



Annual Report of the Parish of the Resurrection May 2026



ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The Parish of the Resurrection Alton is part of the Diocese of Winchester within the Church of England. The correspondence address is: The Parish Office, All Saints Hall, Queens Road, Alton GU34 1HU. The office is open during weekday mornings.

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of The Resurrection is a Registered Charity No: 1136970.

The Churches of the Parish are; The Church of the Holy Rood, Holybourne; St Peter's Church, Beech; All Saints Church, Alton and St Lawrence Church, Alton. On 1st April 2024 the Parish of Bentworth, Lasham & Shalden was established and we are now in the wider Benefice of the Resurrection sharing ministry and mission.

Licensed Ministry team:

Vicar - VACANT

Associate Vicar - Revd David Chattell

Assistant Priest - Revd Jon Rooke

Assistant Priest - Revd Wendy Burnhams

LLMs - Debbie Thrower, Elaine Brown, Ruth Chattell

PTO Ministry Team:

Revd Bruce Nicole, Venerable Annette Cooper

Churchwardens:

Clive Muller, Kay Walker, Matthew Bayliss, Helen Walters, Angie Briggs, Sarah Neish

Elected members of the PCC:

Robin Kemp (St Lawrence), Lisa Hillan (Church of the Holy Rood), Ann Mason (All Saints), Mrs Cheryl Fisher (St Peter's)

Co-Opted members of the PCC:

Mark Penfold (buildings advisor)

Deanery Synod Members:

Tori Hewitt, Keith Arrowsmith Oliver, Derek Gurney, Sue Hubbard and Elspeth MacKeggie Gurney

Hon PCC Secretary: Abigail Coles **Minute Secretary:** Abigail Coles

Hon Treasurer: Paul Susans

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the Parish of the Resurrection is the governing body of the Parish. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules and the Parish Scheme. The PCC met six times during 2025. The PCC was supported by an Executive Group (Standing Committee), Finance & Administration Group, Worship & Spiritual Life Group (Ministry Team) & Community, Outreach & Community Group & Staff & Volunteer Group.

The Constitution of the Parish of the Resurrection and the supporting Policy Guidance document can both be found on the parish website.

Aims and purposes

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Vicar, to promote the whole mission of the Church - pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical - in the Ecclesiastical Parish of the Resurrection Alton. It is the duty of the Vicar and the PCC to consult together on matters of general concern and importance to the parish.

Objects and activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our churches and to become part of our parish community. The Parish Ministry Team and PCC all acknowledge the need to consider public benefit in planning activities and guidance on the advancement of religion.

We work under our Vision Statement of 'Proclaiming the Risen Jesus, Steadfast in Faith, Active in Service'.

This Vision is upheld by our Parish Values:

As a welcoming, worshipping community of disciples of Jesus we are:

Rooted in prayer – learning the practices of being in conversation and relationship with God our Father through Jesus Christ our Lord. In everything we do prayer comes before, during and after.

Rooted in the Bible – believing that The Word of God directs and guides our individual and our communal lives. We read, mark, learn and apply it to all our decision making and parish life.

Rooted in the gifts of the Holy Spirit – sharing what we all receive from Him to encourage and build each other up. We always want to be open to the possibilities of the present and future whilst valuing our heritage.

Rooted in partnership – looking to work with and alongside others who are building and extending the kingdom of God. We will work with each other across our parish, with other local churches and with community groups who have kingdom values at their heart.

Rooted in quality – seeking that whatever we do is the best we can offer and is attractive to those in our communities.

Rooted in fun – enjoying the life that we have and presenting the Church and our faith in Jesus with liveliness and boldness.

Rooted in our care of creation – being good and wise stewards of the world’s resources and our environment. We will work towards the A Rocha Eco Church awards and Fairtrade status.

Main objectives for the year:

- To work together to recruit a new Vicar for the Parish of the Resurrection who will uphold the Parish Values
- To continue to seek a Children, Families and Schools Worker
- To continue the established service pattern across both The Parish of the Resurrection an Bentworth, Lasham & Shalden and to encourage congregations to worship in each other buildings during each month
- To grow the small groups for pastoral care and discipleship and a regular pattern for Alpha and The Bereavement Journey
- To make contacts in the new housing developments through systematic visiting
- To build further our ministry team and its team building
- Improve the use of our Parish Resources

Strategies used to achieve our objectives:

- Focal ministry is further strengthened to give continuous pastoral and liturgical leadership in each congregation
- Greater use of email and social media to inform our parishioners of the activities of the church
- Further updating of our database and website to make them more useful to our administration and communication
- Formation of a community of small group leaders
- Further development of the church-based database for communication and increased use of social media
- Use of teaching series to help movement between churches and worship
- Building teams for small groups and Alpha and Bereavement Journey

VICAR’S REPORT / TRUSTEE’S REPORT

The Benefice of the Resurrection entered a vacancy in March 2025. During the past year, Revs Lyn Power, Martin East and Peter Brown also concluded their seasons of ministry within the ministry team, and we are grateful for all they have given in service to our churches and communities. I am grateful for the hard work of all the team, Rev's Wendy Burnhams, Jon Rooke, Bruce Nicole, Ven Annette Cooper and LLMs Elaine Brown, Debbie Thrower and Ruth Chattell.

Despite the benefice having been in vacancy for the past 14 months, church life and activities have continued without the need to curtail existing ministry. This has only been possible because of the commitment, generosity and faithful service of so many people across the benefice. From leading and supporting worship, running toddler groups, coffee and cake mornings, flower arranging, preparing refreshments and bacon rolls, cleaning, verging, administration and committee work, to countless other acts of service, many have continued to contribute faithfully to the life of our churches. During this time we were delighted to welcome two new members into our team, Emily Spencer started into the role of Anna Chaplain in September followed by Abigail Coles as a new benefice administrator who became part of our wonderful administration team in November. I am grateful to everyone who has served in these and many other ways.

The process of recruiting our next Vicar began following a presentation from the Archdeacon to the two PCCs, after which the Writing Group met to prepare the Benefice Profile. We are grateful to all involved for their thoughtful consideration of the benefice's needs and for the work undertaken to produce the profile document that formed the basis of the recruitment process. Due to a lack of applicants, the post had to be advertised more than once — a situation that is becoming increasingly common, particularly within multi-parish benefices. As Area Dean I continue to be involved in vacancies in our jointly run Deaneries of Alton and Alresford. We are now delighted to look forward to the arrival of Rev Tim Gomm, who will be licensed by the Rt Rev Philip Mounstephen on 11 August at St Lawrence Church.

The departure of a priest from a long-standing post inevitably brings a degree of uncertainty to aspects of church life, even while much continues as before. The arrival of our new Vicar will be the next stage in the transition following Andrew Mickelfield's departure. We trust that with Rev Tim Gomm in prayer and open conversation, we will continue to discover vision for the benefice and for each of our church communities in the months and years ahead.

It is a privilege to belong to a parish that is alive and active in faith and service. While we continue to face challenges around finance and growth, these are not insurmountable. We pray that many more people will join us in worship and grow with us in discipleship. God continues to be at work among us, and as we seek to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, we trust that many more people will come to know the blessing, hope and love found in the gospel of Christ through the witness and ministry of our churches. Please continue to pray for the benefice, our parish and to play an active part in the life of our churches, especially as we prepare to welcome Rev Tim and support him in his new ministry among us.

Reverend David Chattell, Associate Priest, Benefice of the Resurrection - May 2026

The trustees' annual report was approved on 12th May 2026 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



Revd David Chattell (Associate Vicar)
Chairman of Trustees

PARISH OF THE RESURRECTION TREASURER'S REPORT

A brief word of introduction, I am a retired Accountant having spent 47 years working in the profession, the last 13 years of which was a Partner in a local firm. I have been worshipping at St Lawrence for nearly 4 years, previous to that I was a member of a Free Church where I served as Treasurer for many years so Accounts – and Church Accounts – are not new to me.

It was a great privilege to have been asked to stand as Treasurer and I hope I can bring a continuing level of oversight as has been the case in previous years. Having said that, I am very grateful for the support of the Parish Bookkeeper and Administration Team – without whom, the management of the financial matters would be far more difficult. I am also grateful for the support of the other members of the Finance and Administration committee.

Accounts are required of all Charities and the Charity Commission, which is a Statutory Body that oversees Charities, sets out the format to which all Charities must submit Accounts, and it is no different for Churches. “Our” Accounts comply with the requirements but to minimise time being spent by all, I am pleased that with the agreement of the finance team, we are streamlining some of the reports and I set out below a summary which may be helpful.

Overall, expenditure exceeded income by just under £10,000 for the year when taking into account income including restricted funds, but the Parish continues with undertaking some substantial buildings’ maintenance throughout 2025.

The shortfall means that the available funds, including various restricted funds, has fallen by just under £10,000 but we believe that the funding available is sufficient to meet current known expenditure.

However, given the ages of some of our buildings we anticipate the need to spend some substantial sums over the next few years, and we have a comprehensive plan of the necessary works which includes the need to spend at least £60,000 on essential remedial stone- work at St Lawrence Church during 2026. There are insufficient funds in the reserves to meet even this work, irrespective of future urgent work in the pipeline, and although applications for grant funding will be considered, funders will expect to see additional funding from applicant Churches and their Congregations. Please do consider this in your praying and giving

It should be noted that the works referred to for St Lawrence Church do not include any costs for Organ renovation.

We are grateful for all the financial support the Parish receives from the congregations, and I must also highlight Gift Aid if you are a taxpayer and do not already give through the Parish Gift Aid Scheme. Gift Aid enhances the gift, through no cost to the donor, so please do consider making gifts this way.

We are also grateful to those who give through either Standing Orders or Debit Cards, such giving reduces the risk of loss and the administrative work in cash handling by those who volunteer – please do consider giving in ways other than cash.

To summarise the position the total income amounted to £300,462 and expenditure amounted to £310,426 leaving a shortfall of £9,964. Net funds overall amounted £230,104 compared to £240,068.

I am willing to answer more specific points but trust that the above provides you with an oversight of the situation as of 31 December 2025 for your prayerful consideration.

Paul Susans – Treasurer

REPORT ON ELECTORAL ROLL

The current number on the roll stands at 223, with 21 being non-resident in the Parish.

The previous 2025 Electoral Roll had 213 members with 17 of them being non-resident in the Parish.

PCC ANNUAL PROCEEDINGS REPORT 2025

January 2025

- Full safeguarding update was provided to the committee with agreed action to review the safeguarding training programme. Committee was informed that the C of E safer recruitment form has been completed by every new helper/leader at every group held since 2022.
- Discussion held on accessing grants and agreements for assistant Diocesan secretary to future meeting to provide further information on applying for grants.
- BLS – Joint mission was discussed highlighting that the vacancy process would include the further development of POTR and BLS working together.
- Vicar vacancy planning continued including scheduled meetings with Archdeacon, Church Wardens and congregations.
- Clergy well-being – Exit interview planned to include learning on available vicar support, working patterns and planned time off.
- Service plan – 2 retired ministers agreed to provide cover. New sustainable pattern to be agreed to cover period of interregnum.
- Discussion held regarding the CMF (Common Missionary Fund) increase and the impact on capital spend over next 5 years.
- Fabric Committees: Exploring quotes with potential stonemasons for work at St. Lawrence and All Saints. Asbestos surveys scheduled for all buildings (churches and halls). Urgent issue of very tall tree at Holyrood discussed and quote for immediate partial felling approved – List B faculty required.
- Hall hiring rates agreed to be reviewed at the Finance Committee.
- GDPR papers including Data Protection Policy reviewed.
- Alpha Course noted to commence January 2025.
- Meeting to be scheduled in for the Recruitment of a Y&C worker.

March 2025

- Vicar Vacancy process commenced following the meeting with the Archdeacon.

- Letting of the Vicarage – not approved by F&A committee due to need to review works schedule and parking arrangements.
- Fabric Committees: Urgent need to appoint stonemasons for works at St. Lawrence to commence by June 2025. Quote for stone works at Holyrood obtained (region of £20k). Expenditure for work on stone and guttering approved for All Saints, Anstey and Stone (Farnham) to be engaged. Noted that lighting in AS Hall needs to be reviewed. Quote for works to St. Peter's font to be obtained. Growth of moss noted on all Churches.
- Finance and Admin Committee circulated budget position for discussion.
- APCM 2025 preparations to commence with agreed extraordinary PCC meeting scheduled for APCM report sign off.
- The GDPR policy was approved and now ready for upload to website.
- Charitable giving to be reviewed annually at PCC agreed.
- Buildings insurance provider comparison to commence – quotes needed. Noted that AS and Holyrood tied into agreement until March 2026. Initial view that Trinitas was lower annual cost than Ecclesiastical.
- Busy Bees contract to extend for two years with an increase in rates agreed.
- Successful quiz and vicars farewell noted.
- Job description for C&Y worker in development.
- Job description for Administrative Officer to be approved at subsequent PCC.
- Equalities Policy reviewed and remained unchanged.
- Safeguarding policy (including whistleblowing policy), Lone working and Volunteers policy to be revised and approved at next PCC meeting.
- Deanery Synod – DC appointed as Area Dean, committee noted that more representation needed from POTR.

May 2025

- Vicar vacancy writing group established – on target to send draft report to Archdeacon. Response from Archdeacon will be followed by a Section 11 meeting.
- Eco Church Strategy shared. Gold Award was anticipated in the next 12 months. A creation Care Policy needing to be developed for the Parish. Energy usage review to take place. Discussion held about how land and nature biodiversity could be encouraged. Work with ACAN (Alton Climate Action Network) to continue.
- Fabric Committees: Difficulties obtaining the funds needed to complete the stonework at St. Lawrence. Grants would be explored and an overall strategy considering all factors for the building agreed to be developed. At Holyrood the lightning conductor repairs cost was approved noting that due to emergency repair a second quote would not be obtained. Clock repair works at All Saints were considered and agreed that a grant application for this cost would be explored due to the nature of the work not being a priority.
- Smart water and Roof leadwork insurance discussed as per insurance policy requirements. Agreed for each fabric committee to discuss.
- Fire Risk Assessment quote obtained from Hurtwood Fire. Agreed that a second quote should be obtained in accordance with the PCC spending procedures.
- Finance and Admin committee shared that the accounts for 2024/2025 were audited and signed. Noted that treasurer was stepping down in November 2025 and this would be raised at APCM to alert and possibly seek a successor.
- Policies; Safeguarding Policy, Reserves Policy and Lone Worker Policy approved.

- ALPHA had seen less interest and cost implications were discussed. Agreed to postpone for pending review.
- Children, Youth and Families committee proposed raising the hourly rate advertised for the new C&Y worker. PCC agreed that the costs needed to be checked and that in light of the current financial situation a grant needed to be explored.
- Agreed to 3% increase in administrator hourly pay.
- New administrator job description would describe a division of tasks and identify the vicar to line manager both administrator posts.
- Deanery Synod meeting had been held in May 2026.

July 2025

- Mark Penfold co-opted onto the PCC as Buildings advisor – unanimous approval.
- Kay Walker elected as Churchwarden at St. Lawrence.
- No applications received for post of new Vicar.
- Fabric Committees: St. Lawrence exploring cost of roof alarm and Smart Water application. Holyrood require the vestry flat roof to be re-roofed. All Saints decided against Smart Water application, but Stonework repairs scheduled for July 2025. AS Hall external decorating scheduled for July 2025. Painting and carpentry at St. Peter's being carried out.
- Interregnum update – Ministry team to sort a rota up to December 2025.
- Emily spencer appointed as Anna Chaplain.
- Administrative task review to be carried out to establish proportion of time spent on BLS tasks.
- CMF – full amount to be paid agreed, no overpayment agreed.
- Paul Susans volunteered to take on role as replacement treasurer.
- End of year accounts will be passed to external advisor to produce External Verification report.
- Creation Policy circulated by Eco Church team – Approved.
- Successful Curry and Christianity event – 33 attended.
- Away Day planned for September.
- Alpha course to be held at AS Hall going forward to reduce costs.
- Signatories to Newbury bank - agreed to be updated with immediate effect.
- Decision to run a Stewardship campaign in the Autumn.

September 2025

- PAT testing completed across all buildings.
- Agreement for Churchwardens to sign off the form for the vicarage letting.
- Quarterly safeguarding update shared highlighting that the data breach at APCS did **not** apply to POTR but only to those who used online option.
- Stewardship Campaign – Proposal for an October service at St. Lawrence to focus on giving. Agreement to ensure that information about the giving scheme is widely shared as well as information about what works are being planned.
- Noted that electoral role numbers presented at APCM had reduced – action agreed to explore the reasons.
- Fabric Committees: Agreed for TV screen to be installed in the AS Hall – this would benefit ALPHA course and other groups such as Hope Church. St. Peter's electrical works is progressing.

- Agreement for 3rd week services to be used for Baptisms.
- Complaints Policy, Conflict of Interest Policy and Communications Policy all agreed.
- Risk Register full review carried out – decision that the chair of each subgroup to lead on each committee risks.
- GAP events shared – request made for individual to support GAP.
- Issue of recruiting and funding C&Y worker discussed. Further discussion required on possible links with other places to enable full-time hours to be offered.
- New administrator Abigail Coles to commence role November 2025. Secretary of PCC role to be formally handed over to Ellie Elder in the interim period.

November 2025

- Fire risk assessment spending decision approved after consideration of two quotes.
- Electoral role numbers of those completing the forms had previously reduced – action agreed for church wardens to encourage the congregation to sign where possible.
- Vicar Vacancy advert reopened.
- Extraordinary PCC meeting held November to review the Parish Profile.
- Request from Busy Bees nursery to rent previous parish office was declined due to ongoing demand for church storage space.
- Fabric Committees; St. Lawrence still seeking quote for Smart Water marking/roof alarms. A donation had been received to cover the repair works to the Churchyard Lychgate at Holyrood. Ask from the committee for spending decision form to be completed for the installation of screen at All Saints Hall due to cost being larger than initially thought.
- Review of spending decision process – agreement that spending requests should include a 10% contingency and that requests up to £2000 require one quote only and over £2000 two quotes are required.
- Building insurance was still for consideration – quotes from competing provider to be sought and brought back to PCC.
- Risk Register Annual Review carried out – each presented by Sub-group chair.
- Following a conversation with East Hampshire District Council, it was recommended that All Saints Church, St. Lawrence Church and Holy Rood, as well as parish centre and All Saints Hall were to be registered as a food business due to the preparation of food at those places. Food representatives from each church would be sought.
- Proposal agreed to trial an additional service at St. Lawrence, a 9.30 family service lasting 30 minutes. Feedback on the service would be brought to January PCC.
- Administrative team job descriptions reviewed and agreed with both administrators. Office furniture quote to be sought for two desks and replacement laptops.

FABRIC REPORTS

All Saints Church and Hall - Alton

Another year of sharing All Saints with Hope Church has seen all routine annual checks being done and general maintenance shared between the two groups.

The exterior of the north Nave Wall was expertly repaired after a long period of water ingress due to an original Victorian downpipe problem. It now looks very good again. The interior wall will be repaired after it has completely dried out.

The Mens' Shed have carried out minor repairs to wooden cupboard doors which were difficult to open.

The Mower was fully serviced and is in good working order for our team of volunteer mowers and we look forward to a Wildflower Count in the Churchyard in June this year.

All Saint's Hall was repainted internally and externally last August and the lighting upgraded. To follow this the kitchen, office, hallway and toilets are to be decorated in this coming June. Hopefully this will lead to more bookings of our Hall.

Angie Briggs- Church Warden

Church of the Holy Rood - Holybourne

The Holy Rood Living Space Group has met approximately every six weeks during the last 12 months. The principal Holy Rood works/ fabric committee matters over the last year have been the following:

- Repairing the Belfry door
- Updating the sound system
- Arranging improvement works to the Lych Gate
- Tree works in the churchyard
- Arranging repairs to the vestry roof
- Health and Safety, electrical and fire safety inspections and reports
- Arranging for swift and bat boxes to be installed
- Receipt and initial discussion of the latest Quinquennial Inspection report.
- Church Clock repairs

Matthew Bayliss – Church Warden

St Peter's Church - Beech

Over the past year.....

A Local Church Group has met regularly over the past year. A willing group help to clean the church and mow and cut the grass and hedges when needed. Thank you to the Holy Dusters and small maintenance group.

Stage two of Repairs and repainting to the woodwork was completed in early September. We now await a quotation from a stone mason to secure the font and wooden finial.

Plans for the year ahead.....

We continue to investigate problems as and when they arise to ensure a sustainable solution can be found to repair and replace when necessary.

We thank David and the Ministry team who maintain the bi-monthly service pattern with additional funeral and baptisms as they arise, and we look forward to welcoming Tim in August.

A monthly lunch club is held on the 3rd Monday of the month, and a community led coffee morning continues weekly in the village hall.

Please pray for; The ministry team, the team of volunteers involved, support from the village and the Parish Finance Team who all play their parts in different ways.....

Thank you!!

Sarah Neish - Church Warden

St Lawrence Church & Parish Centre - Alton

2025/2026 has been a busy year at St. Lawrence with Andrew Micklefield moving to Winchester and the Reverend David Chattell doing a good job leading the interregnum. It is a great blessing that we have a new vicar, the Reverend Tim Gomm, starting in July. As well as a new Anna Chaplain, Emily Spencer, who started earlier this year. Letting out the Vicarage has protected the building during the interregnum and provided finances for the Diocese. We gained a new Parish administrator, Abbie Coles in Autumn 2025 to join Ellie They are both very efficient, invaluable and well organised and a tremendous addition to POTR.

We opened the church for the Ride and Stride visitors in September but were unable to be there personally as there was a Parish Away Day on the same date.

Regarding the St. Lawrence Hall, the caretaker retired and we have taken on a lovely lady called Theresa as a paid cleaner We have had new First Aid boxes in the hall and some repairs to the building. Two ceiling tiles were replaced and the leaking roof mended. A YU smart meter has been installed and the fire extinguishers checked; We are due a fire risk assessment on 14th May by Philip from Hurtwood Fire.

Rebecca Walters from The Environmental Health has done a food hygiene inspection of the hall and we now have a new Hygiene, food handling and food labelling policy from April 2026.

Regarding St. Lawrence Church, building; it has received a lot of attention this year as it always does and will require a lot of attention in the following years. The A/V system has been checked by Graham Benne with, and Graham Wood added a semi-automatic mixer.

Stubbys did a high reach clean in the church in January 2026. The fire extinguishers have been checked and a fire risk assessment completed May 6th. There was a leak from the water heater in the POD kitchen, and the damp was going through to the robing room, so the hot water heater was replaced. Lyn and Martin Baines then carried out a deep clean of the kitchen.

We cleaned the carpets at the altar and in the Gallilee chapel and the robing room.

Rob Young serviced the two boilers in the church and the one in the hall and will do some remedial work in the Summer on the church boilers. George Harrison mended the Lych Gate and the Tower door.

I am pleased to say that a new "Buildings and Fabric Committee" has been set up at St. Lawrence and we met for the first time on the 6th May.

There was a Food Hygiene inspection earlier this year and Rebecca Walters from EHDC was pleased with our facility. Our coffee morning and Sunday service coffee helpers were already very geared up to this, but we have a new "Food Hygiene, Handling and Labelling policy " from April 2026.

Linda has set up a new lending library of Christian books, and we are hoping to get some more books to sell. We have obtained a display board for the Glow children's group, and their writings and illustrations are a lovely witness to the church. We have just got a display board for the Eco church too. We have a new service booklet for visiting priests so that they know the set up for the services at St. Lawrence church.

I am very pleased to tell you that Paul Susans has joined the serving team and is shortly to help with the communion services.

A lot has been happening in the church which I won't have time to go into! But it is very encouraging to see new faces, young and old, joining the church at the 10.30 and especially at the new 9.30 service once per month. And I do not have time to mention the Alpha courses, a faith journaling art group, the prayer groups and Bible study groups, the organ recitals and the monthly market etc. etc.

Kay Walker - Church warden

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

The Deanery Synods of Alton and Alresford continue meeting together, 'in plurality'.

The respective Standing Committees meet to agree Synod agendas. The two Synods meet in turn at St Peters Ropley, The Church of the Good Shepherd Four Marks and also at Old Alresford Place.

In the last year Synod has received presentations as follows:

What it means to be a Church of England primary school and Revd Amber Beresford led us in a style of Collective Worship that she had given to school children, and we enjoyed a presentation from our Open the Book team. Head Techer Jo Ayres of Bentworth C of E Primary school addressed synod about what it means for her to lead a Church school.

We heard from a Senior Chaplain to the Armed forces who gave insights into his role and how it was received by soldiers. The invitation to speak was extended soon after Bishop Hugh Nelson, then Bishop for the Armed Forces, issued a paper about the current threat level and the congoing conflicts in the world.

Our Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, Jackie Rowlands, spoke about the increasing number of SG referrals to the Diocese and gave us an overview of her and her team's work.

Two funeral arrangers from Richard Steel and Partners addressed synod on current trends for funerals, mostly about unattended cremations which are matters of concern for Clergy. They gave synod insight into the funeral industry and answered questions of very practical nature around embalming, dressing the deceased, coffins and working with bereaved families.

Our Environmental Officer Rev Sam Scott spoke to Synod about food production, sustainability and healthy eating.

At our next Synod in June meeting we will hear from Toby Beresford who works for the Bible Society as their Director of Digital strategy. (We have benefited from the Bible Society's Bible and Roman's Courses)

Synod meetings typically have three parts, Worship, Presentation and discussion, followed by division into the two synods for discussion on matters pertaining to each deanery which usually include their African links.

There were four vacancies across the two Deaneries in the last year.

Rev Jennifer Wright was licensed to the Benefice of Farleigh, Candover and Wield in September 2025, the licensing of Rev David Cooke to the Itchen Valley will take place in July, that of Rev Timm Gomm to BOTR in August. The Arle Valley benefice, centred on St Johns, Alresford, continue to advertise their vacancy.

Rev David Chattell, Area Dean for Alton and Interim Dean for Alresford - May 2026.

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

It is with some relief and gratitude I can report that over the last year no safeguarding incidents or events have arisen in the Parish. However, a safeguarding concern was raised about an activity peripheral to the Parish in the early part of 2025. Much information was gathered and passed to the Diocese Safeguarding Team as requested because it formed part of a wider Diocesan enquiry. The matter was resolved by the Diocese in conjunction with the relevant governing body.

As a Parish we continue to seek advice from the Diocesan Team as necessary and to work within all the guidelines and processes established by the CofE. I am pleased to inform you that because we use the long-winded paper DBS system (rather than the on-line alternative) we lost no personal data through a data breach involving dioceses and charities across the UK in the summer of 2025.

I am grateful to a number of people for assistance over this year: to the PCC for taking their responsibility to monitor me seriously (including getting to grips with the Safeguarding Action Plan for the Parish) and for endorsing the suggestion that the entirely-administrative DBS-checking-work be passed to the Parish Administrators, leaving me free to concentrate on safeguarding training (for anyone between the flower arrangers to the non-stipendiary ministers), risk assessments and role descriptions for all church groups; to Ellie Elder for taking on the DBS work and helping me to rationalise all the record-keeping; to David Chattell for supporting me through the work relating to

the above-mentioned safeguarding concern; and to each and every one of you who has tackled the every-increasing numbers of courses and forms required to fulfil CofE expectations.

As always, I thank all of you on the electoral role and in the various congregations of the Parish for working with me in my on-going pursuit of keeping our churches and groups safe and welcoming places for our community and the wider Alton community.

Sally Kemp – Safeguarding Officer

REPORT OF THE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE

Over the year Teddies, Glow and the monthly Lego Church have been maintained, while Lighthouse has lost a couple of key families and is currently only offering one session per month for a handful of two or three children. The monthly Church @ 4 was revived in January and is holding its own. We are very grateful for those volunteers who have supported the children's work. The King's Arms' Unite group continues to nurture our young teenagers.



Lego Church



Celebrating of one year of Lego Church

We are grateful for Resurrection Furniture's offer of funding to supplement the PCC's commitment to appointing a Children and Families Minister: but, after two informal interviews with promising candidates, we have yet to appoint. For both [local] candidates the stumbling block has been moving their own children from the friends in their churches. Andy Saunders of Lighthouse Ministry has provided welcome advice on wording the advertisement. We will look to Tim Gomm for a fresh perspective on this appointment.

A new initiative since January has been the introduction of a monthly 9.30am Family Service with the Galilee Band leading the sung worship. These have successfully attracted congregations of 7 -15 children and 20-25 adults. While the Galilee Band has been well received on the third Sunday of the month, there have been very few children at these services, with Lighthouse being unsustainable. For September it might be better

to consider introducing another 9.30am service on the third Sunday and suspending Lighthouse altogether.

Our aim for next year is to attain a critical mass of children and young people by offering weekly teaching and worship and a social programme that keeps them engaged. We will, therefore, need to broaden our volunteer base, while praying hard for the right applicant for the Children and Families Minister post.

Robin Kemp

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY & OUTREACH COMMITTEE

There has been an imbalance between social, discipling and outreach events throughout the year. Most events are social.

The Spice Bank Curry Night and the Celtish Christmas Concert were successful innovations to complement regular events such as the Summer Parish Picnic, the Christmas Tree Festival and the Fish and Chip Quiz Night. The addition of sung entertainment to the revived Harvest Festival lunch was well received.



Christmas Tree Festival 2025



Preparation of ALPHA course meal

There will be a repeat of the Merry Opera Messiah from 2024 on October 31st, 2026.

Discipling events included a repeat of the Romans course, a Lent course on Courage for the Journey and a challenging Parish Away Day with Revd Jan Debreuil [with just 45 attendees]. Tim Gomm is clearly targeting the Away Day on September 19th as a springboard event for his ministry to the whole benefice.

The curry event on 22nd June this year has been upgraded to an outreach event entitled Curry, Comedy and Christianity, with a Christian guest comedian.

We are grateful to Tory Hewitt and the Ministry Team for jointly leading outreach on the Alpha course with Harvest Church. However, although a number of parish guests attend,

the few converts are among those brought by Harvest and there is no follow-up discipling group in the benefice. As congregations in the benefice, we need to commit to praying our friends and acquaintances onto the course and discipling them on the other side of it. An aim for this year should be to creatively reach out to all ages, but especially children, young people and their parents, and welcome them into the life of the benefice, not just on Sundays, but into our homes and to a comprehensive programme of activities throughout the week [on an Acts 2:42ff model(?)].

Robin Kemp

REPORT FROM RESURRECTION FURNITURE



Dear Members,

The Trustees of Resurrection Furniture are pleased to present this report, outlining our activities, progress, and impact over the past nine months. We remain grateful for your continued support and commitment to our shared mission.

1. Overview

Resurrection Furniture continues to be an attractive, friendly, and beneficial presence on the high street, serving the Alton community and surrounding areas both practically and spiritually. Demand for affordable furniture remains strong, reflecting cost-of-living pressures and increasing awareness of environmental sustainability.

2. Operational Highlights

- Furniture Reuse & Sales:

We have received and sold a steady flow of donated furniture, some of which has been refurbished by our workshop. This continues to divert significant volumes from landfill while generating income to support our charitable work.

- Donations & Collections:

Donations from local residents remain consistent. Earlier this year, we experienced costly disruption due to a mechanically failing van; however, following the purchase of a replacement vehicle, our service has now returned to normal.

- Logistics & Staffing:

We have recently appointed a part-time driver/loader to ease pressure on volunteers. Reliable collections and deliveries are essential to our success, and this role strengthens resilience and helps ensure a high-quality service.

- **Shop Leadership:**

In October, our shop manager Natasha retired to France. We are pleased to have appointed Theresa Oakes as her successor. She has settled in quickly, and her calm, efficient, and cheerful leadership is already proving a blessing to the team.

3. Community Impact & Grant Giving

Now into the fourth quarter of the year, we have awarded grants totalling £94,000 to 30 different organisations—an increase of £25,000 compared with 2024/25. A full list of recipients is attached to this report.

- Over 50% of these funds have supported youth work and youth organisations.
- The remainder has been directed towards local community groups and individuals facing financial hardship.

Our commitment to POTR remains strong. In the three years up to June 2025, we granted £34,000 specifically to finance our youth worker. In the current year we have reserved a £16,000 assuming a new appointment is made and earmarked an additional £29,000 for the next two years.

Beyond grant giving, we continue to provide low-cost furniture to individuals and families, helping to create stable and dignified living environments.

4. Mission & Christian Witness

We continue to convey the Christian message through our High Street window displays especially at Christmas and Easter, signage on our van, and through our approach to grant giving—particularly in the relief of hardship. Our work remains rooted in serving others with compassion and generosity.

5. Volunteers

Resurrection Furniture is run day-to-day by volunteers, whose dedication and cheerful service make all that we do possible. We have a stable team of over 50 volunteers, at least half of whom are from this Parish or neighbouring churches.

We remain deeply grateful for their commitment and are continuing to explore ways to support, train, and sustain this vital team.



Our Volunteers at work



6. Financial Summary

While detailed accounts will be presented at year end, the Trustees report that:

- Income from sales is up compared to this time last year however it has been less buoyant since Christmas 2025
- Grant giving has increased compared with the previous year.
- Operating costs, particularly transport and utilities, have risen, though these are being carefully managed.

7. Challenges

During this period, key challenges have included:

- Temporary disruption caused by vehicle failure.
- Balancing growing offers of furniture and accessories with a slight drop in sales

The Trustees continue to monitor and address these areas proactively.

8. Looking Ahead

In the coming months, we aim to:

- Build further resilience in our logistics and operations.
- Review our marketing and publicity
- Continue strengthening partnerships with local organisations and churches.
- Maintain and grow our support for youth work and those experiencing hardship, for the community, the environment and heritage buildings

9. Thanks & Appreciation

We extend our sincere thanks to all volunteers, donors, customers, and supporters. I am also grateful to the Trustees—Tim, Derek, Robin, Philippa, Paul, Mike and Nick, and to our Treasurer Chris for their continued strong commitment and leadership.

Conclusion

Resurrection Furniture continues to play a valuable role in supporting the local community, promoting sustainability, and sharing the Christian message in practical ways. The Trustees remain committed to building on this strong foundation and ensuring the charity's long-term strength and impact.

Grants Made since June 2025	
POTR Youth Worker	Alton College Food bank
Home Start Hants	8th Alton Scouts
Artwell	Andrews Endowed School
Bassy's barn	Chawton Park Bowls Juniors
Holybourne Village Pre School	Phoenix
Alton Community Assoc	St Mary Bentworth Primary
Alton Hard of Hearing Group	Alton Men's Shed
Anstey Junior School	St Lawrence Church organ
Kings Arms youth Programme	Alton Arts Festival
Ropley C.E. School	Flip Theatre Workshop
St Mary's Church Lasham	Holybourne Theatre
Bentley School	Alton seniors Library Club
Alton Town Twinning Ass	Ropley History network
Andrews Endowed School	Wootey School
Alton District Community Relief Fund	

John Hubbard - On behalf of RF Trustees

ECO CHURCH TEAM REPORT



The wild garden planting April 2025



Toy Bonanza November 2025

Since the last APCM, the Eco Church team has continued with its programme on the way to gaining the A Rocha Eco Church Gold Award.

Two successful Toy Bonanzas were held, one in July & for the first time this incorporated environment related activities that children could do throughout their summer holidays. In November, the Toy Bonanza was again combined with “Have a Greener Christmas” & again there were activities for children. Donations of £98 was given to Young ACAN & £122 to Home Start Wey Water.

Bulb planting in St Lawrence Churchyard was done in October to extend coverage and in early November the Eco group from St Lawrence Church added bulbs at the west end of the church. Work on the wildflower garden is ongoing – didn’t it look fabulous in the Summer? Initial design plans have been received from three designers for the Quiet Garden.

Julie from the Eco Church team devised and made a brilliant tree for the Christmas Tree Festival, illustrating the plastic journey when recycling is involved.

A very successful Craft Swap was held in the Autumn with left over stock going to other charities and to a newly set up Craft Group being established for Carers. £315 was given in financial donations & split between Home Start Wey Water & The Pink Place.

We were delighted that the work of the parish in gaining the Silver Eco Church Award was featured in the Diocesan weekly email in July, detailing all the work done & activities undertaken.

In 2026-27 we hope to have a real push on reducing the carbon footprint of our parish buildings – watch for more information on this in Sunrise, on the website & in Parish Matter.

Huge thanks to the team & to all of you who have supported Eco Church in the last 12 months.

Elsbeth Mackeggie Gurney