

St Margaret's and St Catherines's



Annual Report
2025

Administrative information

St Margaret's and St Catherine's Church is situated at the cross roads of Tey Road, New Road and Green Lane, in the centre of the village. The correspondence address is The PCC Secretary, 18 Scott Drive, Colchester, CO3 4JD.

Listed here are members of the PCC who have served at any time from 1st January 2025 until the date this report was approved:

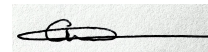
Ex officio members:

- Rector: Vacancy
- PCC vice-chair: Mr Iain MacCallum - to June 2025
- Deanery Synod Representative: Mr Iain MacCallum - to June 2025
- Churchwardens: Mrs Coral Wingate, Mr Iain MacCallum (*ibid*)
Mrs Wendy Doncaster from September 2025

Elected Members

- Deanery Synod Representative Mrs Jennifer MacCallum
- Mrs Anne Matthews: Secretary
- Mr Richard Gough: Treasurer until June 2025.
Mr Mark Wingate from June 2025
- Mr Kenneth Thompson, Mr Peter Vestey: Fabric Manager
- Mrs Wendy Doncaster: Electoral Roll Officer
- Mrs Mags Newton
- Mrs Sally Green

Signed by



Mrs Coral Wingate (Churchwarden)

on behalf of the PCC on 31/03/2026

Structures, governance and management

Since October 2011 the Parish of St Margaret and St Catherine, Aldham, in the Benefice of Marks Tey and Aldham, has been in the Deanery of Colchester and in the Colchester Episcopal Area of the Diocese of Chelmsford.

The PCC is the body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and a charity currently excepted from registration with the Charity Commission and exempt from tax under sections 505, 506 or 508 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988. It has no financially related trusts or charities. It met five times during the year.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. Our PCC normally consists of the incumbent who acts as Chairman, churchwardens, the reader and members elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. New PCC members receive initial briefing.

Standing Committee: This committee is required by law. It is made up of the Rector (lay chair in a vacancy), Churchwardens, Secretary and Treasurer. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the PCC. The Rector (or lay chair) is the Chairman.

Fabric and Churchyard: Mr Ken Thompson has stepped down as the lead maintainer of the fabric of the building and has been replaced by Mr Peter Vestey. Steve Jennings leads the churchyard maintenance. Many volunteers help with maintenance and cleaning on a regular basis. They cut the grass in the churchyard on a regular basis and assist on a one-off churchyard maintenance morning and on other ad hoc occasions.

Fund raising: The establishment of the Friends of Aldham Church has already been referred to. However, the PCC and church members will continue to plan and organise other fund raising activities in the future.

Other Rotas: numerous volunteers, amongst other things, welcome worshippers to church, read and lead the prayers in services, provide flower arrangements, serve coffee after church, clean the church, print and distribute the newsletter, assist with logistics and cater for special occasions.

2025 Report and accounts for the Parochial Church Council of St Margaret's and St Catherines's, Aldham

Incumbent: Vacancy

Bank: CAF Bank Limited
25 Kings Hill, Avenue, Kings Hill
West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ

Independent Examiner: Mr Colin Smith
18 Reynards Copse, Highwoods
Colchester, CO4 9UR

Website: www.aldhamchurch.org.uk

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Fabric Fund (Restricted)

We have allowed the Fabric Fund to move to a negative balance over recent years. This means we are effectively borrowing money from the General Fund.

Expenses last year, with the exception of the Quinquennial Repairs were routine. The fund carries a deficit of £2,319.82 considerably less than 2024.

With the church's Grade II* listed rating we were hoping to recover the VAT element of the QI 2021 Phase 2 Repairs but the sudden change of deadline by the Government meant we missed out.

Legacy Funds (Designated)

The funds remain unchanged from 2024 with a balance of £5469.35 in the Tom Holme Legacy Fund and £159.17 in the John Crane Legacy Fund.

QI 2021 Phase 2 Fund (Designated)

The Quinquennial 2021 recommendations have now all been completed, the last invoice for the architects for £1,092 was paid in 2026.

Reserves Policy

We try to maintain a balance in the non-restricted funds which equates to at least three months payments. Our reserves at the end of 2025 are £26.486 after taking into account the Fabric Fund deficit.

Mission and Charities

We continue our financial policy to support the wider church, at home and abroad. We do this in two ways: 10% of our regular giving goes directly to external Christian causes and contributing to specific causes when needed.

Giving in kind

We continue to benefit from the generosity of time, energy and material goods from a number of our members and the village without whom we could not function. In the church, churchyard and elsewhere their efforts are greatly appreciated, whether they are on a rota or help on an adhoc basis. For special services, wedding, funerals etc the fees are often retained. Thank you.

Mission & Charity Giving 2025	
CYO	635
Colchester Food Bank	215
Nepal	600
Tearfund	215
Essex Clergy Charity	65
Friends of Essex Churches	60
Bible Society	128
CPAS	65
Total	£1983.00

Accounting Policy

As our gross income is less than £250,000 we prepare our accounts on a receipts and payments basis. We choose to have an independent examiner (rather than a registered auditor) to examine the annual accounts.

The Accounts for 2025

The end-of-year balance of the General Fund and the Fabric Fund combined is £18,928.20 which is about the same as last year. We also have £5,628.52 of reserves in our legacy funds. A generous church member donated £20,000 with which we were able to make the final payment for the Quinquennial 2021 Repairs and the balance went into the General Fund.

General Fund (Unrestricted)

The General Fund ended the year with a balance of £20,854.46, about £2000 higher than last year. The total receipts in the General Fund were down approximately £2000 from 2024. Overall expenditure from the General Fund was approximately £6,000 lower than 2024 mainly due to difficulties resulting from the sudden resignation of the treasurer and Iain MacCallum's death, due to an oversight our Parish Share was paid for only six months. The Deanery were very understanding and asked only that we should endeavour to pay our Parish Share in full in 2026, as we have done in the past.

Aims and Purposes

Normally, Aldham Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent in promoting, in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. In a vacancy the vice-chair has the powers vested in the chair, Mr Iain MacCallum sadly died in June 2025 and it has now become the responsibility of the Churchwardens. As a church community, our aim is that we should all grow into a living relationship with Jesus Christ. We aim to do this through worship for people of all ages and stages in life, and through keeping the wider world's needs in our minds and in our giving.

The PCC is also specifically responsible for the church building and grounds.

IAIN ROBERT MACCALLUM 1939-1925

Iain, Jennifer and two year old Fiona moved to Aldham from suburban Greater Manchester in the summer of 1967, following Iain's appointment to a lectureship in Computer Science at the recently founded University of Essex. The choice to live and worship in the village of Aldham was one which proved to be a blessing to both Iain and family and Aldham church and village.

As an evangelical Christian, Iain was attracted to Aldham which had a tradition, alongside Marks Tey, of scripture-based preaching and teaching with the Church Pastoral Aid Society as patron. During Iain's lifetime Aldham saw seven rectors, all faithful to the Gospel, whom Iain supported wholeheartedly. Under them he was able to develop his own skills as a preacher, teacher and bible group leader, and eventually became a Reader in 1992 which enabled him to take on more duties, a role which he enjoyed until his death. There were the inevitable vacancies, seven in total, during which Iain stepped into the breach and helped to steer the church through them. He could turn his hand to most things and his wide experience was invaluable.

Iain took a great interest in village affairs. He was very involved in the last 30 years of Open Gardens Days. In 1984 he masterminded the visit of a group of Texans to stay as paying guests in the village to raise money for a major church roof repair. He made it easy for Aldham folk to be part of the church whether for baptism, weddings, blessings and so on. He was always ready to listen, and visit. Iain loved the church building and put a great deal

of effort into building and repair projects where his experience as church treasurer, one of his many posts over the years, came in useful for getting grants. In 2006 Iain and Jennifer ‘downsized’ to an apartment in Colchester but continued to worship and serve Aldham Church and village as before. Before Iain died suddenly in June 2025, he had set in motion the repair project which has now been completed and this would have thrilled him. Aldham was also in a Vacancy, and continues to be so, which would not have thrilled him. He was Reader, churchwarden and assistant treasurer when he died, in harness to the end. Iain is greatly missed but has left behind a legacy of faithful service to the God he loved.

Objectives and activities

Our mission statement reads:

“We exist to honour God and to enable people in our community to discover Jesus”

The PCC is committed to welcoming all to our church to worship and become part of our parish community. The PCC maintains an overview of all worship throughout the parish and organises special and one off services, aiming to involve everybody in the parish.

The pattern of our service is currently a Service of the Word on the first, second and fourth Sunday and a communion service on the third Sunday. When there is a fifth Sunday in the month we have a joint benefices’ service with the six other churches in our grouping in one of the churches.

Junior church can be arranged in the Tower Room when required but the main thrust of our children’s work is in our Messy Church aimed at young families.

Our services follow the Liturgy with prayer, scripture, music and sacrament.

When we plan our year we consider the Charity Commission’s guidance of providing the public non harmful, accessible religious services, such as worship, education and outreach. We are mindful of Bishop Guli’s initiative of Travelling Well Together, embracing the marginalised and offering kindness, mutual respect and gentleness.

The church building is used extensively for those purposes. The Friends of Aldham Church was formed to assist in the maintenance of the fabric of the church building. There are plans for a new heating system and a small scale reordering to enable the church building to accommodate our outreach programmes.

Financial Review

Richard Gough continued in the role of treasurer from January until his resignation in June 2025 with assistance and support from Iain MacCallum. Mark Wingate replaced Richard in June. The death of Iain and Richard’s sudden resignation has resulted in some difficulties with our financial arrangements but with the treasurer’s hard work and perseverance and the Deanery’s help our financial arrangements are now in order.

Financial Policy

GENERAL FUND. The cost of ministry and worship are generally met by the direct giving of the membership of the church. By church membership, we mean regular worshippers and the church Electoral Roll. We post all fees to the general fund, and we welcome donations and legacies (claiming Gift Aid where we can).

FABRIC AND CHURCHYARD. From time to time, we invite the village as a whole to contribute towards repairs or improvements to the fabric, and to maintenance of the churchyard. We also seek grants to cover major fabric repairs. We undertake fund- raising for fabric and churchyard.

In recent years “The Friend's of Aldham Church” (FOAC) has also contributed significantly to the Fabric Fund. FOAC's aims are to ensure that Aldham Church’s building and churchyard shall be of increasing benefit to the wider community of Aldham and its neighbouring villages for present and future generations by aiding the PCC in improving, repairing, maintaining, renewing, restoring, preserving and developing Aldham Church, churchyard and associated buildings, and the fixtures and fittings in the Church, churchyard and associated buildings for the benefit of the public.

MISSIONS AND CHARITIES. We give 10% of the previous year’s regular giving to external Christian missions and charities. In addition to this, fund-raising is undertaken by members for specific causes. The charities supported by this means are at the organisers’ discretion, and the church is pleased to support such efforts for Christian organisations or organisations which have a Christian ethos.

Achievements and Performance

Aldham is a small village, with approximately 220 dwellings. Until recently the population has been an aging one, with many single occupancy homes. There has been a small shift since COVID with a number of elderly residents moving on and young families moving in, as evidenced by the growing attendance at Messy Church.

The village has no school and the church and village hall are the only community buildings.

There are a small number of almshouses run by a separate charity.

The Parish council are in ongoing discussions with Colchester City Council and bordering parishes concerning the Local Plan. There are several applications being considered for development in Aldham and its borders with several other parishes. The Parish Council have asked that the right infrastructure and clear phasing be put in place but are aware realistically that Aldham is earmarked for growth.

The aging population has meant that inevitably we have struggled, historically, to attract younger people to our services. The recent growth of Messy Church has enabled us to make connections with new, younger families moving into the village; the possibility of a children's choir may be a way of introducing those families to special Sunday services.

Our services and outreach rely heavily on a band of willing and increasingly elderly group of volunteers. Our efforts are appreciated and we felt encouraged when one of our regular Afternoon Tea guests had a letter of thanks published in the local magazine, *Grapevine*. Our teas are well supported, as are our other programmes; our Carols by Candlelight attracted 149 people including 27 children.

None of our activities, including Sunday services and all of our outreach programmes would be possible without the dedication of our volunteers and we are extremely grateful for their ongoing support and hard work.

Messy Church

Messy Church has gone from strength to strength with growing numbers and lots of positive feedback. We meet approximately every six weeks for a ninety minute session and enjoy Bible based teaching in an interactive and often messy way. In our last session we had 16 children from toddlers to 8 year olds with parents and grandparents. We have a variety of activities based on the theme and are age appropriate. In the last few sessions we have

Description of Works and Date Completed	Date of Faculty	Ref Quinquennial Inspection Report, Sept '21	Contractor	Cost of Works Including Fees	Details of Grant Aid from Charitable Bodies	Location of Specification and Drawings
Boundary Hedge along New Road cut back January '25	None	None	C J Winn Tree Services	660 - 00	None	None
Emergency Call Out to replace boiler Motor Capacitor January '25	None	None	J B Oil Boiler Services	120 - 00	None	None
Skip Hire for Churchyard Clear Up '25	None	None	Core Fusion Limited	199 - 00	None	None
Annual Test and Inspection of Lightning Protection System April '25	None	Page 10, Notes B	Bacon Lightning Protection & Maintenance Ltd.	138 - 52	None	Provisional Certificate in Log Book
Emergency Call Out to Leaking Undersink Water Heater May '25	None	None	All Home Repairs and My POS	360 - 00	None	None
Annual Intruder Alarm Receiving Station Subscription July '25	None	None	E-Bound AVX Limited	258 - 00	None	None
Annual Intruder Alarm Maintenance August '25	None	Page 9	E-Bound AVX Limited	523 - 20	None	Report in Log Book
Annual Fire Extinguisher Inspection September '25	None	Page 10, Notes D	Morgan Fire Protection Limited	151 - 50	None	Certificate in Log Book
Alarm System Muted due to Q1 Phase 2 work proceeding at high level November '25	None	Page 9	E-Bound AVX Limited	88 - 20	None	None
Intruder Alarm System, replacement parts November '25	None	Page 9	E-Bound AVX Limited	187 - 20	None	None
Annual Boiler Service November '25	None	None	J B Oil Boiler Services	90 - 00	None	None

Church Maintenance and Minor Repairs 2025

introduced singing which we hope will lead to an established children's choir for special services. There is always a food item for them to prepare which seems to be the highlight of the session.

Average attendances

The service register tells us that our attendance at services is unchanged from last year with an average attendance of 17, although at times we have struggled to reach this number. Our numbers are swelled for special services such as the Carol Service and when we join with the other churches in our group .

We are predominantly a village church, with only a handful of regular congregants from outside the parish

Our electoral roll currently stands at 40 members and has decreased in recent years due to people leaving the village or sadly dying.

Occasional Services

There were no weddings or baptisms in 2025 but we had 4 funerals/ memorial services.

We have broadband available in church for a third party to live stream special services, we do not have the capability of streaming church services ourselves.

Benefice in Plurality

We have now been in a Benefice in Plurality since June 2022 with Marks Tey, Little Tey, Great Tey, Chappel and Wakes Colne and since October 2024 in a Vacancy. We have our own PCCs, treasurers, wardens and services but increasingly we are coming together as a recognisable group supporting each other. We join together in worship for fifth Sundays and special services at Christmas. There is a schedule of all the church services available in the porch and on the website and we all have attended services and had attendees from churches in our group.

Since our joining the group and later after Ian Scott Thompson's retirement we have benefitted from various visiting speakers who regularly preach at services. In particular we have been blessed by two retired clergyman who preach and lead a service for us every month; Rev Robin Spittle and Rev John Chandler, the latter taking our Communion Services.

Description of Works and date completed	Date of Faculty	Ref to Quinquennial Inspection Report Sept. 21	Contractor	Cost of Works Including Fees	Details of Grant Aid from Charitable Bodies	Location of Specification and Drawings
Repair of Chancel East Wall. Fifth Architect Invoice - January '25	Archdeacon Approval given under List B	None	Nicholas Jacob, Architects	402 - 00	Grant funding successful	Nicholas Jacob Office
Q1 Phase 2. Contract Stage. Third Architect Invoice. November '25	Archdeacon Approval given under List B	Page 10. Work requiring attention within five years	Nicholas Jacob, Architects. Q1 Repairs, Phase 2	729 - 00	Several Grant-Award Bodies. FOAC donated £10,000	Nicholas Jacob Office and Church Contract File
Q1 Phase 2. Contractor Completion Invoice November '25	Dito	Dito	Lodge and Sons (Buildres) Limited	28,802 - 88	Dito	Dito
Q1 Phase 2. Contract Stage. Fourth Architect Invoice. December '25	Dito	Dito	Nicholas Jacob, Architects. Q1 Repairs, Phase 2	1,092 - 00	Dito	Dito

Fabric and Churchyard

The Quinquennial Inspection (2021) Repairs Phase 2 was finally completed in January 2026. The attached chart gives details and costings. The next Quinquennial Inspection is due in the Summer 2026. The architect did a detailed inspection before the commencement of the repairs and it is hoped that this means the church is in a good state of repair.

The church maintenance and minor repair work is itemised on the chart on page 14.

Heating

The boiler had its annual service in November. We have plans to upgrade the heating to the church with a more carbon neutral system, which with the uncertainty in the Middle East and the rising price of heating oil has become a priority.

The Churchyard

The churchyard is maintained by a group of volunteers, organised by Steve Jennings. A team did a church yard clearance in March and a skip was hired for the disposal of rubbish. The hedges were cut back in January by J Wynn Tree Services.

delightful surroundings and a net profit of £618 was achieved.

The final event of the year was another Quiz Night in November and this really did prove even more popular than the first. As a result £485 was raised on the night. Thanks are due to the staff who provided the Aldham Bar for both Quiz Nights.

So in total the events held during the year raised the grand sum of £1,722. Together with funds raised in previous years the Friends were able to contribute £10,000 towards the major repair work carried out on the church during the year.

Membership of FOAC is currently 19 life members and 27 annual members but it would be great if we could increase these numbers.

Friends of Aldham Church would like to thank all those who supported the events in whatever way during the past year. The money raised is solely for the upkeep of the fabric of the church building which I think we would all agree is one of the main features of our village. It would be extremely sad if this building at the centre of the village fell into disrepair. The church provides an important meeting place not only for services but other regular local community events. If you would like to help in this very worthwhile cause and become a Friend of Aldham Church (subscription is only £15 per person per annum) please contact me and I will send details of membership

2026 Programme of events

Friends of Aldham Church are collaborating with the Village Hall to organise events for the village during 2026. The Village Hall events are detailed in the Aldham Village Hall Update.

The first FOAC event is another popular Quiz Night. Aldham Open Gardens return this year and this event will be held over the weekend of 13th and 14th June 2026.

Pastoral Care

Aldham Church is a community church and although we have no pastoral committee we have two qualified Pastoral Assistants, one of whom is a recognised presence in the village and works alongside church members to ensure that those in need are recognised. Our monthly Afternoon Teas, Book Exchange and weekly Open Church coffee mornings are an open door to all in the community.

Worship and Prayer

Our Benefice in Plurality means the organisation of services will be quite complex going forward but until we have a new incumbent we will continue with the system we have used with Marks Tey but coordinating with the others churches when needed. We have numerous rotas and systems that give us a detailed idea of services well in advance. Due to our long standing ties with Marks Tey and the timing of our services we are able to pool resources.

Sadly in the last 5 years or so, we have lost 4 lay leaders, including Iain, our Lay Reader,.

We rely heavily on our two retired clergymen and Andrew Waters' (Marks Tey) contacts to supply excellent preachers. We have been blessed with four members of the congregation who have come forward to lead our services and to whom we are very grateful.

We have had a number of special services in the year including Harvest, where we invited the community to join us in our donations to Beacon House and Colchester Food Bank and they responded generously.

We also invited the village to join us in the Shoebox appeal and Lindsay Gough collected 51 boxes for Operation Christmas Child.

The funds from the Church Christmas Card and a collection from the Christmas Afternoon Tea amounting to £150 was sent to the Colchester Food Bank.

We had two home groups, the Midweek evening group were watching Keswick Convention teachings until Iain's death and is now in hiatus and the Wednesday morning home group who were studying The Bible Course.

The PCC

The PCC met four times during the year, where they discussed the usual items as well as the completion of the Quinquennial Inspection (2021) Repairs. The sudden death of Iain MacCallum in June saw a change in roles in the PCC: a new representative on the selection panel for the vacancy and a new churchwarden were elected to replace Iain in these roles. The treasurer also stepped down and another member of the PCC was elected to replace him. The PCC also discussed a grant application to the Deanery Mission Fund for a new noticeboard and some extra chairs to replace broken ones in the church.

Mission and Outreach

Being God's salt and light to the community is our mission.

The PCC continues its policy of supporting Christian organisations or those with a Christian ethos. We have a number of chosen organisations who we support regularly. We do this in two ways:

- 10% of our regular giving is donated to external Christian causes, as shown in the financial statement, including locally Christian Youth Outreach and international The New Life Church in Kathmandu since 2003.
- Fund raising and food donations to specific causes, including Colchester Food Bank, Open Door and Beacon House.

Our social initiative outreach programmes continue with the weekly Open Church with a drink, biscuit and fellowship, a monthly Book Exchange and Afternoon Tea. Many who attend are not church members but we see this as an opportunity to offer fellowship and an open door into the church and some have transitioned into church membership.

The church has developed close links to the Village Hall and is represented

on the committee. A team has been created which consists of members from the Friends of Aldham Church and the Village Hall Committee to coordinate fund raising events for both institutions. It had been coordinated in an informal way previously and had been very successful.

The bi-monthly newsletter continues to be written, printed and distributed by volunteers from both the church and the local community, PDF copies are emailed around the world.

We have a website which is kept upto date with news and a diary of events, details of our worship, mission and who's who. The church has an article printed in the quarterly village magazine, Grapevine.

Friends of Aldham Church

2025 Annual Report

Chair of FoAC, Andy Brown writes:

During the year a number of events were organised to raise funds to help towards the upkeep of the church building.

The first event of the year was a Quiz Night during March at the Village Hall which was well supported and enjoyed by all who attended. The event raised a total of £263.

A free coffee and cake morning was held in the church in May for Friends of Aldham Church as a thank you for their support.

On Saturday 5th July the Kelvedon Singers performed an evening of music entitled Songs of Joy in the church. The repertoire was extremely varied ranging from Vaughan Williams to madrigals to modern arrangements of Beatles and Queen numbers. The church was filled with sound and the audience, which totalled over 50, clearly enjoyed the performance judging by the applause at the end of the evening. This event raised a total of £356 after expenses.

The following Sunday 13th July a Summer Garden Party was held in the beautiful grounds of Tile House in Aldham. Luckily the weather was ideal for the event warm but not too hot. The event was well attended despite competing with tennis finals at Wimbledon.

Music was provided by the Caledonian Reelers along with refreshments and it provided an ideal opportunity for friends and neighbours to meet up in