**Annual Parochial Church Council (APCM) Saturday 14th. March 2026, held in Church House at 10 am.**

**Present:** Rona Stuart-Bourne (RSB) (Priest in Charge); Susan Wales (SW) (Church Warden); Nicola Edwards (NE) (Church Warden); Paul Springett (PS) (Treasurer); Graham Sharpless (GS); Anne Johnson (AJ); David Johnson (DJ); Trudy West (TW); Harold Clark (HC); Tricia Dawson (TD); Christine Porter (CP); Anne Salkeld (AS); Lesley Oldham (LO); Jaquie Hall (JH); Richard Redman (RR); Trevor John (TJ); Frank Wright (FW); Shiela Lockyer (SL); Roger Cowley (RC); Felicity John (FJ) (Secretary); Lola.

**Apologies:** Anthony Higgins; Jan Sharpless; David Grant; Clare Silk; Caroline Woodall; Robin Bawtree; Robert Hall.

RSB welcomed those who attended and started with a prayer. The meeting continued as the **Vestry Meeting.** Churchwardens and deputy wardens were thanked by RSB. The year had been a very busy one with many funerals, the Project St. John's to raise money for extensive and very expensive repairs to the church starting with the roof, and the extension of the Benefice from five to eight churches. Joining Milborne Port Benefice were Blackford, Maperton and Compton Pauncefoot.

RSB again thanked the Churchwardens for their work and support over the last year but also announced that Nicki Edwards had decided to step down after ten years of dedicated service. RSB extended an enormous thankyou to NE and pointed out that the maximum usually asked to do this job was three years, and renewal after 3 years. The requirements have changed a great deal in recent years, and the onus is too heavy for the Churchwardens. Although the congregation are an amazing community, numbers have dwindled and the average age is now quite elderly so has less capacity for aiding the Churchwardens. RSB continued that NE has the exceptional gift of faith, wisdom and care and will be sorely and deeply missed. SW was close to tears when she added that NE epitomised selfless service and has done an amazing job. NE said she was really tired, that she found some of the decisions made by the national church not to be her understanding of ethics and morality, nor did it tackle what really matters at grass roots level, and that the administration of the Church of England was wearing her down.

RSB thanked her again and said that we must ensure that all future tenures of Churchwarden should be set in stone at six years.

SW said she was willing to continue as churchwarden, and the Deputy Wardens, Richard Redman, Neil Briggs and Trevor John were also prepared to continue.

**The Vestry Meeting was closed at 10.15.**

**The APCM:**

**Matters Arising:** FJ gave a brief recap of the 2025 minutes. There were no matters arising.

**Finance:**

**Income 2025: £**115, 912 (up from £102,342 2024)

**Expenditure: £**108,678 (up from £92,800 2024). This, however, includes work for the quinquennial and Project St John's, £15,197 (last year's equivalent was £2,364).

**Underlying expenditure** up by £3,045, much of which is the increase in Parish Share of £4,414.

There were some savings on gas and electricity (but the church was cold between January and March 2025).

**Moving Forward:**

- Need to replenish financial reserves as Project St. John's continues.
- We have saved on Verger wages since August.
- At some point St. John's Cottage will need investment in kitchen and bathroom facilities. (present tenants are content at the moment).

PS prepared a detailed report of all income and expenditure which will go to the Charity Commission.

SW pointed out that when the stonemason (Daniel Kempf) goes up a ladder he sees more that needs doing.

**Fundraising:** The Spirit of Milborne Port (SOMP) have come forward saying they are willing to put on events to help raise money for Project St. John's. TD asked about gift aid on donations and PS replied yes please!

**Banking:** PS pointed out that the Nat West Account had been closed and money moved to the Co-op Bank. If people are still paying by DD they should close this to the Nat West and change it to the Coop via BACS, PS pointed out that most people have changed to PGS which is dealt with by Standing Order. Charges are 1.5% for a one-off payment but nothing for regular payments.

RSB thanked PS for all he does.

PS sent his thanks to NE for her help, hospitality and kindness.

**PS left the meeting.**

| **Electoral Role:** | **For Milborne Port with Milborne Wick and Goathill** | |
|---|---|---|
| Milborne Port | 95 | |
| Goathill | 1 | |
| Milborne Wick | 5 | |
| Non-resident | 9 | **Total: 110** |

The Electoral Role is on a secure database with only GS and Helen Soloman (Benefice Administrator) (HS) having access. FS is hoping that the other churches in the benefice will be doing their own electoral rolls. GS has been researching rules regarding Church Representation. As electoral roll officer and website developer, GS feels that a computer is more secure than paper copy. SW and RSB thanked GS for all his hard work and the amount of work that he does.

**Church Wardens:** St. John's is a good community still, despite many deaths this year. People are quietly getting on with keeping things going. Average attendance is stable at around 65 and this represents the largest congregation in the whole of the Bruton and Carey Deanery. NE reported that using the church for social village activities, such as the Christmas Light Switch on and the Friday Toddler Group, has really upped the number of baptisms. SW reported that people in the village really care about the building even if they don't come to church on a Sunday. Confirmation classes have started, and RSB has had nine enrolments – which has pleased her greatly.

NE confirmed that SW does SO much ably supported by DG and TJ and thanks were extended to them.

**Committee Reports:**

The reports from all the PCC sub-committees were published separately in a booklet. RSB wished to thank everyone who gave their time and effort, especially to the events committee who continue to fund raise for the church especially at this time when so much is needed for Project St. John's. AS mourned the loss of Linda Mumford who did so much and sent out a plea for more people to join the events committee. The summer fete has had to be moved to July 11th because otherwise it would clash with the school fete.

RSB pointed out that it was more productive to ask people individually to join committees.

**Other users of the Church and Church House:**

JH thanked everyone who gives to food share either through donations of food, household products or personal items, or through donating money which can be gift-aided. She cited a person at the moment who has no electricity. RSB commented that foodshare and the work of the Commonalty show what a great community Milborne Port is.

The annual Church inventory has been completed. There appear to be old alter hangings and frontals. SW will look into getting a faculty in order to dispose of these.

**Priest in Charge Report:**

This has also been published separately. RSB reiterated her thanks to all the retired clergy especially now that the Benefice has expanded. She appreciates all the work that everybody does. RSB was very pleased that there will be nine candidates from Milborne Port to be confirmed on August 1st.2026. The service will be at St. John's. She would also like to run a Bible Socoety Course. She has one leader confirmed so far and would like two others. Also needed is a "social secretary" for the Benefice.

**Elections:**

SW, RC and HC (and possibly NE) are our Deanery Synod representatives. There is a meeting in the week following this one at North Barrow where finance will be discussed.

There are vacancies for up to three more members of the PCC.

Sides people in Church – most are willing to continue but more need to put themselves forward. There needs to a rota, and those applying need to be approved by the PCC.

The sound system in Church will be attended to by AH and Tony Thorp.

External examiner of the Church accounts remains Alison Cooper for the moment.

**Other Matters:**

GS spoke of the fact that the website is coming up to it's tenth anniversary. Access is available to the calendar of Church services, the lectionary has been added with extra services – such as during Easter Week – also added. The Pew News can be viewed, as can the Magazine a fortnight after the print edition goes out. Very recently the website has been transferred to a new provider, so there may be some changes that will need to be gotten used to. It is hoped that HS will take on more of the content work and GS is actively looking for another co-administrator of the website.

The Parish Share for both Milborne Port with Wick and Goathill has had the reduction requested approved. GS reported that the overall benefice Share is approximately £86,000.

LO asked if the Church of England was wealthy. RSB replied that the Church Commissioners hold £11 billion in investments, but the Diocese has a £2 million deficit. John Oldham will write to the Church Commissioners adding his voice to the many others.

**Project St. John's**

The scaffolding is due to go up very soon.

Flowers were presented to NE for her ten years of service and hard work.

RSB gave the final blessing.

**The Meeting ended at 11.35 am.**

**PCC meetings:**

**All will be in Church House at 10 am unless otherwise stated.**

**Saturday 16th. May 2026**

**Saturday 18th July**

**Saturday 19th. September**

**Saturday 21st. November 2026.**

**Deanery Visitation: Tuesday 9th. June,** tea for approximately 50 peopl to be provided by TW and her team from **5.45pm**. Church Service at **7pm.**