



APCM

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell Annual Parochial Church Meeting and Annual Vestry Meeting will be held on Wednesday 12th March 2025 at St John the Baptist, Stone at 20:00.

Please send all nomination forms to PCCSecretary@stonedintonhartwell.com or place them in the box provided by 17:00 on Tuesday 11th March.

www.stonedintonhartwell.com/apcm

Booklet V2



What is a Annual Parochial Church Meeting?

Every parish must hold (no later than 31 May in each year) an Annual Parochial Church Meeting, often referred to simply as the 'APCM'.

This annual meeting reports on changes to the electoral roll, parish activities and financial matters.

Every year we elect members to the PCC. Every three years, it is also the occasion when new members to the Deanery Synod are elected.

What is a Annual Vestry Meeting?

The annual meeting of parishioners (also referred to as the annual vestry meeting) is held yearly in every parish of the Church of England to elect churchwardens and deputies (if any) for the forthcoming year. The meeting must be held by 31st May and is commonly held immediately prior to the annual meeting of the parochial church council.

Who can Attend?

Anyone on the Electoral Roll are permitted to attend and vote.

What is the PCC?

A Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the executive committee of a Church of England parish and consists of clergy and churchwardens of the parish, together with representatives of the laity. Legally the council is responsible for the financial affairs of the church parish and the maintenance of its assets, such as churches and church halls. It also assists the clergy in the management of church affairs in the parish, and promoting the mission of the church.

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Agenda's

Annual Parish (Vestry) Meeting

- 1) Opening Prayers
- 2) Apologies
- 3) Thank Churchwardens
- 4) Elect Churchwardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

- 1) Approval of 2024 APCM Meeting Minutes
- 2) Election of Deanery Synod Members
- 3) Election of PCC members
- 4) Annual Report for 2024
- 5) Finances and Accounts for 2024
- 6) Nomination of Independent Examiner
- 7) Church Insurance and Policy Report
- 8) Report on the Electoral Roll
- 9) Deanery Synod Report
- 10) Safeguarding Report
- 11) Report on Fabric Goods and Ornaments of St John the Baptist, Stone
- 12) Report on Fabric Goods and Ornaments of St Peter & St Paul, Dinton
- 13) Rectors / Associate Rectors Report
- 14) AOB

2024 APCM Minutes

Minutes of
The Annual Vestry Meeting held at 8.00pm, Wednesday 22nd May 2024
at St Peter and St Paul, Dinton

Present:

Chair: Rev'd Phil Groves, Associate Rector of Wychert Vale Benefice.

27 Parishioners

Rev'd Phil Groves opened the meeting with a short reading from 1 Corinthians 13, reflecting on Faith, Hope and Love.

Rev'd Phil Groves thanked the Church Wardens, Mrs Rosemary Jackson, Mrs Sue Birrell and Mr Raymond Medhurst for their hard work which is a huge amount of work and is often unseen and behind the scenes. We also thanked Mr Terry Cooper for his work as assistant Church Warden.

Election of Churchwardens

Mr Stephan Medhurst advised that prior to this meeting, there were three nominations received for the office of Churchwarden for the forthcoming year.

The following Churchwardens were nominated and unanimously elected by the meeting.

Mrs Rosemary Jackson
Mr Raymond Medhurst
Mrs Sue Birrell

These three people were duly elected as Churchwardens to serve to the 2025 APCM unless this changes by order of the Bishop.

Churchwardens serve the whole parish no matter where they are located, or worship and members can approach any churchwarden for help, support or advice.

Mr Terry Cooper volunteered to act as assistant Church Warden again.

The Annual Vestry Meeting then closed.

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

Minutes of

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting held at 8.10pm, Wednesday 22nd May 2024 at St Peter and St Paul, Dinton

Present:

Chair: Rev'd Phil Groves, Associate Rector of Wychert Vale Benefice.

27 Parishioners

Apologies:

Rosemary Jackson, Nigel Fetherston, Cassa Messervy, David Pickup, Sue Smith, Clive Corbould

1. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes were accepted as being a true record of the meeting and signed.

2. Report of the Electoral Roll

We are up to 67 on the Electoral Roll, up one from 66. Phil thanked Dee for maintaining the electoral roll.

3. PCC Members

Phil thanked Mrs Eryl Morgan for her years of Service as she stepped down.

Mr Rodger Withers was elected to join the PCC.

4. Annual Report for 2023

Stephan Medhurst advised that the Annual Report on the working of the Parish during the last year was included with the APCM booklet and a copy is held with the minutes of this meeting.

Phil reflected on how it had been an encouraging year with services recovering. No questions were raised.

5. Finances and Accounts for 2023

The functions of the treasurers are being carried out by the finance committee as we are still without an accountant. Anyone interested in taking on this role needs to talk to Richard Smith.

We have recently swapped from excel to an online software. As part of this process, we have changed from an accrual to a receipts and payment system where everything is in 1 year and not carried forwards or backwards. This also means we can not do a line-by-line comparison with 2022.

Both our expenditure and income has increased, with our reserves increasing by approximately £2000.

The Barclays Dinton Organ Fund account has been moved to a restricted fund in the main PCC account as Barclays were trying to close the account.

We have set up a Skipton account for the SJB facilities account which will enable us to gain interest.

We pay the benefice approximately £3000 which covers any work the benefice does for us, including admin for life services and assisting clergy. St Mary's, Haddenham pays the largest portion of the split.

Thank you to Naomi for her work as book keeper and for transferring us to the new system.

Thank you to everybody who gives generously, we are looking at reducing our bills over the coming year as they are currently fairly large.

It was clarified that the Dinton Organ Fund was for a restoration and not general repairs.

It was noted that we would like to see some summarised reports to be able to see what we are spending where.

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

Raymond proposed that we accept the accounts as presented. Terry seconded and everybody agreed.

6. Nomination of Independent Examiner

Richard reported that Steve Marks is happy to be our independent examiner, and he would nominate him again. Being part of the Aylesbury Methodist Church, Steve knows how churches run and operate which makes it easier when verifying the accounts.

Richard Smith proposed we appoint Steve Marks as our Independent Examiner and Sue Birrell seconded. All those present agreed.

7. Church Insurance and Policy

Richard reported that our insurance is renewed each June. We are fully insured for our needs and its currently value for money.

We are UpToDate on all our inspections and all relevant certificates are on display in the Churches.

8. Report on Fabric Goods and Ornaments;

St John The Baptist, Stone & Ss Peter & Paul, Dinton

At Stone there has been a lot going on. The churchyard is looking very good with a very small core team of Ivor, Sue and Steve being very committed and spend time most week on the churchyard, joined by various people who have joined us for the Saturday working parties.

In Dinton the building is being heavily used and we have renewed the derelict sheds.

Many thanks to the small cleaning teams at each church who keeps them looking clean and tidy, a thankless task.

9. Report from Safeguarding Officer

Safeguarding is a standing item for the PCC to look at each meeting. Clare Davey is our Safeguarding Officer.

We work inline with the Diocese of Oxford Handbook with information posters in place within the churches. All PCC members are required to undertake training when they join the PCC.

10. Report on the Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod are starting to get momentum back but it is still very mixed post Covid. Jonathon is now our Area Dean. There will be a full report for next years APCM.

11. Rectors Report

Cassa has stepped back a little from our parish and is leaving Phil to run it.

Evensong is steadily growing with attendees from across the benefice.

Phil thanked Chris and her work in leading the choir.

Thank you to Sue for running Socially Crafty and to Naomi for running Café in the Park.

We host the schools regularly for school services and festivals and the interaction is good.

12. AOB

It was asked whether the APCM could be earlier next year to make it easier to remember what has happened. This will go to the next PCC meeting.

Meeting Closed with the grace at 21:05

2024 Annual Report

Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell Annual Report 2024

Aims and Purposes

Stone, Dinton & Hartwell Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating within the Wychert Vale Benefice to promote in the ecclesiastical benefice the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The Wychert Vale Benefice was formed on 1st March 2016 as the joining of the former Benefices of Haddenham with Cuddington, Kingsey and Aston Sandford and the parish of Stone and Dinton with Hartwell. The parish is part of the Aylesbury Deanery, which is part of the Diocese of Oxford.

Our Rector is Rev'd Cassa Messervy and our Associate Rector is Canon Dr Phil Groves.

The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Churches of St John the Baptist, Stone and St Peter and St Paul, Dinton.

Objectives 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 and the wider benefice. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning for the year, we try to enable people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Mission and outreach work.
- Teaching in the Local Schools.
- Charitable Giving.

The parish relies on the voluntary work of so many people and the PCC very much appreciates their service to the churches and the local community.

Achievements and Performance

The PCC have supported developing and promoting the church within the local schools and encouraging young people and families to come to church by providing a variety of services and activities for them.

This year, we have held a multitude of services across the parish, catering for all. We are starting to hold more said services as our team of musicians are being spread around to cover as many services as possible. Numbers have generally stayed roughly the same, with the exception of Christmas which was well attended. Unfortunately, we have had a high number of funerals this past year and a low number of baptisms.

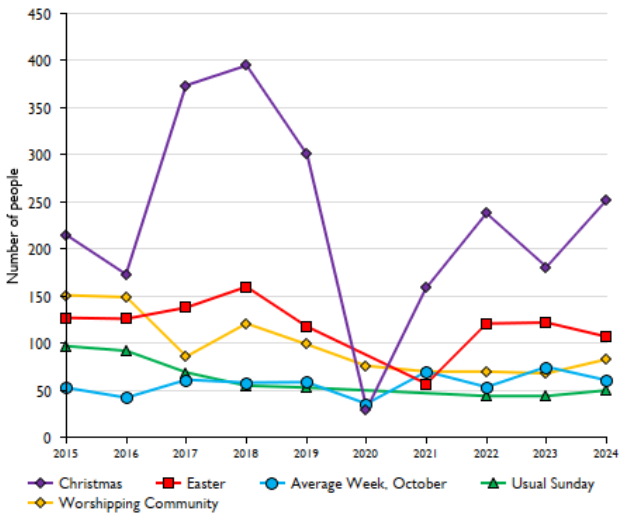
The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

Attendance Summary

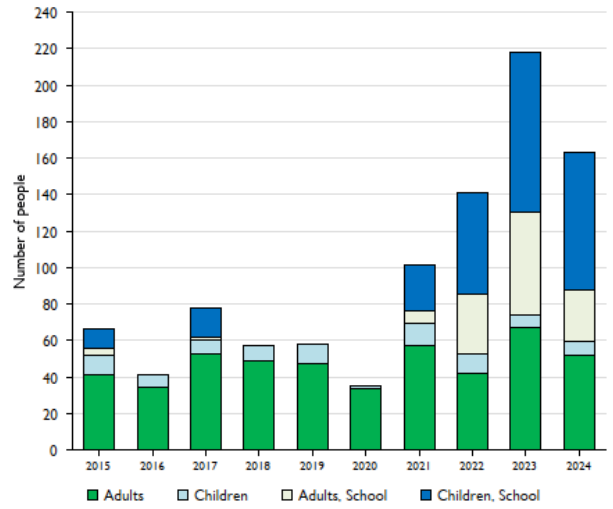
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Christmas	300	28	158	237	180	251
Easter	117	-	56	120	121	106
Average Week, October	58	35	69	53	74	60
Usual Sunday	52	-	-	43	43	49
Worshipping Community	98	75	69	69	67	82

Average Weekly Attendance

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Adults	47	34	58	42	67	52
Children	11	1	12	11	7	8
School Service: Adults	0	0	8	33	56	28
School Service: Children	0	0	25	56	88	76



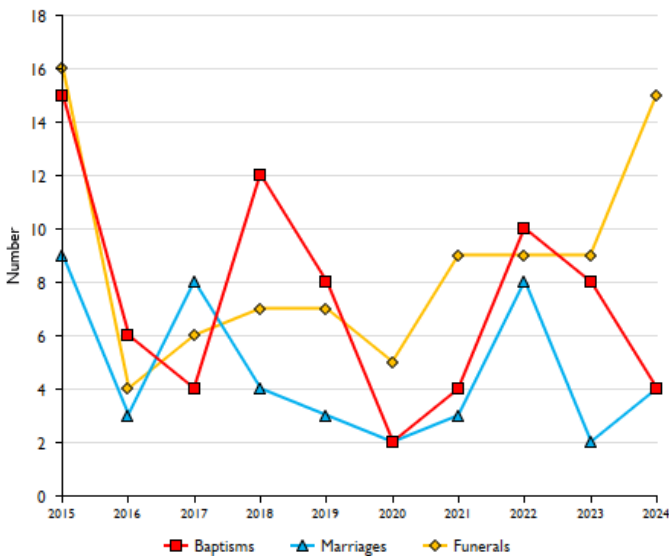
Attendance Summary



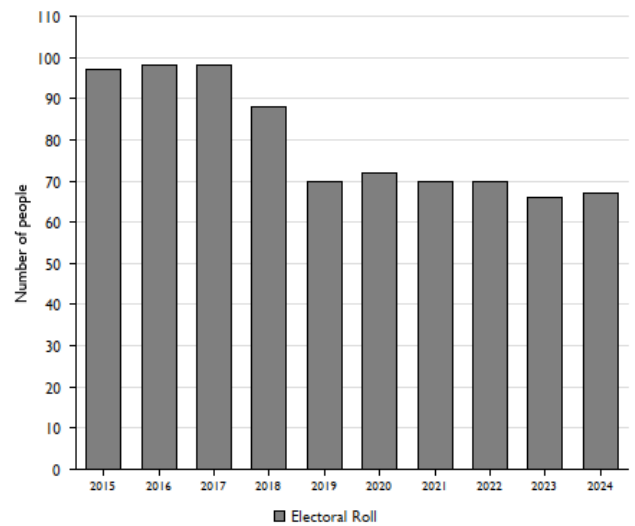
Average Weekly Attendance

Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals and Electoral Roll

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Baptisms	12	8	2	4	10	8	4
Marriages	4	3	2	3	8	2	4
Funerals	7	7	5	9	9	9	15
Electoral Roll	88	70	72	70	70	66	67



Life Services



Electoral Roll

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

Worship and Prayer

We have maintained a regular pattern of worship across the parish, offering a wide variety of services. Remembrance Sunday was marked with an outside service in Stone at the Recreational Grounds Memorial with the Stone Parish Council and a Service of Remembrance was held at Dinton War Memorial.

Christmas were very well attended with 151 people in the congregation, up 71 from last year. Easter was down by 15 from last year with 106 people in the congregations.

The Electoral Roll membership rose by 1 to 67.

As well as our regular services, we normally enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through Baptism, we thank God for the gift of life. Families are expected to attend services before and after the Baptism in order to be welcomed into the Church family. In Marriage, public vows are exchanged with God's blessing, and through Funeral services, friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the person's life and commend them into God's keeping. We have celebrated 4 Baptisms, 4 Weddings and held 15 Funerals *Electoral Roll* this year. Preparation sessions for Baptisms and Weddings are normally held on a regular basis throughout the benefice.

The majority of our services were led by Rev'd Phil Groves and Rev'd Nigel Featherston, and supported by Richard Smith and David Pickup who led our lay led services.

Deanery Synod

We have no ex officio members of the PCC who sits on the Deanery Synod at present so we have space for 2 representatives. They make reports to the PCC at meetings, which provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church. Anyone who stands for deanery synod in 2025 will only be a rep for 1 year.

Our next application for representatives is 2026 with a term of 3 years.

Pastoral Care

Some members of our parish are unable to attend church due to sickness or age and need to be visited and where Holy Communion has been given to those who have requested it. Pastoral Care is an important part of the Church.

Mission and Evangelism

We seek to find opportunities for outreach within the Parish and beyond.

We started running Little Wrigglers this year at the Stone Jubilee Pavillion which is a parent and toddler drop in group.

We delivered the annual Christmas Card around Stone listing all our Christmas services and wishing people a very Merry Christmas from the Church.

We also had our Christmas hamper and concerts in Dinton which have once again been very successful. SPP, Dinton has also been opening its doors regularly this year, not only for hires such as art exhibitions, but also for regular worship for the ROC which has been an enormous success for everybody involved.

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

Parish News

Our Parish magazine is distributed monthly by volunteers to subscribers, schools and nursing homes. In 2024 it made a profit of £1,891.54, up from £1,082.00. The magazine keeps the parishioners informed of important matters affecting our Church, and contains articles that help develop our knowledge and trust in Jesus. The Parish News subscriptions and advertising have continued to represent a valuable source of income for the PCC.

Many thanks to Mr David Pickup and his team for managing this.

Financial Review

We have spent the past year without a treasurer so we continue to pray that we may be able to find a new treasurer to take on the role.

We would like to thank the finance committee for taking on this role collectively and to Mrs Naomi Corbould for the bookkeeping until we are able to find someone to take on the role of treasurer.

Many thanks yet again to all who continue to give generously and regularly to the Parish. Whether you have given through the Parish Giving Scheme, online, by plastic, or by means of cash or cheque, thank you!

Our income totalled £94,754.95. This was due to your kind generosity and the increase in income from users of our buildings and from weddings, baptisms, and funerals, as well as outreach activities and grants.

Our expenditure totalled £116,388.66 (up from £66,845.47 in 2023).

Our Parish Share of £29,933.64 was paid in full.

Volunteers

We would like to thank all the volunteers who work so hard to make our Churches the lively and vibrant community they are, keeping them clean and welcoming with fresh flowers and up to date information. In particular, we want to mention our churchwardens Mrs Rosemary Jackson, Mrs Sue Birrell and Mr Raymond Medhurst who have worked so tirelessly on our behalf.

We would also like to thank Mrs Jenny Pickup who has provided our Pew Sheet every week, keeping us UpToDate with what is happening on a weekly basis.

Many Thanks also go to Ms Christine Ashbridge for organising the musicians for our many services across the year.

We would like to thank the teams that work tirelessly to clean and maintain our churches and churchyards and for the wonderful flower displays they create.

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules and the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956.

At Stone, Dinton and Hartwell the membership of the PCC consists of the Rector, Associate Rector, Clergy, Churchwardens, Deanery and Diocesan Reps, Lay Ministers, Treasurer, Secretary and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services / members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

New members can receive initial training into the workings of the PCC through Diocesan training courses. The full PCC met 5 times during the year with an average level of attendance of 69%.

A Standing Committee also meets when necessary to deal with emergencies.

Each church has a separate church committee for the day to day running and a fabric committee for the maintenance. The SJB and SPP committees report to PCC.

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

The PCC is also required to ensure that the financial statements are examined by an independent examiner or auditor prior to presentation to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

There are the following committees:

- PCC: The overriding decision making body.
- Standing Committee: The Standing Committee is a small selection of the PCC who meet to carry out any emergency PCC business between PCC meetings.
- Church Committees – The SJB and SPP committees look after the day to day running of the respective buildings. Reports to the PCC.
- Fabric Committees – Look after the buildings and the grounds of the respective Churches. Reports to the Church Committees.
- Finance and Compliance – Looks after the finances and makes sure we fulfil our legal obligations. Reports to the PCC.

Safeguarding

The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding Clergy and Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). There have been no safeguarding cases reported this year. No cases have been referred to the diocese safeguarding officer.

Administrative information

Stone Dinton and Hartwell Parish is part of the Diocese of Oxford within the Church of England. The correspondence address is Wychert Vale Benefice Office, St. Mary's Centre, Haddenham, Bucks, HP17 8AH
Tel: 01844 291108 Email: office@wychertvale.org

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2020) and a charity currently exempted from registration with the Charity Commission.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024 are:

Ex Officio members:

Rector: Revd Cassa Masservy

Associate Rector: The Revd Canon Dr Phil Groves

Rev'd Nigel Featherston

Wardens : Mrs Rosemary Jackson

: Mr Raymond Medhurst

: Mrs Sue Birrell

Mrs Nicky Bancroft representative on Deanery Synod (Resigned September 24)

Elected members:

Mr Richard Smith

Mr Steven Kennell

Mrs Eryl Morgan (Stand Down May 24)

Mr Terry Cooper

Mr Roger Withers

Mr Ian Cairns

Mrs Clare Davey, Safeguarding

Mr Stephan Medhurst, Secretary to the PCC

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

Finances

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Statement of Assets and Liabilities

As at: 31 December 2024

Stone, Dinton & Hartwell PCC

	General (Unrestricted)	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total	Last year	Note
Fixed Asset - Tangible Assets							
CCLA CBF Investment Fund	-	-	21,319.59	-	21,319.59	16,187.65	36
Total			21,319.59		21,319.59	16,187.65	
Current Asset - Cash At Bank And In Hand							
Barclays Main PCC Account	7,006.62	4,200.00	8,491.01	-	19,697.63	53,704.27	37
Barclays No2 PCC Account	5,000.00	-	25,000.00	-	30,000.00	-	38
Barclays Stone Facilities Account	-	-	2,113.24	-	2,113.24	4,719.90	39
CCLA (CBF) deposit account	2,178.14	-	-	-	2,178.14	2,068.36	16
Skipton Building Society	-	-	10,000.00	-	10,000.00	30,000.00	39
Total	14,184.76	4,200.00	45,604.25		63,989.01	90,492.53	
Liability - Agency Accounts							
Agency collections	-	-	906.25	-	906.25	933.13	40
Total			906.25		906.25	933.13	
Net Total Assets	14,184.76	4,200.00	66,017.59		84,402.35	105,747.05	
Represented by							
General (Unrestricted)	14,184.76	-	-	-	14,184.76	30,107.61	
Designated for Benefice Costs	-	4,200.00	-	-	4,200.00	3,000.00	
Restricted - Children (SJB)	-	-	243.27	-	243.27	246.22	
Restricted - Electrics (SJB)	-	-	-	-	0.00	145.20	
Restricted - Fabric (SJB)	-	-	17,607.84	-	17,607.84	5,844.89	
Restricted - Fabric (SPP)	-	-	16,154.32	-	16,154.32	13,900.15	
Restricted - Facilities (SJB)	-	-	12,113.24	-	12,113.24	34,719.90	
Restricted - Graveyard	-	-	4,994.85	-	4,994.85	8,041.41	
Restricted - Grocers (SJB)	-	-	1,639.27	-	1,639.27	1,639.31	
Restricted - Messy Church (SPP)	-	-	348.44	-	348.44	348.44	
Restricted - Mission (SJB & SPP)	-	-	5,000.00	-	5,000.00	-	
Restricted - Organ Restoration (SPP)	-	-	7,916.36	-	7,916.36	7,753.92	
Total	14,184.76	4,200.00	66,017.59		84,402.35	105,747.05	

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

Stone, Dinton & Hartwell PCC	Analysis of Receipts and Payments		01 January 2024 to 31 December 2024				
	Income	General	Designated	Restricted	This Year	Total Last Year	Notes
Parish Giving Scheme	17,546.51		-	-	17,546.51	17,547.41	2
Standing Orders - Bank	3,040.00		-	-	3,040.00	8,790.00	2
Other Planned Giving - Envelopes	620.00		-	-	620.00	460.80	
Loose Plate Service Collections	3,816.32		-	1,115.00	4,931.32	4,606.62	3
Good Box Donations (incl. Café in 2023)	610.51		-	304.00	914.51	2669.97**	3
Stripe - Online Giving	44.31		-	100.00	144.31	162.01	4
One-off Gift Aid gifts	275.00		-	5,000.00	5,275.00	2,397.90	5
Donations, appeals etc	552.25		-	5,257.34	5,809.59	2,244.81	
Gift Aid Recovered	6,050.74		-	18.50	6,069.24	8375.90**	6
GASDS Recovered	2,050.83		-	317.57	2,368.40	-	6
Legacies	-		-	5,000.00	5,000.00	500.00	7
Recurring grants	-		-	3,000.00	3,000.00	2,040.00	8
One-off Grants	-		-	4,345.84	4,345.84	2,608.80	9
Other funds generated	179.00		-	2,219.09	2,398.09	1,812.67	
Total	34,785.47		-	26,677.34	61,462.81	54,216.89	
Fees for Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals	5,058.00		-	-	5,058.00	3,783.59	10
Church Lettings - Christian Objectives	3,550.00		-	-	3,550.00	4,050.00	11
Café Donations - Cash	5,098.20		-	-	5,098.20	4,990.81	12
Café Donations - Goodbox	3,242.00		-	-	3,242.00	-	12
Little Wrigglers - Donations	596.11		-	-	596.11	-	13
Parish News Advertising Income	4,214.50		-	-	4,214.50	3,767.00	14
Parish News Subscriptions & Sales	2,312.10		-	-	2,312.10	2,221.25	14
Dividends	-		-	489.01	489.01	434.61	15
Bank and Building Society Interest	109.91		-	885.00	994.91	64.23	16
Contribution to SPP Utility Bills	6,087.31		-	6,087.31	3,882.62	-	11
Church Lettings - Fundraising	1,650.00		-	1,650.00	1,500.00	-	17
Total	31,918.13		-	1,374.01	33,292.14	24,694.11	
Income Total	66,703.60		-	28,051.35	94,754.95	78,911.00	

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

Stone, Dinton & Hartwell PCC	Analysis of Receipts and Payments			01 January 2024 to 31 December 2024		
Expenditure	General	Designated	Restricted	This Year	Total Last Year	Notes
Parish Share to Diocese	29,933.6	-	-	29,933.64	27,826.92	19
Parish Insurance	5,009.10	-	-	5,009.10	4,529.77	
Benefice Costs	-	4,153.16	-	4,153.16	-	20
Administration (incl. website)	1,561.38	-	-	1,561.38	711.50	21
Parish Mission	554.62	-	-	554.62	52.20	22
Giving to Mission	141.38	-	-	141.38	260.40	
Organ / Piano Tuning	288.00	-	-	288.00	323.00	
Organist Cost	790.00	-	-	790.00	370.00**	23
Upkeep of Services / Consumables	1,255.82	-	2.95	1,258.77	894.68	24
SJB Church Maintenance	3,495.01	-	79.48	3,574.49	9010.48**	25
SPP Church Maintenance	2,527.90	-	1,075.20	3,603.10		25
SJB Churchyard	2,884.63	-	644.96	3,529.59	873.18**	26
SPP Churchyard	3,086.34	-	359.47	3,445.81		26
Hartwell Churchyard	-	-	3,400.00	3,400.00	-	27
SJB Facilities Project	-	-	26,808.25	26,808.25	-	28
SJB Utilities (incl. internet)	3,996.94	-	-	3,996.94	3,070.25	29
SPP Utilities	8,457.66	-	-	8,457.66	6,505.30	29
Parish News Expenses	4,635.05	-	-	4,635.05	4,905.73	14
Café Leader Wage	-	-	2,000.04	2,000.04	2,299.89	30
Cafe Expenses	5,896.50	-	-	5,896.50	4,911.68	31
Little Wrighglers	1,413.27	-	1,000.00	2,413.27	-	32
Good Box/SumUp/Stripe	311.91	-	-	311.91	196.47	33
Costs of Fetes & Events	20.00	-	-	20.00	54.02	
Miscellaneous	606.00	-	-	606.00	50.00	34
Expenditure Total	76,865.1	4,153.16	35,370.35	116,388.6	66,845.47	35

Finance Notes

Introduction to 2024 Accounts

The MyFundAccountingOnline accounts system has continued to work well and its ability to produce clear and accurate reports at any stage of the accounting year has considerably assisted the work of the PCC finance team.

This year the PCC Accounts have been simplified for ease of reading and understanding.

The overall situation was that there was an actual loss of £21,634. Although there was an increase in income in 2024 to £94,754.95 from £78,911.00 in 2023, the level of regular giving has declined, and most of the increase has resulted from one-off donations or legacies, or from sources which are inherently variable (e.g. fees from funerals and weddings). Expenditure was substantially higher in 2024 at £116,388.66 (£66,845 in 2023). Whilst over 50% of this increase is accounted for by the expected final invoices for the kitchen and toilet facilities at SJB, there have also been significant calls on general funds for maintenance and repairs to the church buildings and churchyards during the year, along with an upward trend in most regular costs, particularly utilities. As a result, the General Funds reserves of £30,000 have halved in one year. Although most of the increased expenditure during the year was anticipated, we clearly cannot maintain that level of expenditure without an increase in income.

In 2025, we will therefore need to focus on increasing regular giving if the churches are to continue to meet their commitments to serving their communities. We will also need to prepare to raise funds for two significant capital projects: much-needed improvements to the paths at SJB and a replacement heating system for SPP.

Notes to 2024 Accounts

1. Basis of Accounting. The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 on the receipts and payments basis. The figures for 2023 are shown for direct comparison unless denoted by **. The overall total includes General (Unrestricted), Designated and Restricted Funds.

2. Standing Order giving more than halved due to one large donor moving away. Giving via the **Parish Giving Scheme** remains stable.

3. Loose plate collections decreased from £4,600 to £3,816. Giving on the **Goodbox** Mini machines at services has increased. The 2023 figure included Goodbox donations at Café in the Park which is listed separately in 2024.

4. Stripe is used for online donations to Unrestricted or Restricted Funds via the website.

5. One-off Gift Aid gifts. £5,000 was received from one donor to fund Parish-wide Mission (new Restricted Fund).

6. Gift Aid recovered from HMRC on named donations and **GASDS recovered** on service collections. The 2023 figure was an amalgamation of the two which are now listed separately.

7. Legacies. One legacy in aid of SJB Fabric Fund for £5,000 was received from the late Mrs Carole Fryer.

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

8. Recurring Grants. £2,000 Grocers' grant for the Incumbent at SJB. £1,000 Bergqvist Charitable Trust grant to SPP Fabric Fund.

9. One-off grants. £500 from Stone with Bishopstone Parish Council and £500 from Stone Fete to Little Wrighlers to help with set up costs. £645 from Stone with Bishopstone Parish Council to SJB Fabric Fund for new churchyard equipment and £2,701 from LPOWS to SJB Facilities to cover the VAT paid on work invoices.

10. Fees for Baptisms, Weddings & Funerals. Sadly 2024 many funerals were held at both SJB and SPP.

11. Church Lettings – Christian Objectives. This is the income from the Romanian Orthodox Church using SPP for services – reduced from £450/month in 2023 to £200/month from January 2024 and paid monthly in arrears. ROC also contribute two-thirds of SPP gas and electric bills which offsets the costs of increased energy consumption.

12. Café Donations totalled £8340. During the year, the PCC received advice that, to continue to claim gift aid on Café donations, it needed to be certain that donors understood that they were making donations to Stone, Dinton and Hartwell PCC, rather than payments for refreshments. Although the PCC believes that all reasonable efforts to ensure that this was the case had been made, it made a precautionary decision to discontinue GASDS claims on Café donations from May 2024 onwards.

13. Little Wrighlers attendees make a voluntary contribution of £2 per family/week to help cover hire of the hall, etc.

14. Parish News. Income from Advertising, Subscriptions and Sales totalled £6,527, exceeding Printing Expenses of £4,635. A profit of £1,892 for 2024.

15. Dividends from the CCLA CBF Investment Fund totalled £489 – the number of shares held increased due to the SPP Organ Restoration Fund being invested.

16. Bank and Building Society Interest. £110 interest was received by the CCLA CBF Deposit Fund quarterly at 4.99% AER (as at 30/9/24). £885 annual interest was received by the Stone Facilities funds in the Skipton Building Society at 3.65% (as at 16/8/24).

17. Church Lettings – Fundraising. The Art Society hired SPP for 10 monthly meetings.

18. General Funds Income Total for 2024 of £66,704 just below the £67,040 for General Funds in 2023.

19. Parish Share to Diocese. In 2024 our Parish Share was £29,934 and was paid in full. This equated to ~45% of the General Funds income.

20. Benefice Costs for 2023. £4,153 was paid in January 2024 from the Designated Fund set aside throughout 2023 and the remainder paid from General Funds. The costs for 2022 were paid in the Accrued Accounts of 2022 so are not shown.

21. Administration included £596 for the Stone, Dinton & Hartwell website, email, etc for 3 years, £344 for annual CCLI Licences, £315 for Aylesbury Deanery Trust (Deanery Fees) and £228 for MFAO (Accounts system from Data Developments) – the cost of £19/month is shared with Cuddington PCC.

22. Parish Mission. SJB Easter and Christmas cards, 'It's Your Move' books and a new SJB banner.

23. Organist Cost. The 2023 cost was only for 6 months due to 2023 Accounts being Accrual based.

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

- 24. Upkeep of Services / Consumables.** Includes candles, Palm crosses, Service sheets paper, Baptism candles, toilet roll, hand towels, refreshments, cleaning products, flowers, etc.
- 25. SJB/SPP Church Maintenance.** The 2023 figure was for both churches. General Funds cover servicing, annual safety checks, repairs of church fabric, replacement items, etc. Fabric Funds cover new items, SPP Roof Alarm, etc.
- 26. SJB/SPP Churchyard Maintenance.** The 2023 figure was for both churchyards. General Funds cover machine servicing, petrol, brown bins, repairs, etc. Fabric Funds cover new items. £2,966 for SPP path repair, £645 for SJB equipment (funded by a grant – Note 9).
- 27. Hartwell Graveyard Maintenance.** £3,400 was paid to Village Tree Surgeons for tree and clearance work from the Hartwell Graveyard Fund.
- 28. SJB Facilities Project.** Final invoices: £21,756 to Wards and £1,896 to MDP Architects. A further £3,156 to MDP Architects for work on the New Path.
- 29. SJB/SPP Utilities.** Includes gas (at SPP), electricity, water, sewerage and internet at SJB. Costs offset by ROC contribution to SPP bills (Note 11).
- 30. Café Leader Wage.** The PCC employs the Café Leader who is paid from the Incumbent’s Annual Grant from the Worshipful Company of Grocers’.
- 31. Café Expenses.** Includes hiring the Jubilee Pavilion and purchase of food and other consumables.
- 32. Little Wrighlers.** £1,291 in setup costs (floor mats, toys, 1st Aid training, cups, bowls, etc). £1,000 received in grants (Note 9). Continuing costs include the hire of the Jubilee Pavilion, snacks, etc.
- 33. Goodbox/Stripe Fees.** Each service provider charges a small % fee per transaction. The PCC agreed such fees should come from General Funds to encourage donations and fundraising.
- 34. Miscellaneous.** £456 for two Goodbox Mini machines, £150 for hiring Stone Methodist Church for choir practise.
- 35. General Funds Expenditure Total** for 2024 of £76,865 exceeds that of £58,387 for 2023 by £18,478 - **31%** increase.
- 36. CBF Investment Fund.** In addition to the £489 in reinvested dividends the fund value grew by £289. Averaging the investment over the year (£17,000) it had a total return of 4.57%. During the year £7,754 – the SPP Organ Restoration Fund was invested in the fund. On 31/12/24 the fund comprised 22.49% Hartwell Graveyard, 40.38% SPP Fabric Fund and 37.13% SPP Organ Restoration Fund.
- 37. Barclays Main PCC Account.** The main current account contains both General and Restricted Funds – all accounted for separately. During 2024 £350/month was transferred from General Funds to a Designated Fund to pay the annual invoice for Benefice Office fees.
- 38. Barclays No2 PCC Account.** Funds were transferred to this account to gain 1.4% AER interest. On 31/12/24 the £30,000 comprised £15,000 SJB Fabric Fund, £5,000 SPP Fabric Fund, £5,000 General Fund and £5,000 Mission Fund.
- 39. Stone Facilities Accounts.** Following completion of the Facilities project the remaining £12,113 will be used for the New Path. In August 2024 £885 interest was received into Skipton Building Society savings account which earns interest of 3.65% applied to the account annually or upon closure. Both accounts are managed by Mrs V Sewell-Rutter and Mrs S Birrell.

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

40. Agency Collections. Donations to external charities where the monies are paid into the PCC account and forwarded to the charity.

Throughout 2024 the following was raised:

SJB Coffee Cup Collection - Aylesbury Homeless Action Group = £234.81

SJB Coffee Cup Collection – Bucks Clergy Charity = £98.95

SJB Coffee Cup Collection – St Luke’s for Clergy Wellbeing = £100.50

SJB Coffee Cup Collection – Prison Fellowship = £179.13

SJB Coffee Cup Collection – ICEH (International Centre for Eye Health) = £248.05

SJB Coffee Cup Collection, Christmas Services and ‘Carols in the Courtyard’

Aylesbury Community Christmas Lunch = £1,022.35

SJB Service Collection and Café Donations – Christian Aid week = £269.08

SJB & SPP Christingle Services – The Children’s Society = £221.25

SPP Christmas Turkey Draw 2024 – Florence Nightingale Hospice = £625.00

41. Represented By shows all the overall balances of the different PCC funds across all bank accounts and investments.

Naomi Corbould accounts@stonedintonhartwell.com 17/1/2025

Richard Smith Chair, Finance and Compliance Committee 23/1/2025

Independent Examiners Report

Independent Examiner's Report

To the Trustees of Stone with Dinton and Hartwell PCC

This report is regarding the Accounts for year ended 31st December 2024, which are attached.

The basis of this Report.

The Trustees of the P.C.C has agreed that an Independent Review is required in accordance with the Charities Act 2011, section 145 &152 for the above year. It is my responsibility to review the Accounts and ensure they comply with the above Act. Also to report any matters of concern which have been identified during this process. This review is not a full audit and therefore this report does not express an Audit opinion on these Accounts.

Examiners Statement

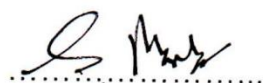
I can report that the Accounts are correct and can confirm that the records have been kept in accordance with the 2011 Act, however need to raise the following-

A) the overall financial loss for this year being £21.6k, comparing Income to expenditure is not sustainable. This level cannot be allowed to continue at this rate and would therefore recommend that future expenditure is closely monitored against income and that where possible grants are explored to cover major projects, prior to commencement.

B) I would recommend a Reserve Policy should be prepared and agreed, which would provide for a reserve fund to be maintained. This should be a fund to cover running expenses for 3 months, estimated at £15k in the event of no income being available.

C) With regard to the funds retained in Bank/ Building Societies, which were used for Toilet / Kitchen alteration and as the final certificate has now been paid, the P.C.C. should consider transferring Facilities Funds (£12.6k) to be included within the same Financial Management system which covers the General and Restricted Funds. .

- Follow up Items**
- 1) Review overall financial situation.
 - 2) Check Reserve Policy.
 - 3) Check situation/action taken regarding Facilities Fund.



S. Marks, FMAAT.

10 Chesterfield Close, Stone.

10th Feb 2025

File Ref Stone D&H cert 2024 .

Deanery Synod Report

No Report Received.

Safeguarding Report

1. Introduction

Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at PCC.

There are regular safeguarding meetings between the Associate Rector and the Safeguarding Officer.

2. Formal Obligation

This report fulfils the formal obligation of the PCC to report to the APCMs on whether or not 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).'

3. Safeguarding Roles

- Parish Safeguarding Officer: Clare Davey
- Benefice DBS verifiers: Val Walker and Carol Hayward

4. Safeguarding Policy, Guidance and Information

- The PCC has adopted 'Promoting a Safer Church' as its own safeguarding policy.
- The safeguarding guidance and information we are promoting and working in line with are contained in the Diocese of Oxford Parish Safeguarding Handbook.
- The 'Promoting a Safer Church' poster and contact information are displayed in our church and a link to our policies and contact details are on first page of the benefice and parish websites.

5. Safeguarding Learning and Development

- All those in positions of leadership responsibility have completed the appropriate safeguarding learning pathways as have all volunteers for children's work and Café.
- The Safeguarding Officer is ensuring all PCC members have complete appropriate training.

6. Safer Recruitment and People Management

- We are compliant with Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance.

7. Concerns Raised

- No safeguarding concerns were shared with Parish Safeguarding Officer.
- No referrals were made to Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

8. Next Steps

- New members of the PCC will be subject to DBS checks and expected to complete relevant training.
- Policies will be monitored and updated where required.

9. Thanks

- The APCM thanks Val Walker (Haddenham) and Carol Hayward (Cuddington) for their service to us as DBS verifiers.

St John the Baptist Church Report

At the start of the year the safety inspections were carried out and passed, the insurance and public liability were checked and paid and church returns were completed.

The Archdeacons Visitation took place in June and we came out in a very favourable light with all our policies in place and essential information on display. It was suggested that we try and open the church more and this will be looked at for 2025.

Works completed during 2024:

- The final bill for the Kitchen and Facilities was paid as was the final Architect invoice.
- Electrical items in the church were PAT tested, and any failures were either disposed of, replaced or repaired.
- Electrical work to move heater switches and add a new socket in the vestry and install lights in the tower ringing chamber and a new socket at the back of the church was undertaken by Glenisters.
- The wax altar candles have been replaced by oil filled ones which are proving to be cleaner and economical.
- Votive light holders were kindly hand made by Terry as we have had occasions when people visiting the church wanted to light a candle in memory of someone and we didn't have any specific thing for this purpose.
- The church had a display of knitted poppies for Remembrance in the churchyard which was lit in the evening for 10 days and very much enjoyed by those visiting. The neighbours commented on the lighting making the church look more beautiful and inviting.
- The corner steps became very unsafe during the year and had to be closed off pending re-seating in 2025.
- The area at the bottom of the Churchway steps had to have the stones removed and the area concreted following Raymonds serious fall.
- The Font booklet was completed and has been a good talking point. A local Historical Graffiti enthusiast contacted us to come and look at the font and any graffiti that he could find in the church.
- The church was opened to welcome people participating in Ride and Stride and it is planned to do this again in 2025.
- Café in The Park continues to be a great outreach place for the community and church.

Other Fabric Updates:

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

- Plans for the path from Bishopstone Road to the church were drawn up by the architect and we were hopeful that the path could be done for the winter. The repair of the tomb by the path will be included in this project.
- A monthly Church Gardening session was held from March to November and in the later weeks of the year we had a group of men come from the Community Payback Scheme to help clear the grounds and boundaries of the church.
- This year an area in the churchyard was left wild for the butterflies and bees but it was generally a bad year for them so the count was very low.
- Socially Crafty continues to meet in the church on the 3rd Monday of each month and is very well attended.

As a church we were very pleased when Richard Smith completed his course and was Licensed as a Lay Reader to the Benefice.

We wish to express grateful thanks to those who work so hard to keep our church and gardens looking so well cared for.

The gardeners Ivor and Steve, the cleaners, Dee, Gwen and Sue, the flower arrangers Dee, Gwen, Sue, Clare, Shirley and Sue.

The Choir and organists; Chris, Richard and Stephan.

All others including Val who has helped to repair some of the Altar Falls and linen.

Jenny and Stephan who produce and distribute the Pew Sheet and Stephan for his work on the website and as PCC Secretary.

Clare who manages our Safeguarding.

Terry who has supported us as Churchwardens again this year.

Leaders and helpers at Café in the Park, Explorers and Socially Crafty. Finally for Phil and the Ministry Team especially for David and Raymond who have led our morning and quiet worship sessions.

We also thank you all for the support and help that you give in any way and invite anyone else who would like to help in any way at all to contact us to offer your help.

Raymond and Sue

Churchwardens

SJB Fabric Report

Report For Annual Parochial Church Council From The Fabric Committee Of St John
The Baptist Church, Stone

January 2024 – December 2024

Monthly meetings have been held to report and discuss the requirements of the church and churchyard that are the responsibility of this committee.

During the year we have been very busy looking after what we have and trying to repair, update and improve things inside and outside of the church building. I would like to express grateful thanks to the Fabric Committee members who work so hard to continuously be observant, looking for anything that needs repairing or maintaining.

We were pleased to have the final bill for the Kitchen and Facilities and the final Architect invoice which we paid. Funds remaining from this project will be restricted for use on future facilities projects.

Electrical work to move heater switches and add a new socket in the vestry and a new socket at the back of the church was undertaken by Glenisters. They also installed spot lights in the tower ringing chamber to light the beautiful stained glass window in there. The wax altar candles have been replaced by oil filled ones which are proving to be cleaner and economical. This was necessary as we had a lot of wax drips and spills which created hard wax on the carpet which had to be removed.

Following many occasions when people visiting the church wanted to light a candle in memory of someone Terry kindly hand made Votive light holders for this purpose which are in the Lady Chapel.

The Font booklet was completed and has been a good talking point. A local Historical Graffiti enthusiast contacted us to come and look at the font and any graffiti that he could find in the church. He found lots and this proved to be very interesting so we held a Supper and Graffiti evening in the church at harvest which was attended by over 40 people. We had a soup supper and then a talk about the different graffiti which had been found and people could follow the historian to see for themselves what we had found. This information is now on our website.

The church had a display of knitted poppies, which were prepared by Socially Crafty, for Remembrance in the churchyard. Over a hundred poppies were on display and lit in the evening for 10 days. This was very much enjoyed by those visiting and the

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

neighbours commented on how the lighting making the church look more beautiful and inviting.

The corner steps became very unsafe during the year and had to be closed off pending re-seating in 2025.

The area at the bottom of the Churchway steps had to have the stones removed and the area concreted following Raymonds serious fall.

The church was opened to welcome people participating in Ride and Stride and it is planned to do this again in 2025.

Ongoing Fabric Updates:

- Plans for the path from Bishopstone Road to the church were drawn up by the architect and we were hopeful that the path could be done for the winter. This was very optimistic as when the tenders came in they were a lot higher than expected. When the Faculty request was made the DAC members arranged a site visit and the plans have been revised to continue the path round to Churchway so new tenders will have to be obtained. The repair of the tomb by the path will be included in this project. A Fund Raising effort will have to start in order to fund this which will be split into 3 parts; the tomb, path from Bishopstone Road to the porch, the porch to Churchway path.
 - A monthly Church Gardening session was held from March to November and in the later weeks of the year we had a group of men come from the Community Payback Scheme to help clear the grounds and boundaries of the church. This was a wonderful thing for the church to do as whilst the men had to attend they were very willing to work and grateful for conversation and praise for a job well done. They offered to come back later in the Spring to help again.
 - For the second year we have been very grateful to the Parish Council who gave us a grant to purchase a wheeled strimmer, long reach hedgecutter and chainsaw which have all been well used.
 - This year an area in the churchyard was left wild for the butterflies and bees but it was generally a bad year for them so the count was very low.
 - Socially Crafty continues to meet in the church on the 3rd Monday of each month and is very well attended. A Christmas Fair was held in the church with many of the items for sale made by members and £500 was raised for the Fabric of the Church.
- I also thank you all for the support and help that you give in any way and invite anyone else who would like to help in any way at all to contact us to offer your help.

Sue Birrell

Fabric Chairperson

SPP Fabric Report

Report for St Peter and St Paul Church, Dinton
for January 2024 until January 2025

This year has proved very successful in many ways but we have also coped with some difficulties with more on the horizon. The good things first. We have seen a gradual growth of our congregation throughout the year. Our regular once per month Evensong has been well attended with consistently over 25 in the congregation. The weddings, funerals and baptisms have seen full churches and the special services – Patronal, Harvest, Remembrance Services, Carol Service and Christmas day Service have also been full. A new service was added in October for those who had been bereaved, it was called a service of Living Remembrance and was much appreciated by attenders. With regard to the Church Fabric we need to thank George Piciaragu for installing a new path for us. How wonderful it is not to have to slurp through mud all winter!!

Now the not so good news. In December disaster struck with the failure of the heating, meaning there was no heating for the Carol Service. Having discovered there were leaks in the underfloor water pipes we all feared for the worst but some sterling work by our Assoc.Rector Phil Groves and our heating engineers saw the heating reestablished before Christmas Day. Unfortunately, we are well aware that the boilers are very old and that anything could happen to the heating at any time and so we are actively considering alternative heating systems.

This will be a time bomb in terms of a major expense but an even bigger problem on the horizon is the concrete rendering on the outside walls which is shedding and leaving the stone vulnerable to damaging weathering. This is mainly visible on the external west walls and the north corner.

There is a problem inside the church as well. The church owns two beautiful Victorian brass candelabra, and they are becoming extremely rickety and fragile. We had an expert silversmith examine them recently and his view was that they should be decommissioned until such time as they can be restored by a specialist.

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

Romanian Orthodox Church – Our partnership with the Romanian Orthodox Church (ROC) has gone from strength to strength. We will continue to discuss our partnership in regular meetings.

Arts Society of Aylesbury – we welcome the Arts Society on the first Tuesday of every month. There are usually over a hundred people present to hear a visiting speaker and have refreshments.

Pattern of Services

We continue to have three regular services each month with the first Sunday being a 9am Holy Communion Service with hymns: the second Sunday being a Choral Evensong Service at 6pm. The fourth Sunday is a 9am Holy Communion without music, which is currently being held in the side chapel to create a more friendly atmosphere.

Upkeep of the church

We have a rota of sidesmen in order to ensure we can verger every service.

Churchyard Gardening a small group meet on the second Saturday of each month to trim and mow and dig out weeds

Cleaning Rota – This is a major task but could be so much easier if there were a few more volunteers.

Bellringers –The Tower Captain is teaching three new people which is wonderful, and he would be pleased to hear from anyone who has had previous experience and would like to join.

Flower Ladies – the flower ladies group make some beautiful displays which really brighten up the church.

WELCOME TO EVERYONE COMING INTO ST PETER AND ST PAUL CHURCH IN DINTON

Rosemary Jackson,

Churchwarden

Clergy Report

Belong, Believe, Build – with Christ at the Centre

For both St John the Baptist Stone (SJB) and Ss Peter and Paul, Dinton (SPP) 2024 was a year of both continuity and change.

Worship

The worship patterns at SJB have had time to settle in. We now seek to welcome people of all ages to our worshipping life every Sunday at 10.30am through a combination of traditional services with Explorers and All-Age Services.

Thank you to those who lead our Explorers. It is now so popular that we need to recruit additional leadership – even if it is just to ensure that we do not exceed our safeguarding ratios. We now sometimes need three adults for the number of children who are attending. Please offer to help: DBS and online safeguarding training are required.

Our special services, such as the Service of Loving Remembrance, have been very moving for many, including people who do not otherwise attend. Our numbers attending at Christmas are returning to pre-covid levels.

At SPP we have made a significant change. We now have two Eucharistic services a month – both at 9am – and we are delighted that our new members are now embedded. We are delighted that our new members are now well integrated into the congregation. It is also wonderful that Rosemary can step down as Churchwarden with confidence, knowing that Ian will be well supported as he takes on the role.

Nigel's consistent presence in the village life is bearing fruit in our church community. Sadly, we have lost some cherished members of our village, but Nigel has been able to support their families during these difficult times. This naturally led to the first Service of Loving Remembrance at SPP, which was deeply appreciated. Attendance at our Christmas services, especially Christmas Day Communion, was also very encouraging. Our companionship with the ROC continues to grow. It has had some tricky issues, but we are hosting a community of prayer, which is important and gives us joy.

Outreach

Café in the Park continues to thrive and we had pastoral opportunities through our relationships with those coming week by week. Socially Crafty had a significant impact – especially with the poppies at Remembrance and the Christmas Craft Fair.

Little Wrighglers was launched this year and Naomi and the whole team have made a significant impact on our community. At both Café and Little Wrighglers it is great that some helpers who do not come to church are able to participate in community building.

The Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell

Our Patronal lunch and outside Christmas Carols were fantastic occasions, laying the foundation for future gatherings. We look forward to more opportunities in the coming year.

At SPP, we continue to focus on being a church deeply embedded in the community, actively participating in village life. The Christingle was a great event (even if we were distracted by the failure of the heating system). We will seek to welcome the Cuddington and Dinton School Community to our church around Advent again this year.

Buildings and Churchyards

At SPP, the heating system failed in December, but thankfully, it was a relatively simple pipe repair. However, this has prompted us to consider the long-term future of the heating system. On a more positive note, we now have a beautiful new path around the church.

The planned path project at SJB will be a major undertaking, and we are grateful to those who have already contributed time and effort to its development.

Both churchyards require significant upkeep, and we sincerely thank everyone who dedicates their time and effort to maintaining them.

Clearing the churchyard at Hartwell revealed the complete failure of one of the walls. We now have a plan to remove it, reinforce the ends of the existing walls, and potentially replace it with a fence.

People

The Church is not the buildings: it is **us**, God's people.

There has been a great highlight this year with Richard Smith becoming a fully-fledged Local Lay Minister and his ministry among us is greatly appreciated.

We are all the church and God takes delight in each of us. I thank you for our partnership in sharing God's love in the world.

Revd Canon Dr Phil Groves