



ST ANDREW'S
CHURCH • COBHAM

ANNUAL
REVIEW
For
2025

March 2026

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Mike and Bryan's 110th Birthday Party! – February 2025



Cuppa & Chat – February 2025



Linnet, Prabhu and Joe arrived – June 2025



Kelly's Ordination – June 2025

VISION STATEMENT

To Know, Glorify, and Make Christ known

The Vision of St Andrew's is to bring a broader, larger congregation to Christ; to nurture, feed and serve our congregation and community; and to apply our faith in our everyday lives.

St Andrew's continues to seek to be a Christian community through which all can come to know and accept God's love for them and reflect that love wherever they are.

THE CHURCH AND ITS MINISTRY

Vicar's Report

Report by the Vicar, Revd Dr Mike Branscombe

Parish Ministry in Cobham

A time to say "Goodbye" and a time to say "Hello"

I would like to start my report by saying thank you to Revd Dr Moni Babatunde, Revd Charleen Hollington, Elaine Bray, David Fuge and Shirley Mensa for working hard to serve God through at Andrew's Church throughout 2025. In May we said goodbye to Revd Tori Silletti and Revd Bryan Silletti as they completed their time as Curates at St Andrew's. We were so blessed to have their presence with us for almost three years, we learned much from them and the gifts they shared with us.

At the end of June we welcomed the first of our new curates Revd Linnet Frederick along with her husband Prabhu and son Joe. In September Revd Kelly Morris, a home grown vocation, became our second new curate. Both curates have already blessed us as they progress in their Initial Ministerial Education. Each member of our staff team does so much more than simply fulfilling their job descriptions. The commitment and loyalty they each offer and receive is a true blessing to us as a church and to me as incumbent.

2025 was a challenging year for St Andrew's School as it adjusted to fewer students on roll at the school. Yet our work continued with the usual pattern of assemblies by clergy, music assemblies lead by David and Louise Fuge, the

weekly church club we call "Faith Ambassadors", visits to church and providing leadership as governors. The support offered to school through "Transforming Lives for Good" coaches has been recognised by the school as a major component in helping vulnerable students to succeed in education. I would like to offer my thanks to Carrie Taylor as she leads this ministry and her fellow coaches Alison Greenwood, Elaine Bray and Nigel Goddard.

Community Engagement

Throughout my 30 years of ordained ministry, I have always made engaging with the community beyond the walls of the church a part of my ministry. In 2025 this aspect of ministry became an even stronger focus. As acting chair of directors for The Cobham Cedar Centre Limited an opportunity arose to establish a Barclays Bank local presence within the Cedar Centre Community Room below Cobham Library. After a few months of preparatory work Barclays Local started operating from The Cedar Centre in mid-February, the rental income for the room allowed for a simple banking presence to remain in Cobham and the creation of two part time jobs. Unfortunately, Barclays decided not to continue the local offering beyond the end of January 2026.

However, the skills gained in that social endeavour have proved very valuable in a major project that began to take shape in the last quarter of 2025. Elmbridge Borough Council's decision to devolve the running of their Community Hubs has brought about a significant moment of possibility for us and a

number of key local charitable partners. With a major local charity as lead, several local charities have made a bid to take over the current operation of the Cobham Centre for the Community. If successful the coalition of community groups, including St Andrew's, will look to increase the range of offerings, hours of operation and welcome a wider cross section of our local population. I hope by the time of our annual meeting to provide a major update on progress.

Final Thoughts

Throughout the year we have continued to offer ministry to Cobham as we conduct Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals. In times of sadness and joy we remain a place where people come and find welcome when they need us most. Many of these services are for people who we don't know well yet the Ministry Team approach each occasion with the same care and compassion whether ministering to stranger or friend.

In 2025 we said goodbye to two people who have made enormous contributions to the life of St Andrew's Church. In June we gathered with Beryl Mooney's family and friends to celebrate the life and faith of someone who with quiet determination sought to serve her Lord and church community without making a fuss.

In December we said goodbye to a former churchwarden who had given countless hours of service to St Andrew's through flower arranging, serving refreshments at Baby Talk, supporting the bellringers, and being an encouragement to many vicars over the years: we have much to thank Mabs Ostley for.

The one thing that remains constant in any Church community is change! How very assuring it is that as the writer to the Hebrews reminds us, "Jesus Christ is same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8) May assurance of the unshakable nature and presence be our guiding light in 2026.

Safeguarding

Report by Alison Greenwood, Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We are all responsible to ensure everyone is safe in church and church activities, so we all need to be vigilant.

Parish Safeguarding Health Check

A Parish Safeguarding Health Check took place in November, when one of the Diocesan

Safeguarding team met with myself and Mike. We are very encouraged by his comments.

'This parish demonstrates a strong, thoughtful and compassionate safeguarding culture, underpinned by motivated leadership, a proactive PSO, and well-structured systems. Many areas already reflect high standards of practice, and where development opportunities exist, they are achievable, practical, and rooted in a desire to strengthen what is already working well.'

The parish should feel encouraged by the significant progress already made and confident that the recommended improvements will further enhance the quality, visibility, and shared ownership of safeguarding across the community. The overall picture is one of a parish genuinely committed to creating a safe, nurturing environment for all'

Policies and practice

The clergy and PCC of St Andrew's continue to give due regard to guidance issued by the House of Bishops relating to safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is a standing item on the agenda of each PCC meeting.

All safeguarding policies are updated and approved annually at the PCC meeting after the APCM. These policies are in line with the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. They meet statutory requirements relevant to our parish context.

The **Parish Safeguarding Dashboard** is a very helpful tool. This is an online tool that allows the PSO to complete an audit of safeguarding practice in St Andrew's. The PCC has signed up to this. An action plan is generated which serves as a reminder for general procedures such as essential safeguarding training and for annual reviews, for example agreeing policy. This is not a one-off exercise but a constant as safeguarding is reviewed and implemented in parish life. It also shows at a glance, who needs their DBS certificate renewed and when trainings need updating.

The Diocesan Safeguarding team run periodic Safeguarding induction/refresher days and regular Safeguarding online drop-in sessions. This enables the PSO to meet and share experiences and ideas with PSOs from other parishes

As I'm not on the PCC, Nigel Goddard is the PCC representative on Safeguarding, and as such he updates the PCC at the meetings and

leads them in short, thought-provoking discussions.

Training and DBS Checks

All PCC members are required to have a DBS check and basic understanding of Safeguarding by completing the relevant training courses. Likewise, all those who work with our children and youth need to have an up-to-date DBS certificate and to have completed the appropriate training courses. All training is to be refreshed once every three years, and in most cases can be done on-line.

I am pleased to report that at the time of writing we were up to date with training and most DBS checks. A few DBS renewals are currently outstanding and are on hold until the Diocese find a new DBS provider, following a data breach that the then current provider suffered earlier in the year. A new provider was announced in December.

By ensuring that protocols are implemented and reviewed regularly, our worshipping community will look out for each other and work to have a transformative effect on the lives of others and ourselves. Thank you for taking time to read this and support our parish safeguarding in any way you can.

Music Ministry

Report by David Fuge, Director of Music

2025 has been a full and rewarding year for the Music Ministry at St. Andrew's with a wide variety of music being included in our worship.

The Choir membership numbers 13 singers, having lost Siyona Navamani to her educational studies. However, for services that require larger forces, we do have a group of "Choir Friends" who can swell the numbers, and I am grateful to all those who take the time to come and join us. The "regular" Choir do make a fantastic sound and are extremely receptive to so many different styles of music and, most importantly, they are a choir centred on the mission of the Church and conveying the message through their singing.

As is always the case, we would welcome anyone who can sing in tune(!) to join us in the Choir. Like many other choirs, we are in particular need of Tenors and Basses to help spread the load.

The Band has continued to go from strength to strength and to become more and more of a "tight" unit. As well as All Age Worship and 3rd Sunday services, the Band has played on some other Sundays when the music choices have

included songs that could be Band led. We have met regularly on the Saturdays before All Age Worship services to rehearse for the following day and for any other Sundays that might require band accompaniment.

The Community Choir met just once in 2025, on the Saturday before Christmas to rehearse for the Crib Service the following week. We sang Wonder of a Newborn Son (Angels Sing Their Song Tonight) by Noel and Tricia Richards as a worshipful and gentle end to the service. The Saturday practice went well and the song came together beautifully to bring what was a wonderful Crib Service to a close.

Singing Assemblies at St. Andrew's School have continued throughout the year led by Louise Fuge and myself on the piano. We are told that the assemblies have become a bit of a highlight of the children's week which makes our time there all the more rewarding. The Easter and Christmas school services held at the church were both fantastic services full of meaning and enthusiastic singing.

Some Highlights

During 2025, the Choir has continued to sing **anthems** on most 2nd and 4th Sunday services of Holy Communion. These try to reflect the theme of the day or fit with the mood of the service and there have been many memorable moments where the words and music have really spoken to us and, I believe, to those sitting listening.

On the first weekend of February, we held a service of **Choral Evensong for Candlemas**. This made for quite a busy start to the New Year as a full sung "cathedral style" evensong is unfamiliar territory to some of the Choir. After some intensive preparation in January, the Choir (with the addition of a few of our friends) were outstanding and it turned out to be a light-filled service which was full of real worship amongst the formality of a Prayer Book service. The responses were Smith of Durham, the canticles were Stanford in C and the anthem was O Thou, the central orb by Charles Wood.

On **Good Friday**, we held a service of music, readings and poems based around the Good Friday story and music taken from movements of The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace and Stabat Mater by Karl Jenkins. Herbert Howells' atmospheric setting of Psalm 42, Like as the Hart was also included. This was such a fitting and powerful way to spend a Good Friday evening, focussing on our Lord's suffering and then ending with a glimpse of the hope of the resurrection to come. Thanks to Margaret Branscombe and Carrie and David Taylor, who

brought the readings to life, and thanks to the enlarged Choir who sang with such passion. I also need to record a huge vote of thanks to Cathy Whitnall, who took over the conducting role at very short notice after Kevin Ayton, who was to have directed the Choir while I played the organ, broke his collarbone a few days before. It was an evening that will live long in the memory.

In May, the Cobham community held a service to celebrate the 80th anniversary of **VE Day** for which we provided a small choir.

Harvest Evensong. People enjoyed the Candlemas Choral Evensong so much that I was asked to put on another one, and it was decided that Harvest would be a good time to do it. In the morning, at All Age Worship, the Choir were singing The Custard Cream Song and in the evening they were singing Evening Canticles in Bb by John Stainer. There aren't many churches where you would get that! The service was well attended and an opportunity for the congregation to sing traditional harvest hymns. The anthem was a new one for us, God in such love for us by Malcolm Archer, which fitted very well with the theme of Mike's sermon and the general theme of our responsibility to the world in which we live. It has become known as 'I can't believe it's not Rutter' as it is very Rutter-esque in nature which makes it very easy on the ear.

The annual service of **Remembrance** in November included the anthems 'Rest in Peace' and 'Rise in Glory' by Peter Skellern and 'Greater Love' by John Ireland. I'd like to thank Graham Fisher for holding the tenor line on his own when our other tenor was delayed on his way back from Singapore.

The **Nine Lessons and Carols** was held on the Sunday before Christmas and was attended by over 200 people. The music chosen was a blend of traditional and new carols, a couple of which were challenging, and the Choir sang excellently. Beforehand, I asked them to communicate and get the Christmas story and its meaning across to the congregation, and I really think that they did that so well. Another service to live long in the memory and a real springboard into 2026.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone in the Choir and the Band who give up their time to make the music at St. Andrew's what it is. It is a great place to be!

Pastoral and Prayer Teams

Report by the Vicar

In 2025 pastoral ministry has continued to be a priority for the clergy team. Many of our church members also offer care within our community. I look forward to new leadership for the pastoral team in 2026 as Revd Kelly Morris has now completed her first few months as a Curate and will start to facilitate the organisation and delivery of pastoral ministry by a wider team.

Once again, the pastoral team were at the heart of our "Time to Remember" service on November 2nd. We were glad to see many families we had helped with services during the last year.

Our Prayer team has been meeting and ministering to people throughout the year. The most visible aspect of their ministry is being available during the 10 am Sunday Morning service to pray with anyone who feels a need to pray for themselves or a loved one.

Small Groups

Report by Revd Charleen Hollington

Background

This report is based on a report to the PCC on 18 November 2025, following the PCC Away Day on 13 September 2025 at which a group was formed to consider how to increase the number of people who are involved in small groups at St Andrew's, in the context of advice from Mat Ineson, the new Mission Enabler Lead at Guildford Diocese, that this might be best achieved by having (as a starting point) a number of courses for general attendance during the year. The report was accepted by the PCC and elements of the report have been included in the St Andrew's Church Development Plan

General recommendation

The recommendation that we should have a number of courses throughout the year to which all were invited was thought to be a good idea but it was felt that this should be combined with the development of small groups operating in addition to the courses, in a 'hybrid' model. The main focus should be on the courses, with small groups growing 'organically' out of those courses, as has happened with the group established after the Alpha Course currently being run successfully by Kellie Symons and Jane Berridge.

Courses

Our recommendation is that we have a 'self-contained' course at the following times in the church year:

- A Beginners/Seekers course (e.g. Alpha) in January
- Lent
- A 'summer' course in June
- Advent

Contemplative prayer

Mike Branscombe has expressed an interest in doing some teaching on contemplative prayer. This would be very welcome, as something separate from the 'main' courses, as a number of people have expressed an interest in learning more about prayer.

Existing and new small groups

In addition to the groups meeting around a central activity at the church (e.g. bellringers, garden group) there are currently three small groups which are meeting regularly and are doing well. There are also probably a number of people ready and willing now to join a small group if the necessary arrangements were made.

The aim is to see what develops organically from the fixed courses in terms of people expressing an interest in meeting regularly in a small group, using the courses as a 'garden' from which small groups may grow. This will entail the ministry team and course leaders being alert to whether people attending a course might be interested in joining a group

Small Group Materials

Although our small groups are undergoing some changes, we do have a comprehensive planning document in place (dated 30 October 2022) which was provided to all small group leaders at the time and which provides a useful starting point for this fresh focus on small groups. As regards materials it contains an extensive list of materials which are still relevant, and a further list was provided at the 2025 Away Day. If there is a gap between materials, the Swedish Bible Study Model recommended by the Diocese (previously circulated to leaders) is very useful. Some groups might also like to choose their own materials, and this should not present a problem.

Small group co-ordinator

There should be one person acting as the 'go-to' person for small group matters. This is currently Charleen Hollington. However, given that she will be away for at least three months each year, we must look at appointing a new co-ordinator.

Deanery Synod

Report by David Greenwood

The Leatherhead Deanery Synod meets three times a year, usually the spring meeting is on Zoom and the other two in-person.

The guest speaker for the February zoom meeting was Martin Carr (Project and Engagement Lead Net Carbon Zero Diocese of Guildford) who spoke about the Church of England's net zero carbon initiative. (See the Property Committee for a report on our own energy review).

The Summer meeting was held at Ockham, the speaker was Revd Canon David Gardner, Project Manager on the Vision and Strategy Team of the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England, who spoke on the topic 'How to make your church community more spiritually healthy.' Revd Canon Gardner spoke on research carried out by the Gregory Centre for Church Multiplication and focussed on two aspects of this research, namely:

- 1) How Christians, especially those aged 18-35, grow spiritually; and
- 2) How to equip churches to facilitate spiritual growth in their congregations.

The research found that those interviewed were helped in their spiritual growth by the following:

- Community (feeling safe and vulnerable): 80%;
- Choosing to grow (intentionality): 38%;
- Engagement with the Bible: 32%;
- Time spent with God: 28%; and
- Calls to action (24%).

The Autumn meeting was held at Oxshott and a presentation on 'Adolescence' was delivered by Mikey Dicken and Adam Brown, youth workers for the Leatherhead Youth Project.

Our own Shirley Mensah was introduced as the new youth and children's ministry co-ordinator for the Deanery.

The meetings are also a good chance for us to get to know the other parishes and people from them, especially so for the lay representatives. Useful connections can come out of the

informal conversations before the meetings as well as through the official agendas.

Churches Together

Report by Revd Charleen Hollington

The churches of Cobham and Stoke D'Abernon continued to work together in 2025 under the Churches Together umbrella to deliver a number of services and groups.

In January 2025 St Andrews (Cobham) hosted the Service for Christian Unity, and St Andrew's (Oxshott) hosted the World Day of Prayer in March.

On Good Friday, Churches Together again arranged for the Cross of Witness to be placed in Hollyhedge Parade and, as with the year before, it is estimated that about 40 people stopped and stood near the cross.

2025 was the year for Churches Together ecumenical Lent study groups, and the various churches put together a number of study groups from their members. The groups worked through the book 'Wild Bright Hope'. We (St Andrew's) hosted and led a group in Church Gate House.

The carol singing at the One Cobham (the Cobham Chamber of Commerce) Christmas event took place on 22 November. This year we did not have any musicians but teamed up with the Cobham Band outside Cobham Furnishers. The band very kindly invited us to join them when they realised that One Cobham had allocated the place outside the Furnishers to them. The arrangement appeared to work well.

Following developments regarding the possible use of the Cobham Day Centre as a Cobham community centre, St Andrew's, Sacred Heart, Cobham United Church and Kingsgate Church have all expressed an interest in being involved in the use and management of the facility.

Revd Charleen Hollington and Freddie Marshall continued to represent St Andrew's at Churches Together meetings as clergy and lay rep respectively. At the AGM in November, Helen Patterson stood down as chairperson. No-one came forward to take up the role and it was decided that we would continue without a chair for the time being. Suzanna Knott after many years of excellent work as secretary stood down and was replaced in this role by Amanda Comber. Jane Berridge continued as Treasurer and we are grateful for her expertise.

Curate's six-month report

Report by Revd Linnet Frederick Prasad

This report outlines my experiences, learning and contribution during my first six months as a curate within our Parish. I aim to reflect on my responsibilities, growth, challenges and interactions with the community.

Upon joining this parish, my family and I were welcomed warmly by both the congregation and the wider community. Many individuals reached out to introduce themselves and share their stories, which helped me feel connected. At the same time, I recognise that working in a new environment brings both excitement and challenges. My husband and son are currently living in Cambridge for my son's GCSEs in May-June 2026, and we hope to be reunited and settled together in Cobham by July 2026.

Strengths Observed in the Parish

The congregation share a strong sense of fellowship, and it is clear that many members genuinely care for one another and for the wider community. I have been encouraged by established outreach initiatives such as Cuppa and Chat, Party in the Park, and the Christmas community lunch. I have been part of a group of volunteers eager to respond to community needs and to support those who are more vulnerable. The parish is blessed with individuals who possess a wide range of skills and talents, and I believe we can invest further in these gifts to strengthen and extend our outreach ministry.

Challenges encountered:

I have observed communication gaps in parts of parish life, which at times lead to misunderstandings and missed opportunities for collaboration.

A small group of the same individuals often carries much of the volunteering responsibility for the community outreach.

I am still learning about the specific needs and preferences of both congregation members and the wider community. I am committed to taking every opportunity to listen through conversation with people of all ages and backgrounds so that my ministry can be responsive and well-informed.

Personal reflection:

Over these six months, I have felt both gratitude and a deep sense of responsibility. The opportunity to serve as a curate has given me invaluable experience and highlighted areas where I need to grow. Engaging with

congregation members has enriched my understanding of pastoral ministry, and I am continually learning from their insights and experiences.

My primary responsibilities have included taking part in the daily activities of St Andrew's ministry and mission. Weekdays, daily offices, Little Fishes, school assemblies, Cuppa and Chat, Springfield Care Home visits, and conducting the consecrated Holy Communion service. I have shadowed the vicar in funeral visits, Church funeral services, and crematorium committal services. Under Mike's observation, I met with the bereaved family in advance and then conducted my first funeral service and Committal.

I have observed three baptism services so far and have not yet conducted one myself.

I accompanied Mike and the young people (who were preparing to travel to the Moldova Christian mission) to the Oasis charity to help sort clothes. This provided a valuable opportunity to build rapport with several young people who took part on that day.

I was given four names of congregation members for pastoral home visits. I spent around an hour with each person, concluding each visit with prayer. I also observed a sick communion service at home, which deepened my understanding of sacramental ministry in a pastoral context.

It was a privilege to be part of the civic Remembrance service in church and the parade along Cobham High Street, standing alongside representatives of the wider community as we honoured and remembered those who gave their lives in the service of their country.

During the Advent season, leading up to Christmas, my ministry involved a combination of preparation, worship, and community outreach, all of which helped me appreciate the breadth and depth of parish life at a key point in the church year.

Conclusion

I am grateful for the support I have received over the past six months as a curate, particularly from Mike, my Training Incumbent, from fellow clergy, and from the congregation. I am committed to continuing to develop my ministry among you and to contribute actively to the life and mission of the parish.

I look forward to working together to strengthen our parish, deepen our outreach, and cultivate a loving and inclusive community where everyone is encouraged to grow in faith.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this report with you.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Family and Youth Missioner's Report

Report by Shirley Mensa

Vision; CLOSE NEAR FAR

"Real revival isn't bringing everyone to church; it's taking the church to everybody."

Equipping families & youth to live out faith, impact their community, and experience God's grace in action.

2025 Achievements Against 2024 Goals

Community Engagement & Outreach

Pancake Party – Clear Easter message shared with families.

Little Fishes – Holy Week crafts used to teach Easter story.

Easter Wonder & Ponder + High Tea Community Lunch – Intergenerational engagement.

Oasis Youth Volunteering – April & July service opportunities.

Youth Pizza Evenings & Discipleship – Bible discussions and games.

All were very popular and very well attended but we would love for all families to join us on Sundays, We have 52+ families who receive our weekly emails, we have over 108 children, if they would all come at the same time that would be fantastic, we are averaging five in discipleship and six in kids church every week

Youth Discipleship & Leadership

The Youth supported Kids Church through DofE volunteering.

Older discipleship group supported/led Bible-based crafts sessions for community events such as Remembrance Day, Easter High Tea Craft session

The highlight of the year for the Discipleship group was the Moldova Youth Mission Trip with Operation Mobilisation. A big thank you for the prayer and financial support of the PCC and individuals.

Kids Church – Growing Engagement

(Building on last year's goal to strengthen children's ministry)

We encouraged Children to Join & Stay Engaged in 2025 through:

Making it Fun & Memorable – Themed Sundays (Super Science, Wonder and Ponder, Brilliant Baking, Drama, Bugs and Butterflies), outdoor adventure sessions, creative storytelling with drama/props, active games. Involving the talents and skills of the congregation to run kids' church with the kids' church team working alongside them,

Strengthening Parent Buy-In – WhatsApp & email updates, take-home "faith at home" sheets, parent showcase moments after Kids Church.

Peer Involvement – Youth helpers as role models; DoFE volunteers.

Community Links – Holiday events like Easter high tea involved children's crafts making families feel welcome, Summer Party in the Park; invitations extended during school assemblies and prayer space times.

Highlighting Belonging – Birthday shoutouts, kids helping with set-up, prayers, and activities in Kids Church

Moldova Youth Mission Trip – Action songs, prayer stations, space for testimonies, encouraging kids to experience God personally in all age worship

Visibility & Celebration – Social media posts (with permission), Kids Church involved in all age worship, and children from St Andrews school contributing to main church once a term.

Summary

2025 has built strongly on 2024 goals: youth are growing in discipleship, leadership, service, and mission; families and community connections have strengthened; and Kids Church has continued to be creative, engaging, and outward-facing. The Moldova Mission marked a milestone, and the next stage is youth ownership, intergenerational mentoring,

ongoing mission opportunities, and the development of a permanent Youth Hub.

St Andrew's School

Report from the Headteacher, Stina Witkowski

As we come to the close of another busy and rewarding year, we wanted to take the opportunity to share a short round-up of school life and to thank you for your continued support of our school community.

We are delighted to report that the children achieved wonderful academic results last summer, reflecting their hard work, resilience and the dedication of our staff. This success has provided a strong and positive start to the new school year, with pupils returning full of enthusiasm and ready to learn.

Throughout the year, pupils have enjoyed a wide range of school trips designed to enrich their learning and bring the curriculum to life. These experiences have been hugely valuable, supporting both their academic development and their confidence beyond the classroom.

One particularly exciting development was the introduction of our new Pupil Parliament. The representatives were elected through a mock election, complete with ballot boxes and voting booths, giving the children a meaningful insight into democracy and pupil voice.

We were also delighted to welcome Bishop Paul for a summer term visit. He was greatly impressed by the children's values, energy and creativity, and took time to thank our teachers, staff and clergy team for their ongoing dedication to the children and the wider community. His visit was a real highlight for us all.

In support of reading, we refreshed our outdoor book swap area and have been recruiting additional volunteer readers to spend time with children developing their reading fluency. This initiative has been warmly received and is already making a positive impact.

Our community events have gone from strength to strength. Both the summer and Christmas school fairs were very successful, bringing families together and raising valuable funds, and the children are already looking forward to the upcoming Valentine's Disco.

We also celebrated a number of important learning events, including Anti-Bullying Week, World Book Day, Feeling Good Week (with a focus on friendships and positive play) and Black History Month. In addition, we were proud to take part in a very special project with

Elmbridge Museum to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day. The children have contributed work to a dedicated exhibition, and we warmly encourage you to visit and see their impressive contributions.

Thank you once again for your continued encouragement, prayers and partnership. We value our close links with the church and look forward to working together in the year ahead.

BEHIND THE SCENES : ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Finance

Because the church is a registered charity, we are bound under current legislation to submit a fully detailed Annual Financial Report to the Charity Commission. The Diocese also receives a copy. To economise on printing, this Financial Report will be published as a separate document within its own covers, rather than including it as an additional (and fairly substantial) section to this Review. In due course the report will be published on the St Andrew's Website. Some hard copies will also be available at the APCM.

Assets and Fabric

Report by Paul Hurrell and Lynn Moreno

The quinquennial inspection and the subsequent report, which we received in March 2024, provided an excellent guide to the current state of the building and grounds of the church. The Property Committee continued to meet and operate in 2025, initially under the interim chairmanship of Paul Hurrell and subsequently under Nick Constable.

Routine maintenance of the church and its assets was consistently performed throughout 2025. The interior was cleaned weekly by a dedicated volunteer. Essential upgrades included the acquisition of new candle holders for the Nave altar and the installation of an HDMI splitter to enhance connectivity for the choir stall and North Aisle TV screens. An external contractor completed a comprehensive electrical inspection, ensuring regulatory compliance and securing the necessary certification.

Church Gate House and its gardens were consistently maintained throughout the year. All storage areas were systematically cleared of obsolete materials, resulting in a more efficient storage system. The newly formed Garden

Committee, led by Judith Robinson, ensured the grounds remained in excellent condition by removing overgrown shrubbery and planting new trees and plants. A robust and secure fence, funded by the Robinsons, was installed between the Church Gate House garden and the Mole River. Following a car park incident, a CCTV camera was installed to enhance security.

A robotic mower was acquired for The Vicarage to maintain the garden efficiently, and a new door was fitted in the study.

After the departure of the Sillettis as Curates in mid-2025, the residence at 57 Coveham Crescent was cleaned and redecorated for the incoming Curate, Linnet Frederick-Prasad and her family, with minor maintenance completed as required.

Sacristan

The work continues to be shared between Judy Brickett and Derek Bullman.

Garden of Remembrance

This part of the churchyard provides an attractive focus for remembering loved ones. The grass is cut by the contractors for Elmbridge Borough Council and the gardening team ensure that it is kept tidy and in good order.

Parish Office

Report by Elaine Bray Communications and Administration Manager

The Parish Office is based in Church Gate House and is open on Monday – Friday between 9am and 1pm. We endeavour to offer a warm and friendly welcome and to try to help everyone visiting, calling or emailing the Church Office – the door is wide open to welcome everyone whatever their question.

The welcome in Church Gate House could be further enhanced on the busier days (Wednesday, Thursday and Friday), if we had a team of welcomers in the welcome area to greet visitors and answer calls. This would be particularly useful on days there are events in the lounge and the hall (currently Fridays) and people struggle to find and visit the office. If you could offer a couple of hours occasionally to join a rota of welcomers, please do let the office know.

As we get busier and are more involved in outreach work in the Church, it is increasingly challenging to keep Church Gate House clean and tidy at all times. Therefore a highlight of the Parish Office year was the day in October when we had the skip and had a major clear out, this day is further documented in the report from the Church Gate House Committee. Huge thanks to all the volunteers that helped on that day.

One of the challenges of the year for the office came when we lost WIFI for most of a week following the car crashing into the field and bringing down the cable. It took several days to sort the problem and restore WIFI to the office.

The enhancements in ChurchSuite during 2025 allowed us to migrate our booking system from Hallmaster to ChurchSuite – the key benefit is that it allows everyone on ChurchSuite and externally to make bookings on one system. We are grateful to Nigel Goddard for his help in the migration and on-going running of the booking system. All members of the St Andrew's family can use MyChurchSuite; if you are nervous of getting started, please do contact the office and we will be very happy to offer a gentle introduction. Email remains a major method of communicating within the church family so we need to make sure we have your correct email and permissions to contact you.

We continued to make extensive use of social media to help promote our services and events to a wider audience. Instagram is still the site with the widest reach, we are followed by 245 people or organisations. We took a decision to no longer post on X following the scandals associated with Grok. BlueSky was chosen as an alternative to X and St Andrew's have posted on BlueSky for the last year.

Following the excellent Church Growth Conference in 2025, when we were reminded that even small changes can make us more effective in sharing the good news, we made a couple of tweaks to our communications plan for major family based events e.g. Light Party, Crib Service etc. We experimented with handing out personal invitations/leaflets on the

school gates for the last 3 events. This has several benefits in terms of building relationships with people who see members of the church there regularly and slowly increasing footfall at our family based events.

As in previous years, traditional posters developed using Canva, remain an important element in our communication strategy. We are delighted that planning approval for our noticeboard to be put up Hollyhedge Road has been granted and look forward to it being installed, so we can have an advertisement in the middle of Cobham.

No two days are ever the same in the parish office and you are always welcome to pop in and visit at any time.

MyChurchsuite

Report by David Greenwood

Do we have the right details and GDPR contact permissions for you? Have you moved or changed your phone number?

You could ask Elaine in the office to check or, if you are a registered user, you can check for yourself through MyChurchsuite, which can be accessed through a mobile App or a web browser. MyChurchsuite enables Adult Church members to see their rotas, update their contact details and their permissions for how the church can contact them (GDPR), opt in or out of the weekly email, see the calendar and sign up for events, view all their church communications in one place, see the (opt-in) address book and choose what contact details to make visible to other St Andrew's MyChurchsuite users.

If we don't have your details at all, please fill out a 'Keeping In Touch' form available through the website.

You should be able to reset your MyChurchsuite password at the login screen.

If you have any questions or difficulties, then contact me at davidg@sac.church or Elaine in the Parish Office.

Other communications

Elaine Bray sends out an email, usually on a Friday, to everyone on the **weekly email list**. Additional emails may go to everyone who has given email GDPR permission. This allows email messages to be sent to subscribers at any time with information about church activities and events.

The main notices for the week ahead are also given verbally during Sunday services,

There are notice boards at the south entrance to the Church, at the lychgate, and at the north-west entrance to the churchyard. The one in the High Street was ripped down during building work; It is now being replaced by one in Hollyhedge.

Electoral Roll

Report by David Greenwood, Electoral Roll Officer

Do you consider yourself to be part of St Andrew's Church? If so, we would like you to be on our church Electoral Roll. 2025 was one of the years that we start a new Roll from scratch (every six years), in time for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in April.

Being on the Church of England Parish Electoral Roll entitles you to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. The number on the roll determines how many Deanery Synod representatives we have, so we would like it to be a fair reflection of our adult "membership". The Electoral Roll is held in our ChurchSuite system.

At the end of 2025, the number on roll was 156.

The form is available on paper in church and as an editable pdf download from the website. Please return completed forms to me at davidg@sac.church or in the G pigeonhole.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Membership

The clergy, Churchwardens, and lay representatives on the Deanery Synod are members of the Church Council ex officio. In addition, 12 lay members are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules, making 22 members in all.

During the year the following served as members of the PCC

Vicar	Revd Dr Mike Branscombe	Chairman	
Assistant Curates	Revd Dr Moni Babatunde Revd Charleen Hollington		
Training Priests	Revd Bryan Silletti Revd Tori Silletti		to May 2025 to May 2025
Training Curates	Revd Linnet Frederick Prasad Revd Kelly Morris		from July 2025 from October 2025
Churchwardens	Sam Acquaye Paul Hurrell	Lay Vice-Chairman	to April 2025
Lay Representatives on the Deanery Synod:	Lynn Moreno Claire Costard David Greenwood David Taylor		from April 2025
Elected members	Lisa Azarmi Leonard Beighton Simon Bray Michael Elson Nigel Goddard James Moreno Lynn Moreno Judith Robinson Adam Skinner Carrie Taylor David Tipping Cathy Whitnall	Secretary Treasurer	from April 2025 from April 2025 to April 2025 from April 2024

The work of the Parochial Church Council in 2025

Report by Leonard Beighton

The Parochial Church Council maintains oversight of all the activities of the Church. It does this by receiving regular reports from the Vicar and other Ministers, officers, Standing Committee, other committees and group leaders. All these are fully reported elsewhere in the Review. Most meetings are held in the Hall.

CHURCH DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Report by the Vicar

The PCC has resumed the process of completing a Church Development Plan. We had been well on the way to a complete plan when I was hospitalised towards the end of 2024. During the course of 2025 the failure of a gas boiler at church led us to undertake an energy audit in July. The report from that audit has brought a new focus to one area of our church development plan, that is how we heat our Church and Church Gate House and maximise the use of all our buildings whilst striving to reach carbon neutrality. In September the PCC spent a day working on the Church Development Plan and have identified the following areas to focus on:

1. Become more energy efficient, provide a sustainable and comfortable environment, and move towards Net Zero Carbon.
2. Create a flexible, multifunctional space within the church building for use by church groups and the wider Cobham community.
3. Deepen personal faith and discipleship by helping more people move from the edge of our community to the committed core.
4. Serve the needs of the wider community with the hope of sharing the Gospel.

During 2026 the PCC will share details of how we will work out the aims of this Church Development Plan in our ministry and mission together.

PCC COMMITTEES

The PCC operates through a number of committees. Each committee includes at least one PCC member (not necessarily the chair) and reports on its activities to PCC at least annually to ensure two-way communication.

Standing Committee

Chaired by the Vicar

This is the only Committee required by Church law. It is chaired by the Vicar and its members are the churchwardens, the PCC treasurer, the PCC secretary, and one other PCC member. The other member is Michael Elson. It meets in the months in which there is no PCC meeting and exchanges e-mails as need be. It has power to transact the business of PCC between Council's meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council.

Budget Committee

Report by the Treasurer, James Moreno

During 2025, the Budget Committee concluded its work following the departure of Revds. Bryan

and Tori Silletti from St Andrew's. The PCC wishes to record its sincere thanks to Revd Bryan Silletti for his leadership of the Budget Committee and for his wider service to the church. We are thankful for the care and attention he brought to the church's finances.

Under the previous model, budgets were informed by comparison with prior years' actual expenditure, with budget holders receiving mid-year reports and the Committee meeting a couple of times a year to monitor progress and identify emerging issues. This approach provided helpful oversight during a period of active financial management.

Following a review by the Treasurer, a revised approach to budgeting has been proposed to better reflect how expenditure is incurred in practice and to ensure resources are directed in support of the church's ongoing day-to-day running, general maintenance, and charitable purposes.

Many areas of spending are largely fixed or constrained, such as insurance and energy costs, where discretion is limited. For non-

discretionary areas, the church will continue to budget by function, but active budget engagement will focus on specific projects and events. Individual projects and events will be supported by agreed mini budgets, with expenditure monitored to ensure clarity, accountability, and value for money in furtherance of the church's mission.

The Treasurer will also work with the Property Committee to develop a rolling five-year plan for maintenance and improvement, enabling planned investment in the church's buildings while maintaining financial sustainability.

In addition, this approach will support:

- Clear budgeting for events and activities, ensuring resources are used effectively for public benefit
- Early identification of exceptional expenditure, allowing appropriate budgeting and, where relevant, targeted fundraising
- Periodic review of service contracts to ensure continued value for money.

This revised framework is intended to support good governance, responsible stewardship of charitable funds, and the long-term financial sustainability of St Andrew's, enabling the church to continue its work for the benefit of the wider community.

Churchgate House Committee

Report by Lynn Moreno

Church Gate House Rental Income

2025 income is showing a slight increase versus last year's income (£1,500).

Management of Facilities

The facilities continue to be popular for our church events and community, providing a space for businesses, charities and social events. Bookings continue to increase with

ECO Committee

Report by Lisa Azarmi

Our Eco Group adopts a community-focused approach to address the climate and biodiversity crisis, grounded in worship, strong communication, learning, and practical action. We seek to embed care for creation into everyday parish life through sustainable choices such as waste reduction, Fairtrade

several charity courses being run, which in turn leads to other bookings. The venue is also popular on Saturdays which have regular booking for private social events. We continue to limit the hire on a Sunday to maintain a good relationship with our neighbours.

The move from Hallmaster to ChurchSuite for our bookings was made possible by an enhancement to the ChurchSuite System. Having all bookings on ChurchSuite allows people, both internal St Andrew's family and external hirers to easily check the availability of rooms and request bookings. The change, which happened in the 4th quarter of the year, has been managed smoothly and it has generally been very well received by our customers. This also allows us to generate easier invoices and information. A big thank you to Nigel Goddard for helping lead and manage this transition from Hallmaster to ChurchSuite.

Maintenance of Facilities

In October we had around 20 people volunteer for our declutter day. We hired a large skip (from a local company who recycled the contents) allowing us to dispose of larger items from storage cupboards, the loft and areas in the church. By freeing up space it allowed us to have dedicated areas for specific items, making it easier to track our inventory and locate items. Two members of our younger church community cleaned the kitchen and kitchen cupboards.

New secure storage boxes in the garden were purchased and have allowed the 'outdoors toys' to be relocated outside, making it easier in the summer. We now need to work at keeping the areas clutter free. Thank you to everyone who gave up their free time on the Monday to help. It was a great success.

purchasing, reduced energy use, and raising awareness of personal carbon footprints.

Clear and engaging communication is central to this effort, supported by a new Eco noticeboard sharing updates, learning resources, and ways to get involved. We are dedicated to support improving the energy efficiency of our buildings via professional audits and phased plans that respect heritage and financial constraints. In caring for land and nature, we manage our churchyard and garden as peaceful, accessible

spaces for both people and wildlife, developing biodiversity areas, wildflower meadows, and no-mow zones, alongside regular flora and fauna counts to track and celebrate ecological progress.

Through local partnerships, community eco-events, volunteering, and global justice initiatives, we aim to foster a hopeful, practical response rooted in faith and shared responsibility.

Faith and Social Action

Report by Charleen Hollington

2025 once again saw St Andrew's Faith and Social Action Committee, along with our 'Project Champions', attempt to fulfil our terms of reference. As part of putting our St Andrew's vision statement into practice ('To know, glorify, and make Christ known'), our role is to help lead St. Andrew's in engaging with society and its needs and to encourage all members of the church family to express their love for Christ by serving others.

The committee continued to consist of Charleen Hollington (Chair), Leonard Beighton, David Taylor and Elaine Bray. Our Project Champions and the charities they represent are Peter Kelly (OM Himalayas), Paul Hurrell (the Garden Route Children's Trust), Carrie Taylor (Transforming Lives for Good), David Taylor (Oasis) and Alison Greenwood (the Foodbank).

This report is an overview of the work of the Committee as a whole. There are individual reports from the Project Champions on their respective projects.

Once again, I believe that it has been a good year for St Andrew's Faith and Social Action. The charities which we principally support have been enthusiastically promoted to the congregation (and elsewhere) by our project champions. The Project Sunday for each project (and Harvest Sunday for the Foodbank) were all creative and interesting. We continue to publish a Faith and Social Action Magazine three times a year, which is distributed electronically and posted on our website, and there are hard copies placed in the church. Whether the magazine is much read is uncertain but we consider it important to report regularly.

Again in 2025 there have been some excellent fundraising efforts which also proved to be great fun. The OM Quiz in January was a great success, so much so that another one is being held in January 2026. The 'Hit and Hope' golf event was better attended than ever before with 6 teams entered. The prize for the best team

name went to 'Fairway to Heaven', and the all-women Hail Marys team once again won the competition.

In my reports for 2023 and 2024 I said that one of the issues that we hope to deal with in the year ahead was finding new committee members, possibly from the younger generations, to refresh our perspective, as well as the chairmanship of the committee.

As always, I give my grateful thanks to everyone on the committee and to all the project leaders and others involved in these efforts. Their commitment and professionalism are a great gift in helping St Andrew's to bring hope to those in need.

Fuller reports from each of the featured charities can be found further on in this review.

Outward Giving Team

Report by Cathy Whitnall (chair)

Keith Baird, Julie Baird, Claire Costard, Michael Elson, James Moreno, Carrie Taylor, Cathy Whitnall (chair)

The team was glad to welcome Helen Goddard to the team, following the sad death of Beryl Mooney.

The PCC was able to set aside £20,030 for Outward Giving, so once again we were able to look beyond what one might think of as our traditional remit.

We have continued to make donations to the charities supported by the Faith & Social Action forum, i.e. Garden Route Children's Trust (£3,000), Oasis (£4,000) and Transforming Lives for Good (£2,000). After some discussion, we increased our giving to OM Nepal to £2,600, which is equivalent to supporting a worker in Nepal for one year.

We have continued our support of Elmbridge CAN with a gift of £2,000.

This year's donation to St Andrew's School was originally set at £1,000 to help fund educational visits to support the RE curriculum. However, a later suggestion was made that we should pay for bibles to be given to the Year 6 leavers and also the children in Reception/Year 1; the additional cost of this was £311.

We were able to send donations to three further charities. We were happy to continue our support for Mission Aviation Fellowship (£1,000); additionally we agreed to support a locally-based charity called Through The Roof which assists disabled people to access the full life of the church.

After a long discussion about the situation in Gaza, we agreed to send £3,000 to Embrace the Middle East which has a long-standing programme of care for people not just in Gaza but also other trouble spots such as the West Bank and Lebanon. We were anxious that our giving would not just end up in a food aid truck waiting for weeks at a border; by giving to Embrace the Middle East we are also helping with medical and housing needs.

The remaining £119 was sent to Crisis.

As always, we welcome suggestions from any member of the congregation for charities that we might support.

Property Committee

Report by Nick Constable

During the course of the year, the Property Committee has undertaken and overseen a range of maintenance, repair and investigative works across the church and Churchgate House. These are summarised below.

Completed Works

- The French drain outside the church continues to be monitored to assess whether damp ingress has reduced.
- The tree at the end of the car park, adjacent to the damaged trip hazard, has now been removed.
- Roof repairs to the gullies and associated areas of the church were completed on 20 January 2025.
- The majority of Priority 1 items identified in the Quinquennial Report have now been addressed.
- The carpet at the church entrance has been repaired and replaced, and the underlying metal grating has been secured following movement.
- A number of plumbing issues within Churchgate House have been resolved.
- A new local heated water unit has been installed in the church washing-up area.
- Decoration works at the Curate's House were completed prior to the new Curate moving in.
- A video camera doorbell has been installed at the Curate's House.

Works in Progress / Approved

- The external notice board near Ellison Thompson has now received planning

permission and will be replaced by the Property Committee in the coming weeks.

- Quotations for new blinds at Churchgate House have been submitted to the PCC for approval, following which the order will be placed.

- Entrance signage for Churchgate House is awaiting approval. The quoted cost is £450.

Outstanding / Planned Works

- The internal ceiling of the church still requires painting and is included in the programme for the coming year.

- The Committee is reviewing the condition of the kitchen appliances to determine whether replacement is required. Several appliances are now at or beyond the end of their useful life, in particular the dishwasher, which is no longer functioning effectively, and the oven, which is likely to require replacement.

- The Committee is also considering refurbishment of the entrance and lounge areas within Churchgate House to rationalise existing cabling, improve finishes, and create a more welcoming and functional environment. Quotations are currently being obtained.

- Quotations are being obtained for external redecoration of Churchgate House, which is now in need of attention. Two quotations have been received and a third is awaited.

Energy Audit and Feasibility Work

Following receipt of the Energy Audit report, a number of investigations have been undertaken to explore potential implementation options. These matters are complex and have significant long-term implications, requiring careful assessment before decisions are made.

A full feasibility study has been requested from an organisation with experience of delivering similar projects for other churches. This study will assess the potential for water-source ground-source or air-source heat pump systems, together with associated requirements.

A full 3D survey of the church will also be required to enable accurate design development and to obtain meaningful quotations, particularly for electrical works and under-seat heating. At present, insufficient information exists to proceed to detailed pricing.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Christmas Lunch and Easter High Tea

Report by Shirley Mensa

Overview

The Christmas Lunch and the Easter High Tea continue to be two key outreach events within the life of St Andrew's, offering hospitality, dignity, and connection to those experiencing loneliness, isolation, or hardship in our local community. Both events also provide meaningful opportunities for church members to serve together and to build relationships beyond regular church activities.

Christmas Lunch

This year marked the 11th anniversary of the Christmas Lunch. Over the past decade, the lunch has grown into a vital expression of St Andrew's commitment to loving and serving our community, particularly those for whom Christmas can be a difficult and isolating time.

This year, our 32-strong team welcomed 80 guests. These numbers confirm that loneliness and hardship remain significant in our community and that this event is deeply valued by those who attend.

Generous gifts from guests and church members helped make the event possible, along with the festive decorations provided by Squires Garden Centre and gifts for the children provided by OASIS.

Easter High Tea

The Easter High Tea continues to grow as a joyful and inclusive community event, carrying the same spirit of hospitality into the Easter season.

Over 90 guests joined the celebration. Notably, more church members attended the Easter High Tea than the Christmas Lunch, which created a strong sense of shared community and integration between guests and the church family.

This increased church participation significantly enhanced the atmosphere and opportunities for relationship-building.

Beautiful Easter decorations were provided by Squires Garden Centre; Sweet and savoury treats provided by Waitrose; and generous sponsorship from Downs Solicitors, Waitrose and Squires.

Both the Charity Christmas Lunch and the Charity Easter High Tea have become beacons of hope and connection within our community. Through shared meals, conversation, and service, these events embody Christ's love in practical and visible ways.

We are deeply grateful to our volunteers, sponsors, donors, and guests. As need grows, so does the opportunity for St Andrew's to continue offering welcome, warmth, and dignity to all who come through our doors.

Publisher's Note: A fuller version of this report with additional detail is available from David Greenwood.

Cuppa & Chat

Report by Revd Moni Babatunde

Over the past year, Cuppa & Chat has continued to develop as a valued parish initiative, growing in both attendance and impact. The weekly gathering takes place every Thursday from 1.00 to 3.00 pm, during which the doors of St Andrew's Church are opened to all, offering tea or coffee, a light lunch, friendly conversation and, for those who wish, an often-competitive game of Scrabble.

During the year, awareness of Cuppa & Chat has increased significantly, largely due to the efforts of Elaine in the Parish Office. This has resulted in a steady stream of new attendees joining our regular guests strengthening the sense of community and fellowship within the church. It has been encouraging to see the church well used and filled with conversation and welcome each week.

We were joined last year by staff from Surrey County Council who came to raise awareness of some of the support services available from the Council. We also enjoyed some crafts in December making Christmas Cards.

We remain extremely grateful for the generous and ongoing support by our local Gail's and Pret A Manger stores, whose donations of bread, sweet and savoury items as well as sandwiches and salads continue to enhance the hospitality offered and is greatly appreciated by all who attend. We continue to offer warm soup and bread in the colder months.

Cuppa & Chat continues to play an important role in addressing social isolation with the local community. Looking ahead, our hope is to explore partnering with diocesan projects offering practical support to members of the

community such as a Hearing Aid clinic. It is hoped that Cuppa & Chat will continue to flourish in the coming year, ensuring that a warm welcome remains available at St Andrew's Church every Thursday afternoon.

Bereavement Journey

Report by David Greenwood

During 2025 we ran The Bereavement Journey twice, a Wednesday evening course and a Thursday morning course. The co-leaders are myself and Revd Moni Babatunde, ably supported by Lisa Azmani (not least by her wonderful sandwiches for the evening group!)

The course is produced and supported by Ataloss. Our Guests mostly find it very beneficial, and we have received really good feedback. Some have come back for another course as they have reached different stages in their journeys.

We do recommend people wait at least six months after a bereavement, for some that may still be too soon.

We follow up with a monthly Bereavement Café and invite both the evening and the day courses to participate. It is a massive privilege to walk alongside people on their grief journeys, as well as always learning something new to help with our own.

Church Watching

Report by Elaine Bray

The church is kept locked most days, if people wish to visit during office hours, the church can be opened by the team in the office. During special events in Cobham, such as the Christmas lights switch-on and parade in November, volunteers keep the church open and welcome visitors.

For that November event, we partnered with the Yehudi Menuhin School. They offered short concerts from talented young people and also

provided some older string instruments and patient instructors to allow members of the public to have a go! A couple of members of the ministry team did try the cello before joining the Churches Together carol singing in the High Street.

On other occasions bellringers have helped to draw people towards and into the church from the High Street.

It is always good to have some knowledge of the history of the church, to allow questions to be answered. David Taylor has kindly offered to run a historical briefing for anyone that would like to learn and be able to share more about the history with our visitors.

We hope to make everyone feel welcome and at home when visiting St Andrew's, which allows us to invite them to the next thing and build relationships.

Spiritual Cinema

Facilitated by the Vicar

In 2025 we enjoyed fellowship and reflected theologically on what we have watched. We enjoy a wide variety of films looking at many themes and I am always fascinated to hear the spiritual reflections offered by those who gather month by month.

In 2025 we watched these films.

January – Where the Crawdads Sing

February – The Lost King

March – The Two Popes

April – The Good Liar

May – Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?

June – If

July – A Man Called Otto

August – The Shack

September – The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry

October – Bank of Dave 2

November – Mr Burton

December – It's a Wonderful Life

CHURCH ORGANISATIONS

Bellringers

Report by Zoë Ostley, Ringer's Secretary

The past year has been a steady and positive one for the St. Andrew's Bellringers. We have maintained our regular Thursday evening

practice sessions and have been committed to Sunday ringing on most weeks.

We are pleased to report continued progress in teaching and development. New ringers are being taught alongside our regular band and the two newer ringers are doing extremely well.

We are very proud of their progress and commitment.

Our practices continue to be well supported by visiting ringers, Julian and Jane Ball, and Amanda. Huge appreciation to their commitment to us .

With our regular ringers, we have successfully rung quarter peals this year and are continuing to build confidence and skill within the band.

It was with great sadness that, towards the end of the year, we lost a long-standing supporter of the ringers, Mabs Ostley. She was not only a ringer, but also our social secretary and a valued member of the church community. Two of the quarter peals rung this year were in her honour as too another one in honour of Jenny Mead, Captain of Esher an enthusiastic local ringer who supported us when needed.

Looking ahead, 2026 is shaping up well, with more quarter peals planned and a new ringer learning the ropes (excuse the pun!) and making very good progress.

We are also pleased to report that significant work has been carried out on the church clock. Fingers crossed, it is now behaving itself and once again keeping good time for the community.

Church Cleaning

Report by Derek Bullman

As I have mentioned many times previously, cleaning the church is a collective effort. Those responsible for special occasions – Cuppa & Chat, refreshments after the Family Services, Christmas tree & candle-lit services, concerts, school holiday activities etc. etc. always leave the church as they found it. Even the vicar brought his unique skills to bear on one occasion in 2025.

I look after the routine “chores”, sometimes with the kind help of my elder son, but chores at home aren’t the same as chores in the church – they become tasks happily undertaken with a sense afterwards of having done something useful – a point worth remembering if you are tempted to volunteer as a replacement for yours truly, now well into his mid-eighties and becoming perhaps a touch unreliable and inefficient. The same goes for my role as Assistant Sacristan where I try to ensure that we are always adequately stocked with consumables.

You may remember that in 2024 our “Henry” Numatic vacuum disappeared along with all its tools. How thoughtful was it therefore that

Bryan and Tori chose a brand new “Henry” as their leaving present.

Church Flowers

Geraldine Thomas now looks after our flowers. She changes the artificial displays by seasons or church calendar and does other displays when possible, for example at Christmas she did an arrangement in the porch and on the windowsills as well.

Gardening Team

Report by Judith Robinson

The team of about 6 meets about once a week, weather permitting.

We are responsible for three open spaces.

CGH Garden

We are renovating the garden to provide a safe and attractive garden for all. It is now almost prickly free, with more shade and wildlife friendly trees and plants. A child safe fence has been installed

St Andrew’s Field.

The semi-wild area was planted with trees provided by Surrey County Council, which have needed serious watering. This wild area is mown just twice a year to allow a variety of wild plants to grow. There is a log pile for wildlife.

Churchyard and Memorial Garden

The trees and grass are the responsibility of Elmbridge Borough Council. However, EBC are happy for us to do some work for which they do not have funds. This year the main project has been the removal of a huge invasive “tree of heaven”, and the planting of three native trees. We are trying to negotiate with EBC to allow the grass to grow long in part of the space to allow wildflowers and butterflies to thrive.

There’s always lots to do, and new volunteers are always welcome. No experience needed.

Mothers’ Union

Report by Jenny Vickers

Even though our branch is rather small we continued to meet monthly. We were grateful to the clergy team who faithfully took our services at the commencement of our meetings. These services are an important part of our time together.

Our speakers during the year consisted of the clergy team, friends and family members as we did not feel it was appropriate to ask other

possible speakers in view of our small membership.

Bryan Silletti spoke about chickens and brought a couple along for us to see and hold, whilst Tori gave a most informative talk about autism. Charleen told us how she and Richard delivered an old truck to Ukraine. Mike regaled us with his experience of attending a garden party at Buckingham Palace. We also had talks by Sheila Bonny's son, David, about his chaplaincy at London Airport, Jenny Master's son, Paul, gave us an illustrated account of his visit to Bletchley Park and Ann Willmore told us about her teaching experiences. We had an afternoon of poetry ably led by Elizabeth Kingdon.

We had our annual tea party to which we invited members from other branches within the Leatherhead deanery. Our theme was "My Favourite Things". We joined together in singing songs from "The Sound of Music" and sang a grace to the tune of "Edelweiss" before tea. Our raffle raised £75 in aid of the MU Summer of Hope appeal.

We continued to host T4U and although the number of those attending had declined those who were present enjoyed the fellowship.

Our cake stall held in Church Gate House in October raised £106.39 for the Mothers' Union's various projects.

A few of us were able to join Bookham branch for their annual summer tea party and Ashted branch for their annual birthday communion service and tea.

Mary Hart who had been a faithful member for many years had moved to Hinchley Wood but we were pleased to learn that she would still be able to attend our meetings.

We continued to go out for tea at Squires from time to time which gave members an additional opportunity to meet.

The first meeting of the Cobham Mothers' Union took place in April 1890. Sadly, we think 2026 will be our final year.

The Mothers' Union will be celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2026.

FAITH AND SOCIAL ACTION PROJECTS

Oasis Childcare Trust

Report by Caroline Edwards, Founder and Director of Services.

Oasis Charity ran two Freedom programmes and two Emotional wellbeing courses in 2025. These are part of our safeguarding services to support female victims of domestic abuse. Our specialist support services walk beside them on their journey from victim to survivor. None of our work is time limited, we will walk beside them for as long as their journey takes.

During 2025, we ran fresh food banks throughout the Easter and summer school holidays. Over 100 families per week accessed the fresh food banks, more families are struggling with the ongoing cost of living crisis and high cost of utilities. We supported over 516 adults and 738 children with fresh food over the two fresh food banks. With 1 in 6 children living in poverty in our community, and more working parents struggling to meet the additional cost of living, the demand for the fresh food bank continues so we will offer these again in 2026.

The positive impact of these foodbanks extended far beyond financial relief. The

programme supported our clients' mental and physical wellbeing, enabling them to enjoy precious moments with their children over the summer — being present, rather than worrying about where the next meal would come from.

None of this would be possible without the support of the community, and on behalf of all of the children and families supported by Oasis, I sincerely thank you and everyone at St. Andrew's Church for all your support and kindness, together we can really make a difference to vulnerable children and families living within our community.

Publisher's Note: A fuller version of this report with additional description and feedback from recipients is available from David Greenwood.

Cobham Area Foodbank

Report by Christina van Roest, Trustee and general manager

Will Foodbanks soon disappear?

Unfortunately, NO, many families are struggling as we have reported last year, the year before and had increased a lot since we started the foodbank December 2013.

The aim was to help for about three times just as an emergency to get the clients out their sudden change of situation, needing the available money to pay for arrears of any kind and supplying them meanwhile with food they would not need to buy.

But almost 13 years later the kind of need has changed dramatically, credits and loans more available, (hence debt building up) the work market has changed, salaries, work opportunities, and great increase in prices in the shops and utilities.

Health issues, especially mental health have risen, not just winter influenced illnesses, but Noro Virus and still Covid Virus in a new 'disguise'/variant they are all still bothering many people of all ages in the area, some with profound consequences.

We are only open one day a week, Cobham, Oxshott, Stoke D'Aberton, Downside, East & West Horsley, and Effingham. We still have 15-20 families visiting us, visiting us collecting food and some deliveries also made by our volunteers to help clients not able to come to us. Some families in Cobham have no transport or any person able to collect the food for them, we offer the 'delivering service' in exceptional circumstances only.

Thanks to the generosity of many donors, especially from St Andrew's Church Cobham, and many individuals, who gave sufficient funding and stock to the warehouse to help all clients who come to us for help. We have received in the period from 1st April 2025 to 30th January 2026: 687.50kg which made out 4.45% of the total collecting in that period. (Last year it was: 914.65kg). It is a sad story that it is still so essential to help people with food, who do not have enough money to feed the family.

We also thank all the people who have donated money to our account. We have many expenses to run the foodbank, insurances, rents, and upkeep of the foodbank van, regularly we must buy additional foods, when stocks are low. We have no salaries to pay for anyone active in the foodbank. In the period mentioned we have received in total 1886.82kg of food, but we had to buy near to 300kg to fulfil our outgoing food needs.

On the positive side we were able to give 59 of our families a generous Christmas Hamper and fresh items, fruits, vegetables, eggs bought from the local market, and fresh meat from the butchers in Oxshott, who gave us a price reduction being for the foodbank clients, and had plenty of Christmas Food Goodies to distribute too. But it does not stay Christmas

forever and many people have re-joined the queue for food at the foodbank from Mid-January onwards; joining the queue are lots of adults who have jobs but cannot cope with the 'cost of living' and worried parents who cannot feed their children.

Our food donations are well down in these months, but we need your continued help, support, and prayers for all these deprived people in our community. Many thanks.

Garden Route Children's Trust

Report by Paul Hurrell

The Garden Route Children's Trust (GRCT) is a UK-registered Christian charity established in 2006. GRCT supports feeding initiatives for pre-primary children in disadvantaged areas of South Africa, providing a daily nutritious e'Pap breakfast throughout the school year. In 2024, GRCT delivered meals to approximately 9,000 children each day.

Children who experience severe malnutrition before the age of three typically complete five fewer years of schooling than their well-nourished peers and do not reach their full physical or cognitive potential. e'Pap, a fortified maize and soya porridge, provides essential vitamins, minerals, and trace elements. Evidence from studies indicates that children receiving e'Pap show improved health, increased energy, and enhanced concentration and retention in the classroom. The cost to provide one child with e'Pap breakfast for an entire school year is approximately £20.

The Garden Route Children's Trust is dedicated to mitigating the effects of hunger by funding the provision of e'Pap to pre-schools in disadvantaged areas of South Africa. The charity ensures that 98% of all funds raised are allocated directly to the purchase and distribution of e'Pap in townships across the Eastern and Western Cape.

The primary objective of the Garden Route Children's Trust (GRCT) is to secure sufficient funding to provide e'Pap breakfasts to 9,000 children each school day. Achieving this goal requires approximately £100,000 annually, sourced from regular donors and fundraising events. In 2025, fundraising efforts were notably successful, with significant private donations, including a major contribution from a St Andrew's member. The annual Christmas Sale in Oxshott, held in November 2025, raised £5,500—a 30% increase over the previous year.

St Andrew's Church continued its generous support, with the Outward Giving Committee repeating its £3,000 donation from 2024, approved by the PCC and gratefully received by the trustees. Additional events, such as the International Quiz Night at the church, also contributed to the GRCT's fundraising success.

In 2026, the GRCT plans to centre its fundraising efforts on commemorating its 20th anniversary.

OM Himalayas

Report by Peter Kelly

The 2025 ministry year began on a high note with a successful international quiz night, which would turn out to be an inaugural event of an annual winter highlight for our church. Over 80 people attended the January quiz, and enjoyed the talents of the ultra-quiz master Simon Bray. The evening netted over £1,000 which was distributed to OM as well as other charities of the Faith and Social Action Committee. Additionally, the outward giving committee reviewed the support level for OM which had been unchanged for 7 years. They graciously recommended to the PCC an increase to reflect inflation which was approved.

For the first time since we first visited Nepal seven years ago to see the work being done on the ground by OM and formed our partnership, we engaged with the short-term missions trip team at OM to plan a summer trip. After months of planning, we sent 12 people from our church (Sean and Shirley as chaperones and 10 young adults) to Moldova for a July week of ministry to children and families in need. It was long and at times exhausting work but the team came back saying that they were deeply moved by the workers they met at OM and by the Moldovan people. Several of our young people said that the experience changed them in a profound way and that they wanted to return to mission field experiences again if offered the chance.

On the ground in Nepal, the ministry activities have expanded to provide a deeper level of ongoing support and reinforcement for people who have responded to an invitation to know God and to understand the work of Christ. The ongoing work in areas of well baby care, sustainable farming, women's business formation and micro-enterprise support, HIV medication delivery, and literacy training are all continuing, at record levels. The OM teams continue to support newly formed groups and house churches so that they are a better

landing pad for people who have expressed a desire to connect with OM or have been introduced to the gospel.

In the autumn of the year, the OM highlight ministry Sunday was warmly received by many in the congregation. Students from the discipleship group in particular were very interested in learning about more opportunities to experience cross-cultural ministry experiences. At coffee, discussions actually began about 2026, which was exciting to see. Clearly the summer 2025 trip to Moldova was significant and formative for many of the team that went from our church. At the OM highlight ministry Sunday coffee hour, Sam Foster spoke to many in our church family and also offered to be a resource to our education programme, providing some sample curriculum materials to Shirley to use in working with the Discipleship group. Lastly, several older members of the congregation expressed appreciation to OM for the work being done, and asked how the church could do more in this area.

As the year drew to a close, Ben, the director in Nepal shared that a new group has started up in Southeastern Nepal that has really taken hold. It is a women's fellowship, where experienced women provide encouragement and support to each other, and especially to younger women. The group has begun to really care for one another and the local community has taken notice. OM is also supporting local schools, run by the government to by other local organisations. In Western Nepal, leaders of a school were looking for teaching in the subjects of sport, hygiene, and nutrition for a class of students of mixed Muslim and Hindu backgrounds. The school administrators approached the OM staff and asked if they would consider teaching the students, which they have. This shows the incredible strength of a trust-based relationship the community workers have with their local neighbours.

The OM team throughout the Himalayas send prayerful thanks for our support and asks us to pray for wisdom as they adapt their strategy, for success in training up house churches and new leaders to be effective with people newly exposed to the gospel, and for continued success in connecting to or creating community outreach programmes.

Submitted with gratitude to everyone supporting the missions work of our church

Transforming Lives for Good

Report by Carrie Taylor

The TLG team continues to work in St. Andrew's, our local church primary school, to support and encourage pupils who may be finding school a challenge or are struggling in some way. The team welcomed Nigel Goddard last year and he has successfully completed his first year of coaching. Joe Jones has also undertaken the TLG training and should be joining the team sometime this year, which brings our team number up to 5.

We have just had our Annual Review for 2025 where the headteacher reflected that,

'The coaches are committed...they bring the children a special time and use active listening...they are testament to the power of the intervention'.

We continue to thank God for this opportunity to gently walk alongside these children and their families, sharing love and fun, activities and chats, and building relationships.

Christian Aid Week

Report by Helen Goddard

Young and adult members of the Church were involved in presenting five Christian Aid videos which were sent to Church members and other Church contacts during Christian Aid Week in May. A short presentation was made during the Church Service on Sunday 11th May to introduce the year's Christian Aid Week appeal – focusing on the needs of the indigenous people of Guatemala as they face the challenges of global warming and pressure to sell their land and livelihoods to big farming businesses.

Three people took part in small house to house collections, one as a deliver only and two as deliver and collect, raising awareness and £94.05

Envelopes handed out at Church raised £265.90

The e-envelope (online donations) raised £730.00.

This gave a total of £1,089.95, an amount significantly lower than the amount raised in the previous 2 years. Christian Aid week nationally raised over £5 million.



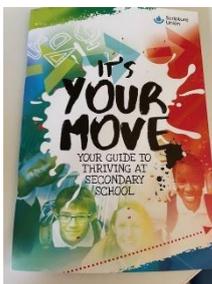
Car Wash – Fundraising for Moldova Trip – July 2025



DiscipleShip Trip to Moldova – August 2025



Kids' Church Summer Special – Science - August 2025



Yr 6 Leavers gifts (July) and Creative Fridays (Nov.)



DiscipleShip helping at Oasis – July 2025



Party in the Party – September 2025



Prayer Spaces at School by Faith Ambassadors



Gala Dinner – February 2025