

**The Annual Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 17th May 2026 @ 11.30am**

All Saints Church, Downshire Square

This pack of information contains:

- Agenda
- Minutes from the previous Annual Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting (Sunday 18th May 2025)
- Annual report for the PCC for the year ending 31st December 2025
- Financial report and accounts of the PCC for the year ending 31st December 2025
- Building and Fabric report from the Churchwardens at St Mark and All Saints
- Report from St Mark's Hall
- Report from All Saints Hall
- Report from Deanery Synod
- Report from Safeguarding Officer
- Report from Health and Safety Officer

The Parish of St Mark and All Saints, Reading

Annual Meeting of Parishioners (Sunday 17th May 2026) @ 11.30am

Agenda

1. Approval of the Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting of Parishioners (held on Sunday 18th May 2025)
2. Appointment of Churchwardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting (Sunday 17th May 2026) @ 11.30am

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting minutes (held of Sunday 18th May 2025)
3. Report on the Electoral Roll
4. Report on Safeguarding (circulated in advance)
5. Report on Health and Safety (circulated in advance)
6. Election of 5 vacancies/ representatives of the laity of the Parochial Church Council to serve for a three-year term
7. Annual report on the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council for the year ending 31st December 2025 (circulated in advance)
8. Financial report and accounts of the Parochial Church Council for the year ending 31st December 2025 (circulated in advance)
9. Report from the churchwardens on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church (circulated in advance)
10. Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod (circulated in advance)
11. Vicars report
12. Parish Discussion
13. Appointment of Independent Examiner
14. Date for the next APCM – by end of May 2027
15. Questions of parish concern (for referral to PCC if necessary)

DRAFT - The Parish of St Mark and All Saints, Reading

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners held at All Saints Church on Sunday, 18th May 2025 at 11.40am

Present: Rev'd Jo (Chair), Jackie John (PCC Secretary), James Butler, Iva Butler, Ron Cummins, Sylvia Cummins, Linda Parish, Angelina Elliott, Hilary Pitcher, Rachel Dunn, Ann Titcombe, Helen McLuckie, Rosie Hughes, Nana Gyebi-Johnson, Elizabeth Hodge, Diana Matthews, John Hodge, Tanya Houghton, Rev'd Jane Lewis.

The meeting was opened at 11.49am

1.	Apologies for absence: Kwaw Elliott, Jess Harris, Levine Whitham, Wendy Smith, Judy Vaughan, Anesta Vaughan, Suzie Carter and Liz Sandford.
2.	Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners held on Sunday 12th May 2024 The minutes typed and circulated were approved as a true reflection of last year's meeting. There were no amends suggested. The minutes were unanimously received.
3.	Appointment of Church Wardens We had two nominations for Church Warden: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kwaw Elliott – St Mark's Church• Linda Parish – All Saints Church Nomination forms have been received from both. Thank you to them both for standing. The meeting accepted and appointed them both to the role of church warden. Unanimous approval.
	This concludes the Annual Meeting of Parishioners

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held at All Saints Church on Sunday, 18th May 2025 at 11.51am

Present: Rev'd Jo (Chair), Jackie John (PCC Secretary), James Butler, Iva Butler, Ron Cummins, Sylvia Cummins, Linda Parish, Angelina Elliott, Hilary Pitcher, Rachel Dunn, Ann Titcombe, Helen McLuckie, Rosie Hughes, Nana Gyebi-Johnson, Elizabeth Hodge, Diana Matthews, John Hodge, Tanya Houghton, Rev'd Jane Lewis.

1.	Apologies for absence: Kwaw Elliott, Jess Harris, Levine Whitham, Wendy Smith, Judy Vaughan, Anesta Vaughan, Suzie Carter and Liz Sandford.
2.	Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 12th May 2024

	<p>The minutes typed and circulated were approved as a true reflection of last year's meeting. There were no amends suggested. The minutes were unanimously received.</p>
3.	<p>Report on Electoral Roll A report prepared by Kwaw Elliott (electoral roll officer) was read out in his absence, as follows:</p> <p>A summary of the prior year (2024) – 121 members on the parish electoral roll. All Saints are 75 and St Mark's is 46.</p> <p>Electoral roll 2025 – This is a completely new electoral roll where everybody had to complete new electoral roll forms. There has been a significant drop. 86 members on the parish electoral roll (a drop of 35). All Saints are 45 and St Mark's is 41.</p> <p>Our thanks were offered to Kwaw for his continued support in this role.</p> <p>Q – What is the drop at All Saints attributable to? A – This is due to a number of reasons: death, worshippers now in care homes and the fact that in 2019 parents needed to be on the church electoral roll to help secure a place at our church schools. This isn't the case anymore and so we have removed a number of names that no longer worship in our church.</p> <p>Q – Could our electoral roll be mentioned at Collective Worship with All Saints Infants School on a Friday morning? – A - Yes, a piece of work about 'Why join our Electoral Roll' could be useful.</p> <p>Q – What is our Electoral Roll? A – The Electoral Roll is a list of people who are over 16 years old and consider this to be their church, regardless of whether they worship here regularly. It helps us with everything we do in the parish and helps guide us in our operating.</p> <p>ACTION – put a detailed article about the electoral roll in the parish newsletter March/ April next year. Rev'd Jo and PCC Secretary.</p> <p>The report and findings were unanimously received.</p>
4.	<p>Report on Safeguarding A report was prepared by Levine Whitham (our Parish Safeguarding Officer) and was circulated at the meeting. The wider church has seen a lot of press coverage about safeguarding over the last 12 months. We have robust safeguarding protocols in place in the Parish to ensure our churches are a safe place of worship. We are about 99% complete on our safeguarding activities on the parish dashboard.. All PCC members are up-to-date with safeguarding training.</p> <p>Q – EH commented that she is not the 'DBS recruiter' – she is the DBS verifier.</p> <p>ACTION – Rev'd Jo to check with the Diocese whether a recruiter is old terminology and now a redundant term.</p>

	<p>The report was unanimously received and accepted.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Report on Health and Safety A report was prepared by Suzie Carter and was circulated as part of the paperwork. A comprehensive Health and Safety check is carried out most months at our churches and presented to PCC.</p> <p>Q – Is there any way the ramp at All Saints Church can be made more user friendly? It is very heavy to move about. Can it be a permanent fixture? A – It can't remain in place otherwise the wooden door won't close.</p> <p>ACTION – PCC members to consider how to make our church more user friendly for disability parishioners.</p> <p>A question about the steepness of the ramp was also raised as this isn't suitable for everyone.</p> <p>Q – Does our H&S policy cover all church buildings or just our churches? A – It applies to all church buildings.</p> <p>ACTION – we should include a clause in our hall contracts stating this. ACTION – TH to meet with hall committee to discuss recent findings at a school and how to implement H&S with hall hirers</p> <p>The report was unanimously received and accepted.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Election of PCC reps As our Electoral Roll has decreased in number to 86, the number of PCC representatives we have has dropped from 12 to 9.</p> <p>We had 3 PCC members up for re-election or to stand down:</p> <p>We have received 3 nominations for our vacancies on our PCC. The nominations are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Hodge – standing again (1-year term) • Nana Gyebi Johnson – standing again (3 year term) • Anesta Vaughan – standing again (3 year term) <p>Thank you to them all for standing again.</p> <p>A proposal was made to accept these nominations. Unanimous approval.</p> <p>We have also received a nomination for Helen McLuckie to be co-opted onto PCC for one year.</p> <p>A proposal was made to accept this nomination. This will also be put on the next PCC agenda. Unanimous approval.</p> <p>ACTION – PCC secretary to circulate safeguarding/ DBS request to Helen ACTION – PCC Secretary to add co-opted nomination to next PCC meeting</p>

7.	<p>Annual report of the proceedings of the PCC and the activities of the parish The report was circulated in advance of the meeting. We have tried to highlight experiences and where we made a difference this year in the annual report rather than a series of 'what we have delivered'.</p> <p>The meeting unanimously agreed in favour of accepting the annual report.</p>
8.	<p>Financial Accounts of the PCC</p> <p>The annual financial accounts were circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>The accounts have been signed and approved by our Independent Examiner, Nick Addo. PCC approved the accounts at their PCC meeting on 8th May (prior to the APCM).</p> <p>Q – Have we had any requests from the Nash Bursary? (An account set up by Roy and Stella Nash to further children's musical enjoyment. A – No. The account has since closed to rationalize some of our smaller sundry accounts.</p> <p>Q – Are we gaining any interest on our accounts? A – Charitable accounts don't get much interest as we pay less banking fees.</p> <p>ACTION – PCC to ensure this money is ringfenced and to promote the Nash Bursary account to any child in a church school.</p> <p>A proposal was made to accept the parish annual accounts. Unanimous approval. A proposal was made to pay Nick Addo the same amount as last year for his work examining our accounts. Unanimous approval.</p> <p>Our thanks were offered to the finance team (Angelina Elliott, Lee Hawkness-Smith and Ron Cummins). Thanks to all for managing the accounts and the hours they have committed to this role to get the finances in order.</p>
9.	<p>Report from the churchwardens on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church</p> <p>A report from both churches was circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>We had an Archdeacons inspection in the Parish in 2024 – making sure we are held accountable for the items and procedures in our churches. It was a significant amount of work preparing for the inspection as it had been a number of years since our last inspection (estimated over 25 years at St Mark's!) – it should be carried out every 5 years. Thanks to everybody involved in getting the paperwork together for the inspection.</p> <p>Payback team are also now helping at both churches (All Saints once a fortnight and St Mark's weekly). They are doing a fabulous job.</p>

	<p>Q – Can we offer them food? A – PCC Secretary will ask the payback supervisor and will write to offer our thanks.</p> <p>A proposal was made to accept the fabric and building report from the Churchwardens. Unanimous approval.</p> <p>Our thanks to Kwaw Elliott and Linda Parish (churchwardens) for their report and support over 2024.</p>
10.	<p>Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod</p> <p>The report was circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>RH gave an update about the recent meeting she had attended and said it was very interesting – gaining knowledge of the wider discussions in the Deanery and how this impacts us as a parish.</p> <p>Our thanks are offered to our Deanery Synod representatives - Angelina Elliott. Kwaw Elliott and Rosie Hughes will fill the 2 casual vacancies.</p> <p>ACTION – PCC members to be sent minutes from Deanery meetings</p>
11.	<p>Vicars report 2024</p> <p>Preparing the Vicar’s report for the APCM always feels a bit like writing a best man speech - you know you have to remember all the right things to say and who you are supposed to thank and somehow sum up, in some clever and inspiring way what everyone is feeling... I have to confess it is not my favourite part of the job and as such I always put it off until the very last minute to write it.</p> <p>But inspite of the fact that I do this every year, I should know better! Because every year as I reflect prayerfully on the journey we have travelled and are travelling together, I find myself uplifted by all that God is doing here in and through us.</p> <p>The formal parts and various reports for our APCM are available here in hard copy and online and I’m not going to reiterate what’s noted in them. And I know that ploughing through pages of reports is not anyone’s first choice way to spend an evening off, but never the less I am going to say please read them. Not just because I know how much hard work and effort Jackie, Angelina, Kwaw and Linda and others put into getting them ready, but also because I want you to take note of how much there is that is good and worth celebrating in our common life.</p> <p>And yes there are challenges, and yes they are ways that we can improve and I will come on to them but first some things I want to note.</p> <p>We have I think good rhythm of corporate worship. Our Sunday services attendance figures are pretty stable particularly when looked at along side the overall figures for church attendance in our diocese.</p> <p>Our school services, Messy Church and Care Homes ministry continue to flourish, offering teaching, worship and fellowship for many who for a variety of reasons are not part of our regular Sunday morning community.</p>

And I want to say an enormous thank you to the teams who make that ministry possible to Sylvia Diana and the Pastoral team who support the care homes, to Kwaw and those who keep our online services and prayers going and to Iva and Tanya, Diana and Jane for their support of Messy Church.

I also want to say a massive thank you to our musicians, especially to Jerry and Rosa and Kathy and the choir for all that they bring to enhance our worship. Most of you will know that in September Kathy asked to step back for a time from Sunday worship and playing the organ at St Mark's, and Jerry and Rosa between them have shared that task between them and covered every single service that required an organist in the parish this year. We are so very grateful to them, and to Kathy, who has continued to support our care homes ministry and playing the keyboard for those services which I know is of enormous benefit. We have a very small thank you for each of them Kathy, Jerry, Rosa, thank you!

At the beginning of this year we agreed as a PCC that we wanted to look at how we develop our worship even further to make sure that we are offering worship that is meaningful to support our whole community to grow and express their faith. We agreed that we should conduct a survey to see what people really value and what different things we might consider in our worshipping life, and due to all kinds of time constraints it hasn't happened yet, and that is my responsibility, but we will do that this year. And in the meantime, I want to hear from you, so please if there are things you want to say about our worship of things you would like us to consider, let me know.

Two years ago we set ourselves a challenge to think and reflect on how we become a more welcoming more diverse community. And it fills me with real joy when I look around our church, our community and see all kinds of people, from all over the world and from all kinds of backgrounds than make up our wider church family. And I want and I believe God desires us to be even more a church where everyone finds a welcome and a place and where different cultures and languages and experiences are valued and celebrated.

Three years ago we set ourselves a target to look at how we could improve our parish finances, and last year we committed to thinking about how we could live and give more generously. This led to our giving month in October in which so many people were so generous and committed to support our church through regular giving or a one off gift or both.

Last year we also spread Easter Joy to nearly 700 people in our schools and care homes with a small Easter gift and a message of hope, through your generosity.

We've raised money for Christian Aid, Macmillan, the Children's Society, supported CowShed, and Readifood with donations throughout the year and supported several Charities through the community coffee mornings thanks to Paul's dedication. Not only that, we have *lived* generously, helping each other and giving our time and talents in so many ways.

And I know we cannot be complacent and our finances are still a concern but I do believe that we are in a better place both spiritually and financially when it comes to living generously and I want to thank you for your continued support of our church and its mission and ministry.

Youth and children's work continues to be a major focus for our Diocese and all parishes are being asked to be as proactive and strategic as they can be with a view to doubling the number of young disciples engaging in our churches in the next 5 years.

It is a huge undertaking for the national church but we know that it is essential to our very survival that we find ways to share the gospel with CYP and help them to grow in faith.

Once again, I am in no way being complacent, and I know that there is so much more we would like to be doing here in our Parish. I also know that I have said this before but I want

you to hear very loudly and clearly, that our children and young people are a huge gift and a blessing to us.

I say this because the most recently published figures which are the 2023 church attendance statistics tell us that 25% of all Church of England Churches in the UK have NO children attending Sunday worship. And 70% have fewer than 5.

In engaging with children in Sunday worship we are easily in the top 10% of all churches across every diocese of the church of England. And whilst that knowledge fills me with joy it also fills me with deep concern and a passion to do more to support and grow our precious young people. And if you feel passionately about this too, if you feel that God may be asking you to help with this ministry come and talk to me.

The other thing which I hope is going to be a major focus for us in the coming year, is (which you will know if you were listening to my sermon), is to reflect on how we can take seriously our commitment to safeguard the integrity of the earth and work towards becoming a more environmentally conscious and caring church.

We know that the world is in an energy Crisis, we know that we all need to make changes to the way that we live and the things we consume, and be better stewards of what we have if we want the earth to be fruitful and thrive.

And there are all kinds of things that each of us is already doing, I'm sure, and there are things that we as a church community are already doing, but we want to do more. We want to do better.

And so in a minute I'm going to host what I hope will be an open conversation about what we might do together here in our community and our churches to safeguard all of creation. But before that I just want to reiterate my thanks to each and every one of you for all that you do and all that you bring, for every minute of volunteering, for every prayer offered every song sung and note played, every cup of coffee made, every door opened and service sheet produced and handed out, every bit of jumble collected and every penny in the offertory plate...

And for those of you who think "Well I don't do anything" or "I can't do anything", I want to thank you for just being, for just being part of this wonderful diverse, faithful family of God that is St Mark and All Saints.

12. Parish discussion – How our parish can become more environmentally friendly

A Rocha have a helpful toolbox to help us safeguard creation and help each other. They have 5 categories:

	Already doing	Quick wins	Long term goals
Worship and teaching in church <i>(embedding creation care in worship, prayer and learning)</i>	Recycling Jo's sermons Children's work including MAD club	Church presence at school fairs and discos etc Change the day/ time to be able to engage more young people?	Better engagement with schools especially SMAS – ways to share and learn together Advertising around the parish community

				Support from additional adults to run sessions if numbers become larger as a result of community awareness (in-line with adult/ child ratios and safeguarding)
	Building and energy use <i>(finding energy efficient and innovative ways to manage our places of worship)</i>	One clear booklet for worship		Produce a larger worship booklet to cut down on paper usage
	Land and nature around church <i>(Nurturing spaces for people and nature)</i>	Great effort in upkeep Jumble sale recycling of items	Can we offer local gardening group use of our garden? Tighter recycling rules for the hall Litter picks organized (needs some resources) Bins outside church to encourage recycling/ rubbish disposal Food disposal No mow May Bird feeders and bird boxes/ bug hotel Don't pick flowers Plant more flowers and trees	What do other churches do that we don't do? Re-write hall lease policies to include rubbish disposal clauses (penalty for mis-use/ wrong bins used for rubbish etc) Talk to council about bins Make signs to tell people we care Protest Have an environment fair to promote how to be more environmentally friendly Gardening project around harvest time

	Community and global engagement <i>(transforming local and global communities and ecosystems)</i>		Signs to stop people sitting with engines running. Connect with Reading council initiatives Thank you messages to payback team Support climate change initiatives	Opportunities with Reading Citizens Parish to engage with payback team to offer lunches
	Lifestyle <i>(Living joyfully and sustainably as followers of Christ)</i>	Bible Study Group Recycling bin How fairtrade are we? We need to source fairtrade tea as well as cleaning products	Minutes/ articles to feedback discussions (redacted) Rubbish in bins Use less plastic Order eco toilet roll Have a walk to church week Think about the things we use and how to avoid them especially paper	Multiple Bible study options? Run by a few who take turns to run on a rota basis (trained appropriately) Help our access Think about travel
	<p>ACTION – Rev'd Jo to reach out to the church that has just been granted 'Gold' level about the process of becoming an ecochurch (or ask A Rocha)</p> <p>ACTION – PCC to discuss how to take this forward</p>			
13.	<p>Appointment of Independent Examiner Nick Addo was appointed as our independent examiner for 2024 Financial Report and Accounts.</p> <p>A proposal was made to appoint Nick Addo as Independent Examiner for the Parish of St Mark and All Saints Church for 2025 annual accounts. Unanimous approval.</p>			
14.	Date for the next APCM (held before May 2026)			

	<p>A proposal was made to hold the 2026 APCM on Sunday 17th May.</p> <p>A discussion was had about poor attendance at the APCM and how we can involve more of the parishioners in the discussion. Also how to make it shorter.</p> <p>A suggestion was made to make the vicars report as the sermon. Maybe not to hold a full Eucharist if we incorporate the APCM as part of the service.</p> <p>Working meeting (with tea/ coffee) so there is no delay after the service. There was a 30-minute gap after the service finishing and the APCM starting.</p> <p>Need engagement from people – how? (In advance of the service?)</p> <p>We discussed what day to hold the APCM – Sunday was felt to be best</p> <p>Possibly have a 2-hour window where we hold a service and APCM. Start with elections, then have worship.</p> <p>Could incorporate parishioner discussion on the week before (People might avoid APCM Sunday)</p> <p>ACTION – PCC and staff meeting to decide on format to incorporate some of the APCM actions within the worship (ie, vicars report)</p>
15.	<p>Questions of Parish Concern</p> <p>No questions were raised at the meeting.</p>
	<p>This concludes the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. The meeting closed at 1.30pm with the Grace led by Rev'd Jo.</p>