ST EDYTH'S
SEA MILLS + COOMBE DINGLE

BELONG BELIEVE BECOME

Annual Reports & Accounts for 2025

Meeting Sunday 10th May 2026 at 12 Noon

To be discussed at the Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting



St Edyth's Church, Avonleaze, Sea Mills, Bristol BS9 2HU, 0117 968 6965
www.stedyths.org.uk - Charity No. 1141128

AGM 2025 Agenda

Parish of St Edyth's Sea Mills and Coombe Dingle
Annual Meetings for Year ended 31 December 2025

1. Annual Parishioners' Meeting
The meeting of Parishioners will be held in St Edyth's Church
on **Sunday 10th May 2026 at 12.00 pm.** Chair: Sally Thomas.

AGENDA:
1. Opening thought and prayer – Sally Thomas
2. Appointment of a clerk for the meeting
3. Apologies for absence
4. Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 11th May 2025
5. Election of Churchwardens

   (notification that Heather Daw is willing to stand for election as Churchwarden)

2. Annual Parochial Church Meeting
The APCM will be held in St Edyth's Church
on **10th May 2026 following the Annual Parishioners' Meeting.** Chair: Sally Thomas.

AGENDA:
1. Apologies for absence
2. Appointment of a clerk to the meeting
3. Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 11th May 2025
4. APCM Resolutions:
    a. Licensed Lay Reader to be a member of the PCC
5. Elections:
    a. to the Deanery Synod
    b. to the Parochial Church Council
6. The Church Electoral Roll
7. PCC Report
8. Vicar's report
9. Churchwarden's Report
10. Fabric report
11. Finance (Audited Accounts and Treasurer's report)
    - Delegation to the PCC the appointment of an Independent Examiner of the PCCs accounts for 2026
12. Other Ministry reports: (See Annual Reports and Accounts document)
13. Any Other Business
14. Closing Prayer

PCC for 2025/6	PCC for 2026/7
Ex-officio members	Ex-officio members
Sally Thomas	Sally Thomas
Liz Fry	Liz Fry
Church Wardens	Church Wardens
David Spottiswoode	
Deanery Synod (Max 2)	Deanery Synod (Max 2)
Elizabeth Marks	
Chris Wright	
Elected PCC (Max 9)	Elected PCC (Max 9)
With 3 years to serve	*With 3 years to serve*
With 2 years to serve	*With 2 years to serve*
Teresa Goodall (2nd Term)	
Chris Woodhouse	
With 1 year to serve	*With 1 year to serve*
Zac Abraham (Treasurer)	Teresa Goodall (2nd Term)
Peter Marks	Chris Woodhouse
Emma Speakman	
Co-opted Members	Co-opted Members
Steff Nantes (ordinand) Archie Torbett (ordinand)	Archie Torbett (ordinand)

3. Minutes of St Edyth's Annual Meetings in 2025

Parish of St Edyth's Sea Mills and Coombe Dingle

Annual Meetings held on 11 May 2025 for Year ended 31 December 2024

Annual Parishioners' Meeting held at 12 Noon

Present: Sally Thomas, David Spottiswoode, Anna Arnold, June Hewett, Di Goodison, Hilarie Adams, Esme Nourse, Eileen Knight, Paul Cockram, Sue Cockram, Peter Marks, Elizabeth Marks, Erica Wright, Sara Spottiswoode, Chris Wright, Jane Kopsch, Steffany Nantes, Lynn Newell, Pamela Jenkins, Archie Torbett, John Hancock, Alison Hancock, Heather Daw, Mark Temple, Jemima Downing, Pauline Quintanilla, Grace Cheng, Liz Fry, Bev Berrange, Bob Guscott, Chris Woodhouse, Gloria Wright, Wiseborn Danquah, Eileen Jarret, Karlynn Evans, Norma Hall, Neil Thomas

AGENDA:

1. Opening thought and prayer

Sally Thomas reflected that "Our God is a Great Big God" - a simple song we sing that prompts our expectations for the year to come. Let's pray that we will see God at work, leading to revival in our hearts and in our community, and like Eph 3 that will be "beyond our wildest dreams" – to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever.

2. Appointment of a clerk for the meeting

Neil Thomas was appointed as Clerk to the meeting with none against

3. Apologies for absence

Zac and Rachel Abraham, Dorothy Danquah, Steve Newell, Elsie Torbett, Sue Dow, Gish Hobbs & Emma Speakman.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 21st April 2024

These were agreed without amendment. It was agreed that they should be adopted – proposed by Rebecca Cross and seconded by Peter Marks. All agreed, none against.

5. Election of Churchwardens

David Spottiswoode was thanked for his service over the past year. David was nominated for warden for the year ahead, proposed by June Hewett & seconded by Gloria Wright. There being no other nominations, David was elected unopposed.

Sally noted that David will only serve for this one more year; the parish needs people to step up to share the load and to prayerfully consider who might serve as warden from the 2026 APCM. ST gave thanks to God for David and the gifts he brings.

The meeting closed at 12:15pm.

Sally Thomas, Vicar 11th May 2025

Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) held at 12:15pm

Present: Sally Thomas, David Spottiswoode, Anna Arnold, June Hewett, Di Goodison, Hilarie Adams, Esme Nourse, Eileen Knight, Paul Cockram, Sue Cockram, Peter Marks, Elizabeth Marks, Erica Wright, Sara Spottiswoode, Chris Wright, Jane Kopsch, Steffany Nantes, Lynn Newell, Pamela Jenkins, Archie Torbett, John Hancock, Alison Hancock, Heather Daw, Mark Temple, Jemima Downing, Pauline Quintanilla, Grace Cheng, Liz Fry, Bev Berrange, Bob Guscott, Chris Woodhouse, Gloria Wright, Wiseborn Danquah, Eileen Jarret, Karlynn Evans, Norma Hall, Neil Thomas

AGENDA:

1. Apologies for absence
   Zac and Rachel Abraham, Dorothy Danquah, Steve Newell, Elsie Torbett, Sue Dow, Gish Hobbs and Emma Speakman.

2. Appointment of a clerk to the meeting
   Neil Thomas was appointed as Clerk to the meeting with none against.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 21st April 2024
   These were agreed without amendment. It was agreed that they should be adopted – proposed by Wiseborn Danquah and seconded by Pauline Quintanilla. All Agreed, none against.

4. APCM Resolutions:

   a) Licensed Lay Reader to be a member of the PCC

   Liz Fry, our Licensed Lay Minister confirmed her willingness to be appointed to the PCC. Sally thanked Liz for her valuable contribution to the life of the church and invited the meeting to confirm Liz's appointment to the PCC. This was proposed by Anna Arnold and seconded by Sue Cockram; all agreed, none against.

   (b) Terms of office for PCC members

   Sally said she values the wisdom, input, challenge and support of the PCC. With an Electoral Roll of 72, St Edyth's can have a maximum of 9 elected PCC members. Clergy, Churchwardens, Lay Ministers lay members of deanery and diocesan synods are in addition to the 9.

   PCC Members are elected for a 3 year term. St Edyth's historically agreed that PCC members could stand for re-election on conclusion of their 1st term, thus serving continuously for 6 years.

   St Edyth's currently has 5 elected members of PCC; two (Zac and Peter) formally "retire" at this APCM, having completed two 3-year terms of office. No Nominations were received for election to the PCC, leaving just 3 *elected* PCC members. The PCC can co-opt up to two people onto PCC but if the PCC co-opts Peter and Zac, it could not then co-opt others later.

   The C of E Representation Rules allows the APCM to decide the number of years of continuous service elected PCC members can serve.

   Following earlier discussion and agreement of the PCC, Sally proposed to APCM that St Edyth's allow elected PCC members to complete up to ***three*** 3-year terms of office. This would enable Peter and Zac to seek re-election today and allow the PCC to co-opt others later.

   The APCM discussed this and noted that there were circumstances when it would not be desirable to have some individuals eligible for election for more than 2 three-year terms.

A counter-proposal was put forward, that the APCM should consider this matter each year, and decide whether or not to allow elected members who had served two continuous three-year terms to be eligible for further election. This was proposed by Heather Daw and seconded by Pam Jenkins. With one abstention, and none against, this was supported by all other attendees.

5. Elections

a) to the Deanery Synod

Chris Wright and Elizabeth Marks being willing to serve on Deanery Synod for a further year, and absent any other proposals, they were both elected unopposed.

b) to the Parochial Church Council

Following the APCM resolution at item 4 (b) above, Peter Marks and Zac Abraham confirmed their willingness to be elected to PCC for a further year. There being no other nominations, they were elected unopposed.

Steffany Nantes and Archie Torbett were both willing to join the PCC but are not eligible for election as they have not been on the electoral roll for 6 months. The PCC will discuss a proposal to co-opt them at the next PCC meeting. The PCC for 2025/26 is therefore:

Ex-Officio
Vicar – Sally Thomas

Church Warden
David Spottiswoode

Licenced Lay Minister
Elizabeth Fry

Deanery Synod
Elizabeth Marks and Chris Wright.

Elected PCC

With 2 years to serve -
Teresa Goodall
Christine Woodhouse

With 1 years to serve -
Emma Speakman
Zac Abraham (Treasurer) (3rd term)
Peter Marks (3rd term)

6. The Church Electoral Roll

Sally noted that Katharine has done a great job compiling a completely new electoral roll for this APCM. Our roll at the 2024 APCM was 69, and the new roll has 72 on it.

7. PCC Report

The Vicar noted that Neil Thomas has been attending PCC (in a non-voting capacity) to perform the secretary role since Mark Temple's retirement at the 2024 APCM. The PCC report was taken as read with no questions.

8. Churchwarden's Report

David Spottiswoode drew out three aspects from his Churchwarden's report.

a) "Vicar" - 3 years ago, it was necessary to set up a transition team to appoint a new vicar; it was a good team, but hard work. David expressed thanks to Sally as vicar and to her team of Jemima, Katharine, and Neil.
b) "Vision" – David challenged each of us to play our part in the Vision and to talk to Sally to get more engaged. Our vision now needs to become our Mission, and he prays that we are all engaged and using God's gifts for his purposes.
c) "Victory" – David reminded us that it is " in the name of Jesus we have the victory!"

9. Vicar's report

Sally said she rejoices that so many play their part in St Edyth's ministry, evidencing the priesthood of all believers. Our Vision Plan (Mission) is to Belong, Believe, Become. Sally gives thanks to the Lord for doing so much amongst us, for giftings, for every part that people play.

Sally noted the PCC had made a big decision about our giving and established an External Missions Team (EMT), led by Rebecca Cross. PCC has decided to double our support for external mission agencies, viz Prison Fellowship, In Hope, and Uganda (via The Message Trust and AJLTC, a theological college led by Sarah and Simon Cawdell). Sally thanked the EMT for their heart and praying earnestly about this.

We also "give" to the diocese who in turn support the vicar, provide a vicarage, train and support her and new ordinands. The diocese does a lot to help clergy be more proficient at what we do.

Sally longs for the message of the Gospel to reach all in our community, noting that we need to pray more and more for our Mission to bring the good news to the lost, that we might become a growing body of Christ.

Sally thanked the APCM for their generosity in regular giving, and asked us all to listen to the Lord, and ask "am I being obedient to your call to give generously?"

10. Fabric report

Neil Thomas has recently taken on chairing the Fabric Team and he noted with thanks that Barrie Havers does a huge amount in an unseen way, keeping our buildings and grounds in a good state of upkeep. A programme of work is being developed following the Quinquennial survey – Neil invited church members with practical skills to volunteer to help where they can.

11. Finance (Audited Accounts and Treasurer's report)

David Spottiswoode summarised the accounts for 2024 on behalf of Zac the Treasurer, noting that we virtually broke even in 2024. God has been very gracious to us.

Whilst St Edyth's Unrestricted funds show income of £123k in 2024, total expenditure was £127k (a deficit of £3.5k). The restricted funds show a surplus of £2.8k in the year, so overall there was a deficit of about £750 in 2024.

St Edyth's contributed a Parish Share of £53,408, the same as in 2023; we pay the diocese what they request in full. The diocese in return give us useful help and guidance. Part of the Parish Share goes to supporting small, poor churches that can't "Pay their way".

There were no questions on the accounts.

It was noted that the APCM must appoint an Independent Examiner of the accounts for 2025. David Spottiswoode proposed, seconded by Chris Wright, that Burton Sweet, who performed this role very satisfactorily, be appointed for 2025. All agreed with none against.

12. Other Ministry reports*: (See Annual Reports and Accounts document)*

There were no questions or comments on these reports. Sally thanked and prayed for those that lead our various areas of ministry, and those that participate and support those that lead.

13. AOB

There was no other business and Sally closed the meeting at 1:10pm.

Sally Thomas, Vicar – 11th May 2025

4.APCM Resolutions

a) Appointed LLM

5. Elections

b) Church Wardens
c) Deanery Synod Representatives
d) Parochial Church Council

6. The Church Electoral Roll

Katharine Wiltshire - Electoral Roll Officer

For the 2025 APCM/AGM a new roll was put together and by April 2025 there were 72 names. During 2025 one person has left the church and come off the roll, and three new church members have joined bringing the total to 74 members on the roll at the time of this meeting.

7. PCC & Standing Committee Report

Neil Thomas - PCC Secretary

St Edyth's PCC works with the Incumbent to promote the mission of the Church, and shares in the leadership, management and administration of the parish. Members of the PCC are elected by the APCM to serve for three years. Its function can be summarised as:

- Enabling the church to play its part in God's mission to his world
- co-operating with the minister in sharing leadership
- ensuring legal compliance in the important areas of safeguarding, charity law and ecclesiastical law, in particular in the areas of finance, employment and appointments

- caring for the buildings and grounds so that they may be best suited for the purpose of the church's ministry and mission
- being a channel of consultation within the wider Church through its synodical structures on matters that affect the Church locally and nationally.

During 2025, the following served as PCC members alongside our vicar, Sally Thomas:

David Spottiswoode	Church Warden
Elizabeth Marks	Deanery Synod
Chris Wright	Deanery Synod
Elizabeth Fry	Licensed Lay Minister

Elected members:
Zac Abraham (Treasurer), Teresa Goodall, Peter Marks, , Emma Speakman (our Parish Safeguarding Officer until July 2025), Christine Woodhouse. Co-opted Members: Steff Nantes, Archie Torbett

Appointed official:
Since 1 July 2024 - Neil Thomas (as PCC Secretary).

The PCC met 7 times in 2025 and twice in 2026 so far. Minutes of the meetings are available in the Church Office for anyone who wishes to read them. Any member of the church who has an issue they wish to be raised in the PCC is invited to bring this to the attention of a PCC member. Where necessary the PCC conducts business by email correspondence where the chair decides that it can be properly carried out in that way.

During 2025, the PCC dealt with matters including:
- the Vision and Mission of the Church, and continuing to make prayer a priority;
- the developing plan of activities by our Belong, Believe, Become teams;
- our pattern of collective gathered worship, and especially for Christmas and Easter;
- beginning to develop a strategy for External Mission and associated giving;
- planning church community events throughout the year;
- a review of our fire safety systems and processes;
- safeguarding arrangements; and
- finance.

Our Standing Committee comprises the Vicar, Church Warden and Treasurer. It meets every two months and has the power to transact PCC business between meetings, subject to directions given by the PCC. We hope and expect to increase our numbers in 2026.

8. Vicar's Report – Sally Thomas

Looking back at 2025, God's worked amongst us in wonderful ways – healing disease, joyful discipleship, generous giving (of time, giftings and money), knowledge of Him through Word and Spirit, sowing and growing faith, courage and peace whilst negotiating a difficult year in the UK and beyond.

In Ephesians 4 we read what feels like a summary of the year in St Edyth's:

... speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

God's built us up as we've learnt together - from the book of Acts (Spring), through a cry for revival (Summer) and on to asking what we believe and how do we share it, using Hebrews (Autumn). This is what it means to be a body – united in our purpose and goal.

Some highlights from 2025 include:
- ministry of the External Mission Team leading to increased, targeted giving to others.
- Songs of Praise in aid of Christian Aid.
- Trinity College ordinands (and a spouse!), who have been a joy to work alongside.
- numbers doubled for a lively infant baptism service – and in general, growing.
- Not Alone, a safe space for parents of children with challenging needs or disabilities.
- adult and Youth Alpha groups.
- Telling Our Story teaching day.
- prayer events and activities which are the Engine Room for all we do.

You'll read below of the developments in Belong, Believe and Become. The concentrated efforts to welcome visitors and newcomers well, Spring Alpha course, prayer walks and teaching on evangelism, and growth of Life Groups and Prayer Triplets have all been such a joy to be part of, and big thanks go especially to Elizabeth Marks, Chris Wright and Liz Fry for steering prayer, discussion and action for us all in these areas.

It will be sad to lose David Spottiswoode as our churchwarden – he has been a rock, and we are so grateful to him and to Sara who has nobly supported him and borne with his late arrivals home for Sunday lunch! She's also been a great encouragement to me personally. We thank God for them both and wish them a year of better health and freer time.

Our staff team is small but (nearly) perfectly formed! Katharine and Jemima have been fabulous – working hard and cheerfully. I really look forward to our times of discussion, prayer and planning.

There is a lot MORE to look forward to – we won't stop crying out for revival, nor learning to spread good news to others nor growing together in the abundant life of Jesus – and in our APCM meeting, you'll hear me focus on the landmarks we expect and hope for our journey in 2026,

May God surprise us as we walk on together - maybe we'll break into a run!

9. Church Warden's Report – David Spottiswoode

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." Acts Ch 2 v 42

This verse outlines four core pillars of the early church in Jerusalem following Pentecost: adherence to Biblical doctrine, community fellowship, the Lord's Supper, and united prayer.

These four pillars that Luke identifies are a wonderful model for a healthy church, and one we at St Edyth's aim to emulate. Do we devote ourselves to them? In this report, I indicate a few examples of what we are doing in each area and leave it to the reader to judge!

Teaching: Luke regarded adherence to Biblical doctrine as an essential characteristic of the church.

Teaching at St Edyth's is Biblically based, often under a general theme. For example, the summer of 2025 had the theme 'Revive Us, O Lord' and included sermons with topics such as 'Unity in diversity' (fellowship), 'Repentance' (breaking of bread) and 'Living like Jesus – spending time with God' (prayer).

Fellowship: Luke saw community fellowship (relationships between members) as an essential characteristic of the church.

Here at St Edyth's, there are activities every week that cater for a wide variety of community needs and stages of life; these include Seedlings (toddler group), Dancercise (maintaining physical flexibility) and Breakfast Club (free meal with activities).

There are also occasional 'one-off' events, such as the 'Glow in the Dark party' - an alternative Halloween event for children, where the theme is light (rather than darkness).

In addition, St Edyth's (primarily represented by Jemima Downing) is involved in various ways at the local primary school.

Breaking of Bread: Luke is referring here to sharing meals and refreshments together as well as the Lord's Supper (communion).

At St Edyth's, we share light refreshments after all services, and once a month we have a 'Bring and Share' lunch at which all are welcome, regardless of whether they have been at the service beforehand, or whether they have remembered to bring some food to share!

There is a communion service almost every Sunday – either at 8.45 or 10.30 – and on alternate Tuesdays.

Prayer: Luke perhaps should have listed this characteristic first!

At St Edyth's, prayer is the foundation of all that we do. All services include a time of intercession; Life groups (in people's homes) include a time of prayer.

Early every Tuesday morning people meet for prayer, either together in homes or on-line.

Once a month, there is a Saturday morning prayer breakfast at church, which includes times of worship and reflection, as well as prayer.

In closing, as I step down as churchwarden, it has been both an honour and a privilege to serve God at St Edyth's these last four years; thank you so much for all the support and encouragement that you have given me, which has been energising. After the challenges of the vacancy period, God has richly blessed us in the provision of the ministries of Sally & Neil Thomas, and of Jemima Downing; it has been a joy to work with all three. I am so excited to see what God has in store for us!

10. Fabric Report – Neil Thomas

Team: Zac Abraham, Wiseborn Danquah, Barrie Havens, Peter Marks, Neil Thomas
The Fabric Team cares for and maintain St Edyth's church, halls and green estate and we are most appreciative of Barrie Havers who continues to support us in many diverse ways with week-by-week care of the premises.

In 2025 a significant amount of repointing was completed to a high standard on the south side of the Church. We used the same stone-mason as on previous phases – he also did the stonework when the hall extensions were built. There is of course more to do, and in 2026 we plan to start repointing the East End Wall.

In addition, following an asbestos survey, we had specialist contractors remove a small area of asbestos dust in the basement near the telecoms plant room.

In conjunction with a grant application, the Fabric Team looked at the potential for using infra-red electrical heaters in the upstairs hall, but the cost was uneconomic and insufficient grant funding was forthcoming. We are now considering some minor alterations to the system so we can control the heating upstairs independently of the downstairs hall.

11. Finance Report – 31st December 2025

Please see full Finance Report and Statements, prepared by our Treasurer Zac Abraham in Appendix I. This will be in a separate document (if electronic).

12. Other Ministry Reports

- ASMA Mental Health Groups – Rebecca Cross

Kintsugi Hope groups are safe spaces, reducing isolation and generally helps improvement in mental health.
Two small groups ran for 8 weeks in the autumn of 2025, one at Sea Mills school and the other in the evening at St Edyth's. A few people have occasionally subsequently attended St Edyth's and remain in contact.
St Marys Stoke Bishop are developing their own wellbeing course as there is now a minimum cost of £360 for Kintsugi Hope. St Edyth's have taken a break this year and we will review in June if there is sufficient capacity and resource to continue to run a group.

- Avonside Mission Area – see Appendix IV

- Belong Team – Elizabeth Marks

Team: Elizabeth Marks, Grace Cheng, Henry Hoi, Helen Robins, Pam Jenkins, Tilly Dodds, Sarah Handley

The Belong Team have had a busy year, praying and planning for a now well-developed process for newcomers and visitors on Sunday mornings. There are three roles - Door Welcomers, Link Hosts and most recently, Newcomer Hosts - along with a Welcome Stand in the foyer and a Welcome Coffee Table in the hall. The Welcome Pack has also been developed over the year containing useful information for anyone wanting to find out more about St Edyth's. We're always looking to expand the team, so please get in touch if you'd like to know more. There's a small leaflet that introduces the three team roles. And please join us all in providing a warm, friendly welcome to all.

- Believe Team – Chris Wright

Team: includes Anni, Archie, Chris, Ellen, Hartmut, Jane, Shenna and Wiseborn
The Believe Team has met once a term and makes proposals regarding St Edyth's approach to belief and in particular, outreach. Coming up soon is St E's 100th anniversary and we need a team to plan to 'put St Edyth's on the map' for all who live in Sea Mills and Coombe Dingle and how we proclaim that the Kingdom of God is near. In particular, we need to seek God's plan in whole church prayer, developing evenings of prayer. The team has proposed Evenings of Prayer in the church, from 8 - 10pm, starting on Wednesday 29th April. Prayer walks around the parish will continue and we aim to plan other activities.

When Jesus sent out his disciples he instructed:
- Bless those you visit with peace
- Have fellowship, eat with them
- Minister to their needs
- Proclaim that: the Kingdom of God has come

This is a pattern for us as well!

- Become Team – Liz Fry

Team: Liz Fry, Karlynn Evans, Teresa Goodall, Sara Spottiswoode, Zac Abraham
The aim of the group is to encourage discipleship i.e. what it means to Become more like Jesus. I am very indebted to the team who have come together to pray and discuss these things.

Prayer triplets: It has been very encouraging to see the number of prayer triplets increase organically, since they were introduced and to see people turning to prayer and to support of each other, meeting either weekly, fortnightly, or monthly. Our prayer triplets have also been encouraged to pray for missions and revival and have been given a theme for prayer for each month.

Prayer Events in 2025 included a Prayer Trail in the church in Holy Week, using the Thy Kingdom Come Prayer Journal and encouraging the congregation to pray for five friends, some extended Prayer Breakfasts in addition to regular ones, and prayer walks in partnership with the Believe team.

Bible One to Ones: We have been discussing and praying about a new way of discipleship of those who would wish it, particularly for those who are new in faith, offering to read the Bible on a one-to-one basis, and training for this is going to be taking place shortly. We thank God for all that He is doing in discipling to help us become more like Jesus.

- Bristol West Deanery Synod Report 2025
  St Edyth's Deanery Synod Representatives: Elizabeth Marks and Chris Wright
  See Appendix II

- Bristol Diocesan Synod Report 2025
  St Edyth's Diocesan Synod Representatives: Elizabeth Marks and Sally Thomas
  See Appendix III

- Children's Ministry – Jemima Downing

Team: Jemima Downing, Barbara Hewer, Sara Spottiswoode, Liz Fry, Anni Davey, Hartmut Kopsch, Dominika Boross, Bob Guscott, Grace Cheng, Archie & Elspeth Torbett, Esme Nourse, Tristan Hagger, Rebecca Cross, Kim Linford, Neil Thomas, Sally Thomas, Miriam Sitche, Lisa Stokewell (and other Breakfast Club Team)

Within Church:
In The Lighthouse Club (TLC) we have seen a growth in consistency of attendance, a development of engagement and a deepening of connection with Jesus. We have been working through stories of the Bible from start to finish, and spotting where we see God. In our connection time at the end of the session we noticed the Spirit moving and connecting with the young people.

Our weekly Seedlings group has continued to be a big hit, with numbers reaching as high as 36 children one week! We have welcomed new families from around the community and continued to see the impact of Seedlings when families attend other community events throughout the year. A big thank you to the team who faithfully serve each week!

Community Outreach: Breakfast Club has continued to run during the school holidays, welcoming families from the local community and beyond for a free breakfast and space to relax. We see around 50 children and 30 adults per session. We are so grateful for the link with the school and are excited to see it grow and the school are adding to the sessions with games/craft/activities. We have further strengthened our links with the school, through regular assemblies where we share Bible stories linked with the school themes. We have been blessed to be able to begin Transforming Lives for Good: Early Intervention within the school, which is a fully-supported one-to-one scheme for specific children identified by teaching staff. We have 5 volunteers finishing training and waiting to start. We are hopeful to see the impact it has on the school and the children providing a safe space and connection for the children.

We have continued to engage with the school during the seasonal celebrations, with all of Sea Mills and their parents/carers coming to St Edyth's to celebrate harvest. Along with Highgrove Church, we led 3 Christmas sessions, exploring with the wise men and discovering how Jesus is the

star of Christmas. For Easter we did a similar format exploring the Easter story. We have loved to know the stories of Jesus are being shared in the school and widening understanding of these seasonal celebrations.

Monday Meet-ups took a break from December through till March, but since returning we have seen an increase in numbers attending and have loved being able to welcome and bless the families in the foyer for snacks after the school run. It has also led to invitations to wider church events. Such events include our alternative Halloween Party, Glow in the Dark, which saw 60 families playing games, sharing food and hearing about how Jesus is the light. Another community event was the Christmas Kick-off held at the Methodist Church in partnership with Highgrove and SMCI. The event saw 60 Christmas cards being made for the community along with a seek and find trail and singing carols. We are excited to explore more community events and watch as our relationships with the local community grow.

▪ Church Cleaning – Katharine Wiltshire

In late 2025 we sadly said goodbye to Lisa Newell, our church and parish centre cleaner. We are grateful for her hard work over the year and ensuring things are clean for our church members and hall booking clients. We hope to employ a replacement soon.

A big thank you to Paul Cockram who continued to keep the toilets up together on a weekly basis during 2025 and of course to Barrie Havens for his continued hard work in and around the church keeping it well maintained and in good shape. We are so blessed to have people like Paul and Barrie doing what they do, which makes life so much easier for us all.

▪ Dancercise – Anna Arnold

Dancercise continues to serve members of both church and community, providing a safe and friendly environment to meet, exercise and have fun in the Lord's presence. Several new people have joined this year having heard about us through the Sea Mills Community Initiative.

The group continues to support Make Lunch and Hope for Katanga with financial gifts. We also made Christmas card envelopes for the Sea Mills Christmas card initiative.

It's still a huge spiritual jump from Dancercise to Sunday services or Alpha; more low key events would be helpful as a stepping stone to hear more about Jesus. Prayer requested that the worship songs we use will speak to people as they move. Prayers of thanks for all those who come and help to make it such a friendly and welcoming group.

▪ External Mission Group – Rebecca Cross

Team: Rebecca Cross, Jane Kopsch, Rachel Abrahams, Esme Nourse, Mark Temple
The PCC agreed in 2025 we supported prayerfully and with £1000 each to:

- In Hope (UK) serving people in Bristol who are homeless, hungry, addicted, and suffering with poor mental health.
- Prison Fellowship (Bristol)
- The Message Trust (Uganda) with a focus on supporting and evangelising to young people.

In addition the PCC agreed £500 each to Embrace the Middle East Gaza appeal and Tear Fund for Myanmar. We had a talk to the congregation from 'In Hope' and a video clip from 'The Message Trust'. We are keen for one or two more people to join the group to ensure prayer and active engagement with our charity partners.

Hebrews 10 v24 ' *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.* '

Please use the prayer sheet and prayerfully consider if you are able to join the group.

- Flower Team – Hilarie Adams

Team: Di Goodison, Hilarie Adams, Gish Hobbs
The aim of our Flower Guild is to bring beauty to our worship and to reflect God's wonder in the arrangements. Easter, harvest and Christmas are our major festivals and a lot of time and effort is put into these. We thank every Guild member, past and present for their dedication and skill. Their creativity enhances the sense of wonder in our services. If you feel you would like to join this very small band, please have a word with Sally or Hilarie.

- Kitchen Hospitality and Refreshment Team– Ellen Grist/Sara Spottiswoode

Team: Barbara Hewer, Teresa Goodall, Ellen Grist, Liz Rees, Gloria Wright, Sara Spottiswoode, Norma Hall, Elspeth and Archie Torbett, Mark Temple, Emma Sapsford

The commercial kitchen at St Edyth's is a huge asset to the church and community. The Sunday refreshments team is happy to be able to support a time of fellowship, over teas and coffees served after the weekly services. The team are exploring options to reduce the impact of disposable cups, whilst limiting the demands of washing up, to include asking people to bring their own cups.

Each month a similar team also coordinate, setup and clear down after a church-wide bring and share lunch, which is always well attended. The generous contribution of food, drinks and famously good homemade puddings is an expression of the church's emphasis on hospitality and recognition of the enjoyment and blessing of sharing a meal together as church a family.

- Life Groups – Liz Fry

Team Leads in 2025: Liz Fry, Chris Wright, Barbara Hewer, Elizabeth Marks, Hartmut and Jane Kopsch, Heather Daw, Sally Thomas In 2025, we had5 life groups, meeting in the afternoon or evening, either weekly or fortnightly to cater for differing needs.

Groups have followed their own choice of study material, but some groups have followed the sermon series.

We thank God for our leaders who give up their time to prepare and lead their groups in Bible study, prayer, and support of each other and in encouraging discipleship and witness. We thank God for all who attend a life group and for how their commitment contributes to the church's walk with God, discipleship, fellowship with each other, deepening commitment to St Edyth's and our witness in Sea Mills, Coombe Dingle and beyond.

- Parish Centre Bookings – Katharine Wiltshire

We saw an increase in regular bookings in 2025 and were delighted to take on three new groups in the final quarter of the year. This included a children's Taekwondo group, dance classes and an evening Zumba group. Along with the other regular bookings such as Calligraphy, Pilates and Slimming World, plus our one-off parties and meetings, we made approximately £15, 667, which is over £2,000 more than 2024.

- Prayer Ministry Report – Teresa Goodall

Team: Teresa Goodall, Eileen Jarrett, Heather Daw, Karlynn Evans, Lynn Newell, Gloria Wright and Jane Kopsch
We continue to be encouraged by the words and pictures that God gives us as we pray before the Sunday morning service, with many people responding to individual words. We are always happy to listen and pray for anyone who needs a fresh touch from the Lord. We would love to have more members in the team and would be delighted to talk to anyone who feels that they may be being called to this ministry. Please contact either Sally, Karlynn, or Teresa.

▪ Safeguarding Report

Team: Liz Fry, Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), Katharine Wiltshire, Safeguarding Admin
Liz Fry is the new Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) for St Edyth's Church. Katharine Wiltshire continues as Safeguarding Administrator and manages police checks, training, safer recruitment, etc.

Should you ever have any safeguarding concerns about yourself or someone else, you can always speak in confidence to Liz. Her contact details can be found on posters and small card stands around the church building and on our website. If Liz is unavailable, you can speak to Katharine or Sally Thomas, our vicar.

At St Edyth's we have a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm. The PCC reviewed the Safeguarding policy in October and is responsible for safe recruitment of people wanting to work with vulnerable groups. The PCC is updated about Safeguarding matters at every meeting.

DBS Checks

As part of the safer recruitment process, where eligible, volunteers working with vulnerable groups have been DBS checked at the level appropriate to the role.
There are currently 17 volunteers / PCC members who require a DBS check for their role;13 of them have a current check and the remaining 4 are in the process of renewing.

Training

We currently have 36 team and staff members in total (not including clergy that are monitored by the Diocese). Below is a breakdown of numbers trained, or working towards the correct level of training, based on their role.

- Basic Awareness: 36
- Foundation: 23
- Leadership: 3
- Domestic Abuse: 16
- Safer Recruitment: 3

▪ Sea Mills Community Initiatives – Nicky White, Treasurer

SMCI is the charity set up by St Edyth's and Highgrove Churches which seeks to support and show God's love to the local community through the staff and many volunteers. This year one Trustee, Barbara Hewer, resigned and we are yet to identify a replacement St Edyth's trustee. Significant events in the year include Apple Day, and three festive Christmas celebrations, there are also a number of regular activities run by SMCI in both the Methodist Hall and Community garden which are continuing to prove popular.

The charity faces challenges in the year ahead regarding its financial situation. Its success means that we now have to pay VAT on café sales and need to look at new ways to increase our fundraising income as the café, which is our primary income source, no longer brings in sufficient funds to cover all SMCI activities. In addition despite being actively worked on, the ownership of the lease for the Methodist Hall still needs to be resolved and it may not remain available for use by the community in the future.

In summary, the SMCI Charity has once more had a successful year, continuing to provide all in the local community with multiple opportunities for support and connection and we thank God for his continuing guidance, provision and blessings.

- Worship – Neil Thomas

Team: Rebecca Cross, Afia Danquah, Wiseborn Danquah Junior, Wiseborn Danquah, Liz Fry, Tristan Hagger, Annabel Handley, Henry Hoi, Steff Nantes, Sara Spottiswoode, Neil Thomas, Nicky White, Chris Wright

Worshipping together in song is an excellent way to encourage each other, remind ourselves of biblical truth, and respond to God with our personal expression of worship. It's a joy week by week to gather to worship, enabled by such a committed team of musicians and those serving on sound, video and projector systems.

A highlight of the year was St Edyth's annual Christmas carol service where a group of 20 musicians led us in worship with joy and conviction! A well-attended Songs of Praise raised a healthy sum for Christian Aid, earlier in the year.

During 2025 we continued to record and publish on our website the readings and sermons for most of our services. It is encouraging that people are using this to catch up with Sunday teaching that they have missed when away from Bristol.

We continue to look for people to join our technical teams and we pray for some musicians with different musical gifts to join us.

13. Any Other Business

14. Closing Prayer

Appendix I
Annual Report & Financial Statements

If viewing electronically see separate attachment.

Appendix II

Bristol West Deanery Synod Report 2025

St Edyth's Deanery Synod Representatives: Elizabeth Marks and Chris Wright

Introduction

Three Deanery Synods took place. In 2025 and the key themes were:

'Creating a Culture of Safety'

'Ministry to the Mature and Faith in Later Life'

'An Outward Looking Church'

March Deanery Synod:
'Creating a Culture of Safety'

Deanery Synod on 12 March 2025 the meeting was held in at Christ Church, Clifton

Synod commenced with a summary of three items:

Diocesan Synod

The Area Dean listed the Members of both Houses of Diocesan Synod and provided an account of the Synod Members Breakfast. Three written questions were articulated for Diocesan Synod, they concerned:

1. Diocese of Bristol Re-Branding
2. Christian Funerals
3. Creation Care and TC.T Partnerships

Vacancy in See Committee

The Vacancy in See Committee requested that Synod should address four questions:

1. What fills you with joy and hope about the ministry and mission of the Church in the Diocese of Bristol?
2. What are the challenges and frustrations, and what would you like to change?
3. What gifts, qualities and experience do you think are needed in an incoming Bishop?
4. Do you have any names that you feel the CNC should consider?

These were discussed and output collected and communicated to the Vacancy Committee.

General Synod

Revd Paul Langham, General Synod Member House of Clergy, provided an introduction to the Safeguarding Option selected at General Synod. This was a very fitting introduction to the main Synod topic.

The Main Theme: 'Creating a Culture of Safety'

Introduced by Caroline Jowett Ive, previously Director of People and Safeguarding for the Diocese of Bristol.

The Church of England is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of its ministry and mission, promoting a safer culture and the welfare of every child, young person and adult. As such, the Church has robust policies, procedures and guidelines in place, to ensure good practice throughout the central organisation, its 42 dioceses and other Church bodies.

The Church of England will:

- Promote a safer environment and culture
- Safely recruit and support all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the Church
- Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Care pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons
- Care pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- Respond to those that may pose a present risk to others

How do we enable this culture to live in our parishes, ministry and mission?

Output from Round-table Discussions – these have been communicated to the Safeguarding Team:

- Acknowledge the importance of training
- Ensuring safe recruitment is essential
- Role of all in the pews to keep their eyes open
- Good visibility is important
- Increase profile of PSOs - standing up front/at PCC meetings,
    - not just a name on a notice board
- Acknowledge can be hard to recruit PSOs –
    - need streamlined systems and more pooled arrangements (e.g. DBS checks)
- Undefended leadership - knowing who to speak to and when to escalate
- Ensure there is a National Church, Diocesan and Parish whistleblowing policy
- Promote Safeguarding Sunday (can be any time of year!) to raise awareness
- Awareness of different groups meeting with different vulnerabilities
    - e.g. special needs, elderly
- Ensuring if a visiting speaker has had a DBS check
- Ecumenical situations, ensuring that appropriate reciprocal safeguarding protocols in place

May Deanery Synod:

'Ministry to the Mature and Faith in Later Life'

Deanery Synod on Tuesday 20 May 2025 focused upon Ministry to the Mature and Faith in Later Life. The Meeting was held at St Peter's Church, Henleaze.

Following the welcome Synod commenced with the report from Diocesan Synod on 22 March at which the primary focus had been Living in Love and Faith (LLF).

The Main Theme: 'Ministry to the Mature and Faith in Later Life'

In a world obsessed with youth, it can be easy for churches to overlook the gifts, experience and wisdom of older people. The simple fact is that people are living longer and there are increasing numbers of older people in society who sometimes feel overlooked. Churches can work together to encourage and bless older people, as well as drawing on their wisdom and helping them avoid loneliness and isolation.

Here's a more detailed look at the various aspects of church ministry to older adults:

1. Spiritual Growth:

- Bible study groups: Facilitating discussions on scripture, encouraging personal reflection, and fostering a deeper understanding of faith.
- Prayer groups: Providing opportunities for intercessory prayer and spiritual support.
- Life review classes: Helping older adults process their life experiences and find meaning in their past.
- Spiritual retreats: Offering a quiet space for reflection and spiritual renewal.
- Worship participation: Ensuring that worship services are accessible and engaging for older adults, potentially offering modified worship formats.

2. Social Connection:

- Intergenerational programs:
  - Encouraging interaction between older adults and younger church members, fostering a sense of community and belonging.
- Small groups:
  - Providing opportunities for fellowship and support within a smaller, more intimate setting.
- Outreach and evangelism:
  - Inviting older adults to reach out to other seniors who may not be part of the church, potentially starting an adult day-care ministry.
- Recreation and leisure activities:
  - Offering activities such as games, crafts, or outings that promote socialization and well-being.

3. Physical and Mental Well-being:

- Health and wellness programs:
  - Promoting physical fitness, nutrition, and overall health through classes, workshops, and health fairs.
- Cognitive stimulation:
  - Offering activities that challenge the mind and keep older adults engaged, such as memory games or puzzles.
- Transportation assistance:
  - Providing transportation to church services and other activities for those who may have mobility limitations.

4. Service and Outreach:

- Involvement in church ministries:
  - Encouraging older adults to participate in various church ministries, such as greeting, ushering, or serving in a church committee.

- Outreach to the community:
  - Helping older adults connect with their communities, potentially through programs like adult day care, respite care, or meals on wheels.
- Service opportunities:
  - Involving older adults in service projects within the church or the wider community.

5. Adapting to Changing Needs:

- Accessibility:
  - Ensuring that church buildings and facilities are accessible to older adults with mobility limitations.
- Communication:
  - Using various communication methods, such as newsletters, email, or social media, to keep older adults informed about church activities and events.
- Individualized support:
  - Recognizing that older adults have diverse needs and providing individualized support to meet those needs.



Messy Vintage is a missional offshoot of Messy Church, which began in a Methodist Church in Jersey. It is a movement that takes Messy Church values and good practice to older people.

Messy Neighbours (from Messy Vintage)
https://www.messychurch.brf.org.uk/latest/projects/messy-vintage/

How does this session help people grow in Christ?

The parable of the good Samaritan not only gives the opportunity to share stories of times we have spent with neighbours now and in the past but also causes us to think more deeply about who we consider our neighbour to be. Jesus makes it clear that everyone is; there are no boundaries or excuses for not sharing God's love.

Messy team theme

- Talk about those who have been our geographical neighbours in the past.
- Talk about those with whom we share our lives now (or next bedroom/lounge, etc.).
- Share thoughts on global neighbours.

Activity

You will need: household coil wooden clothes pegs (7.5 cm minimum); double-sided sticky tape; scissors; felt-tip pens; circle of thick card; craft wood glue

Twist the clothes pegs and remove the coils. Reverse the two halves so that the long ends are back to back and secure together with double-sided sticky tape. Turn each peg into the people who are attending using felt-tip pens.

Form the pegs into a circle, with the lower third of each peg-person firmly touching its neighbour. Take out one person at a time and secure it to its neighbour using wood glue. Cut a circle of thick card (15 cm diameter or appropriate to the size of your pegs). Glue on to the back of the wooden peg circle to support the round from the back. Decorate the card that shows through the gap in the middle.

Then: Share a personal experience illustrating neighbourly love or ask a team member to give a testimony of a good experience, before sharing the story of the good Samaritan. Then, talk about how God calls us to love not only those with whom we happily rub shoulders, but also those with whom we share no common ground.

October Deanery Synod:

'An Outward Looking Church'

Deanery Synod on Thursday 16 October 2025. The Meeting was held in person at St Alban's Church, North View, Westbury Park.

The Main Theme: 'An Outward Looking Church'

'An Outward Looking Church'

Revd Rosy Ashley (Advisor for Parish Development)

Revd Lee Barnes (Advisor for Fresh Expression of Church)

The Diocesan Offer:

Rosy, Lee or another member of the Diocesan team will work with any PCC or leadership Team to help shape a strategy or direction relevant to a particular context.

Introduction: Mission in a Strange New World

Rosy and Lee introduced the Synod Discussion with a summary of the recent Diocesan Conference Mission in a Strange New World.

The Key thought is that the end of Christendom is where the Christian story was known and the church was central. In the new world the church invites Christians in western culture to embrace marginality and discover fresh ways of being church and engaging in mission. While the transition from modernity to postmodernity has received a huge amount of attention, the shift from Christendom to post-Christendom has not yet been fully explored.

How do we engage with local communities for worship and growth, and in providing practical support and outreach? As well as the traditional structure of what we do there is also opportunity in fostering new worship communities through "fresh expressions," running programs like "Leading Your Church into Growth". We also, as we have previously explored, need to become hubs for community activities and essential services, as seen with church cafes and foodbanks. We may also focus on family faith development through "Faith at Home" and equip communities for service through "Growing Good" initiatives.

Rosy and Lee introduced Synod to a wide variety of working models to enable the shaping of local strategic intentions and direction.

Bristol West Deanery Uganda Link

During 2025 Bristol West deanery Uganda link committee, chaired by Rev Janet Lee, met twice and reported back on the three link dioceses in N Uganda. In each Diocese we heard about achievements and challenges:

1. Nebbi Diocese - the Girlchild Project to help young schoolgirl mothers has continued, money was raised to buy sewing machines for those who completed the tailoring course, enabling them to start a business and sustain themselves and their child. Janet was able to hand over the sewing machines during the visit in August. Thank you to those people and churches who contributed to this project.

2. Diocese of N Uganda - we continued to help support the Theological College in Gulu, Archbishop Janani Luwum College, by sponsoring students, and sending money for computers, exam transport and new classrooms. During a visit in August, we are able to meet the students, talk with the Principal, the Rev Sarah Cawdell (a CMS missionary) and see the improvements in the place. The biggest answer to our prayers has been the registration of the college with the Higher Education Council; this has been a long drawn-out process.

3. Kitgum Diocese - two projects have been supported, (1) the remote health centre at Lira Palwo, and (2) the borehole at Rev Jabuloni school. It was great for the team that visited in August to be able to see the solar powered refrigerator in use and a number of other improvements at the clinic.

A report was given in the October Deanery Synod about the August visit and experience.

Looking to next Year – 2026

Opportunities and challenges across the deanery for this coming year are:

- Invite a speaker from the Link Team to your church and talk about the great work that is taking place
- Pray for 'our' three Dioceses and the three Bishops: Godfrey, Wilson and Pons
- Identify a project that resonates and interests you and raise money
- Contribute to the: Training of theological students; Education of children by sponsoring school fees; Support the health clinics and develop school facilities; Contribute to the Nebbi Girlchild Project
- Understand the climate change impact on the environmental project in Kitgum

Appendix III

Diocesan Synod Report

Diocesan Synod is the largest and most representative governing body in the Diocese. It supports the bishop in shaping the strategic direction of diocesan life by providing a forum for engagement and debate, a sounding board for emerging priorities, and a setting in which formal decisions are taken through prayerful discernment and collaborative relationships. In summary, Diocesan Synod is the place all voices and wisdom come together to discern God's calling focus and his kingdom is the Diocese.

Below is an overview of the topics discussed and motions approved during 2025. Full Synod Minutes are available on the Governance page of the Diocesan website.

Living in Love and Faith (LLF)

LLF was discussed at every Synod meeting during 2025.

March: The Rt Revd Viv Faull, Bishop of Bristol, updated Synod on national discussions regarding the ordination and licensing of individuals seeking or in same-sex marriages. Members were invited to reflect on:

- What discussions around Prayers of Love and Faith (PLF) had taken place within PCCs and Deanery Synods, and what their impact had been.
- What further information would support constructive conversations locally.

June: The Very Revd Mandy Ford, Dean of Bristol Cathedral and a member of the National Programme Board overseeing the LLF process, updated Synod on recent developments.

- The Rt Revd Martyn Snow, Bishop of Leicester, appointed in November 2023 as lead bishop for the LLF process stepped down from his role
- Over the summer, dioceses will convene to discuss and respond to the proposals, contributing to the next phase of the LLF process
- Resources to support Diocesan Synod discussion will be made available at diocesan level
- Diocesan Synod members encouraged to attend Nationally run LLF Webinars to gain clarity and opportunity to ask questions.

September: A dedicated LLF session enabled members to:

- Listen and engage with one another
- Deepen understanding of our diverse diocesan perspectives
- Reaffirm unity in Christ
- Prepare for the House of Bishops' October 2025 decisions

No formal minutes were produced.

November: The Rt Revd Neil Warwick (Acting Bishop of Bristol) outlined the House of Bishops' decisions:

- Prayers of Love and Faith can continue to be used within regular services of worship or privately with a couple at the discretion of the incumbent
- Standalone services will be referred to General Synod

He also provided context, reaction, and an overview of next steps.

March 2025

Carbon Net Zero (CNZ)
Synod received an update confirming greater clarity surrounding carbon measurement. Bristol continues to be recognised nationally for leadership in solar installations and environmental initiatives. A list of grants and schemes awarded was shared.

Dissolution of DBAT
The transition of Diocesan Board of Academies Trust (DBAT) schools to other trusts concluded successfully, reinforcing long-term benefits for children, young people, schools, and communities. The Diocese of Bristol School Partnership Programme (DBSP), co-constructed with trusts, will launch in September 2025.

Transforming Church. Together (TC.T)
An update was provided, including a presentation from Holy Trinity Horfield on its use of Sharesy, which has increased bookings and improved efficiency.

Echo: Youth Voice
Synod watched a video on insights from trusted adults working with young people, highlighting their desire for safe and welcoming spaces.

Other business:

- Bishop's Council reports from 10 December 2024 and 25 February 2025 were approved.

June 2025

BDBF Annual General Meeting

- Chair: Richard Bacon re-elected
- Vice Chair: John Sutherland elected
- 2024 Accounts: Received and adopted by Synod. Subsequently formally approved by Trustees
- Auditors: Haysmac appointed for the year ending 31 December 2025

Safeguarding Annual Report
A comprehensive audit reflected exceptionally strong safeguarding practice across the Diocese. A new national framework now enables leadership training to be completed in a one-day session.

All Saints Roof Repair
Following an overview of the proposed works, a presentation from the Racial Justice Team, and extended Q&A, Synod reaffirmed its previous decision to proceed with the roof repairs.

Church Buildings

Highlights included:

- Support for parishes across maintenance, accessibility, reordering, and housing schemes
- Increased staffing, including a dedicated fundraising adviser
- National funding pressures requiring coordinated planning
- A film showcasing reordering work at St Stephen, Southmead, and St Andrew, Castle Combe

Other business:

- Bishop's Council reports from 24 March and 13 May were received

- Synod approved the election arrangements for the Diocesan Board of Education for 2025–2028
- Bishop Viv's last Synod was marked with reflections on her time in Synod, and grateful thanks for her leadership

November 2025

Budget 2026
Synod reviewed the significant financial challenges facing the Diocese. Key points included:

- The 2026 Budget marks the start of essential restructuring
- Long-term sustainability planning is required
- CNZ commitments remain firm, with a new funding plan to be developed
- Parish Share methodology, expectations, and support resources were explained

The budget presented a total 2026 deficit of £3,540,000. After round-table discussion and Q&A, Synod authorised the BDBF to expend the sums set out in the budget. A 10-year Financial Plan will be developed during 2026.

Priority Communities Network (PCN)
The PCN work is cross-departmental and integrated within the broader TC.T context and workstreams. Updates included:

- PREPARED leadership development programme
- 9 of 14 lay workers recruited
- Positive signs of engagement and growth
- Synod approved becoming a formal partner of the Church Urban Fund (CUF) and joining the Together Network.

Other business:

- Bishop's Council reports from 8 July, 18 August, 14 October, and 31 October 2025 were received
- The Church Representation Rules (CRR) Scheme for Concord Church Bishops' Mission Orders (BMO) was approved
- Synod agreed that lay representation on Deanery Synods should remain proportionate to parish electoral roll numbers, using the formula approved by Bishop's Council

Thinking of Joining Diocesan Synod?

The current Diocesan Synod triennium ends in July 2027. If you are considering re-standing or standing for the first time, now is an ideal time to begin reflecting and finding out more.

Diocesan Synod plays a vital role in shaping the life of the Diocese, and we encourage anyone passionate about the Church's mission to consider putting themselves forward.

For further information, please contact the Governance Support Team:
governance.support@bristoldiocese.org

Bristol Diocesan Synod Report 2025

St Edyth's Diocesan Synod Representatives: Elizabeth Marks and Sally Thomas

See Appendix III

Appendix IV

Avonside Mission Area in 2025

Avonside Mission Area is a partnership between our five churches, where we support one another and work collaboratively together in mission. In 2025 we said goodbye to Revd Sonia Home and Rev Julie Summers as their curacies across the Mission Area came to an end in the summer. We are really thankful for all they brought to ASMA and their role in cultivating the connections between the churches. Sonia is now the Associate Vicar of Hope Church, Islington. Julie has recently been licensed as an Associate Minister at St Mary's Stoke Bishop, alongside her part time work as a Senior Staff Nurse. Tristan Hagger is now in his second year as our Ministry Experience Worker for ASMA. Tristan continues to spread his time across the five churches and has offered some reflections here.

It continues to be a privilege to be part of the Mission Area, and to experience a range of Christ-centred worship and mission. In Stoke Bishop I have been overseeing the youth ministry, leading the weekly youth club and a fortnightly discipleship group for young people. I've also been helping with the fortnightly service, Explore@4 which helps to foster intergenerational conversations about faith.

In Shirehampton it's been great to be regularly at the Friday Open Spaces where 50+ lunches are served each week drawing many people into church, offering a safe haven, good company and loving welcome to anyone who wishes to come. The appointment of Youth and Community Connector, Nat Clark has added capacity to this area of ministry and he has been working on new projects to meet the needs of the community and address anti-social behaviour. I was particularly touched by 2025's VE day street party. Tables were brought outside, old classic music was playing, plenty of food was prepared, and many people were moved by the nostalgia, memory and celebration.

The church in Sea Mills continues to be a real blessing to its community. It has been a joy to help with Seedlings, the weekly parent and toddler group, over the last year. It is clear how valuable the time and space is for all who come, and Jemima Downing, the Children and Families Minister, does a fantastic job connecting with people. The Glow in the Dark Jungle party at Halloween was wonderful to participate in. It was incredibly busy, and many families from across the Mission Area came to the event. [St Edyth's have also been delighted to have Tristan play guitar in our Sunday worship from time to time.]

I've enjoyed being at St Peter's Lawrence Weston regularly on Sundays this year. They recently launched a new service pattern, with the later morning service encouraging younger engagement. Messy Church has also had a revamp, and it now runs every month. It's been great to be part of the team who run The Well every Tuesday at St Andrew's Avonmouth, and to be part of the Alpha Course which has been offered to those who come. The 24hr prayer event was very special too - I arrived at 2am and worshipped God with others throughout the night.

For me, 2025 was a year that has felt dynamic, varied and Christ-centred. It has definitely been a year I will never forget.