

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT APRIL 2025

This is our first report as Churchwardens and looking back to prepare it has reminded us of the range of activities we get involved in during the daily life of St Andrew's. It has also highlighted the huge number of people who contribute to our Church on a continuing basis and we would like to thank you all for your efforts. The St Andrew's church family is truly a special one. We extend particular thanks to Roz and Shirley who provided us with an excellent handover at the beginning of our term as Churchwardens and who both continue to do so much for St Andrew's.

Having started to become familiar with the yearly round of tasks such as congregation counts, gutter clearance, dealing with leaks and organ maintenance we began the year by focussing on the information in the Terrier, the record of church property, in preparation for the Archdeacon's visit in July when she reviewed this important document. This included getting a new valuation for the Spanish Chalice and we would like to thank our neighbours in St Andrew's Street, Sworders, for their assistance with this matter. The PCC have received a report and we continue to hold the Chalice in the vault at Hertford Castle.

Chris Seward, Deputy Churchwarden, is an invaluable colleague who has brought continuity of information and practice and we are very grateful for his assistance. He has led a small team who have worked on the installation of the new AV system which we are delighted to report is now fully funded and complete. The system adds to our worship experience and, also, makes St Andrew's more attractive as a venue for hire.

The income from hiring the building has become increasingly important for the church and the programme of events continues to increase with folk and classical gigs featuring. Chris, Harriet and Phil, our Church Administrator who has been so generous with her time and knowledge this year, do an incredible job along with many other volunteers to ensure these events run safely and efficiently.

Our programme of Coffee Mornings continues providing a valued social event each month and a further source of income for the church as well as a variety of charities. We also had another Harvest Fest and Beer and Carols at Christmas.

Another project which has been completed during the course of the year, ably led by members of the Eco Committee, is the installation of bike racks both to the front and the rear of the church for the use of the congregation and centre users. We also had to have two lightening conductors repaired due to vandalism.

Ongoing projects are the installation of a defibrillator in the Porch, a new Soakaway to the rear of the church to channel rainwater away from the building and the replacement of a dilapidated gutter on the porch.

The stone in the porch is showing signs of deterioration and we will be observing this in the coming months and taking advice. We are also getting quotes for the repair of damaged windows.

We have appointed a new Visiting Architect, Matthew Stevens from MDP in Hitchin, and he will be carrying out our Quinquennial inspection at the end of this year. Many issues have been dealt with since the last inspection but we are aware of others that are likely to be raised as concerns when he visits.

Repairs were carried out to the curate's house in Carlton Avenue and it continues to be let satisfactorily.

During the course of this year Alan Little retired as Verger, Sacristan and Sound team member and Sue Little as Assistant Sacristan. We would like to again thank them for their many years of service in these roles.

Lesley Self, Julie Markey – Churchwardens