

CHALE CHURCHYARD COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

I have pleasure in enclosing a copy of our financial report for 2024 which ended with the finances of the Chale Churchyard Committee for the year with £1,889 in hand, just some £50 down on last year.

This is pleasing as we have faced a year of steady growth in grass and coping with regular rain. It just never stops growing! The weather has given Dave Holmes and his helper a regular requirement to mowing the Churchyard throughout the year. We have been faced with some maintenance costs to our mowing equipment, and have also stained the roadside gates, the benches in the churchyard and the external wooden doors to the Church. They have done a good job!

We have greatly benefited from the generosity of Chale Service Station who for many years have donated petrol for our mowers. Sadly, they have now closed and we will be faced with providing the petrol ourselves. Our grateful thanks to Roy Sheath and his family for their support. This expense will add roughly £100 per year to our budget.

The second half of the year saw an increase in burials, mainly of cremated remains, and Dave has dug two graves for ashes, and mowed graveside areas for the funerals. Around September we attended to five burials (but as normal we did receive a proportion of the costs from the P.C.C. fees).

Towards the end of the year we had a generous offer from the Victoria Cross Trust to clean some memorials in the Churchyard, free of cost to us. They came from the mainland and did a wonderful job cleaning the Parish War Memorial, and the so called "Angel" monument to the memory of the Read family of the Blackgang Mission Church. They did a wonderful job and we have donated them £100 towards their costs from our funds.

We have also been awarded an increase in the annual fee, to £15 p.a., we receive from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission towards cleaning the headstones to the two War Graves in the Churchyard from the start of 2025, for which we thank them.

This has all been achieved by generous donations from individual families in Chale and village groups such as the Horticultural Society and representatives from the Methodist Church in Chale. We thank them for their generosity. This has been achieved without any specific fundraising events. The Committee has operated without a specific meeting, but with regular newsletters, for which I thank them.

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Due to certain health problems our hard working and reliable Secretary, Lynette Atkinson, has had a stay in hospital but I am pleased to be able to say she is now slowly recovering at home. Thank you Lyn.

I have given up my car due to ageing problems (me and the car!) so unless there is a specific need to hold a meeting, we will operate by quarterly newsletters which seems to work well; any matter a member wishes raised can be done, and a meeting called if required.

I thank everyone who works so hard for our Church and trust that financial donations we receive are maintained in future (and the sun and rain keeps our Churchyard looking so well). I am also delighted to hear that the Church clock has been repaired and is working again!

Derek Sprake
Chairman and Treasurer