

The Church of St. Peter Purse Caundle



Annual Report for 2025

**The APCM will take place on Thursday 21 2026,
at 11.00am in Church**

Review of the Year 2025

We look back at 2025 with encouragement and an enormous sense of pride. In an age where churches are closing and congregation numbers are dwindling in many districts; we view the year as a positive one for St Peter's with consistent attendance and congregation numbers increasing slightly against recent years. Support for our popular services such as Easter and Christmas is buoyant and the decision to create defined themes for each monthly service is generating renewed attendance. Booking enquiries for baptisms and weddings demonstrate that thankfully St Peter's is still a church of choice for many.



Our renowned village cyclists, Sarah and John Howes, completed a charity cycle as part of the annual Ride & Stride event. Compared to other larger parishes, their fundraising total is incredibly impressive and totalled more than £1,350. The money is split between St Peter's and the Dorset Historic Churches Trust and will go towards urgent repairs and building maintenance.

In September our newly created 'Polishing the Pews' crew tackled the dust and cobwebs to give the church a thorough deep clean which restored its sparkle and reminded everyone of what a truly fabulous building we are guardians of.

In October 2025 our Quinquennial Inspection took place. This in-depth inspection of the church fabric and building by specialist surveyors has set out essential repair and maintenance work that is necessary. We will be setting up a group to plan and schedule the preventative or repair measures suggested and look to fundraise accordingly.



The Carol Service and Village Party hosted by the de Pelet family at The Manor House in December was the perfect start to Christmas resulting in a delightful and joyful event. We favour a traditional carol service, one which encourages participation, so we are indebted to the readers and soloist who made this year's event so enjoyable. Your support raised almost £700 and it remains one of the leading fundraisers of the year.

The online newsletter continues to evolve and provides a cohesive way to keep our community updated and now has almost 70 subscribers.

Throughout it all, we hope that the PCC has demonstrated it is fully committed to continuing its work for the good of the village and for our neighbours. With such a small core team, we wish to acknowledge and thank everyone for their support both practical and financial. Without the wonderful team of volunteers who mow the churchyard, carry out repairs, clean, polish the brass work, flower arrangers, those who read the lessons in church, who wash the altar linen, sort the hymns, make coffee or ring the bell for prayer – it would be a much harder job, so thank you!

Financial

In 2025 the total income generated from collections, donations and fundraising was £5,466, which was slightly under but largely in line with 2024.

Our expenditure came to £4,952, which included a part payment towards the Share (which is the amount paid to the diocese to pay for priests and a contribution to central church costs), insurance and electricity.

Whilst this means our basic running costs are covered, we have been unable to pay the full allocation of the Share, but our willingness to contribute by making sensible, viable part-payments is noted and welcomed by the Diocese.

The rising annual costs for the Share, buildings insurance and electricity, mean that St Peter's relies even more on income generated through covenants, standing orders, one-off donations as well as our regular Sunday collections and gift aid, which is eligible for tax relief.

This however puts even greater emphasis on fundraising. We are determined to reinvigorate our calendar of events and explore new social opportunities to build our reserves. We have introduced a QR code (Quick Response Code) which is a digital way of donating that can be done quickly and securely from your phone. This additional method of donating will hopefully assist people who are on holiday, walking groups and tourists who visit the church.

Therefore, it is particularly important that in this annual review, we acknowledge and offer sincere thanks to everyone (including those who are not regular church goers) whose donations and support make a huge difference to our ability look after the church building. We remain committed to ensuring that all monies we raise will be dedicated to preserving the historical Grade I building and maintaining a strong Christian presence in the village.

Church Attendance

There are 25 parishioners on the updated Church Electoral Roll – an increase on the roll figures in previous years. The average Sunday attendance was 15 but this number increases considerably and we are seeing our congregation boosted for key services such as Easter, Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas. We recognise that busy family life isn't always compatible with a Sunday service and is why we are always grateful and welcoming to everyone who joins our services.



In 2025 there were two baptisms and two funeral services. With further baptisms and another wedding planned for 2026, it is an encouraging sign that the Church is still regarded very much part of modern village life.

Future Plans

Canon Richard continues to be a positive force making strides to improve the pastoral service for Purse Caundle and the surrounding parishes, and we are grateful to have his backing and support. The PCC and congregation will miss the presence of Rev Belinda who leaves the role of assistant curate and is taking the next step in her ministry journey.

We were successful in applying for a **Patronal Festival Grant** which will allow us to host a summer Evensong and drinks reception event at the end of June 2026. The Benefice Choir will guide us through this traditional sung service which will be a celebration of our patron saint: St Peter. If this is well attended and there is the appetite for Evensong, we hope to make this an annual summer party event.

There are plans to install a **bench in the graveyard** so that family and friends have somewhere to sit peacefully and reflect whilst visiting their loved ones' graves. More news on how this is progressing will be shared in the monthly village newsletter.

Thanks to recent generous donations we can finally replace the worn-out **Altar Linen** – much of which was donated or purchased many moons ago!

Planning is already underway for the popular annual events such as the **carol service and Christmas party** as well as exploring new ideas. By combining social events and church services we aim to strengthen our financial situation. We are open to suggestions for new events or fundraising ideas.

We still wish to pursue the idea of hosting a **Catholic Mass Service at St Peter's**. Recent requests to the Catholic Diocese of Plymouth (which governs Dorset) have been declined but we will persist and revisit the situation a little further in the future. We will keep people posted on any developments via the newsletter.

How the PCC Works

The PCC is responsible for the maintenance of the Church and meets at regular times throughout the year to discuss matters concerning Church events and funds. If you would like to support the PCC's work or enquire about becoming a member, please speak to any member of the PCC – all levels of support, even on an ad-hoc basis, would be very welcome.

The flower displays and cleaning in Church are done on a monthly rota basis – thank you to all those who volunteer. If anybody would like to help out with flower arranging please contact Mrs Charlotte de Pelet on 07974 802175.

A Church email has been set up for St. Peter's Purse Caundle. You can use stpeterspursecaundle@gmail.com to email any suggestions or ideas for village events.

Membership of the PCC

During 2025 the following served as members of the PCC:

Canon Richard Hancock TSSF	Chair
Mrs Charlotte de Pelet	Churchwarden
Mr Richard Taylor	Treasurer
Mrs Kate Cox	Secretary & Deanery Synod Representative
Mrs Sharon Vincent	

We would always welcome additional members so please get in touch if you wish to learn more.

stpeterspursecaundle@gmail.com

