

THE PARISH OF THE WINTERBOURNES



ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE PCC

For the year ended 31st December 2025

Dorchester Benefice Rector
The Rev'd Keith Magee

Team Vicar
The Rev'd Teresa Stewart-Sykes

Bankers
Lloyds, High Street, Dorchester

Independent Examiner
David Elliott
Brewery Square, Dorchester

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of The Winterbournes

Annual Report

for the year ended 31st December 2025

Aim and Purpose

The Winterbournes Parochial Church Council (the PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the Incumbent, the Reverend Teresa Stewart-Sykes, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also responsible for maintaining the Churches, which are Grade II Listed Buildings.

We continue to focus on the strategic plan for The Winterbournes, with the aim of continuing to grow God's Kingdom here in the Winterbourne Valley and making new disciples. We aim to build a thriving and sustainable church which contributes to the Diocesan vision to make Jesus known and serve the people of the Diocese with joy.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our Churches, and to become part of our parish family. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament. We try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish family, through:

- Worship and prayer: learning about the Gospel, and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus;
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish; and
- Mission and outreach work.

To facilitate this work, it is vital that we maintain the fabric of the three Churches.

Achievements and Performance

Worship & Prayer

In 2025 the numbers engaging in our weekly services fell slightly to an average of 6 at St Mary's, 10 at St Michael's and 20 at St Martin's. The PCC is keen to offer a range of services, not only on Sundays, but also during the week, that our community will find both beneficial and spiritually fulfilling. For example, Worship Together on the first Sunday of each month at St Mary's is an informal and interactive time of worship; 8am BCP Service of Holy Communion on the second Sunday of the month offers a traditional language service at St Martin's; Tuesday and Wednesday morning and evening Services of the Word and prayers for the world and individuals in our communities at St Martin's are a time for quiet reflective prayer; and once a month the Messy Church at St Mary's continues to offer stories and crafts for children and their care givers. All this is alongside regular Services of Holy Communion from Common Worship at all three churches throughout the month.

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As well as our regular services, we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. There has been 1 baptism, 12 funerals and 7 burials of ashes during the year. Those who are no longer able to come to Church are not forgotten, Holy Communion is taken to 3 people in their own homes, and monthly services are conducted at Casterbridge and Park House Care Homes.

Messy Church

Messy Church takes place on the first Tuesday of the month in term time and has gone from strength to strength in 2025. When the children come to the church just after 3pm we hear their news whilst they have a drink and a snack, and this is followed by a story and craft activities. Lastly, the children come together and sit down for a meal where they chat away merrily with their friends. In 2025 Rev Teresa worked to establish closer connections between the Winterbourne Valley First School and the Messy Church team. For example, during the summer term, we took Messy Church to the school for an 'Ascension Workshop' and offered a range of activities for the children to enjoy, including creating a large mosaic of the Ascension and making stomp rockets. Similarly, at the beginning of December, the Messy Church Team ran "Experience Christmas" at St. Martin's Church, which the whole school attended and enjoyed meeting characters from the Nativity and exploring the real meaning of Christmas. Finally, I would like to thank all those who help and make Messy Church possible at St. Mary's Winterbourne Abbas.

Caroline McMeiken LLM

St Mary

It has been a good and busy year for us here at St Marys. Although Sunday congregations have remained small but steady, Messy Church has continued to thrive with up to twenty children attending. Our links with the school are also becoming stronger. Events that took place during 2025 include the Agape service, the Harvest Thanksgiving event, and of course the annual church fete. All these events important in contributing to our Mission of Outreach in our community. The Community Larder continues to be well used and maintained by dedicated volunteers. We have one or two outstanding maintenance jobs on the fabric of the church; our electrics although pronounced 'not unsafe' need some work to bring us up to the standard required for a full safety certificate and some attention may be required to the slates on the east end of the nave due to recent bad weather. There are a few other minor jobs that can be achieved by volunteers during the coming year. Work on the tower crenellations was completed in the autumn. We are currently awaiting news on our faculties for installation of a tap just inside the churchyard wall and a wooden shed to be erected at the back of the church for storage purposes to reduce the amount of clutter inside the church. Options for installing a toilet are being explored.

Joy Parsons Church Warden

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St Michael

This beautiful Saxon church continues to be a Christian presence in the village of Winterbourne Steepleton. The highlights of the year were the candlelit All Souls and Carol Services and the wonderful community events of a summer cream tea and Christmas wreath making workshop. The wood paneling in the church was repaired and repainted in the summer and the LCC continues to work to restore the bell, the churchyard wall and interior walls.

St Martin

At the heart of Winterbourne St Martin, the church stands as a witness to Christ. The weekly offering of prayer and worship are much appreciated by the regular congregation and occasional visitors who sign the visitors book or pop in to light a candle at the votive prayer stand. As well as the wonderful annual Carol Service and Carols in the Pub, music at St Martins was celebrated by the Serendipity Recorder Consort who led a lovely service for Creation tide in September. The LCC have worked hard to maintain the fabric of the church; work was done on the Lime trees at the front of the church and repairs were made to the roof and the guttering.

Deanery Synod

Two members of the PCC sit on the Dorchester Deanery Synod. This provides the PCC with a link with the churches around us, and with the Diocese as a whole. It also receives reports from General Synod. Amongst the items discussed in 2025 was the implementation of the Makin Report findings within the Diocese and a presentation by the Diocesan Safeguarding lead, Suzi Futchter explaining the roll out of the new Safeguarding Hubs for each parish. Also, there were presentations from the Dean, The Very Rev'd Nick Papadopoulos about his sabbatical in the Holy Land and Steffi Scott from 'Rural Mission', a charity which supports rural parishes to increase mission activity within their communities.

Safeguarding

The Winterbournes PCC has been unable to recruit a Parish Safeguarding Officer but has complied with all other duties under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). The Parish has established a Safeguarding Hub.

Financial Review 2025

Total incoming resources for the year were £63865 and payments were £83,544. Details are contained within the financial statement. Total reserves on 31st December 2025 were £114,139 including £7,261 of Restricted Investment funds (Steepleton) and £65,014 of Designated and Restricted funds and an estimated £4000 of unclaimed tax.

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Interest rates were only a little stronger in the year than in the last few and returns on investment were £4021. The value of the restricted Steepleton Churchyard Fund shares reduced by £290.26

Across all Funds, there was a deficit of receipts over payments of £19,679. However, we only had part of the tax return in the year so another ~ £4000 is due in from HMRC. We did not make our charitable payments in the year except where there were specific collections for Weymouth Foodbank and others.

Again, this year, contributions to the diocese for the Parish Share are in excess of regular voluntary giving and general fund raising and there has been a significant drop in regular giving due to the passing of regular givers. Standing Order income dropped by £2497 per year in 2022, £1,172 in 2023 and £1690 in £2024. 2025 has seen a reduction of £3134, most of this caused by the passing of donors in late 2024.

In 2026 we will launch a Parish giving scheme aimed at increasing the quantity of regular givers and easing the burden of gift aid tax collection. The mechanics of this are in place and roll out is expected late in Q1 2026.

The financial arrangements for the Valley and Valence church magazine benefit from the good efforts of Pompeeshree Kalita who sustains a quality output at modest cost. In 2025 magazine income was 5 approx £700 less than it cost. However, advertising rates were increased in mid-year that should bring this important outreach vehicle to breakeven.

The count for the Parish of the Winterbournes resulted in a request from the diocese for £28,957 during 2025. The share request from the Diocese for 2026 is an increase of 13% over 2025 at £32,464.

Plate Collections have recovered to just under pre-pandemic levels at £4476.

Reserves Policy (2025)

The trustees consider the appropriate level of free reserves they should retain is six months unrestricted payments in a normal year which equate to £38,000 in general funds. The PCC aims to ensure the churches will be able to continue to fulfil their charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure. At present the free reserves amount to a little over £40,000 so uncomfortably tight. The Parish giving scheme and discussions on future share need to show some progress this year.

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Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are required under Charity law to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the financial activities of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with applicable laws and regulations. They are also responsible for ensuring that the charity maintains an adequate system of internal control designed to provide reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded against loss or unauthorised use and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

Structure, Governance & Management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The Council comprises the Incumbent, the Churchwardens, our LLM and retired clergy with PTO, those elected to the Deanery Synod, and other members who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, by those on the Electoral Roll. No members of the congregation stood to be elected to the PCC at the last APCM, so there are vacancies for Parish Safeguarding Officer, PCC Secretary and Electoral Roll Officer; there are also vacancies for Church Wardens at both St Martin and St Michael Churches. The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance in the parish, and for all financial matters. The full PCC met six times during the year and has Local Church Council (LCC) sub-committees; the LCCs deal with the fabric, maintenance and mission of each of the three churches. Each LCC reports to the full PCC, with the minutes of their meetings.

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of The Winterbournes

The Incumbent	The Rev'd Teresa Stewart-Sykes	Chair
LLM	Mrs Caroline McMeiken	
PTO (ex officio)	The Rev'd Jo Lacy Smith	
Churchwardens	Mrs Joy Parsons (St Mary)	Vice Chair
	Mr David Parsons (St Mary)	
	(St Martin) Vacant	
	(St Martin) Vacant	
	(St Michael) Vacant	
	(St Michael) Vacant	
Deanery Synod Reps	Mrs Joy Parsons & Mr David Parsons	
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Vacant	
PCC Secretary	Mr John Crawford	Vacant from 25 th May 2025
PCC Treasurer	Mr Stephen Webb	
Electoral Roll Officer	Mr John Crawford	Vacant from 25 th May 2025
PCC Elected Members	Mrs Rosie Duke	Vacant from 25 th May 2025
	Mrs Margaret Jeffrey	Vacant from 25 th May 2025
	Mr Colin Nichols	Vacant from 25 th May 2025
LCC St Mary	Mrs Joy Parsons	
	Mr David Parsons (Treasurer)	
	Mr Laurie Reading	
	Ms Sue Caddy	
LCC St Michael	Mrs Caroline McMeiken	
	Mr John Crawford (Treasurer)	
	Mr Richard Crumbleholme	
	Mrs Viv Crumbleholme	
	Mrs Becky Dovey	
	Mrs Di House	
	Mrs Dee Capon	
	Mrs Cath Vallis	
	Mrs Wendy Frost	
	Mr Robert Frost	
LCC St Martin	Mrs Cathie Seigal	
	Mr Nigel Power	
	Mrs Christine Gibson	
	Mrs Jennie Schmid	
	Mrs Rosalind Thorpe	
	Mrs Rosie Duke	

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Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2025

Receipts and Payments Account

	General Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Receipts								
<i>Voluntary Receipts - Regular Giving</i>								
Planned Giving	17,710.00	-	180.00	17,890.00	21,024.23	22,714.00	23,886.25	26,954.00
Collections and other giving	4,475.80	-	2,786.30	7,262.10	4,770.53	11,030.44	5,869.47	4,028.21
Tax recovered	1,569.03	-	-	1,569.03	24,284.32	-	-	-
Sub-total	23,754.83	-	2,966.30	26,721.13	50,079.08	33,744.44	29,755.72	30,982.21
Other voluntary receipts	4,830.37	-	-	4,830.37	3,613.13	1,180.00	862.69	4,096.03
Activities for generating funds	4,552.45	-	-	4,552.45	5,500.48	5,807.18	7,964.08	6,370.08
Receipts from church activities	22,537.90	-	-	22,537.90	10,639.80	14,089.10	14,340.00	13,777.20
Investment income	1,085.63	2,146.31	990.87	4,222.81	4,587.35	2,645.91	192.96	233.07
Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Legacies	1,000.00	-	-	1,000.00	-	-	-	-
Totals	57,761.18	2,146.31	3,957.17	63,864.66	74,419.84	57,466.63	53,115.45	55,458.59
Payments								
<i>Church activities</i>								
Diocesan parish share (note 7)	36,306.49	-	-	36,306.49	28,362.61	26,261.64	25,496.76	24,282.00
Other payments	45,317.75	-	1,919.30	47,237.05	31,044.24	39,206.40	40,779.31	43,029.28
	81,624.24	-	1,919.30	83,543.54	59,406.85	65,468.04	66,276.07	67,311.28
Excess of receipts over payments	(23,863.06)	2,146.31	2,037.87	(19,678.88)	15,012.99	(8,001.41)	(13,160.62)	(11,852.69)
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	5,463.97	-	-	-	-
Balances at 1st January				128,021.44	112,630.00	120,631.41	132,563.30	144,777.17
Balances at 31st December				102,878.59	128,021.44	112,630.00	120,631.41	132,563.30

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2025

	General Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	31-Dec-25 £	31-Dec-24 £	31-Dec-23 £	31-Dec-22 £	31-Dec-21 £
<i>Cash Accounts (book value)</i>								
Winterbourne PCC current account	3,706.56	-	-	3,706.56	8,099.32	2,027.48	7,025.67	14,735.74
Martinstown LCC current account	1,194.16	-	2,462.29	3,656.45	8,935.60	9,394.18	16,027.36	13,393.07
Martinstown LCC deposit account	1,757.09	-	-	1,757.09	9,757.09	9,558.12	9,558.12	9,553.22
Martinstown CBF Fabric account	-	28,191.28	-	28,191.28	26,970.70	25,611.30	24,815.97	24,493.81
Martinstown CBF General account	6,933.06	-	-	6,933.06	6,632.88	6,298.57	6,102.97	6,023.74
Winterbourne PCC CBF account	7,124.93	-	-	7,124.93	6,816.44	6,472.88	6,271.87	6,190.45
Steepleton LCC current account	751.67	-	954.56	1,706.23	5,642.03	4,207.54	5,152.71	2,190.12
Steepleton CBF account	5,966.26	26,024.53	7,380.95	39,371.74	42,582.99	40,436.68	39,180.97	50,669.63
Abbas LCC current account	10,336.80	-	-	10,336.80	12,494.02	8,554.41	6,413.16	5,231.45
Abbas CBF Fabric account	44.50	-	-	44.50	42.58	40.44	38.93	38.68
Abbas CBF General account	49.95	-	-	49.95	47.79	45.39	43.68	43.39
	37,864.98	54,215.81	10,797.80	102,878.59	128,021.44	112,646.99	120,631.41	132,563.30
<i>Other Monetary Assets</i>								
Income Tax recoverable (est. 2025)				4,000.00				
Income Tax recoverable (est. 2024)					4,000.00			
Income Tax recoverable (est. 2023)						5,000.00		
Income Tax recoverable (est. 2022)						5,500.00	5,500.00	
Income Tax recoverable (est. 2021)						5,500.00	5,500.00	5,500.00
<i>Investment Assets</i>								
Steepleton Churchyard Endowment shares (Managed by DBF)			6,970.27	6,970.27	7,280.53	7,098.08	6,487.68	6,420.26
<i>Creditors</i>								
Vicar's expenses outstanding at year end								
Total Assets less Liabilities	37,864.98	54,215.81	17,768.07	113,848.86	139,281.97	135,745.05	138,119.09	144,483.56

