

PARISH PROFILE

Sml

St. Mary's
Longfleet
Poole

WEBSITE

YOUTUBE CHANNEL

INSTAGRAM

FACEBOOK

SPOTIFY PODCASTS



WARDENS' WELCOME

Welcome to St Mary's Longfleet (SML) which is a church with real momentum, deep roots and a strong sense of God's leading into the future. We are grateful for all that has been built here but we are not simply looking for someone to maintain what already exists. We are seeking a leader who will help us step into the next season of our life with faith, courage and clarity.

This is not an easy role. It will stretch you. It will require spiritual depth, resilient leadership and a willingness to carry both opportunity and complexity. Yet it is also a rare privilege: to serve among a committed, generous and expectant church family, already deeply engaged in the life and mission of Jesus, and ready to grow further.

We are praying for the person God is preparing. If, as you read this, you find yourself drawn to the possibility of leading a large and growing church, shaping a culture of discipleship and mission, raising and releasing leaders, and serving a community full of both need and opportunity, then it may be that God is already prompting you.

We would love to hear from you.

01202 253527
Office Number



Ali Cox



Pete Naylor

OUR STORY

SINCE 1833



WHAT IS SML ALL ABOUT?

SML is a lively charismatic evangelical Anglican church in Poole on the south coast of England. We are a community of people seeking to love God, follow Jesus' teaching, grow in faith together and serve the world around us.



Our heart is to be Jesus centred, rooted in Scripture, open to the work of the Holy Spirit, committed to prayer and worship and marked by genuine friendship and compassion for those in need.

We are closely affiliated with the New Wine Network; a family of churches committed to the authority of Scripture and the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit. SML is not simply a busy church, but a growing one. Over recent years we have seen increasing numbers of children, young people and adults connecting with church life, alongside a deepening commitment to discipleship and community. We are grateful for all that God has done, and we sense that He is calling us into a new season of growth, leadership development and wider mission.

OUR VALUES ARE:

WHOLEHEARTED WORSHIP

MISSIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

LOVING RELATIONSHIPS

GENEROUS HOSPITALITY

SERVING WITH JOY

COURAGEOUS RISK-TAKING

SUNDAY SERVICES

Sundays are a central gathering point for the church family and we meet together in three services each with their own character. All include band-led worship and deep Bible-based teaching from a team of preachers. We welcome Spirit-led ministry.



8.45am

Our early service has a traditional feel, with some liturgy, and communion within a reflective atmosphere. This service plays an important role in the life of our church with many finding it a place of great community.

10.45am

This is our largest service and has a more contemporary style. It is lively and multi-generational, with provision for children and young people weekly including a monthly all-age service. Communion is celebrated monthly.

SIX30

Our evening service is informal and particularly popular with young adults, those exploring faith and visitors from other churches seeking refreshment. A monthly Worship Night allows space for the Holy Spirit to minister to the congregation. These services are followed by a time of organic prayer among the congregation alongside fellowship.

ONLINE

We livestream one service each week, which gets more than 100 views and is appreciated by those who are housebound, traveling or connected with SML from elsewhere.

[WATCH OUR SERVICES →](#)

MUSIC

Sung worship is central to the life of SML. Our aim is to create spaces where people can encounter God and respond to Him freely and authentically. Our worship team include around sixty volunteers across musicians, singers and production people. Regular Team Nights bring together members and those interested in joining the team to worship and pray together, learn and develop and continue to build culture in preparation for leading worship each week.

“THERE IS A SENSE OF COMMUNITY, WELCOME AND FAMILY FOCUS, THE TEACHING AND WORSHIP, THE ABILITY TO FORM MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS WITH EACH OTHER.”

PRAYER LIFE

Prayer underpins everything we do at SML. At each service there is the opportunity to receive prayer ministry, which is offered by a trained team who pray with sensitivity and care. We also have a committed group of people who take part in a prayer chain, faithfully praying for the needs of the church and community. In addition, we gather monthly for a small prayer and worship meeting held both at lunchtime and in the evening, creating space simply to seek God together.

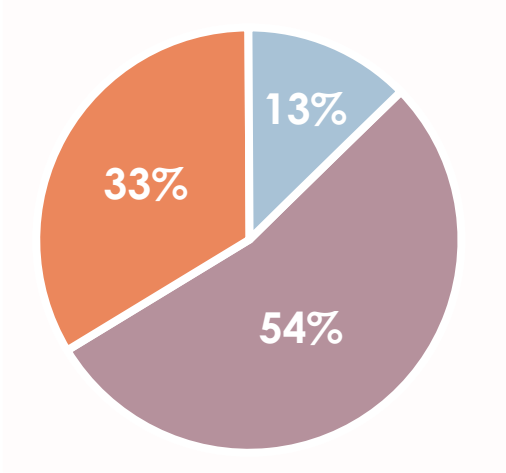
“WHOLEHEARTEDLY WORSHIPPING JESUS, SERVING HIM, GROWING AS A CHRISTIAN.”

SML IN NUMBERS

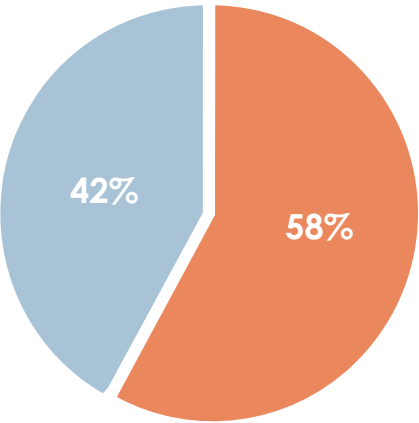
83% OF WORSHIPPING
COMMUNITY LIVE WITHIN
3 MILES OF CHURCH

AVERAGE SUNDAY ATTENDANCE 2025

527

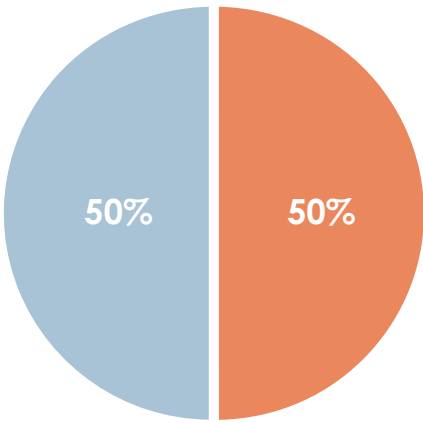


OVER 18s



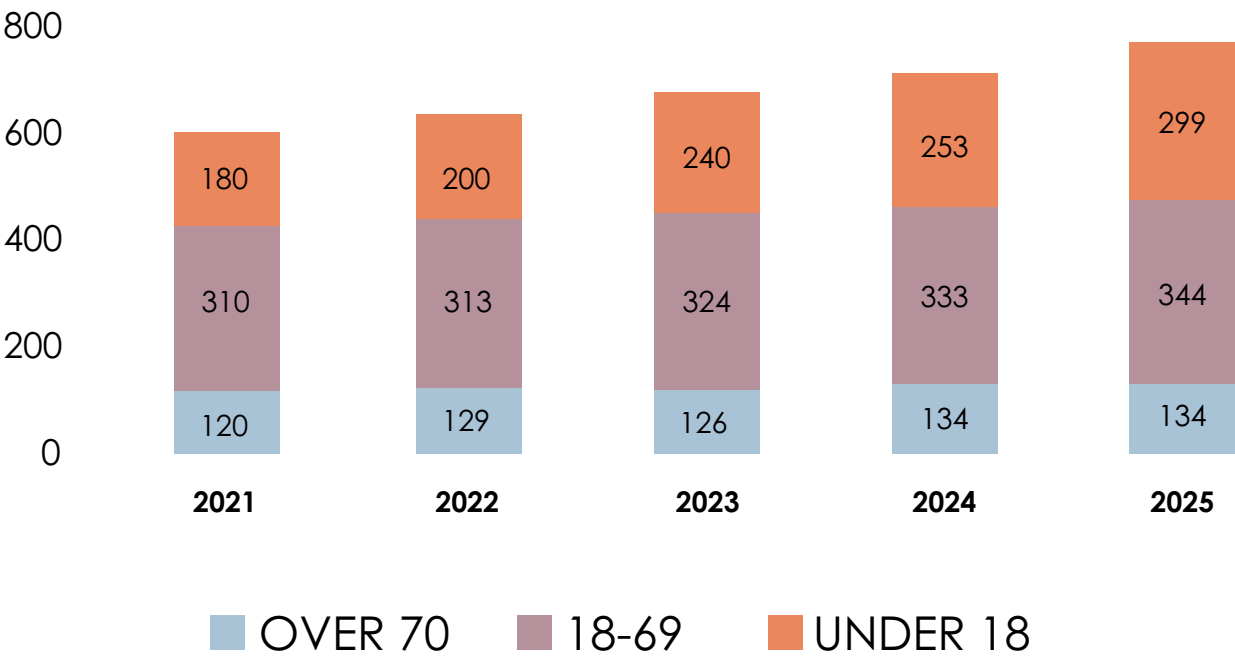
MALE FEMALE

UNDER 18s



MALE FEMALE

WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY



OVER 70 18-69 UNDER 18



OUR VISION

WHERE'S JESUS LEADING SML?

We are blessed with a thriving, multi-generational church family and a long history of generosity, faith and growth. As we look to the future, we sense God inviting us to deepen that story and to raise up courageous disciples who follow Jesus wholeheartedly and help others do the same.



OUR VISION IS SIMPLE BUT AMBITIOUS:

To grow adventurous disciples who take joy in making Jesus known across our community and beyond through:

- 1. Creativity & Prayer
- 2. Equipping Emerging Generation & Life Groups
- 3. Serving with Joy

EQUIPPING & RELEASING

To deliver this vision, we have secured significant Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment funding to support an exciting ten-year plan focused on raising, equipping and releasing disciples. As a Diocesan Mission Hub, our aim is to create a culture where faith grows naturally, a place where people are encouraged to step forward, discover their gifts and live out their faith confidently in everyday life.

LIFE GROUPS

A key part of this will be strengthening Life Groups, which are already central to church life. These small groups are places where people build friendships, study the Bible, pray together and support one another in following Jesus. We plan to continue growing the number of groups so that more people can find belonging and grow in faith.

MISSION

Alongside this, we plan to establish a Missional Leaders Hub, helping develop leaders both within SML and across the Diocese. Through training pathways, conferences and a Discipleship Year, we aim to equip people for roles in mission, worship, youth ministry and church leadership.

“A COMMUNITY THAT PRAYS & WORSHIPS WHOLEHEARTEDLY TOGETHER”

CHILDREN & YOUTH

Children and young people are already a huge part of the life of SML and we want to keep building on these strong foundations. Our objective is to deepen partnerships with local schools, grow youth gatherings and raise a new generation of leaders who will serve both within the church and beyond.

RESOURCING

SML has been recognised as a resourcing church. We have delivered a successful church graft to nearby St Michael's Hamworthy and we want to continue serving the wider church in this way. Over the coming years, we aim to develop new expressions of church and to support the revitalisation of existing congregations. This initiative might include church partnerships or plants, as well as sending small teams to support ministry in places such as Poole Hospital, the armed forces community and other local outreach contexts.

The Lord has given us an ambitious vision which we approach with humility as well as hope. We are already on a strategic path and need a leader who can handle scale, complexity, and influence the Diocese. We believe that under our new incumbent, through prayer, supported by a committed team and in God's grace, it is possible.

WHAT ARE THE OBSTACLES MOVING FORWARD?

SML is a thriving church, but like any large, active community, we face several challenges. We want to be candid about these as we look ahead.

One challenge is maintaining unity within the church family, which encompasses people from the full breadth of charismatic evangelical perspectives. Maintaining unity whilst valuing diversity is something we work at intentionally.

As the church has grown our organisation, coordination and teams have not adapted sufficiently and are not where they need to be. Making the best use of staff, volunteers and space is a challenge and we need to strengthen our systems and communication so that ministries work better together.

Our children's and youth ministries are a particular blessing, but this also carries significant responsibility. With many young people connected to the church, thoughtful leadership development and succession planning are essential.

*"MOVING PEOPLE FROM
BEING WARMLY WELCOMED
IN A SUNDAY SERVICE TO
BEING INVOLVED IN SERVING
AND FULLY BELONGING"*

There are also practical challenges. Although we have significant income, we face financial pressures, balancing a substantial ministry with the need to maintain healthy reserves. Our buildings are well used, which means space can sometimes feel over stretched.

We would love to see our social outreach grow and flourish and have a more meaningful impact in our local community.

Finally, as a large church, it can occasionally feel difficult for newcomers to find their place quickly. We want to continue working hard so that everyone feels welcomed, known and able to belong.

FACING OUR CHALLENGES



THE RIGHT PERSON



WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR IN OUR NEXT VICAR?

SML is seeking a Christ-centred leader who ministers in the power of the Holy Spirit. They will be grounded in prayer and biblical teaching, courageous in conviction, passionate about sung worship and marked by humility and integrity.

They will be someone who walks closely with Jesus, listens attentively to the Holy Spirit, and teaches Scripture with clarity, depth and relevance across generations. They need to be a compelling communicator, able to handle both joyful celebration and difficult conversations with grace, wisdom and emotional intelligence. It is desirable that they are approachable and relational, delighting in knowing people personally, nurturing disciples and building trusted relationships across a large, diverse church family.

We are looking for a leader of leaders – a collaborator who can empower staff and volunteers, develop emerging generations, and sustain unity amidst a wide range of views and backgrounds.

As SML continues to grow, they will need strong organisational awareness and the ability to manage complexity: navigating space pressures, supporting thriving youth and children's ministries, strengthening volunteer culture, and guiding the church through a season of change with steadiness and vision. Above all, they will foster a community where everyone feels welcomed, seen and discipled, enabling SML to remain a flourishing, prayerful, mission shaped church at the heart of Poole.

SML brings together people from across the charismatic evangelical spectrum. A key challenge for the next incumbent will be to hold this breadth in unity, nurturing the strong sense of togetherness already present in the congregation. This challenge includes enabling the church family to worship together with integrity while sensitively navigating the tensions that can arise from differing theological perspectives. From time to time this breadth is felt around some of the more sensitive issues facing the wider church. Our desire is to be a place where all people feel loved and welcomed, but as a conservative leaning church in the context of the Living in Love and Faith journey, prayers of blessing for same-sex couples would not be offered at SML. We are seeking a new incumbent who can lead us well within this approach.

“BIBLICAL APPLICATION AND TEACHING
OPENNESS TO THE HOLY SPIRIT”

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

We are seeking a leader who truly knows the power and value of prayer and following the Spirit's voice. They will have an authentic Jesus centred faith, embracing sung worship and creativity, while living the culture through Word, Spirit and prayer.

HAVING GIFTS THAT DIFFER

We are seeking a leader with confident humility; one who recognises all abilities come from God and knows whether they, or someone else, is the best person to make a decision, lead an activity or drive a workstream. They will be truly comfortable with the balance between their own hard work and delegating to empower others.

TEST THE HEART

We are seeking a leader with unwavering personal integrity in the context of a breadth of congregants' views and three services in one body. Leading this church may, at times, require them to be counter cultural.

SO I AM SENDING YOU

We are seeking a leader with a missional heart and culture, someone who is deeply passionate about reaching the world with God's gospel message, love and grace. This would be helped by being a gifted teacher who is able to draw out that quality in others. It would be attractive if they have a strong testimony of community engagement in a previous post.

DO ALSO TO THEM

We are seeking a compassionate and welcoming pastor who cares for, and has time for individuals, the congregation and the wider community.

IRON SHARPENS IRON

We are seeking a leader with the wisdom required to maintain unity in a large church and be collaborative with a range of people. This specifically includes a passion for youth, treating them as today's church not tomorrow's, and nurturing each congregation within the wider body.

I KNOW THE PLANS

We are seeking a leader who inspires and empowers others, bringing out the very best in volunteers and the staff teams. They will be deeply aspirational and experienced in developing strategy and will have participated in and ideally led a large church. As a leader they will be a strong long-term planner and enabler.

LEADS, WITH ZEAL

We are seeking a leader who has the authority and confidence to lead others but within that is a discerning delegator who is able to get the very best out of people. They will welcome and work effectively with talented individuals. They are likely to have worked outside the church in an operational strategic background. It is essential they have experience of line-managing in complex organisation.

BUT TO SERVE

We are seeking a leader who can shape the shared values and behaviours across the whole church family driving discipleship and serving the community. They will seek to work with other local churches.

THE RIGHT PERSON

A WELCOME BISHOP & ASSISTANT ARCHDEACON

BISHOP

This post offers an excellent opportunity for an experienced priest with the right skills to lead a large and growing church into the next stage of its mission and ministry. Building on what has been accomplished in recent years at St Mary's (SML) and working with an energetic and committed team of lay and ordained colleagues we are looking for someone equally committed to church and community for this role.

Owing to good long-term leadership in the charismatic evangelical tradition St Mary's, Longfleet, has enjoyed periods of steady growth, including amongst our young people. SML is one of the largest congregations in the diocese and been able to sustain employed lay leaders as well as develop a community outreach through its life groups, events and welcoming worship.

The church has recently been designated a hub within the diocesan strategy, with the ambition of seeing how SML can grow further outwards, working with other local churches to serve the people of Poole, and continuing to develop sustainable youth ministry. National strategic funding has been set aside for this.

We are therefore seeking a leader who will be able to develop the ministry upwards, inwards and outwards, grasping the many opportunities there are for partnership, resourcing others and helping develop discipleship and nurture new believers. There is much to build on including links with the hospital, the commitment of a full-time ordained colleague, good administrative support and committed lay leadership.

We are seeking above all a prayerful, servant hearted, leader, who will work with others in sharing some of the joys of being an outward looking and growing church.



Within our diocesan vision there is an expectation that SML, with additional investment, will contribute significantly to enabling other churches in the deanery thrive, perhaps in due course through church planting, or by creating youth congregations, as it has so much to offer.

Longfleet is a very popular place to live on the edge of Poole Park, and Poole harbour, near the station and shops. The Purbecks and beautiful countryside are not far away. There are good transport links directly to the M27 and then to the A34 northwards and M3 to London and a range of leisure activities for all ages on the doorstep.

The Poole deanery is a large but supportive one. Under a new Area Dean there is a seeking to bring together parishes in clusters for mutual encouragement and mission opportunities. Poole also enjoys good ecumenical partnerships, and civic engagement.

Should you wish to know more about this post please do not hesitate to pay a discrete visit to take a look around or contact me or the Archdeacon, the Ven Penny Sayer (01305 269074) for a conversation.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Bishop Karen
01747 811960

ASSISTANT ARCHDEACON

The Deanery of Poole and North Bournemouth is the largest in terms of population within the Diocese with around 180,000 people and growing. It comprises 21 parishes + Poole Missional Communities offering a diversity of worshipping life and expressions of church. It is served by 22 clergy of incumbent status in addition to many chaplains, curates, assistant ministers, Licensed Lay Ministers and Lay Pastoral Assistants and very many others who contribute wholeheartedly to the life of the church. Social demographics are interesting within this deanery with the very rich and wealthiest parishes sitting alongside the poorest. Like many seaside areas we are blessed with fantastic leisure opportunities and yet many within our communities struggle with issues of deprivation and poverty.

Across the Deanery financially we have a mix of churches that give more to support others and those who are in situations where for mission to continue they need to continue to receive help from others. SML has long been a church that supports others which we have seen not only in its financial giving but in other practical ways too, such as the loan of small groups to support setting up new acts of worship. We would hope to see more partnership with others as the SML Mission Hub develops.



The Deanery itself is vibrant and there is a real sense of collegiality across different churchmanship and expressions of Church. The Chapter meets regularly as a whole group and also in smaller cluster groups generally, for lunch, support and prayer. As a Deanery we share training for Lay Pastoral Assistants and Lay Worship Leaders, and our synod meetings have regularly addressed wider issues of mission and ministry and explore new ways of working and being Church.

Revd Canon Lucy Holt Assistant
Archdeacon of Dorset and
Rector St James Poole

CORE MINISTRIES

SML hosts a wide range of ministries, many of which are led by dedicated volunteers.

KIDS

Our children's ministry serves 100 children aged 0–11. Through storytelling, creative activities and conversation, we aim to help children develop a confident and curious faith in Jesus.

YOUTH

Youth ministry is a rapidly growing and thriving area of church life, with around 200 actively involved young people aged 11–18. Midweek groups provide space for fun, friendship and faith exploration, and many young people attend festivals, weekends away and events throughout the year. Around a third of those attending come from non-church backgrounds.

SCHOOLS MINISTRY

We maintain close relationship with local primary and secondary schools, including a special link with Longfleet Church of England Primary school where we run regular assemblies and host the school at Christmas and Easter. We also work closely with St Edward's secondary school where we host open chapel sessions and run several weekly gatherings which engage with over 100 pupils.

YOUNG ADULTS

It's been a joy to see significant growth in our young adults' community over the past year, with many new faces joining. Around 25–30 young adults meet weekly for Bible study, prayer and community, alongside social events that help build friendships and welcome newcomers.

[READ OUR ANNUAL REPORT →](#)

SUNSHINES

Sunshines is our popular parent and toddler group, meeting twice a week and welcoming families from across the local community. For many parents it provides a first connection with church life.

LIFE GROUPS

Life Groups sit at the heart of discipleship at SML, and the momentum we've seen over the last few years has been exciting. It is very encouraging that around 70% of our adult congregation currently belongs to a group, sharing space for prayer, Bible study, and deep friendship. Our heart is that everyone at SML will find a true sense of belonging and encouragement in the Lord.

MEN'S MINISTRY/WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Both ministries offer a variety of gatherings throughout the year, from breakfasts and walks to weekends away, creating opportunities for fellowship, teaching and outreach.

UKRAINIAN MINISTRY

We host a growing Ukrainian community of around 60 people through: live translation at our 10:45 service; a Life Group; 14–17 youth club; seniors' clubs & Alpha courses in Ukrainian, creating space for connection, support & faith exploration.

ALPHA COURSE

We run Alpha courses annually for those exploring the Christian faith, including specific groups such as foreign language and youth. The most recent course has been attended by around 75 adults.

COMMUNITY CAFÉ

Our church café welcomes around 50 people each week, offering a relaxed space for conversation and hospitality. Located close to the hospital, it often provides a natural meeting point for those who might not otherwise step into a church.

VETERANS GROUP

A monthly Veterans' Breakfast welcomes around 30–40 armed forces veterans, offering friendship, food and support.





MINISTRY PARTNERS

SML supports various local, national and international organisations through prayer, finance and practical involvement. These include local initiatives supporting the homeless and vulnerable, national charities such as Tearfund and international mission partners working in Africa and Eastern Europe.

tearfund

cpas

POOLE
FOOD
BANK+

Myra's Wells

FAITHWORKS

Routes to Roots

MARS
living love, loving life

youth with a mission

CLERGY & STAFF TEAM

SML has an Associate Vicar and committed staff team supported by wardens, lay ministers and a large volunteer base. In total, over 325 volunteers serve regularly across the church. The wider leadership community includes lay preachers, ministry leaders and experienced volunteers who play a vital role in supporting the church's ministries and services. We are also passionate about raising younger leaders and encouraging teenagers and young adults to take active roles in serving.

FTE = 11.25



Jordan Betts
Associate Vicar
40hrs



Mark Ambler
Operations Director
40hrs



Claire Inkpen
Operations Manager
40hrs



Vacant
Worship Pastor
32hrs



Rob Sallis
Head of Emerging
Generations
40hrs



Pete Dendy
Youth and Ministry
Support
32hrs



Claire Greetham
Children's Pastor
30hrs



Becca Smith
Children's Assistant
10hrs



Kym Powell
Administrator
24hrs



Gillian Rutherford
Vicar's PA
20hrs



Liz Rolleston
Pastoral Care
Co-Ordinator
19hrs



Julian Searle
Facilities Lead
24hrs



John Morrison
Placement Student
5hrs



Serena Parker
Operations and
Ministry Support
40hrs



Simon Yates
Interim Worship
Coordinator
8hrs



Phil Yeardley
Facilities Support
5hrs



David Tibbs
Verger
6hrs

Additional Support
Technical production
and Media Assistant
16hrs

Additional Support
Facilities Assistant
14hrs

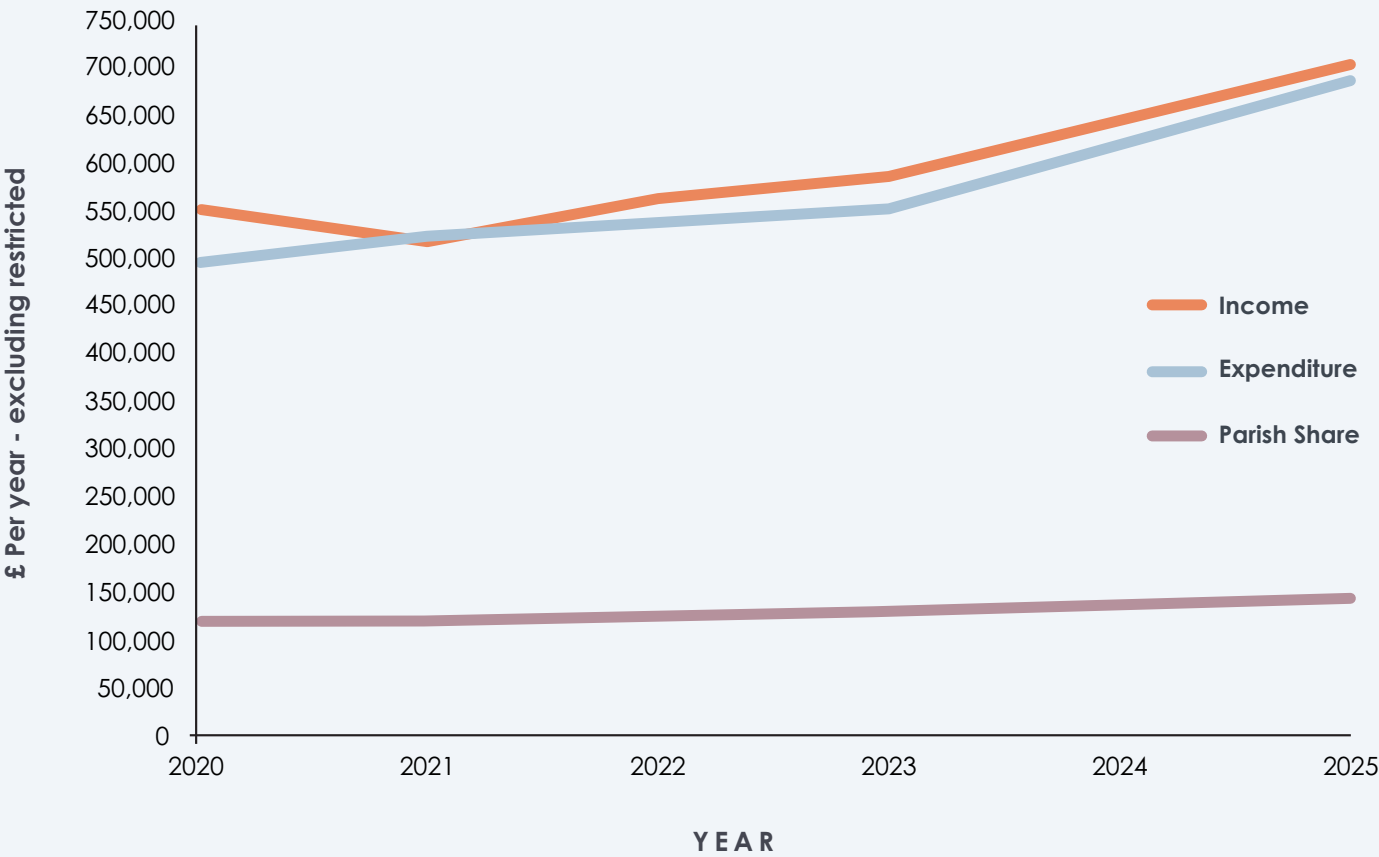
PCC SUB-TEAMS

FINANCES

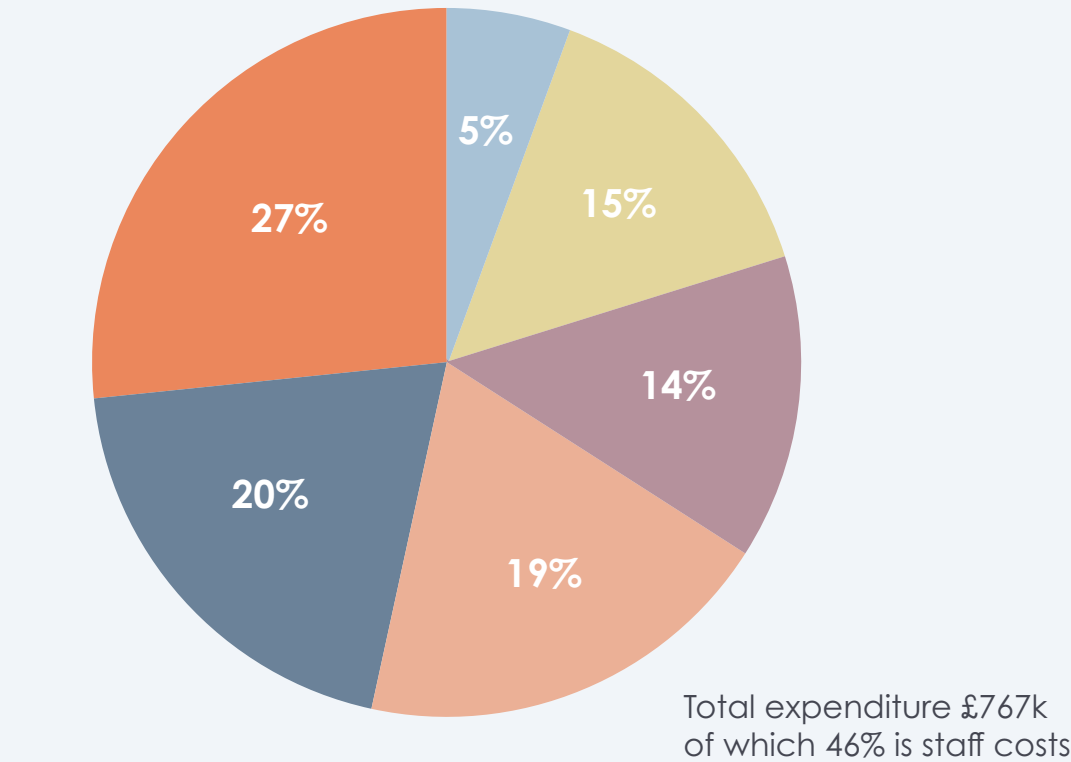
The church's finances are overseen by an experienced sub-team of the PCC. Most income comes through planned giving from the church family, supplemented by one-off gifts and building hire from community organisations. Each year, we set a budget and hold two giving events: one in the spring, linked to vision and teaching on generosity, and a second annual gift day in the autumn.

We aim to maintain a balanced pattern of spending across ministries and also operate a tithe fund, giving away 10% of unrestricted income to support mission and social action locally and internationally. Current reserves represent approximately three months of expenditure, and the church has no debt.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2020 - 2025



EXPENDITURE 2025



Mission & Outreach £43,474	Parish Share £148,062
Youth & Children's Work £111,094	Administration £153,032
Church Ministries £106,694	Buildings £204,208

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is taken very seriously at SML. Dedicated parish safeguarding officers oversee work with children and adults, supported by robust recruitment processes and DBS checks. Training is provided regularly for volunteers and staff, and safeguarding procedures are reviewed annually to ensure they meet national guidance.

FACILITIES



CHURCH

The church building seats around 365 people in its usual layout and can accommodate up to 450 when required. Flexible seating allows the space to be adapted for different events. Recent upgrades to cameras and sound equipment have improved our ability to livestream services. The building also includes office space, meeting rooms, kitchen facilities and accessible toilets.



CHURCH CENTRE

Directly opposite the church, the Church Centre serves as a busy community hub and ministry platform. It houses many children's and youth activities and is also used by local charities, support groups and medical training teams. The building includes multiple meeting rooms, office space, a commercial kitchen and full disabled access. Our eco group recently led the installation of solar panels, helping reduce our environmental impact.

WHAT WE OFFER

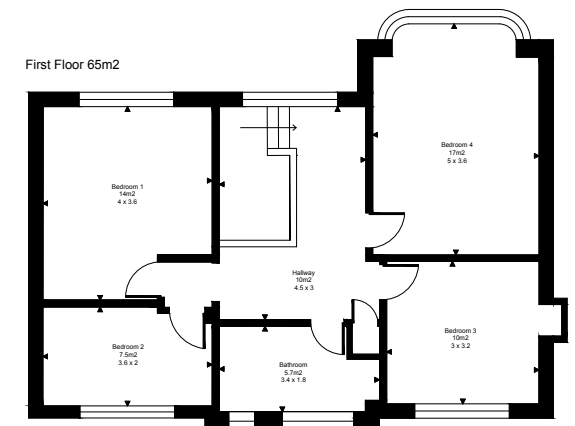
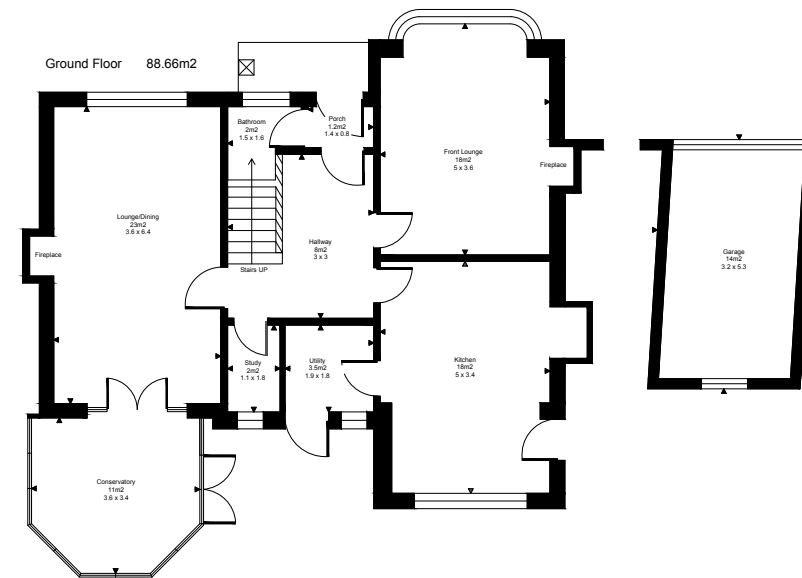
VICARAGE

The vicarage is a lovely spacious 1930s four-bedroom family home with a garden and modern interior. It is located in a desirable neighbourhood within walking distance of Poole Park, the harbour, local shops and nearby schools. The church building is an easy fifteen minute walk or a five minute drive away, making daily life both convenient and enjoyable.



SML Church offers a warm, dynamic and deeply supportive environment for the new incumbent vicar, grounded in a community that values excellence, partnership and genuine care for each individual and family. Our staff and volunteers are ready for a new season of leadership and are committed to working alongside you as we navigate opportunities and challenges together. We recognise the importance of rest and renewal for healthy ministry, so both SML and the Diocese fully support patterns of Sabbath (and other) rest, including the additional monthly leave day provided to clergy.

For families, the local area offers an exceptional range of highly regarded primary and secondary schools, including excellent grammar and comprehensive options within catchment.



Including garage
Total floor area :153.66m² (1646 sq.ft Approx)
This plan is for illustrative purposes only and should not be scaled.
Drawn By Harry R Powell.



PARISH DEMOGRAPHICS

The 2021 census revealed 8739 residents living in 3939 households in the parish, and the population is predominantly white British (over 90%) with other ethnic groups represented. Over 50% of the residents described themselves as Christian

The parish of St Mary's Longfleet ranks at 7,236 in the deprivation index (where 1= most deprived and 12,154 = least deprived)
Poole has an estimated population of 151,500 (2024 data) and together with Bournemouth and Christchurch the conurbation has a total population of 400,196

WHAT WOULD IT BE LIKE TO LIVE HERE?

POOLE AS HOME

Poole is a beautiful coastal town in Dorset, known for its large natural harbour, sandy beaches and proximity to the Jurassic Coast and New Forest. It offers a wonderful quality of life for those who enjoy the outdoors. There are good transport links, including rail connections to Southampton and London and ferry routes to France. Like many towns, Poole contains both wealth and areas of deprivation, providing opportunities for a wide range of ministry. SML itself is nearly 200 years old and sits on a main road close to Poole Hospital. The church spire is a well-known local landmark.

