



**ANNUAL PARISH AND ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING 2025
TO BE HELD ON MONDAY 28 APRIL 2025 AT 8PM IN THE SAINT JAMES CENTRE**

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ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2025

TO BE HELD ON MONDAY 28 APRIL 2024 AT 8PM IN THE SAINT JAMES CENTRE

AGENDA

1. Opening Prayer
2. Welcome and introduction
3. Election of churchwardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING 2025

TO BE HELD ON MONDAY 28 APRIL 2025 FOLLOWING DIRECTLY AFTER THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING IN THE SAINT JAMES CENTRE

AGENDA

1. Welcome and apologies of absence
2. Minutes of the previous meeting – for **APPROVAL**
3. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting
4. Reports to the APCM – for **NOTING**
 - (a) Electoral Roll report
 - (b) Rector's report on the proceedings of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2024
 - (c) Annual Fabric report
 - (d) Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod
 - (e) Safeguarding report: Compliance with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016
5. Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2024 – for **NOTING**
6. Election of Deanery Synod members and PCC representatives
7. Appointment of Auditors
8. Questions

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AND THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING (APCM) OF ST JAMES GERRARDS CROSS AND FULMER HELD ON MONDAY 22 APRIL 2024 AT 8PM IN THE SAINT JAMES CENTRE

PRESENT: Chairman (and Rector): Matt Beeby
Vice Chairman: Andrew Bell
48 church family members and 3 clergy members
17 apologies

OPENING

The Rector opened the meeting with a reading from Philippians 1:21-26 and prayer.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Rector welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish meeting to be followed by the Annual Parochial Church meeting (APCM).

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

1. Election of Churchwardens

The Rector reminded the meeting that, in addition to members registered on the church Electoral Roll, any resident of the parish whose name is on the register of local government electors is entitled to vote at the election of the churchwardens.

The Rector further reminded the meeting that churchwardens are always elected to serve for one year at a time.

The Rector thanked the churchwardens for:

- their encouragement to the Rector personally and to the wider church family;
- their wise counsel, their faithfulness to the gospel and their godly example in serving our church; and
- their great care and support of the staff team and the church family over the past year.

The Rector informed the meeting that Andrew Bell, Gary Palmer and Francesca Hall-Drinkwater had agreed to stand for election as churchwardens for another year.

The Rector shared with the meeting the nominations for Churchwardens, duly proposed and seconded and received before the meeting as follows:

Andrew Bell	Proposed by:	Ann Green	Seconded by:	Lawrence Tebboth
Francesca Hall-Drinkwater	Proposed by:	Wendy Blinco	Seconded by:	John Stanley
Gary Palmer	Proposed by:	Graham Green	Seconded by:	Ruth Findlay

As no further nominations were received and in terms of Rule M9 (3) of the Church Representation Rules the Rector **DECLARED** that Andrew Bell, Francesca Hall-Drinkwater and Gary Palmer were elected as churchwardens until the 2025 Annual Parish Meeting.

Tim Atkins prayed for the churchwardens and for all they have done in the past and for God's blessing on their work to come in the year ahead.

The Rector closed the Annual Parish Meeting.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING (APCM)

The Rector reminded the meeting that only those who are on the Electoral Roll of Saint James are permitted to vote at the APCM.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from: Will Coomber, Jill Roth, Richard Lawrence, Wendy Shingleton, Andrew Shingleton, Megan Brodie, David Brodie, Nick Leake, Amy Beeby, Jane Josten, Martin Josten, Sue Stone, Richard Stone, David Turner, Liz Lee, Sarah Steel and Lynn Clarke.

2. Minutes of the previous Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The minutes of the Annual Parish and Annual Parochial Church Meetings held on 25 April 2023, proposed by Ian Mitton and seconded by Anne Turner, were **APPROVED** (with one abstention) by the members and signed by the Rector as a true reflection of the meetings.

3. Matters Arising

The Rector dealt with the following matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting not addressed later in the meeting:

a. Governance review

It was **NOTED** that the PCC has continued to work through the Governance Review Implementation Plan (GRIP). The committees of the PCC, which take responsibility for much of the operational business which is then brought to the PCC for information or approval, are now running effectively, each with an agreed Terms of Reference. The committees are: the Risk, Audit and Finance Team (RAFT) chaired by Bola Akinseye; the People and Culture Team (PACT) chaired by Ian Mitton; and the Global Mission Team (GMT) chaired by Nick Leake.

The Rector **THANKED** all the chairs and other members of those teams for their commitment and hard work.

It was **NOTED** that the Buildings and Fabric Team remains to be established and at present the PCC Standing Committee undertakes its responsibilities.

b. Contending for the Faith

It was **NOTED** that a 'Contending for the Faith' Working Group has been established, chaired by Andrew Bell. This is to focus our thinking as we defend and uphold the Church of England's historic, traditional teaching on marriage and sexuality. The Working Group supports the

Rector, Ministry Team and PCC in our engagement with our diocese and the wider Church of England on these issues as we hold to a Biblical view of marriage.

4. **Reports to the APCM**

a. **Electoral Roll report**

The meeting noted the Electoral Roll Report and the number on the Electoral Roll as follows:

Total 508 as follows: 433 in Gerrards Cross and 75 in Fulmer.

	Gerrards Cross	Fulmer
Names removed – those who have died	3	6
Names removed – those who have moved away	7	9
New additions	1	0
Error correction	-	1
TOTAL NUMBER ON ELECTORAL ROLL	433	75

b. **Rector’s Report**

The meeting noted the content of the Rector’s Report and the verbal update by the Rector.

c. **Report on the proceedings of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2023**

The meeting noted the content of the Report on the proceedings of the PCC for the year ending 31 December 2023.

d. **Annual Fabric report**

The meeting noted the content of the Annual Fabric report for the year ending 31 December 2023.

e. **Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod**

The meeting noted the content of the Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod for the year ending 31 December 2023.

f. **Safeguarding report: Compliance with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016**

The meeting noted the content of the Safeguarding report and noted, in particular, that the PCC had complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to the House of Bishop’s guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

The meeting also noted that the safeguarding policy is available on the front page of the church website.

The Rector **THANKED** Ann Green for all her hard work, wisdom and advice over the past year.

The Rector encouraged the church family to contact Ann or the Diocesan Safeguarding team directly with any safeguarding questions or concerns, no matter how large or small, including anything to do with a member of the ministry or wider staff team.

5. **Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023**

David Steel, the Treasurer, shared an overview of the financial statements and financial results for the financial year ending 31 December 2023.

The Treasurer **REMINDED** the meeting that Saint James' only source of income is through the church family and accordingly **THANKED** the church family for all their giving in the last year.

The Treasurer further **THANKED** Richard Lawrence for all the time and effort he dedicates as our Planned Christian Giving Secretary.

The Treasurer reminded the meeting that Hazel Robinson is stepping down as Finance Officer later this term and **THANKED** her for all her hard work and incredible support provided over the last seven years.

The Rector **HIGHLIGHTED** the encouragements from the last year with people increasing their regular giving as well as closing the deficit at the end of 2023.

The Rector also **HIGHLIGHTED** the challenges that remain ahead, noting in particular the ongoing cost of living challenges and also the false sense of security we could get from the increased numbers we are seeing on a Sunday, highlighting that we will need a continued focus on fully integrating new members into the church family and on sound Biblical teaching about our relationship with money.

The Rector **THANKED** David Steel for his hard work, care and diligence.

The Rector also **THANKED** Hazel Robinson for all she has done to serve the church family and noted that she will be missed as a member of staff.

QUESTIONS:

1. ***Are we considering installation of solar panels?***

This is still under consideration. We have a preferred supplier and are currently in discussions over pricing. If it makes financial sense, a proposal will go to the PCC for discussion.

2. ***Given we are already over a quarter of the way through 2024, where do things currently sit in relation to the PCC-approved deficit of £188k for the year?***

As things stand our deficit has grown and is currently c.£212k. Sixteen 'giving units' moved away in late 2023 which is having an impact on our income. Our costs are under control, which emphasises the need to continue to grow our income through regular giving.

3. Noting that we have three pots of funds highlighted in the presentation (General, Growth and Repairs) does that give additional comfort about our overall financial position?

In line with previous years and agreed policy, we only look to the General Fund when we consider our ability to meet any budgeted or actual deficit.

4. How is the amount of our Parish Share calculated?

An overall income budget is set at Diocese level, with a certain amount allocated to Amersham Deanery to contribute. Amersham Deanery then allocate down to individual parishes based on a variety of factors including size of Electoral Roll.

5. Did we pay members of staff a pay rise last year?

Yes. We have tried to be as generous as possible and historically have sought to pay above the Consumer Price Index, but in the last couple of years we have not, like many employers, been able to match the very high rates of inflation.

6. Election of members to the PCC

a. Deanery Synod representatives

The Rector reminded the meeting that lay members of the Deanery Synod are normally elected every three years, which last happened in 2023.

The meeting noted Saint James has been allocated 8 seats on the Deanery Synod. Two members have stood down from their role (Jonathan Rushworth and Grant Masom) so there are currently two casual vacancies.

One member of the church family has agreed to stand to fill one of these vacancies and has been duly proposed and seconded as follows:

Tom Kitching	Proposed by:	John Young	Seconded by:	Daniel Upfield
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As no further nominations were received the Rector **DECLARED** that Tom Kitching was elected as a lay member of the Deanery Synod for a period of two years.

The Rector noted that we now have one remaining vacancy on Deanery Synod.

b. Election of members to the PCC

The meeting noted the need to elect three people as Lay members of the PCC, to serve for three years, plus an additional one Lay member to serve for one year following Kathryn Lovewell's decision to step down.

The following members of the church family have agreed to stand for election to the PCC to fill these vacancies. Those standing, each duly proposed and seconded, are:

Three year term

Stephanie Summerell	Proposed by:	Jon Eastwood	Seconded by:	Andrew Rose
Joan Filler	Proposed by:	Lisbet Diers	Seconded by:	Anne Scott
Tish Littlewood	Proposed by:	Frances Cunningham	Seconded by:	Lindsay Mackie

One year term

Simon Bailey	Proposed by:	Taiwo Akinseye	Seconded by:	Jeremy Ellis
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As no further nominations were received and in terms of Rule M9 (3) of the Church Representation Rules the Rector **DECLARED** that Stephanie Summerell, Joan Filler, Tish Littlewood and Simon Bailey were elected as members of the PCC.

The Rector **THANKED** Kathryn Lovewell, John Stanley, Mandi Townsend and Rebecca White who have stood down from the PCC.

7. Appointment of Auditors

The meeting noted that in 2023 we appointed Wenn Townsend, Chartered Accountants as our auditors, and they completed their first audit of our accounts this year.

The Rector **THANKED** Wenn Townsend for their work and the positive interaction we have had with them.

Proposed by David Steel and seconded by Jonathan Rushworth the meeting unanimously approved that Wenn Townsend, Chartered Accountants be reappointed as auditors to the PCC for a term of office ending at the close of the 2025 APCM.

8. Questions and encouragements

The meeting noted the thanks, encouragements and suggestions shared by various members of the staff team and church family as follows:

- Significant growth in numbers staying after the Sunday services for coffee, with a real warmth and energy during that time together as a church family.
- The number attending the 10am service in Gerrards Cross is larger than the combined regular attendance at the previous 9.15 and 11am services.
- The recent Women's Breakfast had over 90 people attending.
- The children's ministry under Anna Barrett's leadership is thriving, with high quality teaching which the children are really engaging with.
- The high quality of training and materials being provided by Daf Meirion-Jones to Growth Group leaders, which is really helping in the teaching and leading of groups.
- The quality of Sean Groombridge, Josh Lucas and the choir and how they lead us so well in sung worship each week.

9. Looking forward

The meeting further **NOTED** a verbal update by the Rector, highlighting various things to be thankful for as a church family, together with some of the challenges and opportunities we are facing. In particular, as our numbers grow on Sundays, we should celebrate that growth, but we should also be ready for some of the challenges and costs that can come with larger numbers. It is also important that we are ready and equipped to welcome newcomers and to help them integrate quickly so that they can develop meaningful relationships within the church family.

10. Thanks

The Rector and churchwardens **THANKED** all who serve in various aspect of church life and activities and the PCC and Staff Team for their dedication and commitment.

Gary Palmer specifically **THANKED**:

- Matt for the extraordinary commitment and emotional energy he pours into looking after and praying for the church family; his concern for our salvation; and his faithful preaching even when the message is hard;
- Amy for her faithful support of Matt; and
- The whole church staff team for their hard work, love and service.

Gary Palmer closed the meeting with prayer.

CHAIRMAN

DATE

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

This year, as every six years, a new electoral roll has been prepared, with each member wishing to have their name entered on the roll being required to apply for enrolment.

The numbers included on the new roll are as follows:

	Gerrards Cross	Fulmer
TOTAL NUMBER ON ELECTORAL ROLL	306	66

The total number on the Roll now stands at 372 for 2025. The 2024 Roll was 508.

Mark Nicholas, on behalf of the PCC



RECTOR'S REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE PCC FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

Please refer to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024, available from the Church Office and on the Saint James website.



ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

The Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 are available from the Church Office and on the Saint James website.

ANNUAL FABRIC REPORT

As churchwardens, we are again enormously thankful to Edwin Clark for his continued efforts in managing the maintenance, repair, and enhancement of our buildings, to Martin Paine who continues to take ownership of all our annual maintenance contracts, ensuring that regular service arrangements are in place, and to Mark Nicholas for additional oversight and administration.

We still hope to be able to establish a Buildings Committee to be known as the Buildings and Fabric Team (BAFT). Until this committee is established, the PCC Standing Committee continues to undertake the responsibilities designated to BAFT.

Further works recommended in the 2023 quinquennial report are prioritised and will be undertaken when appropriate.

Below are the main works undertaken in 2024:

St James Fulmer

- More tree work on the boundary between Church and the Black Horse Pub next door

St James Gerrards Cross

- Extensive tree work including removal of dead trees within the churchyard

St James Centre

- Renewal of the External Roof Man-safe Fall System anchor points and support cables
- Several external repairs with gutter patches over broken weld joints on roof
- Various plumbing in WCs and Kitchen
- Clearance of car park storm drains
- Cistern repairs in WCs

Staff Housing

7 Gaviots Close

- Painting exterior
- Decorating full interior
- New floor covering to kitchen/dining area
- Replace four recessed kitchen light fittings
- Refelt garden shed roof
- Full internal clean

Andrew Bell, Francesca Hall-Drinkwater, Gary Palmer
Churchwardens

REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE DEANERY SYNOD IN 2024

The function of the Amersham Deanery Synod and Team is to equip, enable, support, and facilitate growth and renewal in the local church throughout the Amersham Deanery. The Area Dean's responsibilities include holding Deanery Synod meetings. Synod Meetings aim to bring members together to learn, discuss and feedback on items of common interest. Each parish or benefice provides a number of representatives to Deanery Synod depending on the parish size. Deanery Synod members are also PCC members.

Amersham Deanery Synod met three times in 2024 in March, June and December, with an additional meeting organised in November with the Bishop of Oxford.

The March Synod was held at Christ Church Waterside, Chesham. The meeting agenda included the AGM of the Amersham Deanery Trust. Following this the results of the elections for Deanery Officers for the period 2023 to 2026 were announced. Canon Julie Dziegiel was elected as Deanery Treasurer, and Lawrence Tebboth as Deanery Lay Chair. Dorothy Potter remains as Deanery Secretary. There followed a presentation from Rev'd Asa Humphries as the new Parish Development Advisor for Buckingham Archdeaconry. Synod was also informed about the new Diocesan Vision for Children and Young Families. This then formed the basis for the June meeting at the Chesham Bois Church Centre.

The June Synod meeting included presentations from across the Deanery of Children's and Young People's activities.

There was no September meeting of Synod.

The Bishop of Oxford, Steven Croft, visited Amersham Deanery on November 19th. All Synod and PCC members were invited to St Mary Beaconsfield for a short worship service, followed by an address from Bishop Steven. There then followed a lively question and answer session. At the December Synod, held at St George Little Chalfont, the Deanery Treasurer reported on the planned allocation of Parish Share for the coming year. Synod voted to accept the allocation, but it was also noted that not all parishes agreed with the allocation, and therefore Amersham Deanery for the first time in many years will not meet its full Parish Share allocation.

The Rev'd David Whale talked about the developing estates ministry within the Diocese. The Reverend Vic Jones described the Children and Young peoples outreach work from St George's to the local estates.

In a wider context, February saw the untimely passing of the Bishop of Buckingham Rt Rev'd Alan Wilson. His successor announced in December the Rt Rev'd Dave Bull, former Rector of Marlow and Area Dean of Wycombe.

Presentations and Minutes of Meeting are posted on the Deanery Webpage <https://www.amershamdeanery.org.uk/ddocuments.html>.

Lawrence Tebboth
Amersham Deanery Lay Chair

SAFEGUARDING REPORT: COMPLIANCE WITH THE DUTY UNDER SECTION 5 OF THE SAFEGUARDING AND CLERGY DISCIPLINE MEASURE 2016

I can confirm that the PCC of St James Gerrards Cross & Fulmer has complied with the legal requirement under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure, to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

The PCC takes the collective responsibility for safeguarding those most vulnerable in our community seriously. Safeguarding appears as a standing item on every PCC agenda. I have again provided an annual review document for clergy, ministry heads, standing committee and PCC on Church of England Safeguarding updates and best practice, giving links and references where appropriate.

Our Safeguarding Policy was reviewed and approved at the November 2024 PCC meeting and is in line with the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. The next review will be in October 2025. Our Safeguarding Notice is accessed at the foot of the front page on the church website providing guidance for raising a safeguarding concern along with key contacts and a direct link to our Safeguarding Policy. Contact details regarding safeguarding concerns are displayed in both churches and the St James Centre.

This past year the Rector & I have worked with statutory and voluntary agencies (as required) with support from the Diocese (as necessary) to manage one reportable safeguarding concern and ensured appropriate support was provided for all individuals involved.

The profile of safeguarding in churches is higher than ever before and for good reason. In December 2023 the Future of Church Safeguarding Report was published. It does not make comfortable reading, but the Church is committed to implementing the recommendations. The report is critical of Safeguarding practises within the Church of England and recommends a that a fully independent body (funded by the Church of England) is created to oversee and scrutinize safeguarding policy, practice, protocols and procedures. The full report can be accessed by clicking on the link below.

<https://futureofchurchsafeguarding.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/FINAL-FOCS.pdf>

At St James Gerrards Cross & Fulmer every concern or enquiry is listened to and assessed, even if the enquiry is not actually related to a safeguarding issue per se; the discussions and consciousness raising as to what safeguarding looks like is part of the process, as safeguarding is everyone's business whether they have a role in church or not. The well-being of all in our church family is paramount.

The implementation of Safer Recruitment and People Management for people in all church roles and the associated requirement for DBS checks and/or various levels of safeguarding training is a key priority. I have noted that with the shifting culture, there has been a growing awareness and understanding of the need for safeguarding. This has been demonstrated with an improved willingness to complete any required safeguarding training and even resulting in positive feedback!

Ann Green
PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

March 2025