

The cover features a dark teal background with decorative wavy lines in shades of light blue and white on the right side. The text is centered and uses a white serif font.

PREPARED FOR THE APCM  
SUNDAY 22 MARCH 2026

# ANNUAL REVIEW

Review of Year to December 31 2025

**St. Mary with St. Alban  
Teddington Parish**

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# Annual Parochial Church Meeting March 2026

## Annual Review 2025

### Electoral Roll: Jennifer Paynter

Names added	13
Names removed	1
Net loss/gain	12
Total number on the revised roll	274

The name removed from the Roll relates to 1 person who has died.

### Vicar's Report: The Reverend David Cloake

#### 2025 Proceedings of the PCC: Nick de Mattos

There have been 18 members on the PCC who have committed to 7 PCC meetings over the last 12 months. We have continued to offer the option to join meetings via Zoom.

The first meeting, held on the 19<sup>th</sup> May, welcomed the arrival of Hilary Adamson, newly elected to the PCC. This session also covered the election of officers and reps as follows: Fred Squire – Treasurer, Nick de Mattos – Secretary, Clerk of Works – Nick Fenton, Vice Chair – Katherine Matthews, (temporary) Safeguarding Officer – Mary Field-Smith, Children's Champion – Ruth Chaperlin, Lead Recruiter – Kay Cassidy, Churches Together Lead – Malcolm Eady, Stewardship Recorder – Laura Grant, Electoral Roll Officer – Jennifer Paynter, Deputy Wardens – Hilary Adamson and Jo O'Hagan.

Matters arising included the provision of choir robes, discussion of which Derek Saunders felt should involve the choir and the Vicar gave his assurance on that front.

On the safeguarding front, Mary Field-Smith re-emphasised the need for all volunteers to complete Basic safeguarding training online and all volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults to complete Foundation-level and Domestic Abuse training – also online.

Re: Building Anew, Steve Randall, said that the Diocese Faculty for the work had been extended to January 2027. He said that there were three main phases: 1) drainage works, 2) external superstructure including joining the extension with the main building and 3) internal works, including re-ordering of the organ space. He said that 5 contractors had been briefed and that the works were about to go out to tender before planning permission expires in December 2025. Fundraising was going well and the PCC would not be asked to approve the project if the Governance Group were not confident that the funds would be there to support it.

Every year, each church in the diocese is asked to contribute to the diocese Common Fund. SMwSA has in the past contributed more than the suggested contribution, though this year, in the light of BA, the parish will be contributing 100% of it.

In addition to the usual financial and policy updates, Robin Field-Smith announced the completion of the Church Record (300 pages) which constitutes a large amount of work by RFS, Sue Stevens and the Team. The Vicar pointed out that church property represents the gifts of past benefactors, so its recording is important. He conveyed the thanks of the parish to all involved.

The second meeting, on 15<sup>th</sup> July, welcomed Rev Joy Beauchamp and Rev Sarah Rae as the new curates. It also confirmed the Vicar's proposal of Anna Michel as the incoming Safeguarding Officer. Chris Darling had offered to fill the position of a new Vulnerable Adults Champion and also as a trustee of the Peter and Paul Centre. The Vicar also welcomed Gareth Miller as a new Churchwarden and Jonathan Willams as a Deputy Warden.

Mary Field-Smith covered the safeguarding items to be reviewed by the PCC: procedure for responding to concerns and allegations, risk assessments, use of social media policy, church and non-church activities in the Hall, promoting a healthy and safe culture.

After finance and various policy updates, there was the Building Anew update in which Steve Randall said that all five of the contractors had submitted quotes, much in line with what the Governance Group were expecting. The effect on worship in the church was discussed, and SR said that there was no imminent need to vacate the church, certainly for some time. He said that fundraising continued to go well. The Vicar said

that approval had been gained for a flat associated with the church to be sold and the proceeds put towards the BA fund.

The Contact Collection Devices in church, whereby congregants can pay their offerings by card, needed replacing and the PCC agreed that Goodbox devices should be purchased. At the same time, the Parish Office computers had also reached the end of their lives. This was discussed and a way forward approved.

The third meeting, on 16<sup>th</sup> September, discussed the provision of a small keyboard organ not only as a stop-gap when the main organ ceases to function ahead of its removal to its new home, but also for use in various outside events such as the River Blessing. It was decided that funds could not be diverted from the BA fundraising. (In the meantime, Derek Saunders has acquired a very functional keyboard organ for comparatively little outlay).

Mary Field-Smith welcomed Anna Michel to the role of Safeguarding Officer and much of the safeguarding part of the meeting discussed the use of social media and its potential to publicise widely. While this had its advantages, there was also a risk presented by live-streaming, and an urgent review of social media policy was requested.

After an H & S update by Chris Darling, and finance by Fred Squire, there was a Building Anew update by Steve Randall. He said the approval for commencement of the works would be needed in two to three weeks. Out of the three contractors who had been shortlisted by the quantity surveyor, the Governance Group had chosen Rosewood Restoration who had a track record in church restoration and extension. They also happened to quote the lowest cost. SR said that the contract had to have begun by October and would take 42 weeks after that. Section A = Demolition (of choir vestry) and drainage (November); Section B = the Extension (approval by January 26); Section C = Internal works. There was a briefing, and brief discussion, over the finances, all of which was reassuring.

The fourth meeting was an Extraordinary Meeting to approve the commencement of the project, which was duly done.

The fifth meeting, on 13<sup>th</sup> November, consisted of a safeguarding update in which Mary Field-Smith announced that training was almost up to date following her initiative in setting up some face-to-face sessions and the Vicar said that a new social media Policy was being discussed by the churchwardens.

The Vicar also took the opportunity to point out that MFS had been SG Officer for 10 years where past officers had only lasted 4 -5 years - a noble record.

After the finance update, in the absence of Steve Randall abroad, the Vicar said that the choir vestry had been cleared for demolition and that the big yew tree in the area had already been felled. In terms of finances, it was announced that the flat associated with the church was under offer to a first-time buyer with completion expected in February. He said that Phase A of the build was now under way. A final organ recital

was scheduled ahead of the removal of the blower. Robin Field Smith delivered a brief and interesting history of the organ which can be read in the minutes of that meeting.

The sixth meeting, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January, comprised the safeguarding, social media policy, complaints and finance updates. There was a review of the previous year in terms of attendance. The Vicar said that Christmas attendance had been at capacity: in the 24 hours from Christmas Eve lunch time to Christmas Day, the church had been attended by 1400 people. There was discussion about providing extra services at Christmas and also about the possibility of combining the 9.00 and 10.00 services on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday when the All-age service happens.

In the Building Anew update, Steve Randall said that Section B of the project had been approved. He said that the Governance Group had a good relationship with the contractors. The only problem which might have arisen would have resulted from finding something in the ground, but nothing had been found, the drainage had been dug and laid, the concrete applied and steelwork put in place.

Due to take place soon was the boring for the heat pumps, by far the most economical and green of the heating alternatives. Also, the stained-glass window was to be removed and packed for its protection, ready for the doorway to be created from the main building.

The final item of this meeting was the approval of fees for weddings and funerals.

The seventh meeting was on 3<sup>rd</sup> March. There was discussion of the All-age service and current thinking that the 9.00 and 10.00 services cannot easily be combined. In the safeguarding update, Anna Michel said that the schedule of items needing to be done was now 94% complete, including a policy for the recruitment of ex-offenders.

In this meeting was also the approval of The Annual Report, a legal document prepared by Fred Squire. Arising from this is that regular giving under the Parish Giving Scheme has flatlined but that it wasn't felt appropriate to mount an appeal in the light of Building Anew. This was contested, but the general encouragement was for all to review their giving.

Re: Building Anew, Steve Randall said that the project was still on budget and still on schedule. Section A is officially complete and Section B under way, due to be completed on 14<sup>th</sup> August. Boring for the heat pumps is complete and the main drainage is still to be connected to the main sewer subject to Thames Water approval. The stained-glass window was removed and packed up. The steel frame is up and the brickwork in order. The kitchen design is under way. The Vicar said that there is every cause for optimism with project, including financially.

## Finance

### Treasurer's Report: Fred Squire

Please see separate Annual Report

## Fabric

### Building Anew: Steven Randall

2025 marked a milestone year for the Building Anew project, with construction work starting in early December. This followed seven years of rigorous preparation, consultation, design and planning of the much-needed new facilities for the community, and more than two and a half years of intensive fundraising.

Rosewood Restoration was appointed as the main contractor in October, following a rigorous tender process launched in May, initially involving five contractors. The first phase of works began on 11 December, exactly one week before planning permission expired – a little close for comfort, but ultimately perfect timing.

The design team continues to be led by architects Thomas Ford & Partners, supported by Stand Consulting Engineers as structural engineers and Eng Design as the building services consultant. The wider professional team also includes archaeology, ecology and tree consultants. Huntley Cartwright continues as our Quantity Surveyor and was appointed to be our professional Project Manager for the construction phase.

The building works have been structured into three sections to give the church flexibility to proceed with each section once sufficient funds are available:

- A. Demolition of the old choir vestry, excavations, foundations and drainage works
- B. Construction of the extension, including all finishes, fittings and services, and the doorway opening from the north aisle
- C. Internal works to reorder the organ chamber and clergy vestry.

The total project budget for each section, based on the tender prices agreed with Rosewood, is as follows:

	<b>Cost (Ex VAT)</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total (Inc VAT)</b>
<b>Section A</b>	£0.30m	£0.06m	£0.36m
<b>Section B</b>	<u>£0.90m</u>	<u>£0.18m</u>	<u>£1.08m</u>
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>£1.20m</b>	<b>£0.24m</b>	<b>£1.44m</b>
<b>Sections A+B</b>			
<b>Section C</b>	<u>£0.18m</u>	<u>£0.03m</u>	<u>£0.21m</u>
<b>Total: Sections A+B+C</b>	<b>£1.38m</b>	<b>£0.27m</b>	<b>£1.65m</b>

Initially the church entered into contract with Rosewood in October for only the Section A works (ensuring construction could begin before planning permission expired). Following mobilisation of their team, site set-up and preliminaries, Rosewood wasted no time once on site in December. By Christmas, the old choir vestry had been demolished and excavations for the extension foundations completed, all under the supervision of an archaeologist on site to record any discoveries of interest.

January 2026 saw successful pouring of the foundation slab. Excavations and installation of the rainwater soakaway and drainage pipework were also completed, together with the drilling of two 100m deep bore holes for the ground source heat pump that will provide the extension with sustainable, energy-efficient underfloor heating. By the end of the month the Section A works had been completed.

By early January sufficient funds had been secured to extend the contract with Rosewood to include Section B works. Construction of this phase commenced in February with the erection of the fabricated steelwork providing the core structural frame for the extension. At the time of writing, Section B works remain on budget and on schedule for completion in August 2026.

This progress was made possible by another year of committed fundraising and the sale of a parish-owned flat. Thanks to the generosity of parishioners, the wider community and two charitable trusts, donations and grants in 2025 totalled over £320,000, with a further £50,000 pledged. Notable fundraising events in 2025 included a sponsored parachute jump by our intrepid vicar, two quiz nights, a tango evening and a promises action.

The appointment of a specialist fundraising consultant from Craigmyle towards the end of 2024 proved extremely beneficial. In addition to helping to secure two grants so far, this support also helped to clarify and articulate more clearly how the new facilities will serve community needs and contribute to the preservation of local heritage.

To-date the project been awarded grants by the Benefact Trust (£86,000) and Garfield Weston Foundation (£25,000), for which the parish is extremely grateful. Unfortunately, applications to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, National Churches Trust and Bernard Sunley Foundation were unsuccessful. The outcome of grant applications totalling a further £100,000 to other trusts and funding organisations are still pending.

Including the £250,000 of church funds committed to the project at the outset, the total raised and pledged by the end of 2025 amounted to £932,000. Sale of the flat was completed in February 2026, releasing a further £365,000 and bringing the total funds secured to approximately £1.3 million. Fundraising will continue in 2026 (and beyond if necessary) to raise the remaining balance required to complete the project.

This government's decision to reform the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme in April was an unwelcome development. Previously, this scheme allowed churches to reclaim VAT on eligible building works. Under the revised arrangements, only up to £25,000 of VAT could be reclaimed in the 2025–26 tax year, increasing the project's fundraising requirement by approximately £200,000.

In this context, parishioners have offered up to £150,000 in interest-free loans, to assist with short to medium-term cashflow requirements if required, while fundraising continues. Depending on the outcome of the pending grant applications, fundraising progress over the coming months, and the extent to which the cost contingency in the budget needs to be used, these loans can be drawn upon to cover the completion of Sections A and B.

Beyond this, the PCC will instruct the contractor to proceed with Section C works only once it is satisfied that sufficient funds are available to cover this final phase.

In conclusion, 2025 was a momentous year for the parish. The project that has been envisioned for so many years finally became a reality with construction underway. While fundraising continues, attention is already increasingly turning to preparing for the many ways in which the new facilities will enrich future parish life and the church's role at the heart of the community. This development is not just about creating an accessible, welcoming church building – it is about enabling more opportunities for companionship, learning, wellbeing and community cohesion for generations to come.

Enormous thanks go once again to everyone involved in the Governance Group, Project Team (led by John Ramsay) and Fundraising Team for the immense amount of time and effort they have put in during the past year. Without their commitment, expertise and incredible stamina, none of this would have been possible. In addition, on behalf of the Governance Group, I extend sincere thanks to the vicar, PCC, Churchwardens and congregation for their guidance and support.

For more information on the proposed scheme and fundraising campaign, please visit the 'Building Project' pages on the parish website ([www.teddingtonparish.org](http://www.teddingtonparish.org)).

## Church and Churchyard: Nick Fenton

The church, as the Body of Christ of those living in and visiting Teddington, is centred around both a building and churchyard located in the heart of Teddington.

A much-valued feature is that the church remains open every day, welcoming people of all faiths and none to come in to pray, light a candle, sit, or enjoy its wonderful features. To enable this to happen, we are indebted to three groups of volunteers:

- The 'Holy Bunch of Keys' - those who, in conjunction with the Vicar, provide a rota to open and close the church each day and keep an eye out for any issues, as well as ensuring the votive candle stand is well stocked
- The Holy Dusters, led by Ursula Midgley and Christine Casemore, continue to clean and care for the church on Thursday mornings (but who will welcome some new members)
- The Church Maintenance group, run by Nick Fenton as Clerk of Works, has a rota to check the building every month. Minor faults are either dealt with by members of the group themselves or reported for professional advice or attention

We also depend on the commitment and devotion of our server team, the members of which ensure the church is set up for services and that all necessary hangings, vestments, vessels and provisions are present and correct.

To all these contributing their talents in God's service again we say a big thank you.

We continue to take care to minimise our energy use and costs. Lighting levels during the day are kept to low levels compatible with church usage but our principal cost is gas for the central heating boiler. To help conserve energy and reduce our CO2 footprint, when the church is used formally the set temperature is a modest 15C whilst outside these times, the heating is set to about 6C. The programmable thermostat has proven to be easy to use with only the odd occasion when the church un-lockers found the church to be unusually cosy!. The gas boiler thankfully again passed its annual service and inspection.

Gutters and valleys, the channel between the roofs, are cleared of leaves and debris annually. This also affords the opportunity to inspect the roof including the sides which are not visible from ground level. No issues were reported.

There are three locations where underground pipes are known to be blocked leading to the slow dispersal of water. The intention is to utilize the services of the Building Anew Contractor, Rosewood, to excavate these drains. However, there is one drain which runs along the east side of the Memorial Garden where continuation of the cast iron down-pipe above ground seems to be a better solution, but this may need a faculty.

A revised grass-cutting programme for the churchyard was agreed with the Council at the beginning of the year but the lack of rain for most of the summer meant that a full cut was only done once. Due to a lack of council resources, the raising of tree crowns and the removal of a dead tree have not happened. Nevertheless, the Council has acted promptly when notified of damaged and unsafe lengths of perimeter fencing

The churchyard attracts favourable comments from the many who use the footpath through it. These are very encouraging for the two groups of volunteers who help maintain the churchyard, the Churchyard Gardeners, led by Sally Stones and Tony Swan, and the Grave Adopters, led by Alexandra Ruffer. The exceptionally dry summer meant watering rather than weeding became a priority. Unfortunately, the drought led to the loss of a number of plants and newly planted trees. During the year the churchyard continued to be used for outdoor services, social events and school visits.

Additional bulbs were planted during the year. These were funded by a combination of donations from Squires and the financial bequest made by a local family for the enhancement of the churchyard. The bulbs planted included camassias which should provide colour into the early summer after the daffodils have faded.

Following a meeting with the Council in 2024, last year an additional handrail was installed by the Council alongside the steeper slope of the footpath from the west gate. Additionally, church openers check the condition of the surface of this section of the path each morning and, if slippery, put out salt and/or put in place a warning cone surmounted with a warning sign.

The regular monthly maintenance checks, done by our much-appreciated volunteer inspectors, also help us ensure that health and safety issues related to the church building are identified early, so that remedial actions can be taken.

## Parish Hall: Jo O'Hagan

From Art classes to Zumba, the variety of activities on offer in our Parish Hall never ceases to amaze me. The Hall is used by groups and individuals of all ages, in addition to the many church events taking place on the premises. Demand for space is high, and it is the responsibility of the Hall Committee and the amazing team in the Parish Office to ensure that the building is well maintained and offers the best possible experience for users.

Over the past few years improvements and upgrades have been made to the fire safety, lighting and heating in the building. The decorating project of the past year has made hours of work for our caretaker, Alex, to replace red with teal around the building, whilst continuing to touch up worn areas, to keep this heavily used space in good condition. Other more mundane maintenance and cleaning routines continue, often unseen, throughout the year, all of which come at a cost, which is covered by the regular commercial users of the hall, who also play their part in caring for this important community space. Their contributions and the one-off lets for parties and other activities are vital to the church community in terms of outreach and provide a not inconsiderable addition to the income of the church.

Our committee meet three times a year and an annual audit is made to enable us to assess the maintenance needs and running costs of the building. The meetings also help to inform us of the many requests for meeting space from across the community and to set the level of fees for users. The input of each and every member of the committee is much appreciated.

As the building of the new church extension comes nearer to completion, we are aware that some of the regular bookings for the Parish Hall are likely to relocate to the new facility. This will, we hope, give us some additional space for new activities in regular slots.

We continue to consider how best the available space in our building can be utilised to allow even more people to share and enjoy this great parish asset.

## Recording St Mary's: Robin Field-Smith

2025 saw the final elements of the project fall into place as the team tidied up the draft and arranged for printing and binding. This involved a volume of nearly 300 pages with many hundreds of photographs.

Electronic copies of the record were lodged with the V&A, the CofE Church Archive, the London Archive, the Arts Society Richmond, and the Church Recording Society.

For two days at the end of September a display was laid out in church of all the items, with a guide and members of the recording team on hand to help explain details. On the second evening a presentation was given by Robin Field-Smith, with organ interludes played by Dean Ryan. This is still available on You Tube (<https://www.youtube.com/live/d38GqloQ5uU?si=bjaJVHaCuUZqMoY4>) Then the bound record, a memory stick, and a certificate from the Church Recording Society, were presented to the churchwardens and blessed by the vicar, wearing one of the glorious copes which the church owns. We were honoured by the presence of the Deputy Mayor, who added her thanks and congratulations. Happily, that same day we heard that the Arts Society had come to its senses and decided to take back Church Recording as a key voluntary activity.

In conclusion we place on record our thanks to the Arts Society Richmond for their support and annual financial grant, to the Church Recording Society, and especially Liz Chalmers, for advice and expert collation, and to the members of the Recording Group for the hours spent measuring and writing up all the many furnishings. Special thanks go to Sue Stevens, researcher, proof-reader and coffee maker, and John Penberthy, photographer.

The bound record is now kept in a locked case in church, but there is a copy to peruse on the book-case at the west end of church.

As a postscript, we still own two items which are now on permanent loan elsewhere: the large wooden crucifix from Oberammergau, previously on the north aisle wall of St Alban's, is on display in the Archdiocese of Westminster youth centre in Pinner; the sanctuary lamps acquired for St Alban's from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem are now hung in the sanctuary of St John the Baptist, Holland Road, Notting Hill.

## Communications: Suzanne Parker

Comms are used in many forms throughout the parish and remain an important part of promoting St Mary with St Alban's mission, including the website, weekly Service Sheets and Pew Sheets, posters, email bulletins (Mailchimp), Parish Newsletter, social media, event flyers, and noticeboard displays. Materials reflect the parish's Anglican tradition whilst remaining visually inviting and accessible.

### Printed Materials

Sunday Booklets and Sunday Notices: notices are now included at the back of Sunday's 10am Service Booklet, and a A5 colour Family pew sheet booklet is created for the 9am audience. And on the third Sunday of each month, a more general A5 colour pew sheet booklet is produced to serve all services.

Posters are produced for existing regular events, as well as one-offs, ensuring lively, colourful and full noticeboards at the back of church, and in the entrances of St Mary's Parish Hall and the Peter & Paul Centre. They are all updated weekly to ensure key information is accessible, as well as remaining current and relevant.

A full-colour Parish Newsletter is printed each month (now with the exception of August), thanks to a team of three Editors, a well-oiled bundling process and a hardy bunch of wonderful volunteer deliverers who carry our news to around 5,000 letterboxes in the parish. Additional flyers are occasionally included, to promote things like: Christmas Services, Bazaar and Village Fair. It continues to be a wonderful vehicle enabling SMwSA to keep in touch with the residents of Teddington, with content providing a good balance of the retrospective, the current and what's coming up.

### Digital Media

We continue to refine existing social media channels, the parish website, and email communications. QR codes remain invaluable for information sharing, events and donations. Photos are also important for boosting engagement.

On the website, weekly updates to the landing page keep content fresh, as well as changing rotating news stories, seasonal bible quotes/messages, and new photos/graphics.

Once a month, via Mailchimp, an email news bulletin is sent out to over 800 subscribers. This continues to be a popular, well-read, colourful and dynamic route to share all that goes on, parish-wide, with a loyal readership, more than double the industry standard. The content contains the posters, links to website stories, and current Parish Newsletter. Each bulletin features a mix of essential updates, upcoming

events, and some reflective content to encourage engagement with parish life. We gained 24 new subscribers in the last 90 days.

Social Media content mostly includes well-curated visuals, meaningful reflections, and highlights from parish life. And thanks to the Livestreaming of Sunday's 10am service, as well as other special services throughout the year, we maintain a good reach through our YouTube channel. We also post key events on the *Teddington Nub News* and *Teddington Local* websites.

The SMwSA ChurchSuite platform continues to grow and develop. This is a GDPR compliant software tool where the individual owns their own data. Over the last 12 months, the number of users continued to increase, Fr David regularly and directly, kept in touch using congregation-wide emails sent from ChurchSuite, the calendar contained everything happening within the parish (spiritually and socially) and offered easy access to all event bookings and volunteer sign-up, along with an easy online payment option for tickets/other items.

By using thoughtful design and strong communication, we continue to strengthen our connection with the parish community, so that all members—both long-standing and new—feel informed, welcomed, and encouraged to take part in the life of this parish.

## Worship and Nurture

### Safeguarding: Anna Michel

*“The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults who are involved in Church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church. Everyone who participates in the life of the Church has a role to play in promoting a Safer Church for all.”*

I have taken on the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) this year and am just about now getting to grips with what the role entails. Fortunately, our previous PSO, Mary Field-Smith, helped me greatly with an extended handover period, providing patient explanations of what needs doing and my huge and heartfelt thanks go to her.

In the spirit of safeguarding being the responsibility of everyone, the role is developing into a real team effort, encouraged and supported by Fr David (the Incumbent). Mary F-S has taken on the role of Safeguarding Administrator, supporting the PSO with managing and chasing outstanding safeguarding training and supporting the café leaders, who have taken on the responsibility for safeguarding within their activities.

Kay Cassidy continues as Lead Recruiter, overseeing all the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, meaning our volunteers are safely recruited, undergoing the appropriate level of checks and completing the required safeguarding training. Thanks also to all volunteers who understand the importance of and need for safeguarding and comply with our policies.

As safeguarding continues to be a priority for the wider Church of England, we are aiming high as a parish team this coming year to have 100% safeguarding training completed by the end of May 2026. The PCC is fully supportive of this, and of the Safeguarding Action Plan generated by the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard, reviewed during the standing Safeguarding item at each PCC meeting.

Of note is that we have had a change in Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, now Sarah Dale. The Diocesan team continues to provide excellent support and advice.

Also of note, is that there was an INEQE independent safeguarding audit of our London Diocese last year; the report and recommendations are due soon.

Stepping into this role, I am encouraged by how seriously safeguarding is taken in our parish. If anybody has any concerns about anything they see or hear in church, please speak to me or to one of the Clergy, if I am not available. There are also other options listed on our church website.

### Children's Ministry: Ruth Chaperlin

Children's activities have continued steadily and successfully over the last twelve months and remain a treasured part of parish life. Although numbers of school-age children, at least at the 10am, remain small, we are committed both to maintaining a rich provision for them and to exploring ways of extending our welcome to increased numbers.

Our regular activities remain Church Mice (a midweek service for pre-school aged children and their parents and carers), the 9am family service on Sundays, followed by coffee and craft in the Parish Hall, and the children's group during the 10am service on Sundays. We also have several young people acting as servers, under the guidance and care of Mary Field-Smith, and there are numerous services and other activities throughout the year aimed at, or appealing to, children, including crib services at Christmas, Christingle, and all-age parade services.

Over the last few months, we have also seen the introduction of the All-Age service at 10am on the third Sunday of each month which provides the opportunity for children to stay in church with their families for all-age worship rather than going out to the Parish

Hall for Children's Church. This has been hugely successful, and we hope may become something which will help to bridge the gap between the 9am and 10am congregations.

The 9am family service on Sunday mornings offers a relaxed and inclusive atmosphere that appeals to many parishioners with young families. Many of those who attend make their way over to the Parish Hall afterwards to enjoy coffee and craft and fellowship with one another. The small but remarkable band of volunteers who make this happen every week continue to amaze me with their service. Thank you all. Anyone wishing to join this rota as a way of connecting more with the 9am congregation would be very welcome.

The children's group during the 10am service continues to be a valued part of Sunday morning worship, with around 6-8 children attending each week, although at times much fewer. We meet in church for the first hymn and then cross the road to the Mina Hogan room for our own worship. It has been lovely to see recently a handful of new attendees joining our loyal band of regulars.

Over the last few months our small team of Children's Church volunteers has benefited from Fr David and our two wonderful curates, Joy and Sarah, taking on the regular leadership of sessions. We have also been joined by Harry Dixon, who has joined the rota to lead Children's Church and is doing a brilliant job. The children always participate enthusiastically each week, as we explore the Scriptures with stories, discussion, games and craft. My thanks go to all that lead these sessions and for those in the background who support what we do, especially our churchwardens, Katherine and Gareth.

With discussions for future growth being facilitated by our wonderful clergy and the upcoming Confirmation at St Paul's Cathedral of three of our young people on Easter Saturday, there is much to be joyful and optimistic about in Children's Ministry at St Mary with St Alban.

### Church Mice: Cathy Randall

Church Mice, our regular Wednesday morning service for pre-schoolers of any age (newborns upwards), is currently attracting a healthy number of families who enjoy worshipping with their very young children in a relaxed and inclusive setting. Services include action songs, interactive Bible stories, prayers, and marching with instruments, all within a set framework that the children quickly feel comfortable with. After the service, families are invited to stay for a play session at which refreshments are served, and friendships are made.

We're always eager to welcome more children with their parents, carers or grandparents, and older siblings are very welcome in the school holidays. There is no need to book, and no fee (donations only). We run every single week throughout the year, with the exception of August, and the two Wednesdays following Christmas and Easter.

Huge thanks to all our leaders, both clergy and lay, and a special thank you to Susan Wilmington who comes nearly every week to help serve refreshments and chat to the families.

### Choir and Music: Derek Saunders

With the Mass setting we have alternated between the St Thomas Thorne Mass, Addington and Merbecke. The choir and congregation enjoy the variety, and it helps to keep alive the meaning of the words. There have a couple of occasions when the choir sang the Mass to specific settings e.g. Mozart and Byrd.

Father David continues to take on the mantle of selecting hymns.

With standard services through the year, the choir has been on average about 11/12 in size. This is a small decrease on last year. This still allows for a good repertoire but there have been occasional services where we have struggled in parts in places. Repertoire has been paired down in these instances.

Rehearsals continue to take place Fridays 6.30–7.30pm. The choir also meets regularly at 9.30am before the 10am service.

An organ roster of some regularity and consistency has been established. Dean Ryan, Rachel Pickering and Edward Buxton. We are especially grateful to Dean and Ed who have covered Rachel when she has been unable to play for us in this last year.

Music Library - DS is extremely grateful for the help of Susan Jacobs. She and DS spent many hours minimising the amount of sheet music and organising it in such a way it is more slim lined to fit in a limited space in the church. Looking ahead we are extremely grateful for the care and consideration given to music and the new extension. We can now see that there will be a larger space to rehearse in, more accessible music shelving and a larger robing wardrobe.

With the removal of the organ, DS was able to find a temporary replacement (Viscount Organ II) which whilst being small and without pedals makes decent organ sounds that can fill the church.

It was a delight to hear that money has already been donated to fund a new full size digital organ once building works are finished. It is also good to hear that plans may be going ahead to ensure there is a wooden floor in the choir area. This will do much to enhance the acoustics for singing.

The choir is now established in doing regular evensongs - the third Sunday of every month. This challenges our ability to put together services with so much material on a regular basis.

The carol service saw the return of Janet Smith's orchestra – huge thanks to JS for the amazing way in which she books all the instrumentalists and then cares for them so brilliantly.

Whilst expanding the work of the choir and music, DS is always keen to point out the importance of music serving to enhance the message and words of the Church services. This is the main function of the music provided at St Marys with St Albans. DS is extremely grateful for the support of the team of clergy – this harmonious and good working relationship is key to the evolution of music at the Church.

Other Extra events this year were the service in Exeter College Oxford with Rev. John Shephard preaching and giving communion. Helped ably by Hannah Williams and family. We sang Byrd's Four-part Mass setting. Some members of the choir stayed at Waterperry House to rehearse and sing an evensong there on the same day.

We also held a fundraiser with ten pounds: the choir booked the parish hall and organised a concert and cooked lots of food in a wonderful evening in February which included music, food and good fun. In all raised about £2000. A marvellous event and thanks to all who helped.

And at a Mozart Birthday Concert (Hinde Street Methodist Church central London) a number of the choir took part in this annual event which proved to be a successful way to lighten up the dark month of January.

Points for the future include recruitment of new members, bringing back of wearing robes, further events in alternative venues - e.g. cathedral/Choir tour, use of the Revised English Hymnal which has more mass settings and better selection of hymns, advertising for an organ scholar and choir scholars, a regular children's choir.

My final thanks go out to all of the choir and our organists – most especially our regular choir members, as well as some notable irregulars. They have been a source of wonderful strength. Their love, friendship and good humour make them brilliant musical companions. This comradery has helped us all to continue on with the work of the church amidst an ever-changing and oft-troubled world. Thankfully the Spirit in our

music community comes to the fore and helps to nourish and enliven the work of the Church. Long may this continue.

### Morning and Evening Prayer: Margaret Squire

Morning and Evening Prayer on Zoom has become one of the good things that evolved from all the problems of lock down. Most mornings a group of us join together to follow the app provided by Church House in the Contemporary setting. A similar service is available for the evening.

The service takes about half an hour, with Psalms, two readings and prayers. There are about a dozen of us who participate on an irregular basis, usually six most days; one person leads, another responds and, while two people do the Old and New Testament readings, others listen. It is an uplifting way to start or end the day, and the group has become a very supportive one, both for each other and our community. There is also a WhatsApp group to enable us to stay in touch. New participants are always welcome.

### Servers: Mary Field-Smith

I would like to thank all those who participate in worship as servers, not only at the 10am service on Sunday where they have a more visible presence, but also at the 8am service on Sunday and the 9.30am service on Wednesday as well as the various festival services. It has been a joy to welcome some of our younger church members as servers this year, especially at all age services.

One of the serving team also calls into the church on Saturday afternoon in order to ensure that everything is ready for services the next day – important but unseen work!

The departure of Jean and Marie for Leeds has meant that we have lost one of our most longstanding and faithful servers and Jean will be much missed. We would be delighted to welcome some new faces to join our happy band – no experience required. Please speak to me (and come and try it out) to see if this is a something you could offer on an occasional basis. It is a very rewarding part of ministry.

# Pastoral Care

## Community Café: Clare Rider

The Community Café, held weekly on Monday afternoons, continues to flourish. On 13<sup>th</sup> October 2025, we celebrated its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a special birthday event, opened by Munira Wilson MP and including a local history quiz and a free raffle.

The café offers a welcoming space with a friendly, calm and positive atmosphere, and with volunteers on hand to chat over quality coffee, tea and delicious cake, provided by a loyal team of home-bakers. Since its inception in 2020, it has been lovely to see people come, meet others and develop lasting friendships. The Café also signposts local community services, provides information about events and activities in the area and hosts a book swap scheme. Established in partnership with NHS Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and two of our neighbouring charities, Ruils and Richmond Aid, the Café serves as a practical way for the parish to promote the mental health and well-being of local residents and to welcome visitors to Teddington.

The Community Café is held every Monday, including Bank Holidays, from 1.30pm to 4pm at the Peter and Paul Centre in Church Road, Teddington, TW11 8PS

## Memory Café: Kay Cassidy

The Memory Café has now been running for more than 8 years and is a free, safe, welcoming and understanding space for those living with dementia, their carers and those who simply enjoy good company. The café takes place on the first and third Tuesdays of each month from 1.30–3pm at the Peter and Paul Centre in Church Road. Each session offers time for a good chat over tea/coffee and cake. Guests are encouraged to take part in a light-hearted quiz, and we alternate between a sing-along with guitar accompaniment and bingo. In December we welcomed St. Mary Teddington Bells to our café to get us in the festive mood, and we thoroughly enjoyed singing carols

Regular guests say how much they appreciate the warm, relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Our caring and committed volunteers come from St. Mary with St. Alban as well as other churches and the local community.

## Bereavement Café: Hilary Adamson

The Bereavement Café commenced in March 2025, following recognition that there needed to be a space within which those who are grieving could have an opportunity to talk. Volunteers, who have been trained by Princess Alice Hospice as active listeners, aim to provide a one-to-one service or group support, as is most appropriate to the situation. Recent months have seen an increase in the number of those attending, as awareness of this service grows. Anyone who is grieving a loss, whether it is recent or longer ago, is welcome to attend.

The Bereavement Café is held on the third Monday of each month, from 10-11.30am at the Peter and Paul Centre in Church Road, Teddington.

## Fellowship

### Pints of View: Gareth Miller

Pints of View has been running for nearly two years now, introduced by Father David from 8pm on the first Wednesday of the month, to provide unscripted, agenda-free fellowship in a local pub. A rag-bag collection of a number of us from both St Mary with St Alban and our local community gather, and it has been a wonderful opportunity to meet over a drink or two each month and spend time with some of those people whom you never get more than a chance to say hello to each Sunday morning as well as having the chance to connect and chat with members of our local community too.

We meet in the Tide End Pub near to the river with Fr David pretty much always first at the bar if you want to come and join us too. Whether discussing the boon of a repaired footbridge, local sporting events or Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the conversation is eclectic and wide-ranging, and the open welcome is always warm and friendly.

### The Holy Dusters: Christine Casemore

We're currently a group of six - five ladies and one gentleman - who are in the church for an hour or so on Thursday mornings. We ensure that the porches are cleaned, the floors of the pews and choir stalls are swept and the carpets vacuumed with any spilt candle wax being removed; the pews and choir stalls are dusted along with the pulpit and other woodwork, also polished from time to time. The glass in the doors of both entrances and in the door to the vestry is cleaned along with the other glass surfaces.

The windowsills and memorial plaques on the walls are dusted, the oil-burning candles are topped up and the silver in regular use is washed where appropriate and polished. When time permits, we also remove as much excess wax as possible from the votive candle stand. We aim to leave the church clean and tidy and ready for the next service!

### Fellowship Socials: Trish Raffetto

This coffee/lunch group is purely social and provides an opportunity to enjoy spending time together. We continue to have three events a month – a lunch in a local restaurant, a coffee in a local café and for those who are home-bound a coffee over Zoom. The support and camaraderie of these get-togethers is much appreciated, and newcomers can expect a warm welcome. We look forward to continuing and growing this fellowship during the coming year

### Parish Plod: Robin Field-Smith

We have continued to have a group walking every month, normally on the first Saturday, aiming to cover between 5 and 7 miles, always using public transport to the beginning, and from the end, of the route.

In January we had to change plans at short notice because of the wintry weather - so opted for the Duke of Northumberland's river walk from Twickenham round to Isleworth and back to Richmond.

Between February and April, we completed the Green Chain Walk from Epping Forest to Peckham Rye, enjoying the architectural history of Islington, Regents Canal, City sights including tea in St Paul's, and some lovely green spaces south of the Thames.

In May we started a seven-month experience along the North Middlesex Way which runs along the old northern county boundary from Staines to Enfield Lock. By the end of the year, we had completed five sections allowing for an August break and plods closer to home in the winter. We have seen cows and delightful villages in sight of Heathrow, walked along streams alive with birds and insects, had coffee on the shores of Ruislip Lido and at WS Gilbert's house, and enjoyed wonderful views over London from above Stanmore as well as traversing most of the parks and squares offering greenery and relative peace.

November saw us doing the circuit of Virginia Water, and December took us into Home Park and along the Chestnut Avenue in Bushy Park.

The company is excellent, and good preparation allows for refreshment and comfort stops. So those plodding get exercise, social enjoyment and exposure to many wonderful, often unknown, sites, sights and sounds.

We ended the year with a very pleasant Christmas dinner in the King's Head.

On, on to more good plodding in 2026.

### The First Wednesday Group: Susan Jacobs

The group met in 2025 on the first Wednesday of most months (not in Lent or Advent, or over Summer) in an informal atmosphere over a packed lunch in the Mina Hogan room of the Parish Hall. Each month's topic was chosen in advance and widely advertised in all parish communications outlets. Attendance was between 7 and 20 people and averaged 12. All comers are welcome, whether or not they attend SMwSA. Topics covered in 2025 are listed below:

January – *Archbishop Matters?*

February – *Parenthood these days: How is it changing?*

March – *Safeguarding*

May - *Can exclusion from Parliament be justified on grounds of Christian beliefs?*

June – *A new Pope and a new Archbishop*

July – *Saints*

September – *Prisons: A broken system?*

October – *Climate Change*

November – *Genetic Engineering*

### The Traherne Reading Group: Gerry Gregory

The group continues to flourish, though the death of Terry Brown - a long-standing key member - has very sadly affected us. His contributions were always of great value.

We continue to discuss the prose and poetry of Thomas Traherne - and that of several of his near contemporaries - on religious and philosophical themes.

### Plain and Pearl: Suzanne Strachan

Plain and Pearl is a friendly social all-inclusive group of people drawn together through love of knitting and crafting. We meet bi-monthly on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at St Mary's Parish Hall Teddington.

Year on year P&P popularity is increasing as its membership grows. In addition to knit and knatter gatherings, we hold workshops and are always looking for new craft ideas. This year we had some new workshops: creative patchwork embroidery, crewel

work and embroidered felt decorations in addition to our popular regular seasonal ones like wreath making and craft material swap.

Last November, our yearly participation in pre-Xmas bazaar in the parish hall was particularly successful. We raised around £1700, even more than the best of previous years. We made donations to local charities like Shelter and MiD. The latter is Mediation in Divorce which provides counselling to children of ages 4-18 suffering from anxiety and/or depression due to parental divorce. Our donation went directly to supporting the counselling which literally saves lives.

For the last few years, we have been holding a “knitalong” for a month, usually January. This year we held a crochet-along instead in the month of February. We catered for 2 groups: one for complete beginners to learn crochet with the help of crochet mentors, and a second group of improvers who crocheted their own cushion covers. During the crochet-along we met every Tuesday in February. Every week, a different set of crochet techniques was taught. Crochet-along proved to be a great success. Anyone interested in joining our group, please contact:

[mailplainandpearl@gmail.com](mailto:mailplainandpearl@gmail.com)

## Parish Links

### St Mary's and St Peter's C of E Primary School: Steven Alford

St Mary's & St Peter's C E Primary School is a Voluntary Aided Church of England School, sponsored equally by the two Teddington parishes. It was set up by the local vestry committee in 1832 and is one of the oldest schools in the borough. 26 years ago, it expanded from a one to a two-form entry school, and then in 2011, it expanded again to produce a three-form entry school. The school is near capacity with 627 pupils (630 capacity) with expected strong number applications for the upcoming school year.

It is a larger than average primary school (in the top 20% on size); free school meals numbers are below average (7% compared with 25.7%) as are the number of children with Special Educational Needs (8.27% compared to 14.2% nationally). The percentage of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans is 2.3%, which is below the national average of 5.3%. 89 children (14%) speak English as an additional language with 33 languages spoken in the school.

The school was graded as “Outstanding” at its last Ofsted inspection (Dec '22) and by the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report (June '18), with the next SIAMS report this school year. Rev. Mary Hawes,

Rev. David Cloake, and Rev. Simon Pedley have been working closely with the school in preparation for the upcoming inspection.

The Church and school are closely linked with the clergy regularly conducting Collective Worship, and the school visiting the church for Harvest, Christmas, and Pentecost services. Rev. David also leads Religious Education sessions in the school.

The aims and values of the school can be found on the school web site:

<http://www.smsponline.co.uk/>

It is well supported by the two local parishes and the London Diocesan board (LBDS) for schools.

## School Report for 2025/26

### *Financially Stable*

Almost all maintained schools in the UK face significant financial pressures alongside the challenges of delivering a high standard of education. There are also financial/funding challenges on the horizon nationally relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) changes announced for September '29.

SMSP has worked extremely hard to deliver its Ofsted-rated “Outstanding” standard of education within the parameters of funding challenges and credit is due to school for this achievement. Continued focus from the school will be required to maintain this financial sustainability, especially whilst costs remain high, and rising, in the operational running of the school.

### *Governor Roles*

The Rev. Mary Hawes is the chair of Governors alongside Rev. David Cloake and Rev. Simon Pedley from St Michael's, Fulwell. The Governing Body is well represented by the church, teachers, parents of the school, and members of the local community.

Regular meetings take place with the Governing body with sub-committees overseeing important aspects within the school including the finances (resources), as well as curriculum and standards. We are delighted to have a full complement of governors, after welcoming back Carla Maroussas, as a LBDS governor, for a second period, Adam Willis as a Foundation governor, and Basil Hasan as a parent governor.

### *Absence Rates*

Schools in the UK have reported an upward trend in persistent absenteeism over the last few years, since Covid-19, and this is an issue that the school monitors closely. SMSP has a lower-than-average absence rate, with attendance currently tracking at

97.11% with efforts to maintain and improve attendance in the school. The national average for attendance in primary schools is 95.9%.

### *New Headteacher*

In September we were proud to welcome our new headteacher, Adrian Corke, who joins us from Bishop Perrin CE Primary School. Aid has been an instant success with; teachers, pupils, parents, governors, and wider school stakeholders. We look forward to the next chapter for the school under Aid's tutelage.

### **Handbell Team: Sheila Insley**

2025 was not a good year for St Mary Teddington Bells because in December, Anne Johnson, a founder member of the team said she could no longer belong in the team. Then, in February 2026, Jean Blanc, another founder member, left the church to live closer to his son.

However, throughout the year, at least three ringers attended rallies as far afield as Sunningdale, Sanderstead and Warfield. One team member attended a rally for more advanced ringers in Farnborough, and the same ringer went also to the National Rally weekend in Milton Keynes.

During the year, we twice met up with Weybridge and Barnes handbell ringers for a fun time making music together. We entertained for the SMwSA Churchyard Teas, at St Stephen's Twickenham Lunch Club and at a care home in Kingston.

Of course, Christmas is our busiest time when we rang carols for the Church Bazaar, Hanworth over Fifties group, the Ladies' Group at St Philip & James Whitton and our local Memory Café in Teddington.

We are in desperate need of new, younger ringers. Being able to read music isn't essential but it does help. We will teach any newcomers the techniques of handbell ringing which is a highly social and fun way of making music.

As always, we appreciate very much being able to use the church hall for storage and practice.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> A Teddington Rainbows

We started 2025 welcoming in our new rainbows and spent the term focusing on wellbeing and first aid. The rainbows learned about animal and insect bites and how they might treat these as well as learning how to help a friend who had hurt themselves. We were lucky to be visited by the St. John's Ambulance and also one of our dads who is a doctor.

In the summer the rainbows learned about camping which included looking after their environment. We worked on our Agility badge and were fortunate enough to have a yoga instructor come into one of our sessions which was great fun!

In the autumn, we celebrated Harvest Festival and undertook our moonlight river work for Children in Need which helped the Rainbows think about and help others less fortunate. We collectively raised £800! We also learned about money and science. We had a real scientist come in to help us and the Rainbows were very keen to participate in the experiments! All in all, a busy year!

### 2<sup>nd</sup> A Teddington Brownies

In the Spring Term the Brownies worked on their Aviation badge, learning about things that fly and designing their own paper aircraft. A British Airways pilot gave an interesting talk about his job. We celebrated Chinese New Year with copious bowls of noodles and chopsticks and slod held a Sparkle and Shine evening with a fashion parade.

The Brownies tended our adopted graves and cleared some overgrown areas in the churchyard during the Summer Term. They also carried out a litter-pick along the High Street, worked on their Local History badge and celebrated VE day with a 'Street party'.

During the Autumn term we completed the Compendium of Games challenge, went on a night hike along the Thames, and had a cooker session and Christmas craft evening with the other units in the District.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Teddington Guides

The Spring term began with Fun in the Dark at Walton Firs with challenges and a code to be broken. Working through the Express Yourself theme this term, the Guides took part in a Tap-dancing Evening, yoga, meditation and artwork. We celebrated Thinking Day with a day of international crafts and a sleepover in the Landmark Centre. Alison Painter received a Jack Petchey Leader Award and used her grant to fund a brilliant trip to Harry Potter World for the unit and other Guides in the District.

The Summer term saw us move to the Have Adventures Theme, looking at the stars, the biodiversity in the church yard, planting beans and learning new outdoor games. We cooked out, learnt map skills and how to make healthy snacks. We helped at the Playwam Summer Fair and with the Games at the Village Fair, ending the term with a Picnic in Bushy Park to celebrate 3 Gold Awards and our older Guides moving on to Rangers.

As we move to semi-retirement, both Kathy Gold and Alison Painter have reduced their hours with Guiding with Guides and Rangers now meet alternative weeks. Jacqueline Potts has added Ranger leader to her roles to help out. The Autumn term saw us making and filling harvest bags for the Harvest Festival service and working on the Compendium and Games challenge. A team of Guides honed their map reading skills and took part in Day Prowl (8km Incident Hike) alongside Richmond scout groups in the Surrey hills. We looked at some of our Take Action activities and amalgamated the Country File Children in Need ramble with Guiding for Good and walked through a very windy Bushy Park and Teddington, picking litter as we went.

For remembrance the unit had a visit from a member of the Royal Navy who talked to the Guides about her job and what Remembrance means to her. They made poppy pinwheels. We attended the Remembrance Service in Teddington. A drama student from St Mary's ran a great evening of drama and, alongside the Rangers, we took to the ice at Hampton Court. The unit took part in the Church Bazaar, running games, face painting and the Chocolate Tombola. Teddington District got together for an evening of Christmas crafts just before Christmas and we ended the term with a trip to see Zootropolis 2 and Pizza in Kingston.

### Teddington Rangers

The Rangers ran alongside the Guides for the Spring term joining in with Fun in the Dark, the Sleepover in the Landmark and the trip to Harry Potter world. They worked on their Express Themselves theme with drama, cookie making, fabric printing, story writing and poetry. Many of the unit are also Young Leaders with other units and are working towards their Young Leader certificates.

The summer saw cookouts, pamper evening, some exam destressing and a weekend camp at Walton Firs.

The autumn term began with welcoming new member and making arm-pit fudge. Working on the Be Well theme they created healthy salads, made up exercise routines and explored mindfulness. A team took part in Day Prowl, the unit attended

Remembrance Parade and made Christmas cards to sell. They joined the other units for the Christmas Craft event.

### ALMA: Suzie Gordon

Sadly, I have very little to report this year. However, the Lent Appeal was extremely successful, and we raised a total of £8,962 for Pemba, our linked parish in Mozambique, this money was intended to buy Father Bulaki a bicycle to help him travel his parish plus he had asked for a new printer. After various problems experienced by ALMA, many due to the complex situation in the wider region, most of this money has now reached our linked parish in Mozambique, and we have kept an amount back for emergencies.

We have had far less communication with our parish this year but have continued to pray and message them from time to time. We received a number of photographs from them during the year and sent some in return. The Alma group have continued to meet two or three times during the year to discuss what if anything can be done but sadly it is still unsafe to make a visit.

Rev Joy joined me and Sarah Greenwood at the Alma Service at St Paul's in July when Archbishop Vicente Msosa, IAMA's new primate, preached and the service was led by Bishop Sarah, the new Archbishop of Canterbury.

I have enjoyed my 10 years as the Alma representative but feel it is time for somebody else to pick up the reins and hopefully to establish a good contact with our link parish.

### Welcare: Margaret Squire

Welcare is a family support charity working with families and children up to the age of 13 in south London and East Surrey.

As the needs of children and families in London have changed, so has the work they do. Welcare now focuses on preventative work, life skills development and helping to keep families together. They offer individual one-to-one work and group work programmes, working alongside parents and carers, helping them to nurture their children and cope with disadvantages they face.

Welcare is a Christian-based charity, though the families they help are from all religions and none. St Mary with St Alban Church has supported them with two annual funds raising events for many years. There is a Lent lunch, a simple meal for which participants are asked to make a donation, and a Singalong Carol evening at Christmas

at the Anglers. In 2025 we made over £600 for Welcare at the Anglers and £557 at the Lent Lunch.

## Churches Together: Malcolm Eady

For over 58 years the different Christian churches and denominations in Teddington have worked together and supported each other under the framework of Churches Together in Teddington (CTT). They all have the same basic calling - to worship God, to share the good news about Jesus Christ and to work for the good of all people.

The CTT Council is made up of representatives of the Churches in Teddington, Hampton Wick and Fulwell - the Methodist, Baptist, Salvation Army, Catholic, and the Church of England. It meets four times per year and organises a number of joint services and events. Co-operation between the churches is good and attendance at the special services held in each other's churches is high. The web site is <http://www.teddingtonchurches.org.uk>

The Chairperson this year up to Sept 2025 was The Revd David Cloake from St. Mary with St. Alban, and from then it has been John Lunt from Sacred Heart.

We are allocated 4 representatives on the council. Your representatives are Fr David Cloake, Malcolm Eady, Joy Beauchamp, Cathy Randall.

### *Activities.*

Each year CCT organise joint services at Easter and in the summer. At Christmas they organise the Christmas day lunch at Elleray Hall, carol singing in the High Street as part of the "Teddington Lights Up" event and arrange for the distribution of a Christmas card for the whole of Teddington. They also organise Lent courses, prayer walks and a street collection for Christian Aid.

### *Christmas Day Lunch*

The main event each year is the Christmas Day Lunch at Elleray Hall, which is provided for the local elderly and those who would otherwise be alone on Christmas Day. This year it was held in the brand-new New Elleray Centre, which had only just opened in December - making it their first large event.

The day was a great success thanks to Luis the chef and his family, who prepared around 150 traditional Christmas lunches. Approximately 95 meals were enjoyed by guests and volunteers at the centre, with others delivered to people who were unable to attend or packed up to be enjoyed the following day. On the day itself, guests were collected either by private car or by a minibus kindly provided by Rakat, along with volunteer drivers. On arrival, everyone was greeted with coffee, mince pies, and the chance to win a raffle prize - setting a cheerful tone for the afternoon.

The raffle prizes were generously donated by the congregations of St John's Church, Hampton Wick, and St Mark's. Guests were treated to live music from Angus, the pianist at St John's. The local MP, Munira Wilson, visited and spent time chatting with guests. As guests departed, they were each given a goody bag filled with gifts, toiletries, and food, along with a handmade Christmas card created by Sunday School children and pupils from St Mary and St Peter's School.

More than 60 volunteers helped, before and on the day, to make this a very special community event. Our main funder is the Hampton Fund, which covers about 50% of the cost. In January 2025 we received a late donation from the Waitrose Community Fund for 2024's lunch, which we carried over, and it made up the short fall in funding for the 2025 lunch. There were, in addition, many in-kind donations of small gifts for the goody bags, which were given to each guest as they left. Our heartfelt thanks go to the Ellera Centre for hosting us in their new building.

### *Good Friday Service*

At Easter (2025) the Good Friday processions and the Service on the green, by the Methodist church, took place as normal. One procession started at St Mary with St Alban and followed by a walk down High street and Broad Street. The second procession came from St Francis de Sales, which was joined at Wilcox Road by those from St Michael's to walk down Stanley Road. There was then a short service, in which representatives of various local congregations contributed. This was followed by a Vigil by the Cross, with each church taking a half-hour period. The service and processions this year were well attended (about 150) and the weather was fine.

### *Teddington Lights Up – Nov 27th*

At the "Teddington Lights Up" evening, members from various churches joined up for carol singing at the end of Cambridge Road. This was very successful even though we did not have the Salvation Army band. We were joined by many passers-by, and there was a larger footfall than previous years.

### *Christmas cards/leaflets.*

These are in the form of a good quality A6 colour Christmas card and provide information about the Christmas services at all the member churches. Over 8,000 cards are delivered. The cards are distributed by most of the member churches and there was very positive feedback from residents. The reduced content made it much clearer which were the key services in each church. We plan to increase the print run to 9,000, as some roads in the Fulwell area were not covered.

### *Week of Prayer for Church Unity*

For the week of Prayer for Church Unity in January there were short services held each day at one of the member churches, and this year the main Sunday service was held at Sacred Heart.

### *Christian Aid week collection*

The main activity for Christian Aid week is the door-to-door collection, which for the past few years has been a “delivery only” collection. A few CTT churches helped with this effort and about 3,000 envelopes were delivered to selected roads in Teddington and Hampton Wick. We printed a QR code in our monthly Newsletter, so people could donate directly to Christian Aid. There were also instructions on the envelopes about how to return them to the local churches. The amount raised by cash was significantly reduced, £718.40 plus £105 tax reclaim, so we will be looking at ways we can raise awareness and raise more money for Christian Aid.

In recent financial years Christian Aid Week nationally has raised about £5m which is about 6% of the total income of Christian Aid.

### Hampton Deanery Synod: Nick de Mattos

Hampton Deanery Synod comprises 16 churches in our local area: St Michael and St George, Fulwell; St Mary’s, Hampton; All Saints, Hampton; St James, Hampton Hill; St John, Hampton Wick; St Richard, Hanworth; St Mary with St Alban, Teddington; St Mark, Teddington; Holy Trinity, Twickenham; St Mary, Twickenham, All Saints, Twickenham; St Stephen, Twickenham; All Hallows, Twickenham; St Augustine, Whitton; SS Philip and James, Whitton; SS Peter and Paul, Teddington (now Peter and Paul Centre).

Each meeting comprises an opening welcome by the Area Dean, worship and an introduction to the host church, usually led by a minister of that church. Apologies for absence are noted along with the approval of the minutes from the previous meeting with any matters arising dealt with. Every meeting has a theme, on which the guest speaker will make a presentation. The meeting concludes with prayer.

2025 – 6 has not been a good year for HDS in terms of meetings. The resignation of the long-standing secretary, Anne-Marie Philp, due to her moving away from the area in November 2024 meant that business has not kept up. This was compounded by the more recent absence of the Area Dean.

However, here is a summary of this last year compiled by a combination of the Area Dean’s notes and those of our own Robin Field-Smith.

The meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025 was held at Holy Trinity Church, Twickenham. The incumbent, Rev Simon Couper, led the opening worship with the watchwords of his

church which were Welcome, Worship and Witness. Regarding these three concepts, two questions were regularly asked: How are we doing? and How should we spend our money? He pointed out that 2025 is the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first encapsulation of the Nicene Creed, and all were asked to recite it as part of the opening worship.

The Area Dean's points comprised:

- A request to find a volunteer to fill the post of HDS Secretary
- Tony Dixon has been elected to fill the Diocesan Synod Lay Vacancy
- The Rev James Bunyan is moving from the Assistant Curacy of St Michael's Fulwell to be Vicar of Christchurch, Staines.
- All Saints, Twickenham will cease offering public worship at the end of June. The Bishop of Fulham will lead the final service. Prayers were asked for the people and parish and the future of the church building.

The guest speaker of the meeting was Daniel Aldridge, CEO of Instanter Learning Trust and Executive Head of Bishop Wand School, Sunbury. He talked about the importance of the recruitment of governors, emphasising that their role was more to care for the staff and pupils of schools and supporting the Christian ethos rather than finances and the colour of the carpets. Questions included the contribution of the London Diocesan Board for Schools (LDBS) and what the Deanery could expect from it as well as how governors could be identified and recruited. Both questions were unresolved.

Future meeting dates were yet to be confirmed.

The next, and only other, meeting was on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026 and was held at St James Church, Hampton Hill. The Rev Debs Wignall of St Richard's, Hanworth is the new Area Dean and opened the meeting. Opening Worship was conducted by Rev Derek Winterburn, the outgoing interim AD, centring on Psalm 91.

Deanery news comprised the following:

- Welcome to the Rev Helen Calner, newly appointed vicar of St Augustine, Whitton.
- 2026 is the year for the triannual election of deanery synod representatives at church APCMs

Although there was a visiting speaker in the person of Zac Jopling of St Stephens, the meeting was devoted to deanery business, chaired by Tony Dixon, Lay Chair. He spoke on promoting the Deanery Synod and a Common Fund update. Re the first of these, particularly in attracting more young people, he introduced Zac who has been on his church's PCC for 7 years and the DS for 4. Zac said that the 'tap on the shoulder' is more effective than an impersonal email. Zac himself received a personal invitation. Asked about involving congregants in the DS, Zac emphasised the importance of

making sure the PCC properly represented the congregation as a starting point and making the congregation more aware of the wider C of E. Zac said that it was likely that the average congregant would be unaware of the DS and that what they would like to see in their church and in the C of E at large could be voiced in the DS. Awareness of this might encourage wider involvement.

The meeting continued with a request from the Kensington Area Director of Ordinands for Lay Assessors who take part in the interviews of potential ordinands. Robin Field-Smith is an experienced Lay Assessor, so if anyone is interested in this role, they could speak to him. This was followed by a presentation by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (Kensington Area), Sarah Dale. A full outline of her points is available from Robin Field-Smith or Nick de Mattos. This included a table-top exercise and small groups discussing the five points raised by the SGA: culture, leadership and capacity; prevention; risk management; victims and survivors; learning, supervision and support. Then there was feedback session, summarised as follows: no time limits on disclosure – it doesn't matter how long ago it was; clergy responsibility – to what extent should the disclosure be shared? Sarah said that confidential information should not be shared unnecessarily but that if there was a transferable risk, the SGA could advise; monthly Diocesan SG Zoom meetings – are all aware of them? Clergy priority given to SG helped promote a good SG culture; possibility of SG training being done in (deanery?) groups.

In the AOB, the AD again asked for volunteers for the post of HDS Secretary. The next meeting is on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2026 at St Michael's Fulwell.

## Diocesan Synod: Robin Field-Smith

Three meetings were held in 2025.

At the February meeting at St John's, Hyde Park Crescent, Synod was given a briefing by the Compassionate Communities team on the Net Zero Carbon (NZC) programme, with advice to churches and parishes on how to move forward to achieve the targets, and information on the help available.

Then we had a session on Growing Younger, with a focus on five objectives to drive growth:

- Every parish with a plan to increase the number of the under 17s in their Worshiping Community
- Clergy who understood ministry among children, young people and families
- Paid workers, with an ambition for 300 across the diocese to accelerate growth
- Volunteer youth workers, with an ambition for 2000 new volunteers

- Youth Minsters providing missional youth work, with an ambition for 1 in every deanery

The June meeting at St Paul's, Hammersmith, was focused on finance and Living in Love and Faith (LLF). We started with an update from the LLF Programme Director and then views on key aspects of the programme were sought through use of mobile phone applications beaming answers onto big screens. This showed considerable disquiet with the proposals, both the rationale and doctrinal basis, as well as the suggested measures for episcopal oversight of dissenting parishes. What was clear to me was the weight and noise of views from parishes and individuals who are rooted in Biblical writings rather than Christ's new commandment to "love your neighbour as yourself".

We received the report and accounts of the London Diocesan Fund, and had a presentation on the purpose, principles and process of the Common Fund, which draw on Paul's second letter to the Corinthians (8 and 9) encouraging generosity and the grace of giving according to means for redistribution according to need.

We also voted on a motion asking the Church Commissioners and Archbishop's Council to consider redistributing funds acquired since 1997 for the CofE Pension Scheme directly to diocesan stipend funds.

The November meeting, held at St Mellitus College, opened with a report of Mission activity, highlighting the 17% growth in the worshipping community (approx. 9,000 people) between 2022 and 2024, and a 30% increase in average weekly attendance since 2021. We also heard about eight encouraging stories of mission success across the diocese. There was also a chance for Synod members to use their phones to beam onto the large screens one-word answers to where they had seen glimpses of glory, and what they hoped for in the future.

Synod was given the 2026 budget, which starts the process of removing by 2030 the current £4m deficit, but recognises the welcome increase in contributions to the Common Fund.

There was a report by the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) for the Care of Churches, and parishes were given two pieces of advice in relation to projects: (i) seek advice early, (ii) the greater the change, the more effort required on a clear statement of need.

Synod passed a motion which stated: "That the scales of representation on Deanery Synods for the 2026 elections be one lay representative for every 53 members of the church's 2025 electoral roll or part thereof".

Finally, this was Bishop Sarah's last Diocesan Synod meeting before her translation to Archbishop of Canterbury. On behalf of the Diocesan Synod members, the Lay and Clergy Vice-Chairs thanked her for her guidance and leadership of the diocese through

difficult conversations, the Covid pandemic, and a time of much external scrutiny of the church. They expressed their thanks also to her family and assured her of the diocese's prayers as she took up her new role.

## Fairtrade: Susan Jacobs

In 2025, Advent Calendars, with the Christmas story book included, and "Real Easter Eggs", with the Christian story of the Passion and Eastertide, both of which are produced using the well-recognised Fairtrade logo and which use fairly traded chocolate and sugar, were available. Approximately fifty of each were sold to parishioners at the relevant season. Sales took place after Sunday morning services during the run-up to Easter and Christmas.

Parishioners are encouraged to seek out the Fairtrade logo when shopping. Most supermarkets supply some goods; the Co-op has a large range, and ethically fairly traded goods of all kinds (not just foodstuffs) are available by mail order on several sites: *ethicalsuperstore.com*; *wearefairtrade.com*; *jts.co.uk*, are all recommended.

Hall users, our Community/Memory/Bereavement Cafés and the Parish Office are encouraged to use fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar if possible.