



## The Parish Church of St George, Jesmond

### Parochial Church Council

Chair: The Reverend Debbie Loughran

Lay Chair: Professor Janet Wilson

Secretary: Dr Nigel Russell-Sewell

## Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 20 May 2025

at 7.30 pm in the Choir Vestry, St George's Church

Present: Jonathan Booth, Tom Klenka, Lana Liu, Debbie Loughran, Alison Mattinson, James Parkin, Enid Pearson, Kay Plumley, Nigel Russell-Sewell, Brent Swinburne, Janet Wilson, Libbie Wilson.

Apologies: Izzy McDonald-Booth, Mike de la Hunt, Joan Grenfell.

1. The Chair opened the meeting with a scripture reading and prayer.
2. All were welcomed to the meeting.
3. Apologies were noted.

#### **4. Declaration of Interests**

- 4.1 There were no declarations of interest made.

#### **5. Appointment of Officials**

- 5.1 Professor Janet Wilson (proposed: Kay Plumley, seconded: Libbie Wilson) was elected Lay Chair.
- 5.2 Dr Nigel Russell-Sewell (proposed: Lana Liu, seconded: Alison Mattinson) was elected Honorary Secretary.
- 5.3 Tom Klenka (proposed: James Parkin, seconded: Lana Liu) was elected Honorary Treasurer.
- 5.4 Dr Graham Rutt (proposed: Debbie Loughran, seconded: Kay Plumley) was appointed Parish Safeguarding Officer and Sophie Leach as Deputy Safeguarding Officer. Graham will not sit as a member of PCC.

## **6. Minutes of the last meeting**

- 6.1 The minutes of the PCC Meeting held on 10 March were approved (proposed: Kay Plumley, seconded: Janet Wilson).

## **7. Matters arising and action log**

- 7.1 *See revised Action Log appended to the Minutes.*
- 7.2 Pulpit Barrier (2501-11.3) – Buildings and Grounds Group were not convinced of the need for a barrier and returned this item to PCC. PCC has raised this as a safety concern and would like the Chair to pursue with an architect; noting that a Faculty would be required.

**ACTION: Chair**

- 7.3 Review of the decision regarding dogs on The Green (2411-7.2). The “no dogs” signage had been removed in November. It was agreed that this should be a permanent position.
- 7.4 PCC resolved to uplift the Director of Music’s salary as discussed at appointment (2503-18.1).

**ACTION: Chair**

- 7.5 Kay Plumley reported successfully applying for £2,800 from the Net Zero fund for LED lighting for the church. A grant for £649 for LED lighting for the hall has been submitted, and we expect to hear late June. It was noted that both grants cannot include VAT; the church project requires a VAT reclaim which the Building and Grounds Group are handling.
- 7.6 St George’s Close: The Chair had investigated the parking issues on St George’s Close and rights of access with the Diocese. The deeds of the houses state they have the rights of way that are exercisable by third parties across the full width of the Close. This means they have the right to occupy any point of the road. Whilst the Registrar noted PCC *could* go to court, they advised the outcome may fall on the side of the residents. The road is owned by a diocesan body and managed by St George’s. No further action was recommended and PCC agreed.

## **8. Matters arising from the Annual Meetings**

- 8.1 The minute of the meeting to approve the 2024 Accounts was noted.
- 8.2 The minutes of the Annual Meetings held on Sunday 11 May 2025 were noted. It was agreed that these should be published on the website (Proposed Libbie Wilson; seconded: James Parkin)

**ACTION: Secretary**

## **9. Policy Approvals**

- 9.1 Noted: the Organist Policy had been approved by electronic meeting.
- 9.2 A question was raised about the lone worker policy being in date. Secretary to check with the Parish Administrator that the most recent version is published on the website.

**ACTION: Secretary**

- 9.3 A question was raised about awareness of policies, such as lone worker or safeguarding. How do we ensure members of the congregation and users are aware of these? Suggested: 'policy of the month' in the notices. We also have 'Safeguarding Sunday' which will reflect the policies. The Chair to ask all committees and groups to consider appropriate policies periodically.

**ACTION: Chair**

## **10. Appointment of Sidespeople**

- 10.1 The list of Sidespeople was received and all appointed (proposed: Kay Plumley, seconded: Alison Mattinson).

## **11. Authorised Lay Minister (ALM) authorisations**

- 11.1 The Diocese has taken a more formal approach to Authorised Lay Ministry and introduced a 'core module' for those interested in exploring ministries. Three from St George's joined the most recent cohort. One is seeking authorisation as a lay minister, David Julian Casati. This means they will be able to undertake pastoral care and lead worship. Approved unanimously by the PCC; the Chair will communicate this to the Diocese.

**ACTION: Chair**

- 11.2 Training of robed and non-robed deacons/chalice bearers has taken place. Names were read out and all were unanimously approved. The Chair will return the list to the Bishop.

**ACTION: Chair**

*Enid Pearson arrived at 8.26 pm*

## **12. Reader authorisations**

- 12.1 The Diocesan Director of Ordinands has yet to meet those considering Reader Training. Names will be put forward in the future following these meetings.

### **13. Church Hall**

- 13.1 A draft policy for the Church Hall had been previously circulated regarding use of the Hall and booking. Responses from PCC distilled two views: we have a 'hall' now, but 'hub' in the future; the two not being the same.
- 13.2 A policy for 'now' is required and the policy will be recirculated for adoption. A document for the 'future' will also be circulated to encourage thinking and discussion, and to agree what the community hub will be as opposed to the current hall. The conversation will continue over the next few PCCs about the future, but a policy for current users of the hall is required as a matter of urgency and electronic approval.

**ACTION: Chair & Secretary**

### **14. Pride Weekend**

- 14.1 Pride Weekend is 19-20 July. The PCC considered, as an 'inclusive church', how we might participate. A group could register to join the Pride Parade on 19 July. A service could be held, possibly a Pride slant at Choral Evensong on 20 July. A number of PCC members were enthusiastic about joining the Parade with a banner. Kay agreed to arrange for a banner to be printed and up to £200 was approved for this. Joining the Parade will be promoted in the weekly sheet and at the monthly inclusive service at St Hilda's. Janet will collect details of those interested from 1 June.

**ACTION: Kay Plumley & Janet Wilson**

### **15. Safeguarding (standing item)**

- 15.1 No report received.
- 15.2 PCC formally thanked Dr Sue Vernon for all her work as Safeguarding Officer.

### **16. Finance (standing item)**

- 16.1 The finance report was received from the outgoing Honorary Treasurer, with thanks.
- 16.2 Question: how many months reserves do we have? It appears we have two months in unrestricted funds. A 'giving series' of sermons will take place in the near future.
- 16.3 Disbursement of raffle prizes: some raffle prize donors thought they were giving to 'the hub' and others to 'the church'. PCC agreed that the proportions of monies raised will be allocated appropriately.

**ACTION: Chair**

**17. Building and Grounds Group (standing item)**

- 17.1 Restoration of the light to the plinth on the southeast side of the church was considered; although it is uncertain if there was ever a light on the plinth. Ian Spencer is investigating.
- 17.2 A proposal was discussed regarding the paving slabs alongside the hall and houses with issues caused by cars mounting the pavement. A lay-by is being considered with planters to prevent cars mounting the pavement.
- 17.3 Scaffolding will need to be erected in the chancel to inspect the windows and change the lights that are out.

**18. St George's Community Hub (standing item)**

- 18.1 Notes had been circulated and attention was drawn to upcoming fundraising dates; a flyer has been sent to everyone on the email list.
- 18.2 The Chair has invited Richard Briggs, Principal of Lindisfarne College of Theology, to give a talk on 12 June (7.30 pm) in the Church Hall. Noted this clashed with choir practice and the Chair will speak to the Director of Music.

**ACTION: Chair**

- 18.3 The Friends of St George's were formally thanked for their donation of £15,000.
- 18.4 Questions had been raised about toilets in the proposed plans following the Supreme Court Ruling on trans people. Resolution: the toilets will be individual cubicles with toilets and sinks and gender neutral. There will be no urinals.
- 18.5 Tom Klenka requested a separate card reader for the Hub so that fund raising could be kept separate from the church. A new 'solo' device that doesn't require linking to a mobile (~£60) was recommended. PCC approved the purchase.

**ACTION: Janet Wilson**

**19. Churchwarden updates**

- 19.1 Memorial Garden: the signage is currently ambiguous and there have been issues with people rough-sleeping and misusing the garden. The Chair proposed a large sign to make it clear this is a memorial garden, that ashes are interred here, and to treat the area with respect. A councillor has offered to pay for the signage. PCC approved. Recommended a note in the weekly sheet when the sign goes up to explain why.

**ACTION: Chair**

**20. Any other business**

- 20.1 Proposed dates for future meetings were agreed.

20.2 All PCC members were asked to confirm they are not disqualified from being a trustee by signing and returned a notice to the Chair.

21. The meeting closed at 9.50 pm with The Grace.

### **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

<b>PCC Meeting</b>	<b>Deadline for Agenda items</b>
Wednesday 16 July	Sunday 06 July, midday
Tuesday 16 September	Sunday 07 September, midday
Wednesday 19 November	Sunday 09 November, midday
Tuesday 13 January 2026	Sunday 04 January 2026, midday
Wednesday 18 March	Sunday 08 March, midday
<i>Annual Meetings, Sunday 10 May (separate notification)</i>	
Tuesday 19 May	Sunday 10 May, midday

All meetings will begin at 7.30 pm. Meetings held on Tuesday will normally be held in the Choir Vestry; Wednesday meetings will normally be held in the Winskell Room.

## ACTION LOG

Future agenda items:

January 2026 Review of EV charging (annual)

March 2026 APCM format (annual)

March 2026 Solar panels on church roof (annual)

Meeting	Item	Action	Progress	Status
24-09	10.1	Treasurer to add the new Vicar to the Lloyds account as signatory; and ask if Kay or Mike would remain on account	Debbie spoke to Lloyds and is on the account, but can't access it (25-05). A card is on its way.	
24-11	8.5	Churchwardens to enhance Ministry of Welcome provided	Area for development following the Gift Audit – ongoing (25-05)	
24-11	10.11	Treasurer to continue investigations into endowment fund	Ongoing. Tom to speak to Mike (25-05)	
25-03	9.3	Chair to speak to Bryan Vernon about David Gregory	Ongoing (25-05)	
25-03	18.2	Chair to speak to Director of Music to pursue	Interview has been held. Position to begin in September.	
25-03	18.3	Chair to speak to Director of Music to pursue	A potential donor has come forward and conversations are ongoing with the Chair and Director of Music	
25-05	7.2	Chair to speak to architect re pulpit barrier		
25-05	7.3	Chair to enact uplift in Director of Music salary		

25-05	8.2	Secretary to send Annual Meetings minutes to Parish Administrator for publication on the website		
25-05	9.2	Secretary to check with Parish Administrator that lone worker policy published is up-to-date		
25-05	9.3	Chair to ask all committees and groups to ensure they consider appropriate policies periodically		
25-05	11.1	Chair to inform diocese that David Julian Casati is approved as ALM by PCC		
25-05	11.2	Chair to inform Bishop of names of deacons and chalice bearers		
25-05	13.2	Chair to send Secretary Church Hall policy for approval by electronic approval for immediate implementation		
25-05	13.2	Secretary to include Community Hub user policy on agenda for next meeting and to circulate paper from Chair	More complex than initially thought. To report at July PCC	
25-05	14.1	Kay Plumley to arrange for banner to be printed	Purchased for £28	
25-05	14.2	Janet Wilson to collect details of those interest in attending the Pride March	Jonathan will a notice (or add to the email) for the next couple of weeks with a deadline of 16 June looking for expressions of interest in joining and that he be the contact to collect the names after which Janet will carry out the registration process	
25-05	16.3	Chair to apportion funds from raffle prizes to Hub and Church according to purpose given	Transferred to Treasurer (250616)	



25-05	18.2	Chair to speak to Director of Music to enable choir members to attend Richard Briggs talk	And what an excellent talk it was	
25-05	18.5	Janet Wilson to purchase 'solo' payment device	The Solo Sumup device (which can be used in areas where there is no Wi-Fi signal) has been purchased and was used by Kay at the community hub stall at the fete	
25-05	19.1	Chair to pursue signage for Memorial Garden	Started	
NEW ACTION		COMPLETED	NOT YET COMPLETED (UP TO 4 MONTHS)	NOT YET COMPLETED (OVER 4 MONTHS)