St Peter, Manningford Bruce

Annual report 2025

PCC membership

Total membership as at 31 December was 11. One new member joined during the year (John Bracegirdle), who brings experience with him from previous membership of another PCC. Remaining members were: John Thompson-Ashby (churchwarden and lay chair), George Clarke (treasurer), Milly Woodard (secretary), Andrew Marshall, Dick and Margot Andrews, Myffy Sampson, Genevieve Benest (organist), Caroline Cornell and Gavin Peebles. Their combined contribution to the life of St Peter's is greatly appreciated.

Electoral Roll

Membership of the roll was renewed during the year, with the result that the revised figure was 31 parishioners. Our thanks to Margot Andrews for acting as electoral roll officer.

PCC meetings

There were four meetings during the year, plus the APCM in April. Matters discussed included service arrangements, future fundraising events, income generation, repairs to the fabric and maintenance to the churchyard.

Services

A total of 23 regular services were held during the year, plus two baptisms and a funeral. Overall attendance figures (excluding baptisms and funeral) were 588 compared with 573 in 2024. Major festivals were well attended, including another record attendance for the carol service (125), with literally standing room only, which was also similar for the Christmas Day service. There was a good balance of both older and younger readers at the Carol Service.

A very successful Palm Sunday service was held, taken by Bishop Andrew of Ramsbury, which included two donkeys leading a choral procession round the church.

A Common Worship format has been adopted for communion services, which has found favour with the majority of the congregation.

Average attendance figures across all services were slightly lower, with the Worshipping Community figure standing at 9.

Our thanks to all clergy who have taken services during the year, especially Canon Rhona Floate.

Our regular organist Genevieve Benest played at the majority of services during the year, assisted when required by Ian Postlethwaite; we are very grateful to them both.

Floral and cleaning team.

Cleaning and decoration of the church has benefitted from new members of the team and highlights included wonderful displays at Easter and especially the Christmas services. We are very grateful, with many thanks for their hard work and floral design undertaken by the team.

Finance

Church funds benefitted from a very generous donation from a member of the parish in memory of her sister, part of which will be put towards the replacement of the porch outer doors. Our thanks go to our treasurer George Clarke for managing the finances so well during the year (see separate report).

Church fabric and churchyard

During the Spring monitored cameras were installed overlooking the lead covered areas of roof (the porch and chancel). As a result insurance premiums will be marginally lower.

Rainwater penetration continued to be a problem at the western and southern ends of the church. Scaffolding was required to complete the repair works to the bellcote where lead coverings had cracked necessitating the use of proprietary fillers and additional leadwork; (repairs for which were last undertaken in 2014). Repointing has also been undertaken to the coping stones above the west wall. Regular annual maintenance will be an ongoing requirement to this Grade ! listed building, bringing with it the need to raise funds.

In the churchyard, a severely diseased ash tree had to be removed from the northern boundary linking the 'old' churchyard with the 'new' one. At the same time other work was carried out to nearby trees to restore an original holly hedge. A graveyard plan for the 'new' area has now been completed, identifying existing graves, which have now been given numbers, together with vacant plots for future burials. One double depth reserved grave space has been approved.

Footpath hazard warning signs have been fixed to either end of the public path running through the churchyard, which is also part of various walking routes.

Projects/fundraising

Two major fund raising events are planned for 2026.

Inventory

There were no major changes to the inventory during the year, although a collection of brass flower vases have been added (missing from earlier copies).

Deanery Synod

Dick and Margot Andrews represented the parish on the above and attended a number of meetings during the year.

Safeguarding

The PCC complies with section 5A of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 and the safeguarding policy is displayed on the church noticeboard.

Signed ……

John Thompson-Ashby (Churchwarden)