

**Wheathampstead  
Parochial Church Council**

# **Annual Report & Financial Statements**

**for the year ended  
31<sup>st</sup> December 2025**

**The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Helen's Wheathampstead  
and St. Peter's Gustard Wood**

**Registered Charity No: 1132924**

## Introduction from the Vacancy Leadership Team

2025 has been a year of challenge and opportunity and we have been aware of God's guidance and inspiration as we travel through the Vacancy. But we ended the year in the most uplifting way with the announcement of the name of the 53rd Rector of Wheathampstead and with the Bishop of Hertford generously leading our Christmas services.

March brought the news, sad for us, that Revd Canon Richard Banham was moving to St Mary's Watford. We had valued greatly Richard's 15 years of ministry here, along with the contributions that Claire made to parish life and worship, and developing her own work amongst young people. We enjoyed seeing Lauren and Sam grow into young adults. Our love and prayers went with them to Watford after an emotional farewell service and pizza picnic in July.

We have so much to be thankful for as we work through our vacancy. Before leaving, Richard Banham prepared us for vacancy as well as he could, encouraging many of us into the roles that would be needed if we were to continue to thrive and lining up clergy to lead our Sunday services for the balance of the year.

We in the Leadership Team feel blessed to have the support of each other and so many volunteers around the parish, helping to maintain our mission of Living God's Love in our Community. We are thrilled to have welcomed a number of new faces into our congregations through the Vacancy. We have particularly been grateful to our retired clergy - Bishop John, Rev Brian Gwinn and Rev Geoff Barter, and our Readers Linda, Pippa, John and Carol, who have ensured we have been able to continue our pattern of worship. We rejoiced with Barbara Doye as she joined the team after her licensing as a Reader in September.

Our Diocese has given us great support, notwithstanding that it also has a vacancy for a diocesan bishop. Bishop Jane and Archdeacon Charles moved us quickly through the early formal processes and led our interviews in December, as well as presiding at services for us. We would like also to mention Mike and Victoria Bryant at St Albans High School for Girls Prep in the village, who designed an impressive Parish Profile to give to those interested in our vacancy, and Sara Harnett who assisted the Leadership team with editing.

We have kept the parish moving forward within the framework of our Vision. Highlights included involving members of our Youth Group in an inspiring Pentecost service; our continuing service to the wider village, not least through the summer holidays larder and other seasonal food support as well as the congregation's donations to the Foodbank; the ongoing vibrancy of Coffee in the Chancel; and some important progress towards the proposed re-ordering of St Helen's.

We look forward eagerly to welcoming Rev Andy Jefferson, his wife Liz and their two young children when Andy is inducted as Rector in May 2026, taking over the baton in a relay of incumbents that has spanned more than 800 years. We are excited by the opportunities ahead of us and pray that God's love and guidance will continue to inspire the parish of Wheathampstead and each of us in the years to come.

*David Hartley & Hilary Hollick (Wardens), Keith Andrews & Correen Boothroyd (Deputy Wardens), Pippa Legg (interim leader of the ministerial team), Linda Thomas (Children and Families Minister), Simon Best (interim PCC Chair), Christine Anstice (pastoral care), Mel Tay (administrator)*

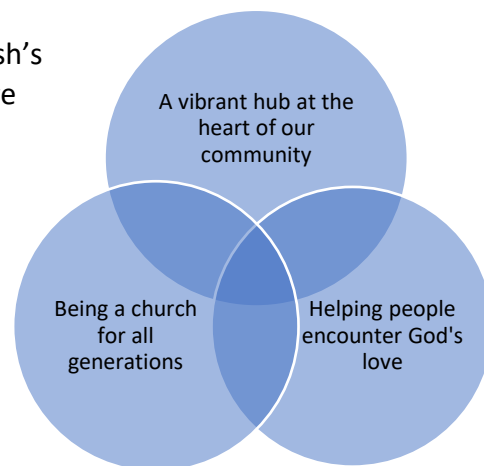
## The Parish Vision: Bringing our strategic planning to life

The Parish's Vision and Mission Action Plan is a framework for the parish's development. Our Mission statement and Vision are reviewed each five years, most recently in early 2022.

Our *Mission* is that we are Living God's Love in Our Community.

Our *Vision* for St Helen's and St Peter's is that we will:

1. Make St Helen's and St Peter's **a vibrant hub at the heart of the community** with buildings fit for God's mission in 21<sup>st</sup> century Wheathampstead
2. Be **a church for all generations**
3. Provide **opportunities for people to encounter God's love**



LIVING GOD'S LOVE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Across all of these is a wish also to lighten the parish's environmental footprint.

The PCC is responsible for driving the Vision forward and its meetings typically begin with a working session in groups linked to each of the Vision's three priorities, making progress towards the current goals for each group and planning the next steps within the Vision framework.

The fourth year of the current Vision has seen good progress in all three priority areas. Some items, such as the Buildings Working Group, Children and Families, Youth Work and Environmental Activities are covered more fully elsewhere in this Report.

We are delighted with the new children's library and the greater involvement of our Youth Group in worship and social activities. We also welcome the evolution of our relationship with the schools in the village.

Work began later in the year on refreshing and redesigning the parish website to make it more effective. We are grateful for the continuing progress with the major project for a re-ordering of St Helen's Church to support our Mission in our community.

A new format for the summer school holidays Community Larder in St Helen's Church proved successful in 2025 and was again supported by providing Easter and Christmas Lunch parcels to a number of families in the village. We have also connected more with secular lines of communication in the village, including via Facebook and the *Parish Pump*.

The PCC has kept moving forward with the Vision during the parish vacancy, laying good foundations for further progress in 2026 and towards the scheduled review of the Vision in early 2027 with the involvement of our new Rector.

## The Parochial Church Council (PCC)

The combination of mission, vision and strategic priorities provides a framework within which the PCC evaluates our progress and promotes new initiatives for growth.

### Role

In accordance with the PCC (Powers) Measure 1956 as amended, the Wheathampstead PCC (The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Helen's Wheathampstead and St. Peter's Gustard Wood) shares with the Rector and other Ministers the work of promotion in the Parish of "the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical". It is responsible for the churches of St. Helen's and St.

Peter's, Gustard Wood. The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England and is registered as Wheathampstead PCC with the Charity Commission (charity number 1132924) and can be contacted at the Parish Office, St Helen's Church, High Street, Wheathampstead, AL4 8AA. In planning the activities for the year, the PCC has considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion.

## **PCC Activities in 2025**

Our Annual Report and Financial Statements look back at a calendar year: this Annual Report and Financial Statements 2025 looks back at the calendar year 2025.

During its year of office, the PCC has met on ten occasions. With the departure for St. Mary's Watford of our Rector Richard Banham in July, the chairmanship of the PCC was assumed by Simon Best as our elected Lay Vice Chair in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. During the Vacancy considerable responsibility has resided with our team of Wardens (2 elected Churchwardens and 2 Deputies). We are grateful to them and to countless others in our congregation who have ensured that worship and service to the community have continued to flourish at St. Helen's and St. Peter's. PCC meetings regularly begin with a period dedicated to the Parish Vision; in group and plenary sessions PCC Members set short and long-term goals, consider initiatives and their implementation and evaluate progress. Our meetings continue to include devotions, discussions and decision-taking. A great deal of work was involved in creating our Parish Profile and preparing for the appointment of our new Rector, and many individuals have made their contribution. A summary of PCC meetings continues to be shared with our mailing list, and announcements in church and via the Parish email sought to keep everyone informed about the steps taken towards the new appointment. The PCC receives annual reports from many areas of church life and our policies are regularly reviewed. In addition, the Ministerial Team, sub-committees and other groups continue to meet and report to the PCC during the year reflecting the many aspects of Church life.

## **Membership**

Members of the PCC are ex officio, co-opted or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). There are up to twelve elected lay members. The list of members who served in 2025 is below. The PCC wishes to record our gratitude to all who have tirelessly assisted in maintaining the momentum of the progress of our Vision for Wheathampstead, Gustard Wood and beyond. We thank all those individuals and groups who have contributed so readily to our worship, pastoral care and activities – especially in the challenging time of Vacancy.

Our grateful thanks go to all who have contributed to the governance and decision-making of the church through their service on the PCC. Barbara Doye reaches the end of her term as a co-opted member and will now be eligible for nomination to the PCC ex officio as a Lay Reader. Several other members will also reach the end of their term and be eligible for re-election. The APCM 2026 will also involve the triennial election of our 3 Deanery Synod Representatives who serve as ex officio PCC members. Vacancies will exist for lay members to be elected either as Churchwardens at the Meeting of Parishioners or to the PCC/Deanery Synod at the APCM.

## List of PCC Members

The following members served on the PCC following the APCM on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

Name	Capacity	Serving from	Serving to
Rev Richard Banham	Rector & PCC Chair	April 2010	July 2025
Simon Best	Elected Lay Member Lay Vice Chair/Acting Chair	Elected APCM 2024	APCM 2027 *
David Hartley	Elected Churchwarden	Elected APCM 2025	APCM 2026 *
Hilary Hollick	Elected Churchwarden	Elected APCM 2025	APCM 2026 *
Keith Andrews	Elected Lay Member Deputy Warden from Oct. 21	Elected APCM 2024	APCM 2027 *
Madeleine Bigmore	Elected Lay Member	Elected APCM 2023	APCM 2026 *
Correen Boothroyd	Co-opted Member Elected Lay Member Deputy Warden from May 25	Co-opted May 2025 Elected October 2025	APCM 2026 *
Helen Caldwell	Elected Lay Member	Elected APCM 2023	APCM 2026 *
Barbara Doye	Co-opted Member	Co-opted Oct. 2025	APCM 2026 *
Sara Harnett	Elected Lay Member	Elected Oct. 2025	APCM 2026 *
Michael Hollick	Elected Lay Member	Elected APCM 2025	APCM 2028 *
Richard Mowbray	Co-opted Member	Co-opted May 2025	APCM 2026 *
David Pangbourne	Elected Lay Member	Elected APCM 2023	APCM 2026 *
Stephen Rider	Deanery Synod Member Hon. Treasurer	Elected APCM 2025	APCM 2026 *
Linda Thomas	Lay Reader (ex officio)	Elected APCM 2025	While in office *
Martin Thomas	Elected Lay Member	Elected APCM 2025	APCM 2028 *
Ales Vrbas	Elected Lay Member	Elected APCM 2023	APCM 2026 *
Stephen Wilson	Deanery Synod Member Hon. Secretary	Elected APCM 2023	APCM 2026 *

\*Member serving on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025 (end of Report and Accounts year).

## Team of Ministers

As with so many areas of church life, we are fortunate to have such a capable and committed team of Ministers who lead our worship and do so much good work away from the spotlight of Sunday Services. During the Vacancy we have depended on them even more and gratefully record our appreciation.

Minister	Role	Minister	Role
Rev Richard Banham	Rector until July 2025	Claire Banham	Reader until July 2025
Rt Rev John Gladwin	Retired Bishop	Carol Hopper	Reader
Rev Brian Gwinn	Retired Minister	Pippa Legg	Reader
Rev Tom Purchas	Ret. Minister until July 2025	John Grace	Reader
Rev Geoff Barter	Retired Minister	Barbara Doye	Reader from Sept. 2025
Linda Thomas	Children & Families Minister and Reader		

## Working Groups, Committees and Sub-committees

The PCC appointed the following officers: Simon Best as **Lay Vice Chair**, Stephen Wilson as **Honorary Secretary**, Stephen Rider as **Honorary Treasurer**, Britt Dahle and Sabrina Shafer as **Parish Safeguarding Officers**, Jez Hirst as **Parish Safeguarding Adviser**, Helen Caldwell as **Lead Recruiter, DBS Administrator** and

**PCC Safeguarding Officer**, Judith Lambert as **Electoral Roll Officer** and Michael Hollick as **Health & Safety Officer**. David Pangbourne is serving as Interim **Data Protection Officer**.

The PCC elects a **“Standing Committee”** with power, subject to the directions of the PCC, to transact business between PCC meetings. Its members are Richard Banham (until July 2025), Simon Best, David Hartley, Hilary Hollick, Keith Andrews, Correen Boothroyd, Stephen Rider and Stephen Wilson.

The overall co-ordination of our **Vision** is led by Simon Best as Chairman.

The PCC is advised by a **“Fabric Committee”** which is chaired by Stephen Scowcroft.

The Rector, Ruth Jeavons, Rev Tom Purchas and Isobel Poole have served as our appointees to **Wheathampstead Churches Together** in whose activities we regularly participate together with St. Thomas More RC Church and Wheathampstead United Church. These include the Good Friday Walk of Witness, special services like the Advent Carol Service, occasions for joint prayer and our ecumenical Lent courses.

## Financial Review

The Financial Statements of the PCC are attached, see pages 13 to 19. The Statement of Financial Activities shows our income and expenditure for the year on our General (Unrestricted) Fund; on the Designated Funds we have set aside for major Fabric costs, Reserves and the Development Fund; and the Restricted Funds which we have been given for particular purposes, and our Endowment Fund. The Balance Sheet shows the state of our finances at the year end, and both these statements are supported by notes.

In 2025 our planned giving increased slightly on the previous year, even though there was a net reduction of two regular donors to the Parish Giving Scheme, compared to an increase of three in the previous year. We were pleased that many were able to increase their donation in line with inflation. This continuous support is much appreciated and represents 74% (2024, 73%) of our unrestricted income. The Unrestricted Funds initially show a deficit for the year of £14,956 (2024, +£7,044). This figure consists of our income for general purposes, from which is deducted our normal annual outgoings on the church and its activities, together with our contribution to the Diocese (the Parish Share), and the Parish’s own giving. The deficit was expected in 2025 as the PCC agreed to pay exceptional planning costs for the reordering project through general funds.

It is the PCC’s aim to ensure that normal expenditure is, at least, covered by our annual income, and this was not achieved this year, but it was expected and budgeted for due to exceptional expenditure on planning costs for the reordering project, reflected in church development costs. It should also be noted that a planned transfer from unrestricted funds to the designated funds of £10,000 for the Roof Fund did result in a further fall in unrestricted general funds.

In addition to these normal running costs there were expenses from our designated funds on fabric and church development. Our total funds, being unrestricted, designated and restricted, at the end of the year stand at £312,137 (2024, £313,110). This is a decrease of £973 (2024, +£10,975) from the previous year.

## Reserves Policy

The PCC follows the general recommendations for Church of England parishes and sets aside funds via its Designated Fund to provide cover against a sudden loss of income and unforeseen capital expenditure. Designated reserves of £223,133 (2024, £209,326) are shown in note 9 to the annual accounts. Within our designated reserves there is £57,290 (2024, £55,049) set aside for loss of income, £85,948 (2024, £82,587) for capital expenditure, and £77,753 (2024, £64,908) for the Roof Fund. As at 31st December 2025 the amount in the General Fund which was not Restricted or Designated amounted to £44,929 (2024, £69,885). Total free reserves, being Unrestricted and Designated cash and short-term deposit funds, came to £277,276 (2024, £285,483).

## Charity Partnerships

We are delighted that we were able to maintain our committed financial support throughout this last year – the 8th year when our focus has been on Vulnerable Children.

### Overview of Charity Partnerships

#### Local

**Azalea Luton** reaches out to those suffering the injustice of sex trafficking, supporting them to build new lives because of the love of God, through Outreach, Drop-In and Befriending and also works as a key partner in Faiths Against Child Sexual Exploitation (FACES) – which is a local coalition of faith leaders working to prevent Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). There is active involvement and support by individual members of the congregation and one of our house groups.

#### National

**The Children’s Society** is committed to fighting child poverty and neglect and helping all children to have a better chance in life. From their early history in the vision and actions of a young Sunday School teacher at the end of the nineteenth century, their work has been grounded in the churches at local and national levels. Churches constitute their core partners and they work very closely with the Church of England. Unfortunately with the loss of a Regional Representative post, we report that our link has become less active.

#### International

**CCT Kimbilio** is overseen by a group of experienced Trustees who share a passion for the Congo and work with street children. In simple terms, Kimbilio is a project supported by the Congo Children Trust. Kimbilio supports street children in Lubumbashi, Katanga in the Democratic Republic of Congo. They have been working alongside the Anglican Church of Congo since 2007. There are active links with British schools.

There is ongoing discussion about identifying a further International Charity and reviewing our current partnerships: the advice and experience of the congregation will be sought. As our current expenditure on Charity Partners has been below budget, the PCC approved a one-off payment of £1,000 to each of our three Charity Partners in addition to the regular Giving detailed in the box below. It was also possible to transfer to Kimbilio £4,000 from an endowment fund created at the time when two of our ministers visited Lubumbashi in 2019.

### Giving 2025 (paid quarterly)

Charity	Annual Total
Azalea	£3,000
The Children’s Society	£3,000
CCT & Kimbilio	£3,500

### Additional Support for Charities:

During 2025 we provided support and additional fund-raising activities for our Charity Partners and several other charities. The Wheathampstead Churches Together Christian Aid Week appeal raised £2,438. The Children’s Society received a total of £343 from the donation box collection and a further sum of £230 from the Christingle Service collection. Our congregation donated in excess of £1,400 to the Bishop’s Harvest Appeal “Rewrite their Future” supporting education in Kenya and Uganda in partnership with Mission Direct. The summer-holiday project “The Community Larder”, the “Christmas Lunch on Jesus” project and a new initiative of Easter Hampers received strong financial backing. Significant donations have continued to be received into our Community Fund with which it is possible to assist local people in difficulties. The figures in this report remind us of the remarkable continuing generosity of our congregation in funding charitable work.

## **Safeguarding**

The PCC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults who attend church or church activities. We have in place – and regularly review – a policy for Safeguarding which is the Church of England Statement “Promoting a Safer Church”. Our Safeguarding Procedures are contained in the Church of England’s “Parish Safeguarding Handbook”. The PCC receives regular reports on Safeguarding which is on the agenda for every meeting. All relevant volunteers are DBS-checked and issued with appropriate guidance for their role; safer recruitment standards are followed. We are committed to having role descriptions and training for all our volunteers. All activities and events have risk assessments. The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops’ guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

## **Risk & Statutory Policies**

As required by law, the PCC has considered the major risks within its responsibility and the systems designed to minimise those risks; this has included annual Health and Safety Inspections with recommendations reported to the PCC. We have undertaken risk assessments for all areas of activity. We have an appropriate fire risk assessment. We hold a register to log any accidents. We take out adequate insurance cover against fire, theft, employers’ and public liability and other insurable risks. Clear procedures are in place for the authorisation of expenditure and secure receipt and recording of income.

The PCC has in place statutory policies in the following areas:

- Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults;
- Domestic Abuse;
- Data Protection;
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;
- Health and Safety;
- GDPR/Privacy.

Where appropriate, these are in line with Diocesan guidance and all are reviewed regularly by the PCC for any changes in activities and developments in statutory requirements or recommended practice.

## **Goods Fabric and Ornaments**

The annual inventory of Church Goods, Fabric and Ornaments was completed during the year and all essential items found to be present and correctly accounted for (and the absence of a few minor items duly noted). The Fabric Committee has taken further the programme of redecoration and repairs at St. Helen’s and St. Peter’s which has included work on the buildings, churchyard and car parks.

The PCC records thanks to the Fabric Committee for many other alterations and improvements. At St. Helen’s these have included urgent repairs to the north wall/ceiling of the Lady Chapel and repairs to the Lych Gate roof in the churchyard. There are ongoing discussions and architectural consultation about repairs to the vestry roof. The tower clock chime motor has been repaired as has the stagebox on the sound system with a new laptop provided for the desk. A new filter coffee machine has been acquired, and a new desktop computer has been provided for the Parish Administrator. A new trail camera has been fitted internally to improve security and the metal theft roof alarm has been upgraded. The church bells and bell ropes have been inspected. 12 chairs with damaged upholstery have been replaced. An EIG risk management survey was conducted and the report received; a CofE Energy Action Plan survey was conducted and the report received.

A number of work parties throughout the year have kept the churchyard tidy. Following a special service of blessing, the new Garden of Remembrance has been available.

## **Environmental Activities**

*At St. Helen's and St. Peter's we believe that human beings are called to be faithful stewards and to enjoy a relationship with and a responsibility for God's creation. We seek to serve the earth, not enslave it.*

Caring for our environment plays an increasingly important part in the life of the Parish, as we acknowledge the stress that human activities have caused for the world around us and pray for those affected by the increasing incidence of extreme weather events.

We repeated a creation-centred service at St Peter's during the Churches Count on Nature week in June, engaging the congregation after the service in identifying 32 species of flowers and shrubs, seven insect species, six tree species, six species of birds, four of snails and millipede and centipede in the small St Peter's churchyard.

Twenty four pupils in four year groups from St Helen's School visited the churchyard for a morning of nature-based activities, which were again well-received.

The Hertford Swift Group observed activity around St Helen's during the summer and we are excited that they concluded that at least four swifts were nesting under the eaves of the church roof. That Group is also guiding us in preparing to insert wooden swift slots into some of the gaps in the eaves to allow swifts in to nest, while preventing larger, sometimes noisy birds from bothering the swifts.

The parish again collected used printer ink cartridges for recycling, making a modest contribution to parish funds. We also continue to offer a limited facility for recycling pharmaceutical blister packs.

The Fabric Committee seeks to keep in mind how it can lighten the Parish's environmental footprint, subject to the constraints of a heritage-listed building and a limited budget. The parish council lent equipment to allow us to conduct a heat-loss survey during the autumn.

## **Buildings Working Group**

Good progress has been made in the last year as we strive to address our needs to render our St. Helen's church building a truly vibrant hub at the heart of our community with buildings fit for God's mission in 21st century Wheathampstead.

All the congregational, statutory 3rd party and Village consultation over the last two years has culminated in a design that would deliver, amongst other things, new toilets and new west door with level access (Phase 1), a new kitchen, an enclosed space in the south transept, welcome areas and flexible seating in the nave/north and south aisles.

The design team completed the Scheme Design, and following pre-planning application public consultation, a planning application and full faculty submission for Phase 1 were submitted for approval in December 2025. We await the outcome of these applications at the time of going to press.

In parallel, our retained quantity surveyors have updated their project cost estimate and advised that the overall project is still on budget (including allowance for inflation) at £721,000 + VAT (ie £865,000), based on being delivered in phases at Q2 2025 prices. The project costs by phase are set out below. This is to aid congregational understanding of the fundraising effort required:-

Design costs funded by the PCC - £32,400

Phase 1 – North door extension (incl two toilets & cleaners/flower cupboard) and new west door and landscaping to create an accessible main entrance - £300,000

New enlarged kitchen, chancel serverly, chancel ramp and chancel storage units - £134,400

Formation of flexible space/discrete room in Lady Chapel (incl glazed screen and floor repairs) - £116,400

Formation of flexible space in the nave and aisles with flexible seating, welcoming area, new west door internal lobby and additional storage - £282,000

**Total Project Cost - £865,000**

All figures include VAT.

The immediate focus is Phase 1 – funds allocated by the PCC and/or raised to date are £60,000, leaving £240,000 to be raised.

The parish is grateful to a number of its members who have formed a small fundraising group for the project. This Group began preparing applications to a wide range of appropriate grant-making bodies under the project title *Renewing St. Helen's Church – Preserving the Past, Serving the Future*. It proposes to complement those applications with a public appeal to our congregation and the wider community, after planning and DAC faculty approvals have been granted.

*Keith Andrews, Richard Mowbray and Simon Best*

## **Friends of St. Helen's Church**

The Friends have had another positive year supporting the church – giving money for the renovation of the church chiming mechanism and the bell frame, repairs to the roof over the vestry with a possible second donation to the stonework on the south side of the church.

To raise funds this year we had a very successful cabaret “Afternoon with Noel Coward” in the beautifully decorated Marford Hall in June with over 90 people. A wonderful afternoon tea followed the cabaret with a raffle.

In October the church was the venue for a fascinating display and talk on “The Tentmakers of Old Cairo” by John Fisher. The Church looked gorgeous with all the tent hangings and the lecture showed how these beautiful objects are still being made today with their history dating back to the 1660's.

Ruth Coles, after 12 years as Chairman, wishes to step down from this role at this year's AGM in November. It is 30 years since we received charitable status and many thousands of pounds have been donated for the upkeep of St. Helen's during this time. The hunt is on for a new Chairman and new Trustees to join our committee. We have a loyal and enthusiastic membership and we hope that our support for the Church and fundraising work will carry on into the future under new leadership. Please contact Ruth Coles if you would like to help (07714215616).

*Ruth Coles*

## **Children and Families**

It has been another busy year with children and families supported at our regular 10am and Kids Worship services, our weekly Ark toddler group and termly Messy Church events at the two Primary schools. We had a bumper Messy Church in May before Richard and Claire left, but numbers were still good in October as new volunteers stepped up to help the Children and Families Minister run the event.

The Children and Families Minister has also continued to lead a weekly worship session at St. Helen's C of E school and termly assemblies at Beech Hyde, as well as Harvest and Christmas services and assemblies for both schools. She was also able to support STAHS Prep school in December when their Chaplain was ill.

Other regular events have included a Bible stories after-school club at St. Helen's, reading Bible stories to the Reception class, the Diocese's Alban Way programme for Year 6 pupils (run with diocesan staff in 24/25 and by St. Helen's lay ministers in 25/26) and Donut club for new Year 7s in the Autumn term.

We again offered the Environmental day in the churchyard to St. Helen's and the STEP Up transition day for Year 6 in June, and joined in with the St. Helen's Scarecrow trail in the village in September.

During the vacancy we have seen some families leave us as children get busier with other activities, but have also welcomed new families at both morning and afternoon services. Our Christingle and Crib services had particularly good attendances this year.

*Linda Thomas*

## **Youth Group**

The Youth Group has continued to meet every Sunday in term-time and we very much value the enthusiasm and care and support for each other shown by the core of eight very committed members aged between 11 and 17. We play games, share snacks, talk about our weeks, study the Bible, discuss our faith and pray together. We have really enjoyed joining with other youth groups once a month at Fuel Adventure in St. Albans and the youngsters and leaders had a superb time at both the Fuel Residential weekend and the Illuminate Cathedral event in February.

The group takes their roles as young leaders very seriously. They have faithfully supported Messy Church, helping with craft activities, and were delighted to be asked to read, choose one of the hymns and lead prayers at one of our 10:00 am services just before Christmas.

The Christian summer festival, Satellites, run by Youthscape, provided a really impactful opportunity for some of the older youngsters to spend time exploring their faith in creative ways while camping together in August 2025. The group appreciated the support the congregation provided to help them attend this festival and we are very hopeful of being able to take a larger group this summer.

*Sara Harnett, Sarah Holloway, Anne Hollis and Ross Rayner*

## **St. Helen's Fellowship**

Another year and the real joy of reporting that Fellowship has grown from strength to strength. Meeting in the Mead Hall 2:45 – 4:15 pm every Thursday in term time [£2 subs], we now have 34 members with others coming along occasionally. It is definitely good to have men and women in the group. Ages tend to be in the 80s/90s with a few younger! [NB Age is only a number!]

Sessions have included talks on 'Magical Mosaics', 'A School Girl's War', 'Up and Close to a Nuclear Bang', 'Sally's African Odyssey', 'Whatever happened to the Princes in the Tower?', 'Following the Evidence', 'Age-Friendly Work in Herts', 'Teddy Bears' Stories'. We have had a magician/ventriloquist, a visit from Jasper – the deaf spaniel – and a V.E. Day celebration. We have had our usual popular 'Save a space for Puds', chair exercises, a Ukelele band, social afternoons with board games, quizzes, bingo, raffles and of course Easter, Harvest and Advent celebrations.

The first Thursday of the month is our Holy Communion celebration led – with our grateful thanks – by our clergy and it was with sadness that we said our Goodbyes to Richard our Rector this year. We wish him well.

We continue our link with the MacIntyre home at 1, Station Road.

Looking over our topics, and getting feedback from members, we can genuinely say we offer something for everyone with friendship and laughter thrown in. Louise and I were very touched by, and grateful for, a gift of £500 from the estate of a dear member, Janet Moody. This will enable us to have special speakers/entertainment in the future.

Louise and I lead but we have a good team supporting us in transport and in the kitchen – important and much appreciated!

*Jill Bareham and Louise Edwards*

## **Deanery Synod Report**

The Rector and up to three elected representatives serve on the Deanery Synod. Rev'd Jo Burke (St. Leonard's, Flamstead) is our Rural Dean and has assisted us in various ways during the Vacancy. Brian Goleworthy and Linda Thomas stood down as Deanery Synod Representatives at our APCM; Stephen Wilson has continued and been joined by Stephen Rider. In May the Deanery arranged an Ascension Day Sung Eucharist Service at St. John's, Harpenden and in October there was a Deanery Evensong at St. Nicholas, Harpenden. There was also a Deanery Quiet Morning in Advent. In addition the Deanery Synod arranged two meetings – in both of which St. Helen's featured.

The February Synod meeting was hosted by St. Mary's, Redbourn and the guest speaker was our own Claire Banham who spoke about her work with children and young people in the parish, her involvement over 6 years with the 267 Project and The Haven – the charity she has set up to support young people's mental health. She emphasized the value of contact with families and young people in the community. Seeds can be sown and growth can follow to produce a glorious harvest!

The July Synod meeting was hosted by St. Helen's on a lovely summer's evening and the members attending enjoyed a glass of non-alcoholic punch and strawberries. The Incumbent normally gives a talk about the host parish and Hilary Hollick performed this task for us. There were two guest speakers. Andrew Brown of the Diocesan Board of Finance explained the Board's role emphasizing ways in which it could help parishes. Philip Nalparis gave a practical talk about Environmental issues and was then commissioned as the Deanery Eco Champion.

**The above report was approved by the Wheathampstead Parochial Church Council on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2026.**



Simon Best  
Lay Vice Chair

# WHEATHAMPSTEAD PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

## 2025 Accounts

### BALANCE SHEET - As at 31 December 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			
Tangible fixed assets	6	-	250
Investments	6	1,732	1,804
		<b>1,732</b>	<b>2,054</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Amounts receivable and prepayments	7	5,617	4,529
Cash at bank and on short term deposit		321,351	319,832
		<b>326,968</b>	<b>324,361</b>
<b>AMOUNTS PAYABLE WITHIN ONE YEAR</b>			
	8	<b>16,563</b>	<b>13,305</b>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
		<b>310,405</b>	<b>311,056</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>			
		<b>312,137</b>	<b>313,110</b>
<b>FUNDS</b>			
Endowment	9	1,732	1,804
Restricted	9	42,343	32,095
		<b>44,075</b>	<b>33,899</b>
Designated	9	223,133	209,326
Unrestricted	9	44,929	69,885
		<b>312,137</b>	<b>313,110</b>

These financial statements were approved by the Parochial Church Council on 24th March 2026.

Signed on behalf of the PCC



**Simon Best**  
Chairman



**Stephen Rider**  
Treasurer

**WHEATHAMPSTEAD PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**

**2025 Accounts**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - For the year ended 31 December 2025**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted & Endowment Funds £	TOTAL 2025 £	FUNDS 2024 £
<b>INCOME &amp; ENDOWMENTS</b>						
<b>Incoming resources from donors</b>						
Planned Giving via Parish Giving Scheme		112,312	-	-	112,312	108,791
Other Planned giving		9,657	-	-	9,657	9,782
Tax recoverable on planned giving		27,851	-	-	27,851	27,711
Collections: St Helen's		7,763	-	-	7,763	7,449
Collections: St Peter's		635	-	-	635	757
Tax recoverable on Small Donations Scheme		2,148	-	-	2,148	2,161
Collections for Specific Purposes		-	-	1,537	1,537	4,105
Collections for the Community Fund		-	-	2,784	2,784	3,564
Legacies, donations etc	2	16,461	1,050	22,560	40,071	36,741
		<b>176,827</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>26,881</b>	<b>204,758</b>	<b>201,061</b>
<b>Income from investment</b>						
Interest and Dividends		2,427	8,625	1,403	12,455	14,247
<b>Income from charitable trading/fees</b>						
Coffee in the Chancel		3,551	-	-	3,551	3,983
Fees for weddings and funerals		17,171	-	-	17,171	23,603
		<b>20,722</b>			<b>20,722</b>	<b>27,586</b>
<b>Other incoming resources</b>						
Coffee after services		486	-	-	486	447
Rental income		855	-	-	855	999
VAT recovered on building works		1,346	-	317	1,663	4,886
Grants		-	-	-	-	4,740
Flowers		-	-	1,150	1,150	4,340
Bells		-	-	180	180	360
Other income		193	-	-	193	482
		<b>2,880</b>		<b>1,647</b>	<b>4,527</b>	<b>16,254</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>202,856</b>	<b>9,675</b>	<b>29,931</b>	<b>242,462</b>	<b>259,148</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>						
Giving	3	15,100	-	10,482	25,582	19,795
Church Management & Administration	4	31,339	-	3,575	34,914	33,624
For the work of the Church	5	171,373	5,868	5,698	182,939	194,754
		<b>217,812</b>	<b>5,868</b>	<b>19,755</b>	<b>243,435</b>	<b>248,173</b>
<b>NET INCOME/EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>(14,956)</b>	<b>3,807</b>	<b>10,176</b>	<b>(973)</b>	<b>10,975</b>
Transfers between funds		(10,000)	10,000	-	-	-
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>		<b>(24,956)</b>	<b>13,807</b>	<b>10,176</b>	<b>(973)</b>	<b>10,975</b>
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD	9	69,885	209,326	33,899	313,110	302,135
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>44,929</b>	<b>223,133</b>	<b>44,075</b>	<b>312,137</b>	<b>313,110</b>

# WHEATHAMPSTEAD PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

## 2025 Accounts

### NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS - Year ended 31 December 2025

#### 1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The PCC is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCCs, and with the Regulations' "true and fair view" provisions, together with FRS102 (2016) as the applicable accounting standards and the 2016 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP(FRS102)).

The historical cost convention is adopted except for investments, which are shown at market value at the balance sheet date.

The statements are prepared on the accruals basis.

#### Funds

Unrestricted funds are those available for the general purposes of the PCC. The purpose of restricted funds is noted in the statements. Interest, other income and tax recoverable related to amounts allocated to particular funds is credited to those funds.

The statements include transactions for which the PCC is responsible but not those of informal groups of members or of separately constituted bodies from which the PCC may benefit.

#### Income and use of resources

Collections, donations and similar income are recognised on receipt.

Income tax recoverable on donations is recognised when the income is recognised.

Income from fund raising events, coffee in the chancel etc, is shown in full and the related expenses are included within resources used.

Grants and legacies are recognised in the period when they become due.

Expenditure is accounted for when incurred.

#### Assets

In so far as consecrated and benefice property of any kind is excluded from the statutory definition of "charity" by Section 10(2) (a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011, such assets are not capitalised in the financial statements.

Depreciation is provided on equipment used by the PCC over the useful life of the asset. Items of equipment costing less than £1,000 are written off when the expenditure is incurred.

Short term deposits include cash held in a Church of England Central Board of Finance account and at the bank.

#### 2 LEGACIES, DONATIONS, NAVE BOXES, ETC.

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted & Endowment Funds £	TOTAL 2025 £	FUNDS 2024 £
Nave boxes, Donations	5,096	-	-	5,096	16,947
Friends of St Helen's	10,027	-	1,583	11,610	14,600
Flower Fund	-	-	900	900	720
Church Reordering	-	-	16,856	16,856	-
Fellowship Fund	-	-	872	872	950
Fabric Fund	-	1,050	-	1,050	300
Children, Youth & Schools Development Fund	-	-	1,244	1,244	288
The Ark	481	-	-	481	508
Income tax recoverable on donations	857	-	1,177	2,034	2,428
Miscellaneous	-	-	(72)	(72)	-
	<b>16,461</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>22,560</b>	<b>40,071</b>	<b>36,741</b>

#### Related Party Disclosures

Donations, including planned giving, from Trustees and their related parties amounted to £26,554 during the year 2025 (2024: £25,950)

## WHEATHAMPSTEAD PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

### 2025 Accounts

### NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS - Year ended 31 December 2025

#### 3 GIVING

	From Parish income		Special collections, Community Fund	
	2025 £	2024 £	2025 £	2024 £
<b>Charity Partners</b>				
Congo Children Trust	4,500	3,500	4,088	-
The Children's Society	4,000	3,000	230	69
Azalea	4,000	3,000	-	937
	<u>12,500</u>	<u>9,500</u>	<u>4,318</u>	<u>1,006</u>
<b>Other charities</b>				
St Helen's School	2,550	2,550	-	-
Harvest Appeal	-	-	1,402	1,647
Beds & Herts Historic Churches Trust	50	50	-	-
Christian Aid	-	-	180	313
Payments from Community Fund	-	-	4,582	3,290
Payments from Funeral Collections	-	-	-	1,439
	<u>2,600</u>	<u>2,600</u>	<u>6,164</u>	<u>6,689</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>15,100</u></b>	<b><u>12,100</u></b>	<b><u>10,482</u></b>	<b><u>7,695</u></b>

Note: Giving to St Helen's School is by standing order which is continuing into 2026

#### 4 CHURCH MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted & Endowment Funds £	TOTAL 2025 £	FUNDS 2024 £
Stationery, post, telephone, print	4,734	-	-	4,734	3,320
Staff salaries (inc occasional organist)	24,227	-	3,575	27,802	27,025
Pension contribution	857	-	-	857	790
Payroll administration costs	425	-	-	425	517
Office Equipment depreciation	250	-	-	250	998
Bank charges and card fees	306	-	-	306	434
Database Fees	540	-	-	540	540
	<u>31,339</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,575</u>	<u>34,914</u>	<u>33,624</u>

#### Note

During the year the PCC employed an average monthly number of 2 staff (2024: 2 staff) : a parish administrator, and a Children's and Families' Minister, both on a part time basis. The services of an occasional organist are also provided on a regular basis. The total costs of salaries and pensions are as shown above and no national insurance costs were incurred. No employees received more than £60,000.

## WHEATHAMPSTEAD PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

### 2025 Accounts

### NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS - Year ended 31 December 2025

#### 5 RESOURCES USED FOR THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted & Endowment Funds £	TOTAL 2025 £	FUNDS 2024 £
Parish share to Diocese	97,805	-	-	97,805	101,172
Fees paid to Diocese	4,573	-	-	4,573	5,558
Wedding Disbursements	1,050	-	-	1,050	1,779
Funeral Disbursements	2,050	-	-	2,050	2,760
Plaques and other memorials	475	-	-	475	652
Ministry expenses	2,632	-	-	2,632	163
Electricity & Water (St Helens)	3,861	-	-	3,861	4,482
Electricity & Water (St Peters)	974	-	-	974	738
Gas (St Helen's)	5,603	-	-	5,603	5,444
Maintenance (St Helens)	3,946	-	-	3,946	9,209
Maintenance (St Peters)	1,783	-	-	1,783	1,114
Insurance (St Helens)	4,566	-	-	4,566	4,017
Insurance (St Peters)	812	-	-	812	806
Mission	2,939	-	520	3,459	5,397
Children, Youth & Schools	2,820	-	353	3,173	2,990
Services	3,594	-	-	3,594	2,102
Choir and music	900	-	-	900	1,153
Casual organists for regular Church services	585	-	-	585	650
Training	208	-	-	208	925
Coffee in the Chancel expenses	362	-	-	362	335
Stewardship costs	137	-	-	137	262
<b>The Flowers</b>	-	-	2,310	2,310	4,373
Bells	-	-	2,515	2,515	146
Audio Visual System depreciation	-	-	-	-	1,531
<b>Major fabric and Projects Expenditure</b>					
Preservation and Restoration	16,500	-	-	16,500	22,320
Church Development	13,198	5,868	-	19,066	14,676
	<b>171,373</b>	<b>5,868</b>	<b>5,698</b>	<b>182,939</b>	<b>194,754</b>

#### Notes

During the year, two members of the ministerial team who are also members of the PCC were paid £15,453 in remuneration and for working expenses (2024: £11,793)

No other payments or expenses were paid to any other PCC member, persons closely connected to them or related parties.

<b>WHEATHAMPSTEAD PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL</b>						
<b>2025 Accounts</b>						
<b>NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS - Year ended 31 December 2025</b>						
<b>6 FIXED ASSETS</b>						
<b>Tangible assets</b>						
				<b>Office printer</b>	<b>AV equipment</b>	<b>Total</b>
				£	£	£
	<b>Cost</b>	At 1st January 2025		4,991	64,380	<b>69,371</b>
		Additions at cost		-	-	-
		At 31st December 2025		4,991	64,380	<b>69,371</b>
	<b>Depreciation</b>	At 1st January 2025		4,741	64,380	<b>69,121</b>
		Charge for the year		250		<b>250</b>
		At 31st December 2025		4,991	64,380	<b>69,371</b>
	<b>Net book value</b>	At 1st January 2025		1,248	1,531	2,779
		<b>At 31st December 2025</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Investments at market value</b>		<b>2025</b>		<b>2024</b>	
			£		£	
		Central Board of Finance Investment Fund	<b>1,732</b>		<b>1,804</b>	
<b>7 AMOUNTS RECEIVABLE</b>						
			<b>2025</b>		<b>2024</b>	
			£		£	
		Income tax recoverable	4,984		2,584	
		Other amounts receivable	633		1,945	
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5,617</b>		<b>4,529</b>	
<b>8 AMOUNTS PAYABLE</b>						
			<b>2025</b>		<b>2024</b>	
			£		£	
		Accrued expenses	<b>16,563</b>		<b>13,305</b>	

## WHEATHAMPSTEAD PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

### 2025 Accounts

### NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS - Year ended 31 December 2025

#### 9 FUNDS

	1 Jan 2025 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Used £	Transfers of Funds £	31 Dec 2025 £
<b>Endowment Funds</b>	1,804	(72)	-	-	1,732
<b>Restricted Funds</b>					
Community Fund	6,076	3,499	(4,582)	-	4,993
Flower fund	770	2,086	(2,310)	-	546
Bell Fund	1,817	2,144	(2,515)	-	1,446
Music Fund	6,347	186	(3,575)	-	2,958
Choral Scholar Fund	2,032	83	-	-	2,115
Charity Partnership Fund	4,088	-	(4,088)	-	-
St Helen's Fellowship Fund	731	909	(520)	-	1,120
Church Reordering (Capital Build)	5,117	17,788	-	-	22,905
Children, Youth & Schools Work	5,117	1,496	(353)	-	6,260
Specific collections	-	1,812	(1,812)	-	-
	<b>32,095</b>	<b>30,003</b>	<b>(19,755)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>42,343</b>
<b>Total Restricted &amp; Endowment Fund</b>	<b>33,899</b>	<b>29,931</b>	<b>(19,755)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>44,075</b>
<b>Designated Funds</b>					
Fabric Fund	1,029	1,113	-	-	2,142
Income Reserve	55,049	2,241	-	-	57,290
Capital Reserve	82,587	3,361	-	-	85,948
Development Fund	5,753	115	(5,868)	-	-
Roof Fund	64,908	2,845	-	10,000	77,753
	<b>209,326</b>	<b>9,675</b>	<b>(5,868)</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>223,133</b>
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>					
General Fund	69,885	202,856	(217,812)	(10,000)	44,929
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>313,110</b>	<b>242,462</b>	<b>(243,435)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>312,137</b>

#### Notes

##### Endowment Funds

These are the Fenwick and Bracey bequests, the investment of which is mainly in the CBF Investment Fund shown in the Balance Sheet. Income from the Fenwick bequest is for the church and churchyard upkeep. These funds, and their annual movement in value, are included with the restricted funds.

##### Community Fund

This fund is from collections at weddings and baptisms, and some donations, which are set aside to provide assistance to those in need mainly in the parish of Wheathampstead.

##### Bell Fund

For the renovation, repairs and maintenance of the bells, including handbells, and related structures, fixtures and fittings, plus the support and development of the bell ringers.

##### Music Fund

Money set aside by PCC and other donations for music and choir purposes within the church.

##### Charity Partnership Fund

Donations set aside by the PCC for work on the Kimbilio Project and and future projects with our Charity

##### Fabric Fund

This fund is for major work to the Fabric of St Helen's church.

##### Income Reserve and Designated Capital Reserve

As the Diocese recommends, the PCC maintains designated funds as a reserve against sudden total loss of income and unforeseen capital expenditure. Reserves were set at an initial level of £60,000 each in 2005 with interest to be accrued to the funds as a protection against inflation. In 2020 the PCC reviewed the Reserves Policy and decided to reduce the Income Reserve by a transfer of £25,000 to the General Fund

##### Development Fund

Donations set aside by the PCC for improvements to the interior of St Helen's. □

##### Roof Fund

Transfer of funds for future repairs on the roof of St Helen's

##### Church Reordering (Build)

Donations restricted to the cost of the church reordering project at St Helens.

##### Children, Youth and Schools work

Donation received restricted to supporting children, youth and schools work.

**The cash related to the restricted funds is held in the PCC bank accounts.**

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S UNQUALIFIED REPORT**  
**Independent Examiner's report to the Parochial Church Council of the**  
**Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Helen's Wheathampstead and St. Peter's Gustard Wood**

---

I report on the accounts of the Church for the year ended 31st December 2025, which are set out on pages 13 to 19.

This report is made solely to the Church's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act). My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the Church's Trustees those matters I am required to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Church and the Church's Trustees as a body, for my work, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

The Church Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. I report in respect of my examination of the Church's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent Examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- Accounting records were not kept in respect of the Church as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- The financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- The financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.



.....  
**J PIPER, FCA**  
*Chartered Accountant*  
14 Church Street  
St. Albans, AL3 5NQ

12 March, 2026