

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2025
To
THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
ST MARY THE VIRGIN, GAMLINGAY
With HATLEY ST. GEORGE AND EAST HATLEY
8th March 2026



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APCM 8th March 2026 St.Mary's Church Hall at 10.45 am (for coffee)

Welcome by Rev Hilary Young

Agenda for Voting of Churchwardens, (Formerly Vestry Meeting) `
Sunday 8th March 2026

Attendees and Apologies for Absence

Minutes of 16th March 2025 Vestry Meeting

Election of Churchwardens

Agenda for Annual Parochial Church Meeting Sunday 8th March 2026

Apologies for Absence

Minutes of the APCM of 16th March 2025

Report on Electoral Roll

Presentation of the Annual Report, Accounts and Review of the Year

Questions and comments

Election of:

Deanery Synod representatives

PCC Members

Electoral Roll Officer

Appointment of Independent Examiner

Closing Prayer, Followed by Shared Lunch

PCC Meeting to following the APCM to Ratify Officers

Administrative Information

The parish church of St. Mary the Virgin is situated at the end of Church Street, Gamlingay. The church of St. James the Great, a Chapel of Ease is situated on the Astor Estate in Hatley St. George. The Church of St. Dennis at East Hatley is cared for by Friends of Friendless Churches. The Parish is part of the Diocese of Ely and the Deanery of St. Neots.

These churches are also part of a benefice with St Mary's church Everton for which this PCC is not responsible although it has shared aims.

Address (The Church of St Mary the Virgin, Church Street, SG19 3JJ)

For Correspondence

The Rectory, 3a Stocks Lane

Gamlingay, Sandy.

Beds. SG19 3JP

Email: gamlingaychurch@outlook.com

www.achurchnearyou.com/13924

Incumbent Rev. Hilary Young.

External Examiner Colin Airey

Electoral Roll Officer Valerie Miller

Structure, Governance and Management.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission. The method of appointment of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The PCC consists of the Rector and members elected by church members (those on the Church Electoral Roll). All those who are eligible are encouraged to stand for election.

Members for the year 2024

Ex officio:	The Rector (chairperson)	Rev Hilary Young
	2 x Churchwarden	Ann Davis
	2 x Deanery synod reps	Ann Davis
	LLM /reader rep	

Elected: Jane Orchiston 3rd year, Ann Davis 3rd year, Nick Ingles 4rd year, Peter Macrow 3rd year. Amelie Geddis Dewhurst 2nd year.

There is no separate Standing Committee (the PCC is the Standing Committee) as the PCC is too small.

The church owes much gratitude to those who have worked so hard this year to maintain the mission and ministry of this parish.

There have been 9 meetings this year one of which was not quorate. Meetings have continued to be separate from those for Everton.

Some of the work of the PCC is carried out by task groups, led by a PCC member but may include others, these groups are authorised by, and report directly to, the PCC.

Task group for fundraising, social and communication.

Lead Jane Orchiston with Ros Hissett, Valerie Miller, Brenda Elcome, Anne Clarke, and Rev Hilary. Ann Davis

Task group for buildings and fabric – Lead, Ann Davis with support from Mr. Chris Miller and Rev. Hilary

Electoral Roll Report

At the beginning of 2025 the Electoral Roll stood at 54 with 1 living outside the parish. The electoral roll as of 14.02.2026 stands at **54** with 1 living outside the parish.

Aims and Purposes

The Parochial Church Council has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent, Reverend Hilary Young, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the church building, church hall and church cottage at Gamlingay, the church building and churchyard at Hatley St George, and the open churchyard at East Hatley. The churchyard at Gamlingay is closed, its maintenance is the responsibility of the Parish Council.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC works with the incumbent to involve as many as possible in life of the church.

Services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music, and the sacraments. In particular we seek to enable members of our local community and beyond to live out faith through:

- Worship & prayer, learning about the Gospel; and developing knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish and keeping everyone safe and in connection with the church, especially but not exclusively the most vulnerable.
- Missionary and outreach work including communications within and beyond the congregation, making the love of God known in the world.
- Fundraising to maintain financial responsibilities and fabric of the buildings, and for other charities.

Achievements and Performance

Bishops Visitation

The bishops visitation happened in August, the first for several years and was carried out by the Rural Dean Nicky Bland. The visit had required a great deal of preparation and updating of paperwork and policies. The feedback was very positive and we were able to carry out some small recommendations shortly after. She was also interested in views and concerns for the future of the church when in vacancy. She reports back to the Archdeacon.

Worship and Prayer

Rev Hilary Young is supported in the ministry team by Mr. Chris Miller LLM/Reader and Mrs. Valerie Miller ALM (pastoral, awaiting reauthorization).

Twice weekly Eucharistic services have continued at Gamlingay every Sunday (Sung and broadcast on Zoom) at 9.30am and every Wednesday at 9.30am (said).

There is also a Eucharist at Everton at 11.15am on three Sundays a month with Evensong on the 3rd Sunday. At Gamlingay the 3rd Sunday now has a healing theme, including anointing for those who wish.

A whole Benefice service is held at either Gamlingay or Everton for shared worship on 5th Sundays when they occur.

Services at Hatley St. George are scheduled aiming for feast days. and holy days.

Lent sessions took place weekly with a daytime study group.

Advent study was offered but not taken up this year.

Service information is advertised weekly and the Rector with Valerie Miller produces a sheet with the readings, intercessions and a reflection for services. This is circulated by email, social media and on the 'A church near you' web page when staff available.

There have been;

Baptisms – 2 children

Confirmations – 0

Funerals – 12

Weddings – 0

Children (Children's Ministry) has been challenging without a dedicated Sunday school leader. The churchwarden has found creative ways to engage the children in God's word and message with a tailored weekly sheet with suggested activity and prayer. There has been one family attending Sparks regularly the child has creative and prayerful ideas of her own and is able to work with a small amount of input. As more families are attending more support is needed if we are to grow. The Roots, Thrive weekly family sheet is also circulated with the newsletter.

Pastoral care

Valerie Miller although not relicensed this year continues to offer pastoral support and has a small group who ensure that connection is maintained with those unable to attend church. Home communion is available on request and advertised in the Newsletter as such. Rev Hilary is always available for pastoral care and ministry in the parish including at Potton View Care Home.

LLM Reader Mr C. Miller writes: I have continued in active ministry during 2025. Unfortunately, I was in hospital over the Palm Sunday weekend and I was therefore unable to assist with services during Holy Week and Easter. During the year I have been involved with services as follows: Evensong at Everton (Lead and preach 7); Parish Eucharist at Gamlingay (Preach x2); Remembrance service at Everton (Lead and preach x1); Funeral (Lead x1); Burial of Ashes (Lead x1)

2025 was the year when all Readers had to relicense if they wanted to continue in ministry. I gave this a great deal of thought (the alternative being retirement) and eventually decided that I would go ahead for relicensing for another three years. I really do value the support and prayers from so many within our benefice which was a huge factor in my decision to continue.

Safeguarding

The PCC continues to take its safeguarding responsibility seriously including ensuring up to date training and DBS checks. Jane Orchiston is the appointed Safeguarding officer with responsibility for the whole Benefice and reports that training and DBS checks continue. The Safeguarding policy has been reviewed by the PCC this year and is available on the church webpage.

Mission and Outreach

Communication continues as a weekly newsletter thanks to Brenda Elcome for editing, laying out and is circulated by email. This and most extra church events are advertised on social media and on flyers in local shops. The web page, social media and advertising are kept up to date by Jane Orchiston and Amelie Geddis Dewhurst, with thanks to Peter Mann for his wonderful publicity designs. Rev Hilary Young also writes a monthly letter for The Gazette village magazine.

We work to involve families beyond the church into the life of Jesus. We were unable to have the Halloween stall this year due to leave but there was a short service of Christ's light at church.

Many children enjoyed the Christmas decoration activity and hot drinks at St. Mary's church during the village community organized, Christmas light switch-on event. Thank you to Jellytots for supplies.

The Christmas Eve nativity walk along Church Street before the Christingle service was a huge success and now has a large following. The small children were supplied with costumes at the start and visited shops and inns on the way, knocking at the inns and collecting the Wise Men's gifts from the shop, singing carols on the way. The Christingle service with candles and symbolically decorated oranges was very well attended and raised money for the Children's Society.

The Christmas carol service was enjoyed by people from the wider village as well as regular attenders.

Work continues with the Baptist church, particularly in the Gamlingay Food project which brings together a food bank (Need Hub) and Community Fridge. The service for Remembrance Sunday is shared with the Baptist Church, this year the service was at St.Mary's Church with Pastor Adrian Semerene preaching.

The Memory Lane group continues twice a month, established as a partnership with the Eco Hub and supported by the Rector, for those with memory loss and their companions.

St Mary's offers a community 'Simple Lunch' at the church hall on two Tuesdays of the month. This has been very successful and now has a group of regular attendees including some from Memory Lane.

The churchyard work continues with volunteers from the wider community.

In all these activities we aim to be generous and visible people of Jesus Christ.

Task Group for Fundraising and Communication

The Fundraising Task Group has been working hard this year to raise funds so we could increase contributions to our Parish Share. Thanks to all who worked so hard and to all those who contributed. The list below shows the events: -

January - New Year Concert
February – Norman's 90th Birthday Party
March - Quiz Night
May – Bingo Night
June – Summer Fete
July – Garden Party
September – Tea Room at the Village Show
October – Harvest of Musical Talents
November – Quiz
December – Christmas Fair and Grand Draw

Some of the above events went very well but it was a bit too hot for the Summer Fete, it was too wet and windy for the Rectory Garden Party. There was no enthusiasm for Bingo. The Harvest of Musical Talents had reduced support from community musicians and audience. The quizzes were enjoyed by everyone, so much so the last one of the year was filled without advertising outside the Newsletter. Other events have also raised funds, such as Simple Lunch. Please see the Treasurer's Report for funds raised.

If anyone else would like to join us they would be very welcome!

Communication on social media has included events and special services and the Newsletter. We have also used banners, posters and leaflets. There are very few places in the village now to put posters. Word of mouth is always a good way to spread the news!

Large print weekly service sheets have been produced for those with vision impairment and the production of large print service books is ongoing at the time of writing.

Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod representatives (Mrs. A Davis) attends and reports back on meetings for the St. Neots Deanery with Hilary Young. Following the Living Ely report, work continued this year on the Deanery Plan, responding to challenges facing the whole Diocese including increased housing, smaller and aging congregations and financial pressures due to steeply rising running costs.

There has been significant impact for the Deanery this year due to the retirement of two clergy, and of the Rural Dean. The treasurer post also remaining vacant has caused difficulties. There has been some movement of parishes within the benefice and may be more, several continue in vacancy. There is change expected in the number of whole-time priests across the deanery and in particular our benefice will likely be reduced, maybe to half time following the expected retirement in January coming of Revd. Hilary Young.

The major challenge for our parish this year was a very steep twenty percent increase in the Share requested which is paid to Ely Diocese. This was caused by a change in the way it was calculated across the Deanery. We were not able to meet this full increase but were able to pay last year's amount plus the expected four percent increase, following dedicated fundraising. An emergency calculation has been made for the 2026 Share by the Deanery, for the benefice this is nearer that expected, but could be subject to change.

There is also work ongoing for, the appointment of a pioneer minister for St Neots East, and provision for Youth across the Deanery.

Buildings and Fabric

Gamlingay Church

The insurance claim has been settled for silver items stolen on 1st February 2023 and money was received in January 2025 accounts.

The annual audit of goods and ornaments has been carried out at Gamlingay and Hatley by the churchwarden - all present. Security cameras continue to be used covering the vestry, main door and tower. Regular cleaning has continued fortnightly but with only 6 people on the rota in pairs, more volunteers are needed.

Works on the fabric repair and maintenance include treatment of woodworm in candlestick standards and one pew. Drain and gutter maintenance and fire extinguisher service and roof check and alarm service. The heating was serviced in August. The Quinquennial Inspection report for St.Mary's Gamlingay was received in February '25. A task group is in place to prioritise works needed and prepare a presentation for the Friends of St Mary's to request funding. The roof project completed in 2023 is part of a wider scheme of work which will require significant funding and grant applications.

Hatley Church

Hatley Church has had an annual fire equipment safety inspection. The Quinquennial inspection took place and was reported on in August by Stephanie Norris architect. Further investigations and significant works are needed to preserve the fabric and to investigate/cure damp problems in the floor of the building. There has not been availability for a team to take this forward. Special thanks are due to the Astor estate for churchyard and gutter maintenance.

The key holder is Mrs. Penny Hewlett, to whom we also give special thanks.

St Mary's Church Hall and Garden

Ann Davis co-ordinates the care of the hall and bookings. A winter heating supplement of £1 an hour added to regular user hire rates between October and March has been accepted by users. The Brownies, Guides and Jellytots continue to be regular weekly users during term time. The Guild of St. Mary's and Simple lunch are regular users,

there have also been private parties and events. The floor requires work which has not been possible this year due to need for funds and human resources to progress the work. The fire extinguishers have been checked. Minor repairs have taken place to the stage floor, toilet and gate.

The garden is used by Jellytots playgroup and by Sparks for outdoor church during the summer. Maintenance of the garden has been largely due to Jellytots.

Church Cottage Gamlingay

Landlord obligations have been met, heating and boiler serviced. Some minor repairs have been made to the water meter and also to the water heating system. Notice of a rent increase was given in November to take effect January 2026.

Churchyards

Gamlingay closed churchyard is the responsibility of the Parish council.

The churchyard project for Gamlingay St Mary's, begun in the Queen's Jubilee year continued as a partnership between church, Parish Council and volunteers working to an agreed plan. See full report in Appendix. The path edging and gravel have been replaced by the parish council following Faculty being granted.

The open churchyard at Great St. James, Hatley St George, is cared for by the Astor estate, for which grateful thanks to Micky Astor and his estate team.

At St. Denis in East Hatley the open churchyard is managed as a nature reserve by a task group made up of local volunteers with the Rector as PCC link. Special thanks is due to key volunteer Nicola Jenkins for helping to organise that group.

PARISH OF GAMLINGAY WITH HATLEY ST. GEORGE AND EAST HATLEY

Financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2025

Presented to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 08 / 03 /2026

PARISH OF GAMLINGAY WITH HATLEY ST. GEORGE AND EAST HATLEY

GENERAL FUND INCOME AND EXPENDITURE					
	2025		2024		
	£	£	£	£	
INCOME					
Voluntary giving: Cash collections GAMLINGAY	4,373		4,370		
Planned giving Gift aid GAMLINGAY	1,440		2,165		
Planned giving through PGS GAMLINGAY	17,921		19,585		
Planned giving - not Gift Aid	-	23,734	-	26,120	
Cash collections HATLEY	432		522		
Planned giving HATLEY	-	432	-	522	
Gift Aid tax due		1,212		1,312	
Sub-total for "voluntary giving"		25,378		27,954	
Other voluntary receipts:					
Donations and grants		4,327		5,075	
Receipts from activities for generating funds:					
Church cottage rent	9,600		9,600		
Church hall lettings	2,458		2,059		
Fund raising events - income	7,302		9,038		
sub-total		19,360		20,697	
Fees due to PCC for funerals & weddings	2,878		3,554		
Other income	8,611	11,488	601	4,155	
TOTAL INCOME		60,553		57,881	
EXPENDITURE					
Church activities:					
Ministry Share to the Diocese		(46,229)		(41,830)	
Church running expenses GAMLINGAY		(10,490)		(10,198)	
Church running expenses HATLEY		(1,800)		(1,905)	
Ministry expenses		(243)		(43)	
Visiting priests		(116)		(128)	
Bell ringers		-		(400)	
Organist fees		(160)		(740)	
Miscellaneous expenses		-		(30)	
Payments in connection with activities for generating funds:					
Church hall costs (insurance, utilities, maintenance)		(2,493)		(2,904)	
Cottage maintenance costs		(678)		(569)	
Fund raising events - costs		(191)		(152)	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		(62,400)		(58,899)	
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) OF INCOME - EXPENDITURE		(1,846)		(1,018)	

PARISH OF GAMLINGAY WITH HATLEY ST. GEORGE AND EAST HATLEY

Financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2025

RESTRICTED FUNDS

Restoration Fund – general

This is a general restoration fund covering both Gamlingay and Hatley to which donations have been made specifically for restoration. Part of the fund is held in an account with Barclays Bank and part in a CCLA deposit. There is income to the fund from the two DBF funds mentioned below and some regular donations. The PCC have discretion to use the fund for restoration purposes as they see fit. This fund has had an income of £500 and no expenditure for 2025.

Restoration Fund - Hatley St George

This is a specific fund for restoration to Hatley St George Church. Part of the fund is held in an account with Barclays Bank and part in a CCLA deposit. This fund has had an income of £200 and no expenditure for 2025.

Restoration Fund for music and vestments

Amounts of money have been given, over recent years, specifically for the purpose of music, for the replacement of vestments and for the replacement of the church notice board. The music fund stands at £182, the vestment fund at £863. In 2025 we paid Mission Praise licence from the Music Fund to a total of £80.

Churchyard Re-Wilding Project fund

Money left over from Gamlingay Environmental Action Group which the PCC has agreed to receive into the PCC accounts and to be set as a restricted fund for Churchyard rewilding project. The PCC can agree on how the money is spent so long as it fulfils its restricted purpose. The amount transferred in 2024 was £250, which added to the inherited amount of £1,076 leaves a total of £1,312 in account. This fund remains unchanged in 2025.

Re-ordering Fund

Following the theft of lead from the church roof in 2018, the fund was set up to raise money towards repairs and replacement of the roof, including some work to the windows and parapets. This fund has now been used to cover this major reordering programme to the church. The project has been completed, and some funds are unspent. The unspent fund of £20,191 is held in a Barclays Bank deposit account. This fund has been merged with the Solar Panels Fund in 2025. Moneys from this fund is used to balance the expenses of maintaining the roof alarm annuity and servicing, which amounted to £1,139 for 2025.

Solar panels Fund

Two grants were received in 2021 totalling £5,000 to install solar panels on the church. £540 was spent on professional fees in December 2021. The current balance for this fund stands at £4,460 and it is held in an account with Barclays Bank. This fund has been merged with the re-ordering fund in 2025.

Children's work Fund

This relates to income received specifically for the work around children in the parish. This fund remains unchanged for 2025.

PARISH OF GAMLINGAY WITH HATLEY ST. GEORGE AND EAST HATLEY

Financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2025

RESTRICTED FUNDS

Communities fund

Grants received from the CO-OP communities project gift. The start balance of 2025 was £1,053 and expenditures amounted to £470, which was spent on food purchases and hall hire. The amount to carry forward into 2026 is £583

Sale of lands fund

This is an historic fund from the sale of land in the late 1970's, and from which the cumulative income can be used for restoration purposes. Initially the original capital of £2,622 was not permitted to be spent, however in February 2022 Resolutions 282 and 275 have been passed with the Charities Commission allowing the funds to be withdrawn and allocated to the Gamlingay Roof re-ordering Fund and further amending the purpose of the fund from "repairs and maintenance of the parish church" to "repairs, maintenance and improvement to the parish church". This has enabled the PCC to use any unspent amounts towards future projects such as the Solar panels Fund or indeed any other future project fund which complies with the amended purpose of the fund. In March 2022 an amount of £24,524 was withdrawn and transferred into the Gamlingay Roof and re-ordering Fund, however this amount was unspent. It has been transferred back into the Sale of lands Fund (Barclays account). In September 2023 the PCC agreed to use moneys from this fund to pay for the Parish Church Building Insurance, retrospectively from 2022 and onwards (totalling £7,280.53 from January 2022 to November 2023). This year, yet again the PCC agreed to use moneys from this fund for the Parish Building Insurance, retrospectively from 2024 and onwards (totalling £8,443.06). In 2025 the share of the invested funds has suffered a devaluation, from 23.1227p down to 22.1983p per share, resulting in a loss of £674 in the investment.

	Balance brought forward	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance carried forward
	£	£	£	£	£
Restoration fund - general	6,790	500	-	-	7,290
Restoration fund - Hatley St George	15,193	1,250	-	-	16,443
Communities fund	1,053	-	(470)	-	583
Re-Wilding fund	1,312	-	-	-	1,312
Music fund and vestments fund	1,125	-	(80)	-	1,045
Gamlingay re-ordering fund	21,330	-	(1,139)	4,460	24,651
Solar panels for church roof	4,460	-	-	(4,460)	-
Childrens' work fund	254	-	-	-	254
Interest earned	-	509	-	-	509
Hall Shed Fund	-	150	-	-	150
Sale of lands fund	34,232	-	(9,118)	-	25,114
Silver theft insurance Claim	-	23,020	-	-	23,020
	85,749	25,430	(10,807)	-	100,371

OTHER RESTRICTED MONIES COLLECTED WHICH ARE PAID IN FULL TO THE RECIPIENT:

Christian Aid	331
Children Society (Christingles)	236
Children Society (Collection box)	130
Manna/Niassa	0
MNDA North Beds	260

PARISH OF GAMLINGAY WITH HATLEY ST. GEORGE AND EAST HATLEY

Financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2025

Fees paid for weddings and funerals

Fees paid for weddings and funerals are paid in part to the PCC and in part to the Diocese. The amounts attributable to the PCC as shown in the General Fund Income and Expenditure account is £2,878. The amount collected and due to be paid to the Diocese in Early 2026 but in respect of 2025 was £1,714 for Weddings and Funerals.

DEPOSIT IN CHURCH COTTAGE

Although not a specific restricted fund, it should be noted that the deposit from the church cottage is held in a separate bank account to comply with tenancy regulations.

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND FUNDS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025				
	2025 Unrestricted funds	2025 restricted funds	2025 Total funds	2024 Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Bank accounts:				
Bank current account	3,570	16,227	19,797	6,615
Bank restoration account (Re-ordering fund)	336	38,431	38,767	39,697
Bank restoration account	1,400	15,711	17,111	16,912
CCLA accounts	-	13,805	13,805	12,755
DBF investment accounts	-	16,197	16,197	16,871
Debtors (money owed to the PCC):				
Gift Aid tax not claimed for 2025	1,212	-	1,212	1,312
Creditors (money owed by the PCC):				
Amount payable to the Diocese for fees & Share	(1,714)	-	(1,714)	(3,061)
Other amounts owed	-	-	-	-
Church cottage rent deposit	(900)	-	(900)	(900)
TOTAL NET ASSETS	3,668	100,372	104,040	90,201
FUNDS				
Balance brought forward	4,452	85,749	90,201	88,927
Surplus for the year	(1,846)	14,623	13,839	1,274
Balance carried forward	2,606	100,372	104,040	90,201
Assets retained for church use:				
Church hall and cottage [purchased from Diocese of Ely in 1947 for £300 consideration] - insured value				£ 381,145
The financial statements of the Parochial Church Council have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using an income and expenditure basis				

PARISH OF GAMLINGAY WITH HATLEY ST. GEORGE AND EAST HATLEY

Financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2025

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2025 which are set out on pages 2 to 4.

Respective responsibilities of the Parochial Church Council and Independent Examiner

The Parochial Church Council consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the charities act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to (a) examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act and (b) follow the procedures laid down the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act and (c) state whether matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the PCC concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would for in a full audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matters have come to my attention

1. which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records have not been met; or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed

Date

Colin Airey FCCA - INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

**These accounts were approved by the Parochial Church Council on 23/02/2026
and presented to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 08/03/2026**

and are signed on its behalf by:

Rev H Young (chair of the PCC)

N Ingles (Hon Treasurer)

Benefice Reflections from the Rector

2025 has been a challenging year for the Benefice with the unexpected hike in Share along with rising costs of everything else skewing much of the thinking and planning in the parishes. Gamlingay was unable to meet more than the expected 4% increase, whereas Everton, with a smaller percentage of the Benefice request, was able to pay the request in full. However this was thanks to support from the Barnabas Oley trust which was a one-off which will not be available in the future. People in both parishes have worked hard to raise what they have, and my thanks go to everyone who has put in effort and commitment with me.

The Benefice PCCs have met separately, with limited collaboration between the parishes, although with Everton human resources being particularly strained, safeguarding has been looked after by Jane Orchiston from Gamlingay for both parishes.

Personal Highlights of 2025 have been very similar to 2024.

- **People** both within and beyond the church families who give support and explore faith. I thank God for the wonderful hard-working souls sharing the load of administration and care for church fabric alongside the active people-ministry. Special thanks go to the small PCCs, with additional mention to Ann and Jane in Gamlingay and Jonathan in Everton for the extras they take on alongside others in facilitating what it is to be Church.

- **Work** in the **Churchyards**, with the **Gamlingay Food Project, Soup Lunches, Simple Lunches, Memory Lane**, Gamlingay Parish Council **Climate Action Group** and connections with the **parish councils in all three communities** have all continued to flourish offering opportunities serve and to link the churches with a wider non-church community, reducing food waste, providing food and company to people in need, and engaging with climate concerns. It is a joy to work with those in and beyond the church communities to make a positive difference. I give thanks for the lovely supportive people some of whom do not share in the worship of the church but who show their care practically alongside church family in all the projects mentioned. The churchyard and food projects in particular would not work without the latter.

The challenges are also the same, with numbers and capacity of people able and willing to share the burdens of administration and practical tasks that keep the show on the road reducing. The Benefice desperately needs a lead for work with children and families to support the great work that Ann has done alongside her Churchwarden duties. **Finances** linked to the Deanery planning process have also raised considerable anxiety, with seemingly no one to listen or work with to tackle the issues. This coming year will be one of transition, my prayers are with all of us that that may be full of the felt presence and blessing of a heavenly parent.

Hilary Young March 2026

Appendix

Roles in addition to Task Groups

Special thanks go to all those involved in supporting the work of the church in many ways, both through the PCC and its task groups and beyond.

Voluntary Admin. The PCC wishes to give their thanks to Carol Wright who continues to give admin support for Occasional Office bookings and to monitor the church email address.

Flower arrangements. We are fortunate to have a group of volunteers who source and produce wonderful arrangements to brighten church and special occasions. Many thanks to Anne Clarke and the team she leads.

Church duty rota Ros Hissett organises a rota to ensure every service is supported by sidespersons, sacristan, readers, intercessors and coffee makers and that the church is cleaned regularly. Many thanks to Ros and all who perform these important roles. Thank you also to those who operate the sound system during service. More volunteers are very much needed to support the small existing team.

Locking and unlocking team.

Thank you to those who perform this task and to Mr. C. Miller for organising the rota.

Church Music

St Mary's continues to benefit from our three voluntary organists (Jane Orchiston, who coordinates the rota, Andrew Smith and Steffan Laugharne). This system continues to work well and thanks are due to Jane Orchiston for organising the rotas. We are extremely grateful to our organists for their valuable contribution to our worship. Thank you to Chris Miller who continues to lead the choral provision in the Benefice.

He writes. As was reported last year the Benefice Choir continues to rehearse on a few occasions before each performance rather than every Thursday. Our main contribution during 2025 was at Advent and Christmas. The Advent music provision was in the form of a Parish Eucharist for Advent rather than an Advent Carol Service. The choir also took part in the Benefice Christmas Carol service this year at Gamlingay. It was a great pleasure to welcome Jennifer Huntley-Prinn and members of her family who joined us for this event (Jennifer and her girls formed the backbone of the choir at Everton church many years ago). Some members of the Benefice Choir together with Jennifer and her family plus a few friends provided the musical provision at the Hatley Carol Service. As is now customary Andrew Smith directed the music for this service. As always thanks are due to all members of the Benefice Choir who give of their time so willingly.

Bell Ringers report to APCM – Feb 2026

Several medical problems amongst our ringers have restricted our performances this year resulting in us ringing for fewer Sunday services; however, our Thursday night practices have continued with the help of regular visiting ringers from other towers in the diocese.

Sadly, we rang for the funerals of church members Alec Hissett and John Mossman who died this year.

Our bells continue to be popular with visiting bands of bell ringers with 5 groups visiting this year.

The bells were rung for the 80th anniversary of VE Day and half-muffled for the Remembrance Sunday service.

Six quarter peals have been scored on the bells this year; four by our local band and two for the Golden Oldies ringing group.

We have two 'novice' ringers receiving instruction during our practice nights.

From mid to end of December the bell clappers were tied to allow carols to be chimed as in previous years. Once again this proved popular and solicited positive comments. The bells have been inspected, adjusted and lubricated as required during the year with no known problems.

Please encourage friends and acquaintances who show any interest in church bells to contact me at gamlingaybellringers@gmail.com.

Details of our bells and ringing times can be found on our website <http://Gamlingay-bell-ringers.webador.co.uk> Our news items can be found on our Gamlingay Bell Ringers Facebook page.

2025 Summary	2025	(2024)
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No. of Sunday services rung for	38	45
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Average number of Sunday ringers	4.3	4.7
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No. of introductory training sessions	2	25
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No. of Thursday practices	40	45
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Average number at practice night	8.0	8.2
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Weddings	0	2
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Funerals	2	0
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Quarter Peals rung	6	2
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Visiting bands	5	2
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John Boocock Tower Captain

Associated Church Groups

The Gamlingay Food Project Ros Hissett provides administrative support for the project and writes:

The Gamlingay Food Project is a partnership between the Baptist Church & St Mary's. We are located in the Almshouse Chapel, by generous arrangement with the Trustees and the local authority.

The Food Hub provides a single local collection and distribution centre for food for those in need. It operates as a hub for The Need Project which is based in Stotfold. In 2025 we were again able to help over 1,000 families in Gamlingay and the surrounding villages. Unfortunately, due to the current financial crisis, our donations have reduced greatly and we are relying more heavily for 'top ups' from Stotfold. So if you are able to donate any long shelf life items please bring them to church or to the Food Hub.

At Christmas we were able to distribute 26 food hampers to some of our regular clients and we wish to say an enormous thank you to all our supporters both individual & companies within the area. The hampers included turkey (or alternative), fresh veggies and all manner of Christmas related foods. We were also have to give presents to the children and adults. All generously donated by members of our community.

The Community Fridge enables free distribution of spare food within the community and is part of a national initiative which has additionally enabled use of food waste produced by supermarkets, reducing landfill. The fridge & freezer are open to all and do not require referrals. During the past year we have stopped over 34,500kg of waste food and almost 4,000 bunches of flowers or plants going into landfill.

We have a brilliant team of regular volunteers for which we are hugely indebted. We have seen a few of our 'collectors' leave during the past year so we are on the lookout for new volunteers to help spread the load.

The Friends of St. Mary's

Following receipt of the quinquennial report the PCC members are working on a plan for necessary repairs to present to The Friends of St, Mary's. Unfortunately, due to low staff this is not yet ready. I am sure when the plan is made the Friends will consider any requests.

Church Yard Project (Task Group Report)

A project was inaugurated at the time of the previous Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, to manage St Mary's churchyard for wildlife. There have been several volunteers from the wider community working with Hilary and a church team with Diane from the Diocese to support the ongoing development of this project. The work has been (indeed had to be) in partnership with the Parish Council, as the churchyard is closed, meaning responsibility for upkeep has been legally transferred to the PC.

The PCC continues to have responsibilities as custodians of the churchyard which remains church property. The dialogue between the PCC and the Parish Clerks on work required in the churchyard has continued this year, with new edging and gravel to

paths paid for by the PC being put in. Although the gravel has proved a nuisance in many ways this is a function of the original path construction.

Churchyard Task Group with Hilary as PCC link continued work this year, although with the volunteers from outside the church family being much appreciated. The funds held by the PCC have not been used this year, but plans to expand the scything team may make use of some this year.

Nicola Jenkins, Peter Condon and Connor Leaf-Grimshaw with other members of the new Cambridge Scything group helped with grass management again this year. A combination of adverse weather and failed communications with the contractors have meant that some of this was less successful this year again, however efforts to communicate with the contractors more effectively continue.

The planned laying of the hedge between the churchyard and cottage/hall, completed early in the year continues to look good, thanks again to Gwyn Williams and volunteers. The group may well repeat the favour in Everton churchyard extension.

Hilary's involvement with the Climate Action Group, which operates with support of the council clerk continued this year. The group's planned activities and membership expanded again this year, with, among other things, a significant presence at the Village Show, growing links with the scything group, which cut a part of Mill Bridge Brook Meadows, and the Repair Cafe which was trialed in 2024 was repeated successfully this last year and will be again in 2026.

The Guild of St Mary

The Guild of St Mary's ladies group was formed in 1973 when the Mothers Union and Young Wives groups were disbanded. The Guild is organised by a committee and meets on the third Monday of each month at 7.30pm in the church hall.

In 2025 we welcomed speakers on cigarette cards, Peru, antiques, the life of an author, diabetes, and had musical demonstrations from Ivel handbell ringers and a local ukulele group. We had afternoon tea at Jordan's Mill and entertained ourselves by each talking for two minutes on a subject of our choice. We also had our usual Garden and Christmas parties.

This year we filled 22 shoe boxes and sent them with 30 knee blankets to Eastern European countries through the charity Link to Hope.

Many of our speakers ask for donations to charities in lieu of payment and in addition we collected and sent £150 to the Prostate Cancer charity.

Valerie Miller February 2026.

St Mary the Virgin Gamlingay with Hatley St George and East Hatley

Minutes for the meeting for election of churchwardens and Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) 16th March 2025

For both meetings

Attendees: Revd. Hilary Young (in the chair) (HY), Ann Davis (AD), Nick Ingles (NI), Jane Orchiston (JO), Amelie Geddis Dewhurst (AGD), Hugh Loudon (HL), Brian Jones (BJ), Lindy Gorton (LG), Plena Grey (PG), John Grey (JG), Roderick Starksfield (RS) David Elcome (DE), Brenda Elcome (BE), Jeannie Hemmings (JH), Ros Hissett (RH), Valerie Miller (VM) Chris Miller (CM), Eileen Thorpe (ET), Helma Watkin (HW)

Apologies for absence: Peter Macrow (PM), Mrs Anne Clarke, Rev. Norman Young, Chris Wareham, Mike Wareham, Anne Bunker, Dawn Martin,

Meeting for the election of church wardens.

HY proposes AD. Opened floor to other volunteers. HY reiterated that it is a large job and ideally shared. HY expressed huge heartfelt thanks to AD and PCC members. NI proposed. BE seconded. Opened floor for objection. None received.

APCM Meeting

Acceptance of 2024 minutes:

Minutes of previous meeting (Sunday 3rd March 2024) brought forward for formal approval. BJ proposed acceptance, DE seconded all agreed.

Electoral Roll report:

Reported as per page 5 of the APCM report. HY commented that drop in numbers and current congregation size of 54 with one living outside the parish. This is in keeping with trends across C of E, however is a small number of people for the size of the share and community. Noted that some regular attendees choose not to join the electoral roll and that this is respected as their personal choice. Valerie Miller formally thanked for her work producing this report.

Introduction to the Annual Report given by HY. Thanks to AD and NI for work producing the report. "This represents a lot of work by a lot of people and some real kingdom business.... We continue to serve both the church community and beyond...". It was confirmed that the report had been sent to those on the electoral roll with time to read and reflect, and a request was made for any question and comments.

Questions and Comments:

- Easy fundraising mentioned By DE. NI confirmed it is within general fundraising Explanation of easy fundraising given for those who may not know: An App to assign a reward percentage of money spent when shopping online to a nominated account (Church funds). .
- Solar panel fund still being in the bank commented on by BJ. HY replied it is ringfenced for that but is currently not enough to place solar panels. Chris Smith was previously leading on this and PM is liaising with him and with the diocese

about how to move forward. If solar panels cannot be done affordably the money needs to be returned to the places it came from. BJ asked if money could be requested from the turbine fund. HY replied they had already donated but could be asked again. AD noted it is a big organisational task and would benefit from a person to spearhead the project.

- VM mentioned restricted vestment fund and requested if it could be placed back into general fund or could be broadened into candles etc. HY said it couldn't likely be unrestricted but that PCC could look into this.
- JG asked about Gift Aid figure for all collections. N.I reassured that all measure were taken to maximise Gift Aid, also that if a miscalculation is later found it will be adjusted into the coming year. HY again thanked NI for all he is doing.
- HY mentioned we almost made share this year without dipping into reserve funds from the year before due to a £5000 legacy. Share is rising due to adjustments based on clergy time. We need to find >£20000 to cover the gap for 2026. Current budget doesn't balance.
- BE asked if the church hall could be used more for children parties. HY explained that that is an option, but we have had to turn one down this year due to damage likely to walls from use of footballs inside. AD mentioned church hall was hired to the school for a week for exams.
- RS asked about sale of land fund. HY replied it has been considered but if used no further return on investment
 - Friends mentioned by HY as a font for funds for building repairs as found on quinquennial report.
 - VM mentioned that there are a number of people in the village who don't come to church but do use the church. Requested that we find a way to remind these people that we are really struggling and may lose the building. HY replied more non church attenders are needed to sign up for easy fundraising and regular parish giving. Need to consider how we can enlarge the circle.
- LG commented that the church is but a house but all our concern is on spending money on the house. HY replied that Jesus did talk about money. HY suggested this is an important debate and is worth a discussion on this. Explained that we are custodians of the building but that the building represents the Kingdom and as such it is and should serve the whole community.
- HY requested again ideas for fundraising that are Kingdom business
- HY suggested rather than asking people in the community for more money we could be thinking about what people need from us and providing it and then hopefully the money will hopefully follow. Request for any suggestions.
- HY thanked CM and VM for all of their assistance with ministry and for VM working towards authorisation. Need to look forward in confidence and trust in God moving forward.

HY formally asked for a collective response to the report. Silence ensued. Moved on to election

Election of:

Deanery Synod members: AD to continue. No other volunteers. No need to re-elect as it is a three yearly post

PCC members: Existing PCC all willing to continue: AD JO NI AGD in person. PM absent so unable to confirm. Request for volunteers. No volunteers. LG proposed a vote but no election needed as no issues given from the floor. 11 hands raised in support of the PCC. VM proposed thanks to the PCC.

Electoral Roll officer: VM happy to continue as electoral roll officer as long as no one on PCC wanted to take it. No volunteer offered. AD proposed AGD second all agreed and thanks given to VM.

Appointment of independent examiner. Colin Airey FCCA has again independently examined and signed off this year's report. HY proposed he is asked to continue. Ros Hissett seconded all agreed. Thanks expressed to Colin for his time and expertise which he gives voluntarily. A token gift arranged.

LG proposed thanks to all for the work done by all those involved throughout the year and in the report.

Meeting closed with prayer of thanksgiving and the Lord's prayer. The meeting was followed by a shared lunch.