



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

REPORTS FOR PRESENTATION  
AT THE  
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING  
OF  
STOKE ST MICHAEL

To be held on  
SUNDAY 19TH APRIL 2026  
at 11.30a.m.  
in the Church

# Introduction to St Michael & All Angels, Stoke St Michael

## Annual Report 2025

What a privilege it is to have been appointed as your new Priest in Charge, following a memorable interview process, culminating in Rachel and I moving into Nunney Rectory in early October, and me being licensed by Bishop Michael on October 16<sup>th</sup>.

Since then I have been getting to know the churches and the people which comprise the three parishes which I oversee, including St Michael & All Angels, Stoke St Michael.

I would like to especially thank and pay tributes to those who have stepped up during the vacancy, since Fr Anthony retired, especially the wonderful team of retired clergy, our dedicated Churchwardens, and all who form part of the worshipping communities across all our parishes.

I will be prioritising being a visible presence in each of these communities, strengthening the existing links between church and village, seeking to build up the body of Christ and see spiritual and numerical growth in each of these places.

I am excited by the prospect of sharing with you in the mission and ministry in these local communities during 2026 and beyond.

Keith

# Stoke St Michael Parochial Church Council

## Annual Report for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025

**Background** The Stoke St Michael P.C.C. has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent in promoting the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. This includes the care of the Parish Church.

**Membership** Members of the P.C.C. are either ex-officio, or elected by the Annual Meeting, or co-opted by the P.C.C., all in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. During the year, the following served as members of the P.C.C.

Incumbent	Rev'd Keith Johnson	<i>Licensed 16th October in vacancy to that date</i>	
Wardens	Jane Evans	Deanery Synod & Electoral Roll Officer	
	Justine North	Deanery Synod & Safeguarding Officer <i>ret/d July</i>	
Others	Janet Gilham	Secretary	
	Tim Pearce	Treasurer	<i>ret/d Jan</i>
	Penny Anderson	Treasurer	<i>co-opted Feb</i>
	Paul Richards		<i>ret/d Feb</i>
	Wendy Foulds		<i>co-opted Sept</i>
	Charlotte Corbett		<i>co-opted Nov</i>
	Rachel McEntee		<i>co-opted Nov</i>

All are for one year only apart from the Deanery Synod.

**Committees** The only committee required by law is a Standing Committee of Vicar, Churchwardens and officers. It has the power to transact business between meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council.

**Church Membership** At the end of the year there were 18 people on the Electoral Roll. Average attendance as reported to Statistics for Mission 12.

### **Review of the Year**

1 For the majority of the year we remained in vacancy. The post was advertised in January 2025 using the Parish Profile, created during 2024, this was unsuccessful and was re-advertised in April with success. The Reverend Keith Johnson was interviewed in May and appointed with the unanimous agreement of the interview panel. He was licensed as Priest in Charge on 16th October and began his ministry with us.

2 The regular pattern of Church services continued during the vacancy thanks to the clergy, mostly retired and with Permission to Officiate, who live in the eight parishes that make up our combined two benefices, or the surrounding area. Peculiar to the other seven churches we have two Communion services a month and have been asked to fall in line with them. With the appointment of The Reverend Johnson the Worship Committee looked at the service pattern and with his agreement we have retained those services. Once he has a full understanding of the needs of all the churches the pattern will be revised in May 2026.

3 During the year those serving as members of the PCC changed. Tim Pearce, Treasurer, resigned as did Paul Richards and Justine North, Church Warden, all were warmly thanked for their support and important contributions made to the work of the PCC. Four new members were co-opted and welcomed, Penny Anderson who accepted the role of Treasurer, Charlotte Corbett, Wendy Foulds, Rachel McEntee The post of Churchwarden remains vacant at the end of 2025. We were very grateful to Bishop Chris Foster who acted as Chair during the Vacancy.

4 The concerns regarding the regular financial support we receive continue. The Parish Share requested for 2025 was £8,057 almost £2,000 more than that requested in 2024. The increase was the first of five years of planned and significant increases due to the diocesan overhaul of both how much is paid by a particular benefice and the revision of the formula by which that figure is apportioned to the various parishes, which greatly affects Stoke St Michael because for the first time, the total population is a factor rather than solely the size of the church community. The PCC agreed to pay an increase of 2% on 2024, in line with inflation and that £5,670 has been paid in full. During the year representatives from Postlebury, Leigh on Mendip and Stoke St Michael worked with Richard Mawer of Cloford who submitted an appeal against the requested amount requested of the combined benefices. Correspondence between Richard and the Diocese and Matthew Pinnock, finance lead for the diocese continued with no conclusion at the end of 2025.

Our money is divided into two pots, which are banked together in our National Westminster business account

- a) the money that we spend on the **everyday running of the church** (payment to the diocese to cover Stoke's share of the cost of our priest's stipend and housing, contributions towards the services that the diocese offer to support the church, and the cost of the day to day running of the church (electricity and water bills, insurance); a pot which is fed by regular giving (direct debits, service collections, and regular fundraising events such as the Christmas Fair and Harvest activities).
- b) The money we have targeted to spend on **designated projects** (buildings -currently the south east window-and the vestry and porch roofs and youth work). This pot is fed by targeted fundraising and donations and grants.

At the start of the church financial year (1 January 2025) there was £28,686.52 against £24,461, overall -£4,226 (deficit).

This year the church costs were £12,700; outgoing payments totalled approx. £17,000. Most of the day to day running costs were paid from our non-designated funds which, due to careful use of resources and a warm summer, and thanks to increases in regular giving finished slightly in credit (about £200 up). Significant building costs were paid for from our 'designated' funds which left this pot in debit by about £4500. This would have been a higher figure had our funds not been boosted by the generosity of the village at our one-off fundraising events (Love and Cherish, Stokefest teas, community concert and Christmas Walk).

Our running costs for 2026 will be higher as we are asked to pay an increasing amount towards our priest's expenses (rightly so, as stipends are brought in line with other payments). We will pay these from our non-designated funds. We also have the huge challenge of raising further designated funds to meet the renovation and building work needed.

5 The PCC met for eight meetings throughout the year endeavouring to address the many major concerns with the building which includes water ingress to the porch and vestry roofs, reglazing of the south west and the east windows, and major work to the tower, bells and clock. Planning to address these problems began in 2023. We are very grateful to Paul Richards for all his work in obtaining quotes for the projects the PCC have prioritised and researching possible grants towards that work.

The beginning of the year started with the commissioning of a report on the state of the tomb chests and architect's drawings for the re-roofing of the vestry and the porch; quotations for work on a number of windows and investigation into the damp in the S E corner of the and the re-rendering of parts of the Mill Lane boundary wall. The unexpected and significant changes in PCC membership resulted in much discussion and re-evaluation of what works could be achieved in the immediate and near future, and potential works providers were re - contacted to help us understand their assessments of work needed. The PCC agreed to proceed with the renovation of the SW window (Heritage Stained Glass, Kingskerswell, Devon) and start the grant application process ; investigate making good the porch and vestry roofs (Minerva, Frome); and following consultation with several other builders, contact Ken Biggs Contractors (High Littleton) who replaced the main roof of the church and ask them to inspect the gully between the chancel roof and the east wall as a possible source of the damp in the south east corner of the chancel. We also investigated the grey area of who is now responsible for the state of chest tombs given that following its formal closure, the responsibility for the churchyard was passed from the church to county (via the parish council).

Progress has been slow and frustrating. Heritage Stained Glass is not on the list of 'agreed contractors' used by the church's main grant body who received but failed to reply to emails requesting that an exception made be made in our case as we wanted uniformity in the windows and the other three were renovated by HSG. Other funding sources are now being researched, but it looks likely that we will have to restart the quotation process.

Ken Biggs has completely failed to reply to our request to visit (emails, phone calls and visits in person) which is extraordinary behaviour for a local company who carried out nearly £100k of work for us less than 10 years ago.

Thankfully, the porch and vestry roofs have held up given the wet winter we have had.

Research into responsibility for the chest tombs suggests that while not necessarily desired practice on the part of the PCC, the tombs are indeed the responsibility of county now, regardless of the state in which they were handed over. The diocese was asked for their view on this early in the year and has not replied.

So, at the end of the year, the Mill Lane boundary wall has been repaired, we have a new socket at the back of the nave, and so far the most vulnerable parts of our church have survived the winter. The village is joining in fund raising and we have had offers of help in making grant applications, which we hope to progress in 2026.

6 The church complies with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. Justine North continued as the Safeguarding Officer for Stoke St Michael, Leigh on Mendip and Downhead, until she moved to Devon, ensuring all have done the training for the role they fulfil. Another officer is being

sought at the end of 2025, they will be supported by Claire Edwards - Parish Administrator - who does all the Safeguarding administration. Before leaving Justine also updated all the risk assessments required.

7 The Sunday Stokers continued to meet in the Memorial Hall joining the Family Service in time for a blessing and to 'show and tell' the congregation what they have learnt from their activities. The leaders, Lizzy and Charlotte, supported by members of the congregation and parents follow the church year with their exciting and interesting activities for each meeting. A permanent display of their work is in the church.

8 For the majority of the year Nunney and Stoke St Michael continued to host the monthly service of Soul Food, a more informal approach to worship. Led by Justine and Chris North at Stoke until they left the village, on their departure the group reverted to Nunney. Refreshments were always served at the end of this service as they are after both morning services, an important time for the congregation to meet and talk as proved by the continued and growing number who regularly attend the Friday Coffee & Chat mornings, made possible by the team of volunteers organised by Penny Anderson. The local PCSO tries to join the group once a month.

9 Thanks to the team of Charlotte Corbett, Jane Evans, Wendy Foulds, Simon Francis, Janet Gilham and Justine North who unlock and lock the church, the church is open every day for private prayer and is regularly visited by those who would not attend a service. Comments in the Visitors Book reflect the appreciation that the church is open daily unlike so many.

10 'To Love and to Cherish' a two day multi-event was held in the church at the end of May and was very well attended both by villagers and visitors from far and wide. The initial idea of a display of wedding dresses to raise money for the restoration of the south-west window caught the imagination of many in the village and the idea grew. A total of 26 dresses and suits were displayed, as were the church marriage registers dating from 1644. Coffee and tea with cake served each day. A concert and readings on the theme of love, sung by the Quartet and supported by local talent was held on Saturday evening and on Sunday a service celebrating marriage brought the weekend to a close. It was much more than a money raising event bringing the community together and involving so many. The total raised £ 747

11 The two annual events raising funds for the church were the harvest supper - £639 and the Christmas fair £481. In addition the church refreshment stall at the Stoke Fest raised £371 and refreshments served in the church after the Christmas walk made £44. A Concert of local talent held in October resulted in £275 for church funds. The Easyfundraising online shopping link for the church raised £ 157. There is no cost to those participating and all villagers are encouraged to 'sign up'. Details of this and other ways of donating to the church are listed on the 'achurchnearyou' website and on flyers placed in the church pews.

12 With great sadness we learnt that, due to ill health, Alan Molloy had decided that he could no longer be our organist, his support over the years has been invaluable. The Quartet led by Simon Francis have continued to attend special services and to sing Evensong on several occasions. Thanks to them.

13 Thanks to Janet Gilham, Barbara Gilson, Cicely Middle and members of their families the Harvest Supper was held in the Memorial Hall and followed the service held in the church. Graham Gilham donned the hat of auctioneer for the perishable produce and all donations of packaged food were taken to the food bank in Shepton Mallet.

14 The community Christmas Tree erected in front of the church was again the destination for the Christmas walk when mulled wine and mince pies were served in the church. All the Christmas Services were well attended, especially the Carol and Crib Services and the Christmas Day services led by the Reverend Graham Witts. Over the Christmas period 97 people came to church.

15 The Magazine for Downhead, Leigh on Mendip and Stoke St Michael, The Village Connection, continues with advertisers making it possible to keep the yearly subscription of £5 for 2026. Charlotte Corbett has taken over from Justine to update the church's facebook page and the Stoke page on the 'A Church near you' website with news of events, details of services in the church and all things promoting Christianity In Stoke St Michael and the wider world. We are grateful to them both and their IT skills.

16 With sadness we bid farewell to Chris and Justine North as they moved to pastures new in Devon. They have supported our community in so many ways, in particular Chris taking so many services especially during the vacancy and his favourite the Crib Service, Justine as Church Warden, Safeguarding Officer and numerous other hats. We have yet to learn what they will spend their gift voucher on!

17 Thanks to all those who keep the church running. To Janet Gilham, Secretary; Tim Pearce and Penny Anderson, Treasurer; and to all members old and new of the PCC. Thanks to all who are on the lists for Readers, Intercessors, Sides people, Church Flowers, and Church Cleaning.

Jane Evans

10th March 2026

	Notes	General fund £	Designated fund £	Restricted fund £	TOTAL 2025 £	TOTAL 2024 £
<b>Receipts</b>						
<b>Donations and Legacies:</b>						
Planned giving (dd and regular one off)		4,427	-	-	4,427	3,940
Collections, walsafe, coffee + chat, donations, Sum up,tomb grant		2,867	-	-	2,867	2,180
Income tax (Gift Aid 2024) recovered		1,430	-	-	1,430	1,478
Legacies		-	-	-	-	-
<b>Other Trading activities</b>						
Magazine sales and adverts		1,121	-	-	1,121	793
Income from other Properties		-	-	-	-	-
Fundraising: L+C; Harvest; C/mas Fair, Stokefest; Concert; Walk Easyfund		2,722	-	-	2,722	2,053
<b>Receipts from Investments:</b>						
Bank interest		525	-	-	525	772
<b>Receipts from Charitable activities:</b>						
Parochial fees: funerals		681	-	-	681	866
<b>Other Receipts</b>						
Insurance claims		-	-	-	-	-
Sale proceeds from fixed assets		-	-	-	-	-
Loans received		-	-	-	-	-
Visiting priest fee reimbursement, diocese		40	-	-	40	299
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>13,813</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13,813</b>	<b>12,381</b>
<b>Payments</b>						
<b>Charitable activities:</b>						
Donations/Grants to charities		-	-	-	-	(86)
Mission & Evangelism: Hall rental - Stokers and C. Fair		(282)	-	-	(282)	(250)
Parish Share		(5,670)	-	-	(5,670)	(5,559)
Clergy expenses - from Oct, priest in charge appt		(101)	-	-	(101)	(100)
Church running expenses; utilities and minor repairs		(1,498)	-	-	(1,498)	(1,720)
Churchyard maintenance		-	-	-	-	-
Cost of raising funds: magazine printing		(859)	-	-	(859)	(953)
Support costs: service fee		(40)	-	-	(40)	(213)
Administration costs (inc. staff costs)Postlebury Office		(1,477)	-	-	(1,477)	(1,436)
Governance Costs		(25)	-	-	(25)	(875)
Other: Insurance		(1,599)	-	-	(1,599)	(1,617)
<b>Major expenditure</b>						
Church repairs, reports: boundary wall, architects report roof;		(6,205)	-	-	(6,205)	(1,937)
Repairs to other property		-	-	-	-	-
Capital purchases/additions		-	-	-	-	-
Loan repayments		-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total payments</b>		<b>(17,756)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(17,756)</b>	<b>(14,746)</b>
<b>(Surplus)/ Deficit of Receipts over payments</b>		<b>(3,943)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(3,943)</b>	<b>(2,365)</b>
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-
Opening Cash at 1 Jan		7,744	22,500	-	30,244	32,609
Closing Cash at 31 Dec		3,801	22,500	-	26,301	30,244

\*produced using the Diocesan Cashbook v5

Statement of accounts and liabilities

Nat West General Fund	£24,461.36
Nat West Stoke and Leigh Magazine	£1,842.14
Nat West accounts TOTAL	£26,303.50

Approved by the PCC on 12-9-2026 and signed on their behalf by:

 Chair

 Treasurer

## Church Wardens Report 2025

2025 began with many building related issues being carried over from 2024 the majority of them listed by our architect in his Quinquennial Inspection carried out in March 2024. As stated then the required work identified by that inspection is depressing and requires funding running into hundreds of thousands of pounds.

However some things have been achieved:-

The required safety checks and maintenance have been carried out to comply with Health and Safety requirements

the Fire Extinguishers were serviced in April 2025

the Portable Appliance Test was carried out in October 2023 and next was due in October 2025, this oversight has been addressed and test booked at time of writing this report.

The church is up to date with the Disability Discrimination Act requirements.

All Risk Assessments for the church were revised and updated during the year and are displayed in the relevant areas.

The Inventory was checked and corresponded to the fixtures and fittings at the time of checking.

The four chest tombs in the churchyard are listed and therefore the procedure for restoring and making safe is complicated and costly. Following its closure the responsibility for the churchyard was passed to the Parish Council who in turn passed its responsibility to Somerset County Council.

The conservation report required before any repairs can be done was carried out by Sally Strachey Historic Conservation at a cost of £1,782. An application to Church Care for a grant towards the report was made and £ 750 received. The Diocese was requested to clarify the legal responsibility for this work a reply has yet to be received. Both the vestry and porch roofs require major repair work to the slates and lead flashing. Quotes received for the work amount to £46,000.

The condition of the southwest window is our greatest concern, a quote of £8,550 + VAT has been received from Heritage Stained Glass who restored the window blown out by Storm Henk. The 'To love and Cherish' exhibition held at the end of May raised £ 747 towards this and other donations have been received.

The interest in our church generated by the exhibition is very encouraging and we hope to build on it with the formation of a Friends of Stoke Church. New and younger members of the church have joined the Parochial Church Council bringing new ideas and skills.

Research is ongoing to identify grant making trusts and charities to help with the costs, most require match funding, so a very large fund raising project is required backed by the whole of the village.

The general running of the church has continued throughout the year thanks to our volunteers and we hope and pray that will grow with help from new volunteers, ideas and money.

Jane Evans 10 March 2025

## Worship Committee Report 2025

The committee's remit covers the worship in the benefice of Leigh on Mendip with Downhead and Stoke St Michael and the benefice of Postlebury. The committee met three times in 2025 on 4th March at Cloford Manor, 29 October in Leigh on Mendip Tower Room and 24th November at Cloford Manor.

At the first meeting the service plan for the previous six months and other procedures agreed at the beginning of the vacancy were reviewed with no major concerns. The service plan for the next six months was agreed allowing Claire Edwards the Parish Administrator and Jennifer Brook to ask all assisting clergy to take the services.

The October meeting, the first for the Reverend Keith Johnson, agreed the services based on the current service plan until Easter 2026.

In particular all the Christmas Services were agreed, and members detailed to arrange lay or clergy leaders of the many carol and other services requests. Keith to lead a service in each of the eight churches over the Christmas period.

There was a round table discussion about the pattern of services across the eight churches. Earlier discussions were revisited. Some radical ideas were put forward. There was a desire for fairness/equity but also concerns about clashes in the current programme.

Henry Pomeroy proposed that each of the eight churches have one Sunday service a month taken by Keith. It was noted that Downhead wanted an evening service only. The question was asked should a Holy Communion service be held in each benefice every Sunday, noting that this was already ignored on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday. Keith to check this.

It was agreed that all the churches would consider which Sunday in the month and what time of service they would like ideally. That a further meeting of the Worship Committee will be held on 24<sup>th</sup> November at 4 pm at Cloford Manor to resolve the service pattern issue and the CSP from January to the end of May 2026.

At the November meeting Keith answered the question raised at the last meeting - Under Canon Law B14 "The Holy Communion shall be celebrated in at least one church in each benefice or, where benefices are held in plurality, in at least one church in at least one of those benefices at least on all Sundays and principal Feast Days, and on Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday.

Two possible patterns were looked at - once or twice a month service for each church. Stoke voiced their concern if only one service a month, as we are trying to build our congregation and some of the present congregation have preference for 9.30 or 11.00. It was agreed to trial, and review at the next meeting of the Worship Committee, the one service pattern with changes to location Witham to change with Nunney, to shorten the journey for Keith between churches. Because Downhead only want an evening service, Stoke will retain their two service and move the no service Sunday to the second from the fourth. Stoke Evensong will be kept as led by a lay person and as will any other lay led services.

There was general discussion about the role of churchwardens and others in terms of planning, preparation and facilitating services. This varied across the churches. Keith said that he would like to choose the hymns in consultation with the musicians/churchwardens and that he would like the churchwardens to find at least one person to deliver (and possibly prepare) the intercessions. Churchwardens to inform Keith of arrangements in advance.

	0930	1000	1100	1600 (winter)	1800
<b>Week one</b>	Wanstrow		Leigh		Stoke Evensong (JE)
<b>Week Two</b>	Nunney		Witham		
<b>Week Three</b>	Marston		Stoke (with Stokers)	Soul Food (HP/CP)	Downhead Evensong Soul Food (summer)
<b>Week Four</b>	Stoke		Cloford		
<b>Week Five*</b> <b>March, May,</b> <b>August,</b> <b>November</b>		Alternating Postlebury and Leigh/ Stoke			

## **Church Groups Report 2025**

### **Coffee and Chat**

At least 49 people have been welcomed to Coffee and Chat over the course of 2025, a good increase on numbers for 2024. Of those, about 25 attend regularly: for the sense of belonging, to get out of the house, catch up on news, and to share laughter and sadness, all important particularly so for those living by themselves. Weekly attendance grew throughout the year to an average of 10 to 12. Those new to the village have come along to find out what goes on in Stoke, others have come along to talk to PCSO Will Mortimer. We have been used as an end of walk point, a place to meet friends from surrounding villages and a place to reunite with old friends and memories. We have welcomed our local councillor, Barry Clarke. We have run for 51/52 Fridays including holiday periods and have been able to adapt to fit in with other events, such as life celebrations and the school Carol Service.

This is a cross-denominational group as is our parish and continues to be very supportive of our Anglican church, encouraging, helping with and attending events. Almost all attend festival services, and a core worship regularly at all or some of our weekly services. The group does a brilliant job of promoting the presence of the church in the village.

Our willing, stable and reliable hosting team (Jane, Janet, Charlotte, Tim, Karen, Wendy, Rachel, Simon, Penny) makes running the 2 hour session easy.

Penny Anderson     10th March 2025

### **Sunday Stokers**

Our children's group, Sunday Stokers, have enjoyed another busy year of fun and activities. We continue to meet in the hall from 10.30am. Our sessions follow a similar pattern each week, including a calm, welcoming activity, a story, craft and/or games, a snack, song and then walk to the Church to join the end of the service for 11.45am. The children are invited up for a blessing and given the opportunity to tell the congregation about their session. We were fortunate to have Chris North and his trusty guitar to teach us and accompany a child friendly song.

During 2025 we covered many of the Bible stories including 'Calming the Storm' and 'One Body, Many Parts' as well as looking at the themes of Baptism and Weddings. The Church held a Wedding Dress Exhibition and Stokers contributed by creating a wedding bouquet of paper flowers for display as part of the exhibition.

We used the story 'The Grumpy Owl' as our Christmas theme and gave a copy of the book as a gift to our families. Stokers was represented at the Church Christmas Fair with a children's book tombola and crafts for sale.

Charlotte Corbett     11th March 2025

## **Safeguarding Report 2025**

### Allegations

There have been no safeguarding allegations or concerns flagged up over the year.

### Dashboard

This is an on line tool which enables the Safeguarding Officer to keep up to date with all the SG policy requirements in the Parish. The Dashboard produces an Action Plan, which is produced for each PCC meeting.

### SG Hub

All records are recorded on this online tool which enables the Officer to keep up to date with all the DBS and Training requirements for each church activity, and requirements for each staff member in the church.

### DBS/Training requirements

During the year Justine as Safeguarding Officer continued to work closely with Caroline Pomeroy (Postlebury PSGO) to ensure the DBS levels/training levels are right for each role, and to keep the Hub up to date. In populating the new Hub in 2024 and using the spread sheet created the lapsed DBS and training of some of the staff team is now up to-date

The media spotlight on Safeguarding in the Church of England over the year has continued, and she has been very keen that we are meeting all our requirements. This has put extra work on all the staff team, and we are very grateful to everyone for their hard work in getting up to date and in particular to Justine for all her hard work. Unfortunately Justine had to stand down as Officer due to moving from the area and so search for a replacement officer began in August. We are very grateful to Claire Edwards for her ongoing hard work with the SG admin.

Keeping our children and vulnerable adults safe within our church community is of the upmost importance and at the time of writing I am very pleased to record that Rachel McEntee has agreed to take on the roll of Safety Officer for Stoke St Michael.

Jane Evans

20 March 2025

# Annual Report of the Frome Deanery Synod - 2025

## **Background**

Frome Deanery is one of 18 Deaneries in the Diocese of Bath and Wells. Its Deanery Synod is regulated by the 1969 Synodical Government Measure which sets our five functions

- (a) to consider matters concerning the Church of England and other matters of religious or public interest;
- (b) to bring together the views of the parishes of the deanery on common problems, to discuss and formulate common policies on those problems, to foster a sense of community and interdependence among those parishes, and generally to promote in the deanery the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical;
- (c) to make known and, so far as is appropriate, put into effect any provision made by the Diocesan Synod;
- (d) to consider the business of the Diocesan Synod, and particularly any matters referred to that Synod by the General Synod, and to sound parochial opinion;
- (e) to raise such matters as the Deanery Synod consider appropriate with the Diocesan Synod in 1989

Frome Deanery comprised eight benefices (two of which are held in plurality), 19 parishes, 28 churches, a population of approximately 35,000 (of whom approx 28,000 live in the town of Frome), and a declared active membership of 1,090\* (\* the figure is the total number on the electoral roll on the parish dashboards for 2018)

## **Membership**

### Diocesan Synod:

The following members are serving on Diocesan Synod ( 2022 - 2025)

Revd Caroline Walker, Revd Liz Dudley, Mrs Lois Bushell, Mrs Elaine Gilbert and Mr Richard Loveless

### Officers of the Deanery Synod

The following have been officers of the Deanery Synod during the year:

Area Dean- Revd Liz Dudley

Assistant Area Dean- Revd Ian Snares (

Secretary- Mrs Kally Dunn

Lay Dean- Mrs Lois Bushell

Treasurer- Mr Ian Crook

Representing Stoke St Michael Parish: Jane Evans and Justine North

### The Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group (DMPG).

This group continued to meet regularly throughout 2025 to finalise the proposed Deanery Plan. The group consists of Mike Adams, Mike Wilshire, Andrew Alden, Andrew Morrison, Justine North, Lois Bushell, Caroline Walker, Jenny Waller, Ian Snares

## **Details of Deanery Synod Meetings:**

The Synod has met three times during 2025:

## Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025

- Summary of the origin and work of the Anna Chaplains and Friends of Anna Chaplains by Len. It is an ecumenical, community-based chaplaincy, promoting the spiritual welfare of older people. It involves visiting older people wherever they may be living. The emphasis is on spiritual support but, clearly, people's practical struggles will also play a part in their overall well-being. The chaplaincy is intended to compliment and run alongside, rather than replicating or replacing, ministry already being done by. At present the focus is around the care homes in Frome, but the vision is for the team to grow across the deanery to care for older people wherever they are.
- Ian Snares gave details of the Green Pastures - Homelessness initiative who are looking to work in partnership with churches inland Frome a meeting to be held on the 6 March to learn who should lead and be members of a core implementation team and what is needed financially and practically.
- Meeting on 12 February at Holy Trinity, Tony Cook from the GO Team to promote The Big Dream working with 0 - 19 year olds.

## Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025

- Common Fund - new Benefice Share Scheme a lot of anxiety expressed the Area Dean offered to meet each PCC to feed the concerns back to the Diocese.
- Mission Together - the many outreach initiatives happening in the Deanery were briefly outlined The Big Dream, Open the Book, Anna chaplaincy, The Giant's Garden, The Prayer Shed. These resources to be shared, to build on what we have and make greater.

## Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October

- Synod welcomed the Rev'd Keith Johnson to the Deanery. Keith gave a brief introduction to himself.  
Synod bid farewell to Andrew Alden as his time as Frome Town Pioneer ends. Andrew gave brief overview of his ministry.
- Updates given on the The Big Dream, Green Pastures and Mary's House.
- Common Fund as result of the Area Dean attending individual PCC meeting Synod were asked to agree on the formal statement prayerfully discussed and discerned within clergy chapter and the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group to be sent to Diocesan Synod - ***Following a series of listening opportunities, Frome Deanery Synod wish to make known to Bath and Wells Diocesan Synod their deep concern about the impact the new benefice share arrangements is having on parishes' ability to be effective and innovative in worship and mission. However, recognising too, that despite the challenges there are signs of new growth, the Deanery would welcome the opportunity to meet in dialogue with members of the Diocesan Team to discern a way forward that will enable the churches of Frome Deanery and the Diocese to flourish.*** Agreed