

Minutes of PCC Meeting
Tuesday 17 March 2026 at 7pm
at St John's Church

Present:

Rev. Graeme Dixon (Chairman)	Sue Muldowney (from 7.40pm)
Kevan Abernethy	Peter Myerscough-Jackopson
Sarah Beak	Christine Owen
Lynn Black	John Pennells
Ewan Brown	Linda Purkess
Glennis Gould	John Sofrin (from 7.20pm)
Simon Harris (to 9.00pm)	Katrina Stout
Angela Jones	Crawford White
Randell McKay	

		Action
1.	<p>Opening Prayer Graeme Dixon opened the meeting by reading from Psalm 134, and leading a short time of open prayer.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies for Absence Ann Laird, Sarah Phelps</p>	
3.	<p>Declarations of interest Ewan Brown is a paid employee. Graeme Dixon is the husband of Steph Dixon who is a paid employee.</p>	
4.	<p>Health and Safety</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. Spacing of Chairs at St John's Church Graeme stated that concerns had been raised about insufficient and random spacing between the rows of chairs. The manufacturer of the chairs told Graeme that there were no legal guidelines under which we could be prosecuted. The guidelines issued in the UK Safety, Spacing and Legal Guide for Church Chair Layout state that there should be, as a minimum, 36-48 inches from the back of a chair to the back of the chair behind it. There are three recommended spacings; one to enter a row sideways; one to enter forwards and one to easily pass another person.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Graeme stated that he had moved forward the remaining front two pews and spaced the chairs more evenly, to see how people felt. One of the remaining front pews has been sold and once this has been collected then there would more room to space the chairs. Once all the pews had finally been removed there would be markers on the floor for the placement of chairs. Randell asked whether we needed all the rows of chairs? Graeme replied that there was someone in every row at the All Age Worship service. It was suggested we had some rows with wider spacing. It was stated that the chairs were easier to move to accommodate the wheelchairs at evening services.</p>	

	<p>It was commented the stone had become very smooth and could be roughed up, or asphalt strips used. Roll matting had been considered but felt to be impractical. Graeme stated he would speak to those who are affected, to seek a way forward.</p>	Graeme
7.	<p>St John's</p> <p>i. Church Administrator Maternity Leave Graeme confirmed that there had been 5 applicants for the vacancy to cover for maternity leave, and 4 people had been interviewed. 2 applicants had been offered the job but had declined. Graeme was hopeful that another applicant would accept the role the following day.</p> <p>ii. Church Hall Update Graeme confirmed that the Feasibility Group had met recently to decide how to move forward. It had been agreed to contact Kingswell Building Ltd., who design and supply modular buildings, to arrange an initial meeting to discuss what they can do, and obtain illustrations and costs.</p> <p>Phil Bundy had intimated that he would be able to find funds to fix the Hall roof, but Graeme had confirmed the Hall was no longer fit for purpose. Graeme stated that he had spoken to Richard Bullen, the Architect, who advised that we need to be clear what we want the building for, and his guidance was to demolish the existing Hall.</p> <p>Katrina stated that she had spoken to someone who had questioned whether we need a new Hall and whether all our church activities could be done in the church building. It was agreed that the church building had its limitations, and particularly some of the children's activities needed a hall.</p> <p>Graeme confirmed that a feasibility study had been carried out which included accommodating a Pre-School, which would need two rooms, and to house the Church Office, with space for Ewan to work. Paint Pots, a Christian Pre-School Franchise would be a local resource to help with set-up. Graeme confirmed that he had contacted the Diocese, as they are the Custodian Trustees of the current hall, set up under a Charity Commission Scheme, and would be liaising with Nigel Wright in the Property Management Department. Graeme stated the Church Hall was originally called the Mission Room.</p> <p>Christine commented that she felt the Lord had given her a vision, several years ago, of a much larger Church Hall, to be used for church activities and events as well as for the community, as a stepping stone for bringing new people into the Church. God had a big vision for us.</p> <p>Graeme stated it was important to include the local community, and to make this a journey not a destination.</p> <p>iii. Guttering Repairs It was stated that a List B application would be needed for the guttering repairs outside the Vestry. These repairs, together with pointing, would enable the Vestry wall to dry out before re-plastering. The repairs were approved: Proposed by Simon Harris and seconded by Sarah Beak.</p>	Graeme
8.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>i. 1B Promoting the Welfare of Vulnerable Groups Worksheet Lynn Black led the discussion as part of her Ordinand training; to enable the PCC to answer two questions:</p> <p><i>Q1: What vulnerable groups do we have in our church?</i> <i>Answer:</i> Children; under 18's; elderly; Friday Friends (Bereavement Group); Tots Group; those with mental illness/dementia/mobility problems.</p>	

	<p>Ewan Brown confirmed we run the following groups which involve children: Two groups on Monday evenings; youth group on Wednesday evenings; two groups on Friday evenings; Christian Union groups at Rownhams, Nursling and Mountbatten schools; Lego Church; Tots Group; youth band and singers; puppets; Light Party; craft events and school assemblies.</p> <p><i>Q2: How could those in leadership roles better engage with and promote their welfare?</i></p> <p><i>Answer:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The physical condition of the room for Tots group and forming relationships with parents/guardians; some not affiliated with church. - Being aware of children with difficult home situations/SEN/fostered children, and all those less able to look after themselves. - Visiting those who are ill; at home and in hospital. - We offer Holy Communion once a month in a local Care Home, including those with dementia. - We use a ramp for easier access of wheelchairs into the church, and move chairs to make space for them in services. - Helping the homeless, using our Barty Fund as appropriate. Graeme stated that he had a recent incident with a homeless person wanting to sleep in the church porch. Graeme called upon the support of a Church Warden and they agreed for the person to sleep in the Church Hall for one night. It was commented that often vulnerable people become manipulative, which in turn also makes us the vulnerable ones. It was noted that we do not have an official process providing guidance and boundaries when dealing with vulnerable people. - Street Pastors could be invited to share some of their experiences and how they deal with them. Use some of their resources listing agencies who help the homeless. - The PCC must be made aware of and be assured that any known offenders and others who pose a risk to children and vulnerable adults, are effectively managed, with advice from the Diocese. - Community Payback teams are sent to St Boniface if there are children's activities being held at St John's. <p>It was agreed the following two actions should be taken:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define a process for pastoral ways of working. 2. Create boundaries within which to offer help. (eg rough sleepers) <p>The Worksheet discussions were approved: Proposed by Simon Harris and seconded by Lynn Black.</p>	<p>Graeme/Sue</p> <p>Graeme/Sue/ Lynn/Peter</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Nursling May Fair Graeme agreed to speak to Mike Bunce regarding our involvement at the May Fair.</p>	<p>Graeme</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Parochial Visitation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Checklist It was stated that the PCC response was being prepared. It was advised by the Diocese that paper copies of all documents and items from the Terrier be displayed on tables for the Visitation. ii. Martyn's Law Graeme stated that we should wait for guidance from the Diocese regarding Martyn's Law, which required actions to deal with a terrorist threat. It was commented that a key would be needed to lock the front door of St John's Church, to prevent entry of any threat, and it was proposed that a spare key was hung on the wall inside the church. <p>Graeme confirmed that there would be a Fire Alarm exercise after the APCM.</p>	<p>Peter</p> <p>Graeme</p>

	<p>iii. Employees as Trustees Under Charity Commission provisions being a trustee is generally a voluntary role. This is what makes the charity sector unique and promotes trust and confidence in charities. The Parish Visitation check list includes 'It is not good practice for an employee of the PCC to also be a member of that body. Does anyone fall into this category? If yes, has this been registered with the Charity Commission.' (Further investigation post the meeting suggests that the process to register a trustee as an employee is very involved and certain actions must be taken by the PCC before submitting the request to the Charity Commission.)</p>	
11.	<p>Deanery Synod Deferred to next PCC Meeting.</p>	
12.	<p>Audio and Visual Contractors A list of DAC approved contractors had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was stated that the Brief compiled by David Hammond was being updated by David Thompson, and this would be sent to the contractors. It was agreed that a minimum of 3 quotes should be obtained for consultation fees; the PCC must approve any expenditure before an order is placed and the team of technicians should request the quotes. Proposed by Simon Haris and seconded by Ewan Brown.</p>	David T/ Technicians
13.	<p>Sound System/Projector It was confirmed that the current Projector being used at St John's Church was on loan from Clive Jones, but it had been broken. It was agreed that a replacement should be purchased for return to Clive. It was acknowledged that we had received a lot of free kit including speakers which still needed to be mounted on the wall. Graeme confirmed that we have been offered a donation of up to £10,000 towards upgrading our sound and audio system.</p>	Technicians
14.	<p>Minutes of PCC meeting on 18 November 2025 i. Approve the Minutes for accuracy The Minutes were approved: Proposed by Ewan Brown and seconded by Crawford White.</p>	
15.	<p>Minutes of PCC meeting on 20 January 2026 i. Approve the Minutes for accuracy The Minutes were approved: Proposed by Ewan Brown and seconded by Crawford White ii. Matters Arising 7. Policies Graeme confirmed that the Spice Organisation offered support to Clergy and their spouses. Lynn agreed to give Ewan access to the Policies section on Sharepoint to enable him to upload the Data Protection and Privacy Policy and the Complaints Policy onto our website. 11.ii Key Safe Graeme confirmed that the new key safe was ready to be fitted to the church porch at St John's. 12.i 6. Finance For the purposes of Gift Aid, Ewan to update the website with our full charity name instead of 'twinspires'. 12.i Asbestos Certificate Graeme confirmed he was waiting for the certificate from the roofer.</p>	Lynn/Ewan Graeme Ewan Graeme

	<p>12. 13iii Prayer Ministry Training Graeme stated that he had reminded the Bishop’s Chaplain of this need, at the recent Clergy Conference.</p> <p>12. 13iii PTO Application for Steve Beak Graeme confirmed that the application was still with the Bishop.</p> <p>14.ii 6 Sidespeople (Stewards) Graeme confirmed the Job Specification was in progress.</p> <p>15ii. 6ii. St John’s Lightening Protection Scheme Peter confirmed that he was liaising with Chris Bird regarding the possible re-location of trees from the Bible garden.</p>	<p>Graeme</p> <p>Graeme</p> <p>Peter</p>
<p>16.</p>	<p>Date of future meetings APCM: Wednesday 29 April 2026 7pm St John’s Church</p> <p>Deanery Synod Meetings: Wednesday 24 June 2026 – Longstock Village Hall (tbc)</p>	
<p>17.</p>	<p>Any Other Urgent Business</p> <p>i. Flooring at St John’s Church Graeme confirmed that he had met with the Architect, Richard Bullen, in St John’s Church, who subsequently emailed his thoughts to Graeme:</p> <p>“Background:</p> <p>Churches of this era are commonly found to have flooring comprising decorative tiles of coloured clays to give a patterned, but generally mat, appearance. This seems to be what is visible in the chancel. These tiles were generally laid on a thin mortar or limecrete. From the mid-1850s onwards (when St Johns was originally constructed), a Portland cement-based mix was often used. In most cases, these bases were bedded directly onto compacted earth.</p> <p>My guess is that these tiles were prone to movement in the past and also let in a lot of moisture. We can see settlement cracks in the walls of the church and also the ingress of water which has caused damage to the lime plaster in some places. I expect that previous generations sought to control this by overlaying the tiles with a bituminous based coating and then a slightly raised area of timber (hardboard) on battens.”</p> <p>Richard Bullen suggested three main options for remedial work. The first two options of Re-bedding the tiles or Overlaying with a new Surface would be time consuming and costly. He therefore, recommended the third option of Extending the Current Raised Floor to the entrance and between the first seats and the chancel steps. This would be a relatively small area which could be completed in phases, with less impact on the church and the least cost.</p> <p>Richard also stated that we needed to carefully consider a non-slip floor covering, with a high R rating creating friction to help alleviate the problem of the chairs slipping.</p> <p>Graeme stated that he had also spoken to Richard Streatfield at the Diocese, who advised that we should probably investigate what was under the pew platform and he gave permission for us to remove a strip of flooring. However, if we did this and found major problems we could not ignore these. It would be our decision.</p> <p>It was agreed that we would not remove any flooring at this stage, but Graeme would arrange a meeting at St John’s Church between Richard Bullen and Richard Streatfield, to form a plan going forward. All members</p>	<p>Graeme</p>

	<p>of the PCC would be invited to attend.</p> <p>Graeme commented that although the Architect had suggested carpet tiles, there had been considerable spillage of water during Lego Church, when held in the church building, which was not conducive to carpet flooring.</p> <p>Graeme emphasised that it was important to manage all the changes to the church building so that we take everyone with us.</p> <p>Graeme confirmed that we needed to let the crack in the wall behind the choir stall to settle.</p> <p>ii. Cupboard Space in Vestry Katrina Stout asked permission to use cupboard space in the Vestry to store boxes of plastic bowls used for Tots Group, to prevent current pilferage in the Community Centre. Graeme agreed to discuss this with Katrina outside the Meeting.</p>	<p>Graeme/ Katrina</p>
<p>18.</p>	<p>Closing Prayer Peter Myerscough-Jackopson closed the meeting in prayer.</p>	

The meeting ended at 9.40pm.

CO/20260317 PCC Minutes

Signed
 Rev Graeme Dixon

Date