

# St Matthew's Church Carver Street



**The Annual Report of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical  
Parish of Sheffield St Matthew  
Charity number: 1197801**

**2025**

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

**Objectives of the Charity:** The primary objective of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Matthew Carver Street is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England.

St Matthew's PCC. has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent of the parish, in promoting the ecclesiastical parish, and the whole mission of the Church – pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The PCC is the Sole Member of St Matthew's House Ltd, a charity and company limited by guarantee, which trades as The Art House.

The PCC is responsible for the maintenance of the fabric of the church building; St Matthew's, Carver Street, Sheffield is a Grade II listed building recognised as being of particular architectural and historic significance.

**Summary of Purposes of the Charity:** The Purposes of the charity are set out in The Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 as amended and the Church Representation Rules (contained in Schedule 3 to the Synodical Government Measure 1969 as amended).

**Summary of the main activities:** The Trustees lead the charity in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church. The trustees have had regard to the guidance of issued by the Charity Commission on Public Benefit.

### **Main Address of the Charity:**

The Parish Office  
8 Backfields Sheffield  
S1 4HJ

### **Clergy:**

Incumbent:

The Rev'd Canon Grant Lambert Naylor B.A. (Lampeter), M.Th (Oxon), SSC

Hon Assitant Curate: The Rev'd Alan Watson CMP, SSC

Assistant Priest: The Rev'd Canon Richard Parker SSC

Rt'd Assisting Priest: The Rev'd Alun Price, The Rev'd Canon Geoffrey Harbord

## Membership

Members of the P.C.C. are either ex- officio members or are elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. During the year, the following served as members of the P.C.C. Since the AGM 2016 regular members are elected annually. The AGM in 2016 passed a resolution that Wardens could serve for longer than six successive terms if so desired and duly elected.

### **Ex-officio Members:**

Incumbent: The Rev'd Canon Grant Lambert Naylor SSC  
Hon Curate: The Rev'd Alan Watson CMP, SSC  
Churchwardens: Dr Stuart Barfield & Mr Stephen Linskill  
General Synod Representative: Mrs Michaela Suckling  
Deanery Synod Representatives: Mr Ian Burgess & Mrs Holly Featherstone

### **Elected PCC Members:**

Mrs Caroline Fisher  
Ms Sandra Palmer  
Mrs Holly Featherstone (PCC Secretary)  
Mrs Carol Taylor (Safeguarding)  
Mrs Minerva Faddoul  
Dr Richard Dawidek

### **Key Personnel:**

Chairman: The Rev'd Canon Grant Lambert Naylor SSC  
Secretary; Mrs Holly Featherstone  
Treasurer: Dr Richard Dawidek  
Safeguarding Lead: Carol Taylor

## Constitution

**The constitution is that of the Constitution of the Church of England, which can be found in "A Handbook for Churchwardens and Parochial Church Councillors" Mowbray ISBN 0-264-67411-1**

## Electoral Roll

97 members were on the electoral roll at the last APCM. This year following revision as per the rules of the Church of England. The number of parishioners on the new electoral roll stands at 103.

**Ms Poppy Stevens**  
**Electoral Roll Officer**

# REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

## End of Year Reports Review of the Work of the P.C.C. for the year 2025

The PCC consists of four elected members and eight ex-officio members.

Five PCC meetings took place over the course of the year with an average attendance of seven members.

Staples on the agenda include, regenerate, the Art House, safeguarding, health and safety, buildings and HR. With regular reports being submitted by the treasurer, the Arthouse, Parish Nurses, the safeguarding officer, regenerate updates, the development worker, scriptorium and student ministry, childrens' ministry, music and choir report and womens' ministry.

This year has also seen a re-visiting of our Mission Action Planning process and high on the agenda has been our wish to become a centre of excellence for education and development of discipleship within the church community.

Our PCC is a registered charity with the charities commission which also requires additional work and administration.

Caroline Fisher and Sandra Palmer will both be stepping down from their roles as trustees on the PCC, and I would like to thank them wholeheartedly for their enthusiasm and ideas during their time serving on the PCC.

I am extremely grateful to my colleagues on the PCC for all their continued hard work and support.

**Holly Featherstone**  
**PCC Secretary**

### The Vicar's Review

Over the past year, the parish has continued to develop positively. Our congregation has now experienced more than ten consecutive years of steady growth, with a further 10.1% increase recorded this year. While there is ongoing work to strengthen our mission in the city centre, these numbers indicate that St Matthew's remains a place where people encounter the Faith and are supported in their discipleship.

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## REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

Our ministries have continued to mature, particularly our provision for children and families. On Sunday 1 February this year (2026), several children will be admitted to First Confession and Holy Communion. I am grateful to Minerva, our Children and Families Worker, for her dedicated leadership in this area.

The Parish Nursing Project continues to be recognised as an exemplary initiative within the city. Louise has been a valued colleague and an important part of our ministry team.

The Scriptorium has again attracted students from across the city each Thursday. Students remain an integral part of parish life, and I thank Mark, our ministry experience student, for leading this work during the past term, building on the foundation laid by Godwin before his move to Belfast.

I also want to acknowledge Tammy, who has succeeded Ian as Development Worker and PA. Her work plays a central role in supporting the parish's activities. Meanwhile, Ian continues his training at St Stephen's House, and we keep him in our prayers as he prepares for ordained ministry.

The work of the parish is sustained by the commitment of both staff and volunteers. I extend my thanks to Fiona, our Director of Music; the choir; Churchwardens; servers; the sacristy team; Holly, who provides administrative support; Richard, our treasurer; the parish nursing team; readers; intercessors; flower arrangers; and the many others who contribute in various ways. Each act of service strengthens our common life and witness.

A particular highlight for me in the past year was the completion of the work on the chancel floor. It looks spectacular and it is the first significant work of the REGENERATE project. We have also been able to undertake work in the tower and commission work to the Lady Chapel.

In the coming year, we anticipate further opportunities for growth. The Diocese has asked us to oversee a graft to support St Catherine's, Richmond Road. I ask for your prayers as we discern and appoint the right priest to lead that community into renewed mission and growth.

Finally, I record my thanks to Frs Watson, Parker, and Price, and Harbord for their support throughout the year.

Jesus, I trust in You.

**Canon Naylor**  
**Parish Priest**

## The Report of the Fabric and Ornaments of the Church

We continue to work towards general repair and upgrade of St Matthew's, and the last year has been particularly busy. The main work has of course been the first phase of Regenerate in restoring the floor of the chancel, including relaying broken tiles and replacing some worn ones. The choir pews were also removed for restoration and the underlying parquet floor repaired. Not only has this really helped improve the appearance of the chancel, it also gives us a wonderful taste of what the future Regenerate project has in store for the building.

We have not seen any rats inside the church for a while, and our contract with a pest control company demonstrates low level of activity outside the church on their monthly inspections. We plan to continue this contract. The council have made renewed efforts to stop overflowing commercial bins being left out on Backfields, with some success.

In August we contracted Willow Estates to excavate an area of Backfields and they have repaired some parts of a collapsed drain pipe near the sacristy door. Unfortunately at the time they also identified a blockage further down the road, and there remains a small amount of standing water in the cellar beneath the sacristy. Yorkshire Water have surveyed their drains and do not think there are any leaks in their pipework, and have assessed that the repaired pipe is not connected to the drain. Conversations continue about how this might be remedied. The cost to date is £5,400.

In October restoration work on the church bell was completed by Blyth & Co. This included new fittings and ball bearings, new bell wheel, rope and salley. It also included cleaning and preserving the wooden frame, and installing material to the window openings to prevent rain ingress when windy. Finally the damaged wooden access ladder was replaced with an aluminium ladder and unforeseen work to remove a redundant steel beam than was in the way. This work cost £11,224.

The Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) have granted permission for the repair of the Lady Chapel window to start, and the first stage is planned to start this spring. This will see local stone mason Graham Bailey repair damaged stonework, prevent water running down the window from the roof and replace previous cementitious repair with traditional breathable lime mortar. This will require temporary scaffolding externally. We will allow the wall to fully dry out and then plan to complete the internal works in a year's time. This will remove modern plaster which has been used on a past repair and replace with a breathable lime render to prevent recurrence. The total cost of this work will be £19,195.

Beyond this the next steps include replacing the lighting with a more sympathetic and energy efficient system, replacing the audio system to improve the acoustics in the church, installing level access ramp/steps to the east door onto Carver Street and commissioning the first of the proposed new pews before seeking approval of the DAC for the works to upgrade the nave.

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

Stuart soon will be moving to Gloucestershire for work and after many years Stephen looks to hand on the role of church warden too, and so we will both be standing down this year. Whilst it is disappointing to be stepping down when so much is happening, we both look forward with excitement to see this work progress over the coming years.

**Dr Stuart Barfield / Mr Stephen Linskill**  
**Churchwardens**

### Director of Music's Report

The CHOIR has remained fairly constant in numbers with one or two younger singers joining us. Illness and various issues often affect attendance but overall support and enthusiasm is good.

We now have membership with the RSCM Royal Schools of Church Music and 7 singers are working towards music medals with the Voice for Life scheme. I run small sessions for these and in addition have started 'Choir Skills Improvement Sessions. These are aimed at mainly newer singers, helping them with theory, singing tips and the structure of services and what everything means.

The choir is augmented for bigger occasions with other volunteers or paid singers brought in.

The MUSIC GROUP is a small willing group of players that come together to enhance our processions and play for Christmas Eve 4pm Mass. In addition, my band members from home are happy to play at our Patronal Festivals. Other musicians are the strings group that played at the Easter Vigil and Patronal Festival in 2025.

In 2025 I have provided and played the music for Little Prints toddler group. This has also led on to the launch of a monthly Families Choir on Sundays. It is wonderful to have more families in church and to be involved with the Families team to bring music to all our young people.

The toddler group and families choir each have a list of songs that they sing; carefully chosen for their age groups and with meaningful words that teach about God.

**Fiona Law**  
**Director of Music**

### St Matthews Children's Ministry

The Children's Ministry at St Matthew's has seen an increase in the average number of children and families attending Sunday morning mass, and a growing engagement of our children, in discipleship and fellowship, in the life of the Church. Praise the Lord!

The number of registered active children and families at St Matthew's is 37 and 24, respectively.

### ***Play & Pray children's and families' area***

One year on, the space is proving to be popular with the children alongside their adults. We have had to expand the space by adding a bigger table to accommodate our older children. Younger children are keen to emulate the older children as they create liturgy themed crafts and complete activities during Sunday morning Mass. Friendship groups are developing through this. Toys continue to be available for infants and toddlers. Our children are learning to share and are settled as they have grown in familiarity with the functionality and purpose of the space. The space is also used for the Pop up Families Choir which takes place after Mass monthly on the first Sunday.

The model of the Play & Pray area was presented and well received at the See of Beverley's Development Day in Christ the King, Bowburn on 11 October 2025. The children and youth ministry adviser, Jane, has engaged in monthly meetings over discussions about how to utilise the area to enable children and families to remain in worship and provision of resources for different types of spirituality styles.

### ***Little Prints Baby and Toddler Group (0-4)***

The group celebrated its one-year anniversary on 16 January 2026. The team running the group is comprised of 5 helpers who collaborate with each other to offer their availability with unwavering support. The Parish Nursing Project continues to provide the service of its brilliant nurses, who provide warm support and advice on health and wellbeing. Our director of music, Fiona, continues to bless the group with live keyboard and new songs that align with the Church year.

The group has grown from 9 registered children in March 2025 to 20 children in March 2026. Attendance has grown from 1 regular child to 4 regular children and relationships are growing among mums and group helpers.

### ***Sunday Mass Readings and Gifts (6+)***

There has been an expressed interest and confidence in children aged 6 years and older engaging in Readings in Sunday morning Mass. We have 5 children who are or are in the process of entering the Readings register. Deepest gratitude to the carers who back them up and help with home practice.

Children are also given the option to serve. One of our youth oversees choosing a Gift bearer to partner with on Sunday mornings. Often another child or a child's parent/carer is keen. The children often take great delight in serving and in this great offering.

### ***Pop up Families Choir***

St Matthew's Pop up Families Choir started on 2 November 2025. It runs for 20 minutes on the first Sunday of the month, after Mass refreshments. Light refreshments are provided beforehand for small hungry tummies. Children with their adults and members of the choir are invited to join in the intergenerational choral singing led by Fiona.

### **Families Lunch – Pre-Advent**

As last year, families were invited to a Families Lunch. Families and children enjoyed some time building relationships over food, after mass, on 30 November 2025. Advent resources were shared in the run up to Christmas. In attendance were 19 children with their 13 adults.

### **Christingle and Christmas Vigil**

Ten families with their 16 children came together before 4pm Christmas Eve Mass. Christingles were made and at the end of the Vigil the children lit their Christingles as they created a Nativity tableau dressed as their favourite Nativity character. Also, it was the first time that two children from St Matthew's played music with Fiona at the 4pm Christmas Vigil.

### **Candlemas: First Holy Communions**

Seven of St Matthew's children received First Holy Communion on Candlemas (Sunday, 1 Feb 2026). They met together with Fr Naylor in January after Sunday Mass and learned about Examining our conscience, Freeing ourselves of guilt and shame, First confession, and Receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

### **Families Pancake Party – Pre-Lent**

A Pancake Party was held on Shrove Tuesday, 17 February 2026 with pancakes, activities, and a children's liturgy of the Ashes with Fr Naylor. 11 children with their 7 adults were in attendance.

This Lent the children are practising finding verses and the Sunday Gospel reading in the Holy Bible for Kids-ESV (for ages 8 – 12) available in the Play & Pray area.

Looking to the Future: Family Easter Special, Spring Sponsored Walk, Children's Catechesis, A Youth Social

An Easter family special will take place on Good Friday, 3 April 2026 starting at 10 AM. Flyers are provided.

A walk for families will take place in May half-term from St Matthew's Church to the Botanical Gardens with planned activities and a picnic. This walk will help to raise money to purchase 5 ESV Bibles (£13.01 per Bible, hardcover) and for a summer Youth Social. Flyers will be provided after Easter.

A Children's Catechesis will be held once per month, after Sunday morning mass, for 10 minutes, with Fr Naylor, for children who have received First Holy Communion. The aim is to continue engagement in fellowship and discipleship of children aged 6+.

Plans are underway to host a Youth Social in the summer with food and a Bible movie. Children aged 10+ are welcome to invite their friends. Event to be advertised nearer the time.

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

Thank you to parents, carers, children, and all who support and give of their time and gifts to the Children's Ministry at St Matthew's Church. We come together in this Christian journey to grow in spirituality as we strive to emulate Christ's love and humility and to draw others nearer.

**Minerva Fadoul**  
**Children and Families Worker**

### Report from the Mission Partnership Development Worker

2025 has been one of significant progress, achievement, and sustained community engagement for St Matthew's Church. A major milestone was the successful completion of the Pave the Nave project, which raised a total of £46,880.

Throughout the year, the parish hosted a series of well-attended events that reinforced community connections and showcased the vitality of parish life. The Heritage Open Days talk attracted a commendable audience, and feedback from the event will inform the theme for 2026, which will explore the everyday histories of working lives. Oktoberblest proved to be a successful and profitable occasion, generating a surplus of £1,062.63 while providing opportunities for fellowship and engagement. The Catholic Evangelism Lecture and Patronal Festival were also notable highlights, achieving excellent attendance and significant social media visibility, thereby reflecting the active participation and interest of both the congregation and the wider Sheffield community.

Grant acquisition and management continued to be a central focus of parish operations in 2025. The church successfully registered on Cornerstone, thereby gaining access to over 600 grants through the Diocese, facilitating a more efficient and strategic approach to funding. Applications were submitted to support children's work, church maintenance, and student ministry, with ongoing efforts directed towards identifying grants for disability access. Securing these resources remains critical to sustaining ministry initiatives, supporting essential repairs, and enabling further development of parish programs.

Operational improvements were implemented successfully during 2025. The full transition to OneDrive has facilitated automatic document synchronization and streamlined workflows, replacing Google Drive and enhancing efficiency across all parish operations.

Stock sales continued to perform strongly. Existing items, including cups and coasters, were nearly depleted, and the 2026 parish calendar sold out by Christmas, marking an improvement over the previous year. Engagement across social media platforms increased noticeably, broadening the parish's reach and visibility, while updates to the church website ensured that information about events, services, and activities remained current and accessible to all parishioners and visitors.

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

The previous Development Worker, Ian Burgess, departed, and Tammy Mitchell was appointed as the new Development Worker with the additional responsibility of serving as Personal Assistant to the Vicar. This dual role has ensured continuity in community projects, volunteer coordination, and administrative functions, while also providing support to the Vicar in managing schedules, correspondence, and parish activities.

In reflection, 2025 has been a year of both accomplishment and consolidation. The successful completion of key projects, strong participation in parish events, and effective management of grants and resources demonstrate the dedication of the clergy, staff, volunteers, and congregation.

Looking forward to 2026, the parish is well-positioned to build upon these achievements, continuing to foster growth, support ministry initiatives, and maintain its commitment to serving both the congregation and the broader community.

**Tammy Mitchell**  
**Development Worker**  
**Personal Assistant to the Vicar**

### Parish Nursing Project

2025 saw Louise complete her first full year as Lead Nurse and Catherine become fully qualified as a Parish Nurse.

The year closed with the project being awarded almost £20,000 from the National Lottery Community Fund.

Our biggest area of activity is now health education and promotion. This is due to the combination of an increased number of clients visiting the stall as well as through the various groups we support, visits to events and conducting talks to provide information and Basic Life Support training to community groups.

- Louise and Catherine are both now qualified to conduct Basic Life support resuscitation training which they have been providing to community groups such as The Mothers Union and Women's Institute.

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

- Our nurses and chaplain have given numerous talks to community groups about Parish Nursing.
- Louise has spoken as part of the panel for Parish Nursing Ministries UK to encourage and train other parish nurses.
- We are currently working alongside the Diocese to help establish new Parish Nursing projects in the Sheffield area such as one at St Catherine of Siena, Richmond.
- We keep in close communication with multi-agency outreach to maintain links and contribute to joined-up services within the city.

In March we provided blood pressure checks and health advice at the Winter Gardens, as part of the *Help Us Help* event. This important initiative raised awareness about homelessness and the incredible efforts being made to support those in need.

In February Louise attended the launch of the new Healthwatch Sheffield contract at the “The Circle”, Sheffield.

The event provided a great opportunity for networking, insightful talks, and engaging activities aimed at shaping the future of health and social care in our community.

New projects include “Maternal Journal” run by volunteer nurse and registered midwife, Catherine. *Maternal Journal* is a global community movement, where partakers share creative tools and techniques to support the huge changes, joys and challenges that occur during pregnancy, birth and parenthood. Sessions are provided both in person and online.

The stall is now open 4 days per week, and continues to be very busy providing health checks, advice, signposting or just a listening ear from our nurses, volunteers and project chaplain, Fr Parker.

The change of stall location within the market has made a measurable difference with 63% of those seen in the second quarter of 2025 being new clients.

The stall is now our primary point of contact with the people of Sheffield city centre, and the number of visitors is at an all-time high.

Our presence in the market has also been instrumental in ensuring good outcomes for several medical emergencies that have occurred with visiting shoppers in the past year.

Louise’s presence on the stall has thoroughly proved its value, but it is our hope that we will be able to recruit an additional nurse in 2026 to expand our offer to the wider community through additional projects.

We continue to work alongside our colleagues from Diabetes UK and the Welcome Space and are committed to supporting the Little Prints group and those on a journey of recovery through the Anderson Green project.

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

The Healing Mass is still drawing in a regular core of people and occasionally other people who feel drawn to come and worship in the evening on Wednesday. Although the numbers have been lower than the previous year, this still seems to be meeting a need for healing and peace. Mark Atkinson, is on the Ministry Experience Scheme, has assisted in serving at Mass and with the laying-on of hands. He has also been a great support on the stall, and his presence is clearly valued by our clients.

Prasad Chokka joined the team as a volunteer. He has just finished his Master's in Public Health. The experience he has gained on the Stall has helped him to gain employment for Nursing Care home agencies.

Our expenditure dropped in 2025, on the previous year, due to a change in focus to providing health support on the stall and reducing our involvement with those on the streets as the need is now being fulfilled by other providers.

We have received grant funding of £52,499 in 2025 as well as £2865 from personal donors and continue to seek funding to support our work.

We thank all the many people who have supported our work through the giving of prayer, time and funds.

**Louise Smith**  
**Lead Parish Nurse**

### Safeguarding Report

At St Matthew's Church, Safeguarding is taken extremely seriously. I have continued to be Parish Safeguarding Officer, but safeguarding is seen as the responsibility of us all. We have Safeguarding Policies in place for Children and Vulnerable Adults, as well as for issues relating to Domestic Abuse. These can be viewed in the church porch, and are updated and ratified by the PCC on at least an annual basis. Relevant local contact numbers are also on display. Diocesan updates and newsletters are shared with Father Naylor and the PCC and are also displayed in the porch.

All current PCC members have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in place at the appropriate level, and this also applies to any church employees or volunteers who are working with children and/or vulnerable adults. This includes those involved with the Parish Nursing Service, and the Children and Families group. These checks are undertaken every 3 years and are all up to date or currently in process at St Matthew's.

There is a training requirement for all members noted above to complete Basic and Foundation level training courses about safeguarding in the life of the church. Those in positions of additional responsibility, including Father Naylor, other officiating priests, church wardens, Parish Nurses, relevant volunteers, those involved in recruitment, home visitors, children's group leaders, choir leader/organist, and myself, have to complete further safeguarding training in the appropriate areas. All training is to be repeated every three years and we have a personal responsibility and requirement to keep up with this if our position is to be maintained.

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

Where relevant, training is completed around 'Safer Recruitment', to ensure that Safeguarding is at the forefront of this process. There is then a requirement to ensure that discussions around Safeguarding and the updating of knowledge is brought up on a regular basis with employees and volunteers.

A Safeguarding Team, currently made up of Father Naylor, Stuart Barfield (Church Warden), Louise Smith (Lead Parish Nurse), Minerva Fadoul (Children and Families worker), Holly Featherstone (Administrative Support) and myself as Safeguarding Officer meet regularly to ensure that all matters have been considered and everything is up to date.

At St Matthew's, we have taken on board the Parish Safeguarding Digital Dashboard which allows further accountability and awareness of required actions needing completion, along with a digital Parish Safeguarding Action Plan. We are currently working at the 3rd level on this Dashboard 'Creating a Safer Church', having completed a significant number of suggestions and requirements in the past year. The Parish Action Plan is shared at each PCC meeting and actions ratified as required. Safeguarding is a standing item at all PCC meetings.

We have a Lone Working Policy in place for employees and volunteers and are currently looking at installing CCTV in the church porch, to further ensure the safety of those working within St Matthew's.

When any safeguarding concerns are brought to our attention, they are treated in confidence. Information may be shared with statutory agencies and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team if appropriate, and further support accessed if required.

Safeguarding issues have, rightly, had a high national profile in recent years, and we would want to offer reassurance that we are both aware of and contributing to, consultations relating to future developments which will aim to make church life at all levels, a safer place for all.

If anyone has safeguarding concerns, they can speak with Father Naylor or myself, the Parish Nurses or any PCC member. Any urgent issues should be referred straight to the emergency services as appropriate, or the relevant local agencies. Local 24 hour council numbers for Sheffield and Rotherham are displayed in the porch. Urgent, out of hours safeguarding advice can also be obtained from 'thirtyone;eight' on 0303 003 11 11.

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The Diocesan Safeguarding Administrator, based at Church House in Rotherham is Deborah Corker-Vaughan, and the local Safeguarding Advisor is Sian Checkley. Contact details are contained in the latest Safeguarding newsletter, and they are happy to advise on any relevant matters. There is a clear safeguarding link on the church website.

Thirtyone:eight is an independent Christian Safeguarding Charity, which supports us with the administration of DBS checks and more general advice. Their website has a wealth of advice and resources, available to all. The name refers to Proverbs 31:8, which implores us to speak up for those people who cannot speak for themselves. We all share the common aim of "Creating safer places. Together".

**Carol Taylor**  
**Safeguarding Officer**

### Parish Statistics for 2025

Our congregation has continued to grow, with average attendance across our two Sunday Masses increasing from 108 last year to 119 this year.

We have also seen encouraging growth among our children and young people. Over the past year, we celebrated 22 baptisms—16 of these were children and young people under the age of 18, alongside 6 adults. In addition, we celebrated 10 confirmations (including 3 children), 2 weddings and 2 marriage blessings.

As a city-centre church, it is natural that we have a more fluid congregation, with members arriving and moving on as their circumstances change. Despite this, our overall numbers continue to rise. We are also seeing an increase in young people coming to faith. National trends, alongside initiatives such as Scriptorium, Alpha, our children's ministry, and our women's ministry, all contribute to this momentum. At present, there are no signs of this growth slowing down.

I believe that it is a testament to the warm welcome that St Matthew's offers that is fundamental to this success.

**Mrs Holly Featherstone**

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

### Scriptorium

Since arriving at Scriptorium in September of last year scriptorium seems to be going from strength to strength it has been great to build upon the hard work that had already been accomplished before I arrived. There often seems to be a core team of students who gather week on week with many others coming in on some weeks with the amount seeming to rise around crucial times of the year such as when exams or assignments are due.

The lunches in the middle of the day seem to be proving popular including the scriptorium classic of Jacket potatoes. Many of the students are now taking part in the setting up and clear down of meal times. Many of the students will come early for lunch and attend the mass which directly proceeds lunch allowing prayer to be at the centre of our day together.

I am also finding that the offices are getting an increased attendance with many students now becoming involved in the set up such as ringing the bell and lighting candles. And reading the scripture and responses during the offices.

The beginning of the theology group set up by Esosa seems to prove popular among the students and is a welcome addition to the day.

My thanks go to the Art house for the use of their space and for the church for the support they give to this key mission area.

**Mark Atkinson**  
**Scriptorium Lead**

### Women's Fellowship

The women's fellowship began meeting in autumn 2025 in response to a desire for deeper relationship, study and discipleship. We are currently a small group, with about four-five women meeting weekly but with others who join when they can. We vary in age and life stage from women in their twenties and starting careers or families through to women enjoying retirement.

We meet on alternate Wednesdays after the midday mass and always begin with lunch and catching-up, followed by a study and concluding in prayer. We finish within 90 minutes. We began by practicing different kinds of prayer which we have received from Christians going before us, including novenas, the Psalms and liturgies written more recently. Since the start of 2026 we have committed to engaging with lectio divina, or divine reading, where we slowly and prayerfully read the gospel passage for the subsequent Sunday. As we engage with the scripture we ask God to reveal a specific word or phrase to us to dwell on and seek God's direction for our lives or if there is something specific He is teaching us.

There are a few areas for development in the coming year and I ask women who are involved currently and those who might like to be in the future to ponder and pray about how they could support the next steps.

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

- Several women have mentioned a desire to arrange an additional meeting outside of work hours, for example in the evening
- One off events where we do something as a special or a seasonal activity i.e. wreath making, a party, an outing
- Events where we collectively support the life of the church through practical tasks

I look forward to what the next year holds for women in the church and discovering how we might best love and encourage each other to more closely follow Christ.

**Juliet Simms**  
**Women's Fellowship Lead**

### Deanery Synod Report

This year one of our Deanery Synod members, Ian Burgess, left mid-term to pursue his vocation. Holly Featherstone has now served 6 years on Deanery Synod and will be stepping down to make room for someone new.

It is good to have the Anglo Catholic voice represented and collaborating with those from other traditions within the Church of England.

As of the beginning of this year Vicky Vidler, based at St Chad's Woodseats, has taken over as Deanery Lay Chair.

On February 26th our own Michaela Suckling gave a presentation to the Deanery on General Synod.

The Revd Canon Mark Brown will be stepping down from his role as Area Dean of Ecclesall at the end of May, ahead of a three-month sabbatical.

Rev'd Simon Oatridge was appointed as Priest in Charge of the Benefice of St Peter and St Oswald, Sheffield, and Oversight Minister in the EL3 Mission Area.

**Holly Featherstone**  
**Deanery Synod Rep**

### St Matthew's House Ltd (The Art House at St Matthew's)

The focus for 2025 was building Processes & Professional Delivery whilst researching and preparing to launch a CIC trading arm for the charity. Although the year started well on these tasks the loss of Jamie Brown in June as our Finance Manager did have an impact on us achieving these goals. This resulted in a shift in emphasis to re-evaluate our financial systems, controls and recording management.

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

This resulted in having to immediately work from top down to fulfil our end of year obligations rather than grassroots upwards, therefore this will not be completed until Spring 2026.

We will have produced a profit for 2025 which will be lodged in April 2026 as there is still work to complete on the inherited accounts. This will be the first clear profit generated by the charity and built from 90% commercial income from our pottery and art courses. This makes The Art House a truly independent, self-sufficient charity, a huge achievement. It does mean we are now liable for tax and corporation tax which is why it is very important to set up the CIC within 2026 and implement financial controls.

Our small number of staff continue to be an active part of our community and engaged in the challenges brought to them which they have steered well under a new staff structure. Jon Gardner joined us as Operational Coordinator, Poppy Stevens was promoted to Office Coordinator and Tom James and John Chappell split the Pottery Coordinator role to deliver the ever-expanding pottery department.

Louise Smith has joined the Board of Trustees and has made a positive impression already and we look forward to working with her over the coming years.

We have continued to provide our Monday Morning Wellbeing Pottery Group and Friday Anderson Green Project; both are successful in supporting the participants with an even stronger offer as the Carver Street Parish Nurses have been able to continue to grow their involvement throughout.

In November we gained a grant to install doors into the café area and cupboards into the lower gallery, this will enable us to provide more appropriate space for internal and external users.

We also gained a small support grant to help us set up the CIC as well as be part of the Sheffield Community Interest Network Festival.

Light Up Sheffield made its debut, and we had credit and logo projected onto The Cathedral, Sheffield City Library and the Cubo building in Pounds Park.

Our social media has been re-launched which has resulted in a 207% increase in views, 47% increase in followers and 8% increase in clicks to the website.

Another very busy year which provided another step forward for The Art House, as usual it wasn't without its bumps, and as usual these challenges were undertaken by a staff team that work hard and Trustees who continue to support us through change.

**Ben Clowes**

**Strategic Director, The Art House / St Matthew's House Ltd.**

# REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

## Treasurer's Report

The accounts for the third year have been prepared on an accrual basis. ExpensePlus software has been in place for a full financial year and has been a great blessing with even the Vicar having the scales fall from his eyes and start using it for expenses management.

The dashboard lets me know I have saved an estimated 105 hours by the various automated features, and I am confident in its standard operating condition that the management of church finances is a significantly easier task. I would like to thank Holly for her financial administration help during the year to make this job even easier.

### Financial Report

While St Matthews clearly grows in strength through the fruits of our investments and initiatives, this has been a tougher year for St Matthews financially but still within our means. Money is there to be spent and not admired, and despite a deficit in our unrestricted (General) fund, we have further increased funding for Regenerate (including meeting our goal in the Pave the Nave campaign), restored the Chancel, secured the future of the Parish Nursing project, continued the Scriptorium into a new student year, and brought great health to the life of the parish with our Children's ministry. In the General fund we have navigated a changeover in Development Worker and carried out some important maintenance to the drainage to try and relieve some of the continual flooding experienced in the basement, but have been affected by a slight drop in the number of regular givers as well as some particularly high costs and issues with utilities relative to previous years.

Total receipts were £ 292,663 (£ 229,201) against a total expenditure of £255,593 (£204,002) (prior year in brackets) broken down across funds as follows.

### Unrestricted Funds

These are represented by the church's General fund which took in £104,372 against expenditure of £127,414 leaving an operational deficit for the year of £-23,041. With fund transfers included, this leading to an end of year balance of £7,807. This is a significant deficit and would represent a risk if maintained. I am satisfied that much expenditure in the deficit was incurred through one off events or restoration, and a significant part comes from the drainage works we have completed in the summer, to try and investigate the source of the basement flooding.

Total donations to the church (all categories) were budgeted at £68,070 whereas we took in £66,949 contributing to our deficit. This comprises £52,995 of regular donations with 60 named donors at year end. This compares to £56.567 with 66 standing orders last year. Total donations to the church (all categories) were budgeted at £68,070 whereas we took in £66,949 contributing to our deficit. This comprises £52,995 of regular donations with 60 named donors at year end. This compares to £ 56.567 with 66 standing orders last year. We are deeply grateful to all of our givers and considering the drop in regular givers do encourage all who give to the plate (giving to which has increased significantly to consider switching to a standing order instead).

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

Please also when considering our operating deficit this year, and that costs are doubtless to rise, review where appropriate that which you may give each month.

Large expenditures include insurance for the church (£5,714 – a minor increase on 2024 although unfortunately set to rise significantly in 2026), altar and church supplies to keep us outfitted to the highest standard (£5,884 – which is actually similar to last year although I expected fewer one off items, I will review this for 2026), utilities (£6,273 – including some significant outlay on gas due to a broken boiler running all scheduled hours in November and parts of December), the drainage works and other non-routine work of (£12,165), printing (£2,418). Our biggest expenditures continue to be the Common Fund payment to the Diocese at £26,500 and the Mission Development worker salary at £31,662. The latter is quite a significant outlay and represents me missing a payment in my accrual from 2025 of a payment owed to the Diocese and an overlap period (including holiday pay) between our Development Workers. This should therefore stabilise next year at a predictable amount, and we have already seen the fruits of Tammy's hard work in identifying, applying for and securing grants.

For 2026, I have set a budget along similar lines to have a more stable year. It would be a good year to end with a surplus in the General account although you give to the church and we serve as a PCC to spend money on mission and upkeep rather than sit on it. We will look, coincident with Regeneration work, to ensure all aspects of the church are fit for the next 175 years.

### **Designated Funds**

These include the Regenerate fund, for which we saw the completion of our fundraising efforts for the Pave the Nave campaign (£18,546 taken in year before gift aid) as well as numerous successful events and sponsorships. Already the PCC has begun to discuss the appropriate way to stage the Nave restoration and will be 'trailing' the first section in the Lady Chapel soon.

A grant for £30,000 from the Garfield Weston Foundation was drawn down to assist with the first tangible stage of Regenerate – the Sanctuary restoration. In total £42,586 was spent on this part of the work and the results I think are beautiful and really promising for the rest of the church.

Last year I notified the APCM that I resolved to move the funds we hold on to hand for Regenerate into higher earning accounts. Between notice accounts and fixed rate bonds, I have been earning market leading rates (Starting at 4.2% but declining in year inline with base rates) on the at least £270,000 we have awaiting expenditure. This has led to a nice 'Interest Received' line of £12,544 in year.

Total receipts for 2026 for Regenerate are an income of £83,965 against an expenditure of £56,092 with a closing balance of £296,334.

The designated Mission fund has been drawn down as in 2024 with various activities that would fall under the fund description as for Mission and Evangelism. The closing balance is £21 but I will not assign this elsewhere and close the fund just yet, in case we receive grants in 2026 or 2027 for Missional purposes, where this fund may still be useful.

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

The Scriptorium fund is used to finance the activities of our Thursday study and prayer group as ends the year with a strong closing balance of £6,485 from Diocesan grants received. This will allow us to continue the work for the short and medium term, and we can look to an expansion in activities that will help to grow and fortify the faith of the worshipping community that use this resource.

The Children's Ministry fund also ends the year with a good closing balance of £4,286 with a good grant income of £12,155 in year. This will taper off in 2026 to the point where we will be looking for sustainment from other grant sources or our own funds. Tammy is working closely with Minerva to secure short-term funding as this has clearly been an excellent investment by the Centenary Project and the Church Burgesses, to whom we are very grateful, in stimulating children's and families ministry in the city.

Specific Donations was used to purchase the statue of St Benedict for the monastery at Gweru and ends the year at £890, so a minor deficit on donations for this against what was received. We can clear this deficit with general funds later when we come to use this balance for a new altar frontal.

VDF (Vicars Discretionary Fund) had good utilisation as there was a £10 operating deficit – i.e. money taken in as donations was all used as grants for those in need. There is therefore a closing balance of £2,148.

### **Restricted Funds**

These are funds that the PCC has an obligation to spend for their given purposes and comprise Parish Nursing, Pilgrimage, Student Ministry, Agency Collections, the Richard Buckley fund and Flowers.

**Student Ministry** did not see too much activity in year £1,580 taken in including some very generous donations, and expenditure of £1,268 giving a closing balance of £2,949. Again, as most of the student engagement is currently coming through Scriptorium this has led to this fund growing. This is a useful balance to have on hand if student activities increase in 2026.

**Agency Collections** is used for Lenten giving to the ACS and for the portion of carol service collections for the Sea Cadets and will be paid out in 2026 (closing balance £180). Pilgrimage ends the year in a slight deficit again, with slightly better tracking of income and expenditure now that the ExpensePlus software was in place (my thanks to Jean for her efforts in organising the Pilgrimage, communicating with the Holy House and coordinating payments etc). This seems to be from supporting places for students so I may clear this in 2026 with that fund once I've confirmed it.

Parish Nursing had a fantastic year in terms of grant income, with Louise and team successfully winning funding from the Cutlers, the Harry Bottom Trust and, a long-term target, the National Lottery. This led to £67,534 in grant income in year, forming a large part of the £72,234 in income. With a yearly expenditure of £41,922 this has led to a good closing balance of £38,209 for the team to look at expansion plans in 2026 alongside maintenance of the existing Parish Nursing support to the city and the vital service from Louise and all volunteers.

### Other Financial Reports

Once again, the CCLA fund in which the Legacy fund is invested continued to perform poorly, losing value over the year (-£1,000) ending the year at £84,639. As a PCC we have resolved to move this from CCLA, which is fine by me personally as I am not satisfied with the investment approach taken in the Church of England funds they operate. With some time after the preparation of annual accounts, I will move to complete this soon.

Regarding the above notice on putting Regenerate funds into higher interest bonds and notice accounts, the church holds money in the following (with year end balances listed):

Cambridge & Counties 1 Year Fixed Rate Bond (matures Feb 26): £82,100  
United Trust Bank 200-day Notice account: £82,100  
United Trust Bank Charity Easy Access: £81,921.43  
Equals Money (payment cards for staff): £340.36  
Redwood Bank 95-day Notice account: £85,232.51  
Lloyds Commercial Instant Access: £161.36  
Lloyds Treasures Account: £8,609.11

I have closed the Flowers fund this year having cleared an accrual of some old gift aid and this is now being recorded in General under the 'Flowers' category.

Kingfisher Accountants provided the independent examination accompanying these accounts for us again this year, giving governance costs of £300 + VAT.

Regarding in year fund transfers, these include two transfers from the Richard Buckley Fund to Pilgrimage – 1 to cover a deficit from 2024 in supporting places and another specifically for supporting a place in 2025. There is a transfer from General to Pilgrimage to cover the places of the Vicar and the driver. There is also a transfer from Parish Nursing to General of £1,387 which is due to the accounting software's payroll function assigning employer national insurance allowance reimbursements all to PN when the initial payment of employer NI is from General for workers paid through General funds.

### Closing thoughts

I have very much enjoyed being the Treasurer for the last two years and am very pleased with the current state at which day to day operations take place. There is a strong workflow between expenses coming in, end of month reconciliations and reporting including this one, and this is complemented by the support from Holly F.

As Stuart steps down from his role as Churchwarden, I have been asked if I would be interested in succeeding him and being proud and willing to serve God's church, especially St Matthew's, I hope to take up this post at the APCM on Low Sunday, though I will not be far from supporting the Treasurer responsibilities, if indeed not covering them.

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2025

Please pray for me, our church, good financial fortune and continued impact, growth and spiritual health through our missional activities and our witness to the faith.

Saint Matthew, pray for us. Our Lady of Sheffield, pray for us

**Richard Dawidek**  
Treasurer

