

The Ecclesiastical Parish of St Paul's Egham Hythe



Annual Report and Financial Accounts
of the Parochial Church Council
for the year ended 31st December 2023

St Paul's Egham Hythe Parochial Church Council

Parish Church:

St Paul's Egham Hythe
in the Runnymede Deanery
Diocese of Guildford

Address:

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Incumbent:

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email: vicar@speh.org.uk

Bank:

The Co-operative Bank,
PO Box 250, Delf House, Southway, Skelmersdale, WN8 6WT
Account Name: St Paul's Church, Egham Hythe
Sort Code 08-92-99 Account No: 67215168

Independent Examiner:

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"The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Paul, Egham Hythe" has been on the Register of Charities as a separate entity since 1st July 2019, registration number 1184186. Members of the PCC are trustees of the charity.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, Revd Rosemary Hoad, in "promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical". The church building and hall are located at St Paul's Church, Thorpe Road, Staines TW18 3HJ. The accounts relate to the financial year January 2023 to December 2023.

Charity Registration Number: 1184186

Membership of the PCC

The membership is partly ex-officio and partly elected at the Annual General Meeting in accordance with Church Representation Rules. PCC members are usually elected for a three-year term of office. Membership from the APCM in April 2023 was as follows:

Vicar/Chair of PCC	Revd Rosemary Hoad
Curate	Revd Josh Cleaver (from July 2022)
Associate Clergy	Revd Sue Loveday Revd Janet Franck (until June 2023)
Diocesan Synod	Revd Rosemary Hoad (<i>term expires 2024</i>) Steve Baynes (<i>term expires 2024</i>)
Deanery Synod	Steve Baynes (<i>re-elected - term expires 2026</i>) Graham Rule (<i>appointed July 23 term expires 2026</i>)
Churchwardens	Diane Oliver Elizabeth Roshier
PCC Members	Selwyn Boothe (<i>term expires 2024</i>) Victoria Diplock (<i>term expires 2025</i>) Jackie McGovern (<i>term expires 2024</i>) Christine Oxenham (<i>term expires 2024</i>) Emma Sterry (Treasurer) (<i>term expires 2026</i>) Nicola Rule (<i>term expires 2026</i>)

The following appointments were made by the PCC:

Lay Vice-Chair of PCC: Steve Baynes

Treasurer: Emma Sterry

PCC Secretary: minutes - vacant (Diane Oliver office)

Safeguarding Officer: Alison Hawkins

DBS Evidence Checker: Diane Oliver

Electoral Roll Officer: Christine Oxenham

Foreword (Revd Rosemary Hoad, Vicar)

There's so much to be thankful for as we look back at 2023, and I hope as you read this report you get a flavour of the ways in which St Paul's seeks to serve God and be a blessing in Egham Hythe. The Open Space activities during the week have continued to grow and reach out more widely into the community and the number of children and young people we are reaching is increasing. We've made some progress with the plans for the improvement of the facilities and should shortly be able to start to apply for the relevant grants. Our day-to-day financial challenges have been met once again, albeit close to the wire. I'm so grateful to the small team including my clergy colleagues, wonderful wardens and others who have given so sacrificially to the ministry of St Paul's, investing in the work of the kingdom in this place. We're touching people's lives with the love of God and it's bearing fruit. It's exciting to see what is possible, and we now need a wider number of people to catch the vision and invest their time and talents to enable this ministry to continue to grow and flourish. Please pray with me for God to raise up more people from our church and community to share in this amazing journey.

*Jesus said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few;
³⁸ therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.'
(Matthew 9: 37-38)*

Overview of 2023 (Revd Rosemary Hoad)

In 2023 our Open Space weekday activities got more gloriously messy, with a lot more children and young people around. Stepping Stones has continued to flourish, now attracting up to 35 children each week, along with their parents or carers. Messy Church moved from occasional gatherings to a monthly offering and is starting to build a good core. Youth space evolved and as it went into its second year in the autumn, and alongside the new year 7s some older students have started to be involved as mentors. Magna Carta students have also volunteered with the church as part of their Duke of Edinburgh scheme, the GCSE music group staged a concert in church, and the choir supported the Christmas Tree Festival. The Easter Activity weeks are a highlight of the work we do with Thorpe Lea and The Hythe primary schools, alongside a number of other activities during the year. A monthly Godly Play group has been established on Sunday mornings during the 10am service, and this is starting to bring more families along to Sunday services.

Serving the most vulnerable in our community has continued to be a priority, with the Friday Food Kitchen continuing to take out meals to around 90 people each week. In November we also began to host the Runnymede Foodbank, working together with the Vineyard Church. We've continued to be a Warm Hub at particular points during the week, and Tea and Chat offers a friendly welcome to all. We keep our regular activities free, encouraging those who are able to make donations so that this can continue. In a difficult climate we are thankful that we have again been able to meet our financial commitments, though this remains a challenge.

The Open Space facilities project has moved forward a little with the proposals now awaiting planning consent from the Borough and Diocese. Once this is in place the grant applications to Your Fund Surrey and others can be submitted. It has been a lot of work getting to this stage, and particular thanks to Sue Loveday for her work on this. There's a long way to go – please continue to pray for the project.

Membership (Christine Oxenham)

At the APCM in April 2023 there were 81 members on the church Electoral Roll (79 in 2022). This was made up of 55 residents in the parish (59 in 22) and 26 non-residents (20 in 22). The next complete revision of the Electoral Roll will be in 2025.

Church Development Plan and Parish Vision

“All are welcome at St Paul’s. You will find a warm, safe, open space where you are free to watch or join in, to receive or to give, to pass through or to belong. On Sundays we worship with joy, refuelling the community for the week ahead”.

The PCC regularly review and update our Church Development Plan, and the latest version is available in church or from the parish office. In 2023 the details of our Church Development Plan were reviewed with the Archdeacon and others as part of the Parish Needs Process and Archdeacon’s Visitation. Our vision to improve the Open Space facilities is woven into each area of the plan.

The three core areas of the Church Development Plan are:

- Faith and Worship
- Youth and Children
- Hospitality

These connect with the Guildford Diocesan transforming church/transforming lives vision focus on: Growing Disciples, Growing Diversity and Growing Community. More information about that is available on the Diocesan website:

<https://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/vision-and-strategy/>



Reflections on 2023 (with thanks to a number of contributors)

The following short reflections on aspects of ministry in 2023, written by a variety of people, have been broadly grouped into our three core areas from the parish vision.

Faith and Worship

Baptism: (Josh Cleaver)

We’ve had 7 baptisms in 2023, all children. People ask to have their children baptised for all sorts of reasons and come at the occasion from many different angles. Each case presents an opportunity to demonstrate God’s hospitality and extend an invitation to belong and it is one of the most heartening experiences to see parents and children at Stepping Stones and Messy Church who have accepted that invitation. If you are thinking about Baptism for yourself or for children, speak to one of the clergy or email office@speh.org.uk.

Curate: (Josh Cleaver)

Having looked through some old emails, it turns out that I am writing this near enough 2 years to the day since I first travelled down from Oxford to St Paul’s to meet Rosie, Liz and Di to explore the possibility of joining as curate. This simultaneously feels both years ago

and as if it was only yesterday. In a similar sense, my priesting in summer 2023 felt both like the closing act on a chapter which began 5 years previously in Ukraine and brought us back to the UK via a couple of years in Moscow, as well as a beginning of something new and unknown. Having been with you for 18 months, I feel I am now able to see more clearly how St Paul's impacts the community and the beautiful ways in which we are joining in with God's mission to help others belong.

Sunday Services

Our 10am Sunday service has welcomed some new people including children (particularly on the Godly Play week). We seek to include all ages, and resources are also available for families to use in church. Zoom also makes the service accessible and communal for a number of people who wouldn't otherwise be able to attend. Others catch up on YouTube during the week. Much of our numerical growth in on-site worship has been during the week through Messy Church and Stepping Stones, which makes our regular Sunday worship and prayer for that outreach all the more important. It is good to see a number of people taking new responsibilities, though there is room for more! Please pray for that growth in commitment which can renew our own faith journey at the same time as serving God and his mission in Egham Hythe.

Readers and Intercessors: *(Ben Niblett)*

This year our services were enriched by hearing from more people and a bigger range of voices leading our prayers and reading our bible passages. Many thanks to all our readers and intercessors - and more are welcome.

Music at St Paul's: *(Becky Brent and Alison Hawkins)*

Music continues to be an integral part of worship at St Paul's. We have continued to build on the range of music and those who are involved. Jamie has led our worship for many of our services, on both organ and piano, and Alison and others have played from time to time. This year, the choir from Royal Holloway have also performed some amazing pieces and for the second year running a Christmas choir rehearsed and performed at the 'Carols by candlelight' service. It was all the more special because of the coming together of a number of members of the congregation to sing. We are thankful for all they did to make this happen.

Becky and the music group are slowly getting back to playing a few songs within services and the intent is that the choir will be involved in more events and that the music group will participate on a more regular basis. We are always keen to have more people involved in the music, so if you would like to be involved please get in touch.

Tech Team: *(Chris Williams)*

I am a fairly new member of a small tech team under the leadership of Steve Baynes and we assist in the use of audio-visual aids at St Paul's. This ranges from enabling everyone to hear in Church during services including when there are choirs or the music group. Occasionally we will add material on the big screen TVs for people to see. We also video services and stream them on YouTube and Zoom so people not able to attend Church for any reason can still watch and be part of the service - this is probably the most satisfying part of the role for me.

Zoom Church: *(Clare Quarman and Kate Nibblet)*

We continue connecting to Sunday worship at St Paul's with a regular attendance of around 8 adults and children, and others from the congregation joining us from time to time. We are heartened by the love and support the group have shown each other this year through difficult life events, particularly as the year began and ended with the sad passings of Karen and Cliff. The kids love sharing their creative efforts with the group, and we all enjoy it when people in church drop into the office for an after-service chat.

Wednesday bible study and reflection group: *(Richard Gilbert)*

This year's Bible study has been exhilarating, educational and challenging. We have read and reflected on eight Psalms, using Paula Gooder's book "Journalling the Psalms", had a six session Lent course "Natural Evangelism" by J John and a truly wonderful reflection on "The Magnificat" by Rosie Hoad. All of our attending group members have joined in with detailing their thoughts, experiences and beliefs. In 2024 we have started a six session "Pilgrim" course on The Lord's Prayer. All are welcome and it would be good to see new members.

Word for the week: *(Clare Quarman)*

Word of the Week is a little weekly dose of spiritual nourishment in your pocket! Using a dedicated WhatsApp group, Josh has led us on a fascinating exploration of sources this year, ranging from Old Testament texts to 20th century stories. Members have generously shared their thoughts, experiences and questions each week and our conversations have delved into baptism, suffering, calling, free will, the nature and variety of prayer, and much more. It has been a pleasure to take part in and to learn from one another.

Mothers' Union *(Ann Hawkes)*

St Paul's currently has 10 members of the Mothers' Union and would welcome others who would like to join. Membership is open to all who are baptised (men as well as women, and whether or not you have children). The Mothers' Union promotes the well-being of families worldwide by developing prayer and spiritual growth and by practical action to improve conditions for families. In July we hosted the Deanery Bring and Share Lunch.

Youth and Children

Stepping Stones

'A safe space to play', 'a welcoming space with welcoming people', 'fun and friendship' are just a handful of quotes from our regular Stepping Stones attendees. This year there has been a real surge in numbers and it is now not uncommon for us to have well in excess of 50 people - children (babies and tots) and carers - on a Thursday morning. For many, Stepping Stones is the first point of contact with St Paul's and it is heartening that the efforts of the team to make the space safe and welcoming are appreciated and reflected in the quotes above. We start with a short Toddler Service with a story, songs and a prayer, then get the ride-ons and toys out and have craft and refreshments.

Messy Church

Last year, we made the decision to put on a monthly Messy Church event. These events are attracting roughly 30 children plus their families and providing fun activities, free food and the chance to hear the gospel. To repeat the theme of belonging, in recent months there

has been a distinct overlap between those who attend Messy Church and our other children's ministries which means we are sometimes seeing certain families in church two or three times a week outside of Sunday worship.

Godly Play *(Nina Cleaver)*

Godly Play is an imaginative approach to spiritual nurture through story, wondering, and play. It has helped children at St Pauls to find new meaning in familiar Bible stories within a peaceful, contemplative and creative environment. In 2023 we started a monthly session for ages 4-14 during the Sunday service, which also enables parents to experience church in a different way, whilst children are happily occupied.

Youth Space

September 2023 marked the paper anniversary of Youth Space and it has taken that amount of time to fully appreciate what this ministry is and does - and also what it isn't and doesn't do. Numerically, not much has shifted and we've maintained a steady attendance rate of between 20-30 young people a week. The real difference this year has been in the depth of relationships and the types of conversations the team are now having with those who come. Highlights of the year so far include:

- The completely random mix of ages of our core attendees (11-16) which completely goes against the sensible planning last summer but is all the better for it.
- Three of our regulars speaking to the community in church at Harvest Festival.
- Slow and steady bridge building with Magna, especially with year 7 and 8 tutors.

Easter Activities and schools

What a privilege it is for us to have every child from Thorpe Lea and Hythe schools (over 600 children) into the church building to explore the wonder of Easter through crafts, activities and stories. It is a great testament to how close we sit to the heart of the community that, despite neither school being 'church schools', we have this opportunity to literally share the gospel of Christ and witness to his resurrection.

This year saw a number of other services and visits with our local schools, ranging from a summer concert, Harvest and Remembrance services, Christingles as well as various Christmas Carol Concerts and involvement at the Christmas Tree Festival.

Uniformed Organisations

It's great to have close links with all the local Uniformed Organisations, and there are three Sunday Parade services in church (Mothering Sunday, Harvest and Remembrance). Rosie continues as chaplain to the ATC and enrolled a number of new cadets at their presentation evening in church.

Hospitality

Tea and Chat

Part of our wider Open Space initiative, Tea and Chat is aimed primarily at the older members of the local community but open to all to meet and make new friends over a cup of something and a piece of cake. Currently we have about 12-15 weekly attendees. The spiritual space of the reflective Communion service that follows is also much appreciated.

Eco Church: *(Kate Niblett)*

The Eco Church group started the year by organising a well-attended community environmental Q&A session with our MP Ben Spencer. It was a challenging and thought provoking evening, and one that has been promised to be repeated in 2024. We continue to strive towards the A Rocha gold eco church award. Our monthly zoom meetings discussion often focussed on the challenges of making our building more eco-friendly, and the opportunities the development plan might present to do this. We continue to try to make the outside space eco-friendly and attractive. The summer sales of home-grown produce raised funds for Tear Fund's appeal for famine relief in East Africa. The Creationtide season in the Autumn was an opportunity to reflect on our stewardship of the natural world and our response to Climate Change.

Food Kitchen

Around 4000 meals were distributed to people's homes from our Friday Food Kitchen during 2023, which shows just how important it is for the local community. The Christmas Lunches were also a great success. Organised by Councillor King and others, and working with a paid chef the project has received welcome support from Runnymede Borough Council and the Stroud Foundation.

Foodbank

From November 2023 St Paul's has become a new venue for the Runnymede Foodbank, and the first one in the evening. St Paul's and Vineyard Church are working together and in October came together for a well-attended training evening. The numbers attending have exceeded the expectations of the Foodbank, and it's meeting a clear need.

Warm Space

St Paul's has for the second year been a warm space over the winter months at specific times during the week, including while the Foodbank is running. This is supported by Surrey County Council.

Hall *(Diane Oliver)*

Our hall is widely used by groups in the community. Most pre-Covid groups are back to normal including Baby Sensory, Brownies, Craft friends, with Sundowners and Surrey Arts on a seasonal basis. The Wednesday Egham Group has moved from meeting in the church to the hall. Runnymede Fine Arts give us a donation to park in the car park one day per month. In addition, Egham Women's Institute have made our hall their regular monthly meeting place after coming temporarily when the Hythe Centre was used as a Vaccination Hub. We also welcomed Bright Lights, a weekly youth group catering for those with additional needs. The Air Training Corps started to meet here twice a week in the summer while their squadron is being renovated. There's no definite end date as yet! Little City became a regular monthly booking. Food Kitchen became permanent weekly fixture with a paid chef and volunteer deliverers. With other one off events and occasional Birthday parties the hall is at comfortable capacity. The church has priority use on Sundays, including for Godly Play and baptism parties, with most other church activities during the week now part of the Open Space in church.

A pricing strategy was agreed that the hourly rate would be the same as the year (ie £23 in 2023) with a set rate of £150 for parties. It was agreed that a paid cleaner had to be

engaged, and I'm very grateful to Trish in taking this on and being flexible to work around bookings. The income from the hall goes some way in enabling the church to meet our financial commitments and support our policy of welcoming everyone to the various church activities free, with donations from those who are able.

Christmas Tree Festival: *(Steve Baynes)*

The 2023 Christmas Tree Festival continued to be a successful way of bringing the community together. Two highlights were on the Thursday with the Stepping Stones Toddler Nativity in the morning, and the Christmas Tea Party with carols from Magna Carta School in the afternoon. The Friday evening event saw two Scouts formally awarded with their Chief Scout's Gold Awards. Over the course of the 4 days over 500 people came into church including over 100 at the Christingle Service on the Sunday afternoon.

Christmas Puddings: *(Christine Oxenham)*

The Christmas Puddings once again proved really popular with all flavours selling well. The Christmas raffle exceeded the previous year for excellent kindly donated prizes and ticket sales. The total raised from the puddings and raffle was £620.30. These funds contributed to the cost of the initial planning application for our open space project.

SP@pub: *(Steve Baynes)*

This monthly event has now settled into a rhythm with a permanent venue at the Thames Side Brewery. Monthly reminder emails are sent out to our congregation database and everyone is welcome to come along and join the 'regulars' in this most relaxed of environments. Dates are displayed on the church website.

Lifts

This is a practical way that we provide support for some members of the church who would struggle to attend services in person, whether for the Thursday Tea and Chat, Sunday 10am services or other ad hoc occasions. It has provided a closer friendship between both the lift givers and the people who are collected. Particular thanks to Barry and Graham for their regular care in this way.

Welcomers *(Christine Oxenham)*

Welcoming on Sunday mornings and assisting at baptisms and weddings is a really good way of getting to know the many people who come to our services. It is really easy and rewarding, helping to make people feel comfortable and at ease, handing out service booklets and notice sheets and recording attendance numbers for church records. If you feel you would like to join our small team of regular welcomers or may just like to have a go one Sunday as a trial, then please do let me know.

Parish Safeguarding Policy Statement

At the PCC meeting held on 3rd May 2023 the PCC of St Paul's Egham Hythe adopted the Church of England "Promoting a Safer Church" Policy Statement, national policies and Practice Guidance approved by the House of Bishops. This policy statement actively underpins all safeguarding work within the church, and details are available on our website: <https://speh.org.uk/safeguarding>

The PCC is committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of everyone within our community, and will ensure that we will

1. Adopt and implement the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy and practice guidance.
2. Promote and publicise the 'Promoting a Safer Church' policy statement and ensure all church officers have access to it.
3. Have a plan in place that sets out, in line with national and local priorities, how the policy will be put into action.
4. Ensure that any person who works with vulnerable groups is aware of and abides by national and local safeguarding guidance.
5. Review the policy regularly to ensure best practice.

"Promoting a Safer Church" sets out the Church of England's commitment to making the church a safer place for all. The Policies and Practice Guidance apply to all Church bodies and officers. All authorised clergy, bishops, archdeacons licensed readers and lay workers, church wardens and PCCs are required by section 5 Clergy Disciplinary Measure to have "due regard" to safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops.

The Policy Statement, Policies, Guidance and Protocols are available to view on the diocesan website at www.cofeguildford.org.uk/safeguardingpolicy

Safeguarding and Inclusion *(Safeguarding Officer Alison Hawkins)*

Roles and responsibilities

- Safeguarding Officer: Alison Hawkins safeguarding@speh.org.uk
- Incumbent: Revd Rosemary Hoad vicar@speh.org.uk
- DBS Coordinator: Diane Oliver office@speh.org.uk
- Risk Assessments: Victoria Diplock
- Diocese: safeguarding@cofeguildford.org.uk 01483 790379 (please note this is a new telephone number from Dec 2023)

Actions taken: There were no safeguarding incidents to report during 2023. There was an issue raised about a Scripture Union booklet available to visiting children from local schools, which was checked with the Diocesan Safeguarding team in responding to this matter.

Some work has been done to improve safeguarding awareness in the younger church users. This includes posters and creating a new section on the website 'safeguarding information for children' where relevant safeguarding info is presented in a more child friendly manner. This is especially important given the increase in activities that are now offered for under 18s. We also marked Safeguarding Sunday in November.

Parish Dashboard: The new Parish Dashboard, set up by the Diocese has proved invaluable in helping us keep abreast of risk assessments, training requirements, role descriptions and person specifications. During the course of the year we were able to work our way up to 93% on the dashboard. A big piece of work in achieving this was to do new risk assessments for all the different activities the church is now involved in, and particular thanks to Victoria Diplock for her work in this area. It is now a requirement that all PCC members as trustees

have to have foundation level training, which is available online. A number of people therefore needed to update their training in 2023, and we're grateful for the effort people have made to learn and comply in this important area.

PCC Report *(Diane Oliver)*

There were seven PCC business meetings in 2023, including two before the APCM in January and March, with two further meetings in 2024 completing the term since the APCM. Every meeting has prayer, safeguarding and finance included. This has been a busy year for the PCC, with the Open Space Facilities Project and grant applications, the Parish Needs process and Archdeacon's Visitation and the new Safeguarding Dashboard adding to the already busy agenda.

The January (18th) and March (8th) meetings before the APCM concentrated on the 2022 report and accounts and beginning to update the Church Development Plan. There were important discussion about grants, including receiving the go ahead to apply for the Your Fund Surrey funding.

The meeting on 3rd May, the first after the APCM, included the appointment of officers and other roles and the annual adoption of the Parish Safeguarding Policy. The Open Space facilities plans were reviewed and the wrap-around glazing revised, awaiting architect's new drawings. The Church Development Plan was reviewed, and progress noted.

On 5th July Graham Rule was appointed as the second Deanery Synod representative, joining Steve Baynes who was elected at the APCM. The Parish Needs process was underway, and the PCC received feedback about the June team meeting with Danny Wignall (our Mission Enabler). The PCC agreed to go forward with the Foodbank joint venture with Vineyard Church. Further progress had also been made with the Open Space Facilities Project, and the Standing Committee agreed the formal agreement with the architects.

The September meeting (6th September) included agreement of the Safeguarding Plan and Dashboard updates. The risk assessments for all the different areas of ministry were circulated. A number of policies were agreed. It was reported that the Foodbank anticipated a start date of 14th November after training in October. It was noted that the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) would be coming for a site visit for the Facilities Project in October. The PCC agreed the costs for the QS, of approximately £1500 plus VAT to be drawn from the Rosewarne bequest rather than grant so as not to delay the process.

The meeting on 4th October included a report and feedback on the Fire Risk Assessment and Policy, and an update on the work that had been done as a result of the visit. There was also a report about the very positive Archdeacon's visitation on 20th September. With regard to the Facilities Project the PCC formally agreed to progress the project (based on amendments to plan C) to Faculty application. Various documents would be needed. The autumn activities and Christmas Tree Festival were discussed.

At the 22nd November meeting there was feedback about our first Safeguarding Sunday which had just been held (19th November). The Facilities Project amendments were

complete and ready to apply for planning permission. There was an update on the Church Development Plan progress.

Church Fabric (*Diane Oliver*)

- January: Internal light fitting in undercroft replaced with LED sealed unit. Hall top cupboards x 2 removed to enable tall freezer installation for Food Kitchen.
- February: Eco / PCC resolution to replace all lighting in hall and church to LED commences. Grant received from Surrey County Council and donations from congregation members which covered majority of costs. LED replacement in Hall of Downlights x 18; update Emergency / Fire Exit Lighting. Smoke and Heat Alarms fitted at same time.
- March: LED replacement in Church, specifically Uplighter in Nave; Spotlight above Baptism Font; Spotlights x 4 in Crossing; Spotlights x 2 in Chancel (High Altar). Fluorescent strip light x 2 in Vestry including Emergency Lighting; Sealed unit in Toilet and Lobby including Emergency lighting. Flat square panel lights x 2 in office.
- May: 2 x Chancel spotlights operated by one switch, second switch operates high spotlight to shine on Cross (multi-colour function). Spotlight x 2 in Lady Chapel; Font spotlight changed to Warm white.
- June: Churchwardens' Visitation and licensing.
- August to November: Annual Servicing completed on: Fire Extinguishers; Hall, Church and Vestry boilers; Cooker; CCTV; Organ Blower. Fire Risk Assessment report commissioned and received, with initial recommendations implemented.
- September: Lino floors in Hall and Church Vestry scrubbed, deep cleaned and re-sealed. Hall kitchen and toilets deep cleaned. Archdeacon's Visitation, which included checking that all the legal responsibilities have been completed – such as registers, notices, insurance, safeguarding, evidence of mandatory checks completed, plus the inventory and log book etc. As it was also part of the Parish Needs Process a substantial part of the meeting was also about our Church Development Plan.
- Ongoing: Outside maintenance of clearing low-level gutters and downpipes, including South-West corner and wire mesh fitted to discourage nesting (November). Grounds maintenance with paid grass cutting April-October.

Open Space Facilities Project

It has been encouraging to have many people engaging with our Open Space project to improve the facilities, and to see how much the contribution of St Paul's to this community is valued. In 2023 after our preliminary application to Your Fund Surrey we received the go ahead to move to a full application. For that stage full planning consent from Runnymede and a Faculty (church planning consent) from Guildford Diocese was required. Much of the work of 2023 has been the detailed process of agreeing the architects drawings, getting costings and preparing all the documentation involved.

The proposed extension will provide toilets, including disabled and baby-changing facilities, a catering kitchen, a café area and a small meeting room. We need both church and local

authority planning consents to have been approved before we can complete our grant application to Your Fund Surrey. This is an exhaustive process which very much depends on being able to show community support.

At the October PCC meeting the following was agreed, though the detailed work for items 4-6 will be undertaken at a later date.

Guildford Diocese will be sought to:

1. Build an extension at the north-west corner of the nave to provide:
 - toilets, including one for the disabled, with baby changing facilities
 - a kitchen capable of providing cooked food and catering for large events in the church
 - a small café area and meeting space
 - access from the church and the exterior
2. Build porches to improve the west and south nave entrances so that they are more open and fully accessible, while also improving them as fire exits and reducing heat loss.
3. Provide water and drainage services to the south west corner of the nave so that a servery can be created.
4. Reduce the choir pews in the chancel to make that a more flexible space, particularly for schools use and concerts.
5. Create storage space in the north transept, ideally repurposing the surplus wood panelling from the reduced choir stalls, including the memorial plaques.
6. Relocate the World War Two memorial name plaques to a suitable location to be determined.

The latest plans can be seen on our website: <https://speh.org.uk/community-2/facilities-project/>

St Paul's Church
Egham Hythe

Open Space project

O God,
make the door of this house
wide enough to receive
all who need human love and fellowship;
narrow enough to shut out
all envy, pride and strife.
Make its threshold smooth enough
to be no stumbling-block to children,
nor to straying feet,
but rugged and strong enough
to turn back the tempter's power.
God make the door of this house
the gateway to your eternal kingdom. Amen.

Please pray:

- For God to inspire and direct each step.
- For the many different groups and activities that already meet at St Paul's, across the generations, and a strengthening of the team.
- For the planning processes for the new extension – both in Runnymede and in Guildford Diocese.
- For the Your Fund Surrey grant application.

www.speh.org.uk

Unless the LORD builds the house,
those who build it labour in vain.
(Psalm 127)

Runnymede Deanery Synod *(Steve Baynes, Deanery Synod Lay Chair)*

The three Deanery Synod meetings had the topics of “Preparing for Parish Needs Process”, “The Changing Face of Ministry to Families”, and “Deanery – What’s the Point?” as their main agenda points. All three meetings were open to the public and detailed minutes are available via the Deanery Administrator runnymededeanery@gmail.com and on the deanery website. Steve Baynes continued as Lay Chair and Rosie Hoad as Assistant Area Dean.

Diocesan Synod *(Steve Baynes, Diocesan Synod Lay Member)*

The three Diocesan Synod meetings had the topics of Reflections on Living in Love and Faith (LLF) from members of General Synod and the 2024 Budget as their main agenda points. Steve Baynes and Rosie Hoad continued as lay/clergy members respectively.

Finance and Grants

Thank you once again to Emma Sterry for all her work as treasurer – her notes to the accounts follow and give details of the highlights of the year. We’re immensely thankful that for the second year running we have finished the year with our parish share up to date. In order to do this we depend on those who are prepared to give regularly and generously, and we’re very grateful for the sacrificial giving this entails. Please continue to pray for our vision and ministries, and for all the regular costs to be met. As we seek grant funding for our Open Space project this regular on-going commitment also shows the value that is placed on our presence and activities.

In the meantime we have continued to apply for small grants as we are able, particularly towards specific activities. The Food Kitchen has now been set up as a separate account. We’re also grateful for the on-going grant from the central church for Josh’s ministry, which continues through 2024 and to the end of his curacy sometime during the first half of 2025. We have not given priority to holding fundraising events for the church, asking instead for people to give regularly as they are able (see below). We have however encouraged imaginative approaches in raising money for outward giving to organisations such as Christian Aid, Tearfund and Your Sanctuary, and heartened by the generous responses.

Giving to St Paul’s

We are very grateful to all who financially support ministry at St Paul’s. Regular giving through the Parish Giving Scheme is the best way to give if you can. The church pays no fee for this so the total amount you donate comes to St Paul’s and PGS administer the Gift Aid donations for us each month. You can find out more at www.parishgiving.org.uk (our details are Egham Hythe St Paul PGS 170617192).

There are a number of other ways to give, including via a QR code and through our website. For tax payers do sign a Gift Aid declaration so we can claim back the tax.

Please consider joining those who support St Paul’s Church, so that we can bless the community we serve. For more information contact Emma at treasurer@speh.org.uk or get in touch with the office and we can help you look at which option is most suitable for you.