

Parish of St. Luke Farnworth with Cronton Mission

Annual Trustees Report of the Parochial Church Council 2025

COMMUNITY - Walk of Light



COMMUNITY - Church supported Farnworth School and the Everton Reverse Advent Calendar



CONCERTS - 6th form college



CONCERTS - Brass Band



CHILDREN - Sunday Club



CHILDREN - Jam Club



CRONTON - Ecumenical service



CRONTON - Confirmation



Our Mission Statement

"We strive to live by faith, to be known by love and to connect people to Jesus and one another".

Our Vision

God's love is to *Learn from each other*
Outreach to all in our community
Vitalise personal growth and discipleship
Ensure all feel welcome and encourage belonging

Priest in charge Reverend Canon Peter Dawkin



Local Ministers Sue Smither, Clare Liptrott and Lesley Firth

Wardens Barry Horabin, Pat Johnson, Rob Leech and Ray Roberts

Web site St-luke.co.uk **Charity Number** 1133042 **Parish number** 744

St. Luke's church
Pit Lane Farnworth
Widnes WA8 9HU

Cronton Mission Church
held in Cronton School
Smithy Lane Widnes WA8 5DF

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Independent Examiner Nadia Hague FCA Vanguard Accountancy Ltd
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1. AIM and PURPOSE

AIM - To promote the mission of St. Luke's church and Cronton Mission pastorally, evangelistically, socially and ecumenically. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

PURPOSE - To provide a church family within which people can grow as Christians and help one another and the community.

PCC members	Position	Until	
Reverend Peter Dawkin	Chair		
Barry Horabin	Warden 2016 & Deanery Synod ex-officio	2026	
Pat Johnson	Warden 2018 & Deanery Synod ex-officio	2026	
Rob Leech	Warden 2020 ex-officio	2026	
Ray Roberts	Warden 2025 ex-officio	2026	
Lesley Runcorn	Deanery Synod ex-officio	2026	
Yvonne Horabin	Deanery Synod ex-officio & Treasurer	2026	
	Joined		
Sandra Vanezis	Eco Officer	2021	2028
Owen Mullarkey	Fabric subgroup	2024	2028
Margaret Campbell	Safeguarding Officer	2018	2028
Jeff Evans	Assistant Treasurer	2020	2028
Lynn Keeling	Sunday Club Leader	2000	2026
Sue Smither	Lay Minister	2019	2026
Laura Watkin	Deputy Warden	2025	2026
Deborah Doyle	Cronton representative	2020	2026
Clare Liptrott	Lay Minister	2024	2027
Gail Beswick	Baptism Assistant	2024	2027
Pam Roberts	Magazine proofreader	2025	2027
George Telfer	Health & Safety Officer	2024	2027
Co-options			
Sandra Lacey	Secretary	2025	2026

2. OVERVIEW of 2025

On Palm Sunday a red ribbon was cut to officially declare the opening of the toilets and the servery. The transformation at the back of the church is simply stunning. Everyone who helped to make it happen, especially Baz and Yvonne were thanked. In June the Grosvenor Women's club was the first group to pay to meet in church. At the end of June, the club very kindly hosted a talk on Mersey Gateway Environmental Trust arranged by Faiths4Change. The talk was about the wildlife of the Mersey, and how we can all help to protect the Mersey. There were interactive elements to the talk where participants partook in water quality sampling and viewed the small critters of the river under the microscope. The Grosvenor Women's club also host a games afternoon on Wednesday afternoons in church to raise funds for church.

We are indebted to the Justice Department Payback Team who, in addition to maintaining the churchyard to an impeccable standard also clean the church each week. We were sorry

to see Sandra, their supervisor, leave at the end of December, she was thanked for all her support and was presented with a gift.

In June we hosted the Visitation Service at which the Archdeacons officially admit churchwardens.

In November our monthly Bereavement Café started. This is an opportunity to share experiences or just to sit and listen with people who understand how loss can affect you. People who have attended are pleased to meet in a safe and understanding environment.

Also, in November we were honoured to host the Widnes Baby Loss Awareness Wave of Light service.

In November and December our Christmas Tree and Carol festival took place. St. Luke's church groups, Cronton Mission, the community and the schools worked in harmony to portray the true meaning of Christmas.

PCC members spent many meetings discussing Fit for Mission objectives - numerical growth, deepening discipleship, developing leaders, and promoting social justice. In October PCC had to vote on the initiative. It was decided that whilst we agree with the overall objectives of Fit for Mission, we believe that St Lukes Farnworth and Cronton Mission can better achieve this by remaining as a Parish. We are confident we can achieve the objectives as we have a "Ten Year Sustainability Plan" in place. The plan covers the actions we are taking and are planning to take. Covering all aspects of our church life, it covers what we currently do such as supporting Foodbank, organising church events which are open to all, working with local schools and 6th Form College, and supporting a successful and growing Cronton Mission, which is held in the school.

Our aim going forward is to build on what we are currently achieving, thus meeting the overall aims of "Fit for Mission".

Eventually, after a small subgroup once again spent time and energy discussing/investigating what used to be Bold Mission, now Building Blocks Nursery, the church received the rent direct from the owner of the nursery and a new lease was put in place.

Thanks were recorded to Colleen Harper who stepped down as warden after 5 years to look after her grandson, to Margaret Campbell who stepped down as Deputy Warden but thankfully continues as Safeguarding Officer and to Dorothy Lightfoot who stepped down from PCC. Dorothy was on PCC for many years and involved with children's groups. Ray Roberts is now a church warden, Laura Watkin is a Deputy Warden and Pam Roberts joins PCC.

In 2025, we were sad to learn of the deaths of several of our church family members, amongst them Irene Hodkin, Bill Salmon, Tony Tallon, Doreen Hough and Lily Woodstock all of whom were involved in and supported many church events.

Events and services in 2025

January

The second 'River of Light' walk, a joint venture between school and church. The procession of families and staff from Farnworth CE school in torrential rain was followed by a service in church when several people spoke about their role in the community and the children were involved in readings and leading prayers, refreshments were served afterwards.

February

Free Recital Concert given by students from Cronton 6th Form performing Arts Department who showcased the various talents they will be using for their exams.

Cronton School visited St Lukes - Year 5 and reception led this special service.

March

Lent course held at St Michael's church and at St Luke's church.

With a grant of £5,000 from the Liverpool Diocese and donations pew cushions were purchased.

Quiz at Widnes Cricket Club price matched with £500 from HSBC.

Lent Soup and Sandwich lunches.

Sunday Club involved in Mothering Sunday service.

Spring raffle was held.

April

New Church Electoral Roll in place.

Palm Sunday collection of Easter Treats for Foodbank.

Cronton Mission shared worship on Palm Sunday with Cronton Methodist Church.

Experience Easter for children of Farnworth School at St Luke's church with Lay Minister Sue and at Cronton School with Lay Minister Clare.

Good Friday Jam Club at Cronton Mission.

May

On VE Day 80 the bellringers took part in a celebration ring and the church was open so people could light candles in memory of others.

involving several local churches.

At ECO day there was a Nature Trail, Plant swop, Games, crafts and art activities and 'Preloved Recyclable' stall.

Collection for Christian Aid made at the Mothers' Union meeting.

June

Cronton College Performing Arts Students presented Summer and Sondheim, an evening of music and song.

Children from Farnworth School Y5 came to church to join in a mid-week worship with us.

July

At a special service Summer, who has attended Sunday Club since she was 4, was crowned Rose Queen. The congregation were invited to chat to Rose Queen Summer and her retinue after the service.

Cronton CE school with leadership from Lay reader chair facilitated LDST Ethos Day - representatives from the 17 schools in the Trust shared worship and activities at Cronton. All other children and staff joined in on TEAMS.

Cronton Mission held a service to recognise the work of Headteacher, Sylvia Thomson, who retired from the school after 18 years.

Proms and Pimm's evening with Clock Face Miner's Heritage Brass Band.

Farnworth Reception classes visit church.

September

National Heritage Open Day with Guided Church tour, Farnworth Village Heritage Walk, Self-guided churchyard quiz, Eco craft activities, tombola and eco inspired games.

Café style worship led by Lay Minister Clare moved to the first Friday of the month to spread availability of family worship more consistently across the month. This takes place during the school day at Cronton CE School bringing the school community and local community together. This continues to thrive and grow.

The headteacher and SIAMS lead at Cronton attended the school leaders Diocesan conference at Hope university. Farnworth head and Deputy headteacher were also involved in this.

Confirmation preparation group -open to all members of Cronton congregation, followed by ongoing bible study each week.

3 adult members of Cronton congregation confirmed by Bishop Ruth in Liverpool Cathedral.

October

Harvest Festival with donations to Foodbank. Sunday Club took part in the service.

Children from both Farnworth CE and Lunts Heath CP schools held their service in the following week and donated to Foodbank too.

Cronton Mission held a Harvest Festival in partnership with school with donations to the foodbank.

Reception children (seedlings) from Cronton were welcomed to the Mission, and key stage 2 children (Gardeners) led the service.

November

Widnes Baby Loss Awareness Wave of Light service.

All Soul's Service a time to gently remember and give thanks for all those who have gone before us, be that recently or some time ago.

Bereavement café

Advent Soup and Sandwich lunches.

Remembrance Sunday with the beautiful poppy 'waterfall' created by the ladies from the Farnworth Arts and Craft group. Wreaths presented by Bill Pierce accompanied by his sister-in-law Doris, Summer, our Rose Queen and Alexis on behalf of the children from Farnworth School.

SIAMS inspection - a positive inspection celebrating the collaborative effort of school, church and wider community in embracing christian distinctiveness in all aspects of school life.

Cronton Parish Council along with both schools, all 3 churches including Cronton Mission and many community organisations laid wreaths at Cronton War memorial. A joint short service followed at Cronton Methodist Chapel.

Special service to acknowledge Safeguarding Sunday.

Quiz at Cricket Club.

Toy service - donations given to the Trinity Kings Cross Project who distribute them to children in Widnes who might not otherwise receive a Christmas present.

Games Room at Farnworth School Christmas market.

New Street Public art project Mural to celebrate our heritage drop in.

Holy Communion with children from Farnworth School in school.

Advent Still Time reflection sessions with Ordinand Helen Lane.

December

Clock Face Miners Heritage Brass Band Christmas Concert.

Sixth Form College Performing Arts Department Excerpts from Legally Blonde performance. Cronton school supported by Clare took part in the lighting of the village Christmas tree and ecumenical carol service organised by Cronton Parish Council.

Key stage 1 from Cronton presented their Nativity on the second Sunday in Advent.

Cronton school and church came together for a new event, a joint carol concert for

church/school families.

Christmas raffle.

Sunday Club Nativity.

Nine lessons and carols service followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

Christmas Eve Christingle services 3pm & 5pm and Christmas Eve Holy Communion 11pm.

Christmas Day HOLY COMMUNION 10am.

Review of Objectives set for 2025

a) MISSION and MINISTRY

A sustainability report with short, medium and long term plans to enhance mission and ministry was produced by Churchwarden Ray Roberts.

A budget for the next 3 years to show we can support our mission and ministry was produced.

Investigation of ways to reach out & interact with a wider and more diverse population is ongoing.

Points in the Net Zero check list have been actioned. Net Zero check list completed as directed by the Diocese.

Since the toilets and servery project has been completed the church has been used for a range of activities.

Prices for the use of church have been set. People and organisations using church must meet the required safeguarding policies.

Technology including WhatsApp is used extensively for outreach & to interact with a wider and more diverse population.

b) CHILDREN'S and YOUNG PEOPLE'S MINISTRY

Communion before Confirmation re-introduced for Sunday Club and three children were admitted to receive Communion before Confirmation.

The implementation of the Diocesan 'Growing Faith Adventure' which replaces the Child Friendly Award is ongoing.

Special service to crown our Rose Queen Summer.

Schools welcomed in church for their own services and performances as well as joining us at 9.30am Wednesday services.

Collective Worship in Farnworth school led by Lay Minister Sue Smither.

Farnworth School supported in their initiative to help Everton Reverse Advent Calendar appeal.

Holy communion and Holy baptism services at Cronton adapted to become family focused and inclusion to children.

Monthly Café worship in Cronton School led by Lay Minister Clare along with Sunday café worship has facilitated the attendance of 19 new adults and 19 new children in 2025. The growing partnership working between church and school continues to enable children and families to know Jesus better and explore their spirituality.

c) OCCASIONAL / PASTORAL SERVICES

A Blue service in the period before Christmas was not held.

The second Walk of Light and service in church with children from Farnworth school took place.

3 Ladies from Cronton Mission were confirmed at the Cathedral.

d) FESTIVALS

Sunday Club children involved in the Remembrance Day service.

School involved in Harvest Festival and decoration of church

e) MAKE A BIGGER DIFFERENCE

Bring One Friend and Back to Church Sundays did not take place.

Foodbank and Kings Cross Project supported.

Lent and Advent 'Soup and sandwich' lunches held in church.

Use of social media to promote services has led to increased number attending church services at St Luke's church and Cronton Mission. Posters displayed outside church outlining events in December also helped increase numbers.

Lay minister Clare uses social media to share family ministry with those who miss services and the wider community.

f) RULE of LIFE

Advent Still Time reflection led by Ordinand Helen.

Lent course.

Parish Giving Scheme promoted across St Luke's church and Cronton Mission.

To emphasise the need for the congregation at Cronton Café Style to support the ministry to promote Outreach and pastoral care there through regular monetary giving. This is ongoing.

A 'Good Box' has not yet been put permanently at Cronton Mission for online giving.

A service of thanksgiving for volunteers (every 2 years) was not held.

g) PLANTING NEW CONGREGATIONS

Church taken to Farnworth School for Holy Communion.

To investigate ideas to take the church to the people. This is ongoing.

h) CONSERVATION PROJECT

Eco Nature and Heritage Day held to encourage awareness of the nature in the churchyard and raise awareness of eco issues.

3. CHALLENGES for 2026

As in 2025 our Parish is running at a loss as expenses are higher than income so if you would consider joining the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) it would be appreciated as we need to ensure the church stands as a beacon in the town for generations to come. **THE PAST IS OUR INHERITANCE THE FUTURE IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY.**

If 100 people donated just **£10** a month this would add **£12,000** a year to our funds, and if it was gift aided that would add a further **£2,500**. It is possible to sign up for annual increase in line with inflation. To join PGS call **0333 002 1260** and quote our unique church code **22062210**. One-off donations can also be made this way, and you can gift aid it too.

Objectives for 2026

a) MISSION and MINISTRY

To review our sustainability report on a regular basis to update our short, medium and long term plans to enhance mission and ministry.

To set up a Mission group to establish what our church needs to do, in order to grow.

To review and update our budget to show we can support our mission and ministry.

To investigate further methods to outreach & interact with a wider and more diverse population.

To action points in the Net Zero check list.

To utilise the church for a range of activities now toilets and serverly project completed.

To continue Bible study for Cronton congregation

To introduce a monthly lunch club on first Monday.

b) CHILDREN'S and YOUNG PEOPLE'S MINISTRY

To encourage children and adults to consider confirmation.

To implement the Diocesan 'Growing Faith Adventure' which replaces the Child Friendly Award.

To welcome schools in church and support schools in their initiatives.

To invite classes to worship with us at our midweek service and to 'take church to school' once a term.

To continue to use the School Newsletters and their Social media outlets to promote church services and events.

To work closely with RE lead to support the planning and delivery of Collective Worship within Farnworth CE School and to meet regularly with the Vision Ambassadors to develop their roles and responsibilities within school.

To continue monthly café worship in school as an extension of worship at Cronton Mission.

To continue to use school newsletter, social media including school/church Facebook/X sites, and WhatsApp group to communicate services encouraging family engagement at Cronton Mission.

To further develop more family inclusive worship at Holy Communion at Cronton to increase attendance at these services.

To develop growing links with local County Primary schools.

To actively promote and encourage the growth of Sunday Club through school newsletters, at JAM Club and on social media.

To continue to nurture and encourage the Sunday Club children who attend now.

To maintain the tradition of having a Rose Queen and retinue.

To support school initiatives.

c) OCCASIONAL / PASTORAL SERVICES

To hold a Blue service in the period before Christmas.

To make the Walk of Light and service an annual event.

To introduce Times of Reflection.

d) FESTIVALS

To introduce Remembering Festival Experience for school children and church families.

To hold Experience Easter in church or school.

e) MAKE A BIGGER DIFFERENCE

To hold a 'Bring One Friend and Back to Church' service.

To continue to support Foodbank, Kings Cross Project and Vision Ambassador Initiatives.

To hold monthly lunch club starting in June.

f) RULE of LIFE

To hold a bible study/prayer group and/or meditations.

To instigate a Giving Campaign to promote the Parish Giving Scheme.

To emphasise the need for the congregation at Cronton Café Style to support the ministry to promote Outreach and pastoral care there through regular giving.

To have a 'Good Box' permanently at Cronton Mission for online giving.

To hold a service of thanksgiving for volunteers.

g) PLANTING NEW CONGREGATIONS

To investigate ideas to take the church to the people.

h) CONSERVATION PROJECT

To install solar panels to reduce our energy bills.

To install 300mm insulation above the Bell Tower ceiling to reduce heat loss.

To undertake a full thermal heat loss survey to identify other areas of heat loss.

To investigate the erection of a room within the church for meetings.

To hold annual Eco Days to encourage awareness of the nature in the churchyard and raise awareness of eco issues.

To take part in the national Heritage Celebration which is a festival of history and culture, to learn about the history and traditions that have shaped our heritage and church and to encourage an awareness of preserving and conserving our church.

4. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE and MANAGEMENT

STRUCTURE

The general functions of the PCC are stated within section 2 of the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956. There are no other related trusts. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. Church members registered on the Electoral Roll are eligible to stand for election to the PCC.

Legally, the PCC is responsible for the financial affairs of the parish and the church, and the maintenance of the building, the Bridewell and the churchyard, and for promoting the mission of the church. The PCC operates two subcommittees: The Standing Committee and Friends of St Luke Farnworth. PCC members are DBS checked and receive Health & Safety and Safeguarding training.

GOVERNANCE

PCC members are committed to making good use of the funds and resources with a focus on achieving the desired outcomes whilst ensuring the charity follows the law, produces policies and, where issues arise, these are dealt with efficiently and quickly. Potential risks are considered, progress is monitored and actions taken when necessary.

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER & LEAD RECRUITER Margaret Campbell 07376112836

Safeguarding Officer for Cronton and Deputy Recruiter for Cronton is Debbie Doyle.

Deputy Recruiter for St Luke's church is Lynn Keeling. Safeguarding is of vital importance, to St Luke's and Cronton Mission. We need to be welcoming but also a safe place. Therefore, we follow the Diocese of Liverpool Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance 2016. This refers to the whole recruitment process for volunteers and paid workers.

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION

All the congregation's information is stored in a safe place, privacy is respected, and personal information is not shared with other organisations.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Health and Safety Officer and the Churchwardens are totally committed to all aspects of Health & Safety in church and in the churchyard. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Health and Safety Officer George Telfer 07792412415.

MANAGEMENT

PROCEDURES - The PCC operates under a mature system of controls and procedures developed over many years of operation. Finance and operational issues are routinely monitored as part of regular PCC meetings. When planning activities for the year, the PCC considers the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefits, particularly the specific guidance to charities concerned with advancement of religion.

BUDGET - An annual budget is prepared to monitor short-term viability. Actual results compared with budget are reported to the PCC quarterly. The investments are reviewed. All assets are insured.

RESERVES POLICY - No charity can operate for any length of time without reserves. The reserves available are low, so a major effort will be needed to re-build reserves to a working level, and to re-build a contingency for future maintenance costs.

CONTINGENCY PLANS - The Scout and Guide building can be used for services in the event of the Church becoming unusable for a limited period.

ELECTORAL ROLL - 146 on the 2025 roll.

5. CHURCH GROUPS 2026

Bell Ringers

If you would like to ring the church bells practice is Tuesdays 6.30pm. Training given. Nigel, Tower Captain 07860632096

Bereavement Café

11am monthly on second Tuesday to share experiences or just to sit and listen with people who understand how loss can affect you. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available.

Choir

If you are interested in being in the choir contact Paul, Director of Music 07778042553

Church Cleaning

10.30 to 12noon once a month on the last Wednesday and as required for special services. All equipment and materials provided. Just call in, 'many hands make light work'.

Cronton School Café style worship

Every first Friday of the month in term time in school at 2.30pm. Clare 07976549410.

Flower Arranging team

If you would like to help Wednesday & Friday mornings Lesley 01514231759

Friends of St Luke's Church

organise fund raising events ranging from quizzes to concerts. Ideas for fund raising always welcome. If you would like to join our WhatsApp group, contact Sandra 0776672030

Mothers' Union

meet second Wednesday each month 7.30pm for prayer and fellowship with a variety of speakers. Colleen 01514244351.

Jam Club

Second Sunday each month 3-4pm in church join Clare and Jack (our church puppet) for worship focused on families and the young at heart -bible stories, songs and crafts. Also, Good Friday 10am to 11am Clare 07976549410.

Lunch Club

First Monday each month starting in June. Sue 07962012916

Open Door Wednesday

10am to 1pm church is open. Pop in for a chat and cuppa. People on hand to welcome you and show you around our beautiful church.

Open Door Saturday

First Saturday each month 10am to 11.30am for fellowship, a look around and chat or for a quiet space to sit and spend some time with your thoughts, or with God. Tea and teacakes, coffee and crumpets provided. Sue 07962012916.

Parish Review

Hard copies are delivered to 150 people and copies are available in church. The magazine is available to view on the church website, and 50 people receive it by email to cut printing costs. If you would like to input to the magazine, or have a magazine delivered to you or would like an advert in the magazine please contact farnworthreview@yahoo.co.uk Philip 07710030973.

Sunday Club

In the Bridewell 10.30am on 1st, 2nd and 4th Sundays during term time for stories of our faith told in a lively way with craft activities. The children go into church at 11.15am to share what they have done with the congregation. Lynn 07741494261.

Uniformed Organisations

Clare Liptrott 07976549410.

6. FINANCE

a) FINANCIAL REVIEW

The funds of the church are, in the main, made up of three sections:

1. Endowment Fund - Generally, only the interest is available for the PCC's use, not the capital. There have been NO withdrawals from Investments.
2. Restricted and Designated funds - This is for monies for specific purposes, i.e., Major Repairs, Bridewell etc.
3. General Fund - This covers the income and expenditure of the day to day running costs of the church. It is this section which yet again has seen a noticeable drop in income having lost quite a few of our regular givers who have sadly died. At the start of 2025 a total of £106,000 was outstanding to the Diocese at end of December 2024, and we are pleased to report that this has now been offset against the outstanding rents from the Dioceses regarding Bold Mission as well as monies from the Diocese for rents on the new lease from July 2024. We now receive the rent from Bold Mission direct, the current amount being £4360 per quarter, which is a great help towards our Parish share of £6,380 per month. The Income from Regular givers this year has continued to drop, although people using the Parish Giving Scheme has increased, both with regular givers changing from giving by envelopes and standing orders as well as new regular givers.

Balances @ 31/12/2025 - Endowment Funds £164,329, down on the previous year by £6,431 due to a decrease in stock market, Restricted funds, including Friends account, £9,294. The funds held at end of December 2024 have been used to pay for the new toilets project. Designated funds £1,309. General Funds under £10,000 at the year end.

Charitable Giving

Children's Society - £600 from Christingles.

Christian Aid - people were encouraged to donate direct to Christian Aid.

Foodbank - As well as food donations on a regular basis and at special services such as Easter and Harvest. Farnworth, Cronton and Lunts Heath Schools continue to support Foodbank too. Donations for 2025 increased on the previous year with over 900kg of goods donated. Toy Service - the response from the congregation, the schools and the community donating toys, gifts and toiletries for the Trinity Kings Cross Appeal was again overwhelming. Mothers' Union support Women's Refuge and Brennan Lodge.

b) ACCOUNTS

The church's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The church's trustees consider that an audit is required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)) and that an independent examination is needed.

This report for 2025 was approved at a meeting of PCC members on 13th April 2026. If you spot any mistakes, please contact PCC Secretary 07761672030 sandralacey47@yahoo.co.uk so amendments can be made before the report goes to the Diocese and the Charity Commission. Thank you.