

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
BISHOPSTONE AND STRATFORD TONY, SALISBURY**

Registered Charity Number 1213127

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

Trustees and PCC Members

Chairman:	The Revd Canon Jenny Taylor, Team Vicar (until 11 May 2025) The Revd Dr Ruth Howlett-Shipley, Team Rector (from 12 May 2025)
Churchwarden:	Mrs Sarah Seal (also Deanery Synod & Team Council member)
Secretary:	Mr Geoffrey Taylor (also Deanery Synod & Team Council member)
Treasurer:	Mr George Brutton
Elected:	Mrs Margaret Barter Mrs Jill Ford (until December 2025) Mrs Sally Leaver Mrs Alix Ricketts Major James Thompson Mrs Louise Vincent

Electoral Roll Officer: Mrs Anne Stutchbury

Administrative Information

The Parish of Bishopstone and Stratford Tony is part of the Chalke Valley Team Ministry in the Chalke Deanery, Diocese of Salisbury. The Team address is: Church Office, Byworth, Meadow Close, Dinton, Salisbury SP3 5HY.

Structure and Governance

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England and operates under the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956. The PCC registered with the Charity Commission on 30 April 2025, Registration Number 1213127. The appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. PCC Members are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). The 2024 APCM, resolved that, 'in accordance with CCR 2020, M15(9), the total number of elected lay representatives on the PCC may be 9 irrespective of the total determined by the number of names on the Electoral Roll, effective from the 2025 APCM'.

The PCC met formally on 4 occasions in 2025. The APCM was held on 23 March 2025.

Electoral Roll 39 members.

Objectives and Activities

The general functions of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) are set out in the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 and include the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has responsibilities for the maintenance of the Bishopstone church building and churchyard and the Stratford Tony churchyard.

Achievements and Performance

On 11 May 2025, a full church gathered at a Benefice Communion to mark the retirement of the Revd Canon Jenny Taylor after 16 year's ministry in the Chalke Valley Team, initially in 2009 as an Associate Priest responsible for Bishopstone and Stratford Tony and from 2013 as Non-Stipendiary Team Vicar. The Incumbent of the Parish then became the Team Rector, The Revd Dr Ruth Howlett-Shipley. Apart from the ministry of our two stipendiary clergy, all the activities in this report rely upon the support of volunteers: two Associate Priests, retired Clergy, Churchwarden, Lay Worship Leader, PCC members and all who give of their time, energy and financial support to ensure that services take place in a well preserved building, the Churchyard is maintained and the Church is able to serve the wider community.

Policies and Safeguarding All policies on Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Financial Management issues are reviewed annually, in line with Church of England policy. In particular, Safeguarding Policies are reviewed by the Benefice Team Council, then adopted by individual PCCs. Training, based on these policies is provided for individuals either on-line or face to face within the Benefice and a record of such is maintained centrally.

Worship The pattern of two Parish Communion services a month has continued. In addition, five 1st Sunday Morning Services were led by our Lay Worship Leader, Mrs Sally Leaver. The Carol Service was held in the Village Hall again with increased numbers and the "Carols round the Crib" on Christmas Eve proved as popular as ever. A Carol Service and an Evensong were held in Stratford Tony.

Organists We continue to thank Mrs Shelagh Lamb for her support for our regular Communion services and other 'special' occasions and Mrs Margaret Barter, then Mrs Heather Hooper for supporting our Morning Services. The church organ restoration which began in 2024 was completed by April 2025. This was marked by a well-received celebratory recital by David Halls, Director of Music at Salisbury Cathedral.

From the Registers 4 Funerals, 2 Weddings and 1 Baptism were conducted in Bishopstone in 2025.

Mission and Outreach

Pastoral support to individuals in our community continued to be provided by our Clergy and Lay Pastoral Assistant (LPA), Mrs Sally Leaver who stood down in April after 15 years of dedicated service as an LPA. 2025 Mission Giving was: £600 to our Deanery Chalke-Cueibet Link, £200 to Salisbury Foodbank, £150 to Morning Star, £200 to The Bridge 2026 Lent Project, £50 to Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust. Separately, participation by volunteers in the annual Ride & Stride raised £845 for the Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust, of which £422 was returned to the PCC for the North Transept Roof Appeal. The Augustus Montgomery Coal Trust funds administered by the PCC have provided financial assistance to individuals in need in the Parish. A Coffee Morning was hosted in support of the Lent Appeal for 'Save Our School', a project to build a new church primary school in our linked Diocese of Cueibet.

Our magazine, STaB, continues to play an essential role in the life of our community. The PCC is most grateful for the work of the Editorial Team in maintaining such a high quality magazine, for the contributors and for the team of volunteers who deliver it to every house in the Parish.

Fabric

The North Transept Roof Project understandably consumed much time and energy both in fundraising and preparation for the building work to begin in 2026. The PCC is very grateful to Toby Mills and Roger Stockton for volunteering to undertake the considerable work in preparing an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund which was to be successful against strong competition in obtaining a grant of £248,000 in January 2026. Alongside the main fundraising activity, Mrs Anne Stutchbury, Chairman and the Friends of Bishopstone Church Committee have been tireless in organising fundraising events involving local speakers. The events and the funds raised have been well publicised throughout the community. The response has demonstrated a clear desire for such activities which point towards exploring a wider community role for the church in addition to ensuring that the building is well maintained and secure. Our Churchwarden, Mrs Sarah Seal has played a leading role as our trustee in her involvement in all aspects of this project. This work will continue for all involved into 2027.

A regular team of volunteers has continued to maintain the churchyards in both Bishopstone and Stratford Tony. The day to day care and welcoming appearance of the building and churchyard, cleaning, flower arranging and refreshments after services are undertaken at no cost to the PCC. These and other items of maintenance could not happen without the generosity of finance and time of a small number of volunteers.

This year, in particular, has demonstrated the importance which the whole community places upon its local church. It is the aim of the PCC to develop this engagement after the North Transept Roof Project has been completed.

Financial Review

In 2025, activities in the PCC's General (undesignated/unrestricted) Fund were: Total Receipts: £31,481 (2024 £42,407) against Expenditure of £30,690 (2024 £38,680). a surplus of £791 (2024 surplus of £3,727). The Share, the PCC's contribution towards the cost of Clergy and administration was £16,207. The PCC is grateful to the Parish Council for its ongoing financial contribution to the maintenance of the Bishopstone churchyard.

It is the policy of the PCC to maintain, where possible, a balance on our unrestricted funds which equates to one year's running costs to cover any emergencies that may arise, particularly bearing in mind the significant costs that can be incurred when work is required to the church building.

Approved by the PCC and signed on their behalf by the Chairman, The Revd Dr Ruth Howlett-Shipley

Team Council

Team Council is formed of clergy and lay representatives from each parish in the Benefice. The group met three times in 2025.

June 2025 - Bill Stacey shared details of contactless giving trials in the Benefice. Revd Ruth highlighted changes to the safeguarding training requirements. Geoff Taylor confirmed the total raised for the Lent Project – 'Save Our School' was £21,500. Benefice Planning and items such as types of services, parish events and working with the local community were discussed..

September 2025 - Anthony Bell-Chambers shared details of the Alpha Course proposed for January – Easter 2026. Revd Ruth gave an update on the Diocesan data breach. Members were asked to consider a charity for the 2026 Lent Project.

November 2025 - Members were joined by representatives from The Bridge Youth Project Salisbury and Morning Star. Both charities shared presentations on their work locally. The Bridge was chosen as the 2026 Lent Project.

It was noted that individual PCC contributions to the Team Account are likely to increase by 10% in 2026.

Changes and additions to Benefice services and events have been implemented and proved successful.

Chalke Deanery Synod

Chalke Deanery Synod is formed of clergy and lay representatives from the Benefices of Chalke, Nadder, St Bartholomew, Western Downland and Wilton. The group met three times in 2025.

February 2025 in Nadder (Tisbury) - Following a recent visit, The Very Revd Nicholas Papadopoulos gave a presentation called 'Eyewitness...Stories from Palestine'.

June 2025 in Chalke (Bishopstone) - Elizabeth Harvey, Diocesan Director of Finance shared a presentation on the work of the DBF (Diocesan Board of Finance). Miriam Longfoot was introduced as the new link between the DBF and the Chalke Deanery. Dr Sherwood Elcock gave an update on the Chalke-Cueibet Partnership and building the new Church Primary School in Cueibet.

November 2025 in Nadder (Dinton) - Revd Dr Ruth Howlett-Shipley was appointed Rural Dean on the retirement of Revd Mark Hayter. Jean Watson was appointed Deanery Treasurer. Suzi Fitcher, Diocesan Director for Safeguarding gave an update on safeguarding, training and reporting procedures. Katie Fitzsimmons, Diocesan Director for Education gave a presentation on the work of the DBE (Diocesan Board of Education).