



St John's with St Andrew's, Waterloo.

Five Year Vision: May 2026

St John's, Waterloo has been serving the people of Waterloo and London since 1824. We have a proud history of offering worship to God and supporting local people. Our buildings – St John's, Waterloo and St Andrew's, Short Street, have gone through many changes, adapting and re-adapting to meet contemporary needs, and being rebuilt after the trauma of the Second World War.

St John's was renovated in 2022. Over the past three years we have grown and developed our work in many ways.

- We strive to be a beacon for a Christianity, centered in a daily round of worship and prayer, which celebrates inclusion and speaks out for justice, working for a society where everyone can flourish and no one is held back by structural injustice.
- We offer a deep community engagement through our sister charity The Bridge At Waterloo which welcomes over 60 people each week, many of whom experience isolation and other challenges.

- We maintain our churchyard, with the support of a committed group of volunteers. The churchyard won gold in last year's London in Bloom competition
- We work with a range of inspiring and excellent arts organisations – both professional and amateur – who create world class arts and music alongside inspiring community projects
- We support homeless people by providing a night shelter in winter and offering help and resources for people who are on the street

Our Sunday and weekday services welcome a wide range of people who are seeking a deeper engagement with God and their spiritual journey. We are a community which seeks to study, learn and listen to its calling, and discern where we are being led by the Spirit.

Many young adults are finding their way to us, seeking community, justice and a place to grow and explore their journey. We work for a juster, fairer world, caring for people and nature. Our vocal support for LGBTQ+ people has brought into being a community which is unusually diverse, and confident in its diversity.

We want to build on this foundation to nourish the green shoots in our communal and worshipping life, and support others who are, through creativity and/or spiritual exploration, seeking greater engagement and discovery.

We held an AwayDay on Saturday January 24th 2026 attended by members of the PCC and Subcommittees at which we outlined our vision for the next five years. (Notes from the AwayDay are at Appendix 1 below.)

By December 2031 we want to be

- A thriving worshipping community numbering three times our current membership of 165
- A place where people who are pursuing their spiritual journeys are confident to ask questions without fear that answers will be imposed
- A HUB church, sharing our experience and knowledge with other churches

- A beacon for environmental sustainability, speaking and working for a just transition to a more sustainable world.
- Courageously taking action in areas of injustice, including supporting homeless and displaced people in the UK and abroad, people migrating to the UK, and older people experiencing poverty.
- Supporting our sister charity the Bridge at Waterloo to increase our involvement with local residents, working in partnership with organisations such as Coin Street Community Building.
- Known in the ecosystem of London as a place of excellence and community focus for music and the arts.
- A key player in the local neighbourhood, supporting the many community and business organisations locally and working with Lambeth and Southwark to make this area a thriving place to live in, work in and visit.
- Debt free and with a resilient financial plan for the future.

By 31st May 2027 we aim to:

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
Hold a regular Celebration Sunday, four times a year, bringing our worshipping communities together for lunch	Congregation committee, Face to Faith, Open Table
Hold community event/ fun day in the churchyard.	Renewal and congregation committee
Develop our new role of Associate Priest, supporting people in their 20's and 30's and our arts work especially through the arts and culture working group and working with others in our role as a Hub church.	Clergy team
Develop our identity as an inclusive church, building our provision for people with disabilities	Open Table/Clergy Team
Work with the staff team to finalise a 5 year Action Plan for our arts and culture engagement, lettings and bookings and the work of the Bridge at Waterloo ensuring long term sustainability	Vicar/Resources Committee

Ensure that all the activities within the church are clearly associated with St John's – and encourage cross-activity fertilization.	Comms committee
Improve our communications with the congregation about the work of the PCC, Bridge at Waterloo and subcommittees	Comms committee
Review the subcommittee structure and terms of reference and implement revised structure	Clergy team/PCC
Ask revised subcommittees to review Mission Action Plan goals agreed in 2025 in the light of this Five Year Vision	All subcommittees
Develop a strategy for our youth and children's work, taking into account the relatively small number of families with children locally	Clergy team/PCC

Appendix 1 – Notes from the AwayDay held on Saturday January 24th 2026

Group feedback

In five years' time

- 1 A thriving worshipping community
 - a. Bigger congregation and choir
 - b. Nurturing everyone
- 2 Sustainable – financial, clergy team, green, env
- 3 Continue and grow everything we already have inc. outreach and types of worship.
- 4 Increase community involvement, e.g Coin Street
- 5 Increase arts
- 6 Want St John's to be a key desirable music venue, like the South Bank!
 - a. Survey to locals, what do they want from St J?
 - b. Café, local evangelism, a new youth centre for locals,
 - c. Christian 'church watcher'
- 7 Debt Free
- 8 Focusing on retention
- 9 Reflective on profile
- 10 More responsive to needs of congregation
- 11 Building on reputation as an arts venue
- 12 A centre of excellence – HUB church, helping other churches develop as we have.
 - a. Structured for future resilience – finances, succession planning no single points of failure. Planning for growth
- 13 Activist – with visible results
 - a. TBAW – homelessness, migration, older people/pension poverty
- 14 Community focused – esp in Arts and Music work, i.e. not too narrowly construed, bringing in families and diverse groups.
- 15 ALTERNATIVE HTB
- 16 Questioning/informative

- 17 Known for above
- 18 Healthy commitment
- 19 Resources, Money
- 20 Themes for year's activity and worship
 - a. Health and wellbeing
 - b. Local environment
- 21 Relationships between congregation and local community
- 22 Neighbourhood

Actions for Year 1

- 1 Celebration Sunday, bringing our worship communities together for lunch (INTERNAL) integration of congregations. ACTION – congregation committee, F2F, OT
- 2 Community event/ fun day. Prizes. Using the garden. Bringins community in. (OUTREACH) Summer event alongside carol service. ACTION – renewal committee
- 3 Also – Georgia's new role / start of hub
 - a. Arts and music working group
 - b. Growth of Open Table (Neil)
- 4 Integrated affirming
- 5 10.30 as central event?
- 6 3 celebration Sundays, include meal, bring and share. Different groups responsible for these. Action – Georgie, clergy
- 7 Language within groups to remind part of St John's, e.g. St John's Open Table ,St John's Face to Faith. Better comms for future events - Clergy team
- 8 Demystifying subcommittees and reporting back about meetings – Laurie and team
- 9 Invite small numbers of church members for more 'fringe events.'
- 10 More integrated church
- 11 Rationalise subcommittee structure by Annual Church Meeting – PCC
- 12 Use Rivers of Life to showcase St John's and build on it to develop engagement – clery, comms, renewal, congregation committee, PCC

Appendix 2: Summary of Five Year Strategy developed in Autumn 2024 by the staff team at St John's, for incorporation into our Five Year Vision

Purpose and Context

- The document sets out SJW's vision and strategic goals for 2025–2030, aiming to guide the church's development as a hub for worship, community, arts, and social justice.
 - It responds to recent growth, a major restoration, and the need to secure SJW's future as an inclusive, creative, and resilient organisation.
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Key Strategic Aims

Church

- SJW is an inclusive Anglican church, welcoming people from diverse backgrounds.
 - **Main goal:** Triple the weekly congregation from 80 (2025) to 240 by 2030 across all services.
 - Focus on being a safe space for spiritual exploration, especially for those with past trauma from church experiences.
 - Continue commitment to creativity, justice, climate action, and expanding provision for children and young people.
 - Four subcommittees (Congregation, Renewal, Communications, Resources) oversee mission delivery.
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Arts and Music

- SJW aims to be London's leading "Arts Church," integrating faith, creativity, and social justice.
- **Current strengths:** Historic venue for music and arts, strong community projects, annual Waterloo Festival.

- **Gaps:** Fragmented cultural identity, limited artist engagement, underused spaces, lack of audience data.
 - **Goals:**
 - Define a coherent cultural identity and strategy.
 - Integrate professional and community arts.
 - Develop artist residencies and open-call schemes.
 - Invest in facilities, technology, and marketing.
 - Track and grow audience diversity and engagement.
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Community (The Bridge at Waterloo - TBAW)

- TBAW is SJW's sister charity, focusing on community engagement, arts, and horticulture.
 - **Programme:** "Room for You" offers creative, wellbeing, and social activities for marginalised groups.
 - **Gaps:** Limited evening/weekend activities, reliance on volunteers, underused spaces, fragmented outreach.
 - **Goals:**
 - Strategically curate and expand activities.
 - Strengthen volunteer recruitment and support.
 - Improve outreach to underrepresented groups.
 - Enhance facilities and accessibility.
 - Develop a five-year fundraising plan for sustainability.
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Bookings and Events

- By 2030, all bookings/events (church, cultural, charitable, commercial) will align with SJW's mission.
 - **Challenge:** Replace the £200,000 annual income from the Bovingdons contract (ending by 2030/1) with new, mission-aligned revenue streams.
 - **Transition plan:**
 - Grow music, arts, and charity bookings.
 - Professionalise operations (CRM, marketing, staff training).
 - Maintain high-quality facilities.
 - Diversify income and manage risk.
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Resources and Facilities

- Maintain two top-quality, brand-aligned buildings (SJW and St Andrew's) with proactive maintenance.
 - Invest in technology (digital visitor management, CRM, box office systems).
 - Continue sustainability initiatives (EcoChurch Gold Award, energy review, recycling).
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Finance and Fundraising

- Develop integrated financial tracking and reporting.
 - Diversify funding sources and build long-term relationships with donors and partners.
 - Create pathways for community and artist representation in governance.
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Measures of Success

- Tripled congregation size.
 - Growth in artist engagement, diversity, and repeat collaborations.
 - Stronger partnerships and strategic use of venue.
 - Improved audience numbers, diversity, and engagement.
 - High satisfaction among visitors, audiences, and clients.
 - Financial sustainability and resilience post-Bovingdons contract.
 - Recognition as London's leading Arts Church.
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Phased Timeline (2025–2030)

- **2025:** Lay foundations, recruit key staff, review systems.
 - **2026:** Build capacity, upgrade facilities, launch flagship projects.
 - **2027:** Scale and diversify bookings, secure partnerships.
 - **2028:** Consolidate brand, implement quality assurance.
 - **2029:** Prepare for income transition, professionalise staff.
 - **2030:** Achieve financial sustainability, mission-aligned operations.
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Appendix 3 : Mission Action Plan agreed 2024 and revised 2025.

Congregation Committee	3 year objective 2024	Activities in 2025-27	Future priorities
Priority areas			
Community building and fellowship	Organise at least one outing a year away from London, both day-pilgrimages and parish/retreats/residential weekends and Quiet Days. Congregation committee members – and others - helped out with the 2024 Waterloo festival including Giles's book launch and the 200th anniversary...	Cuckmere circuit walk – dogs welcome - plans well underway (Neil) – 4th October St Francis's Day walking pilgrimage in Sussex. Details later. To include introduction to the Berwick paintings (parish offer/Debo/Chris C?) Creation Day (QD) – 27th September with the Sisters of St Andrew (again) – self-book Festival etc. Happy to support some of The Bridge at Waterloo events, such as Festival, need prior notification about this. Great thanks to all who support community life/shared hospitality etc.	Community and fellowship Include involvement in Waterloo festival – dates and duties to be confirmed. Overnight parish weekend type events.
Sunday worship - coordination of teams	Make sure the worship is well supported. Coordinate the teams, especially around special occasions. Aim to bring all teams together 3 times a year (termly).	Plan Sunday volunteer get togethers	Sunday worship: gathering planned to include Sunday servers, bellringers, readers and intercessors - do a big thank you during APCM. Training schedule for volunteers in services. Involve other groups?
Pastoral care	Make sure that we have a good system to support people. Invite the congregation to say how they would be better supported.	Encourage pastoral care within congregation	Pastoral Care : Develop strategy.

Renewal Committee goals for 2024/5

Priorities	2024 SMART Goals	Activities in 2024/25 – progress	Activities in 2025-26
Justice Renewal			
Giving and engaging	Support 20 projects directly (measurable = projects that give feedback) Encourage congregational support	• Selection process of the charities / projects to be discussed - involve Finance team and/or congregation as in the past? (core: USPG, Ch.Aid, TBAW) • Consider selecting projects / charities according to the SJRC themes i.e. Justice / Spirit and Environment • To consider: Tools for Self-Reliance and Loo Twinning, Carole Milner's Elders Group to keep under our radar, supporting TBAW namely Room For You • Having a feature in Column Inches (CI) of the charities / projects supported for congregational info and attracting support (Meet with Comms c'ttee)	• To continue our outward giving.
Here for Renewal	6 talks a year from congregation members	Talks series replacing Here For Justice - meet with the Comms c'ttee and connect with CI on their guest regular interviews of congregation members. Invite the people interviewed for CI to talk about their journey re Justice, Environment and/or Spirit. The talks format and other related aspects (PR, venue in the crypt, length...) to be discussed	• To continue our Here for Renewal talks and increase our speakers.

Community Activism	3 marches, 3 campaigns, 100 letters/emails, support 1 local group	Re-connect with people off the radar (e.g. former worshippers) Continue our work with Citizens and aim to get at least 2 or 3 new people working with Paul Smedley on Citizens and the Be Well Network (as well as Abigal Trip and Georgia Ashwell).	Active support for London Citizens, including meeting with MP, actions on Living Wage, hosting workshop, and accreditation of our Room for You as a Be Well Hub.
Spirit Renewal			
Mental Health	Signpost 20 people to Be Well Hub, Art Club etc	Be Well Hub (in conjunction with Citizens UK) which overlaps with Room For You activities / support Room For You Active Listening Having a link / a list of all the activities SJW and TBAW/Room for You offer in order to be able to signpost new members to activities and regular events (Walking group, Gardening Club, Art Club...) (discuss further what 'listening' could further entail - 1to1, group meetings etc.)	- To continue signposting. - To work with Abigail Trip and our listening House Meeting group.
Developing Spirituality	Worship demystifying materials Exploring Spirit II (20% increase on 2023) Newcomer lunches 4? Church buddy 10 newcomers? Families, Christingle	- Worship-demystifying materials e.g. having a FAQs on service rites and history of worship to feel at home in church - Church buddy (different from the welcoming team) - designated member(s) of the congregation with whom new members could seat next to during the service	- To build on our Exploring Spirit and Creative Spirit courses. - FAQ for the website.

		- Families, Christingle: use the Post Office service for distributing leaflets in our post code area to attract young families to this service - services engaging children: help Grey Aim to double weekly attendance in church	
Open Space	Inclusivity and Accessibility Statement in church Renewed commitment to being an open space	Have a sign / poster in church with statement Have a sign to the access ramp	To implement our work on accessibility signage.
Environment Renewal			
Living up to Eco Gold	Increase recycling in church (20%) Reduce food waste in church (50%)		Continue our eco questionnaire each year.
Make do, Mend and Share	Set up organisation (start operations by September) Link with Gardening Team (1 project)	(aka Repair Shop)	Begin trial for FreeFix
Sustainability Club	Run and report congregation questionnaire (x2) Recycled Christmas Cards (1 session) Car share (1) Speakers on sustainability e.g. heating (2) Swapshop for clothes/books etc (1)		Activity at Waterloo Festival picnic – tbc.

Resources Committee Priorities 2024 – 2027

Priority areas	3 year objective 2024	Activities in 2025-26
Ensure financial stability and continued funding for Parish Support Fund	Maintain annual budget surplus and three months reserves after repaying contractual loan capital and interest Increase congregational giving by 10%/year Loan repayment in order of priority • repay all contractual capital and interest • build up sufficient reserve for the higher contractual repayments in 2028/32 • repay a further 20% of outstanding bank loan	We will continue to work on financial oversight and to maintain our overall financial discipline. We recently approved amended financial procedures to monitor spending outside the agreed budget and expenditure within certain agreed thresholds. Repayment of loans remains a priority and we are pleased to have cleared our loan to the Diocese two years' early. During the year we want to work further on our ten year forecast and discuss as widely as possible our income position in the light of reduced activity from our events partner and the potential that they do not extend or renew their contract.
Ensure that our operations, including bookings, partnerships and community action, are robust and well governed	Implement excellent human resources and statutory policies and procedures	Working on excellent HR procedures and practices will continue this year.

Develop and manage a long-term plan for maintenance of buildings	Keep our buildings functional at all times, well maintained and in good decorative order Ensure that all known and potential major repairs are either in hand at the end of 2027 or budgeted in future years	We recognize that maintaining good letting spaces across St John's and St Andrews is critical to our financial stability. Expenditure on this has to be a priority and we will spend the next year refining our plan to ensure that this is done.
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Communications Committee Priorities 2024 – 2027

This strategy is based on our draft audience mapping exercise done in February 2024: [Target Audiences and Comms Methods.docx](#)

Priority areas	3 year objective 2024	Activities in 2025-26
Accurate and accessible information easily available on SJW activities	Website and other external comms are: - accurate and up to date, - reflect the values and ethos of the church, - effective for all our purposes including congregational discipleship, church growth, income from bookings, community work, arts and music programmes, social action, and social and climate justice work - accessible for different audiences	• Accessibility review of new website • Out of date material removed more promptly – signs taken down asap, foyer carousel, home page on website – needs a plan
Agile and engaging social media	Social media content is relevant and interesting, attracts new followers and supports all our various strands of activity equally	• Increase cross-engagement between different comms platforms e.g. CI and Instagram • Increase video content on insta, and posts with multiple slides

Monitoring effectiveness of all communications in reaching for all our audiences	Our communications channels work effectively together to meet the needs of our different audiences, and to showcase who we are, as evidenced by monitoring / review of - email Newsletters - website statistics - social media reach - Column Inches reach (print and online) - signage around the building and garden / periphery - WhatsApp groups	• More website stats analysis and comms / social media data • Column Inches review action plan
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