



**The Friends of
Tewkesbury Abbey
Annual Report - Spring 2026**

Aims and Constitution of The Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey

The Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey is a membership organisation whose purpose is to assist in maintaining the fabric of the Abbey, and in adorning it and preserving it, together with its furnishings, vestments and ornaments, for posterity.

The management of the affairs of the Friends is in the hands of a Council. The Vicar, a Churchwarden and a nominated representative of the Parochial Church Council are ex-officio members. Other places on the Council are filled by election at the Annual General Meeting of the Friends.

The full text of the Constitution is available on the Friends website.

Our front and rear cover pictures illustrate 'The Friends' Story - an introduction', presented in this report.

Front Cover

The foreground image shows Canon Edward Gough and some of those directly involved in work on the tower. It was taken 90 years ago, in 1936, by his son, John Gough.

Behind this can be seen the West face of the tower taken from the roof of the nave in 2019, which clearly illustrates the extent of the repair, performed in 1936, to crumbling brickwork.

Rear cover

Clockwise from the top left: the state of the stone in the tower prior to the work undertaken in the 1930s; a workman against the north-east turret of the tower; the Tower Team at the unveiling of the plaque, and the plaque dated 1939 commemorating the completion of the work.

This was a major operation undertaken to save the building. It included repairs to crumbling stone, foundation strengthening and a deathwatch beetle infestation in the roof space timbers. In 1935, the Friends launched their first major appeal to raise funds for this work. The money raised was equivalent to approximately £2.3 million today.

Thanks to Mr Rafael Bellairs and Dr Ian White for the provision of other images used in this report.

The Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey

Annual Report 2026

Incorporating accounts for the year ended December 2025

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The Friends' Website

- Purchase tickets to Friends' events
- Pay your subscription or make a donation
- Complete a Gift Aid declaration
- Access exclusive articles, videos and audio at 'Just for Friends!'
- Find our contact information



The address is www.friendsoftewkesburyabbey.org.uk

or use the QR code printed here.

The Council and Officers of The Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey 2025-26

<i>President</i>	The Bishop of Gloucester
<i>Vice Presidents</i>	The Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire The Bishop of Tewkesbury The Archdeacon of Gloucester The Archdeacon of Cheltenham Mr G Finch
<i>Chair</i>	The Reverend CE Whitney (<i>to June 2025</i>) Dr I White (<i>from June 2025</i>)
<i>Vice-Chair</i>	Dr I White (<i>to June 2025</i>) Dr N Oakes (<i>from June 2025</i>)
<i>Treasurer</i>	Mr N Bennett
<i>Council 2025 - 2028</i>	Ms J Clifford Mrs K Vincent (<i>from January 2026</i>)
<i>Council 2024 - 2027</i>	Mr R Bellairs Mr J Goom Mrs L Parsons
<i>Council 2023 - 2026</i>	Mrs M Beagley Mrs S Coulton Mr G Hill
<i>Council 2022 - 2025</i>	Mr S Evans (<i>to June 2025</i>) Mrs S Lancelot (<i>to June 2025</i>) Mr H Sweet (<i>to June 2025</i>)
<i>Ex-officio</i>	The Vicar of Tewkesbury, Reverend Canon ND Davies
<i>The Churchwardens</i>	Mr P Charman (<i>to June 2025</i>) Dr N Oakes (<i>to June 2025</i>) Mrs J Pegg (<i>from June 2025</i>)
<i>PCC Representatives</i>	Mrs E Charman (<i>to June 2025</i>) Dr J Lancelot
<i>Secretary & Administrator</i>	Mrs K Vincent (<i>to December 2025</i>)
<i>Bankers</i>	Lloyds plc, High Street, Tewkesbury, GL20 5RZ
<i>Independent Examiner</i>	MAG Bull BSc FCA, BPC Partners Limited, Chartered Accountants, 3 Royal Crescent, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL50 3DA
<i>Postal Address</i>	% Tewkesbury Abbey, Church Street, Tewkesbury, GL20 5RZ
The Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey is a registered charity, No 211236, governed by a constitution created in 1933, amended 2nd July 1989, 7th July 2013 and 29th June 2025	

Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends

How quickly the Friends' year is rushing by. As I write, our Events team are busy working on our activities for 2026, while others are struggling with the ever-increasing burden of responding to scrutiny by legal and financial bodies. You won't be surprised to discover that the Events team is never short of volunteers!

More from Events elsewhere in this report. You will also find a taster for a series of articles covering the Friends' story. These articles will be available on the members' area of our website and will show the ways in which the Friends have helped the Abbey since they were formed in 1934. Unashamedly based on the material that was produced for our 90th Anniversary a few years ago, we hope you will find these expanded articles to be full of extra, interesting facts related to the projects the Friends have undertaken.

I would like to thank all of you who responded to our request to complete a Gift Aid declaration. The result has been a significant increase in the money we can claim from HMRC for subscriptions and donations. The declarations you made will remain valid unless you ask us to cancel them, so these increases continue into the future. This is a very simple way for you to increase your donations to the Friends by 25% at no additional cost to you. I would urge anyone donating to the Friends, who pays income tax, to get in touch with us if you would like more information or help with making such a declaration; it is a very simple task.



Even frequent visitors to the Abbey, as I am, may occasionally be surprised by something not seen before! It helps to have the camera to hand

Finance is always close to the heart of any charity of course, and the Friends are no different. I talked about the dramatic effects of the Covid pandemic on the Abbey's funding streams in my letter in the Autumn Newsletter. That lack of funds has meant that all but absolutely essential work on the building has had to be postponed by the PCC. We have still helped by continuing with our annual grant, to the PCC, to assist with fabric-related expenses. This year that grant is again £80,000.

I am pleased to report that the Friends have been very grateful to receive several bequests, which means that we will be in a position to assist when the PCC is ready with appropriate projects. This comes at a time when the staff levels at the Abbey, helped by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, mean that there are more people to help organise and manage such projects. Any major work takes time to prepare. For the PCC, there are plans to be produced, external bodies to consult, contractors to engage, and much more; it will still take time, but we do expect to have something tangible to report before too long. We have already had one very positive meeting to discuss some of the likely projects in the pipeline.

The Heritage Lottery Fund grant has, amongst other things, helped pay for several surveys to be carried out. It is expected that these surveys will result in work being required. A 900- year-old building can't be allowed to fall into disrepair. It has to be monitored and kept in a good state of health.

You may recall that in our 2025 Autumn Newsletter we appealed for help with our administrative work. This was in anticipation of Karen, our long-standing Administrator, moving out of Tewkesbury and consequently needing to reduce her workload. Some of Karen's roles have now been taken on by existing Council members stepping forward, and special mention must go to Gareth Hill, for taking on the Membership Secretary task; to Jennie Clifford for the work she is doing on producing our Reports and Newsletters, something that exploits her obvious skill as a proofreader; and to Marion Beagley, who is helping enormously with taking on many of the financial tasks in support of our Treasurer.

I must thank all of my fellow trustees, the Council members. It's a pleasure, for me, to be the Chair with such willing and able Friends. I must especially thank Nancy Oakes for stepping forward and taking on the daunting role of Vice-Chair, and Nigel Bennett for his continuing, able support as Treasurer.

We will be saying farewell to two of our trustees at this coming AGM: Sue Coulton and Marion Beagley. Sue has completed six years on Council and so cannot stand for re-election again this time. Sue has been one of our mainstays for help with refreshments at our many meetings, talks and the AGM. Marion, who has completed three years, has decided that she cannot stand for re-election to Council for personal reasons; however, Marion has told us that she will continue with her new finance work as a co-opted member of the Finance committee.

But I must return to Karen. She has been in the Administrator role for 11 years and has done wonderful work. So wonderful that we had become very dependent on her. That dependency has become even more apparent now that she has completed her move away from Tewkesbury. Originally contracted to develop a digital member database, Karen has completed that task and done much more, developing our website being just one example.

On the positive side, I am delighted to be able to report that now Karen is no longer an Administrator, she has agreed to join Friends' Council as a trustee. She was co-opted on to Council to take up a vacancy at the start of 2026, and I fully expect that position of trustee will be confirmed at our AGM in July. It is reassuring that Karen is still committed to helping the Friends and so is available to answer the difficult questions that arise from time to time. She is continuing to work remotely on the tasks we haven't yet been able to pass on elsewhere.

The biggest thanks, though, go to you, our loyal supporters. Without your continuing friendship, the Friends would not be the thriving organisation that it now is.

Dr Ian White

Friends' Events

The Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey Events team has delivered a rich and varied programme, reflecting both the historical significance of the Abbey and the warmth and enthusiasm of its community. The year has been marked by well-attended, thoughtfully organised events that have combined learning, music, fellowship and shared purpose.

The 2025 AGM offered a wonderful opportunity for members to come together. It included a reception and lunch, the formal AGM proceedings, a talk by the Revd Canon Dr Malcolm Brown, and a traditional afternoon tea followed by the Festival Evensong. Particular thanks were extended to the Abbey Tea Room for their invaluable support in hosting the event and preparing the lunch arrangements. The contribution of Friends through the much-loved 'bring and share' lunches was also deeply appreciated, with a wide array of delicious dishes enjoyed by all. The event created a warm and welcoming atmosphere, allowing members not only to reflect on the year's achievements, but also to connect socially, exchange ideas, and strengthen the sense of community that lies at the heart of the Friends.

During the summer, members enjoyed a memorable outing to Witley Court, a visit that perfectly combined heritage, music, and conviviality. Set beside the romantic ruins of Witley Court, the Church of St Michael and All Angels provided a breathtaking setting for the day. Often regarded as one of England's finest baroque churches, its richly decorated interior left a lasting impression, from the painted ceilings by Antonio Bellucci to the ornate rococo organ case and vibrant stained glass.

A guided tour of the crypt, led by Angela Snow, brought the church's layered history vividly to life, offering fascinating insights into its architectural evolution and the legacy of the Foley family. The visit was further enhanced by a captivating organ recital given by James Lancelot, whose performance filled the space with both beauty and resonance. The day concluded with a generous homemade lunch served in the nearby gardens, where members enjoyed delicious food, lively conversation, and the simple pleasure of spending time together in a relaxed and picturesque setting. It was, by all accounts, a truly enriching and enjoyable occasion.



In November, the Friends gathered once again for a wonderful evening with Coro Camino, held on Wednesday 12th November. This proved to be a particularly special event, combining music, fellowship, and outreach. Coro Camino, a small and talented four-part choir, delivered an inspiring programme of 18 pieces spanning both sacred and secular repertoire, including works by Vangelis, John Rutter and Edward Elgar. The evening offered moments of reflection and joy, from the poignant 'Shalom', performed as a heartfelt wish for peace, to the lively and uplifting 'Rhythm of Life'. A particularly memorable highlight was the audience's participation, creating a shared musical experience that embodied the spirit of unity and community.

Guests were seated informally around tables, enjoying refreshments and carefully prepared nibbles, contributing to a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. Sincere thanks were extended to Sue Coulton and Linda Parsons for their thoughtful catering arrangements, and especially to Linda Parsons for her dedication in organising the event and liaising with the choir. Gratitude was also given to the Vergers and the Membership and Communications committee for their essential support in ensuring the evening's success.



Importantly, the event also served as a Friends recruitment opportunity, with several new members joining as a result. During the evening, Nancy Oakes spoke eloquently about the vital work of the Friends in supporting the ongoing care and preservation of the Abbey, highlighting contributions to repairs, lighting, and the restoration of the Milton Organ. The evening concluded with moving reflections from Graham Finch, who drew parallels between his own Camino pilgrimage and the sense of shared purpose experienced within the Friends community.

Overall, the events of the past year have once again demonstrated the strength, generosity and enthusiasm of the Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey. Each gathering, whether educational, musical or social, has played an important role in fostering community spirit while supporting the preservation of this extraordinary building. The Events team is to be warmly thanked for their dedication and creativity, and we look forward with great anticipation to another successful and engaging programme in the year ahead.

Mr Rafael Bellairs



Fitzhamon Lecture 2026

Martin Heale, Professor of Late Medieval and Reformation History at the University of Liverpool

delivered a fascinating lecture to an attentive, capacity audience on Saturday 25th April.

Entitled 'Tewkesbury Abbey in the Later Middle Ages' it explored how the Abbey community continued to remain buoyant throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a time of decline for many English monasteries.



Martin comprehensively developed three themes: the Abbey's relations with its lay patrons; efforts to boost its endowment income; and the endeavours of the Abbot to raise the Abbey's status and profile.

The lecture was followed by refreshments, during which our speaker made himself available for further questions. The evening was a resounding success

If you were unable to attend, an audio recording of the lecture, plus the accompanying slides, will be available in the Member's area of the Friends' website in due course.

Dr Ian White

Membership Updates

The Friends have welcomed the following new members during 2025:

Life members

Mr Thomas Brown	Mrs Caroline Hillaby	Miss Joy Hillier
Mr Malcolm Nunn	Mr David de Silva	Mr Julian Thurston

Annual members

Mr John Ashford	Mr Chris Benton	Mr Jim Budd
Mr Colin Butler	Mrs Sue Butler	Mr John Carmichael
Mr Hugh Chiverton	Mr Tom Daltry	Ms Lorraine Dodd
Mrs Julie Evans	Mr Peter Evans	Rev Stanley Finch
Ms Lynne Gilland	Mr Tim Hodgetts	Mr Robert Jackson
Mrs Kathryn Jeffree	Mr Tim Jeffree	Mr William Jones
Mr Phil Joseph	Ms Janet Lanigan	Mr Alan Laughlin
Mr Paul Murray	Ms Samantha Thomas	Ms Joan Vaughan
Prof Haydn Walters	Mr Robert Wilson	

We also remember those Friends who died during 2025:

Mr Nevin Brown	Miss Mary Foster	Mr Terence Golding
Mrs Rosemary Harvey	Mrs Celia Hodges	Mrs Wendy Roberts
Mr John Stedman		

Entry By Donation and Friends' Membership

Many Cathedrals and Major Churches have been obliged to introduce a charge for entry. Tewkesbury Abbey has not done this but it has introduced an entry by donation scheme. Visitors to the Abbey are now welcomed by a small team of volunteers who invite them to make a small donation before entering; this is not a compulsory payment. Regular congregation members and Abbey volunteers have been issued with a small card to show on entering so that they can be waved through.

We are planning to supply membership cards to Friends which will serve the same purpose but, in the meantime, if you explain to the welcomer team that you are a Friend then you will be waved through. Of course, you still may, at your own discretion, make a donation which will go into the Parochial Church Council funds.

The Friends' Story - an introduction

The Friends were formed in 1934, with a constitution laying out the intention of helping the Parochial Church Council by raising money to be given as grants for the purpose of keeping the fabric of the Abbey in a good state of repair and to preserve it for the enjoyment of future generations. Since that time the Friends have done exactly that: they have raised an extraordinary amount of money, from subscriptions, appeals and bequests.

'The Friends Story' will describe the significant projects that the Friends have been involved with. This basic information comes from the 90th Anniversary presentations given in 2024, but these articles will go further with perhaps more images and historical detail of the part of the Abbey being worked on. Here is a very small extract from the first decade of the Friends' existence. The Friends' Story will launch with three articles to cover the beginning of the Friends and the first two decades. At its launch it will be available exclusively on the Members Area on our website.

The Friends' Story - An extract from the 1930s

The next grant made was in 1935 when the Friends paid for repairs to the Beauchamp Chantry, replacing the rotten wooden beams that supported the vaulting with steel supports.

This ornate Chantry can be found to the left of the High Altar. It was founded c.1430 by Isabel Despenser. Beauchamp (pronounced Beechum) was the family name of her first and second husbands. The Chantry is also known as the Warwick Chapel.



Isabel, Countess of Warwick, born 1400, was married, aged 11, in the Abbey and she founded this Chapel after the death, in 1422, of her first husband Richard, Earl of Worcester. Isabel, who died in 1439, was a generous benefactor of the Abbey. She was the daughter and sole heiress of Thomas le Despenser, 1st Earl of Gloucester.

She left a detailed will, and the extract shown below specifies her wishes for her burial and memorial.

"my body to be beryed In the Abbey of Tewkesbery, yn such place as I haue assyngned. And that my grete templys [fillets or head bands] with the Baleys [pale rubies] be sold to the vtmost pryse, and delyueryd to the sayde Abbat and the howse of Tewkesbery, so they groche [complain] not with my lyenge, and with such thyng as y woll haue done a-bout my body. And my

Image to be made all naked, and no thyng on my hede but myn here cast bakwardys, and of the gretnes and of the fascyon lyke the mesure that Thomas Porchalyn hath yn a lyst, and at my hede Mary Mawdelen leyng my handes a-crosse, And seynt lohn the Evangelyst on the ryght syde of my hede; and on the left syde, Seynt Anton, and at my fete a Skochen of myn Armes departyd with my lordys, and ij fireffons to bere hit vppe; And all a-bowt my tumbe, to be made pore men and wemen In their pore array, with their bedys In their handes"

[F. J. Furnivall, *The Fifty Earliest Wills in the Court of Probate*, London (London 1882)]

The location of Isabel's tomb is now unmarked, but it was found and opened during the Victorian Restoration of 1875–79, confirming its central location in front of the high altar.

Dr Ian White

Agenda for the Annual General Meeting

Sunday 5th July 2026 at 2pm in the Abbot's Parlour, Abbey House

The Friends' Meeting Prayer

God our Creator, grant that your love may be present at our meeting,
so that what we say and do may be for the good of Tewkesbury Abbey and its Friends.

May we receive fresh encouragement in our labours, catch a wider vision,
and dedicate ourselves anew to the work to which you have called us.

We ask this in the name of Him who came not to be served, but to serve,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Apologies and Opening Remarks

Minutes of the AGM held on 29th June 2025

Chairman's Report

Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair

Election of Treasurer

Election of Council Members

Appointment of Examiners

Treasurer's Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2025

Vicar's News

Any Other Business

Date of Festival and AGM 2027: 4th July

The Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer are elected by the Friends at each AGM. Council Members are elected to serve a three-year term, and one-third are elected each year. Those eligible to stand for election are any member of the Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey and the electorate are those present at the AGM. Nomination forms are available from the Friends' website and the Secretary. Nominations to be received by 21st June 2026.

Treasurer's Report

2025 proved to be a significant year with one legacy positively impacting our finances. The market range traded so there were no major surprises. The government changed some financial rules which for subsequent years will substantially increase building costs.

Thanks to a new computerised accounting system and the diligence and hard work of the Finance and Investments committee our results are produced much quicker and with a greater degree of accuracy.

The 2025 accounts represent an accurate reflection of our financial state and I am pleased to recommend them for adoption.

My grateful thanks to the Investment Manager, Financial Examiner, Chairman of the Council and all members of the Finance and Investment committee. Special thanks are due to Marion Beagley for all her support during the year.

Mr Nigel Bennett, Treasurer

Trustees' Report For The Year Ended 31 December 2025

The trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025.

Aims and Objectives

The Friends' main purpose is to assist the Abbey as set out in the constitution. The Council receives recommendations and information about the needs of the Abbey from the Parochial Church Council, which has the prime responsibility to maintain the Abbey.

The Abbey is in constant need of care, maintenance and repair and, in view of its size and age, some of these demands are likely to be unpredictable in their timing and substantial in their content. The Friends' assets are available to be spent for the purposes of the Friends with the restrictions that the capital endowment funds are required to be invested to produce income and the restricted funds must be used for the purposes specified by the donors.

The Council continues its policy of maintaining income and reserves to fulfil its purpose to assist the Abbey, having regard to the obligations that it may be asked to assume. The unrestricted funds at 31 December 2025 totalled £385,393 which included two designated funds: a maintenance reserve of £200,000, and a designated fund for future grants of £87,000.

The Trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

Public Benefit

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Achievements and Performance

Main Achievements

£87,000 was paid in grants during the year, which included £80,000 for the maintenance of the fabric of the Abbey, and £7,000 for the Choral Scholarship Fund.

In October 2019 The Friends launched an Appeal to mark the 900th Anniversary of the consecration of the Abbey in 2021. The target is £202,100 to support a project to reorder the West end of the Abbey so as to provide a more open, light and welcoming entrance. At 31st December 2025 £143,612 had been raised.

Financial Review

Financial Position

Total income for 2025 totalled £562,185 (2024 - £43,698) which included bequests and legacies amounting to £522,547 (2024 £1,572). Income from investments totalled £18,786 (2024 -£20,683) and continues to form an important part of the Friends' income. Governance costs are met each year from subscriptions. The Maintenance Reserve has stayed consistent at £200,000. The level of the reserve follows the guidelines set out by the Charity Commissioners. The value of investments increased by £17,370 (2024 -£22,355).

Reserves Policy

The Trustees' policy is to maintain sufficient reserves to enable the charity to respond to significant maintenance, repair and improvement needs of Tewkesbury Abbey, while also providing a measure of financial stability in the event of fluctuations in income.

At 31 December 2025, the charity's total funds amounted to £1,192,445. Of this, £658,097 related to restricted funds, £148,955 to endowment funds and £287,000 to designated funds, comprising £200,000 set aside as a maintenance reserve and £87,000 designated for future grants. The charity's free reserves, being unrestricted funds available for general use after excluding designated funds, therefore amounted to £98,393.

The Trustees aim to maintain free reserves at a level of not less than £200,000. At the year end, free reserves were below this level.

The Trustees keep the position under regular review, taking into account the charity's investment base, expected future income and the ongoing needs of the Abbey for repair, maintenance and improvement works.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The Trust is governed by a constitution created in 1933, and amended 2nd July 1989, 23rd February 2013 and 29th June 2025.

Trustee Selection Methods

Members of Council serve for three years and if willing can be re-elected for a further three years at the AGM. A member of Council who has served two continuous terms will not be eligible for re-election until one year after retirement at an AGM.

Organizational structure

The Council is responsible for the management of the affairs of The Friends.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing the financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed; subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at anytime the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The trustees' report was approved by the board of trustees and signed on its behalf by: Dr Ian White, Trustee
18th April 2026

The Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey For The Year Ended 31 December 2025

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey (the Trust) for the year ended 31 December 2025.

Responsibilities and Basis of Report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent Examiner's Statement

Since the Trust's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and contents of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Michael Bull Bsc (Hons) FCA, 3 Royal Crescent, Cheltenham, GL50 3DA

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES for the year ended 31 December 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
INCOME	Total Funds	Total Funds
Donations and Legacies	539,804	17,969
Charitable Activities	3,595	5,046
Investments	<u>18,786</u>	<u>20,683</u>
	<u>562,185</u>	<u>43,698</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable Activities	(98,136)	(98,771)
Gain-on Investment	17,370	22,355
	-----	-----
NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)	481,419	(32,718)
FUNDS, brought forward	711,026	743,744
	-----	-----
TOTAL FUNDS, carried forward	<u>1,192,445</u>	<u>711,026</u>

BALANCE SHEET

As at 31 December 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
FIXED ASSETS	Total Funds	Total Funds
Investments	<u>1,188,773</u>	<u>705,909</u>
CURRENT ASSETS		
Stock	300	300
Debtors	2,274	1,949
Cash in bank	<u>3,445</u>	<u>5,648</u>
	6,019	7,897
Creditors	(2,347)	(2,780)
	-----	-----
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>3,672</u>	<u>5,117</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>1,192,445</u>	<u>711,026</u>

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOW

for the year ending 31 December 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
Income from Operation	<u>444,507</u>	<u>(74,160)</u>
Cash Flows from Operation Activities		
Investment	(545,496)	(42,727)
Disposal of assets	80,000	80,000
Interest received	11,907	13,140
Dividends received	<u>6,879</u>	<u>7,543</u>
	<u>(446,710)</u>	<u>57,956</u>
Decrease in Cash	(2,203)	(16,204)
Cash of the beginning of the year	<u>5,648</u>	<u>21,852</u>
Cash of the year end	<u>3,445</u>	<u>5,648</u>

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
held on Sunday 29th June 2025 at 2.00pm in the Parish Hall**

Those present included: Jennifer Barrett, Tony Barrett, Alan Beagley, Marion Beagley, Rafael Bellairs, Babes Bennett, Nigel Bennett, Frances Brewitt-Taylor, George Charman, Marcus Charman, Paul Charman, Jennie Clifford, David Coulton, Sue Coulton, Sue Counsell, Andrew Crowther, Nick Davies, Graham Finch, Malcolm Gribble, Margaret Gribble, James Lancelot, Austin Meares, Valerie Meares, Nancy Oakes, Linda Parsons, Joy Pegg, Hilary M Reeves, Clare Scrimgeour, Janice Smail, Peter Smail, Ivan Steele, Richenda Steele, Hugh Sweet, Pat Webley, Ian White, Marsha White, Graham Whitehead, Charles Whitney, Margaret Wilson, Renee Young

Apologies: Basil Barke, June Barke, Christine Bennett, Hugh Bennett, Neil Birdsall, Ruth Bishop, Tom Brown, John Carmichael, Elizabeth Charman, Hugh Clatworthy, Janet Davis, Bill Evans, Patricia Fearnley, Karen Feighan, Martyn Fell, Glenny Garnett, James Garnett, John Goom, Janet Harvey, Neil Heavisides, Caroline Hillaby, Michael Hilier, Cathy Instone, Spen Instone, Brenda Kimmins, Deitra Kimpton, Julia Maxwell-Tomlinson, Peter Quinnell, Joanne Raywood, Matthew Roff, Kathleen Standing, Alwyn Thompson, Karen Vincent, Marc Vincent, Haydn Walters, Julia Walters, John Whitehead, Robin Wilson

The Chair of the Friends, Reverend Charles Whitney, enquired whether the Vice-President present at the meeting would like to chair the AGM, and Mr Graham Finch replied that he was happy for the Chair to chair the meeting.

Those present observed a minute's silence to remember those Friends who had died since the last AGM:

Mr Nevin Brown	Mr Darrell Buttery	Mr George Clarke
Mr Tony Day	Mr William Emrys Evans	Miss Mary Foster
Mr Terence Golding	Miss Doreen Hunt	Mrs CM Paternoster
Mrs Sylvia Simmonds	Mr John Stedman	

Apologies for absence were noted.

The minutes of the AGM held on 30th June 2024 were approved without amendment.

The Chair thanked all those who had been involved in that morning's High Mass, in particular congratulations to Mr Carleton Etherington for his new *Missa Brevis* and the Abbey choir for singing it so well. Thanks were also expressed to the Friends' Events committee for arranging the bring and share lunch.

The Friends' year has been one of change and consolidation. Constitutional changes have been required on account of the requirements of the Charity Commission and the development of the Tewkesbury Abbey Foundation. The Friends' Vice-Chair, Dr Ian White, had led a working group to determine the impact of these on the Friends and the Constitution changes which are required. The Chair also thanked the Parochial Church Council of the Abbey for approving the amendments that were now brought to the membership at the AGM.

Other changes during the year arose from the demise of the Young Friends and the need to increase membership numbers. A recruitment event is planned for the autumn, with thanks to Mr Rafael Bellairs, Chair of the Events committee, for leading on this. A review of administration has been diligently undertaken by Mr Gareth Hill coordinating a working group looking at how the Friends functions, as the Friends' Administrator, Mrs Karen Vincent, is looking to complete her work.

There have been two excellent lectures: Dr Ellie March on the medieval environs of the Abbey, and Mr Jim Budd on the conservation of the quire stained glass. Thanks to Mr Graham Finch for arranging these and for the Events committee for hospitality.

The Membership and Communications committee, led by Dr Ian White, and the Finance and Investments committee, led by Mr Nigel Bennett, have been meticulous in their work regarding communication, compliance and management of the Friends' data and resources. Committee members were warmly applauded.

The Chair expressed appreciation to the Vicar, Revd Canon Nick Davies, for the acknowledgement in the Abbey Bulletin, and elsewhere, of the financial support provided to the Abbey by the Friends during difficult times, as the Abbey PCC sought to balance income and expenditure. At the present time, the Friends are contributing £80,000 per year towards the upkeep of the Abbey fabric.

Monies raised for the 2021 Appeal have been safeguarded for the time being. Opportunities for a suitable future use for these funds which satisfy the original intentions of the Appeal will continue to be explored.

The terms of office as Trustees of the Friends of Dr Andrew Crowther and Mr Hugh Sweet both completed at this AGM. Dr Crowther had previously served as Vice-Chair for more than thirty years and Mr Sweet had served as Honorary Treasurer for twelve years. The Friends have been blessed by their loyalty, their support and their wisdom. Gifts were presented to them and they were warmly applauded by all present. Mr Graham Finch informed the meeting that between them Dr Crowther and Mr Sweet had served on Council for more than seventy years. He personally commended them for their dedication and efforts. This is a sad farewell to true Friends of the Abbey but future contact will be maintained.

Mrs Sylvia Lancelot also completes her six years on Council at this AGM and must now take a one-year break. The Chair expressed the hope that Mrs Lancelot would consider returning to Council in the future. Gifts were presented to Mrs Lancelot, and also to Mrs Sue Coulton and Mrs Linda Parsons, in thanks for their work in providing refreshments at every Council meeting.

Mrs Karen Feighan has had to step down from Council for personal reasons but hopes to be able to continue with some administrative tasks.

A gift was also presented to Mrs Janice Smail in thanks for her work maintaining the Friends' Table in the Abbey.

The Chair thanked all members of Council for their support during the year, naming in particular Mr Rafael Bellairs, Dr Ian White, Mrs Karen Vincent and Mr Nigel Bennett for their considerable understanding and help, and to Mrs Marsha White for the patient hospitality provided so frequently.

The Chair apologised that it was not yet possible to confirm the date of the AGM in 2026 due to an ongoing review of the worship pattern at the Abbey and known events to accommodate. The date will be announced in the Autumn Newsletter.

The Chair concluded with reference to the coming events of the Friends' Festival and wished the Council all the best for the future. All present warmly applauded.

The Friends' Meeting Prayer was read.

Dr Ian White guided the meeting through the proposed changes to the Friends' Constitution. The revisions would clarify the core focus of the work of the Friends as the provision of funding for major fabric repairs and projects, and the beautification of the Abbey. This would remove duplication of intention with the fundraising work of the Tewkesbury Abbey Foundation and the Abbey PCC. The role of the charity trustee has changed considerably and the review of the Constitution also looked at compliance with Charity Commission rules and guidance and the need to bring the Constitution into line.

The changes have been under discussion by the Council for more than a year. The proposed changes were approved by the Council at their meeting in February 2025 and subsequently by the PCC at a meeting in March. The formal vote at the AGM is the final action before they can be adopted and implemented.

The proposed changes have been presented in the Annual Report 2025 and also made available on the Friends' website. Questions were invited but none were raised.

The Chair conducted the vote. The changes were proposed by Dr Ian White and seconded by Dr Andrew Crowther. All present at the meeting voted in favour of the changes. There were no votes against, and no abstentions.

The Chair proceeded to the Elections to Council.

There was one nomination for Chair:

Nominee Ian WHITE

Proposer Charles Whitney Seconded Nigel Bennett

Dr White was announced as duly elected Chair and congratulated by the outgoing Chair and all present.

There was one nomination for Vice-Chair

Nominee Nancy OAKES

Proposer Ian White Seconded Nigel Bennett

Dr Oakes was announced as duly elected Vice-Chair and congratulated.

There was one nomination for Treasurer

Nominee Nigel BENNETT

Proposer Ian White Seconded Charles Whitney

Mr Bennett was announced as duly elected Treasurer and congratulated.

There were three vacancies on the Council but only one nomination received

Nominee Jennie CLIFFORD

Proposer Charles Whitney Seconded Ian White

Ms Jennie Clifford was announced as duly elected to Council and congratulated. Other Trustees may be co-opted by the Council in the future to fill the vacancies.

Dr Ian White thanked Reverend Charles Whitney for graciously agreeing to be the Chair at a time when his workload was already substantial. The year has not been straightforward but Charles has not skimped on the commitment made to serve for a year. His guidance and good humour will be missed by the Council. All present thanked Charles for so generously stepping into the role when the Friends needed a steady guiding hand, and he thanked them for the gift presented.

Dr White introduced himself to those present. He has been a Friend for 37 years, has served on Council for 6 years and been Vice-Chair for the last 3 years. The time on Council has been a bit like serving an apprenticeship. He looks forward to meeting more Friends.

Mr Nigel Bennett proposed the appointment of the Examiners, BPC Partners - Michael Bull of Cheltenham and all present approved.

Mr Bennett proceeded to draw attention to certain aspects of the figures in the accounts which had been circulated to Friends in the Annual Report. Income is now only recorded when it has been received, there having been increasing occasions when the sum of a notified bequest is significantly higher than the amount finally disbursed. Mr Bennett recommended that the AGM adopt the accounts and this was confirmed by a show of hands.

The Vicar, Reverend Canon Nick Davies, gave news of the Abbey. He thanked the Friends for their contribution which had this year enabled numerous unglamorous but essential tasks at the Abbey to take place, including gutter clearing, clock repairs, churchyard repairs and lock maintenance, as well as contributing to the salary of the Fabric Officer and Architect's Retainer. The Abbey has received a grant of £250,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund and that has enabled some key fabric investigations to take place into the east end monuments and medieval stained glass, and remedial work is expected to follow. More exciting projects are expected in the future. Dr White reminded Council members that the new year's cycle of meetings commences on 19th July with a focus on governance and constitutional matters.

Under Any Other Business it was suggested that a Musica Deo Sacra brochure be included in the Annual Report mailing. Also, only a few tickets remain for the upcoming trip to Great Witley.

The AGM was followed by a talk by Reverend Canon Dr Malcolm Brown on 'The Established Church – What it means and why it matters'. The Friends Festival concluded with afternoon tea and Friends' Evensong.

Programme for the Friend's Festival - Sunday 5th July 2026

10:30am High Mass

Preacher: Bishop David Jennings

Bishop David is one of the honorary bishops in the diocese. He was Bishop of Warrington in the diocese of Liverpool and previously served in the Diocese of Chelmsford as Vicar, Area Dean and Archdeacon.

12:30pm Bring and Share Lunch - in the Parish Hall

Please bring contributions to the hall before the morning service.

Wine and soft drinks will be provided

2:00pm Annual General Meeting to be held in the Abbots Parlour, Abbey House

c.2:30pm Guest Speaker: Bishop David Jennings

4:00pm Refreshments - in the Parish Hall

5:00pm Festival Evensong

