

**The Parish of
St John the Evangelist
Great Stanmore**



**Annual Report and Accounts
for the year ended
31st December 2025**

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**The Annual Meeting of Parishioners
for the Election of Churchwardens**
Sunday 26th April 2026, 10.45am in Church House

AGENDA

1. Opening prayer
2. Apologies for absence
3. To receive the Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting of Parishioners (27th April 2025)
4. Election of tellers (if required)
5. Election of two Churchwardens to serve 2026/2027
6. Date of next Meeting (25th April 2027)
7. Closing prayer

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners held on
Sunday 27th April 2025 at 10.45am
in Church House**

Chair: The Revd Matthew Stone	Minutes: Pam Curran
Attendance: 67 parishioners (of which 57 on the Electoral Roll)	

Introduction	
1.	<p>Opening prayer The Rector, the Revd Matthew Stone, welcomed parishioners and prayed for the meeting, the purpose of which is to elect two churchwardens to serve 2025/2026.</p>
2.	<p>Apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted from: Valerie Banger, Mark Griffiths, Kelly Kehn, Valerie Kershaw, Mark Lynch, Andrea Nicholson, Nina Nolan, Lizzie O'Connor, Mikey O'Connor, Jackie Peters, Keith & Sue Robson, Karen Stirrup, Tee Waterhouse, Shane Wall, Sue Wright and Julia Wyndham.</p>
Administration	
3.	<p>Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting of Parishioners held on 28th April 2024: to agree the minutes as a true record. The minutes were signed by the Rector as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p>
4.	<p>Election of tellers It was not necessary to appoint tellers.</p>
Election of two churchwardens to serve 2025/2026	
5.	<p>The Rector reported that two nominations had been received as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Pam Curran</u> proposed by Jackie Peters, seconded by Sylvia Daniels. • <u>Graham Nicholson</u> proposed by Bev Singleton, seconded by Sam George. <p>Pam Curran and Graham Nicholson were unanimously elected to serve as Churchwardens across 2025/2026. Pam and Graham will be readmitted to office by the Archdeacon of Northolt, at the Visitation taking place at St Edmund the King Northwood Hills on 3rd July 2025. They were thanked for their work.</p>
Miscellaneous	
6.	<p>Date of next meeting The next Annual Meeting of Parishioners will take place on Sunday 26th April 2026.</p>
7.	<p>Closing prayer The Rector closed the meeting in prayer.</p>

Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 26th April 2026, 11am in Church House

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. To receive the Minutes of the previous Annual Parochial Church Meeting (27th April 2025)
3. Matters arising
4. Reports
 - 4.1 Electoral Roll Officer's report
 - 4.2 PCC Secretary's review
 - 4.3 Presentation of accounts and Treasurer's financial review
 - 4.4 Fabric report
5. Election of tellers (if required)
6. Elections and appointments
 - 6.1 Election of 4 Deanery Synod Representatives to serve 2026/2029
 - 6.2 Election of 1 PCC Member to serve 2026/2027
 - 6.3 Election of 4 PCC Members to serve 2026/2029
 - 6.4 Ratification of PCC Appointment of Auditor for 2025 Accounts
 - 6.5 Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2026/2027
7. Group Reports
8. Rector's Review
9. Mission Action Plan (Listening to London, Listening to God)
10. Any other Business
11. Date of next meeting (25th April 2027)
12. Closing prayer

Advance Notice of PCC Meeting – Sunday 27th April 2026 at 11.45am

*Immediately after the close of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, there will be a very short meeting of the newly elected Parochial Church Council to appoint the Church Officers: Vice-Chairman, Deputy Wardens, Secretary, Treasurer and Electoral Roll Officer.
Also, to appoint members to the Standing Committee.*

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 27th April 2025 at 11am in Church House

Chair: The Revd Matthew Stone	Minutes: Pam Curran
Attendance: 67 parishioners (of which 57 on the Electoral Roll)	

Introduction	
1.	<p>Apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted from: Valerie Banger, Mark Griffiths, Kelly Kehn, Valerie Kershaw, Mark Lynch, Andrea Nicholson, Nina Nolan, Lizzie O'Connor, Mikey O'Connor, Jackie Peters, Keith & Sue Robson, Karen Stirrup, Tee Waterhouse, Shane Wall, Sue Wright and Julia Wyndham.</p>
Administration	
2.	<p>Minutes of the previous Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 28th April 2024: to agree the minutes as a true record. The minutes were signed by the Rector as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.</p>
3.	<p>Matters arising – none.</p>
Reports	
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>• 4.1 Electoral Roll Officer's report The Rector presented a report that had been prepared by Electoral Roll Officer, Andrea Nicholson, based on the full renewal which took place between 2nd February 2025 and 11th April 2025.</p> <p>The new roll stands at 178 (2024 – 179) which is made up of 63 residents (who live within the parish boundary) and 115 non-residents (who do not live within the parish boundary). The deaths of George Fitzpatrick, Rachel Gaskin, Daphne Johnson, Dorothy Neve, Andrew Newton, Diana Phillips and Peggy Waters since the last APCM were sadly noted. Also, Margaret Payne who had attended St John's Church for many years until her move with husband Harry to Bedfordshire in 2022 to be closer to their daughter.</p> <p>• 4.2 PCC Secretary's review PCC Secretary Karen Stirrup had prepared a report based on the work of the PCC in 2024, which is on pages A8-A12 of the 2024 Accounts Booklet. Karen was thanked for her work. There were no questions.</p> <p>• 4.3 Presentation of accounts and PCC Treasurer's financial review Treasurer Jennifer Neve had prepared a report which is on pages A15-A18 of the 2024 Accounts Booklet. The Rector gave an overview of the income and expenditure during the year and highlighted the surplus of £14,535.</p> <p>The Rector thanked all those who support the church through their regular giving. Other income streams include the rent from Hollond Lodge and 16 The Chase. Parish Administrator Karen Stirrup was thanked for all her work managing the regular and one-off bookings in Church House. This had generated £64,286 across 2024.</p>

	<p>It was pleasing to note that St John’s had paid, for the fifth-year running, full Common Fund costs, which in 2024 was £92,164.</p> <p>Jean Orpwood asked a question about the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. The Rector explained that the Government had agreed to extend this scheme for a further 12 months but capped at a maximum of £25,000 in a year for any individual place of worship.</p> <p>David Wicks asked whether the passing round of the collecting plate could be reinstated in church services. The Rector said in response that there are collecting bowls in in the church, including by the south door. As so few people give using cash these days, the existing arrangement of having the contactless machine available each Sunday will remain unchanged. Cash can still be given in church. It was acknowledged that most people give using bank transfer.</p> <p>The 2024 Accounts were approved by the PCC at the last meeting held on 25th March 2025. With no further questions, the 2024 Accounts were unanimously adopted by the meeting.</p> <p>Jenny Neve was thanked for her work as Treasurer. In turn, Jenny presented gifts to the Rector and Becky Stone to thank them for their support to her during the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>4.4 Fabric report</p> <p>The Fabric report was prepared by Churchwardens Pam Curran and Graham Nicholson. The fabric of our various buildings remains in good order (apart from the Old Church).</p> <p>The 2025 budget includes expensive stonework costs totalling £300,000. There is money to pay for this. The exploration of a new heating system for the church continues. The organ refurbishment continues on a modular basis with the most recent works to the pedals taking place in 2024 at a cost of £21,000. The PCC is keeping in mind the introduction of disabled facilities as and when funds allow.</p>
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Elections and appointments

5.	<p>Elections of tellers</p> <p>It was not necessary to appoint tellers.</p>
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6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>6.1 Term of Office for Elected PCC Members</p> <p>St John’s has traditionally had an arrangement where PCC Members would have a year off after completing a three-year term as an elected member of the PCC, before seeking re-election (unless they were standing to be a Churchwarden or Deanery Synod representative). This is permitted under the Church Representation Rules (CRR M16 (7) and (8)).</p> <p>There are rare occasions when a PCC Member resigns their elected position early in which case a replacement person will be elected to complete the original three-year term. The PCC would make the appointment through a by-election. In such cases, the person who filled the vacancy would be able to stand for their own three-year term.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>This arrangement was confirmed by those present.</u></p>
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- **6.2 Election of 4 PCC Members to serve 2025/2028**
The Rector reported that four nominations had been received as follows.
 - Mark Griffiths
proposed by Doreen Pay, seconded by Margaret Deucher.
 - Shaun Knevett
proposed by Bev Singleton, seconded by Nigel Bayliss.
 - Jackie Peters
proposed by Jane Prentice, seconded by Pam Curran.
 - Nancy Pillay-Newton
proposed by Lorna Wyon, seconded by Pauline Ball.

The Rector sought agreement that the four nominees could be elected together, rather than individually. This was agreed by all. Accordingly, Mark, Shaun, Jackie and Nancy were duly elected to serve on the PCC for a period of three years until 2028.

The Rector thanked the retiring PCC Members: Nigel Bayliss, Mark Lynch, Jenny Neve and Jane Prentice.

- **6.3 Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2025/2026**
Derek Taylor-Mew was re-appointed for a further 12 months.

Group reports

7. The 2024 Annual Report and Accounts were published on 28th March 2025. Rather than comment on each report, the Rector invited additional comments from the report authors and questions from church members as follows:
- **7.3 Churchyard Gardeners (pages 15-16)**
John Mair thanked Carole White and all those who tended to the churchyard.
 - **7.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (page 17)**
St John's Church remains a welcoming community. It is essential that everyone is given a chance to deliver Bible readings, lead prayers and to make any contribution to our shared life together. Please speak to the Rector, Churchwardens or Frederick Oshunniyi, our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer.
 - **7.6 Flowers (page 18)**
The flower arranging team were thanked for their amazing work. The church looked stunningly beautiful for Easter.
 - **7.10 Little Fishers Parent & Toddler Group (page 21)**
Edit Rees asked if anyone has a shed that they no longer require, as she would be happy to receive it for the storing of toys. Also, if anyone sees a shed for sale online. Edit was thanked for her work leading this group.
 - **7.11 Music (pages 21-22)**
Director of Music, Philip Rees, asked parents to encourage their children to join the 2025 Children's Christmas Choir as there was not one in 2024. Rehearsals are planned to take place, from October, in church whilst Café St Jean is held in the hall - in the hope of making life easier for parents.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7.15 Safeguarding (pages 30-32) The Rector commented that safeguarding remains a top priority for the PCC and at each meeting there is a substantive agenda item to ensure the necessary appointments, policy reviews and other work are undertaken during the course of a year. <p>The Rector noted the work undertaken by:</p> <p>Parish Safeguarding Officers - Mark Lynch and Nancy Newton. Children’s Champion – Sue Wright. Vulnerable Adults Champion – Sheila Oliver.</p> <p>If anyone has a concern about a child, young person, or vulnerable adult (or needs to make a disclosure) please speak to Mark or Nancy. It is everyone’s responsibility to make St John’s Church a place where all can flourish.</p> <p>The Rector mentioned the online training courses which all church members are encouraged to complete.</p>
Assistant Curate’s review	
8.	<p>Assistant Curate, Wendy Wall, had written a report (pages 34-35) about her work in 2024. At the meeting, Wendy spoke of her deep love for the church family and said how much she will miss them when she leaves next month to become Vicar of St John’s Greenhill. She also paid tribute to the Rector’s kindness and effectiveness as her Training Incumbent.</p> <p>Wendy’s induction service is on Tuesday, 17th June 2025 at 7pm. Everyone is welcome to attend to support Wendy as her new ministry begins in Harrow.</p>
Rector’s review	
9.	The Rector had written a report (pages 35-36) to explain his work in 2024.
Mission: Listening to London, Listening to God	
10.	The work of the PCC Mission Action Groups covering children & young people, discipleship, environment and outreach was recorded in the PCC Secretary’s Report (pages A13-A15).
Any other business	
11.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11.1 Church Lunches Sue Jones, via the Rector, thanked those present for their support towards the Parish Lunches which are occasions that are much enjoyed by all. The next lunch will be a BBQ on 20th July 2025 to celebrate 175 years of St John’s Church. • 11.2 Walking Groups David Wicks explained that he is a member of different walking groups (not part of St John’s Church) and invited others to take part.
Miscellaneous	
12.	<p>Date of next meeting The next Annual Parochial Church Meeting will take place on Sunday 26th April 2026.</p>

13.	<p>Closing prayer The Rector thanked the members of the church for all they contribute to the mission and ministry of St John's Church. The meeting closed in prayer.</p>
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4. Reports

4.1 Electoral Roll Officer's report

A verbal report will be given at the meeting.

4.2 PCC Secretary's Report

See pages A8-A12 of 2025 Accounts Booklet.

4.3 Treasurer's Financial Review and Accounts

See pages A15-A18 of 2025 Accounts Booklet.

4.4 Fabric Report

During 2025, the following work has been undertaken:

Routine Repairs/Maintenance

Church

1. The organ blower and humidifier were serviced every six months. Cost £210 and £215.25.
2. The tower clock was serviced. Cost £393.60.
3. The annual asbestos monitoring took place and the register duly updated. Cost Nil.
4. A new screen was purchased as the old one failed. Cost £5,874 (plus an additional £144 to investigate whether the old screen could be repaired).
5. Portable Appliance Testing took place on all plug-in appliances. Cost £108.
6. The oil-fired boiler was serviced and safety tested. Cost £160. A new gas sensor was fitted in the gas alarm unit. Cost £260.
7. Annual service of the lightning protection system. Cost £168.
8. The fire extinguishers were serviced. Cost £117.43.
9. The insurance policy was renewed on 3rd October 2025 (covers the Church, the Old Church, Church House and Church House Cottage). Premium £10,330.29. Excess £250.
10. The gutters, downpipes and drain gullies were cleared of leaves and the roof was inspected. Cost £247.50. The inspection highlighted that a section of lead needed to be refitted. Cost £492.

Churchyard

1. The churchyard was regularly maintained throughout the year by the London Borough of Harrow. Cost Nil.

Old Church

1. The insurance policy was renewed (see '9' under The Church above).
2. The weeds were cleared on three occasions during the year. Cost £410
3. The safety access equipment in the tower was serviced and tested. The Diocese of London covered the cost (£571.20).

Church House

1. A new cooker with extractor hood and splashback was purchased at a cost of £3,000 which included the disconnection and removal of existing cooker. Additional wiring was needed (£396), and the new pipes were boxed in (£42.85). Total spend £3,438.85.
2. The doorbell failed and needed replacing. Cost £250.
3. All windows (including Church House Cottage) were cleaned inside and out on two occasions. Cost £408.
4. The annual asbestos monitoring was undertaken and the register updated. Cost Nil.
5. The Wolstenholme Hall heaters were hoovered to remove the dust. Cost Nil. Three new pumps were fitted free-of-charge.
6. The gas-fired boiler and cooker were serviced and safety tested. Cost £100. The smoke and carbon monoxide detectors were also checked.
7. The fire extinguishers (and fire blankets) were serviced. Cost £154.78.
8. The annual test for legionella was undertaken. Cost £52.50.
9. The insurance policy was renewed (see '9' under The Church above).
10. The gutters, downpipes and drain gullies were cleared of leaves and the roof was inspected. Cost £168. Two downpipes needed to be repaired. This was work done free-of-charge when the section of lead was being re-fitted to the church roof (see '10' above).
11. New wooden laminate flooring was laid in the Micklem Hall. Cost £2,818.72.

Church Field

1. Church Field was maintained throughout the year. Cost £3,646.58.
2. Various tree works were necessary. Cost £2,800.

Church House Cottage

1. The boiler was serviced and gas safety tested on 2nd May 2024. Cost £100.
2. The insurance policy was renewed (see '9' under The Church above).
3. A faulty zone sensor was replaced. Cost £180.
4. A wasp's nest was removed. Cost £90.
5. A broken windowpane was replaced. Cost £99.

Hollond Lodge

1. The boiler was safety and gas tested on 15th February 2024. Cost £100.
2. The buildings insurance policy was renewed on 3rd October 2025. Premium £1,097.05. Excess £25.
3. The gutters, downpipes and drain gullies were cleared of leaves and the roof was inspected. Cost £82.50. The inspection highlighted that some tiles had slipped and were replaced. Cost £156.

The Chase

1. The buildings insurance policy was renewed on 4th January 2025. Premium £1,397.74. Excess £25.
2. The boiler was safety and gas tested on 14th February 2024. Cost £100.

The Rectory

1. The burglar alarm was serviced. Cost £192.

The PCC continues to place a high priority on undertaking the routine maintenance and repairs in an efficient and cost-effective fashion with known/reliable contractors with whom we enjoy a good relationship.

Quinquennial Inspection Actions

The last Quinquennial Inspection was undertaken in 2022. On top of the routine repairs/maintenance, the current priorities are the stonework, organ refurbishment, church heating and disabled access. These are all very costly projects and are being progressed as far as is financially possible. Brief summaries follow:

Stonework Project

A reminder that in late 2023 the following was undertaken to commence this project:

Drone survey of tower - £2,994
Windows survey - £768
Art Architects (Stage 1 fee) - £3,540
Total £7,302 incl. VAT

In 2024 the following was undertaken:

Tower stonework inspection - £8,354.40
*Netting and pinning of three gargoyles - £2,993.76
Art Architects (Stage 2 fee £6,180 & Extra Advice £660) - £6,840

A Faculty was required for this work.

Total £18,188.16 incl. VAT

The PCC were able to claim VAT of £4,248.36 on the works undertaken in 2023 and 2024 through the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (LPOW).

At the time of preparing this report (January 2025), the next step is for Art Architects to prepare a detailed scope of drawings to confirm all repair, and consolidation works required to the tower only, as identified in the quinquennial inspection report (and subsequent tower stonework inspection report). A budget of £300,000 incl. VAT and all professional fees have been agreed for these works which we hope will take place in September 2025.

Organ Refurbishment

The organ is being refurbished on a modular basis.

The PCC spent £20,702.40 to complete the next stage in the refurbishment. This work included the great mounted drawstop action, three sets of primary drawstop movements, pedal bourdon and open wood pipework, soundboards, and derivation relays, including the replacement of all perishable leatherwork, life expired parts, bedding, valve assemblies, regulating buttons and transmission tubing.

The Archdeacon of Northolt authorised these works under a List B Faculty.

Church Heating

The current oil-fired heating system remains well-maintained, and the level of warmth generated is usually satisfactory for most of the heating season. Owing to its size, construction, and large windows, it is a challenge to warm the church building to a satisfactory level in the very cold weather, in spite of the heating being switched on 48 hours ahead of a service. Despite any wish to do so it is not cost effective to keep the heating on all the time, even on a low level. For context, the cost of the oil was c. £4,572 in 2024.

The PCC has continued to explore its replacement to a more environmentally friendly system. This is in line with the Diocese of London Vision to cut carbon emissions of all 470+ churches to Net Zero by 2030. This effort forms part of the Church of England Environment Programme, to which the Diocese of London is committed. For now, we remain very mindful of our carbon emissions.

In 2023 and 2024 Graham Denman and the Assistant Curate visited various churches who have had their heating systems replaced recently to see how effective they are and what lessons can be learned. In 2024 an Energy Audit of the Church (and Church House) was undertaken by an external consultant. The cost of this audit was covered by the Diocese of London. The [current] recommendation is to install air-to-air heat pumps although this will need further and detailed exploration in 2025.

Disabled Access

The PCC takes its responsibilities very seriously in this regard and it is a desire to make St John's Church 'disabled friendly' with fully accessible facilities. As a contribution towards this, there is ramped access, white lines on all steps, a hearing loop system, and a dementia friendly toilet seat/grab rail all in place. An Accessibility Audit was undertaken in 2020.

Miscellaneous

Another area being monitored is the Church House roof which is old and will ultimately need to be replaced. Broken/missing tiles are replaced where possible (access to the higher tiles is impossible without specialist equipment). There are no reported leaks inside the building.

The General and the Fire Risk Assessments for the Church and Church House were reviewed and updated. The Risk Assessment for the Old Church was also reviewed and updated. Actions arising from these reviews will be undertaken during the course of 2025. The Health & Safety policy was updated, and a copy is on display in the porch.

A new Quinquennial Inspector will be appointed in 2025 following the retirement of Charles Sheppard who has looked after St John's Church for many years. Our thanks to him.

Finally, we remain grateful to those who help look after our building, especially Shaun Knevett, Cristian Tomoiaga and Shane Wall who work quietly behind the scenes doing all sorts of jobs.

**Pam Curran and Graham Nicholson
Churchwardens**

The following elections/appointments will now take place:

5. Election of tellers (if required)

6. Elections and Appointments

- 6.1 Election of 4 Deanery Synod Representatives to serve 2026/2029**
- 6.2 Election of 1 PCC Member to serve 2026/2027**
- 6.3 Election of 4 PCC Members to serve 2026/2029**
- 6.4 Ratification of PCC Appointment of Auditor 2025/2026**
- 6.5 Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2026/2027**

7. Group and Activities' Reports

7.1 Bereavement Visiting Team

In 2025 our visitors continued to offer listening support for the bereaved within our community, and in so doing become part of the outreach of the church. We have had contact, either in person or by phone, with seven clients this year, mostly referred from the Bereavement Care (BC) Office. We also gained a new visitor to our ranks.

We hold regular meetings to support and learn from each other by Zoom, on darker winter nights, and in person at other times. In November, at All Souls' tide, we welcomed those whose loved ones' funerals we have conducted over the past two or three years to the Annual Memorial service. The time we shared afterwards in Church House offered us the opportunity not only to remember the loss we all suffer, but all those funny, pleasurable little things that brought that person alive again in our hearts and minds. Thanks to Bev Singleton and her team for their time given to prepare the refreshments. A generous retiring collection of £362.50 was made for Bereavement Care. And parishioners are reminded that this service is open for all to attend.

St John's Church is a member organisation of Bereavement Care for which we pay an annual subscription of £200. Their Codes of Practice provide a framework for our pastoral care as well as those of the parish. To that end we each undertake the Diocesan Safeguarding training every three years, which protects both visitors as well as our clients. Ongoing bereavement training is available from time to time.

Some attended the annual conference in October, that ranged over several themes both in workshops as well as the opening address and much informal discussion over lunch. Our Bereavement Care membership includes reduced fees for training and attendance at the annual conference. The bereavement team acknowledges the ongoing generosity of the PCC to cover these expenses for all our visitors.

Bereavement Care Charity is dependent upon individual donations and grants from organisations to maintain their ongoing work. Bereavement Care received an important grant this year to support part time hours for an office assistant, who has been proving her worth. The Board of Trustees strive to make the charity better known, extend its work in the area and to make it more effective. They are always on the look out for those seeking involvement in the community, as trustees. If you, or your place of work would be

interested to support the charity, do please look at their recently launched [website](#) for further information:

In the meantime, our visiting group looks forward to another year of supporting those who need of a listening ear during difficult times. Do please contact me or the clergy, in confidence, if you would like to receive such support, or are interested in exploring opportunities to share in the rewarding work of Bereavement Care. Thank you.

Jean Orpwood

7.2 Café St Jean

A warm welcome is extended to all who gather at St John's pop-up coffee shop, Café St Jean – our weekly café, following on from every Sunday service.

While children enjoy the complimentary fruit squash (and biscuits!) they have the benefit of a large, enclosed playing field. Playing freely with their friends, while parents are close by.

Freshly brewed coffee or tea is served along with a selection of biscuits. All for the nominal £1 suggested donation. This suggested donation still manages to cover the cost of the café, despite the steep cost of living increased in recent years.

Café St Jean as it now is, was launched in 2006, making it 20 years old this year, something to celebrate! Many volunteers have helped staff the rota over the years. It is an enjoyable, sociable duty – a good way to engage with people you may not otherwise get to talk to. New volunteers are always welcome.

Now under new stewardship of the marvellous Sue and Shaun, we owe our thanks to the 25 strong team manning the weekly café. As well as the dedicated people putting out the chairs and tables. Without their continued commitment we would not be enjoying such hospitality every week.

Bev Singleton

Café Co-ordinator Sept 22-Jan 26

7.3 Churchyard Gardeners

As usual the Primroses welcomed Spring and were joined by Pulmonarias and the Daffodil bulbs, planted the previous Autumn, to give a spectacular display. This was followed by Forget-me-nots and Tulips and then by a bed of Poppies on the southeast side of the church.

In June the borders were planted with Geraniums and Cosmos and, in the southeast bed, with Rudbeckia and Calendula (Marigolds). Later the bed by the steps was planted with Echium which we hope will self-seed.

We tried to keep on top of the weeding. The Roses were fed and dead headed as usual. We planted two new standard Roses (both 'Gabriel Oak') and 8 of the stakes for the Roses were replaced.

More Daffodils were planted in the southeast bed with a few Wallflowers and all the beds were covered with a mulch of stable manure to end the season.

The ivy growing in the yew trees on the north side was removed by Patrick.

Rosemary, Carolyne & Mike, Bianca, Leonie, Bill and Maga have all generously given the time for which many thanks.

We are grateful to the London Borough of Harrow for keeping the grass cut and the hedges trimmed, and to the Rector and Peter Williams who regularly pick up litter in the churchyard and surrounding roads.

Carole White

7.4 Engage

Our contemporary service continues to play an important part in our church life. The service enjoys a dedicated attendance, as well as welcoming those who come occasionally when a particular speaker interests them. We are grateful to all members of the band, some of whom attend other churches in the mornings, for their unstinting commitment to sharing their musical talent and leading great worship. This year we are particularly grateful and excited to have welcomed many young people into the band, current and former members of St John’s School encouraged in their music by Catherine Ogunniyi who is both the music teacher at the school and our wonderful band leader!

The speakers are invited to choose their own themes, bringing whatever they feel is on their hearts for us to hear. Last year we enjoyed hearing from:

MONTH	SPEAKER	THEME
January	The Revd Jackie Small St Peter’s, West Harrow	Almighty God Taking Us into New Things
February	The Revd Simon Johnson Holy Trinity, Wealdstone	Walking in the Way of Love
March	The Revd Ninus Khako St Albans, North Harrow	Fasting and Church Tradition
May	The Revd Ali Taylor St Paul’s, South Harrow	On Being Enough!
June	The Revd Mark Poulson,	Mission in Hounslow and Southall
July	The Revd Sophie Schuil-Brewer Holy Innocents, Kingsbury	Ignatian Examen Prayer
September	The Revd Urmila Kurkalang St Matthew’s, Yiewsley	Build an Altar – Making Sacred Spaces
October	Clive Scowen, Lay Minister Christ Church, Roxeth	Calling – Set Apart for God’s Service
November	The Revd Irene Lawrence St Albans, North Harrow	“Sign Me In” – using sign language in worship

(We do not have an Engage service in April or December because of the United Stanmore services for Good Friday and Advent respectively. We also take a break in August).

Average attendance is around 35, and it is a privilege to be able to offer a contemporary service as a contrast to our morning 'diet'. Refreshments are always served afterwards, and many stay to enjoy further fellowship. If you haven't yet tried an Engage service, do come along and see what it's like!

Becky Stone

7.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

EDI at St John's continuously seeks to promote the fair treatment and full participation of all Church members in Church affairs, particularly members who are somewhat disadvantaged or are underrepresented based on family background, age or disability.

Inclusion of persons with visible and internal disabilities formed the focus of St John's EDI actions and considerations in 2025. The background to this and EDI actions are outlined below.

Background

EDI focus on access for disabled persons was driven by the following factors:

1. The Church had given much consideration to improving access to St John's Church and the Church House facilities for several years whilst prioritising other important structural work. More impetus was given to this recently, when a member of the congregation observed that another member with reduced mobility (uses a wheelchair) was interested in but was unable to readily access Café St Jean (in Church House) to share refreshments and partake in informal discussions with fellow Church members after Sunday communion services.

This was relayed to the Rector (at a PCC Meeting) who tasked EDI members to explore what further could be done to improve disability access generally within the Church and at Church House.

2. At the Harrow Deanery Synod Meeting held on Thursday 10th July 2025 (attended by the Rector and some PCC members) there was a presentation by the Revd John Beauchamp (who has vision impairment), the Diocese of London Diocesan Disability Ministry Enabler, on the provision of accessibility for disabled individuals in Churches.

Mr Beauchamp at the meeting, and within the document that followed, quoted scripture to underpin his message:

- Matthew 22:39 - "And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself" (and 'your neighbour' includes disabled people).
- 1 Corinthians 12:22-25: St Paul teaches that the church is a body in which the 'less honoured' parts should be given special honour. Or in other words, those who are dishonoured and marginalised by society should be welcomed and valued as essential and vital to the church community.
- John 20:27: 'Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe". Jesus clearly rose from death still bearing the scars of crucifixion. In order for the church to be a fuller representation of the Body of Christ, we need the wounded bodies of disabled people to be amongst us as equal partners at the kingdom feast.

Mr Beauchamp also highlighted resources available on the Diocese of London (DoL) website (<https://www.london.anglican.org/church-and-parish-support/diversity-and-inclusion/disability-ministry/>) . Including:

- The Diocesan Disability Statement, adopted by senior staff in 2022.
 - Database of links to online resources and groups offering advice and support in a range of disabilities.
 - The 360 Accessibility Audit tool. A self-audit tool to help churches raise up the voices of disabled people and look in depth at building and facilities.
3. The requirements of the Equality Act 2010 place a legal duty on everyone to make provision for people with disabilities to access buildings, activities and services and to be able to play a full part in wider society. The following specific elements relate to churches:
- Churches are deemed to be voluntary sector organisations and providers of “services”.
 - Some churches are also employers, and the Act has provisions that employers must comply with.
 - The Act emphasises the need to involve disabled people in consultation about adaptations and improvements to buildings and services. The disabled people are the experts to be consulted.
 - The Act requires everyone to do ‘all things reasonable’ to remove barriers by adapting the physical environment and/or providing services in different and accessible ways.
 - Accessibility must be considered holistically when building modernisation/ refurbishments are planned.
 - The Act requires everyone to also consider beyond the immediate needs of present congregation and anticipate the variety of disabilities that could be presented in the future.
 - The act stipulates that disabled people should be able to access and participate independently wherever possible even when there are people who are willing to offer assistance (potentially problematic for a church where some members consider assisting less able fellow congregants as their Christian duty).

EDI Actions

With full consideration of the points highlighted above, the EDI team identified the following related actions, with commentary on status in Table below.

Ref	EDI Action	Status	Commentary
1.1	Conduct visual inspections of St John’s Church building and Church House to identify potential modifications to further improve mobility access	Open	Quick visual inspection was undertaken. Short term solution identified to assist wheelchair users to access the ground floor of the historic Church House building on special occasions. Further detailed inspections of St John’s Church House and the Church House are necessary.
1.2	Enquire about Church actions	Ongoing	1. White edges on all steps leading to the hall and up the stairs to improve visibility.

Ref	EDI Action	Status	Commentary
	and plans to improve disability access to Church House quickly		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Handrail in toilet to assist those who have nobility challenge. 3. A red toilet seat so individuals with dementia are not confused by the lack of contrast between white porcelain and seat. 4. The toilet mirror is not immediately visible when entering the cubicle so individuals with advanced dementia do not believe the toilet is occupied when they see their reflection;
1.3	Enquire about Church plans to improve mobility access to Church house by remodelling access points	Ongoing	<p>Prior to 2014, the PCC had obtained a quotation to have a hydraulic lift fitted close to where the chairs are stacked in the Wolstenholme Hall in Church House. The quote obtained at the time was £45,000. Modifications to the steps at the front door (without obstructing the pavement) and toilets would also be required. If such a lift were to be fitted in the future, a new storage place for 120 chairs would need to be found.</p>
1.4	Plans to make the journey from the Church to Church House (across Old Church Lane) safer	Ongoing	<p>The St John's Rector explored with the London Borough of Harrow the possibility of fitting a zebra crossing or pedestrian lights across Old Church Lane to facilitate safer crossing. This was following a death in 2015 of an elderly resident of Tudor Well Close on the pavement near Church House by a car whose driver was blinded by the sun and mounted the pavement https://www.harrowtimes.co.uk/news/11768076.elderly-man-age-87-dies-in-hospital-after-crash-in-stanmore/. The local councillor (Cllr. Marilyn Ashton) stated that there needed to many more 'incidents' occurring before a crossing could be installed in Old Church Lane close to the Church, mainly because there is a two-stage crossing near the top of the road that folk are supposed to use. Most do not. The contact with Harrow Council was initiated primarily for the safety of the Junior Church children brought to Church after their Junior Church sessions on Sunday mornings.</p>
1.5	Enquire about St John's Church actions and plans to improve disability access quickly	Ongoing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Large print hymn books and service books are provided for individuals unable to read the projector screen. 2. Loop system is provided in for those with hearing aids. The loop amplifier was replaced in 2025. 3. Handrail in toilet to assist those who have mobility challenge. 4. A red toilet seat so individuals with dementia are not confused by the lack of contrast between white porcelain and seat. 5. The toilet mirror is not immediately visible when entering the cubicle so individuals with advanced dementia do not believe the toilet is occupied when they see their reflection.

Ref	EDI Action	Status	Commentary
			6. Toilet flooring that is not blue, because blue looks like water and might confuse some disabled individuals.
1.6	Enquire about Church plans to improve mobility access by remodelling access points	Ongoing	<p>At time of release of this report there are ongoing Church fabric maintenance projects which reduce funds available for physical improvements to access points. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairs to the church stonework with costs of c£300k which only covers the most urgent works. • Replacement of the environmentally unfriendly oil heating system. • Ongoing works to the Church organ. <p>Notwithstanding, the Church, which is a listed building, has an appointed Architect who could be commissioned to provide costed advice on practical remodelling works.</p>
1.7	Explore available grants that could be accessed to fund remodelling works	Ongoing	List of grants available for Grade 2 listed building works such as St John's Church and Church House, have been collated and will be analysed for suitability.
1.8	Explore the makeup and strength of a Disability Access Team (including a disabled member)	Ongoing	<p>Ongoing discussion to establish a disability access team with proposed remit to facilitate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress the initiatives described above in this report. • Demonstrate Church conformance with the DoL aspirations and directives on Disability Access. • Demonstrate Church diligence to understand duties under the Equality Act and compliance with relevant requirements therein. • Formulate the St John's Disability Access Strategy and produce Practical Plans. • Explore and devise a strategy for accessing Grants that may be available to St John's. • Seek subject matter expert advice on practical measures that could be implemented for disability access. • Be the focal point of all matters concerning disability access for the Church.

Frederick Oshunniyi
EDI Officer

7.6 Flowers

The faithful flower team continued to provide the floral arrangements in church throughout 2025. As the team is small, this was only possible at times due to the willing co-operation and flexibility of those involved, when rota changes had to be made due to unforeseen circumstances.

There was much support throughout the year from people in the congregation wishing to sponsor the altar flower arrangements on chosen weeks, with generous donations made to the flower fund. This helped too, towards funding the special decorations at the festivals. James Funeral Service kindly donated the cost of the two Christmas trees. We were very grateful for all the donations we received.

The festivals are always joyful occasions, with different members of the team taking the lead at Easter, Pentecost, Harvest and Christmas. We encouraged anyone interested in flower arranging to come along on these occasions to help.

We were pleased to welcome Leonie who enjoyed practising her skills at the festivals during the year and came to our annual meeting in November learning more about how the group is run.

We very much need others to come forward to join the group and will warmly welcome and help anyone interested.

Sheila Oliver

7.7 Great Stanmore Bell Ringers

We continue to practice on a Thursday evening 8-9.30pm and have a few new ringers who attend practice and are doing well with Shaun & David's tuition. We have Ronda & Simon, Sitel, Robert and Jo, who are all doing well and about to graduate.

We ring for Sunday services when we have enough ringers available, we ring Rounds, Call Changes and Kings and Queens.

We plan to visit other towers in the summer for practice to gain experience when possible. Sue and Shaun rang for Sunday Service on a visit to her home church in Buxton in August which was really beneficial.

We went to the Pantomime at the Radlett Theatre to see 'Cinderella' in December 2025 to support Victoria's production.

We rang on Mothering Sunday, Easter Sunday, a wedding in May, Battle of Britain Sunday, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas Day. We have had visiting Bands throughout the year ringing on all eight bells which sounds wonderful.

The Bell Ringers restricted fund had a balance of £7,665 as at 31st December 2025.

Anyone is welcome to come and join, or just have a go on a Thursday Evening 8pm-9.30pm.

**Shaun Knevett
Tower Master and Steeple Keeper**

7.8 Home Groups

Bushey Home Group

The Bushey Home Group meets on alternate Tuesday afternoons at 2.30pm at Maureen's house in Bushey (weekly in Lent) and our thanks go to her for her hospitality and wonderful cakes/cookies.

Sadly, this year we lost two members of the group, Diana and also Pat who moved away to be nearer her daughters. They are both greatly missed but we were very pleased to welcome Marj into the group.

In 2025, we finished our in-depth study of St Matthew's Gospel and looked in some detail at the events of Holy Week as our Lent study. We then began some sessions of stand-alone discussion topics, of which the first two were 'forgiveness' and 'humility'. Future topics will include 'healing', 'miracles' and 'prayer'.

As always, we ended the year with a short Advent service and a bring-and-share high tea. We are a small and friendly group and would love to welcome new members.

Frances Westcott

Hatch End Home Group

Hatch End Home Group meets on the last Thursday of each month from 10.30am except for December's social event that is organised before Christmas. Although several group members have been meeting together in fellowship over many years, meetings in Hatch End began on the 27th of July 2023. We are able to relax, share refreshments, have a laugh, and support each other. We were delighted with the news that one of our members had become a grandmother. Our Home Group fellowship helps us to continue learning what it means to anchor our lives in faith.

During Lent, we explored examples of Hope in the Bible that relates to us having Hope in God's Promises, Hope in Salvation and Hope Through Resurrection.

We read from the Book of Acts on healing in conjunction with the sermon given by Becky Stone last May that included the story of Peter and John healing the lame beggar. The sermon provided key messages on the importance of Prayer and was helpful for us as Christians to contemplate on the power of Prayer even during challenging times.

We had a discussion on Frances Westcott's sermon of last July, on Marta and Mary (Luke's gospel), that described the different ways Marta and Mary attended to Jesus. This provoked a lively debate as to whom among us was a Marta or a Mary. It was helpful for us to reflect together on what is the right mindset to have in our service as Christians.

We are grateful to Becky and to Frances for sharing their well-constructed sermons with our group, helping our reflections as Christians.

For September's meeting we started a study of the Book of Ecclesiastes and spent five meetings looking at the lessons we can learn from the wisdom of King Solomon. Many thanks to Bill for leading our reading of this book and making it so interesting. We were amazed that after 3,000 years much of it still seems relevant today.

The Home Group participated in a feedback exercise on Discipleship to support the church's proactive mission activity on discipleship. Thoughts on discipleships from the group include: 'To me, being a real disciple of Jesus means that you should always try to put others before yourself; live by Jesus' example; share your thoughts on his teachings when you can; be tolerant of non-believers and read the Bible regularly.' We will continue with discussing discipleship during Lent.

Dr Lorna Wyon MBE

The Stanmore Home Group

We began this year by completing our journey through C.S.Lewis' *The Screwtape Letters*, considering the tricks and challenges of the Christian life as imagined through the eyes of a senior demon.

For Lent, we followed Rachel Mann's *Still Standing*, a Lent Course based on the biopic film *Rocketman* about the early life and career of Elton John, exploring themes of friendship, betrayal, trust and hope. Although the course is designed to last 5 weeks, we found each session had lots of material and rather than rush it or have long meetings we allowed each session to flow into the next as it needed to, so we didn't finish this course until the end of June!

In September we decided to share the cost of joining New Wine Online in order to use some of their talks as inspiration for our sessions and enjoyed a wonderful series by Bishop Ruth Bushyager on '*Come Away with Me*', followed by a selection of one-off talks by a variety of speakers.

We will continue with this in 2026, including choosing another series for our Lent Course. If you would be interested in joining us, please speak to Jane Prentice or Becky Stone – newcomers always welcome!

Becky Stone

7.9 Junior Church

It is a tremendous joy to report that Junior Church has continued to grow in 2025 to such an extent that we have had to introduce another group. We are now able to offer three groups which meet on the second and fourth Sunday throughout the year to cater for the following ages:

- Reception - Year 3
- Year 4 - Year 7
- Year 8 - Year 13 (new)

Our popular all-age services take place usually on the first Sunday in the month. The services are a little more informal and give the children the opportunity of being involved by leading different parts of the service. It is not uncommon to have up to 16 children having a role in the service.

On the ths

ird Sunday of the month Junior Church games still provides an energetic hour of fun and activities while parents enjoy an hour off.

In September, the PCC kindly paid for Junior Church to go to the Lost Jungle in Edgware for a round of crazy golf, followed by a drink or ice cream at McDonald's. In December, Junior Church returned to Radlett to see 'Cinderella'. Victoria Ward, a member of our church family, produced and directed the pantomime and was able to offer a discounted price for the tickets. Many thanks to her.

Members of Junior Church performed a wonderful Nativity called 'Away in a Suitcase' on Christmas Day to a packed church. Part two followed in January at the all-age service to celebrate the visit of the wise men.

Enormous thanks to the leaders who generously give their time to provide activities and teaching to help the children grow in faith.

In closing, it must be acknowledged that many churches no longer have any children attending. The average number of children attending St John's Church each week is over 30. This is unusual and must not be taken for granted.

It is essential we all continue to see the children at the centre of our shared life together. They need to be safe and know that they are loved by us as God's children. Please pray for them.

Beverley McKeon
Commissioned Children's Minister

7.10 Little Fishers

Little Fishers, our parent/grandparent/carer and toddler group, has had another busy year.

Apart from our usual Christmas party (a special thank you to Father Christmas for your help) and Easter egg hunt, we also introduced an extra art and craft session on Christmas Eve, then some of the children stayed for the crib service in church.

During the year we invested in some new toys, including a larger bouncy castle and an ice cream truck. We also have got a toy kitchen, new small tables and chairs for the children and good quality colouring pens and pencils from kind donations. I would like to say thank you again to those who made monetary donations or donated good quality toys/equipment.

However, two main problems we have are:

1) Lack of storage space for our equipment. Currently, we have items taking up a large amount of the Deaconess Mabel room, items in the shed and items left outside (which sometimes get used and abused by hirers of the hall). We really need a shed that is at least half the size of the current shared shed, or maybe bigger.

2) We need more volunteers to help. I understand that a lot of people are working during the day, but where I most need help is between 12-12:30pm to help set up the activities before the parents and children arrive, and between 1:45-2:15pm to help tidy things away. I would really appreciate any offers of help, you do not have to commit to coming every

week, just as and when you can. Could you help for half an hour once a month? You don't have to be "good with children", or be responsible for looking after any children, just be an extra pair of hands to help. Please think about it.

I would like to finish by saying a big thank you to our wonderful team: Belinda, Jane, Karen, Matthew, Randa, Patricia, Marcella, Nick and everyone else who has helped at different times throughout the year.

Edit Rees

7.11 Music

We continue to have a sung service every Sunday, with music accompanied mainly on the organ and sometimes with pre-recorded music on the PA system. The choir lead the singing for most of these services, and once a month we have our 'all-age' service.

If you can sing soprano, alto, tenor or bass and would like to consider joining us, even on an ad hoc basis without regular commitment, please speak to either myself or Pam after the service sometime. I promise an informal chat will not mean any commitment!

We had a very successful Christmas carol service, with the help of some extra singers from our congregation and beyond, and thanks to Revd Rachel Phillips for her marvellous organ playing. Again, if you can sing soprano, alto, tenor or bass and would like to join us just for Christmas, you would be very welcome. Rehearsals normally take place on Sundays after church from the end of October.

This year we hosted the annual Harrow Deanery Choirs' Festival in October. There were approximately 80 singers from various churches in the area who sang in the choir, Matthew preached a very good sermon, and Shaun and his team produced an outstandingly good tea. I received many compliments after the service.

The bulk of the work on the organ has finally been completed, although there are a few bits that don't work, but this will need much more work, which we have no current plans to carry out owing to cost.

I must record my thanks to Rachel, who plays the organ from time to time, and to Pam, who chooses most of the hymns, along with Matthew and Rachel. Thank you to all the choir, to those who come nearly every week and to those who come as and when they can, also to Becky, who provides the words for the projector and the music for the PA system.

Philip Rees
Organist and Director of Music

7.12 New Wine

New Wine Festival 2025 at The Royal Bath and West Showground was again a wonderful experience. Gathering with over 10,000 other Christians including 1900 children and 1700 teenagers to worship, pray and learn is always an uplifting time and this year was no exception.

As well as some incredible music, fantastic Bible teaching, and fascinating seminars such as Responding to the Quiet Revival, there is also always lots of fun including a big wheel and crazy golf, evening entertainment from Bill Ding and the Skyscrapers, and lots of time to relax over a drink with friends.

If you've never tried a summer Christian festival, consider giving it a go – though be prepared: it is camping and we can't promise you the sunshine will last the week...

Becky Stone

7.13 Old Church

The Old Church has been in a ruinous state for over 175 years. It was in use from 1632-1850 until the current church was opened. The Old Church had fallen into a state of disrepair and was not big enough, so rather than repair and extend, a decision was made to build a new church. This is what we use today. As the Old Church was being taken down, local people protested saying the church should be left as piece of history. Whilst this was a noble idea, in reality, successive generations of PCCs have been faced with the unenviable challenge of trying to preserve the decaying fabric.

Over the years various working groups have been formed to preserve the fabric, but with exposed walls and no roof, the rain and cold continue the decline. Some church members will remember the most notable works took place in 1991-1992 and stabilised the ruin and removed the ivy. Much of the funding for this project came from Section 106 money paid by the developer who built the housing on what was RAF Stanmore Park. S106 agreements are paid by developers (to local authorities) to mitigate the impact their development will have on local infrastructure and heritage.

Across 2015-2017 a Working Group explored possible reinstatement of the Old Church into a community facility. Various meetings were held which included some attended by representatives from English Heritage, the London Borough of Harrow, the Diocese of London and the appointed Quinquennial Inspector of the Old Church who is an architect.

In spite of a significant amount of work and time invested, the London Borough of Harrow advised that an Options Appraisal was required in order for them to formally consider any proposal to reinstate the Old Church as a usable building. The Options Appraisal would need to be prepared by an architect at a cost of £20k-£25k. Regrettably, this sum was out of reach of the PCC not least because there was no guarantee that planning permission would have been granted.

In subsequent years, meetings have taken place with English Heritage (2022 and 2024) and Historic England (2025). In spite of the Old Church having merit on both historical and architectural grounds, neither organisation was able to assume any responsibility to help preserve the Old Church, mainly because of a lack of funds.

The Rector contacted the Diocese of London's Director of Parish Property & Fundraising, and a meeting took place (2025) during which it was agreed that the Quinquennial Inspector should be commissioned to produce a report to consider what minimum investment is required to stabilise (not improve) the ruin – e.g. capping the walls and re-pointing at high

level. The report was duly received and confirmed estimated costings for the most urgent repairs would total £128,522 incl. VAT (excluding fees). The Diocese of London covered the £2,400 incl. VAT cost of producing the report. A meeting is booked in the Spring of 2026 with the Head of Development and Church Buildings Adviser from the Diocese of London to discuss possible next steps.

During the year, the fixed vertical ladder, safety wire system (with traveller) and harness were tested and re-certified on 6th May 2025 at a cost of the £612 incl. VAT. The wire system needed to be replaced at a cost of £4,703.30 incl. VAT. The weeds were last removed in the Autumn Term 2025 at a cost of £490. The Diocese of London covered all these costs.

The PCC decided some years ago to keep the Old Church closed to visitors. The risk assessment is reviewed annually.

The Old Church restricted fund had a balance of £5,107 as at 31st December 2025.

Matthew Stone

7.14 St John's Church of England School, Stanmore

St John's Church of England School, Stanmore

St John's School has an ethos deeply rooted in the Bible, with Christian values that underpin all that it seeks to be and do. These values are evident not only in the way staff teach and support the children, but also in the genuine care shown within the whole school community. Each child's uniqueness is recognised as a reflection of God's image, and they are nurtured through an inclusive approach that supports their intellectual, emotional, spiritual and social development.

Excellence begins in the Early Years, where the new thriving Nursery (opened in September 2025) and Reception classes provide an exceptional start to each child's educational journey. Each year group benefits from a rich and varied bespoke curriculum, with educational trips and a rich plethora of sporting competitions to take part in.

A defining feature of St John's School is its vibrant music provision, which brings joy and creativity to school life. The ever-growing school orchestra offers children opportunities to learn, perform and excel. The two school choirs - Sing Up Club (juniors) and Singing Stars (infants) - are extremely popular, with pupils performing in a variety of settings throughout the year. St John's is a place where children are inspired to dream, believe and achieve.

One of the most significant changes during the 2024/2025 school year was the retirement of the Headteacher, Mrs Jo Hester, at the end of the Summer Term, after 13 years in post and a total of 36 years in the teaching profession. Amongst the various celebrations to mark this occasion, a surprise service was held in St John's Church on 21st July to recognise Mrs Hester's enormous contribution to the lives of so many over the years. Attended by almost 400 people - including former staff, pupils and parents - the service was a joyful occasion and a meaningful opportunity for the wider school community to express their gratitude.

Following the announcement of Mrs Hester's retirement, the Governors established a new committee to oversee the appointment of a new senior leader. This work also involved

exploring alternative strategic options for St John's School, taking into account the current educational landscape, including falling pupil numbers and increasing financial pressures.

From 1st September 2025, St John's School entered into a two-year partnership with three other Church of England primary schools: Bishop Winnington Ingram (Ruislip), Holy Trinity (Northwood) and St Mary's (Norwood Green). These schools have already been working in partnership for two years under the leadership of an experienced Executive Headteacher, Mrs Rachel Blake. The Assistant Headteacher of St John's School, Miss Anita Donnelly, successfully applied for the newly created role of Head of School and now leads St John's School on a day-to-day basis, with Mrs Blake providing strategic oversight. This partnership has made a very positive start and is working well.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is responsible for appointing two governors. Jon Stephen's four-year term of office ended on 31st August 2025. Having moved to Ruislip and with two young children, he chose not to seek re-election. Following several weeks of advertising the vacancy in the pew sheet, Charles Sheppard, an architect, was successfully appointed to the Governing Board for a four-year term, beginning on 1 September 2025. Mr Sheppard has had a long association with St John's Church through his work as the Quinquennial Inspector for 20 years, retiring from this role in 2024. The other PCC-appointed governor is Tracey James, a business consultant, whose current term of office runs until 4th October 2028.

Four church members serve as governors:

Kelly Kehn (Parent Governor) – Chair of Governors
Graham Nicholson (Harrow Deanery Synod)
Clemey Pagano (Harrow Deanery Synod)
The Rector (Ex-Officio) – Vice Chair of Governors

Two church members volunteer their time as readers:

Ian Mackie MBE
Andrea Nicholson

Becky Stone leads the Parents' Prayer Group.

Kelly Kehn
Chair of Governors

7.15 Safeguarding

The PCC continues to place the highest priority on matters of safeguarding to ensure the children, young people and any vulnerable adults who attend our services, participate in our activities, attend our groups or use church premises are kept safe. We take these responsibilities seriously.

'Safeguarding' continues to be a substantive item on every PCC meeting agenda. This enables the PCC to oversee and monitor the implementation of the various policies and procedures.

During the course of 2025, the PCC noted/monitored/approved/undertook the following:

1. 10 DBS checks to the enhanced level were obtained. DBS checks are renewed every three years in line with the Diocese of London's policy. DBS are in place for the Clergy, Director of Music, Licensed Lay Ministers (LLMs), Parish Administrator, PCC Members and the Safeguarding Team, together with the leaders of the Junior Choir, Junior Church, Little Fishers and Youth Group.
2. PCC Members, and all those who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults, are asked to undertake the Church of England's Safeguarding Training Courses at the appropriate level for their role (Foundations or Leadership) usually when they receive their new DBS check. In addition, the Diocese of London requires all Clergy, LLMs, PCC Members and the Safeguarding Team to complete the 'Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse' course (as well as the Foundations course). The safeguarding training is renewed every three years.
3. Regularly updated the Church of England's Parish Safeguarding Dashboard for St John's Church which reviews the policies and procedures that are in place using a helpful traffic light system. The Dashboard makes safeguarding simpler for parishes and measures and reports on parish compliance. The current level of compliance at the time this report is being written is 98%.
4. The Rector and Mark Lynch, one of our two Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs), attended an event on 26th February 2025, which recognised and thanked PSOs for their work.
5. Reviewed and re-adopted the Church of England's 'Promoting a Safer Church' publication (and completed the accompanying statement).
6. Reviewed and re-adopted the Church of England's 'Parish Safeguarding Handbook'.
7. Reviewed and re-adopted the Diocese of London's 'Safeguarding Policy'.
8. Reviewed and re-adopted the 'Safeguarding Policy Statement' (copies were displayed in the Church, Church House, uploaded onto our website and sent to the Diocese of London).
9. Reviewed and re-adopted the Diocese of London's 'Model Parish Safeguarding Checklist'.
10. Reviewed and re-adopted the Church of England's 'Code of Safer Working Practice'.
11. Reviewed and noted the Church of England's 'Practical Guidance: Safer Recruitment'.
12. Reviewed and adopted the Church of England's new policy statement on 'The Recruitment of Ex-Offenders' (copies were uploaded onto our website and sent to the Diocese of London).
13. Reviewed and noted the Church of England's online guidance 'Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse'.
14. Re-appointed Mark Lynch and appointed Nancy Newton as Parish Safeguarding Officers.
15. Re-appointed Sue Wright as Children's Champion.
16. Re-appointed Sheila Oliver as Adults at Risk Champion.
17. Re-appointed Karen Stirrup as a DBS Evidence Checker.
18. Re-appointed Matthew Stone as Lead Recruiter.
19. Made sure all safeguarding posters and contact information were up-to-date and displayed across the Church and Church House (incl. in the toilets). Leaflets on Domestic Abuse are also available.
20. Reviewed and re-adopted the Church of England 'National Safeguarding Standards' which are essential for churches to understand the quality and, most importantly, the impact of its safeguarding activities. The details are on display across the Church and Church House and have been sent by email to church members.
21. Reviewed and re-adopted the Role Descriptions for our Bereavement Visiting Team, Commissioned Children's Minister, Director of Music, Junior Choir, Junior Church,

- Little Fishers Parent & Toddler Group and Youth Group. Many of the Role Descriptions now include safeguarding prompts (in the form of dos and don'ts). Each person undertaking one of these roles is asked to review the Role Description every year and to sign a copy in confirmation that they understand the requirements of the role.
22. Obtained a new signed 'Declaration on Safeguarding' (= Code of Conduct) from all those who work with children and young people.
 23. Reviewed the Group Risk Assessments for Junior Church (incl. crossing Old Church Lane) and Little Fishers Parent & Toddler Group.
 24. Reviewed the GDPR Privacy Notices which are available on the church website and on display in the porch.
 25. Updated the General and Fire Risk Assessments for the Church and Church House.
 26. Reviewed the Risk Assessments which are completed when church services, school services/visits have more than 150 people in the church at any one time.
 27. Updated the Health & Safety Policy.
 28. Reviewed the hiring agreements for Church House to ensure that the groups that work with children who hire the premises on a regular basis have their own safeguarding policies in place. Copies of these policies, together with their insurance, are obtained from each group annually and filed in the Parish Office. These groups are also sent a copy of our Safeguarding Policy.

When people hire the premises on a one-off basis, such as a child's birthday party, they are also sent a copy of our Safeguarding Policy and sign a clause on the Booking Form to say they have received a copy and undertake to follow the guidelines within it. The Terms and Conditions of Hire reflect the importance of our safeguarding procedures being followed and key messages are given to the hirer when Church House is handed over to them. Food allergies, risk assessments, insurance, and security are also covered in the Terms & Conditions.

29. The safeguarding section on the church website was reviewed and updated.
30. Nancy Newton and Sue Wright visited Junior Church to explain their roles. This will be repeated on a semi-regular basis.

Safer Recruitment

We do not permit anyone to work with our children and young people unless they have been safely recruited. This involves the applicant reviewing the relevant Role Description to make sure they fully understand the requirements of the role (incl. safeguarding expectations). A new DBS check to enhanced level is obtained as well as two written references

Once a DBS check has been issued, applicants undertake the Diocese of London's online safeguarding training, and the pass certificate is handed to the Rector. New applicants are then asked to sign a Declaration on Safeguarding.

Safeguarding Sunday

The Church of England designated the third Sunday in November as 'Safeguarding Sunday'. This important initiative is a chance for congregations to use a regular Sunday service to listen and talk together about how spaces can be created that are safer for everyone. The theme and focus in 2025 was Actions Speak Louder and churches were encouraged to move beyond conversation to concrete steps in creating safer environments for vulnerable people, focusing on practical improvements and support for survivors.

Our 9.30am Parish Communion on 16th November 2025 was dedicated to 'Safeguarding Sunday' with the liturgy, hymns, prayers and sermon all focussed on safeguarding. As part

of the sermon, the Parish Safeguarding Officers, Children's Champion and our Adults at Risk Champion were re-introduced and their roles were explained again.

The contact details of the Safeguarding Team are published in the pew sheet each week. Church members were reminded that safeguarding is a whole church commitment with each member having a part to play. Many have voluntarily undertaken the 'Basic Awareness' online course.

The Diocese of London has undergone an external safeguarding audit conducted by INEQE. Individuals from Cathedrals, Diocesan Staff, Diocesan Synod, London Diocesan Board for School and Parishes (including children) were encouraged to complete an online survey about their own experiences. A number of church members have done this. The result of the audit will be published in 2026.

Finally

The PCC continues to demonstrate due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children (as is our duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016).

Indeed, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and we must all play our part to ensure that St John's Church remains a safe place where everyone can flourish.

If you have any questions about our safeguarding procedures or a concern, please contact our Parish Safeguarding Officers or the Diocese of London's Duty Safeguarding Adviser.

Mark – 07982 906833

Nancy – 07443 487126

Duty Safeguarding Adviser - 020 7932 1224

Matthew Stone

7.16 Tea & Chat

We met weekly on Tuesday afternoons between 2-4pm throughout 2025. People arrived at various times, usually making sure they were present for tea & cake time, served by our team of helpers.

During the year we were pleased to welcome two newcomers from the local community to Tea & Chat. However, the regular group became smaller. This was due to frailty, moving away, weather and transport problems.

Mabel, a staunch supporter of the group for many years, died peacefully during the year. May, aged 100 years in November, moved away from Stanmore, to be nearer her relatives.

Heidi moved away in July, but before she left, she provided with her helpers, another delicious Turkish Tea which was much enjoyed by us and some visitors.

In February the choir from Aylward Primary School children came on their annual visit to sing and talk about and show their work.

Christmas began for us when St John's School Sing Up Club visited one afternoon to sing a selection of Christmas music which is always a delightful occasion. It was also lovely to welcome again the tiny children from Stanmore Montessori to watch the proceedings.

Each week there was plenty of conversation and companionship. We were always ready to offer a friendly welcome to anyone who came.

Sylvia Daniels & Sheila Oliver

7.17 Welcome Team

Welcome is a very important part of our ministry and something St John's is excellent at! Thank you to our wonderful welcome team for all that they do.

Jane Prentice

7.18 Youth Group

The Youth Group continues to meet twice each term with the aim of providing a safe space where the young people (aged 11-18) can meet and have fun. Our events have included Laser Tag, ten pin bowling, games and a BBQ on Church Field. We now share our youth work with Stanmore Baptist Church.

In September it was pleasing to welcome the new Year 7s and most sessions we have a total of 15-20 young people attending.

Thanks to those who support this important work.

Matthew Stone

8. Rector's Review

As we reflect on 2025, I do so with deep gratitude to God for the life, faith and witness of St John's Church, Stanmore. The year has been one of steady growth — with average Sunday attendance now at 153 adults and children — renewed confidence, and faithful service, as we have continued to meet with God in our worship, our community life and our care for one another.

Worship has remained the heartbeat of parish life. Across all our services we have seen encouraging signs of deeper engagement, with particularly strong attendance at Easter and Christmas. The dedication and creativity of our clergy, lay ministers, Director of Music, choir, readers and welcome team contribute enormously to services that are both welcoming and Spirit-filled, as together we seek to encounter God in Word and Sacrament.

Beyond Sundays, our three Home Groups provide valuable opportunities for discipleship and spiritual growth. Alongside the monthly prayer group, they offer safe and supportive spaces

for learning, reflection, honest conversation and prayer. It was especially pleasing to see the return of the prayer ministry team, offering prayerful support each Sunday during the 9.30am service. Prayer is fundamental to the Christian life.

It has been a joy to witness people of all ages growing in confidence in their faith, most notably through admission to communion and confirmation in December. During 2025 I marked the twentieth anniversary of my ordination, and the privilege of conducting services, baptisms, weddings, and funerals never diminish. Inevitably, there are moments of sadness, particularly when we commend members of our own church family to God's eternal keeping. This year funerals were held for Rose Akbar, Mike Evens, George Fitzpatrick, Andrew Newton and Peggy Waters. We miss them. We also said a fond farewell to Pat Hodgson who moved to Oxfordshire to be nearer to family after many decades in Stanmore.

Pastoral care remains central to our mission. Communion is regularly taken to two church members who are no longer able to attend services; hospital and home visits take place when required. Our Bereavement Visiting Team provides dedicated and compassionate support, often accompanying people who are not members of St John's Church but are referred to us through Bereavement Care.

The Café St Jean Team, together with the Social Events Team who provide the lunches, make another important contribution to our church life. To share fellowship regularly in this way is a New Testament principle (Hebrews 10:25) and we are encouraged to meet together. Please look out for those who are new and help them to feel welcome and that they also belong.

Weekly outreach through Tea & Chat and Little Fishers Parent & Toddler Group continues to be a significant expression of our hospitality. Many who attend these groups are not churchgoers, yet they value the welcome, community and care they receive. With encouragement from leaders, some join us for special services which strengthens their connection with the church.

Our outreach to local schools remains strong. During the year I welcomed pupils from seven schools into church: Avanti Secondary School, Aylward Primary School, Bentley Wood High School, North London Collegiate School, Stanburn Primary School, Whitchurch Primary School and St John's School, with whom our links remain particularly close. Primary school visits tend to focus on the life and work of the church, while secondary school visits support the teaching of GCSE RE. I have also enjoyed visiting Stanmore Montessori.

The PCC continues to respond to the Diocese of London's missional priorities, guided by the 2030 Vision "...for every Londoner to encounter the love of God in Christ". Through our Mission Action Groups — children and families, discipleship, and environment — we explore new initiatives, nurture confident disciples, build compassionate community and seek creative growth. Our thriving Junior Church (now offering a third group to cater for the older children) and Youth Group, alongside our strong commitment to safeguarding, equality, diversity and inclusion, reflect this shared vision.

I am kept additionally busy with the following responsibilities:

- Vice-Chair of Governors to St John's School
- Delivering collective worship at St John's School and school services in church

- Deliver regular assemblies at Aylward Primary School
- Chair of Trustees to the Bernays Memorial Institute
- Member of the Metropolitan Police Safer Neighbourhood Team Ward Panel
- Member of the Bishop of Willesden's Creative Growth Group
- Ministerial Development Review Consultant
- Padre to Stanmore Air Cadets
- Area Dean of Harrow

During the year we said farewell to the Revd Wendy Wall, our Assistant Curate, and her husband Shane, both of whom contributed greatly to church life. Wendy is now Vicar of St John's Greenhill, Harrow. It was a joy to welcome back the Revd Rachel Phillips, who in retirement has chosen to make St John's her church home, having worshipped here for many years prior to ordination, even serving as Director of Music for 15 years.

Our work as a church would not be possible without the dedication of our clergy, Churchwardens, Deputy Wardens, Treasurer, PCC members, Parish Administrator and many volunteers. I am profoundly thankful for their prayerful support, collaboration and work. It is true to say that we need more help to share the load - as we continue to grow the work increases, but the stepping up of new volunteers is slower than it should be. Can you offer some of your time to help us?

As we look ahead, we do so with confidence in God's faithfulness. May St John's continue to be a church rooted in prayer, open to the Spirit, and committed to sharing the good news of Jesus Christ in Stanmore and beyond.

With my thanks and prayers

Matthew Stone

Our Family

ST JOHN'S CHURCH STANMORE



Worship



Children & Youth



Prayer & Support



Community Outreach



St John's School



Groups and Fellowship