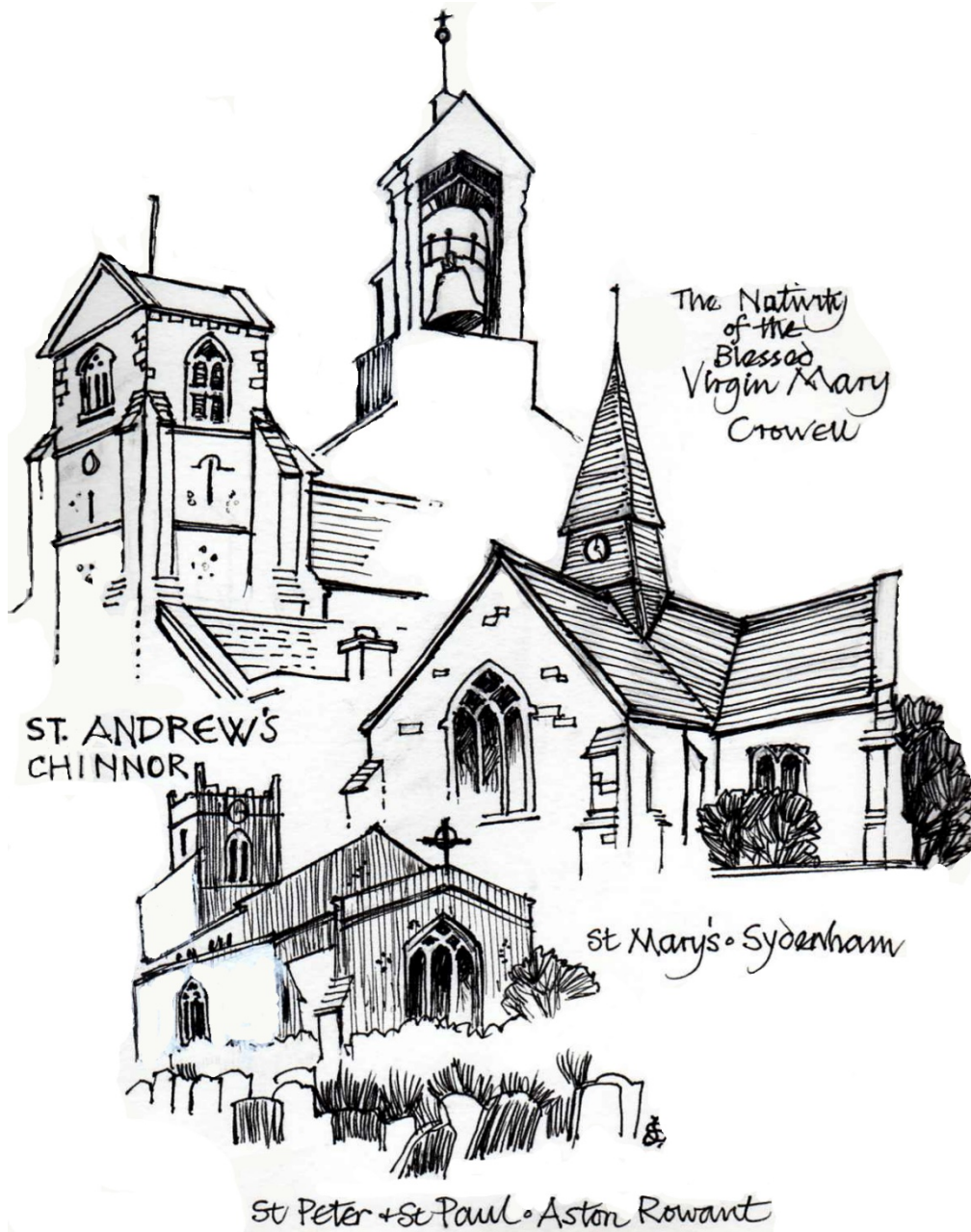


**The United Parish of CHINNOR, SYDENHAM, ASTON ROWANT and
CROWELL**



2026

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Sunday 3rd May 2026, 12:00pm

St Andrew's Church Chinnor

The United Parish of Chinnor, Sydenham, Aston Rowant and Crowell

Sunday 3rd May 2026

Agenda for the

Vestry Meeting, APCM and first meeting of the new PCC

(meetings to be held at St Andrew's Church Chinnor chaired by the Rector, the Rev'd Dr Jacky Barr)

VESTRY MEETING 12 noon

Election of Churchwardens to

St Andrew's Chinnor

St Mary's Sydenham

St Peter and St Paul's, Aston Rowant

The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Crowell

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING 12:10pm

Opening Prayers by *Rev'd Dr Jacky Barr (Rector)*

Apologies for absence

Minutes of Annual Parochial Church Meeting held Wednesday 21st May 2025, available from the Parish Office

Matters Arising

The Reports (available in this booklet)

The Rector's report

Annual report of the PCC and Financial Statements

Churchwarden's report - St Andrew's Chinnor

Churchwarden's report – St Mary's Sydenham

Churchwarden's report – St Peter and St Paul's Aston Rowant

Churchwarden's report – The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Crowell

The electoral roll

Deanery Synod

GDPR

Safeguarding

Church hall – Chinnor

The Old School Room – Sydenham

The Old School House – Sydenham
The Children’s Work Co-Ordinator
The Children’s Society
Hempton Field – Chinnor
St Andrew’s Church Luncheon Club
United Parish magazine
United Parish Website – A Church Near You
Organ and choir - St Andrew’s Chinnor
Choir – St Mary’s Sydenham
Bellringers -St Andrew’s Chinnor
Bellringers – St Peter and St Paul’s Aston Rowant
Friends of St Andrew’s Church
Flower Guild – St Andrew’s Chinnor
St Mary’s Flowers
St Peter and St Paul’s Flowers
CCGW!
Pastoral Visiting team

Proposals

The elections and appointments

Election of new PCC members
Appoint independent examiner

Questions ideally submitted in writing before the meeting

Any Other Business

First Meeting of the New PCC 12:15pm

Election and Appointment of

Lay Vice Chair
Secretary
Treasurer
Electoral roll officer
Safeguarding officer
GDPR officer
Standing Committee

Date of next meetings

MEETING DATE	Standing Committee	Reports due
Weds 8th July	Mon 29th June 7pm	29th June
Weds 16th Sept	Mon 7th Sept 7pm	7th Sept
Weds 18th Nov	Mon 9th Nov 7pm	9th Nov

Rector's Report: The Rev'd Dr Jacky Barr. (covering the year 2025)

Rector's Report: covering the year 2025

Each of our four churches has its own character and rhythm, and together they form a community that continues to worship faithfully, care for one another, and serve the wider villages we are part of.

Alongside our weekly services, we accompany people through life's significant moments: baptisms that welcome new life, weddings that celebrate commitment and joy, and funerals where we commend loved ones into God's care.

Our worship is supported by an extraordinary number of people who serve quietly and faithfully. Churchwardens, readers, intercessors, musicians, sacristans, sidespeople, flower arrangers, bell ringers, cleaners and administrators all play their part. None of what happens in this parish would be possible without the generosity of volunteers, and I want to say a sincere thank you to everyone who contributes in these ways.

One of the great joys of parish life continues to be our work with children and schools. Chooseday Church and Starboddlers remain lively and welcoming spaces where children and their carers can explore faith together through stories, music and crafts.

In our local schools we continue to take Open the Book and RE Inspired sessions, helping children encounter the Christian story in ways that are imaginative and accessible.

Pastoral care also remains central to our life together. Through the Pastoral Visiting Team we maintain contact with those who are housebound or lonely and help ensure they remain connected to the life of the church. During the year we also ran the first *Journeying Through Grief* course which provided space for people to reflect, share and support one another following bereavement.

Our connection with the wider community remains strong. Village events, concerts, harvest celebrations, Remembrance and Christmas services continue to bring many people through our doors. Our regular ministry at Hempton Field nursing home also remains a valued part of parish life, with services, visits and children's groups bringing companionship and joy to residents.

Behind the scenes there is also a great deal of work that ensures the parish runs well and responsibly. Safeguarding, governance, finance and administration are all essential parts of church life today, and I am very grateful to those who give their time and expertise in these areas.

Our digital presence has grown significantly during the year, with more than one hundred thousand visits to our parish pages on *A Church Near You*. This shows how important online communication has become in helping people find information about services and events.

We also continue to care for the beautiful buildings and churchyards entrusted to us. Across the parish there have been repairs, improvements and ongoing maintenance. These historic buildings are not only places of worship but also an important part of the heritage of our villages.

Another encouraging aspect of parish life is our focus on the environment through Chinnor Churches Go Wild, which celebrated its eighteenth anniversary this year and continues to bring together churches and community groups in caring for creation.

I would also like to acknowledge the commitment and diligence of our members of the PCC (the church governing committee). Across 2025, the PCC demonstrated active and responsible governance, balancing immediate fabric and safety needs with longer-term strategic planning. Decisions taken during the year reflected careful stewardship of buildings and finances, sustained attention to safeguarding and people, and a clear commitment to sustaining worship, pastoral care, and mission across the United Parish. The steady flow of agendas, minutes, reports and proposals has been well managed by our PCC secretary.

Of course, there are also challenges. Some congregations remain small or ageing, and we continue to ask how we might welcome new people, particularly younger families and those moving into new housing developments. Financial pressures and the cost of maintaining historic buildings remain realities for us. The number of ordained clergy available to lead services reduced in 2025, due to ill health and moving away.

But alongside these challenges there is much encouragement. Our churches remain active, prayerful communities sustained by generosity, goodwill and faith. We are close to having our accounts up to date and this will mean a meaningful and realistic budget can be produced. Although ordained clergy are in shorter supply, our home grown lay leaders have grown in confidence and enthusiasm. And conversations are taking place with the Archdeacon about creating a “house for duty” post.

As we look ahead, I want simply to say thank you to everyone across our four churches. Each of these communities contributes something distinctive to the life of the United Parish, and together they form a rich and faithful Christian presence in our villages.

Thank you for your faith, your generosity, and your commitment to the life of our churches. It is genuinely a privilege to share this ministry with you.

Jacky

The Rev'd Dr Jacky Barr, Rector

Financial Report

At this time it has not been possible to present the financial report for either 2024 or 2025. However draft 2024 accounts have been presented to the external examiner for comment. It is expected that they will shortly be provided to the PCC for approval.

Churchwardens' Report

St Andrew's Chinnor

Schedule of Services for 2025

Worship

Sunday service of Holy Communion at 10:30am (Approximately 40 services)

Average attendance 46 – 80

Monthly All Age worship at 10:30am (Approximately 12 services)

Average attendance 40 – 50

Monthly 8am Sunday service of Holy Communion (Approximately 12 services)

Average attendance 15 - 20

Thursday mid-week communion at 10am (Approximately 52 services)

Average attendance – 15

Home communions – approximately 3 services a week

Hempton Field – approximately 2 visits a month

Chooseday Club at 3:15pm on a Tuesday (Approximately 30)

Average attendance 15 Adults and 20 children

Starboddlers on a Thursday at 11am (Approximately 39)

Average attendance 6 Adults and 22 children

Weddings

No of services x 1 Adults 105/Under4 2

Thanksgiving of marriage x 1 107

Baptisms

No of services – 12 Average Attendance - 60

Funerals (including thanksgiving and burial of ashes)

No of services – 31 Average Attendance - 75

Other

Taizé – 15–20 attending (Approximately 12 services)

Covenant Service at Methodist Church

Mothering Sunday Average Attendance – Over 16 – 50/Under 16 - 5

World Day of Prayer 10:30am – 37 & 7:30pm – 27

Christian Aid Service – 65 Adults/Under 16 - 6

Café church at White's field 100+

Rogation Service at Manor Farm Average Attendance – 65 Adults/Under 16 - 5

Harvest Service with Methodists Average Attendance – 107 Adults/Under 16 - 4

Service of the Departed Average Attendance - 80

Remembrance - Full church

11 November Monday Remembrance Service Average Attendance - 10 Adults

Confirmation Service 77

Easter

Palm Sunday – 42 adults/ under 16 - 4

Stations of the Cross – 8 adults

Maundy Thursday - 10am Holy Communion - 15

Hempton Field - 6

Journey into darkness (Tennebrae service) - 6

Good Friday meditation - 30

Home communion - 3

Easter Vigil - 22

Easter Sunday Holy Communion and Baptism - 106 adults/Under 16 -14

School Easter Services x 2 50 Adults / 400 children

Christmas

Nine Lessons and Carols 112 Adults / Under 16 - 13

Crib 112

Midnight mass 98 Adults / Under 16 - 3

Christmas Day 65 Adults / Under 16 - 5

Christingle Service 49 Adults / Under 16 - 12

Candlemas Service 52 Adults / Under 16 -1

U3A Christmas Concert Over 111

St Andrew's CofE Primary School Christmas service x 2 Over 297 adults/ Under 16
243

Additional Events

Work Parties x 5 (Average 5)

Repair Cafés x 3

Macmillan Coffee morning

Solstice services at Donkey Lane Orchard x 2

Our congregation numbers are thriving, and the church is alive with joyful and prayerful worship, inspired by the choir and organ, readers, intercessors, and friendly sides people. This is thanks to the hard work of our Rector and the Ministry Team. The church has had Weddings, Baptisms, Funerals, Festivals, Fundraising events, Taizé and Seasonal Services (Easter, Christmas, Harvest etc.) and it is wonderful to see that the Church is in great demand. Thank you to all the volunteers who help with all these services.

The backbone of our United Parish is our wonderful Church Administrator who keeps us all on our toes. Thank you to the wonderful team who work so tirelessly making connections with young people, especially with Chooseday Church and Starboddlers. Thank you to the teams who work with St Andrew's CofE Primary School and welcoming the school into church for their Christmas and Easter services as well as the Year 6 Leaving Service, which are very well attended with both children, parents and grandparents. Thank you to our hardworking cleaner Steve Hedges for his care and maintenance of St Andrew's Church and the brass cleaning volunteers.

Fabric

We continue to seek to provide careful maintenance of our buildings, and the creation of welcoming and safe spaces in our church. We try to ensure compliance and continuity. None of this takes place without background structure and support from you, our church community. Two big projects in 2025 were the restoration of the Lady Chapel and the installation of new cupboards in the vestry.

The Churchyard

The regular work parties, as well as visits by the Community Payback Crew, have helped with keeping the churchyard neat and tidy. Thanks go to Chris McGuire, Will Drinkwater and Brian Collins for their continued gardening support, and to the Chinnor Parish Council. Part of the wall along Church Road was rebuilt after a car accident.

Fundraising

See separate report from the Friends of St Andrew's Church.

Flower Arranging

See separate report from the St Andrew's Church Flower Guild.

Challenges

Ongoing fundraising and grant funding for the care and maintenance of the church.

Ongoing expense of heating the church.

Drawing the people in from the new estates in Chinnor.

Supporting the Rector and the Ministry Team.

Robert Pegg and Laretta Milligan
Churchwardens

PCC and Churchwardens' Report St Mary's Sydenham

Worship news (NB numbers in brackets are the 2024 figures)

Services – 30 (29) services in total. Average attendance to Holy Communion and Evensong – 14 (15)

Specials

Easter - total attendees over Easter – 89 (36)

The Easter services at St Mary's provided a time for reflection and joy. Ash Wednesday (20) offered Compline and Communion whilst Good Friday (19) invited the congregation to contemplate. Easter Sunday (50) celebrated that 'Christ is Risen' and in addition to the family service, a hunt revealed over 30 delicious Easter eggs whilst the choir and members of the congregation sported colourful bonnets

Harvest Festival – 36 attendees – 33 adults and 3 children (29)

a lovely Harvest Festival led by Joan with a poem (learnt by heart by a village youngster), a choir harvest song and offerings of grain, flowers, fruit, vegetables and more. The altar was groaning!

Remembrance Service held outdoors – 70 (70) attendees with sausage rolls served afterwards.

Christmas at St Mary's – saw 289 (234) through the doors broken down as thus: Carol Service – 70 plus 4 children (70) in attendance with mince pies and sherry served upon entry, Countryside Carols – c50 (46) in attendance, Crib Service c130 (c90) in attendance. Midnight Mass – 20 (28) in attendance

Weddings – x1 (1)

Baptisms – x0

Funerals/Interments – x2 (6)

Sydenham Led Services

Songs of Praise –

Mothering Sunday with handmade posies – 46 plus 10 children (29) in attendance. **Mothering Sunday – Songs of Praise. (30th March)** A beautiful basket of posies awaited the congregation on Mothers' Day.

We invited individuals to let us know their Mother's favourite hymns and a poem was written and performed by Flo and Arva (helped by their mums). It was a lovely service.

Events

- Carols round the Christmas trees on the Green – c 25

Pancake races on Shrove Tuesday

The Pancake day races in Sydenham held on Shrove Tuesday were a flipping good do! Contenders of all ages raced up Brookstones tossing pancakes - real and virtual (the record was 100 a minute) whilst the McKee kitchen team prepared fresh ones, made by a host of volunteers. These were enjoyed with lemon and sugar in the OSR. Although not as widely supported as usual, we all had a good time.

- Sydenham Village Fayre – June (share of profits to Church)
- We again welcomed the Rambling Rector and her fellow walkers – another enjoyable event.
- Some of the ministry team attended the Sydenham WI Summer party
- United Parish Hymns and Pimm's service
- Annual Ride and Stride
- Christmas Fayre - December - raising over £2,400 (£1,800 in 2024). The successful format included Christmas stalls, tombola, children's activities and a raffle not forgetting crusty home-made bread, soup and puddings. A real village 'coming together' event. c 60
- X2 St Mary's village meetings led by Jacky to look ahead and plan events.
- The monthly coffee morning in the OSR continues to thrive attracting visitors from across the Parish

Comment

The support of the villagers for St Mary's continues to shine through in countless ways, for which we are very grateful. Whether it's helping with the bustling Christmas Fayre, tending to church cleaning, churchyard upkeep and loving attention to the Queen's Garden, supporting the choir, providing AV equipment and technical support, arranging beautiful floral displays, ringing the bells, winding the clock or managing the many other tasks that keep our church thriving, it's good to see.

We look to explore new ideas to broaden our outreach and welcome even more of the community.

See challenges

Highlights of the Year

- The packed Crib service.
- Family services
- Cricket Club Songs of Praise.
- Remembrance Service
- The Choir outing and dinner
- The Christmas Fayre
- The VE Concert on 10th May
- The Villagers all coming together to help
- Nick Oakley volunteering to organise the readers

Our thanks go as ever to Jacky and Joan and all the Ministry team.

Challenges

- Although we have a lot of support from parts of the village it is still disappointing that more villagers especially the new incomers despite our best efforts and calls to come along to St Mary's - especially to our more lighthearted services and events, don't!
- We will continue to encourage more folk through the doors.

Fabric report (and related) - St Mary's Sydenham

Replacement of a selection of windows and repair to the frames

A new "Nixey" Noticeboard was put up to replace the old one.

All the above sought and received PCC and Faculty approval

The fire extinguishers were checked and the church bells and organ serviced.
And: The Quinquennial was conducted with noted actions.

The **churchyard volunteer group** led by Nick Potts continue to keep the churchyard looking neat and tidy whilst protecting wildlife.

The Queen's Garden continues, thanks to Gilly's loving care and attention, to look lovely with freshly planted and maintained flowers and shrubs.

The Church **cleaning team** comprising village volunteers regularly keep St Mary's as cobweb and droppings free and spic and span as much as possible under the management of Sally Baldwin.

Mark Kermack provides practical help and advice across the board
Jon Church keeps the **clock chiming**.

Fiona Kermack and Roy Harrison – PCC member /Church Warden

The Old School Room, Sydenham

The new booking system works well, and we have now installed a Hive thermostat which allows us to control the heating more accurately and at levels to suit user. This is hoped to manage the costs even more effectively. Following requests two grab rails have been installed at the entrance. The usual servicing of the boiler, installation of new in-line filter, fire extinguishers have been done and the repair of missing leaded light to the store room completed. New tablecloths have been purchased along with new wine glasses.

Normal regular monthly usages see 33% of the days the hall being occupied. We will be looking for new volunteers to assist in the running of the OSR over the next few months.

Mark Kermack

Head Trustee

Old School House Sydenham

A few events in 2025 requiring attention: loose guttering and the usual boiler service but apart from that, nothing of significance to report apart from the fact that the tenant pays rent on time is very self-sufficient and practical and is generally happy.

Churchwardens' Report (Including the Fabric report)

The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Crowell

Attendance at the two Sunday services per month remained stable, averaging 8 persons. Sadly, most have attended a service elsewhere in the Parish, in the morning and have placed their offerings there. Our income from the 'plate' is thus very minimal.

We held a couple of festival services with excellent attendance. Harvest, Hymns and Pimms and a Carol Evening.

Except for special services, we rarely have locals attending.

Soul Space will be reduced to three specials per year from 2026.

We have had organist cover for all services, shared between Graham and Monica with Judy filling in where needed. Hugh decided to step down.

The damp has stayed away and the walls remain stable.

Our heating regime is still working well, with oil usage at a minimum, yet keeping a comfortable temperature for services and assisting to keep the damp out.

The church remains locked except for services or when the Wardens are carrying out maintenance...It is regularly checked, is secure and watertight. Mandatory servicing was carried out.

The car park entrance stood up well but suffered some more settling which needs to be fixed again in 2026.

We are still experiencing pairs of number plates and drug items discarded in the car park. We are working with the police.

A car entered the car park and crashed through a couple of fence sections. Emergency repairs were carried out to protect the horses in the adjacent field. The repairs were paid for privately.

The grass areas around the attended graves and pathways were kept short and the wildlife areas roped off with signs and explanation. This brought some pleasing comments and will be repeated in 2026. We seem to have the correct balance now and will rotate the 'wild area' around the churchyard.

The rainbow garden continued to be a source of mainly good comment and pleasure from walkers and locals. Many graves are now being tended and so the appearance of the graveyard continued to improve.

We still had a few thoughtless people who insist on throwing plastic wrappings on the old compost heap areas. This causes some distress to the families with graves close by. The heaps had been moved to one area but old habits die hard. We still have the two volunteers that keep areas of the graveyard mown. The cremation area and the area west of the yew tree. A further volunteer helps to keep the carpark mown.

We were able to facilitate 8 work parties during 2025 but few or no volunteers turned up. Despite that, work in the churchyard progresses but not to the degree and speed that we had hoped.

We are ever grateful for the support from Surman and Horwood which involves, some mowing, a drinking water fountain in the church and access to their water tap for hose connection when the heating water needs topping up during maintenance. Plus other help as needed.

The repairs to the damaged stain glass window was completed on schedule with the window now back in place and looking pristine.

On the downside, we have now lost the sun beam halo on the head of Christ in the stonework above and behind the altar as the sun goes down.

Services

Holy Communion		12	
Compline		1	
Evening Prayer		6	
Weddings		0	
Baptisms		2	
Funerals			
Interment of Ashes	1	Burials	3
Memorials		0	
Other			
Soul Space		8	

Harvest	(Bring and Share Supper) Yes
Remembrance	Yes
Carol Service	(Social and Mulled Wine) Yes
Lent Group	Yes
Alternative Mothering Sunday	(a sensitive service run as Soul Space for those who have lost children)
Social Church	(Hymns and Pimms) Yes
United Parish Service	Yes
Prayer Group	Yes

Additional Events

Art and Soul	Not this year
Work Parties	8 (little or no attendance except Wardens)
CCGW events	Not this year
Warden Training	Yes x2 events

Andy and Maggs Warman
Church Wardens

Churchwarden's Report (Including the Fabric report)

St Peter & St Paul's – Aston Rowant

1 Summary

A total of 60 religious services were held in our church during 2025.

The Parish Council held 6 of their meetings in the church

During the year Rev'd Des Foote moved away and Rev Brian Griffis suffered from ill health and service rotas were put under pressure, but we welcomed Rev'd Tony Whitaker to the team and the lay led services made a greater contribution.

The school services were a great success.

A special service was held to mark the patronal festival of our Saints, Peter and Paul, and a festival event was held in the churchyard after the service with a bar and BBQ.

The church is in good structural condition, and progress has been made with heating and electricity supply problems. More work needs to be done on the sound system and the internal decoration.

2 Use of the Church

2.1 Details of Religious Services

Morning Prayer services	22
Communion services	22
Special Services	6
School Services	6
Weddings	1
Baptisms	1
Funeral	2
Memorial	1
Burial of ashes	1

2.2 These services were led as follows:

Rev'd Dr Jacky Barr	14	Rev'd Dr Brian Griffiths	7
Margaret Poole	11	Rev'd Joan DeVal	2
Rev'd Des Foote	1	Lay Led	12
Rev'd Tony Whitaker	10	Helen France	6

2.2 Parish Council Meetings in Church

Six Meetings of the Aston Rowant Parish Council were held in the church with an average of 12 attendees per meeting.

2.3 Bell Ringers

Our happy band of bell ringers ring for nearly every Sunday Service and practise every Tuesday, and are much appreciated.

2.4 Other Events

Duck Racing and Cream Teas
Soup Kitchen for homeless (hunger lunch)
Tower tours with Cream Teas
Charity coffee morning
The Patronal Festival

2.5 Casual Visitors

Our visitors' book continues to have interesting messages from visitors from all parts of the world. The provision of historical information appears to be very well received.

3 The Fabric of the Building

The church building is in pretty good shape.

The electricity supplier has been changed, and the metering system is providing a satisfactory billing arrangement.

In the longer term we are considering the option of removing the pews, replacing them with comfortable chairs which would make the space more usable. This is a long term option which will require much debate and consultation in the future.

Outstanding items not yet resolved:

The church clock continues to stop from time to time, and this needs more attention.

There is a crack between the North wall and the vestry which we are discussing with our architect.

A portion of the wall between the churchyard and The Old Vicarage is collapsing due to tree roots and ivy, again a matter we are discussing with our architect.

As the west wall of the church has now settled down, we are proposing to decorate and replaster around the window behind the altar.

4 Churchyard

The churchyard is still open and available for burials. The churchyard is kept semi wild with a grand display of primroses in the spring. Mowing and hedge trimming are completed by a local gardener, and we are very happy that the Parish Council made a contribution to these costs. The churchyard foot paths are becoming muddy during winter, and we plan to re-gravel them during 2026.

5 Highlights and Challenges

We are challenged by an aging population in Aston Rowant Parish (see the ratio of funerals to marriages and baptisms). We are short of priests to take services and administer to the “flock” in the Aston Parish, but this has in part been made up by lay led services. The real challenge is to see an increase in the younger age groups attending services and if they don’t want to attend services then we need to get other events organised in church to get “them in”. The Church of St Peter and St Paul’s is the oldest and most beautiful building in the Parish, it is our heritage and we need to find a way for it to be continued to be used and appreciated in this modern society of ours.

Richard Boarder
Church Warden

Electoral Roll Report 2025

The parish church electoral roll is the first building block of the church’s governance structure. It is a register of the lay members of the church who are entitled to vote at the APCM. Those on the roll are eligible to be elected to lay representative positions on their PCC and deanery synod. Deanery synod representatives may then be elected to diocesan synod and general synod. The total number on the parish church electoral roll, as presented at the APCM, is an important factor in determining the number of lay representatives (parochial and deanery synod) that a parish may have, whilst being only a small component of how the parish share allocation is determined.

Electoral Roll Numbers	2025	2026
St Andrew’s, Chinnor	90	89
St Mary’s, Sydenham	13	12
St Peter & St Paul’s, Aston Rowant	15	14
Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Crowell	6	6
TOTAL	124	121

Andrea Oughton
Electoral Roll Officer

Deanery Synod report

Three members of the PCC (Margaret Poole, Laretta Milligan and Andrea Oughton) as well as the Rev'd Dr Jacky Barr sit on the Deanery Synod. Jacky also sits on the Deanery Standing Committee.

Over the course of 2025 the Deanery Synod met 3 times. These meetings provided opportunities to bring together the views of 51 churches and 12 benefices, in the Deanery of Aston and Cuddesdon. The meetings enabled us to:

- worship and pray together, and equally importantly – pray for each other,
- learn from each other and to share experiences,
- hear from Visiting Speakers,
- report from the Treasurer on the deanery's finances,
- consider the business of the Diocesan Synod.

The meetings are held in different churches, and this gives us an opportunity to visit other churches.

Laretta Milligan

GDPR report

GDPR might not appear to be particularly relevant to our Parish; typically when GDPR is in the news headlines it will be for large corporations who typically have a data breach where a lot of personal data is stolen by hackers. So how does GDPR apply to us, and why does the Parish need to keep your personal data?

For the wider Church of England, I think that the area of most vulnerability would probably be any disclosure of information associated with a Safeguarding issue. Obviously, this would be very distressing for victims and damaging for anyone under investigation.

As a PCC we do need to keep information which is covered by GDPR. I hope that the following provides some insight as to the type of information we need to keep and on what basis.

Legal obligation

The PCC is required keep various records which include personal information, for instance names and addresses of donors for claiming Gift Aid and also for the Electoral Roll.

Contract

We need to keep legal documents such as building leases for property which we own.

Legitimate interest

The normal running of the church requires sharing information between groups of volunteers who organise rotas. To enable this to happen contact details have to be shared within the group.

Consent

Recipients of the Parish Magazine consent to being contacted via email and other means.

GDPR requirements are sensible and easy to understand. Personal data must be:

- Processed lawfully, fairly, and transparently.
- Used only for specific, stated purposes.
- Adequate, relevant, and limited; don't collect more than is needed.
- Accurate and kept up to date.
- Stored securely.
- Kept only as long as necessary.

Church Representation rules state that a GDPR report must be included in the APCM report, this is because as an organisation we have to handle data governed by GDPR rules, and the APCM is the annual accountability meeting.

I am pleased to report that no incidents have been reported in the last year.

Mark Prescott

Safeguarding report

DBS and Training Update

Total No. of people whose status needs tracking = 40 (excluding Ministry Team members who are all managed at Diocesan level)

<u>Activity</u>	<u>No. needed</u>	<u>No. completed</u>	<u>No. outstanding</u>
DBS Check	40	14	26
Safeguarding Training	40	28	12

Overall Report

As it is now 3 years since Jane Tucker was appointed Parish Safeguarding Officer and commenced a major DBS checking and Safeguard Training initiative, we have now reached the stage where those DBS Checks and Trainings need to be renewed, as they are only valid for 3 years.

As Margaret Poole and Andrea Oughton commenced this renewal process in Autumn 2025, there were issues with the Diocesan approved DBS Verification contractor. To cover the immediate lack of a Verifier the Diocese advised using our existing external Safeguarding Advice provider, Thirty-one Eight, whilst a new source of DBS Verifications was identified and adopted. The PCC has now approved the DBS Verifier recommended by the Diocese and so, once both DBS Administrators are trained up in the new software and processes, the backlog of DBS renewals can be addressed. There are no new DBS checks outstanding.

The updating of Safeguarding Trainings is all being achieved by online training sessions, with Jane Tucker offering technical support for getting online, if necessary. Due to health issues some notifications of the need to renew training have been delayed, but the backlog will be addressed before Easter.

The major Safeguarding initiative this year has been directed towards raising awareness of how to deal with Scam texts, emails, letters and phone calls.

In conjunction with Chinnor Parish Council, and Chinnor Methodist Church we facilitated 2 presentations by the Scam Awareness Advisors from Age UK

Oxfordshire, in Chinnor. Chinnor Parish Council hosted and sponsored the first and Chinnor Methodist Church hosted and sponsored the second. We also learned more about all the services offered by Age UK and were able to distribute literature on Scam Awareness widely across the parish.

Due to health issues the annual audit of Safeguarding records against the names of all those that volunteer in roles that involve children and vulnerable adults, has not been completed yet, but will be addressed in March.

The existing Risks Assessments completed last year for all relevant events, mean that as those, or similar events are planned and take place this year, it is just a case of updating the existing risk assessment, or identifying one for a similar style of event, and amending as necessary.

Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway has asked for advice on managing Safeguarding, as they want to start involving under 18s and Neurodiverse adults within their activities. Jane Tucker is offering limited Safeguarding consultancy to the railway volunteers involved in setting up their processes.

Jane Tucker is now part of a group of PSOs across the Dioceses that meet online, occasionally for updates and mutual support.

There continue to be occasional Safeguarding issues raised across the parish, and, where necessary, we have received guidance from our Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.

As previously, email safeguarding@unitedparish.church to raise any Safeguarding questions or concerns, all of which are handled with discretion and understanding.

Jane Tucker – Safeguarding Officer

Children's Work Co-Ordinator's Report

Despite 'retiring' from the post of Children's minister in September 2024, Margaret Poole continued to support the ongoing work in schools and in St Andrew's Church throughout 2025. Since I started in the role as Children's Work Co-ordinator in September '25, Margaret has guided and supported the handover and continues to be a leading member of the Chooseday Church team. Chooseday Church continues to go from strength to strength with faithful attendance of children and parents and run by a crack team of experienced and gifted volunteers (see separate report by Margaret.)

Starboddlers continues to bring joy and delight to all who participate. Regular attenders are familiar with the songs, the routines, the prayers, the puppets, instruments and bubbles. It has been a pleasure to see children, who were reticent at first, now participate with increasing confidence and understanding with the encouragement of their parents and child-minders. Margaret had been able to continue in this ministry in the Autumn term but has now stepped out so sessions are currently run by Rev'd Jacky and myself each week. Volunteers would be welcome to support these sessions which foster relationships with those on the fringe of church and in the early stages of their faith. Sense of humour and tolerance for noise are essential!

We continue to take Open the Book into both St Andrew's School and Aston Rowant School. The team is much smaller than when it started (now Rev'd Jacky, myself and two volunteers from Chinnor Community Church: Jean Sutcliffe and Jane Reynolds) but children report how much they enjoy taking part in acting and presenting. We record feedback from children each session, which gives us an indication of how the story and reflection has been received. Children are often able to link the story to their school's Christian values and sometimes to their own thoughts and actions. At the request of Helen Francis, Head of Aston Rowant School, we have incorporated the Space Makers activities into each session. These are spiritual practices based on the Ignatian tradition of meditation and comprise stilling, noticing, dwelling in Scripture, mending and blessing.

Throughout a term, each one of these is practised at least once in relation to the story presented, allowing children to become familiar with them and to develop their own spiritual growth as they respond.

Margaret Poole continued to lead RE Inspired in schools for the remainder of the academic year 2024/25 but has mentored others in taking over her role in leading these sessions and continued to support in preparing craft materials. Jo Whitfield led each session throughout Autumn term 2025 with a team comprising myself, Rev'd Jacky, Laretta Milligan, Tricia Prescott, Jane Tucker and Jane Reynolds. I am looking forward to meeting RE Inspired hubs in Reading and receiving training and updated resources to keep our ministry fresh and relevant. This continues to receive positive feedback from the staff as we support RE lessons covering difficult concepts such as the Christian response to death and how we know the Christmas Story is true.

As always, we welcome volunteers to support each of these ministries which, although they take time and energy, are so rewarding. Safer recruitment policies are followed and training is provided for those who are willing. Please pray that these ministries continue to be effective in helping children and adults to understand the love of God and the good news of Jesus.

Fiona Ludlow

Chooseday Church report

It is amazing to think that Chooseday Church has now been running for more than 8 years now, and in that time, we have welcomed many children, parents and careers.

The main focus of Chooseday Church has always been how we can engage the children in learning the Christian faith in a fun and sometimes dynamic way, that they are able to grow and remember what they have learnt.

As a team we make it our priority in welcoming all, through good hospitality and fellowship so that all become members of the Chooseday Church Family.

How wonderful then, that when we said goodbye to our long-standing older children, who had been with us since the beginning, (as they went off to secondary school), for them to return in September to tell us all about their new experiences.

During 2025 we have celebrated Lent, Mother's Day, World Day of Prayer, Easter, Harvest and Christmas. The large TV has been a valuable tool in sharing songs and videos with the children as well as storytelling and the wonderful craft activities that the children thoroughly enjoy. We have also encouraged the older children in helping to present the Power Points through Bible readings, prayers and leading the Lord's Prayer with actions.

We have been very thankful for the financial grant support that Chinnor Parish Council, and Chinnor Open Gardens have given us through the year, not to mention the donations that individual members of the congregation have donated as they support all we do.

We had our annual visit to Hempton Field, Summer picnic with games and Christmas Party, which were enjoyed by all. One of the main high lights of the year was the children playing the handbells at their Christmas party. We were able to buy the bells with some of the grant money that came from Chinnor Parish Council, which the children had practised at our ChooseDay Church sessions.

Another highlight was planting spring bulbs in St Andrew's Church yard in the Autumn term, which were purchased with the grant that we received from Chinnor Open Gardens.

Chooseday Church continues to be the highlight for many children and adults during the busyness of the school year, none of which could happen if it was not for the team of volunteers that give of their time, talents and resources, in sharing their faith with all those that come, children and adults alike.

Margaret Poole

The Children's Society

“For 140 years, The Children's Society has been here for young people when they most need support. Today, we've never been more determined to create a society built for all children. We draw on our experience and expertise; by listening to and empowering young people. We collaborate tirelessly, building a movement with everyone who shares our vision. Every child deserves to feel hopeful, happy and excited for their future.”

St Andrew's church continued to support this valuable work in 2025.

The boxes from the Starboddlers' group and individuals raised a total of £299.35

The Christingle service donations raised £178

The sale of Christmas cards at St Andrew's church raised more money.

“On behalf of everyone at The Children's Society and all the young people we work with, thank you so much for all that you do.”

Tricia Prescott

The United Parish Magazine

2025 was a year of going from strength to strength, we continued producing a bi-monthly edition and made adjustments in the format to ensure clear and concise communication. The special Christmas edition again was a big hit to highlight the amazing work from our volunteers and spread the festive cheer.

40 copies delivered to homes

100 plus copies for distribution to churches for 'drop-ins'

300 plus e-mailed copies.

Total of books published 440 copies.

We are very grateful to people who generously donate to the cost of producing the magazine. It costs approximately 50p-£1 per magazine to print.

Nic Milligan

United Parish Magazine Editor

The United Parish website – A church near you

'AChurchNearYou.com' is the official Church of England website used to locate, view services for, and contact over 16,500 local churches and chapels. It acts as a digital directory providing service times, event calendars, contact details, and, in many cases, a full, dedicated website for individual parishes.

Our United Parish has four 'websites' for each of our four parishes which are 'hosted' on this platform, and the design and function are dictated to by the main website. The sites are updated weekly with a diary for the week, and pages with monthly services, United Parish Magazine, Pastoral Letters, @Home Services, and notices of special events and news.

The sites record the number of 'visitors' to the sites, and the latest figures for the last calendar year are:

St Andrew's Church, Chinnor	35,654
St Mary's Church, Sydenham	24,955
St Peter's and St Pauls' Church, Aston Rowant	23,603
Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Crowell	20,087

Total 104,299

(Total for APCM 2025 = 67,983)

I am always very happy to update the website with news and posters of events, and welcome comments and suggestions about the websites.

www.achurchnearyou.com/St-Andrew-Chinnor

www.achurchnearyou.com/St-Peter-St-Paul-Aston-Rowant

www.achurchnearyou.com/St-Mary-Sydenham

www.achurchnearyou.com/Nativity-Of-The-Blessed-Virgin-Mary-Crowell

www.achurchnearyou.com/Chinnor-Sydenham-Aston-Rowant-Crowell-United-Parish

Tony Whitaker

The Pastoral Visiting Team

The Pastoral Visiting Team currently consists of four ladies from the four churches, who have been linked informally through Rev'd Dr Jacky Barr with individuals in the Parish, who may be more vulnerable or lonely, and who would appreciate a more personal and on going befriending and opportunity for fellowship and maintaining spiritual links with the church family.

These relationships are achieved through in-person meet ups in the home, or through phone chats to 'check in' and offer support - in a relaxed form, as guided by the individual.

- Two of us regularly pray for those who have written prayer requests in the prayer book left in St Andrew's church for parishioners and visitors
- JW was trained by Rev Jacky to take Home Communion, and the hope is that this can be extended to more recipients
- We attended Rev'd Jacky's *Journeying Through Grief* course, which ran at St. Andrew's church over 4 consecutive Monday afternoons in October, to support and contribute to discussions
- RK offers hospitality
- JG continues to host prayer meetings in Rectory Meadows (covered separately)
- Where possible and appropriate we send a card on the first anniversary of a deceased loved one to the next of kin

The four of us report back to Rev'd Jacky via written forms and meet roughly monthly. In a previous year we benefitted from a training day at Florence Nightingale Hospice, Stoke Mandeville, and would welcome something similar in the near future, for our continued development. We appreciate the guidance and feedback offered by Rev'd Jacky and welcome new links with individuals.

Barbara Bedford/June Gibbs/ Rona Knight/ /Jo Whitfield

Friends of St Andrew's Church

The Constitution states the purposes of the charity are to help conserve, maintain, and improve the fabric, furnishings and fittings of St Andrew's Church. Funds are raised through membership subscriptions, donations, and fundraising events to support the restoration and preservation projects in the church and the churchyard.

There are currently 38 Life Subscription members and 7 Annual Subscription members. Continued efforts are being made to attract new members by articles in the Parish Magazine, Chinnor Pump and elsewhere as well as Friends Leaflets are circulated amongst the various public places in Chinnor such as the Library, Village Centre, Chinnor Parish Council, as well as St Andrew's Church. These are also available at all fundraising events in church.

The Friends hosted their Annual General Meeting on 15 October 2025 at St Andrew's Church with an excellent talk and slide show by Brian Fowler on a Day at the Beach at Tower Bridge. All donations from his talk were donated to Florence Nightingale Hospice, as requested by Brian.

Copies of the Annual Report as well as the Statement of Financial Activities for the period 1 October 2024 – 30 September 2025 as well as the Balance Sheet 30 September 2024 were circulated. Thank you to Michael De Val for being the Independent Examiner for the accounts. Due to Gill Skinner moving away, Moyra Hollick was approached to be a Trustee. There were no objections to this proposal. The Secretary, Laretta Milligan, and Treasurer, Grace Gibbs, both agreed to stand again as well as Elizabeth Nixey, as Trustee. The Friends was approached by the Rector to cover the costs of the cleaning of the gutters and the Friends donated £900.

The Friends hosted several successful events in 2025 and are planning more fundraising events for 2026 towards the ongoing care and maintenance of St Andrew's Church.

These events could not be hosted without the generosity of the many hard-working volunteers and friends of St Andrew's Church. A big thank you to them all.

All funds raised are divided between the St Andrew's Fabric Fund and the United Parish General Fund.

Laretta Milligan

St Andrew's Flower Guild

The St Andrew's Church Flower Guild has a number of very competent, talented and experienced flower arrangers, and welcomes new members no matter what their skill level. The Guild is available for a full floral service, in church as well as outside venues, to include bouquets and buttonholes. The Flower Guild is willing to work around any budget. The Flower Guild are also willing to arrange flowers for baptisms, funerals or any other special occasion in church, as well as for functions such as wedding receptions, etc.

As well as providing bi-weekly arrangements by the members of the Flower Guild at their own cost, to enhance the church's worship, special efforts are made to fill the church with flowers when we celebrate festivals. A big thank you to all the members for their dedication in providing a variety of designs on a bi-weekly basis. This ministry allows us to share our talents and brings joy in creating flower arrangements for all to enjoy. This is particularly the case for Easter and Christmas, and for Harvest festival. The annual Flower Festival with cream teas is one of biggest fundraising events in the St Andrew's Church calendar. This is held in conjunction with Chinnor Open Gardens. The theme in 2025 was "Thank you for the Music".

Lauretta Milligan

Co-ordinator: St Andrew's Church Flower Guild

St Mary's Sydenham Flowers

St Mary's at Sydenham has enjoyed many opportunities to make our loving church even more beautiful. We have a small band of volunteers, Rosemary, Adele, Heather, Annie and Jane who join together to do most of the events. We would welcome anyone who would like to have a go as we need younger people. Often the best arrangements are the simplest, so if you are interested, do not be put off!

We are most fortunate in that the Sydenham Fayre Committee has donated funds for the flowers in church, which is very welcome as we have always provided the flowers for christenings and funerals as well as for the normal services.

This year for Mothering Sunday, we will do our usual posies, so that all the ladies receive a posy. We move onto Easter where we ask people to donate a lily in remembrance of some-one whom we have loved who has died. A highlight of this last year was the VE Celebrations, where the church was blacked out for amazing audio and visual effects and of course, we had red, white and blue flowers. Harvest is a wonderful time for flower arrangers, as it is for the other churches in the benefice. Although sad, poppies are a poignant reminder for our outside Remembrance service which is becoming increasingly popular and Christmas is a gift for using the talents of both the young and old. We feel so lucky to have help from so many villagers too. In all a very satisfactory year

Adele Stancliffe

St Peter and St Paul Aston Rowant Flowers

Thanks to a loyal band of flower arrangers, we are able to have fresh flowers in the church throughout the year and the church always looks beautiful for the festivals.

In December we said goodbye to Correen Gorton, who has been doing the flowers for many years and has always supplied us with greenery; she has gone to live in South Africa to be near her family but we miss her input!

I would like to thank my fellow flower ladies for their continuing support.

Rona Knight

Church hall Chinnor

The hall continues to function well, with a faithful set of regular users.

The income is sufficient to cover the regular utility bills and normal maintenance and repairs, but not for major items. The main door lock is now working satisfactorily, and minor repairs have been made to the old part of the roof.

The cookers have been replaced, with welcome assistance from the Luncheon Club and Chinnor Parish Council.

There is still a need to integrate the hall with the church to ensure an effective financial and practical future.

I would like to thank Val Welford for all her hard work on behalf of the hall.

Martin Wright

Hempton Field

Hempton Field Nursing home continues to be supported by the Ministry Team and others on a very regular basis, and 2025 was no exception.

We have continued to go in on the first Monday of every month to take Holy Communion, with a regular attendance from 5 to 8 residents.

Every 3rd Thursday of the month Jackie Griffiths and I go in with a themed session which can include a craft activity, but with the main focus being, to engage in conversation with those who attend.

We continue to link the residents with the wider community of the parish as we make time for special events. This year Sydenham choir have visited twice with a special sing along for from their Sydenham concert, and then the annual carol singing.

Chooseday Church visited during the summer term and shared with the residents what they have been learning through stories craft and song, leaving each resident with a hand-crafted bookmark. So wonderful to see how the older children have embraced these visits showing such respect to all the residents Our Starboddler children and carers made a Christmas visit during December where they shared the Christmas nativity through Godly play and they sang their usual crazy songs and Christmas songs. The joy on the residents' faces were all we needed to see in knowing how much they enjoyed themselves.

As always there is always a very warm welcome when we visit Hempton and we are always treated to a cup of tea and homemade cake, which is also extended to the children visits.

What an honour and a pleasure it is to be able to take the Church into Hempton, something that I have had the privilege to organise for more than 15 years now.

Margaret Poole

The Luncheon Club is held fortnightly throughout the year, in St. Andrew's Church Hall.

We serve a hot main course, followed by a dessert and tea/coffee.

We have 45 members, who are served by a wonderful team of 18 volunteers, who take on the following tasks:

Preparing and cooking meals

Driving/escorting members

Putting out tables/chairs

Laying tables

Serving

Washing-up

Clearing-up

This year we were able to purchase new cookers and a dishwasher in the Church Hall. We are so grateful for the Parish Council grant. Thank you also to the Food and Warmth Grant and the Thame Runners who kindly helped with costs towards the Christmas party. Our thanks also go to various local companies and shops that support Luncheon Club.

Again, this year we were awarded the Food Hygiene Certificate maximum of 5.

Jackie Griffiths

CHINNOR CHURCHES GO WILD!

One of A Rocha UK's longest standing Partners in Action is Chinnor Churches Go Wild! (CCGW!). Located in Oxfordshire, at the foot of the Chiltern escarpment, CCGW! is near Chinnor Hill (BBOWT) and Aston Rowant (EN) national nature reserves. This area is valued for its beech woodland and bluebells, chalk grassland, wildflowers and orchids, red kites and muntjac deer and a variety of wildlife. The project, run by a group of Anglican and Methodist volunteers, focuses on community engagement events and creation care across the 10 acres of church grounds of the four rural churches. St. Andrew Church Chinnor, and St Peter and St Paul Aston Rowant have achieved Eco Church awards and run eco services and organise walks and nature surveys through the local reserves.

On 28 July 2025, Chinnor Churches Go Wild! (CCGW!) celebrated its 18th birthday. To celebrate this milestone, CCGW! hosted a convention that brought together all the major players to share what CCGW! has learnt over the years and consider its strategic recommendations for the future. It was a particular delight to welcome our old friend, Dr Bob Sluka from A Rocha International, as the keynote speaker, as well as Hannah Mann, Environment Programme Manager for the Diocese of Oxford, Maranda St John Nicolle, World Mission Officer for the Diocese of Oxford and Director of Christian Concern for One World (CCOW!), Dr Paul Taylor, Sustainability Officer at Reading University and Helen Stephens, A Rocha UK's Head of Church Relations. Local organisations were represented too, with information tables including Fairtrade, around St Andrew's Church.

There was a strong recommendation that CCGW! should continue with its current programme and continue to be an active A Rocha UK Partner in Action.

Brian Griffiths
Chair : CCGW!

St Andrew's Choir, Chinnor

St Andrew's, Aston Rowant and Crowell have been well served by our usual group of organists and singers. Sunday services have benefited from the music provided, as have the occasional memorial services. The evident appreciation, enjoyment and participation of the congregation is a significant factor in creating services with a meaningful atmosphere.

Graham Smallbone

St Mary's Choir, Sydenham

2025 was, again, a relatively quiet year for the choir.

The good news is that we have had several new members and now have 24 people on the books – including 2 more men!

We supported 6 funerals at Crowell, Aston Rowant and Sydenham across the year, but, sadly, no weddings.

The big event was our concert held in May to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day. It was a wonderful occasion with lots of music and fun, the church beautifully decorated for the occasion and a full audience. The profit from ticket sales was split between the choir and the parish general fund. We then took a selection of songs from the concert 'on tour' to Hempton Fields where quite a few of the residents recounted their own wartime experiences.

Another lovely occasion was our choir outing, which was slightly different this year. We sang a Christmas Choral Experience, 'Sing Christmas', by Joel Raney and Mary McDonald at St Andrew's Church. All those who were there really enjoyed it and we received some lovely comments. We followed this with a super supper at The Crown in Sydenham.

We're all so grateful to Chris Hood for the hard work and effort he puts in to keeping the choir in order. With Hugh as our accompanist, it means he can really concentrate on us!

Siobhan McKee

Bell ringers - St Andrew's Chinnor

It's been a busy and successful 12 months up the tower.

Highlights have included an excellent quarter peal to celebrate Sue Bailey's diamond wedding anniversary, twinning activities with Dorchester, Aston Rowant and Benson, and the introduction of a learners' practice night on Thursdays.

The learners' night is a very welcome necessity, supporting the arrival of a veritable flood of interested pupils in the last few months, including 2 youngsters and 3 adults. One of the youngsters (courtesy of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme) is already a safe and stable ringer, and another should achieve that very soon.

Our group of 'local' experienced ringers is relatively small, but with the support of a large and reliable number of visitors, the Friday practice is usually well-attended, enjoyable and energetic.

However we always remember that Sunday ringing is the foundation of our activity, and we ring whenever enough capable ringers are available. That's been the case most weeks, although sometimes only with 4 or 5 bells.

We hope our learners will bolster that core team in the near future, and as they develop, allow us to improve the quality and level of our ringing.

We feel we're making progress in promoting local bellringing (which is a very underrated hobby), and in improving communication and cooperation both within the church, and the broader community.

Thank you
Malcolm Barker - Tower Captain
07425 411681

Bell ringers - St Peter and St Paul Aston Rowant

At least five of our six bells are rung regularly for services but only with the generous support of ringers from Chinnor and Watlington. One of our stalwarts – Paul – was hospitalised for over two months at the year-end and we look forward to his return when he is strong enough. Tuesday practices are usually well attended, and we have gained another D of E recruit – who lives within earshot – so it is hoped that he will maintain his interest. We would very much benefit if some more recruits came forward from the village!

Our maintenance inspection found no significant issues with the installation, but the tenor clapper was taken to White's works for minor modification.

Broadly, this has been a 'quiet' year for us. Unusually there have been no quarter peal attempts. Our new muffles were not used as there were insufficient ringers available at the appropriate time on Remembrance Sunday. Sadly, the handbells remained in their cases leading up to Christmas. It would be good if these aspects could be rectified in 2026.

Robert Newton

Closing statement and Prayers by the Rector the Rev'd Dr Jacky Barr