

All Saints' Church, Banstead

AGENDA & REPORTS FOR THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING 26th April 2026



All Saints' Church from the south-west

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The following reports will be presented in person to the APCM

- Report on changes to the Electoral Roll since the previous APCM
- Report on the proceedings of the PCC and the activities of the parish generally in 2025
- Annual Report on the Financial Statements of the PCC for the year 2025 independently examined
- Annual Fabric report under section 50 of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018
- Report on the proceedings of Deanery Synod
- Report on the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults in 2025

**THE OPEN MEETING FOR PARISHIONERS TO ELECT CHURCHWARDENS
&
THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**
Sunday 26th April 2026
in ALL SAINTS' CHURCH at 11.00am

THE OPEN MEETING

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Prayers
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Convening Notice
4. Minutes of the previous Open Meeting on 6th April 2025 (as displayed in the church porch for the previous two Sundays)
5. The Election of Churchwardens

THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting on 6th April 2025
3. Appointment of Independent Examiner
4. Report on Changes in the Electoral Roll since the previous APCM
5. Report on the proceedings of the PCC and the activities of the parish generally in 2025
6. Annual Report on the Financial Statements of the PCC for the year 2025 independently examined
7. Annual Fabric Report under section 50 of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018
8. Report on the proceedings of Deanery Synod
9. Report on the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults in 2025
10. The Vicar's Address
11. Election of 3 three-year Representatives to Deanery Synod
12. Election of 6 three-year Representatives to the PCC
13. The proposed date of the next APCM
14. Any Other Business

Closing Prayer



Easter Flowers



ANNUAL REPORT on the WORK of the PCC and the ACTIVITIES of the parish generally - for 2025

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH is based in the High Street, Banstead, and is part of the Diocese of Guildford within the Church of England. It is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission (registration number 1133791), and its long history of service to the local community is manifest in its Grade II* listed building. At the time of the APCM in April 2025 the Electoral Roll stood at 124 (with 66 resident in the parish and 58 non-resident).

AIMS AND PURPOSES

All Saints' Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of promoting in the ecclesiastical parish of Banstead the whole mission of the Church of England, in all its pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical dimensions. This responsibility is shared with the clergy.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our community at All Saints', and to this end we are members of the Inclusive Church network. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Through our worship we put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music, and sacrament.

When planning our activities, the PCC has considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try whenever possible to support and enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community 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.
- Missionary and outreach work, supporting social action initiatives for people in many sorts of need.

It remains important to maintain our church building in good order and the other parts of the Church Complex, i.e. the churchyard and Orchard and the Church Institute. The curate's house at 14 Glenfield Road continued to be rented under full agency management.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

At the start of the year Revd Kate and her husband Tony had settled into the vicarage and she was finding her way around the parish and the diocese. The congregation had been very faithful to All Saints' during our two vacancies. We are delighted that Revd Kate has come to lead us and thank her for her hard work and wonderful sermons.

Weddings, baptisms and pastoral matters have continued with the diligent support of the team: Licensed Lay Ministers Rosemary Whipp and George Harcourt-Vernon, who assisted at services, provided pastoral support, and interred ashes, and Pastoral Assistant Donna Taylor.

We were able to appoint a new Children and Families Worker, Christine Murray, from November 2025. She is both experienced with children and enthusiastic to develop that work in a church setting, attending the Foundations in Ministry course run by the diocese. We look forward to supporting her plans to visit schools and bring children back to All Saints'.

Our Parish Administrator, Ruth Mash, left us in June 2025. We would like to thank her for all her help during her time with us.

Our Director of Music, Mr Jan Pringle, leads the Choir and having live music and singing in church is welcomed and enjoyed by all. We are often told that our choir creates a wonderful experience in our regular Choral Evensong and beyond.

As always, it is largely on volunteers that all kinds of duties from outreach and hospitality to church bells and flowers depend, so thanks must be given to our Head Server and Premises lead, Alan Clarke, who enables services and keeps the buildings in good condition with the help and support of Geoff Chant.

After years of unstinting service within this team we said goodbye to Lin and Mike Dunford who moved to Devon to be nearer their family. We miss them and thank them so much for all that they did for us at All Saints'. Happily, they still wish to keep in touch! Vail Sale has kindly taken over the hospitality role, which is progressing well.

For many years Susan Hassanein ran the Institute, which is an important source of income for All Saints'. When she decided to resign Geoff Chant agreed to take over the work. We are very grateful to them both because there is much to do in that role. Susan will look after the churchyard and all that that involves for the time being.

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

For most of the year the church building has been open every day between 9.30 am and 4.30 pm for private prayer.

Everyone is welcome to attend the wide range of services on offer at All Saints'. These are: 10am Communion on Wednesdays; 8.00 am on Sundays twice a month (BCP on the first week and Common Worship Communion the second week); the main 9.30 Sung Parish Eucharist on Sundays, Choral Evensong monthly, and additional services for major feasts and when required for community bodies. Prayers for Peace continue to be offered weekly.

Streaming of the 9.30 am service is now a regular feature in our services with a team of helpers enabling the shy, the enquiring and the housebound to share our services.

Morning Prayer by Zoom has maintained a regular congregation of around eight and has been continued throughout by Anne Anthony.

Our beautiful traditional Choral Evensong, which attracts interest from visitors as well as our own congregation, is held once a month. The annual All Souls Memorial Service was well attended and appreciated. Christmas was full of the usual joyful services: Mothers' Union Advent Service; the Advent Carol Service; the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols; the hugely popular Crib Service and culminating in the wonderful Midnight Mass and Christmas Day service – all had the church full of people. Revd Kate again included the 'Blue Christmas' service for those who find Christmas a difficult season, and we were delighted at the number of shoppers on the High Street as well as other members of the Banstead Five Churches ecumenical group who stopped to sing Carols in the Orchard with us.

The aim remains to provide opportunities for worship, understanding that one style cannot fulfil everyone's needs. People are welcome to drop into church for a time of reflection and our prayer space, with a votive stand and 'prayer tree', are available for private devotion to all who need it. Paper 'leaves' are available for people to write their prayers and hang them on the tree and these are offered to God in a short service once a month.

Revd Kate has continued to enliven and restore us after a long period without secure leadership. She held another teaching week of 'Ignatian Prayer' in July at a different time of day to give others a chance to experience this unique form of prayer.

In January and February Revd Kate presented the 'Sycamore' course over a number of weeks. It proved to be a gentle but profound introduction to Christianity, drawing two attendees to Confirmation later in the year. It is hoped to repeat other parts of the course annually. Later on in October and November we held a Bible Course over two full days at a retreat centre in Woking. We learnt a great deal and were well treated. We hope to repeat the idea of a closer study of the Bible again.

The house groups continued to meet regularly, including a Celtic Spirituality Group and a Bible Study group. These provided opportunity to develop understanding of Christianity in a supportive atmosphere. The 'Exploring the Faith' discussion group continued.

As well as holding our regular services All Saints' practice is still to enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones through life. Through baptism we thank God for the gift of life; in marriage, public vows are exchanged with God's blessing; and through funeral services family and friends express their grief, give thanks, and commend the person into God's keeping. In 2025 there were 9 baptisms, 4 confirmations, 2 marriages, 6 funerals held in church, 7 funerals taken at a crematorium and 22 burials of ashes.

MISSION, PASTORAL CARE AND OUTREACH

Previous holders of the Children and Families Worker post have laid the groundwork for future development of our children's ministry. Our new CFW will build on this work. In the period when the post was vacant Revd Kate continued occasional assemblies in our local schools, and we hosted special school services for seasons such as Harvest and Christmas.

Young people are also active members of the Choir which, as well as providing a musical education, functions as a pastoral and social support for them. Two young organists are using the church organ to practise and improve their skills.

Safeguarding is always a high priority and all personnel in relevant roles undergo DBS checks and training as required. We pay due regard to the guidance issued by the House of Bishops. Our Safeguarding Officer, Mrs Tina Douglas, regularly checks procedures and training needs as recommended by the Diocese and is in constant touch with the Diocesan leaders on current needs.

Recently we have had to change our DBS procedure following a data breach in the provider's systems. At present the diocese has taken over the role until a new provider is found.

The national Church has had to face huge criticism of their handling of safeguarding concerns particularly in the reports of Alexis Jay. The General Synod has not yet adopted her recommendations and so we wait to learn how the Church will police this difficult subject in the future.

Visits continued to some care homes and the Pastoral Assistants and Lay Ministers visited the housebound and sick in person. We have also started to grow and train more members for our Pastoral Team.

'Sing for Joy', designed particularly for people with dementia, but enjoyed by many, was held regularly for 10 months of the year with a summer break. It is truly a joyful experience and attracts a very wide audience now.

Heritage Open Day

All Saints' took part once again in this national festival in September. The day included displays of our history, and sight of our historic books. There was an interesting illustrated talk, a bell ringing demo at midday and a Children's Church Trail. Finally in the afternoon there was a walking tour of interesting graves in the churchyard. The event was well advertised and helped our many visitors to learn more about the church.

For the Christmas Community Event, organised by local businesses in November, we ensured that the church was open for quiet visits and prayer if required.

We support the Epsom & Ewell Foodbank. Members of the congregation leave items at the back of the church and these are collected weekly by a member of the Foodbank. Where specific items are needed details are published in the weekly pew sheet and the congregation is very generous in their response. This continues to function as the demand for its services grows.

We are also very fortunate to have an active Mothers' Union which, in addition to their local work of providing support for women and families in difficult conditions, continued to contribute to the MU's international work for literacy and women's projects.

We continue our overseas mission involvement, supporting the African Children School in The Gambia, via the UK-registered charity BACSECT established by Revd John and Dorothy Baxter.

Communications continue to be important. A newsletter is produced every month and circulated to any who request it either in paper format or electronically. This provides an insight into All Saints' life with a useful diary of events. Current information is maintained on the website A Church Near You (<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8081/>) pending development of our own website.

FINANCE AND NET ZERO

We thank Robert Collier, Parish Treasurer, for all his work with our finances. He organised a stewardship campaign and highlighted Generosity Week to boost our individual giving. In addition, he has become involved in the diocesan Net Zero project.

THE CHURCH COMPLEX

The Church Complex provides a valuable resource for the community, both inside the buildings and in the surrounding grounds. The church is much loved by the villagers and visitors who often remark on how peaceful the building is.

The church continues to be cleaned regularly and all normal activities in this area continue successfully. We aim to keep it open every day for private prayer until about 4.30 pm.

The Church Institute also continues to provide facilities for the Open Door Café, a friendly place run by volunteers from the Banstead Five Churches and others. This is open Tuesday to Saturday. The Church Institute is hired out to many community groups including the Pilgrim Pantomime Company, which puts on a successful annual pantomime in January. The main hall is used in term-time by a pre-school.

Between the church building and the High Street lies a green area called the Church Orchard, belonging to the church and treated as a village green by local people where village events are held such as the May Fair, Village Day, the Christmas Community Event, and ecumenical carol-singing.

Local people have a keen interest in the extensive churchyard, as a place to remember loved ones, to find peace in green tranquillity, or, since it is criss-crossed by well used public footpaths, to use as a through route to the High Street. Tree surgeons carry out work on the 140+ trees in the churchyard when required, pruning, trimming and where necessary felling to keep everything safe. Maintenance work continued to be well supported by a local voluntary organisation, Banstead Village in Bloom, who generously provided regular and very beneficial gardening help (including litter collection). Again, only a minimum of repair work was carried out by Surrey Highways Authority to the public footpaths for which they are responsible, so some remain potentially hazardous to the less able.

The curate's house at 14 Glenfield Road continued to be rented and managed by the Premises team using the services of a local estate agent, which ensures it is kept well maintained and produces an income for All Saints'.

DEANERY SYNOD

The members of Deanery Synod elected from this church provide the PCC with an important link between the parish and the activities and wider structures of the Church.

ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS

We have been committed for many years to our covenant as a member of the Banstead Five Churches (our Local Ecumenical Partnership), which calls for increasing fellowship, joint worship and prayer, and development of Christian education for both children and adults.

The LEP held the Walk of Witness on Good Friday; the Remembrance Service; the Carol Singing in the Orchard; the Annual Pantomime and provides volunteers to work in the Open Door cafe. Owing to a decline in volunteers it has been necessary for the churches to reconsider how to move forward in the future.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Revd Kate has embraced life at All Saints'. She has decided to continue offering different parts of the Sycamore course in the near future. It aims to help anyone who is interested to find an accessible way into the complexities of Christianity. We are encouraged by the Diocesan Parish Needs Process to help define future goals

We very much hope that in the coming year we will, with her help and guidance, continue to provide support to our local community in many and varied ways, being open and flexible to needs as they arise.

INVESTMENT POLICY

The PCC seeks to mitigate loss of value through inflation by cautious and simple investment of funds. It is not appropriate to have an aggressive active treasury management policy seeking to maximise returns.

Excess cash should be invested in risk-free deposit accounts, or with the agreement with the PCC, in Church of England Board of Finance (CBF) investment funds operated by CCLA (the fund manager of investments for Churches, Charities and Local Authorities).

Risk free deposit accounts are those with the CCLA or up to £120,000 in any FCA regulated financial institution.

Endowment funds should be invested in the CBF Church of England Investment fund.

RESERVES POLICY

The PCC has an agreed reserves policy which is summarised below:

Cash reserves are that part of the unrestricted reserves representing cash held at bank along with short term debtors and creditors.

The PCC aims to retain cash reserves sufficient to pay its immediate financial obligations and to maximise its cash reserves for future expenditure considering the cost of maintaining an historic grade II* listed building.

The PCC can authorise a deficit of expenditure over income in a financial year and consequently the use of historical cash reserves, normally identified at the time of setting the budget. The PCC can agree to use any unrestricted cash reserves by re-designating between funds as necessary.

When cash reserves fall lower than a threshold of 6 months' worth of cash expenditure (currently equivalent to £90,000) the PCC needs to take steps to reduce expenditure and/or increase cash reserves. Such steps would include realising investments, reducing discretionary spend, postponing payment of the Parish Share and increasing income.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The results for the year are summarised in the Statement of Financial Activities on pp. 12-13.

Total income amounted to £214,259 (2024: £194,911), an increase on the previous year, due to increases from donations and increased income from the Church Institute.

Total resources expended amounted to £227,735 (2024: £257,934), the decrease mainly due lower energy costs now that more favourable supply contracts are available.

As a result, net movement before unrealised gains was a loss of £13,476 (2024: £63,023 loss) and which included non-cash charges for depreciation of £25,866 (2024: £27,119).

Cash at bank and on deposit was £182,849 (2024: £161,838).

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The powers and duties of PCCs are laid down by the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956. Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. Members can be co-opted to the Council when occasional vacancies arise.

The PCC operates through a number of teams including those covering worship, premises, outreach, and finance all of which report back to it regularly.

The PCC has a programme of identifying major risks to which it is exposed. The PCC has a safeguarding policy in place that follows the Diocesan safeguarding procedures. Financial procedures, mainly comprising segregation of duties and budgetary controls, have been reviewed and are considered sufficient.

MEMBERS OF THE PCC

Incumbent	Revd Kate Blake	Chair
Churchwardens	Tina Douglas	Vice-Chair, Safeguarding Officer
	Anne Anthony (replaced Geoff Chant 6.4.2025)	
Deanery Synod reps	Susan Hassanein	
	Ivor Leyland	
	Susan Major	PCC Secretary
Elected members	Emma Andrews	
	Alan Clarke	
	Geoff Chant (from 6.4.25)	
	Robert Collier	Treasurer
	Lin Dunford (until 22.7.2025)	
	Dennis Fox (until 6.4.2025)	
	Robert Harris	
	Graham Lister	
	Helen Poulton (from 6.4.2025)	
	Margaret Thomas	
	Natalie Thomas	
	Rosemary Whipp	

The Annual Vestry Meeting 2025 and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) were held on Sunday 6 April 2025.

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, BANSTEAD
SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2025

	Actual 2021	Actual 2022	Actual 2023	Actual 2024	Actual 2025
<u>Donations and Legacies</u>					
<i>Planned Giving</i>					
- Regular giving by banker's order	49,318	44,453	43,735	47,964	57,438
- Envelope Scheme	7,070	7,259	4,779	4,135	75
	56,388	51,712	48,514	52,099	57,513
<i>Single donations</i>	4,974	8,136	1,956	9,671	7,112
<i>Income tax recoverable</i>	15,481	14,884	15,394	16,509	16,670
<i>Collections for general purposes</i>	4,654	5,745	8,180	12,373	15,061
<i>Legacies</i>	-	24,507	3,000	1,000	2,000
<i>Votive stand</i>	262	650	856	1,148	1,499
<i>Fabric Fund</i>	-	-	20,950	-	-
	£ 81,759	£ 105,634	£ 98,850	£ 92,800	£ 99,855
<u>Charitable Activities</u>					
<i>Church Institute</i>	37,989	53,531	47,531	55,214	65,467
<i>Open door</i>	3,209	6,464	7,045	7,956	7,560
<i>Magazine</i>	1,318	-	-	-	-
<i>Fees</i>	8,214	8,719	7,964	4,639	5,108
<i>Ground maintenance subsidy</i>	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500
<i>Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme</i>	-	-	13,428	-	-
<i>Income from government grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Other income</i>	-	-	-	98	63
	£ 55,230	£ 73,214	£ 80,468	£ 72,407	£ 82,698
<u>Investments</u>					
<i>Dividend income</i>	3,065	3,983	3,589	3,645	3,732
<i>Interest income</i>	1,046	378	5,415	4,059	3,674
<i>Property income</i>	20,491	22,000	25,557	22,000	24,300
	£ 24,602	£ 26,361	£ 34,561	£ 29,704	£ 31,706
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	£ 161,591	£ 205,209	£ 213,879	£ 194,911	£ 214,259
<u>Resources expended</u>					
<i>Charitable Activities</i>	92,312	96,137	178,094	88,084	74,313
<i>Donations</i>	1,047	1,317	3,505	2,153	3,369
<i>Church Institute</i>	32,334	43,160	52,090	49,950	34,453
<i>Expenditure on raising funds</i>	-	-	669	5,013	5,505
<i>Parish Share / (Diocesan Quota)</i>	93,831	108,807	110,030	112,734	110,095
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	£ 219,524	£ 249,421	£ 344,388	£ 257,934	£ 227,735

NET INCOME / EXPENDITURE	£ (57,933)	£ (44,212)	£ (130,509)	£ (63,023)	£ (13,476)
Unrealised gains on investments	17,259	(16,012)	11,290	3,006	(5,346)
Total funds b/f	726,542	685,868	625,644	506,425	446,408
TOTAL FUNDS	£ 685,868	£ 625,644	£ 506,425	£ 446,408	£ 427,586
Represented by:					
Cash at bank and deposits	315,755	315,053	181,362	161,838	182,849
Debtors	19,893	20,546	39,377	22,222	14,248
Liabilities	(3,165)	(20,106)	(8,634)	(7,859)	(8,506)
	332,483	315,493	212,105	176,201	188,591
Investments	136,021	120,009	131,299	134,305	128,959
Tangible fixed assets	217,364	190,142	163,021	135,902	110,036
TOTAL NET ASSETS	£ 353,385	£ 625,644	£ 506,425	£ 446,408	£ 427,586
Net income before dep'n & unreal'd gains	(30,430)	(16,990)	(103,388)	(35,904)	12,390

CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL

This year, we were required to revise rather than renew our Electoral Roll. We only renew the Electoral Roll every 6 years, and the next renewal is not until 2031.

Our current numbers remain similar to last year with 130 people on the Roll, 65 of whom are resident and 65 of whom are non-resident in the parish. Over the past two weeks a current list of those on the Electoral Roll (showing names only) has been displayed in the church by the South Door to enable parishioners to check their inclusion on the Roll. The list will be taken down following this meeting.

Very sadly, four of our longstanding church members on the Electoral Roll have died this past year and another has moved away. But we are delighted to have welcomed another five people, including our new Children's Worker.

Anyone who has missed getting their names added to the Electoral Roll can do so at any time but that will not form a part of our Electoral Roll numbers we send to Guildford Diocese following this year's APCM.

Ros Young, Electoral Roll Officer

CHILDREN'S WORK IN 2025

Officially starting as Children & Families worker on 1st November 2025, I have been developing personally in various areas such as discipleship, reinforcing various teaching methods from a religious perspective and strengthening my knowledge of the Bible through the Foundations in Ministry and other *ad hoc* sessions, run by the Diocese.

We ran Advent services for the Scouts, Banstead Infant and Junior Schools and the Crib Service for the wider community. We connected with some local families during the Banstead Christmas lights switch-on and one of those families started coming to church during Advent.

We have started running weekly provision for children 0-10 at our 9:30am Sunday service with gentle learning and activities that link with the adult services, to help families grow together in faith.

Chris Murray, Children & Families Worker

ALL SAINTS' YOUTH (ASY) IN 2025

ASY is our youth group for young people aged 11–18. We meet on the second and fourth Sunday of each month in the Institute from 5:00 to 6:30pm. Our aim is to offer a relaxed, sociable space where friendships can grow, supported by a light spiritual element.

Sessions are varied and hands-on: we cook together, play board games, grow plants, and enjoy plenty of time to chat. Out in the community, we take part in litter picks and support B5 events



such as the Walk of Witness and carol singing around the Orchard bonfire. The group is run by two adult volunteers and currently has four regular young members.

In 2025 the group enjoyed many of our much-loved food-themed activities - pancakes for Shrove Tuesday, edible bonfires for Guy Fawkes, biscuit decorating, and Christingles during Advent. This year we also tried something new, creating Advent flower arrangements with the wonderful support of Pam and Margaret.

Penny Flohr & Janice Povey

CHURCH MUSIC IN 2025

It was with tremendous sadness that we learned of the death of Hazel Richardson, a long-serving and experienced contralto voice. Her health, both physical and mental, had declined rapidly and significantly though she continued to attend rehearsals and services almost to the end of her life. It is our hope that she has taken her rightful place in the celestial choir.

Our choir continues to support the music, and spoken parts of the service, at the weekly Sunday morning Mass and monthly services of Choral Evensong. I continue to be encouraged by Evensong attendance; that people are willing to venture out, often in the most dreadful weather, on a Sunday evening indicates this service certainly fulfils a need.

On Palm Sunday we presented Stainer's Crucifixion, a well-known work for tenor and bass soloists, choir and congregation. A large congregation gathered to listen and join in the hymns. Very heavy rain just before the service didn't seem to dissuade many from attending. We hope to present Olivet to Calvary, a similar work, on Palm Sunday in 2026.



As ever, services of Advent Carols and Nine Lessons and Carols were enhanced enormously by the musical offerings of our choristers. We usually include a newly learned anthem at Nine Lessons and Carols; this year it was Rutter's 'All bells in paradise', composed in 2012.

None of what we achieve happens by magic. Working hard in rehearsals enables us to make the most of our God-given gift and use our voices to offer praise to the glory of God on behalf of the congregation. I wish to record my thanks to our choristers, not just for their singing but also for the other tasks that are necessary for a choir to operate effectively: music must be got out ready (and filed away again after use), robes need to be repaired, washed and ironed and emails both informative and encouraging need to be circulated... None of this happens other than through dedication and a desire to see the choir flourish.

It goes without saying that a choir can't exist without choristers so, if you have got this far, I urge you to consider offering your own voice to our efforts. If you don't then the choir will die, as has happened already in so many parish churches up and down the land. If you are not sure about how your voice might fit in or need help reading music you can be assured that we will teach you. We are the most welcoming and encouraging group of singers that I have ever encountered.

Jan Pringle, Director of Music

THE SERVERS TEAM IN 2025

The serving team have been able to provide acolytes and/or a crucifer for all the appropriate services throughout the year. This year one of our long-standing members, Lin Dunford, moved away to be closer to her family. We are very grateful to her for her many years of service and wish her and Mike every blessing in their new home.

During the year, we are pleased to have welcomed Gabriela Weiss Clarke on to our team, who after training has quickly settled into her role and is a great addition to our group.



Many of the team also joined the All Saints' procession through Banstead for the May Queen event and led the annual procession from the church to the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday.

We are always pleased to have new members so if you would like to know more about joining us, please contact me for further information. You would be most welcome.

My special thanks to the whole team for their continuing support and enhancing our worship at All Saints'

Alan Clarke

CHURCH BELLS & RINGING 2025

Ringling in 2025 followed the regular pattern of Wednesday evening practices and on Sundays for the 9.30 service and for 6.30 Choral Evensong on 3rd Sundays and/or major feasts. Additional service ringling took place on Ash Wednesday and Corpus Christi, for the Advent and Christmas Carol Services, and for Christmas Eve 'Midnight' and Christmas morning.

Our group grew during the year with one person returning to ringling after a break of many years, and two very committed to the process of learning to ring from scratch. Combined with another's progression to independent ringling without needing assistance, by the end of the year we were able to ring six bells on more occasions.

We continued our social activity with approximately monthly 'tea and scones' after practice, and in March we held our tower meal at Ciao Italia.

We thank Malcolm Clarke for his faithful service to our ringling, and are sad that during the year he decided that health issues required him to give up this activity.

Part of gaining experience as a ringer, and being of help to other towers, is to join another tower's weekly practice. In the first half of the year we joined Epsom Common three times, and we are grateful to ringers from Epsom Common, Epsom and Ashted for their support of our practices.

Local area ringers helped to make up the numbers for ringing for the two All Saints' weddings. Ringing events in the Surrey and Guildford areas also provided opportunities for ringing and socialising – we were pleased to host the Surrey Association AGM in May. We continue, where possible, to make our bells available to visiting ringers who may be on tour in the area.

We joined in with the special country-wide commemorative ringing for the 80th Anniversary of VE Day (8 May) and VJ Day (15 August). Representatives of Banstead British Legion attended on both occasions, and on VE Day we were pleased to be joined by local Beavers and their leaders.

In September members of the band hosted a talk/information session about the bells and bellringing as part of Heritage Weekend.

In October former Banstead ringers Revd Vivien and Phillip Turner celebrated their Golden Wedding. John Tickett and Richard Anthony were able to join their son James and other ringers at Graffham, West Sussex for a quarter peal to mark the occasion.

As we have **eight** wonderful bells in the tower, and not enough ringers to do them justice, we would encourage anyone who is interested in learning to ring to get in touch.

Anne Anthony

PRAYERS FOR PEACE

For a few years now, since the Ukraine invasion, a few regular worshippers have been very supportive of prayers for peace in church.

Peace is a precious thing to have, and even more precious when it is taken away.

Our regular Wednesday morning meetings in the Lady Chapel after the eucharist are our personal regular petitions on behalf of All Saints, and indeed on behalf of Banstead for that peace which so many peoples in today's world seek.

We have regular said prayers, with Bible passages, and psalms, together with an interesting discussion about those conflict areas which are topical. We have music too!

We are very relaxed and friendly at the meetings although the subject matter is so dire. The meetings last about thirty to forty minutes.



George Harcourt-Vernon

SING FOR JOY

'Sing for Joy' meets monthly in Church for those who enjoy singing, and is ideal for 'Reviving the memories and lifting the Spirits'. It is a relaxed and chatty morning of music, when we sing songs and hymns organised into themes.

Our team of helpers (importantly our two ladies who present, and our pianist, as well as Ron who looks after the words on the screen) make this a happy morning for everyone. Each of the helpers plays their part. We enjoy refreshments, and celebrate birthdays and anniversaries. About 40-45 people come regularly, some walking, some coming by bus or car, and even taxi.



We are grateful for the support of our Vicar Kate, and our church friends who help with refreshments, with moving the piano and lectern, or by chatting to our visitors, or who offer help in any other way. The morning ends with a final song 'Be back Soon' and a Blessing. Several times a year, our church friends provide a little gift with love from All Saints, for occasions such as Valentine's Day, Easter 🐣, Harvest, and Christmas.

Veronica Lansdown

'EXPLORING THE FAITH' IN 2025

The 'Exploring the Faith', led by Rosemary Whipp, is now well established and usually meets fortnightly on Monday mornings in the Orchard Room. (It's called *The Faith* because Christianity is always the focus, not faith in general.) We cherish our ecumenical identity and count ourselves fortunate to have an RC and an occasional URC member.

Our meetings start with prayer and then we read a book over several weeks and discuss the ideas raised, informally and cheerfully. In Lent we turn into a Lent group, using the book used by other church groups which in 2025 was Jane Williams' *The Sacraments*, though we found this somewhat over-full for our five meetings. But also in 2025 the EF group turned to the Pilgrim Course to guide us through first the Creeds, then the Beatitudes – basic, yes, but all the more needed thereby.

Our discussions are wide-ranging, raising questions which engage our interest though, as often, answers are harder.

We're a friendly group and welcome new members, even if just dipping a toe. Free coffee, tea and sometimes biscuits! So if you're free on Monday mornings why not give us a try? Speak to Rosemary Whipp (01737 359764).

Susan Major

CHURCH FLOWERS 2025



Easter arrangements

It gives the flower arrangers great pleasure to provide the weekly pedestal arrangements and decorate the church with displays for Easter, Harvest and Christmas. Eastertide is always a very special time when we work with flowers, including 65 lilies, generously donated by parishioners in memory of their loved ones.

During the year many parishioners have donated flowers for the weekly pedestal arrangement in memory of their loved ones or to mark special occasions. It has been a privilege to work on these arrangements.

We were delighted to arrange the flowers for Lucy and John's wedding in July using a fabulous combination of white roses and sunflowers.



Pedestal – 'in memoriam'



Summer wedding



Harvest arrangement

In December we held our annual Christmas workshops in the Church Institute led by Pam Freeman helped by Gill Gordon and myself. Thirty participants enjoyed making wreaths, swags and table decorations. £684 was raised for the church flower fund.

We are extremely grateful for all the very generous donations we receive which with the money we raised at the Christmas workshops have enabled us to maintain the weekly arrangements and celebrate the Church's festivals with flowers.

My thanks go to all the arrangers for their creativity and enthusiasm and especially Pam Freeman who has shared in the organisation with me. Along with the fun and fellowship there is also a wonderful sense of peace and tranquillity whilst we arrange in our beautiful building.

We know the flowers are much appreciated by all those attending services, those participating in the 'streamed' services and the many visitors. We have received many compliments, thank you.

Margaret McFarlane

MOTHERS' UNION 2025



Part of the Worldwide Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union theme for 2025 was 'Join Us and Join In'. As members of the branch at All Saints' we support each other, our parish and the work of the Mothers' Union worldwide through prayer, worship and practical action.

During the year we enjoyed a full programme of meetings and events. These included three fascinating talks.

At the first, in January, Ros Black told us about the interesting history of Duxhurst, Surrey's Lost Village. In April Trish Hayward-Brown gave a talk entitled 'Loos I have known' telling us about her experiences of travelling the world when she was MU Worldwide President. 'Hilary in the Himalayas' was the title of the talk in June when Hilary Jones spoke about her visit to Nepal where she did the Dhaulagiri Circuit Trek. It was a wonderfully illustrated and insightful talk that left us all quite breathless! At our meeting in October we welcomed Pam Freeman who gave a flower arranging demonstration entitled 'Autumn Glory'. Using flowers and foliage from her garden she created a stunning display in beautiful autumnal colours.

Our annual Lent and Advent services were led by Reverend Kate. These services are an opportunity for a time of quiet reflection with words from scripture, Ignatian and personal meditation, prayer and familiar hymns. Afterwards we gathered for tea in the Orchard Room.

Members and friends enjoyed meeting together for food and fellowship at our various social events. On a warm, sunny evening in May we held a 'Bring and Share' supper. Veronica and Alan Lansdown very kindly opened their beautiful garden for an Afternoon Tea Party in early July. In glorious weather, we sat in the shade of a gazebo enjoying delicious cake and good conversation. In September the outing to Denbies Vineyard was much enjoyed. We relaxed and chatted over a leisurely lunch, visited the art exhibition and looked round the gift shop. In November we joined with the Drama Group for a most enjoyable 'Bring and Share' lunch.

MU at Denbies 2025



Afternoon Tea Party



'Bring & Share' Lunch

On the morning of Maundy Thursday members of the branch, accompanied by four grandchildren, were privileged to create the Garden of Gethsemane in the Lady Chapel ready for the 'Watch until Midnight'. One of the children on returning in the dark evening to the candle-lit Chapel described it as a magical experience.



Lady Day



Garden of Gethsemane



Village Day

At Village Day on 5th July we ran our 'Mothers' Market' Stall selling homemade cakes, preserves and garden produce. We were delighted to raise £249 which will benefit Mothers' Union projects in this country and worldwide. Our presence at this event is excellent outreach to the local community, an opportunity for us to tell people about the work of the Mothers' Union.

On the fourth Wednesday of each month the branch celebrates Corporate Communion. A member leads the intercessions and we remember fellow members across the world in the 'Wave of Prayer'.

Members went to Guildford Cathedral on two occasions. Firstly on 25th March for the annual Lady Day and Commissioning Service led by Bishop Andrew. The service began with the parade of branch banners down the nave after which we heard testimonies from MU representatives about their work in prisons, with the Refuges and AFIA. An address by Bishop Andrew and the Commissioning of the MU Diocesan President and Trustees was followed by the Eucharist. The 'Pilgrimage of Prayer' on 2nd September was led by Christ Church, Epsom with the theme 'Join us and Join in – Spread the light of Jesus'. Banstead branch put five names in the Book of Remembrance: Anne Ellingham, Joy Teunion, Gill Woodhouse, Pat Lawrence and Hazel Richardson. We remember these members with great affection and give thanks for all they contributed to the MU and the life of All Saints'. We were delighted that members of their families were able to join us.

Due to our fund raising and generous donations we were very pleased to be able to make contributions to several Mothers' Union projects. We also donated two beautiful shawls to All Saints' for use at Baptism services.

Donna Taylor organises the sale of MU cards and books in the 'Open Door' cafe and at meetings. The branch delivers Baptism Anniversary cards in the parish. MU members and other parishioners place flowers in the Lady Chapel each week and we thank Trish Clarke for organising the rota.

On 4th May we offered our help once again at the Village May Queen Celebrations. Wearing our sashes we promote the Mothers' Union in the wider community.

At the end of 2025 our membership was 27 members plus 1 twilight member

ALL SAINTS' BANSTEAD MU COMMITTEE:

Liz Claus, Karen Javeleau, Veronica Lansdown, Margaret McFarlane, Elisabeth Rogers, Donna Taylor

ALL SAINTS' ZOOM COFFEE

All Saints' Zoom Coffee continued to run online every Thursday 11.00am-12.00 noon through 2025, as it has done ever since its inception during the pandemic. For many and varied reasons we've valued the chance to connect with others without leaving the comfort of our own homes. We've discovered its advantages for keeping in touch from a distance, e.g. Dover, Inverness, too!

Since the lifting of lockdown the group has met up in person and outdoors once a year, this August for a cuppa-in-the-conservatory to dodge forecast

rain. And in Advent we hosted very special guests – the Holy Family – as we marked Posada online together. But anyone is welcome, any week. Just ask for the link – and bring your own coffee ☺.



Hilary Jones

BIBLE STUDY GROUP IN 2025

The Bible study group usually meets on Tuesday evenings once a fortnight, moving round the houses of some members. There are eight of us regular members but we're always happy to welcome visitors and new members – just let me know at susan.major3@btinternet.com if you're interested.

Our meetings in 2025 considered the letters of James, Peter and John, assisted by Tom Wright's *Early Christian Letters*. There's a lot to think about in these, and we haven't yet exhausted them. We also learnt a lot about the early Church, and how the first generations of Christians found their way through the many ideas and interests of their times and places – and we're finding how often these letters resonate with our own era.

We end our meetings with a short service of said Compline, led by the home-owner, which we all feel enriches our gathering.

Susan Major

BANSTEAD CHURCH INSTITUTE 2025

As you may know I started assisting Sue Hassanein with management of the Institute at the end of 2024 when I was a churchwarden after she stood down following many years as the Institute Coordinator. I took over fully on a temporary basis in April 2025 after I finished my time as a warden. So I would like to start off by thanking Sue for all her help and advice in what to be honest has been a challenging year getting to grips with something she made to look so easy.

One of the major tasks is to draw up 8 annual contracts and 3 licences for the regular hirers and licensees of the Institute, get these agreed and hard copies signed after sighting proof of each organisation's Public Liability insurance. Not a five-minute job.

The Little Orchard Pre-school, one of our 3 licensees, has settled in well although we have had some issues with use of the car park and generally getting to know each other. They have had some staff changes and most of my contact on behalf of All Saints is with Mr Elliott King who owns the company. They do look to be operating successful and as Sue said last time their extensive use of the Institute five days a week does reflect very beneficially on our finances.

With Premises agreement the fencing round the outside play area was replaced with the Pre-school arranging and paying for that. This has greatly improved the look of that area.

We did have an issue with damage to the under support of the stage caused by one of their trolleys which came to light in October and following inspection and discussion with Premises this will be repaired in 2026 with the Pre-school paying for the work.

The Banstead Institute Men's Club, or the Snooker club, also continues to function very successfully with a healthy membership and we have a very good relationship with them. Together with Premises we have been able to negotiate some further increase to their licence fee which again has helped All Saints' finances.

We also of course have the Open Door café which is open from Tuesday to Saturday. As previously there are still not enough helpers for it to be open on Monday. However it remains very popular, with the volunteer helpers continuing to work hard to make it such a success. So much so that, as Sue said last time, the fact that many patrons come every day is a measure of how valued this facility is.

The Orchard Room continues to be used for other mainly church related activities such as the Vicar's Sycamore Course, All Saints Youth, Exploring the Faith, the Mothers' Union, Lent Groups, Lin and Mike Dunford's farewell, PCC and other meetings plus of course the Ladies Lunch club, not forgetting coffee after the 9.30am Sunday service. Occasionally it has also been used for funeral wakes.

During the week on Wednesday to Thursday following the Pre-school finishing at around 3.15pm we have our usual hirers being the Karate club, dance school and Banstead Fitness plus the Yoga class who also meet on Saturday in the Gable Room.

West End Stage Stars, one of our bigger hirers, have sessions in the Gable Room most weeks and three-day workshops during half term when the hall is also available during the day.

Our other big hirers are the Markets every 2nd and 4th Saturday and the Antique Fair which is every third Saturday. These continue to do well although there is an indication that the organisers are finding it a little harder to sell all their stalls and footfall being a little less on some occasions.

The other regular hirer we have is the Curzon Cinema which puts on 2 or 3 monthly showings at the beginning of the year and after the summer. These are very popular with those who cannot make it to the cinemas in Sutton or Epsom and enjoy being able to view with local residents.

One of the annual events which takes place is the Pilgrim Pantomime Company's production at the end of January with scenery work in August and rehearsals some Sundays from September for next year's pantomime. Largely made up of members from the Banstead Five Churches, it was *Cinderella* this year which was well received with all the cast being young people.

Other annual events which involve the Institute and come under its responsibility as they are centred on the Orchard, are the May Fayre, Banstead Village Day and the BVRA Christmas Event. All these were successful events and seemed to have more people attending than last year.

All of the activities which take place in the Institute and Orchard are managed under All Saints online booking system, Hallmaster. The monthly invoicing is very ably handled by Ron Wilks with he and I making the necessary entries. This system continues to be very effective in ensuring that hire and licences fees are paid promptly and where not, we can quickly chase them up.

The Parish Office is situated in the Institute on the corridor adjacent to the Orchard Room. The All Saints' Parish Administrator Ruth Mash left us in June, and the Office is now manned by volunteers.

Cleaning of the building continues to be carried out by Bright and Beautiful, Banstead, since I first engaged them back in 2020. This has to be done every morning before the Pre-school starts at 8.00am to ensure the hall is clean and hygienic for the young people and the toilets are in good order for them and the Open Door customers. We have an excellent relationship with this company, who also clean the church, and are readily able to adjust our changing needs over half terms and the summer holidays.

In conjunction with Alan Clarke, the Premises team lead, all the various maintenance and safety requirements have been carried out during the year. These include every six months, in line with statutory legislation, the fire alarm system being tested and annually the inspection and replacement as necessary of all fire extinguishers of which there are 10 in the building. Just as an indication a fire alarm test costs £150 and a new foam extinguisher £55, both plus VAT.

The four annual pest control inspections took place and the statutory emergency lighting test was carried out as well as repairs effected to the Gable Room windows, men's and ladies' toilets.

The Hive system remotely controlling heating in the three separate sections of the building has continued to be extremely convenient and cost effective. This ensures extra heating can be provided when needed outside the scheduled programme and turned off if not required.

Whilst this has been very much a transitional year with both Sue and Ruth moving on, the Institute has, I believe, continued to operate effectively. Not only in generating an increased income for All Saints but still able to provide, sitting alongside the church, many valued and interesting activities for the people of Banstead.

Geoff Chant

THE CHURCHYARD AND CHURCH ORCHARD 2025

The churchyard is often admired for its sense of peace and tranquillity, and many people have found solace there in times of difficulty. To others it is just a convenient place to enjoy a sandwich at lunchtime, a quick cut through to the shops, somewhere to stroll with the dog or a chance to bump into acquaintances for a chat. We tend to assume that it is just somewhere to be taken for granted, permanent, never changing.

Not so! The occasion when Revd Maria asked members of Banstead Village in Bloom to raise the canopy of the trees in the Orchard because shoppers on the High Street had told her that ‘they had no idea that there was a church in the park’, was only a decade ago and that seems incredible to us

now. We spent time clearing the debris from the wild scrub behind the Institute because there was frequent evidence of rough sleepers using the area and what is now the Memorial Garden for ashes was frequently littered with syringes, beer cans and spirit bottles. Many people were afraid to use the public footpath on the western border



because the huge hedge of the churchyard obscured the view and made them feel unsafe. Now the space is open and clear and always feels like a safe place. We have so much to thank the members of Banstead in Bloom for and it is a great pleasure to record our appreciation for all that they have done in the past and continue to do for us now.

Many people tending the churchyard on a Friday morning are some of the original members of the group and we are delighted to regard them as friends. Thanks to them the rubbish is cleared away, the grass mown on the ashes plots, graves tidied and so much more besides.

We pay to have the grass professionally strimmed, but it is the volunteers who cut the hedges using their own power tools, collect the brash and store all waste under tarpaulins until it is time for them to burn it all.

In September each year on our Heritage Open Day a member of the Banstead History Group leads a number of guided walks to graves of particular interest. Naturally these include many official war graves as well as those of historical interest, particularly the listed chest tombs. This year paths have been created to enable safe access to many more graves. The nature of the site determines that the surface will always be bumpy but the hard work of making these extra paths has ensured that access is as safe as is possible. The appreciation expressed by mourners who tend graves is obviously heartfelt and sincere.

It is important to have seats that are clean and easily maintained and our dark brown recycled plastic ones have been a great hit with users. Starting in the Garden of Remembrance, they have now been adopted as the standard pattern for all new seating and can be seen to great advantage in The Orchard where CIL funding enabled all the old wooden seats to be replaced in a single operation with the local authority providing the staffing to secure the fixings. We were not successful in replacing the worn surface of the banjo path so that area continues to need regular weeding through the season - by BVIB volunteers, of course.

The Orchard is home to two major events of village life – the May Queen festival and Village Day later in the year. Both saw even greater numbers than ever last year. Whilst most visitors focus on the main purpose of the day, the church is always open and it is noticeable how many people take the opportunity to go in and experience the peace that the lovely building provides.

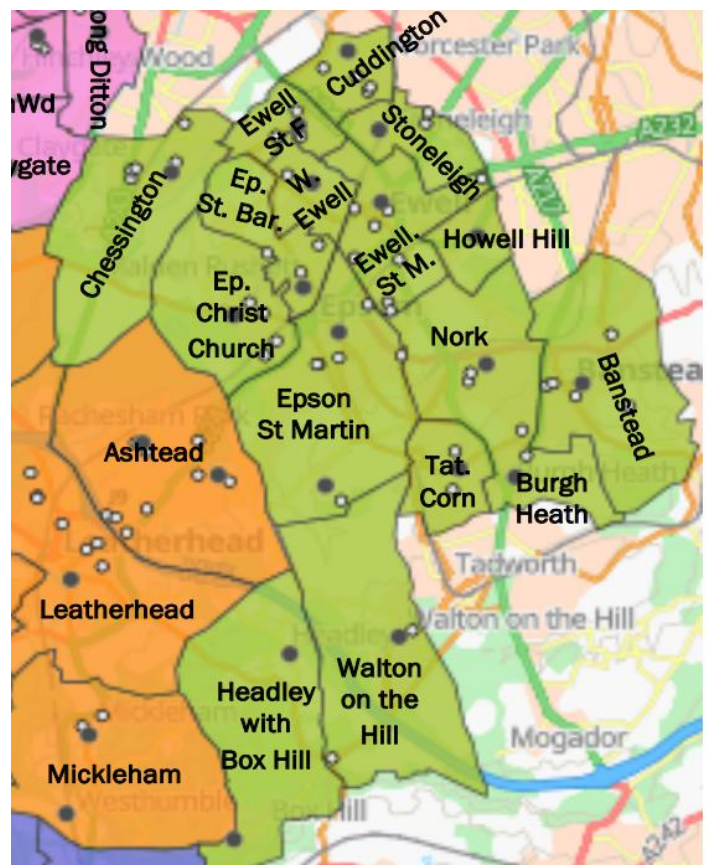
Sue Hassanein

DEANERY SYNOD 2025

All Saints' is a member of Epsom Deanery, encompassing fifteen parishes, and members of each parish (clergy and lay) serve on Deanery Synod. The Synod's function is to enable parishes to share good ideas and disseminate good practice, to hear views from the parishes and to transmit thoughts to Diocesan Synod.

All this in only three meetings a year for lay members, which does result in some lack of continuity, though clergy members share in retreats and other meetings. The Chairman at first in 2025 was Revd Rosemary Donovan of Christchurch, Epsom, but in autumn she left to take up a post in Derbyshire and Revd John Marrow of West Ewell was appointed Area Dean (and Chairman) in her stead. The Synod's Lay Chair was Peter Harvey.

So in 2025 Deanery Synod met three times.



The main business of the January evening concerned finance so our Treasurer Robert also attended. Several speakers from the Diocese and the national Church considered various aspects but all emphasized the need for a shared vision which can identify where we are and create a convincing picture of where we need to be. There was also much useful detail on helpful strategies and resources. As part of our financial planning we were urged to support the Net Zero project, and in fact Robert has now taken the responsibility of Net Zero lead for All Saints'.

The speaker planned for the second meeting unfortunately had to withdraw, so the May meeting was held by Zoom and briskly disposed of necessary business.

The final meeting in October was held in our own All Saints' Church. Clergy members held an election to replace Rosemary Donovan and Des Williamson on Diocesan Synod, and the new members are John Marrow and our own Kate Blake, whom we thank for her willingness to represent our tradition in the diocesan context. The main theme of the evening was Mat Ineson's presentation on 'Discipling the Middle-Aged', i.e. people aged 45 to 64, an under-represented group in many churches. We considered factors perhaps influencing people and then looked at how we may provide what is needed. Here the key is authenticity: we must walk the talk, live the word, if we are to assist others to develop in the church community.

Deanery Synod provides the ideas and the forum for discussion, and for all useful ideas we thank God. It is up to us to implement them. May God give us grace to do so.

Susan Major

SAFEGUARDING IN 2025

At All Saints Banstead we remain committed to upholding the highest standards of protection for our children and vulnerable adults in our care. We undertake the diocesan training and carry out the required DBS checks. We remain vigilant for our young choir members, our visitors for Sing for Joy and the general public at all times. We display the relevant notices in the church and elsewhere.

The IICSA report which was brought to your attention last year led to the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby. His successor Sarah Mullally has made clear her commitment to finding a way ahead for a safeguarding future while apologizing for past mistakes.

We recognized Safeguarding Sunday in November. The diocese provided posters for us to display and an opportunity for me to impress upon the whole congregation that safeguarding is a concern for us all. I received some interesting feedback.

We were glad to be able to appoint a Children and Families Worker this year who has started her responsibilities with great enthusiasm. She will be going into local schools after Christmas.

We had to replace the DBS agent this year because of the data breach of the agent we had used previously. Luckily I had decided that it might be helpful for the new Families Worker to have her helpers checked at the same time through the diocese. These checks are needed regularly by schools to ensure safety from visitors. Most of the checks came through by the end of the year allowing her to plan her visits with an appropriate team. We look forward to seeing more children and their families in church and our other spaces in due course.

We have had another young organist wanting to practise using our church instrument. He is a member of the choir and not technically a minor but we discussed with various parties how best to protect him.

I have attended a number of Zoom Safeguarding presentations this year which keep me up to date but, just as helpful, I am able to hear about the problems and experiences of other Churches in the diocese.

Tina Douglas, Safeguarding Officer

OUR ECUMENICAL LIFE with the BANSTEAD FIVE CHURCHES



Ecumenical life in Banstead has deep roots; the first Week of Prayer for Christian Unity here was held in 1960. A 'Group of Five' emerged in the early 1970s, consisting of the Churches today covenanted together, i.e. All Saints', St Ann's RC Church, Banstead Methodist Church, Banstead United Reformed Church, and St Paul's, Nork. These were renamed the Banstead Five Churches in 1979.

By then some joint activities were flourishing. Some have now ceased but one that survives is the **Good Friday Procession** carrying the Cross along the High Street, and in 2025 this again took place – perhaps the 50th occasion. By 1988 **Lent House Groups** had started, and three of these were again held in 2025, focused on Jane Williams' *The Sacraments* and with good support from All Saints'. These are occasions where we get to know each other informally and benefit from other faith perspectives.

In 1990 the **Open Door Coffee Shop** was blessed by the Bishop of Guildford and opened by the Mayor, and still thrives under five Directors, one from each Church, providing affordable food in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere to a wide range of people. Also still thriving is the annual **Pantomime**, which began as a fund-raiser to build the café premises and continued through popular demand. In 2025 it presented *Cinderella* to enthusiastic audiences.

The Covenant pledging the Churches to work and learn together was signed in 1991; it binds us still.

But by 2025 the Executive Committee, established to coordinate our joint work, was in difficulties. Revd Alex Stevens of Nork with Burgh Heath, was Chairman at the start of the year (Chairmen serve for three years) but moved to a new parish early in the year and a successor could not be identified. Nor did the Executive Committee have a Treasurer or a Secretary, though both were required by its constitution. Furthermore the bank account continued to be frozen.

This did not prevent the Churches sharing some activities, some of which have been mentioned above. They also joined for the **Remembrance Day** service at the War Memorial and for Christmas **Carols in the Orchard** - both well attended. A joint **Advent Service** was held at St Paul's, and Churches invited each other to various events, a D-Day evening of song at the URC, for example.

May God grant that in future years we continue to work together in a deepening friendship.

Susan Major

Postscript: The Banstead Five Churches Trust

One positive expression of unity between our Churches is the Banstead Five Churches Trust. The Trust is a registered charity (reg. no. 1131456) funded by profits from the Open Door café whose objectives are to support local projects which are in line with Christian values. (Grants are made to organisations, not to individuals.) So there are five Trustees, one from each Church, who meet twice a year but keep in touch by email at other times.

In 2025 the Trust made five grants totalling £4500: four grants of £1000 each to Banstead 3rd Scouts, Age Concern Banstead, Banstead Pantry (part of the Foodbank), and St Ann's Memorial Garden; and one of £500 to the URC for Christmas presents for children of inmates at HMP Downview.

More information and application forms from susan.major3@btinternet.com.

COMMUNICATIONS IN 2025

All Saints' continues to develop its communications, though there is much room for improvement.

Live-streaming some services to YouTube is proving increasingly valuable, with viewing figures rising. This is our best way to reach the shy, the exploring and the housebound.

The year's success story was the newsletter which is published monthly: in the summer Sam and Gabriela Clarke kindly agreed to edit it, and brought exciting fresh ideas and excellent eyes for design and layout. Copies are emailed (in colour) to congregation members and other friends, and delivered in hard copy (black and white only) to some local people. Copies are also available in church and in the Open Door café.

For our website we currently use the one supplied (for free!) by the Church of England's A Church Near You (All Saints' is at <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8081/>). This contains notes on forthcoming services and events, plus pages on baptisms, marriages and funerals, and also on All Saints' music, the Institute, the church's history, with facilities for enquiries and donations. Viewing figures rose and rose in 2025, and over 51,000 views were counted in that year, plus over £700 in donations.

Our two Facebook pages, one a closed group, one open and moderated, have languished, and the open one is now moribund. But excellent pictures, with brief notices, are occasionally posted on the closed group's site by public-spirited congregation members and also by Banstead Village in Bloom volunteers. But there is much room for development of social media.

The weekly 'pew paper' contains the week's timetable with brief notices, and is supplied with Sunday's readings. This is emailed out to about 140 people who ask for this, and 93 copies (including three large-print ones) are available in church for use on Sundays and to take away.

Finally – this is Banstead, where people talk to each other, in person and on the telephone. Conversation flourishes, from simple friendly chat to serious discussion and mutual support. Such live communication cannot be measured but should never be under-rated.

Susan Major



YOU ARE WELCOME