

Their faith and love for nature also inspired them when they created a stunning flower display for the Flower Festival organised by the Parish. Jessica from Summit wrote a poem called 'Spirit', which the Summit youth used as inspiration for their display. A special thank you to Cathy Moore for making this display possible and guiding them, and to Sarah Ingram for offering her support and skills as well.

Summit also served at the recent Youth Catalyst Worship Event run by the Diocese and hosted by St. Christophers Church & Summit. They welcomed 29 youths from 4 other churches and served up the food and drinks. It was an incredible night of worship, games, prayer and discussion. Jamie from the Youth Catalyst Team gave a powerful (and equally entertaining) talk. The response was overwhelmingly positive, which is very encouraging. A special thanks to Robert and Karen who helped on the evening.

The Summit group also undertook another great Youth Take-over Service on Advent Sunday. As always, the young people helped in all aspects of the service including welcoming, service leading, bible & advent readings, intercession prayers, acolyte duty, taking up the elements and collection. This time however, they acted out an amusing, but relevant, Christmas themed skit (written by Rev. Chris) in place of the sermon. It was well received by the congregation.

We are so blessed whenever the young people get involved in the wider church and Diocese. It is no small thing for these young people to willingly give up their time to serve, and it is very encouraging to see their ever-growing engagement.

Serving within the Community – Looking for where God is at work and joining in is still core to what we do with the Summit group. They have been very active this past year, living out their faith and helping the wider community and environment.

For example, Summit thoroughly enjoyed doing a litter pick from kayaks along the River Wey in Autumn. They have also spent an evening helping out at the Cancer Research Charity Shop in Haslemere. Most recently, they helped at the Community Fridge in Haslemere, collecting & putting out food donations and creating social media videos to educate the general public about what the Community Fridge does do and why (food waste). One of these videos was used by the Church of England for their Lent Campaign.

On December 5th, Summit had another successful Summit Sleepout to raise awareness and funds for those experiencing homelessness through the Church Urban Fund. An incredible £2208.75 was raised (including gift aid)! We are so grateful to all the support we received. As well as games and craft, the young people got to hear from Sophie from the Church

Urban Fund who came to thank them, as well as share the great work that the CUF do. Dorothea from Mothers Union also spoke to them about the organisation and how they support people facing adversity such as the homeless. Kirsty Jones who works with homeless people in the Mole Valley area shared some very powerful stories of people she has helped. During the evening, the young people also made Christmas cracker gifts for vulnerable people living in temporary accommodation and put together toiletry care packages for Guildford Action shelter for the homeless. CUF wrote an article about Summit's sleepout and brought a photographer along to capture the fundraiser, having heard so much about all they had achieved the year before during their first sleepout.

Outings – Summit have enjoyed some fun social trips this past year, which include an Escape Room in Guildford, kayaking on the River Wey (this particular trip was just for fun) and most recently they enjoyed a film together at Haslemere Hall.

Sponsorship – ASK Italian Haslemere kindly sponsored pizzas for our Summit Sleep Out in December and were keen to continue to help the group. They have become Summit's official pizza sponsor, providing pizzas for all of their Summit Late sessions. ASK were also kind enough to donate pizza for the Youth Catalyst Worship Event which Summit hosted, and they provided their lemonade for the lemonade stand at the cake bake sale. We have developed a great relationship with the new manager Naomi and have got them involved in the Community Fridge project. We continue to have a great relationship with Tesco's who donated drinks to the Youth Catalyst Event & welcome The Den into their Haslemere store for any of their community projects.

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 with Justin dressed as a scarecrow this year. Justin also did us proud during their Christmas visit and agreed to dress up as a donkey, and alongside Verity & Karen, with the help of some knitted nativity characters, we taught the children about the true meaning of Christmas and the Nativity story. Justin was back in a bunny costume for their Easter service as Verity's Jesus puppet taught 'Bouncy Bunny' the real meaning of Easter alongside Karen. A special thanks to Carol who helps at all the Weyhill Montessori Assemblies.

A massive thank you to all the leaders and volunteers who make these groups and activities possible.

Verity Sutherland, Older Children's Worker

PARISH ACTIVITIES AND GROUPS

Music and Choirs

It has been another vibrant year for choral music within the parish, enriched by the diverse contributions of our Robed, Junior, and Youth choirs, alongside occasional ensembles like the Winterbourne Singers, Sine nomine and Quarta Dominicae. A significant highlight was our recent Holy Week performance of Fauré's Requiem, which brought together a large choir for a truly moving occasion. These successes have been greatly supported by our multi-talented organ scholar, Scarlett Martin, and we are pleased to report that the Junior Choir continues to maintain strong numbers.

While we celebrate these achievements, we also reflect on the loss of two valued members of the robed choir. We were deeply saddened by the sudden passing of Christopher Schofield, a dedicated regular over the past few years, and we marked the retirement of Don Stacey. We offer our profound thanks to Don for an extraordinary eighty years of choir membership—a remarkable legacy of service.

Looking forward, the upcoming opening of The Link offers an exciting new chapter. With its dedicated choir room and a newly catalogued music library, it will provide a fantastic resource to support the continued growth of our parish's multifaceted choral tradition.

Clive Osgood, Director of Music

Haslemere Link Magazine

We are pleased to report another good year, our circulation has increased, advertising is stable and growing, and our costs have gone down. This has enabled us to make a positive financial contribution to parish funds, estimated at around £1400 at the end of 2025.

We have significantly increased the number of town outlets where people can obtain a copy of our magazine and hand deliver them around town.

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.

New challenges face the magazine team as the software application we have historically used (MS Publisher) is being withdrawn. This is likely to mean a change in the format, look and feel of the magazine. I am sure it will be exciting!

It is also necessary for us to change our web publishing application, which will mean new ways of accessing the magazine on-line. Kari and Chris have achieved this changeover and will be finding ways to analyse our on-line readership.

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.

This is my last report to the APCM as I have stepped down from the magazine team. Fortunately, Kari has all the necessary skills to continue with the magazine publishing and is supported by Debbie, Frances, Geoff and Sue, all who have been on the team for some time now.

However, it is essential that we find someone who can support Kari on the administrative and technical side of the magazine, as she has a great many other duties and if for any reason, (e.g. a well-deserved holiday), she is away, there is currently no-one else who could produce the magazine.

Content

The Link magazine endeavours to be an interesting and informative parish magazine.

From regular contributors we learn about youth activities, school activities, gardening, recipes, wildlife, churchyard maintenance, what's on in Haslemere and surrounding areas, book reviews, paintings, pilgrimages, and fascinating places to visit.

We aim to have one or two feature articles in every edition and would welcome more contributions from our readers on topics of specific interest.

Advertising & Costs

Our priority always remains outreach to the community. We are also pleased to accept advertising for local businesses.

Our budget for 2026 shows an anticipated income of £2,600, estimated costs of £1,227, making a net contribution of £1,373.

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

The church care group, previously under the leadership of Roscelin Rees, continues to keep our church of St Bartholomew looking clean and well cared for. The teams efforts are greatly appreciated by everyone who comes to visit or worship.

We have recruited 2 new members to the team to replace those who have left due to age, infirmity or location. Our numbers are currently at about 16 but more members are always very welcome. The ability to come and perform their tasks at a time of day of their choosing also helps.

The jobs include the furnishings woodwork, silver, brass, linens and candles. Each taken by a member of our gallant band. I can be contacted on 01428 652646 if you would like to join.

Our annual coffee morning will be arranged shortly.

Roscelin Rees

St Bartholomew's Bell Ringers

This year' report is very much a follow on to last year's. With some minor ailments affecting some of the band, we have been even more grateful for our learners who are all progressing well including our adult learner, Steve. His attendance is exemplary and he takes his learning opportunities working round the youngsters. They of course continue to progress well, and all have elected to test their skill against the Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze award with one success already. It has also meant that they have reached the standard to ring on Sundays and those who could joined us on Easter Day meaning we had almost all ten bells ringing, a marvellous sound rang well – all credit to them.

We continue to try and ring nationally recorded quarter peals before the 2nd Sunday Evensong. This has meant close liaison and flexibility by ringers and choir who are still without their rehearsal space. As time goes on the attempts are more challenging and so the greater chance of failure, but lessons are learnt. We also attempt some on Saturday mornings on higher numbers of bells and invite some help but always to benefit the local ringers.

Following from all of this I am pleased to report that we rang for all services except a couple of Evensongs, and all weddings. This ringing has also been flexible to allow the choir five or more minutes warm-up time. Most of the time it works and hopefully we will be back to normal in June when the Link re-opens.

We are organising another outing this year with the youngsters in mind and aiming at the Alton area. We're delighted that some of their parents are joining us again and helping to organise it.

Following last year's District striking competition when we came second, we were asked to represent the District at the Guild competition in Epsom Common. The standard as expected was high and without one of our star strikers (sorry!) we came 5th out of eight but were told that our second half was perfect. Another lesson.

For the dinner this year we tried The Mulberry in Chiddingfold and all 21 enjoyed the evening. As I commented that evening, we must never take any success in recruitment for granted. As I watched the Enthronement of the Archbishop of Canterbury, I remembered turning down requests to ring at the cathedral when they were short, partly because of the half-hour climb to the belfry!

This year will always be remembered in the Diocese for Bishop Andrew's sudden death. As bellringers we always have a duty to reflect the mood and we were honoured to be able to take part in the diocesan ringing tribute to him as requested by the Dean of Guildford by ringing half-muffled both on the Sunday following and, by coincidence at a District practice which was being held at St Bartholomew's on Friday. As requested also by the Dean we did not ring half-muffled for the funeral but of course they did at the cathedral.

Another event that was significant for the bellringers was the retirement this year of both Sue Ware, Tower Secretary and Sue Morgan, Tower Treasurer. We owe them enormous thanks for many years of efficient handling of the tower's affairs and my personal thanks for their share of the load as well as their quiet counsel. They are continuing to ring and of course are long standing members of the congregation. They have been replaced respectively by Sue Wreford (so not completely Sue-less!) and Stephen Mulliner.

Another aspect of our future is of course the hardware. We are blessed with a fine set of ten bells which next year will all have reached their century. They replaced a set that was 15 years old, but these have a lot of life left in them. However, they do require maintenance most of which is carried out and funded by the bellringers from weddings and donations. We have replaced the odd rope in the same way but the increasing problems of handling, by old and young alike, has demonstrated a need to replace them with a new set at a cost of about £3,000, the first since records began. We hope that this will receive a favourable reception once the dust has settled on the Link project.

As ever we thank Chris and Justin for their support. I hope we remain near the core of church life. My thanks also go to the other ringers for their fantastic support, particularly Tom Raggett, my deputy, and the other officers.

Paul Bagshaw, Tower Captain

Church Flowers Report

St Bartholomew's

The highlight of the past year for the Flower Team was joining St Christopher's Team and several other community groups by taking part in the Flower Festival at St Christopher's raising money for The Link Project. It showed what could be done without the use of floral foam. There were several weddings at St Bartholomew's over the year, but professional florists were used for all of them. We are always happy to quote for weddings so please remind any bride that it is an option to use the local flower team as well. The Team has reluctantly said goodbye to two very long-standing members, Margaret Ovington and Sybil Coe have both retired after many years. I was particularly grateful for their support and expertise when I took over from June Elliot 8 years ago. Their advice and knowledge continue to be valuable. We have, however recruited a further member to the team whose

Together in Christ, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love

experience of flower arranging and even running her own floristry business will be invaluable.

We are always on the lookout for new members. No previous experience is required. We work in pairs so there is plenty of support if required. You do not need to have a garden as many of us can provide greenery and often garden flowers.

Thank you to all those who notice the flowers and provide feedback. It is always welcome.

St Christopher's

St Christopher's Flower Team, now numbering 7 ladies continues to decorate the Church weekly throughout the year except for Lent and Advent. For more than three years now we have not used floral foam so when it was announced at the General Synod this year that floral foam should be banned from Churches, we were ahead of the game. Unfortunately, we cannot prevent undertakers and outside wedding florists from using it - yet. We try as much as we can to use flowers and greenery from our own gardens, but this proves difficult at times and flowers have to be brought in, especially at Christmas and Easter. St Christopher's had no weddings this year, so we continue to rely on generous donations for the cost of flowers over the year and are very lucky that we rarely run low on funds. In June we held a very successful (foam free) flower festival in aid of the Link Project – this festival was a joint project with members of the St Bartholomew's Flower team and involved many different flower teams from all over Haslemere, Grayswood, Shottermill and Bramshott – raising in the region of £8500.

Sarah Mulliner and Frances Reincke

PART 2 MEETING DOCUMENTS FROM 2025 APCM

The 2025 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

Noel Cullen

Katie Morgan

Debbie Peet

David Sewell

Andrew Silk

Marion Thomas

CO-OPTED PCC MEMBERS

None

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

