

PARISH OF PLUMPTON WITH EAST CHILTINGTON CUM NOVINGTON
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING ALL SAINTS CHURCH 4th May 2025

ANNUAL REPORT

The Parish is a charity but exempt from registering with the Charity Commission within the meaning of the Charities Act 1993.

During the year the following served as members of the Parochial Church Council.

Priest in charge	Rev. Anne Dunlop
Churchwardens	Mr Howard Wood Mrs Janice Doran Deputy: Mr David Dawson (until March 2025)
Representative on Deanery Synod	Mr Peter Baker Mrs Kathy Baker Rev. Anne Dunlop
Elected members	Mr Alan Fraser-Harris Mr Eric Gill (deceased) Mrs Janice Doran (Parish Safeguarding Officer) Mrs Angela Spinks Mrs Tina Lambert Mr Robert Doran (Health & Safety) Mr Martyn Long Mrs Liz Meredith-Jones (Secretary)
Ex-officio/Co-opted	Mr Kelvin Speirs (Treasurer) Mrs Carole Nicholson (Assistant Secretary) Mr David Dawson (Deputy Church Warden, Electoral Roll Officer to April 2025)

Membership of the PCC is determined under the Church Representation Rules and consists of the Priest in Charge/Incumbent, Churchwardens/Deputies, members of the Deanery/Diocesan/General Synod, and members of the Church who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) and co-opted members voted on by the PCC. The number of lay members on the PCC is governed by the number on the Electoral Roll which in this year was nine.

Members are encouraged to stand for election to the PCC and we try to ensure a balance of skills and experience where possible.

The primary objective of the PCC of Plumpton with East Chilton cum Novington is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as expounded in the doctrines and practices of the Church according to the usage of the Church of England. The PCC has the responsibility for the care of the buildings. They also work with the Priest in Charge/Incumbent, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

A service of Holy Communion is held every Sunday in the Parish at All Saints and on occasion during the year at East Chilton and St Michael and All Angels. Additional services are held at Easter (The

Triduum) and at Christmas as appropriate. A service of Compline is held nightly via ZOOM. A midweek service of Holy Communion is held on Tuesday at 11.30 a.m.

There were fifty-six on the Electoral Roll in 2024, with the October count averaging thirty. There were no marriages, one baptism, nine funerals (five burials, three interments of ashes) during the year.

The PCC met twelve times during the year; Finance and Safeguarding are Standing Items.

ANNUAL REPORT – Rev Anne Dunlop

I wish to thank all of you for the many ways you have contributed to the work and mission of the Church during the year. We have achieved a lot, and the church is growing not just in numbers but also in our faith and commitment to being disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our services.

Our worship together each Sunday is the expression of the Body of Christ in this place. Gathering together builds friendships, forms networks and develops ideas. We each have a part to play and something to offer. My thanks to those of you who lead the prayers, read the lessons, welcome, provide transport, and refreshments afterwards. Thank you for your commitment, I know that you put a lot of preparation into what you do.

The choir has been a significant addition to our services and my thanks to Geoff and Angela Spinks and Judith Miller for maintaining this work. People from within the Parish of Plumpton and Offham have joined together to sing at the services on occasions, along with others from within the local community. We look forward to a regular inclusion of the choir in our services and welcome other singers who may wish to join. My grateful thanks to Judith Miller who plays the organ for us almost every Sunday in the year and at many other occasions, and to Liz Meredith-Jones and Geoff Spinks who cover as needed.

We have a quiet, reflective mid-week service of Holy Communion at 11.30 a.m. on Tuesdays. Compline is said nightly via ZOOM. Our service of Remembrance was well attended as was the later service at the Polish War Memorial. The church continues to be open daily. I have continued my engagement with the schools as a Skylark Foundation Governor and undertaken with others, inspections of the schools during the year, looking at quality of education.

Developing Faith

Many of you continue to engage with daily reading notes and I am sure, attest to how this has helped promote the understanding of what we believe and a growing familiarity with the scriptures. There have been regular bible study courses open to the congregation and others during the course of the year.

Other developments

During the year, the sale of the glebe land was completed. The PCC received £30,000 from the sale and the new Rectory. I moved into the new Rectory in December 2024. The Diocese licence for me as Priest in Charge has been extended to November 2027.

The Churchwarden report will detail the work done in the churches and surrounds more fully. Briefly, the sound system at All Saints was replaced with upgraded equipment and an extra speaker for the chancel area and the addition of T loop system (financed by the church). The individual microphones

were updated to headsets. My thanks to Nick Satchell who managed this work which was funded from the Millennium Fund monies.

The purchase, funded by members of the congregation, of new kneelers at the altar rail has enhanced the building. We continue to be a Fairtrade Church in our purchasing as much as is possible. During the year we replaced the old cupboard and wardrobe in the vestry with purpose-built units. We continue to investigate alternative heating installations in the church. We have maintained our Diocesan contribution (Parish Share) which was £14,400 in 2024, £1779 from weddings and funerals (2023 paid in arrears).

The churchwardens will address the buildings and land more fully, but at this point I would like to express my thanks to Peter Woodhouse for the cheerful willingness he offers us in fixing just about everything that needs fixing in and around the church.

Our events

During the year we hosted Harvest Festival at the village hall and at the College. We had our usual 'refreshment' stand at the College Open Day. In November we arranged the Springs Dance company's production of The Journey of the Magi in the village hall which was well attended. My thanks to Carole Nicholson, Kathy and Peter Baker who managed the booking, those of you who hosted the dancers and others who helped on the day. My thanks to Sharon Vaisey who hosted two 'Cheese and Wine' events to raise money for the upkeep of East Chiltington. Our Harvest services both at the church and at the college were a great success and our thanks to Carole Nicholson for managing the village event and Tina Lambert for overseeing the Open Day refreshments at the College.

Tuesday Lunch

In many ways the congregation contributes to the life of the church and its place within the village of Plumpton. The Tuesday Lunch, now in its fourth year continues its regular attendance of around thirty. It is much appreciated as a focus for developing friendships and socialising, as much as it is for its delicious meals. This year we have welcomed new members to our teams which work in a five-week rotation. These are all volunteers, and I am very appreciative of their considerable commitment and dedication to this work.

Jesus spoke a lot about hospitality; it is a human need. In a teaching he said "I was a stranger, and you welcomed me..." with the idea that what we do for others in his name is as to him. Those attending are not always strangers to one another, although we do welcome new people, but many live on their own and the Tuesday Lunch 'gets them out of the house' to meet friends.

Thursday Pop up Café

In a similar way, the Thursday 'Pop in Café' evolved as a response to providing a warm space over the winter months. It has grown with a regular group averaging about sixteen each Thursday. This It is run by people from the village and my thanks to Paul Mitchell, Jo and Nick Hale and others for their commitment to this project.

Plumpton College

Our work at Plumpton College has continued to develop and I am grateful to the Principal, Jeremy Kerswell, and his team for facilitating this. Each Wednesday during term time we open St Michael as a 'Reflective Space' and a team of volunteers, mostly from the church, along with others are there in the

afternoon when the students have a general 'enrichment period' – an opportunity to engage with clubs and other interests. During this time, students can visit the church and have someone to talk with. My thanks to all who volunteer to be part of this. This is a significant engagement with the students, and I acknowledge the consistent commitment of the team of volunteers

It has also been my privilege to take part in the College service to mark Remembrance Day. This year it was with sadness as the star of this event has always been Eric Gill. Eric always read the Kohima Epitaph but not before he has explained to the young people just what it meant. Many students have stopped behind to speak with him. Eric died this year, and his funeral was a notable event with members of the Royal British Legion in attendance and a collection made for this charity. We are grateful for the many ways in which Eric contributed to the PCC and his always entertaining presence. Whilst noting the death of Eric Gill, I must also reflect on the death of Rosalie Sinclair whose tireless and positive involvement in the church over many years was a gift. Her legacy to us are the banners in the church and a beautiful altar frontal. They are both very much missed.

Our life together

So many of you give in various ways to make our church and its services welcoming.

My thanks to those who serve at the altar and those who read and lead the intercessions, provide transport, welcome people, and serve the refreshments after the service. Those who clean the church, arrange the flowers, and untangle the toy corner. To Kate Gold who manages the flower borders and Angela and Geoff Spinks who look after the flowerpots. All this makes our church pleasant to attend and visit. The church is opened faithfully by David Dawson every day to make this possible.

On behalf of the church, my thanks to all the volunteers from the village who help clear the churchyard each Autumn.

More generally my thanks to the churchwardens for their help and support which I greatly value. David Dawson for managing the Electoral Roll revision. David has stepped down from Deputy Warden and Electoral Roll officer this year and the PCC note their thanks for his contribution. To Carole Nicholson and Liz Meredith-Jones who between them use excellent administrative skills in the responsibility of the PCC secretarial post. My thanks to Kelvin Speirs as Treasurer and Kate Gold for their advice and help in dealing with our finances. To Janice and Bob Doran who in addition to meticulously managing rotas, oversee our health and safety and safeguarding. To Judith Miller and Geoff Spinks and the choir for faithfully enhancing our worship. So many people help -in all that you do, you all make it what it is.

Looking forward

I understand the Diocesan plan remains for Plumpton and Hamsey to become a United Benefice. During the year we have had opportunity to join together for services, Easter, and Christmas. I hope that this engagement will increase over time.

This year has been positive as we continue to develop as a community within the village. This reflects our necessity to be missional and to engage with our community, particularly important as new housing will bring challenges but also opportunities.

The last two years have enabled us to address many practical and administrative issues. This is behind us now, so our focus must be looking forward.

APCM 28425

So, I encourage you as I do every year. The living water that Jesus Christ gives us is not to be held inside but to outflow to those around. Begin to be sensitive to opportunities among the people you know. Ask God to help you share the joy and the love, the forgiveness and healing – the Gospel. Hear again the words of Jesus “You are to be my witnesses...”. May God give his blessing.

Rev Anne Dunlop

Priest in Charge Parish of Plumpton and East Chiltington cum Novington

SAFEGUARDING –Janice Doran Parish Safeguarding Officer

There have been no incidents concerning safeguarding in the last year and risks have been closely monitored.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024 – Kelvin Speirs, Treasurer

Parochial Church Council of Plumpton & East Chiltington
 Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2024

General Fund Receipts & Payments**Receipts**

	2024	2023
Free Will Offering	17341	16051
Tax Credits	3870	3736
Donations & Legacies	5785	6156
Fund Raising	8195	8051
Interest	441	444
Weddings/Funerals	4774	5418
Annexe	3687	3854
Appeals	7630	
Grebe Land Sale	30000	
Miscellaneous	<u>247</u>	<u>125</u>
	81970	43835

Expenses

Diocese	16179	17222
Utilities	13957	15473
Repairs/Maintenance	18046	10241
Church Yard	2191	154
Bank Charges	77	105
Insurance	3860	3827
Parish Expenses	3000	1358
Annexe	7049	6063
Miscellaneous	5	194
Donations	1331	1262
Fund Raising	<u>853</u>	<u>218</u>
	66548	56117

Excess of Receipts over payments	15422	(12282)
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Bank Account 1/1/2024	26480	38762
Bank Account 31/12/2024	41902	26480

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I have examined the Financial Statements and the Other Funds Accounts, other relevant records and the supporting books and invoices of the Parochial Church Council of Plumpton and East Chilton for the year ended 31 December 2024. In my opinion the Financial Statements present fairly the activities for the financial year ended 31 December 2024.

Signed MD Gardiner 3 April 2024

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT - Howard Wood, Janice Doran

All Saints Plumpton Green

In late April 2024 Polegate roofing completed the refurbishment and partial replacement of the cast iron guttering and down pipes and at the same time replaced broken and in some cases missing tiles on the north facing roof. This work had been outstanding for a number of years due in part to Covid and a lack of available funds. The costs were £12,426. The annual servicing and replacement of fire extinguishers took place in all three churches and in the church annex in May 2024. A smart meter has been fitted at All Saints with the need to keep an eye on increasing costs. New altar rail kneelers were purchased with generous donations from church members in July.

Nick Satchell fitted a new PA system and hearing loop in the church with new speakers and head mikes and we thank him for his time and expertise. This was funded by a grant from the remains of the Plumpton Millenium fund in July 2024. The old boiler room below the vestry continues to flood but a submersible sump pump has been purchased and is soon to be wired in, making the removal of flood waters automatic. Our thanks to Mike Middleton who has carried out works to try to make our two storage shed rooves waterproof.

New storage cupboards have been fitted in the vestry by Nick Heath and the older furniture moved on.

Peter Woodhouse fitted a booster to support our Wi-Fi in the church and continues to offer support with the SumUp machine which has not worked well or consistently.

A Clavinova keyboard has been along with a carrying case providing flexibility of use in different locations and as a back up to our church organs. Thanks to Geoff Spinks and Judith Miller for your exhaustive research, resulting in an excellent choice.

A small group has spent a great deal of time, work and research to address our church heating over recent months. The result will be the installation of ten modern infra-red heaters June 2025 ready for winter.

Our Quinquennial inspection was carried out by architect Tim Wells on Thursday 10th April 2025. Whilst we await his detailed report he did comment positively about the number of repairs and improvements which completed in the last 5 years. There were no major issues to report.

I wish to thank all the villagers who have taken part in graveyard tidy ups and to David Richards who carried out mowing duties during my long holiday last year. I would particularly like to thank Wells Close residents David Stokes and David Hibbard who keep the newer grave area looking so tidy. We have had some problems in the graveyard with glass vessels and long dead plants in pots lying around, and the far eastern end is awaiting complete clearing and levelling. Mole hills and very wet conditions have made access difficult at times this winter.

St Michael and All Angels Plumpton Grade 1 Listed and on Heritage at risk Register

The Quinquennial inspection of this church took place in December 2024 by architect Jonathan Cerowski. His report is detailed and reflects the amount of maintenance required and the amount of funds required for its future to be secured.

He has also produced a concept design for internal works which would enable the building to be used as a lecture theatre by Plumpton College. After discussion the PCC decided that without all the works necessary to overcome the dampness identified in the Diocesan advisory committee report, being examined and fully costed we would not be able to justify any decision about coming to a legally binding decision over the joint use of St Michael and the DAC were unlikely to grant a faculty without the dampness being sorted. We await those costings from the architect.

Sadly several instances of vandalism have been committed in the church over recent months mainly affecting the organ. Mike Middleton has fitted a protective lid which has been tampered with. The college authorities are supportive and have supplied fan heaters and padlocks for the tower door but a change of locks on the main door may be required. The college continues to manage the church grounds in an environmentally favourable manner.

East Chiltington Church Grade 2 Listed

The Quinquennial inspection of the church will take place on Thursday 15th May 2025 by architect Tim Wells. In preparation MPS electrics have just carried out a full EICR. This test assesses the safety and condition of a buildings electrical installation to ensure they are safe and compliant with regulations. It involves a thorough inspection of the wiring, sockets, consumer units and other fixed electrical parts. In addition we are seeking quotations for fitting a lightening conductor initially for the church tower. (The church has never had one!)

Subsequent to my report last year relating to problems with rotting oak beams in the bell tower, we called in the services of our architect and a structural engineer. At the same time the church had to be closed for safety reasons as roof tiles on the porch were slipping. The church remains closed although the porch has been re-felted and tiled after a list B application for a faculty, (planning permission) was granted by the Archdeacon.

The structural engineer required scaffolding to be erected in the church tower and for the ceiling below the oak frame to be removed for closer inspection. We had to apply for an interim faculty for this work and then a confirmatory faculty from the consistory court to carry out repairs involving removing existing rotting timbers, replacing them with well-seasoned oak joists supported by new stainless-steel angles bolted to the tower walls. This work is ongoing with quotations currently being sought.

The church insurers are taking a keen interest in the process, and we are keeping them informed. Much of the work to date has been undertaken by local firms, including the scaffolding and I am indebted to Stephen Israel for his contacts and for the positive interest coming from a group of possible financial supporters of East Chiltington church.

I am grateful to Janice Doran for her support in these matters and for taking more responsibility for East Chiltington church. Some electrical work has taken place meaning that the porch and the lychgate are well lit and the emergency lighting is also functional. I would like to thank James Otway and Robin Burberry for their works to maintain the graveyard and the field car parking areas and for the additional volunteers who turn out on occasion.

Church Annex

Safeguards were fitted to the electric heaters for safety reasons, but which also prevent adjustments made by hirers! The external timbers of the annex need a paint this summer and we should consider painting the internal walls at some point soon. However costs for the annex are up and takings are down. Discussions are taking place about the entrance to the annex car park and whether it should be widened. The warning posts and plant containers continue to be damaged.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT – Robert Doran

There have been no reported incidents. Help for infirm and elderly when mounting and dismounting the chancel steps to read or receive communion is given. Visitors to the churchyard now have advisory notices to take care of the uneven surface. The new radiators in the Annex have wire covers to prevent burns. Dogs are now not allowed in the annex, except on a short lead. The moving of chairs and tables after the Tuesday lunch is controlled to prevent accidents. We continue to analyse safety for all our visitors at our churches.

ELECTORAL ROLL – David Dawson

This is the year when the Electoral Roll is revised. My thanks to David Dawson for this work. The roll now stands at 55. Over fifty means our PCC number of lay members is nine.

DEANERY SYNOD – Kathy Baker, Peter Baker, Rev Anne Dunlop

The Deanery Synod is the local focus of the Church of England in the Deanery of Brighton and Lewes. It comprises elected members from the congregation and the clergy and meets several times during the year as a source of information and support for the parishes. Meetings during the year included:

- Presentation by the Friends of Chichester Cathedral which provides grants for the Cathedral with a focus on cultural events.
- Examples and experience of Pastoral Workers.
- Annual meeting which includes Treasurers regarding Diocesan finances.
- Information to raise awareness of modern-day slavery and safeguarding generally within the parishes.
- A service with Bishop Will celebrating 1700 anniversary of the Nicene Creed and 950 years of this Diocese.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE EVENTS

During 2024 the PCC Social Committee was involved with:

- Open day at Plumpton College
- Harvest Festival St Michaels
- Harvest Festival All Saints
- Production of Journey of the Magi
- Carol Service St Michael in the College
- Two 'Cheese and Wine' fund raising events
- Tuesday Lunches
- Thursday Pop in Cafe

WEB SITE – Rev Anne Dunlop

During the year the website is kept up to date.

Rev Anne Dunlop, PCC Parish of Plumpton 4th May 2025