

St Bartholomew's Waltham

Report to Waltham Parish Meeting 2025

Much has changed for the better since this time last year and the arrival of Dawn Stamper to lead our worship has been a breath of fresh air. She has responsibility for the three churches of the Parish Upon the Hills, Petham and Upper Hardres with Stelling. We are enjoying renewing connections with Upper Hardres and Stelling, with whom we were linked in a previous Stone Street Group in the 1990's and it is good to have a regular pattern of services at Elmsted.

At St Bartholomew's we have completed the works to the tower and nave roofs and the south porch/vestry roof has been completely retiled and better attached to the south wall, under the supervision of our architect Katharine Rutherford. We are grateful to Colmans Contractors for their expertise and to our anonymous donor whose support has allowed us to build up the Fabric Fund. After the roofing works, there was only a small amount on deposit in the Bells and Bell Tower Fund, so that has been incorporated into the Fabric Fund.

List B consent for the repainting of the west door has been granted.

We are due to have a Quinquennial Inspection this year.

The parking area continues to deteriorate but I am hopeful that it can be resurfaced this summer. The church is open daily during the summer months and visitors often comment on how clean and cared for it is, thanks to the work of all the volunteers on the rota. The Ladies Guild keep the chancel and the brass tidy and their floral displays enhance the simplicity of the interior, especially during church festivals.

A couple of working parties led by Les Leslie, have enabled much of the overgrown vegetation on the north side of the church to be cut back.

Regular grass cutting is carried out by Chris Tanton and we are grateful to Waltham Parish Council for a significant grant towards these costs.

Our historic chalice and paten have been on display in the cathedral for many years and recently we were told that a faculty is required to regularise this loan. That is in hand.

The organ has caused considerable expense over the past couple of years, not to mention stress for our organist. We are exploring what can be done about this.

This past year there have been two weddings, two baptisms and one interment of ashes.

Chris Cox
Churchwarden