

**THE ABBEY CHURCH OF ST. MARY AND ST. ETHELFLAEDA, ROMSEY with ST.
SWITHUN'S, CRAMPMOOR**

**The Annual Vestry Meeting for the Election of Churchwardens and the
Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be held in Romsey Abbey on
Sunday 31st May 2026**

at 11.45 a.m.

AGENDA

- 1) Opening prayers
- 2) Apologies for Absence

VESTRY MEETING

- 3) Minutes of the Vestry Meeting held on 18 May 2025 (*draft minutes below*)
- 4) Election of Churchwardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

- 5) Minutes of the APCM held on 18 May 2025 (*draft minutes below*)
- 6) Election to Deanery Synod – 6 members for election for 3 years
- 7) Election of 5 members to the Parochial Church Council for 3 years
- 8) Report from the Electoral Roll Officer
- 9) Election of the Electoral Roll Officer
- 10) Parish Reports – PCC Committees **2025 Pages 10 -17**
 - a) Deanery Synod
 - b) Discipleship
 - c) Fabric Committee
 - d) Financial Resources Committee
 - e) Health and Safety Committee
 - f) Magazine Committee
 - g) Mission & Giving Committee
 - h) Safeguarding
 - j) St. Swithun's Committee
- 11) Annual Report and Accounts of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31st December 2025
- 12) Election of Auditor
- 13) Group Reports **2025 Pages 17 - 27**

Abbey groups

 - a. Bellringers
 - b. Catering Team
 - c. Children and Families Worker Report

- d. Choir
- e. FORAC
- f. Head Verger
- g. Home Groups
- h. Journeying Together
- j. Listening Cafe
- k. Mothers' Union
- m. Net Carbon Zero
- n. Parish Lunch
- p. Pastoral Team
- q. Romsey Abbey C of E (Aided) School
- r. St Swithun's and Abbey Women's Group
- s. Sainly Sweepers
- t. Tour Guides
- u. Youth Worker

Associated organisations 2025 Pages 27 - 30

- 1. Christian Aid
 - 2. George's Trust
 - 3. Friends of Romsey Abbey
 - 4. Music in Romsey Abbey
 - 5. Triangulate
- 14) Vicar's report
- 15) Question time
- 16) Closing prayers

AGENDA ITEM 3

Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting for the Abbey Church of St Mary and St Ethelflaeda with St Swithun's, held in Romsey Abbey on 18 May 2025

Chairman: The Revd. Canon Thomas Wharton

The Vicar opened the meeting with prayer.

Copies of the Vestry Meeting Minutes of 26th May 2024 were circulated with the Annual Report before the meeting. The Vicar asked the meeting whether he should sign the Minutes as a correct record of the meeting. All agreed.

AGENDA ITEM 4

The Vicar introduced the election of Church Wardens. It is the custom in our Parish for Church Wardens to serve for 4 years. Mr David Auger had served 3 years and was willing to serve for a further year: He was proposed by Juliette Bowden. Seconder Pamela Leech Mrs Janice Bartlett had served 1 year and was willing to stand for a further year: She was

proposed by Liz Wagner and seconded by Ian Clark. There being no other nominations, the Vicar declared Mr Auger and Mrs Bartlett elected. They were formally accepted by the meeting for presentation at the forthcoming Archdeacon's Visitation.

The Chairman concluded the Vestry meeting.

Confirmed this date 18th May 2025.

AGENDA ITEM 5

MINUTES OF THE APCM HELD ON 18 MAY 2025

1. OPENING PRAYERS

The Vicar, the Revd. Canon Thomas Wharton, took the chair and opened the meeting with prayer.

2. APOLOGIES

There were 71 present and 13 apologies.

Apologies received – Pamela and Roger Leech, Glynne Beasley, Nigel and Jenny Herriott, Sandy and Paul Quinnell, Karen Clewer, Colin and Rosemary Davis, Jane Arden, Geoff Mordan and David Johnson

(Agenda items 3 and 4 are recorded in the Annual Vestry Meeting Minutes)

5. MINUTES FROM 2025 APCM

The Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 26 May 2024 (pages 3-8) were taken as read and agreed unanimously. The Chairman signed the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

6. DEANERY SYNOD ELECTIONS

Parish representatives to Deanery Synod are elected every three years and are ex officio members of the PCC. Based on our electoral role figures, Romsey is entitled to 6 lay representatives.

We currently have 3 vacancies for Deanery Synod. Nigel Herriott has been nominated, proposed by Liz Wagner and seconded by David Johnson and Tim Edmonds proposed by Chris Maxey and seconded by Steve Alger. Both were elected unanimously.

7. ELECTIONS TO THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

The PCC may include up to 15 elected members who serve for 3 years. There were 6 vacancies, 5 for three years, and 1 for one year. The PCC may include up to 15 elected members who serve for 3 years. There were 5 vacancies for 3 years. The following

nominations were received:

Richard Beton – proposed by Miriam Marchant and seconded by Janice Bartlett – standing for re-election.

Rhys Lewis – proposed by Janice Bartlett and seconded by Christopher Pritchard – standing for re-election.

Andrew Keeling – proposed by Christopher Green and seconded by Martin Seymour – standing for re-election.

Nicholas Sackley – proposed by Bridget Brook and seconded by Fenella Butcher.

Chris Riley – proposed by Christopher Harpham and seconded by Pamela Leech.

The Vicar proposed, and it was agreed, that these nominees be elected *en bloc*. All voted in favour of the five candidates who were unanimously elected for 3 years.

The Vicar thanked all candidates for their time and dedication to the work of the Parish.

8. REPORT OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER

Jane Russell, Electoral Roll Officer reported that the new Electoral Roll, as required by the Church of England, was completed between 18th February and 18th April 2025. Jane reported that 46 people on the Electoral Roll live outside the Parish and that 62% of the 418 on the Roll are female and 38% are male. 21% of the applications to join the Electoral Roll were made by paper and 7% did not provide an email address. Jane requested that if people have an email address, that they let the Parish Office know so that Parish records can be updated. Moving forward, she would like to see an increase in the number of applications made on-line. Jane thanked the Parish Office for their contribution to completing this process. The Vicar and those present thanked Jane for her considerable hard work this year.

9. ELECTION OF ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER

Jane Russell was willing to serve for a further year as Electoral Roll Officer. She was proposed by Adrienne Mordan and seconded by Richard Beton: She was elected unanimously.

10. PARISH REPORTS

Reports were received from the following committees and associated organisations and taken as read before the meeting.

- a) Deanery Synod
- b) Fabric Committee
- c) Financial Resources Committee
- d) Health and Safety Committee
- e) Magazine Committee
- f) Mission and Giving Committee

- g) Safeguarding
- h) St Swithun's Committee

Committee reports were adopted.

11. ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

Tim Rogerson, PCC Treasurer, presented the audited accounts for 2024 which had been available in the Abbey and St Swithun's and on the Abbey website for over two weeks.

Tim reported an overall surplus of £2,000 for 2024. This is a reduced surplus from 2023 when a £21,623 surplus was reported. This was a good result considering the budget for 2024 was a deficit of around £30,000. One of the main savings had come from the fact that no payment to the Diocese had been requested for the PCC's agreed contribution of £15,000 to support the 'House for duty' arrangement at Kings Somborne (which enables the Parish to have an Associate Priest).

As the income report shows (page 15) there has been a reduction in planned giving in 2024, hence the current Stewardship campaign. Fees received from Music in Romsey had increased in 2024 as there was a catch up payment that Tim had found during his hand over of the MIRA Treasurer's role to Dick Hewett early in 2024.

Common Mission Fund payments to the Diocese had been lower in 2024 than 2023, but would increase in 2025. Heating and lighting costs were lower in 2024 than 2023 although the standing charges were still much higher than they had been prior to 2022. Staffing costs had also increased as there was a full complement of staff in 2024.

Tim thanked all those who give freely of their time to make the Treasury function work effectively noting that there were approximately 12 volunteers. In addition he thanked Lin Webb, who had retired as Finance Officer during 2024 after five years in post and Alex Butcher, who had been appointed in her place.

Tim was then thanked for his role as Treasurer.

12. ELECTION OF AUDITOR

Tim reported that Knight Goodhead have been our Auditors since 2019 and the fees they charge are considered by Tim, to be reasonable. They were proposed to continue as our Auditors by Andrew Keeling and seconded by Rhys Lewis. All voted in favour.

13. REPORTS SUBMITTED BY GROUPS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PCC AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Abbey Groups

The following reports had been circulated and were taken as read:

- a. Bellringers
- b. Catering Team
- c. Children and Families Worker
- d. Choir
- e. FORAM
- f. Head Verger
- g. Home Groups
- h. Journeying Together
- i. Mothers' Union
- j. Net Zero Carbon Group
- k. Parish Lunch
- l. Romsey Abbey School
- m. St Swithun's and Abbey Women's Group
- n. Tour Guides
- o. Youth Worker

Associated group reports

- Christian Aid
- George's Trust
- Friends of Romsey Abbey
- Triangulate

All reports were taken as read and accepted by the meeting

14. VICAR'S REPORT

I thought I'd begin my report this year by sharing 3 moments in the past church year that made me stop and smile and give thanks to God for being part of our church family here in Romsey.

First: A person in deep distress turned up at the Abbey with her dog. One of our ministry team noticed her and called others to come and help. It became clear that whatever inner turmoil and mental health issues this person was facing, it was beyond our knowledge and capabilities to help... other than what was offered: and that was, different members of our ministry team sat with this person, gave a safe space to listen, support, respect, offer to pray for her. After 2 hours the emergency services contacted us as they were looking for this person and they came to give her the professional support she needed. It was a joy several weeks later to receive a letter of thanks from this lady with picture of her dog.

Second: I remember one of our young people in our church family stand up and share confidently in front of our Abbey Vine congregation what being part of church meant to her. How being part of a church family gave confidence, joy, belonging and the ability to grow and share faith. Being part of church, and Youth Group was the highlight of the week.

Third: I have the opportunity most months to turn up, often late, at parish lunch, to sit and spend some time and conversation and delicious home cooked food with different people from our parish and appreciate and be encouraged by a sense of care and loving service shown, especially for those who may be living alone.

Now, these are just three examples out of many I could have shared. I know I could ask all of you here, to think of a few occasions where you have seen God at work through the care and love of others, moments which made you stop and smile and give thanks for the love of God shown in action.

Reading once again the reports from our numerous, church family groups, also makes me thankful. Because I know that every one of these groups will have similar stories to share. Moments where you will have seen the love of God and love and care for others shown and expressed in action.

And that really is what I want to remind us of as we gather for this annual parochial church meeting. A reminder of our first and primary call as a church family, as people who are called to follow Jesus Christ.

As we heard in our Gospel this morning, Jesus said:

‘As I have loved you, so you are to love one another’

Living Loving Serving... appropriately Loving is in the middle of Living and Serving.

We are a large, busy, parish, with so many things happening, so many people involved, so many responsibilities and demands to carry out, but our first and prime calling is to love one another as God in Jesus loves each one of us. That is the strand that needs to run through all our parish activity, worship and outreach. The call to love as Christ loves us. The faith handed onto us from previous generations, and the faith we must inspire the next generation with.

And that primary call is not easy.

We are not commanded to always agree. We are not told there is only one correct way of following Jesus or given clear guidelines for how to navigate complex challenges. It is a

normal part of church life for there to be differences of opinion, different convictions and different hopes for the future. A perfect church, a perfect leader, a perfect Christian doesn't exist. All we are asked to do is to love one another as Jesus loves us and to seek to become more like him.

So thank you, to the many of you, who are doing this, who are seeking to respond to Jesus' call to love one another through prayer, time, service, actions, skills. That is our prime calling and that is the command that underpins all that we are and all we do.

Just a few comments and thanks to end with.

While remembering our prime call to love one another, we do still need to plan, to develop our mission, to be effective stewards of our gifts and resources and make decisions to enable God's love to be shared with many.

I was delighted with a suggestion from Chris Harpham that our newly elected PCC start the new year with a Eucharist and for us as a church family to spend time not only meeting for business but also being together. I would like to suggest this coming year we look to do that, hold a Parish away day or weekend and for us as a church community with our PCC and Ministry Team to review our mission and priorities for the future.

I am incredibly grateful for all your support. For the many volunteers, teams, church groups who work hard, give generously of your time and enable our Abbey and St. Swithun's to be open as vibrant places of worship, welcome and creativity, thank you.

For all my colleagues in the Ministry Team, our retired clergy who work incredibly hard and give of your time and service - thank you, you are all wonderful.

And for our Church Wardens David and Jan, who work incredibly hard and support the ministry of our abbey, thank you. This is the last year of service for David and next APCM we will need to elect a new Church warden. I ask you all to pray about this, pray for the right person who may feel called to offer themselves for this important role. I mention this now as it is good practice for a new candidate for Church Warden to start shadowing during the coming year. Do speak with me, David or Jan.

The new PCC will meet for the first time on June 18th 2025, and this first meeting will start with a Eucharist in the Abbey. I am planning that we have a Parish Awayday during the year to review Mission and priorities.

Thank you for continuing to 'Live, Love and Serve' together in Romsey.

15. QUESTION TIME

Neill Beasley asked whether we could progress protecting the Saxon Rood as this has been discussed for about 30 years. This is only one of a series of projects that are awaiting progress. Thomas replied that we have now received professional analysis and reports on the level of decay and possible options to mitigate this in the future. We can now focus on how to progress this. Thomas added thanks to the Net Zero team for their reports on reducing our carbon usage. Several projects are now being progressed as we were not successful in securing a large National Lottery grant for a more significant project. The '*Give to Go Green*' project (heating and lighting) is being launched a part of the Stewardship campaign.

Beth Auger wanted to thank Rosy for her work to encourage and develop our young people as individuals and also in the life of the Abbey.

There were no further questions. Thomas again thanked those who had been newly elected as Church Wardens, the PCC and Deanery Synod and said he was looking forward to working together in the year ahead. Revd Sally Womersley then thanked Thomas for his hard work and leadership of the team.

16. CLOSING PRAYERS

There being no further questions, the Vicar thanked all who had provided reports and attended in person and the meeting finished with the Grace.

AGENDA ITEM 8

REPORT OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER 2026

After the excitement and stress of last year when we were required by the Church of England to compile a new Electoral Roll, this year has been, as might have been expected, fairly quiet as only a review was required.

Notification for the review was given in the April Edition of Open Door and in the Parish Bulletin. Announcements were also made in the notices ahead of the 9.30 Parish Eucharist and Abbey Vine.

The review was held between Friday 24th April 2026 and Friday 8th May 2026.

As of 8th May 2026, the number on the Electoral Roll stands at 421 of which 259 (62%) are female and 162 (38%) are male. Since the completion of the new Electoral Roll in 2025, there have been 11 new additions. Sadly, 9 of the 2025 Electoral Roll are now deceased.

To ensure the accuracy of the information held on the ER it is important that any changes are provided to the ERO for the details to be updated and should not be undertaken by others.

Jane Russell (Electoral Roll Officer)

AGENDA ITEM 10

PARISH REPORTS – PCC COMMITTEES 2025

a. Deanery Synod

Romsey Deanery Synod members: Julie Carlton, Adrienne Mordan, Liz Wagner, Tim Edmonds, Nigel Herriott (resigned January 2026)

Three topics were discussed in 2025 – Diocesan Financial Briefing Grants and Fundraising, Growing Rural Parishes and the use of Church buildings.

The Financial Briefing was given by Jane Parry the Parish Support Advisor and Pastoral Secretary who gave information and guidance on how to apply for Grants and Fundraising. She identified key areas that need to be addressed before applying. Cornerstone is a new platform recently developed by the Church England that not only give information on how to apply but also a list of funders that are available.

A presentation by Thorngate and Blackwater Benefice was given on the subject of Growing in Rural Parishes explaining the actions that have taken place since its formation in July 2023.

Finally a member of the Church Building team from Winchester presented a talk on how to make the best use of church buildings not only in our diocese but the whole of the UK. The aim was to give examples on how to make church buildings be used for more than worship, enabling them to be sustainable for the future. It can also provide a social outreach to provide warm open spaces where people can gather together and make the Church the heart of the community.

Pastoral Update.

Rev'd Yin-Yin Bull has now moved to Thorngate and Blackwater Benefice – she was ordained on the 28th June 2025 along with Rev'd Ann Devereaux from the ACNB Benefice.

Rev'd Anthony Cross was ordained Deacon/Curate on the 29th June 2025 and is serving in the Braishfield Benefice.

Rev'd Vanessa Lawrence has now left the ACNB Benefice to take up the post of Chaplain at the University of Winchester – there are due to be interviews for this position shortly.

Rev'd Ann Devereaux is to take up the position as House for Duty Priest in Kings' Somborne.

The Overseas Partnership Group who are supporting South Rwenzori diocese in Uganda have been fundraising during 2025 to provide essential equipment desperately needed in the area. He thanked the deanery for their continued support praying for them during the service intercessions.

Christine Brazier

Deanery Synod Secretary

b. Discipleship

Members: Revd. Sally Womersley (chair), Rosy Payne, Barbara and Ian Keys, Barbie Evans, Katie Clark, Revd. Thomas Wharton, Lucy Rocque, Eve When, Lucy Lewis, Jan Bartlett

The Discipleship Group met on 4 occasions over the last year.

Last summer in preparation for Confirmation, we used the CofE course; "We Believe", based around the Nicene Creed to explore our understanding of faith. Confirmation took place during the (Ethelflaeda) Patronal festival last October; 9 young people and 3 adults were baptised/confirmed by Bishop Rhiannon.

This year, starting in May, we shall be using the Alpha course as preparation for Confirmation, with a service of Confirmation sometime in the Autumn yet tbc. So far, 7 people have expressed an interest in becoming baptised (and, or) Confirmed.

Earlier this year we said farewell to Syrone Dore our Children and Families worker. Syrone's gifts and skills, her warmth and welcome, and passion for creation care, helped to build and create a vibrant ministry among children and families with the regular groups; as well as our annual events: Light in the Abbey, Summer fun day and regular events at Christmas and Easter festivals. We offered our heartfelt thanks and wish her well in her future ministry. Presently we have 3 lead volunteers taking responsibility for "Abbey Toddlers", "Singing Story time" and provision for Children's work on a Sunday.

Thank you to all our volunteers and to everyone who offers their time and support.

Prayer Ministry- The Wednesday online- prayer group continues to meet each week at 7pm for half an hour. This is an invaluable intentional prayer ministry as we ask the Holy Spirit to guide us in mission and ministry among ourselves, the town, and the wider community. Everyone is welcome to join the group online. The link can be found on page three of the weekly bulletin. Thank you to everyone who participates.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Advent and lent groups Our Advent book; 'O Come Emanuel' with reflections on the Advent Antiphons (various authors), and "Lentwise, Spiritual essentials for real life" (Paula Gooder) were well received.

Sally Womersley

Associate Priest

c. Fabric Committee

Members: David Auger, Jan Bartlett, Glynn Beasley, Patricia Brown, Diane Hargreaves, Chris Harpham, David Johnson, Pam Leech (chair), Richard Pratt, Revd. Thomas

Wharton, Chris Riley, Graham Backhurst

The Fabric Committee has had a very busy year. It has been noticeable that prices are beginning to impact considerably on the cost of works that need to be carried out which is a concern.

We continue to ensure that all safety equipment has annual inspections.

The work of the Fabric Committee is varied and this year we have worked with Men's Shed to provide a garden tool storage unit in the South Garth. This has helped to keep the Boiler Room clear of gardening tools and it is proving useful to the team who meet regularly on the last Saturday of each month to maintain the South Garth.

Finally, after three years of liaison we have been granted the necessary consents by TVBC to replace the external signage around the Abbey to modernise this and bring the content up to date; hopefully we will see the conclusion of this project during the course of this summer.

The PCC accepted a quote from Colin Avery, stonemason, to replace the sinking ledger stone in St. Nicholas chapel. There was a need for an archaeological watching brief and to submit a written scheme of investigation to cover the eventualities for when the ledger stone was lifted was ably fulfilled by Professor Roger Leech.

The conservator Peter Martindale requested that the sculpture of 'Alice' remained raised for a further period of 6 months - 1 year as there is still considerable flaking from the plaster of Paris. The monument will be re-assessed in 2026 with a view to returning her to the plinth. We are indebted to the Friends of Romsey Abbey for their financial support for this project.

The PCC agreed at its April meeting to grant sums for options studies for both the lighting and heating in the Abbey. The Fabric Committee have been working with the Zero Carbon Group to ensure the options proposed are the best they can be.

There has been signs of beetle activity in the Abbey amongst artefacts so the Fabric Committee are in the process of obtaining competitive quotes to deal with this outbreak.

The Fabric Committee have planned and overseen the re-decoration of the Parish Office along with re-carpeting.

The Fabric Committee have also worked with the Church Rooms Committee to replace the windows and doors with double glazed units. The planners delayed this project considerably and there have been significant snagging problems but this is almost all rectified now.

We also deal regularly with the fabric issues at St Swithun's. There is considerable damp in the vestry and this requires input from the inspecting architect which will be undertaken when she has successfully planned the works to the Abbey tower roof and flagpole. The ash tree at St Swithun's has ash die-back and a tree surgeon has been appointed to deal with this.

Each month there is the opportunity for members to report any new damage they may have seen and this is then investigated and we have ongoing matters that take a considerable amount of time to resolve for a variety of reasons.

General maintenance to ensure that the Abbey is safe is ongoing and ably supported by our Head Verger Chris Harpham. We use a variety of workmen to carry out low level maintenance tasks but finding people willing to do the work is always a challenge.

I am indebted to the members of the Fabric Committee for their expertise and commitment to our Grade 1 listed building and especially to Patricia Brown and David Auger who will leave the Committee after this APCM having given years of service to the maintenance of this place.

Pam Leech

Chair

d. Financial Resource Committee

Members: Liz Wagner (chair), Tim Rogerson (Treasurer) , Jan Bartlett, Revd. Thomas Wharton, Julie Carlton, Ian Clark, Stephen Alger, Patricia Brown

FRC met five times in 2025 reviewing Business Continuity Plans, Financial Procedures & Policies, Risk Register, Succession Plan, Data Protection and insurance policies. Gift Aid was reclaimed on eligible donations.

Regular givers (mainly PGS), visitors, MIRA concerts, Christmas Fair and catering events continue to be major income streams. In 2025 income from contactless donation points totalled £20,777 (£21,078.93 in 2024). An income of £12,371.86 (£11,210.69 in 2024) was gained from the contactless payment point which in the Gift Shop. The small contactless donation device by the candle stand raised £1,902 (£1,877 in 2024) mainly with £1 donations.

In May and June a successful 6-week Stewardship Campaign increased income from regular giving by £11,000 and, during the same period, an equally successful Give to Go Green Campaign which with match funding from the CofE raised £23,157.25 towards replacing the Abbey spotlights with LED lamps.

Energy costs continue to be a major expenditure, but the PCC's utilities are purchased via CofE's Parish Buying Energy scheme enabling energy to be purchased as cheaply as possible. In addition all the electricity is 100% from UK renewable resources. In October the energy providers for Parish Buying were changed from Total to Corona (gas) and Ecotricity (Electricity). This switch has caused considerable extra work for FRC and Finance Assistant but should result in costs being kept low and the energy being as "green" as possible.

Our continued thanks to Tim Rogerson, in his role as PCC Treasurer, Alex Butcher, PCC's Finance Assistant, Penny Simpson, Assistant to the Treasurer and all on the PCC's Finance Team and FRC.

Liz Wagner

FRC Chair

e. Health & Safety Committee

Members: Julie Carlton, Liz Wagner, Paul Quinnell, Sarah Riley, Christopher Harpham, Jan Bartlett

The Health and Safety Committee keeps under review H&S policies, procedures and risk assessments for the Abbey and St Swithun's and carries out monthly inspections of the Abbey and grounds.

The Committee met five times in 2025. Eleven staff and volunteers attended Emergency First Aid at Work and Paediatric Emergency First Aid at Work training held in the Church Rooms in March. Online training, on a range of topics including food hygiene, working from height and manual handling, is completed by staff and volunteers according to their role within the Abbey and St Swithun's.

We have continued to monitor developing guidance about Martyn's Law which will come into force in April 2027. This legislation, brought forward in response to the bombing of the Manchester Arena in 2017, requires churches which regularly hold 200 or more people to ensure that staff and volunteers are alert and prepared for potential terrorist attack. Building on our existing evacuation procedures, we will need to strengthen training and consider a wider range of scenarios.

The Committee membership is Julie Carlton (Chairman), Jan Bartlett, Chris Harpham, Paul Quinnell, Sarah Riley and Liz Wagner, The Committee would welcome new members who have an interest in health and safety and staff wellbeing. Please contact Julie Carlton if interested.

Julie Carlton

f. Magazine Committee

Members: Rowland Davies (Chair), Tim Edmonds Content Editor, Biddy Massey Distribution Manager, Jane Russell Deputy Distribution Manager

Production of *Open Door* proceeded smoothly until September when a switch-on fault developed in the computer used to produce the magazine. All 2025 issues were produced and printed to schedule but the computer failed completely in December and the January 2026 issue was not produced until late in the month following a replacement of the faulty machine. There have been no issues with the production of the 2026 magazines.

The total of magazines distributed stands at around 270, some of which are complimentary copies, plus an average of 46 Bookstall sales per month. There were six cancellations of subscription, all for different reasons. These were largely balanced out by four new subscriptions. Unfortunately five subscribers died and five moved into a nursing home or had failing sight.

The annual report is an opportunity to thank all our contributors who supply us with articles and photos. Both regular and occasional contributions are always welcome as are any new contributors.

We have received a number of very positive comments on the magazine, the most outstanding one being:

We remain grateful for 'Open Door.'
It remains a very impressive magazine.

The Magazine Committee was very pleased that it was possible to maintain the cover price at £2.00 and the discount of 12 copies for the price of 10.

A contribution of £1 200 was made to Abbey funds from the proceeds of 2025 magazine sales.

Rowland Davies
Committee Chair

g. Mission Giving Group

Members: Ian Clark, Revd. Thomas Wharton, Jane Horne, Jane Arden, Richard Peace, Beth Auger Julie Carlton

During 2025 Jane Arden was unable to attend meetings, but still took an active interest in our discussions. The group's job is to promote the local charities and mission agencies that

the PCC supports, usually through a monthly article in the Open Door magazine. With the Vicar it organises a termly visit by a speaker from one of these agencies. In 2025 we had speakers from the Homelessness charity run by Southampton churches, and at Pentecost welcomed Terry Ascott to preach, the founder of the SAT-7 satellite-TV and social media broadcaster across the 27 countries of the Middle East and North Africa. It is ironic that in the birthplace of the Christian faith, there are now a small minority of believers, some of whom have to worship in secret.

The PCC continues to support over 20 organisations, with a broad balance between local and international, and between social action and Christian mission. In 2025 we distributed £20,000 on behalf of the PCC.

Ian Clark

h. Safeguarding Report

Safeguarding has continued to play an integral role in our everyday ministry. Most of the policies and procedures from the Church of England, have been updated and we are constantly looking at how we work these into our policies and procedures at Romsey Abbey and St Swithin's.

Last year, Winchester Diocese was affected by a data breach involving software used to carry out DBS checks. Unfortunately, we were one of eleven Parishes across the Diocese that had parishioners affected. This was reported to the ICO and managed within our Parish. It has resulted in the DBS applications returning to paper versions instead of online and the whole process taking a lot longer! We wait for Winchester to provide us with a new agent.

At Romsey Abbey, we now have two Safeguarding Administrators and DBS verifiers alongside myself. Cath Beck and Kathryn Macgregor have joined the team and proving a great help to reduce the workload.

I continue to work alongside Rosy and, since Syrone left, our children and families volunteers, as well as our other groups, to ensure all our activities are fully safeguarded. I was very lucky to be invited to attend the Choir Tour to Truro last August, an enjoyable experience and a chance to get to know our choristers and choir chaperones better. I would like to thank them for all their support and working with me.

Safeguarding in Romsey Abbey is everyone's responsibility. Our awareness and raising concerns fall to each and every one of us, clergy, staff and volunteers. If anyone has any concerns, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

My thanks to Thomas, Jan, and David for all their support.

Sarah Riley

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Safeguarding@romseyabbey.org.uk

Mobile 07986662503

j. St. Swithun's Committee

Members: Richard Pratt (Chairman), David Bartam, Catherine Bartram, David Bibby, Irene Bray, Sandra Drake, Val Lines, Jenny Scovell

The average attendance was 26. Three were 34 people at the Easter day service and 58 at the carol service. There were 2 funerals.

The church welcomed Singing Story Time every Wednesday during term time, and in December the Youth Group.

Jan Bartlett, Liz Hallett and Richard Pratt dealt with the Archdeacon's visitation in September.

For much of the year we struggled to find sufficient organists.

The orchids bloomed and are increasing.

We welcomed Paul Hollingworth and Toby his wonderful dog to lead the Morning Worship service every month. Sadly during the year Nick Flood retired .

During June and July, major roadworks took place at the junction of Halterworth Lane and Winchester Road and along the footpath by the church. Hampshire County Council kept us informed, and maintained access to the church. The contractors who carried out the work were very considerate and even stopped work during a funeral.

Richard Pratt

AGENDA ITEM 13

GROUP REPORTS - ABBEY GROUPS

a. **Bellringers 2024**

The bell ringers are responsible for ensuring the Abbey's fine ring of eight bells are rung for services, weddings and other occasions, and that the bells are rung and maintained to a high standard.

In 2025 we rang for all Sunday morning services, most Sunday Evensong services, sixteen weddings and two funerals. There was also general ringing on 8 May for the 80th anniversary of VE Day.

Nine quarter peals were rung including one in memory of Mike Hayward, a former member of Abbey band and another was rung to mark the 2nd anniversary of the passing of Joy Scanlon, another former member of the band,

Three peals were rung during the year, including the 150th on the bells and the traditional Christmas peal for the townspeople of Romsey.

In September our annual tower outing took us to Henley and the surrounding area.

We rang carols on handbells at the Abbey Christmas Fair and we also rang in the new year and were joined by the Vicar Thomas Wharton and Churchwardens, Jan Bartlett and David Auger together with many family members.

I thank the whole band for their continued support and dedication throughout the year. Because of this, the standard of ringing remains high, and our glorious bells continue to be heard across Romsey every week.

Alistair Brown
Tower Captain

b. Catering Team

In 2025, as in previous years, the Abbey Catering Team continued to cater monthly for Baptism preparation sessions and the increasingly popular Parish Tea and weekly, providing pastries for the Abbey Vine congregation. Homemade cakes/biscuits have also been provided for several joint Sunday morning services, including Epiphany Gift Service, Mothering Sunday, Easter, Stewardship campaign launch and Harvest. Catering has also been provided for many other Parish functions including:- meetings for Abbey Stewards/ flower arrangers/ Gift Shop volunteers and for Sidesmen, pancakes on Shrove Tuesday for the boys and girls choirs, Christian Aid Lent Lunch, Archdeacon's Visitation, Beggars Fair, Light in the Abbey, All Souls, tea for the choirs before Sunday Evensong and wine bars at MIRA concerts.

Outside catering functions have included funerals, FRA afternoon tea & Desert Island Discs, wedding anniversaries, birthdays and Civic receptions.

Demand for catering was very high and approx. £12,000 was added to PCC funds from all these catering events. These events just could not happen without the loyal support of the wonderful band of volunteer bakers and helpers. Our sincere thanks go to these volunteers for maintaining the Abbey's strong Benedictine tradition of hospitality and welcome. We look forward to welcoming new members to the team in 2026 to increase the capacity of the team.

Liz Wagner

c. Children and Families' Worker

During 2025, the work with children and their families has been supported by a growing team of committed volunteers. Under the leadership of Syrone Dore they enabled the following sessions to widen the Abbey ministry to this group:

Toddler Group

The weekly session has continued throughout 2025. Each session lasts for 1.5 hours and offers free play, crafts and activities, and circle time where we have storytelling and songs. Refreshments and snacks are available throughout the session. We currently have approximately 10 families attending each week. Ages range from newborn to 4 years.

Singing Story Time

This has continued at St Swithun's Church. Each session starts with circle time where children are individually welcomed with a song. A new book is selected each term, to which we sing and sign (Makaton). The session ends with a parachute and goodbye song. We currently have approximately 4 families attending each week. Ages range from newborn to 3 years.

Little Angels Group

This group has met intermittently during the year for a Bible-focussed group, for children aged 3 to 10 years. Each session explored a different Bible story or theme using Godly play, which is a Montessori style of telling Bible stories and parables using simple, natural materials. After the story, children can participate in the themed craft activities or use the story telling materials to re-tell the story themselves. Each session ends with a short time of prayer. We had about 3 families attending each session, but the group reached a natural end in December 2025.

Seekers

Seekers takes place during the 09.30 service each Sunday morning. Children have the opportunity to follow the Sunday School Banner during the processional hymn before their session starts with a short, interactive children's 'sermon', followed by a prayer and then activities to help consolidate learning. Children have the opportunity, at the end of the service, to show the congregation the craft activity they have completed.

Abbey Vine Children's Activity

A craft activity is provided for the children to complete during the 11.15 Abbey Vine Service. The activity is designed to consolidate learning from the morning's theme or reading. Children then have the opportunity to feed back to the congregation. Toys and colouring sheets are provided for very young children.

Pop-up events

Children's pop-up events occurred throughout the year including events for children attending Quavers, families attending Abbey groups, and events for the wider community. In 2025 these included a Quavers Easter egg hunt, Quavers Abbey tour, Summer Family Fun session, Light in the Abbey, Toddler's Christmas Party and Messy Church Goes Wild. This latter session encourages exploration of the natural world and connecting with God outside

the traditional church setting, with a focus on good stewardship of God's creation. Several of these pop-up events have been gratefully supported by the Friends of Romsey Abbey.

Early in 2026 Syrone left the Abbey to pursue other opportunities but thanks to the brilliant team of volunteers most of the sessions are continuing. Thank you Syrone.

Syrone Dore/Jan Bartlett

d. Choirs

The work of the choirs at the Abbey have continued apace with their weekly contributions helping to lead the worship of the services on Sundays and at the fortnightly mid-week Choral Evensong. Concerts, a successful Cathedral tour to Truro during August took place as well as workshops for the choristers leading to presentations at services. Continued outreach both at Romsey Hospital, Mottisfont and social occasions including taking part in the Lantern Parade has all added to the continued supportive community feel of the various groups.

'Quavers' our training choir continues to help feed the main choirs and a considerable amount of regular outreach into the local schools and further afield is required to keep this moving forward.

Thanks to all our volunteers, chaperones and Richard McVeigh my assistant, who has also been mentoring our organ scholar, John, who is in the second year of his university course at Southampton.

Martin Seymour
Director of Music

e. FORAC

In the last 12 months the choir parent group has met on an occasional basis to help support the work and community of the choirs. They have reverted back to their original name of 'Friends of Romsey Abbey Choirs' as this more accurately covers the nature of the group and a refined terms of reference were also drawn up and agreed. Our overall strap line being 'Singing, Learning, Connecting'. Particular thanks to those who helped from FORAC last autumn when the choirs had a successful tour to Truro Cathedral.

Martin Seymour
Director of Music

f. Head Verger's Report

The Head Verger and Verging team had a busy 2025 supporting the many services and events that take place in the Abbey during the year. Two Vergers now look after Evensong on a Sunday. In addition to the services, the Head Verger and Verging team supported many of the concerts, civic services and events including the Schools and Charity concerts/services,

the Beggars Fair, St George's day celebration, the Mountbatten Memorial Service, the annual Civic service and the Remembrance Sunday service.

The team visited Salisbury Cathedral to enjoy Evensong and watch their vergers at work. The team also attended the event remembering the German invasion of the Channel Islands, and we remembered one of our own, Canon Michael Halliwell, who grew up on the Islands.

During the year the team welcomed new member, Ian Mackay, husband of Sally. He looks after the sound desk on a Sunday evening for Evensong. Welcome Ian.

Team building throughout the year was supported by the tea/cakes after the set up/training sessions on a Saturday, pub visits and meals out, plus the Servers and Vergers annual BBQ gratefully hosted by Chris and Sarah Riley.

The vestry team of Brian, Sarah, Bruce, Gillian, Sally, Ian and Young Thomas under my leadership, receive lots of positive comments so thank you for all that you do to support the Abbey.

We are always looking for New Servers if you would like to join this very happy band please have a word with Sarah Riley our Head Server or me.

Chris Harpham
Head Verger

g. House Groups

Clark's Home Group

The Clark homegroup continued to meeting twice a month (1st and 3rd Tuesday afternoons through most of 2025 except the holiday seasons. We generally studied Bible books (like Tomothy and Titus) or Bible characters like David and 'the girl with no name', sometimes with the aid of short videos. We followed another series on the Apostles Creed. We usually met in The Harrage, but had a summer social in Love Lane. Several new members joined us, replacing older members.

More details from Katy Clark katyc@eml.cc

Katy Clark

Barn House Housegroup

We have enjoyed our completion of the study of Isiah with the help of Handel's messiah. This was followed by using the Journey into Faith course designed by Revd David Simpson and Revd. Bryan Taphouse in 1995. This has been a worthwhile journey enjoyed by all of us.

We used music and prayer as part of our discovery. We will probably go back to Bible study for the rest of this year.

Every Blessing

Barbie and Jean Evans

h. Journeying Together

'Journeying Together' has continued to meet throughout the year, with a regular membership of 15 people. The group's aims are to share experience of the Christian journey in an inclusive way; discuss the Bible and other inspiring books; pray and grow in faith. During the year we explored the books of Nehemiah, Ruth and Esther using helpful bible study guides. As a self-facilitated group these have proved very helpful for those leading the sessions, as it enabled us to explore the themes of God's sovereignty in everyday life, loyalty, the importance of prayer and dependency on God.

In addition, we used the Advent study guide, '*O Come Emmanuel*' which considers each of the Advent Antiphons in turn. In addition, the group also explored a couple of hot topics, Celtic Christianity and Assisted Dying ably led by Bryn Bridges and Howard Green. All the discussions have been positive, interesting, and at times challenging. The sessions also include a time of prayer at each gathering.

Jan Bartlett

j. Listening Café

This Easter sees the fourth anniversary of the Listening café. The café meets every Wednesday from 1.30pm- 3pm (except Christmas and New year).

This last year, we have people joining us from the Abbey community, Romsey, North Baddesley and other areas. Some visitors also join with us regularly at Abbey Vine and the 9.30 am service. Numbers of visitors to the café vary week to week. This last year we have had other volunteers joining us. The volunteers continue to meet regularly once a quarter at the Wisdom Centre, partly as a social gathering, and also to discuss any particular needs. A huge "Thank You" to all our volunteers who kindly offer their time regularly on a rota basis. And to others who join with us and help us clear away each week.

Our thanks also to Sarah Riley as Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) who has offered her time and expertise in guiding us through the necessary safeguarding and risk assessments.

Revd. Sally Womersley, Associate Priest

k. Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union (MU) meets in the church rooms on the second Tuesday of the month at 2.30. You don't have to be a mother to join us! We sometimes have a speaker, a discussion, or a service, followed by tea and (very nice) biscuits. We have a fund raising cream tea each year and a Christmas Party. On the first Wednesday of the month we attend a short service in Winchester Cathedral and meet up with other members taking it in turns to lead the prayers.

We are involved in purchasing and wrapping presents for prisoners to give to their children at Christmas time, and we also raise money to send overseas to support some of the poorest people in places like Burundi and South Sudan.

Last year we had an outing to visit St. Nicholas' church, one of the oldest churches in the New Forest followed by a cream tea organised by the MU members in Brockenhurst.

We look forward to celebrating 150 years since our founder, Mary Sumner started the movement in our Diocese. And now there are over 4 million members worldwide in over 80 countries. Join us and join in. This year, look out for lots of action!

Jane Horne

m. Zero Carbon Group

Last year we wrote of starting two projects to reduce our carbon footprint, one on heating, one on lighting.

Heating: We are getting advice from Purcell Architecture. We need to conserve heat better. To do that options are needed: better lobbies at the north and south doors, double glazing, insulation in the roof, careful to avoid creating condensation problems within the roof structure.

We will generate heat with Air Source heat pumps. The gas boilers need replacing.

Purcell's advice is that we are likely to need underfloor heating to have the heat where we need it in the Abbey, and not up in the roof structure.

Lighting: We will replace the existing halogen lights with LEDs and move to a DMX control system. This will fix the dimming problem with the aisle lights, save us over £9000 per year and reduce our carbon footprint by about 6 tonnes per year.

As well as progressing the projects we have done some fundraising, updated the Romsey Abbey website to include a mission statement and to provide information about what we are doing. We continue to collect data on the Abbey climate.

Tim Edmonds

n. Parish Lunch

We have our parish lunch on the second Thursday of each month, which means we have twelve per year. We charge people £6 for their lunch which is two courses followed by tea or coffee.

The numbers attending during 2025 ranged from 37 to 55. We had a special meal in December for which we charged £10. It was a Christmas meal and also included wine, mints and table decoration – altogether a very festive occasion. The payment for this meal also

included one raffle ticket per attendee. The income from the raffle ranges from £26 - £45 per meal. Raffle prizes are all donated and there is a raffle every month

All food is purchased locally and cooked by members of the parish lunch catering team. We also cater for those attending with special dietary needs.

All the catering staff are very generous. Not only do they give their time but they only ask for reimbursement of the cost of items they have purchased for the lunch and occasionally a donation towards their fuel.

Everyone who comes to the lunch seems to enjoy their meal – they keep returning! On arrival attendees are asked to confirm their attendance for the following month to help the catering team with planning. They can cancel if their plans change.

The profit in 2025 amounted to £1254.60; from this we have paid for a new coffee machine for the Church Rooms kitchen which cost £286.80.

Liz Holloway

p. Pastoral Team

We now have 20 volunteer members of the pastoral team.

Numbers have increased this last year for those who take Holy Communion at home and within the community (living in care), Romsey hospital, and also those who are requesting a home visit or telephone call. Revd. Sally Womersley and Revd. Jill Aussant give training and support to those taking Holy Communion into the community. We have been encouraged by the feedback given; that this is a valuable and much appreciated ministry.

We continue to meet as a group every 2-3 months for feedback and supervision.

Our thanks to Sarah Riley (Parish safeguarding Officer), and to Jan Bartlett (CW), who have offered training and support re; safeguarding and lone-worker policy. Most team members have now completed this training.

Over this next year, Pastoral volunteers (who wish to), will have lapel badges to wear at the Sunday services, so they might be recognised. We shall also be producing a welcome pack for care homes with information as to who are and what we might offer in the way of support to families. Our thanks to Philip Clewer for taking our photographs and also to Sallyann for the updated “Pastoral Team” board in the Abbey.

Thank you to all our Pastoral volunteers and supporters, for your giving your time and support so generously. (Sallyann Coole. Pastoral Co-ordinator).

I would like to add my thanks and on behalf of the ministry team, to Sallyann for her time and skills, which have been invaluable as our co-ordinator. Also to Revd. Jill Aussant for her support, advice and encouragement.

Sally Womersley

Associate priest

q. Romsey Abbey C of E (Aided) Primary School

2025 was a positive and fruitful year for Romsey Abbey CE Primary School, beginning with a successful Ofsted inspection in January. The report celebrated that the school continues to actively build upon and raise the good standards reported in our 2019 inspection. We have maintained a strong local reputation and full Reception Class intakes despite falling regional birth rates.

Achievement outcomes in July 2025 were strong, with pupils exceeding national averages in **Reading, Writing, and Maths** at the end of Key Stage 2. **Greater Depth achievement** was higher than national figures in Reading, Writing and Maths. **Year 1 Phonics** attainment reached **84%** (exceeding the 80% national average). In **Early Years: 77%** of Reception children achieved a "Good Level of Development," 8% higher than the national figure. These results stemmed from a well-designed curriculum and a deep investment in collaborative staff development.

In 2025 we had a particular focus the **power of story, imagination and talk**. By embedding oracy initiatives, we are empowering pupils to think both critically and imaginatively and communicate effectively. These key skills are visible in our classrooms as well as our half-termly services at the Abbey, which are led by the pupils themselves.

In Collective Worship and throughout our curriculum we have sought to inspire the children and whole school community with how we can **fly high together and build each other** up in love. We enjoyed learning about different **heroes of hope** in the Bible and through history, being inspired by those who have, by faith, made a real and lasting difference by shining with the hope of Christ in the world around them. We were proud to raise **over £700 for Children in Need** in November as we seek to make a positive contribution to the world around us. The school continues to be greatly blessed by the **ongoing support of the Abbey** with the Year 5 Abbey Sleepover and the half termly services at the Abbey a real highlight for our pupils.

Mark Harris

Headteacher

r. St. Swithun's & Romsey Abbey Women's Group

We have enjoyed the usual mixture of talks, visits and social (eating) meetings. Several of the talks this year have been by members of the clergy and congregation with Bridget Brooks, Beth Auger, Jill Aussant, Jane O'Brien and Ian McKay speaking about volunteering at the Paris Olympics, The Gideon Bible, the EU, George's Trust and dog training respectively.

Another interesting talk was about the Leprosy Mission.

There were the annual Ploughman's and Fish & Chip suppers, plus a New Year dinner at the Palmerston Rooms and a Summer visit to Spitfire House gardens near Stockbridge.

All meetings were well attended, and we have some new members. However, the current committee have been serving for MANY years and, collectively, we have decided to retire after next September's AGM. It looked as though this group would fold BUT we may have three volunteers to form a new committee and current committee members are happy to support them.

Everyone HOPES that Women's Group will be able to continue.

Liz Sharman

s. Sainly Sweepers

A dedicated and enthusiastic team of volunteers, to whom we are very grateful, continues to meet fortnightly to keep the Abbey swept and polished. Visitors often remark how well kept the building is.

David Johnson, a floor polisher on the north side for more than fifteen years, has retired, and has engaged Rob Gower to continue in his place. New recruits have also taken over from the occasional retiree. However, it is a big space, and more volunteers would be welcome, particularly to cover extra busy holiday periods and sickness absences.

Unfortunately, some advertisements during the year did not attract any new people.

Head Verger, Chris Harpham, organises a Coffee Morning after a cleaning session every few months, and we host a 'Sherry & Mince Pies' gathering each December.

Georgie Keane & Biddy Massey

t. Tour Guides

29 guided tours were booked in 2025 as well as a number of *ad hoc* tours given by the tour guides. Tours included a number of U3A groups, foreign and local students, as well as groups of families and friends. This year the Abbey offered guided tours both at ground level and the Ringing Chamber as part of the Winchester Heritage Open Days Festival. The events were a great success and were fully booked. We plan to offer the same for the 2026 Festival. There was a panel of 8 regular volunteer guides who generously gave up their time to share their knowledge and enthusiasm.

During the spring and summer, we have been very grateful to Andrew Keeling who has offered 'drop-in' tours on Wednesday lunchtimes. These tours are not booked and visitors can just turn up on the day. Numbers are increasing and over 120 people requested these tours with many making generous donations to Abbey funds

As well as income for the Abbey, the tours provide important outreach with many visitors saying they must return again and explore further.

Rob Gower

u. Youth Ministry

Youth Ministry at the Abbey continues to flourish, providing a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment in which young people are nurtured in faith, develop a strong sense of belonging, and are encouraged to live, love, and serve. Through a range of regular and seasonal activities, young people are supported as they explore and deepen their spiritual journey.

Weekly engagement includes school groups at Mountbatten School and The Romsey School, Friday evening "Youth Nights" (currently the Youth Alpha series), and Sunday worship encourages both participation and leadership opportunities. Alongside these, collaboration

with local youth workers strengthens connections between young Christians, fostering community, shared identity, and meaningful service to others. |

Faith formation is intentionally embedded across all events. Over the past year, key events have included the Deanery Weekend Away, WinterFest, Campfire Night (St Catherine of Siena), Nurture sessions and groups, Chorister Pancake Races, and Chorister participation in the Romsey Lantern Parade. One highlight has been the confirmation of nine young people following the “We Believe” course, marking a significant milestone in their faith journey. |

This growing ministry is sustained by the dedication of volunteers, parents, the Ministry Team, and the wider church community, whose prayer and support enables young people to grow in confidence, faith, and a deep sense of belonging

Rosy Payne

ASSOCIATED ORGANISATIONS

1. Christian Aid

Even though the local Committee no longer meets, the Christian Aid representatives from the Romsey churches (Baptist, Methodist, URC and the Abbey) continued to liaise and co-ordinate a limited number of fund-raising activities.

Local activities continue to include Lent lunches, bucket collections and some sponsored events. In March the Abbey’s Lent Lunch raised £466.85 and the bucket/envelope collection for Christian Aid week (delayed until September because of the PCC’s own Stewardship campaign) raised (with Gift Aid) £925.93 In addition, the Romsey PCC’s Mission & Giving fund donated £1000.00 in December.

Sincere thanks go to those who continue to contribute and support to help Christian Aid achieve their aim of ending worldwide poverty.

Liz Wagner

2. George’s Trust

As George’s Trust reaches the 17th Anniversary since its launch in 2009, we are lucky enough to still have wonderful support from the Romsey Abbey PCC and Parishioners and the people of Romsey as a whole. Every anniversary though is always tinged with the sadness of the memory of the tragic loss of George.

Nevertheless, George’s Trust continues to raise funds for Teenagers and Young Adults in our area. This year we have pledged £40,000 to the Southampton University Hospital for the Teenage and Young Adult Cancer unit’s much needed decoration and refit. We have also given equipment such as Wifi routers, kitchen equipment for each room within the unit such

as mugs, glasses, cutlery and Birthday vouchers to be given to the patients receiving treatment. Raising funds for Teenage and Young Adult Cancer unit continues to be our focus and we feel very privileged to be able to help such a wonderful unit. Of course, the George's Trust small grant scheme is still there to be of any help to those young people and the organisations that they belong to.

Some of the fundraising events we have held this year are a Barn Dance at Michelmersh in the spring, which was great fun, dancing to the Spike Island Band. We served Strawberries and cream at the Mayor's Picnic, always fun time within the Romsey Community. We helped run the Winchester City Council Car Boot Sale and received all the fees from the stall holders for George's Trust. It was lovely to talk to people who had never come across George's Trust and their interest and generosity was overwhelming. Then of course at the end of the year we held our annual Christmas Concert in the Abbey, as always, a wonderful highlight of the year. To end the financial year, we have just held yet another successful event here in the Abbey in the shape of a Fashion Show. What a wonderful evening it was which was enjoyed by everyone and raised an amazing £4700. A lot of work goes into these events, but we have wonderful supporters who are willing to organise parts of event and help in whatever way they can, to bring everything together.

As well as our own events during year, we are lucky to have support from other organisations and individuals. One such group, this year was the members of the Romsey Railway Society who nominated George's Trust as their charity for the year and they raised an amazing £500, which was a lovely surprise. We also had many other donations over the year, including one from the Parish Giving Scheme here at Romsey Abbey and we thank everyone for their support.

We look forward to another year of fundraising and thank the PCC and the Parishioners for their continued support .

Jane O'Brien

Chair of George's Trust

3. Friends of Romsey Abbey

2025 was another successful year for the Friends. The Friends raise money through subscriptions, donations and social events, to pay for projects that enhance the visitor attraction. This year we have spent over £10,000 for items including the Ceiling Viewing Mirror, one third of the cost of the new sound system, re-print of the Visitor Leaflets, protective film covering for the Cope Cabinet, Abbey Flowers, an annual donation of £1000 and wire inserts for the pedestals, the Canis QR Code, the Children's Light party and our £3000 Annual Contribution towards the Abbey Youth Workers.

Coffee mornings entrance £2, held every other month in Romsey Town Hall are extremely popular and well attended. We have homemade biscuits and non-members are very welcome. We run the bottle stall at the Abbey Christmas Fair, bottles generously donated by the Friends.

A popular event is the annual boat trip on the River Thames. In 2025, we had a four Churches Tour in the Test and Bourne Valleys, a visit to Farnborough Air Sciences Trust Museum and Wind Tunnels, Buckler's Hard, Southsea D-Day Museum and Castle, Petworth House (NT) and the Mill Theatre in Sonning.

Jill Hall

Chair

4. Music in Romsey Abbey

Music in Romsey Abbey is the team of volunteers that manages the booking, ticketing, front of house, box office and backstage activities for the evening concerts held in the Abbey. These events couldn't happen without the generosity and dedication of our many volunteers, to whom we are extremely grateful.

In 2025 we hosted 23 events with over 6000 tickets sold and 2000 individual performers involved - with the most popular events being the Band of His Majesty's Royal Marines Collingwood, the Romsey Male Voice Choir and the Romsey Youth Choir. We raised approximately £22k for Abbey funds.

Music in Romsey Abbey is a charity in its own right, raising additional funds through a small administration fee and through cushion hire donations, with an aim to help fund new equipment. We were pleased to donate an additional £6k in 2025 towards replacement lighting.

Our new relationship with Oasis for in-person ticketing has worked well, with around 15% of our ticket sales happening in the shop last year.

We are always on the lookout for additional help on concert days. If you are interested in being involved in any way - helping to prepare the Abbey or welcoming the audience, for example - please get in touch with our concert administrator, Chris Green.

Chris Green

5. Triangulate – raising awareness of positive mental health in the workplace and community

The number of booklets taken from the stand near the South Door continues to be high, with as many booklets being taken throughout the year as in any of the previous 17 years. Additional resources were purchased in 2025 to widen the topics available but these are not as visually appealing as the booklets usually on offer. Whilst the range of booklet topics was reduced in print format by our original supplier, there now seems to be an increase again so new supplies will shortly be purchased.

The PCC continue to support Triangulate, as one of their partner charities, with a financial contribution which is used to buy resources for the stand.

Romsey Abbey continues to be a charter signatory of Mindful Employer with the biennial review having taken place in the summer of 2025. Current charter signatory status is required to continue the subscription to Mindful Employer Plus, the 24/7 helpline for staff and volunteers.

Bridget Brook