

Communications Committee Report 2025/26

St Andrew's Annual Parochial Church Meeting, April 2026

Background

The Communications Committee is now in its fourth year and continues to meet its original aims:

- To maintain and improve the standards of communication within the church community;
- Utilise new platforms of communication to reach a broader audience;
- Retain people who are part of our community, and to reach new audiences.

Membership and meetings 2025/26

The membership of the committee has remained stable this year, with one change. Forbes Mutch continues to co-ordinate and chair the group and is ably supported by Lou Cobb (PCC representative and social media), Alex Nicholas (graphic designer), Phil Probert (Secretary, website and social media) and Richard Taylor (magazine). After Kath Oates withdrew from the committee last year, we welcomed Julie Hollings, who has joined us with a wealth of marketing experience having recently retired from her role as Director of Communications at the East of England Ambulance Trust.

The committee met six times during the year, in May 2025, June 2025 (twice), October 2025 and January and February 2026. Meetings took place on Zoom, apart from one in-person meeting in June.

Activity 2025-26

Apart from consistent publicity – posters, social media, the Messenger and the monthly parish magazine – for events and church seasons, key achievements this year have included:

A survey about **Soul Food**, our monthly informal discussion service, was conducted amongst the congregations of St Andrew's and St Mary's to try and discover why numbers had fallen from 25-30 in the early years to around a dozen ten years later. A key conclusion was that not enough people knew about the service. The service, while following the same format, has been rebranded **Soul Sunday**; publicity has improved with pew flyers and more social media posts and numbers in 2026 have improved to around 20.

We have created the framework to display a **large banner** in the front of the church grounds to advertise events such as the coffee mornings and folk concerts. The poles are removeable and the banners folded away when they are not needed. The first time it was used was for the coffee morning on Saturday 11 April. Thanks go to Rod and Jo Willis and Andrew Goodman for their help with this.

Julie has been preparing a short **welcome pack** for visitors to the church and new members of the congregation, briefly explaining some background about the church and information about activities, services and our position in the community. This will be available at the back of the church.

The 2025 **Christmas card** design was again selected from entries drawn by children at St Andrew's School. This is the second year we have done this and this time we attracted over 70 entries. The best of the runners up were featured in the December Parish magazine.

Future projects

We have been talking to Yanni Lee about producing a branded St Andrew's tote bag, featuring the church and a suitable slogan.

Summary

After four years, it is safe to say that the Communications Committee continues to be the go-to point of reference for most church-linked publicity, producing a consistently high standard of communications in both printed and digital formats.

Forbes Mutch (Chair)

April 2026