

## All Saints Church, Milton Keynes Village - Churchwardens Report 2025- 2026

It has been a full and encouraging year at All Saints. God is blessing us with continued growth and diversity in church attendance at services, groups and activities throughout the week. Careful planning by Matt and support from a team of dedicated ministers has been nurtured and was particularly appreciated during Matt's three-month sabbatical, continuing throughout the year. Our Curate Rev Alison has worked enthusiastically and closely as part of this team to support the growing initiatives at All Saints. We have continued to hold a morning service each Sunday and celebrate holy communion twice a month with worship led by a committed team. Births, deaths and marriages have been marked by appropriate life services. Particularly poignant this year 2026 have been the recent funeral services for members of our own congregation.

In support of those who cannot attend church, we are now supplementing the pre-recorded online service with an audio recording of the key parts of the Sunday morning worship, available on the website, usually by Sunday evening.

Some work has been done on the church website to maintain a more real-time presence, with new items appearing regularly and old items being removed after events have passed. The website is an important external showcase for our community, and it is important that it appears current and active.

Pat and Barny have been meeting regularly with Roger and Jonathan the Churchwardens at St Mary's Wavendon under Matt's guidance to ensure continuity and smooth running of church matters especially during Matt's three-month sabbatical. Managing a combined email account significantly eased the communication between areas of the Parish at this time. This is being maintained to assist in this first point of contact. This report predominantly covers the main areas of maintenance and practical developments in All Saints church building and churchyard over the last year plus challenges for future projects. Two significant areas of focus have been the quinquennial inspection and reordering of the vestry.

<p><b>Quinquennial Inspection, Report, tenders and pre contract meeting</b></p>	<p>We are required to have a professional inspection of the church and churchyard undertaken every five years. The latest was in April 2025. Unsurprisingly for a building over 700 years old, there are always works arising, those identified in the latest inspection being estimated at around £30,000.</p> <p>Shortly after receiving the report, Pat and Barny met with the architects to prioritise the works and in October, we agreed a scope of the highest priority items, plus those with lower priorities where it was most economic to complete them at the same time.</p>	
<p><b>Works completed</b></p>	<p>The work was tendered to three suppliers, and we held a pre-start meeting with the successful tenderer in November, with the work scheduled for January. This was timely as in December, one of the areas of ceiling plaster identified for repair fell into the nave.</p> <p>As well as the ceiling repairs, the work included external repairs to buttresses and the top of the tower plus some roof repairs.</p> <p>We are fortunate to have such a highly decorated church, but the centuries continue to take their toll on the intricate stonework, especially of the windows. We have opted for full stone replacement rather than cement repairs, which whilst more expensive, will last hundreds of years longer, preserving the beauty of the building for future generations.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the Government closed their support scheme for historic places of worship early and so we are unable to recover the VAT on the cost of the works. In the absence of this, the total cost was around £12,000. This was funded from our Buildings Fund but has left us with no reserves for building emergencies or to complete the remaining, lower priority works identified in the architect's inspection.</p> <p>Whilst gaining access for machinery, the churchyard wall was damaged by the contractor. This was swiftly repaired at their expense.</p>	

<p><b>September to November Reordering of vestry</b></p>	<p>In October 2025 Pat and Barny gathered a team to work together to remove an old cupboard from the vestry and replace with 2 sets of storage racking for church and children’s church related items. The damaged filing cabinet was removed and recycled, and contents of filing cabinets tidied. An area is now dedicated to use by children’s church with table, seating and storage.</p> <p>This is encouraging the children’s group leaders to plan and organise the sessions with the children more effectively and easily.</p> <p>The whole area was cleared again in January to enable the tiled floor to be cleaned by the contractors – some tiling repaired.</p>	
<p><b>Audio upgrade phase 3 – mics 2025-26</b></p>	<p>We have recently completed the last of three major phases in our multi-year upgrade plan for the church audio system. Having previously upgraded the speakers and the mixer, this last phase was to install a new, professional grade wireless microphone system. Testing over Christmas confirmed our choice of system and whilst we are still trialling choices of some individual components, and awaiting diocesan permission to permanently install the antennas, the majority of the installation is complete.</p> <p>As well as improving speech quality, the new system will provide better radio coverage, meaning the microphones can be used at the back of church for baptisms and café church without cutting out.</p> <p>We are grateful to Broughton Trust for providing a grant to support some of the purchase cost.</p>	
<p><b>Churchyard path August September</b></p>	<p>The churchyard path edges have been clearly defined in preparation for addition of gravel after the quinquennial repair works - by kind donation of church member. Weeding of path is being maintained.</p>	
<p><b>October 2025 January 2026</b></p>	<p>Lightning conductor inspection completed. Annual fire extinguisher and portable appliance testing completed.</p>	

**Other works:**

- **Routine maintenance and improvements –**

Maintenance has continued with the dedicated work of stewards and the mowing team to ensure the building and churchyard are in good order. Thanks to Wayne, Paul and Barny for their work with repairs and maintenance in the church building. The annual high-level cleaning was completed on 11<sup>th</sup> August. Brian has effectively continued to coordinate the churchyard mowing rota encouraging new volunteers to join the team this year. Special thanks also to David Monk for his help with the weekly refuse arrangements of wheelie bin collections and funding provision of additional green bins.

**Welcoming and supporting:**

- **Welcoming NHS walking groups** for refreshments mid-week continues as a regular part of supporting our community. A team of volunteers in church supply hot drinks, cake and biscuits to 40-60 walking visitors as they end their exercise session. A further £993 for the Building Fund was raised in 2025 from donations.
- **Our Dorcas group** continues to meet fortnightly knitting blankets for The Milton Keynes Hospital Charity – cancer care ward. New participants always welcome.
- **Ponderings in the Pub** – The group continues to meet fortnightly and continues to grow in popularity. We are grateful to Rev. Philip for his leadership and insight. Each session is accompanied by a handout and frequently a map to give context and guidance to the discussion, which is often wide ranging!



- **The Bell ringing team** is a regular part of the weekly activities in church with regular training and practice increasing their part in celebrating worship now ringing the first Sunday of the month. A team for maintenance cares for the bells and visiting ringers are hosted regularly.
- **Children's church** led by a dedicated team and **'Voices of Joy' an enthusiastic Children's choir** encourage growth and support in the church,
- **Big Basics** is a great new initiative run from All Saints, starting in September 2025, it is thriving and focusses on faith with the 14-18year olds across the Parish.
- **Sunday Social** is an informal meet up in The Swan after the service on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month. It is completely without organisation, just an opportunity for a social catch up for anyone who fancies it.
- **Concrete Calves Wind Band continue** to meet each week in church as a not-for-profit community group. They are a place for beginner woodwind players to come together and share in the joy of making music as part of a group. Their rehearsals culminate in concerts throughout Milton Keynes to raise funds for selected charities. Summer and Christmas concerts have successfully performed this year in Church and are a welcome part of our community involvement. Celebrating their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025 they donated £196 from the proceeds of the summer concert to the church especially towards building repairs.
- **Musica Charity Choir MK** hosted a concert in church to raise funds for Alzheimer's Society and MK Hospital Charity on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May inviting our local community to join together to support these special causes.

**Practical projects ahead:**

- **We are looking to improve the facilities for the provision of refreshments in church.**

A simple servery at the back of the church providing heating for water, washing up facilities and storage to make the preparation, serving and clearing of refreshments safer, more accessible, simpler and easier to manage. We are indebted to our team of volunteers, and we would like to make life easier for them. Layout and costings to be further assessed. £1350 raised in 2025 for the Building Fund from walkers' donations, church refreshment donations and coffee morning donations. Plus a further £1500 donations for this project to date.

For reassurance and legislative compliance there is confirmation of the maintenance of the formal areas required recorded in the documents below:

- the terrier – a list of land belonging to the church
- the inventory – a list of all the items belonging to the church,
- the logbook – a detailed record of all the alterations, additions and repairs carried out in relation to the church, its land and its contents.

These have all been maintained to ensure the day-to-day functioning of the Church and are available as hard copies in the church.

Our Vision continues to enthuse and motivate our stewards and church family to extend our pastoral work, to invite, nourish, refresh and adventure - prayerfully and with energy with our community and throughout this ever-growing parish of Milton Keynes - a city for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**Patricia Sawyer    Barney Daley                      Churchwardens                      March 2026**