



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 Wednesday 14 January 2026

at 7.30 pm in the Winskell Room, St George's Church Hall

Present: Joan Grenfell, Mike de la Hunt, Tom Klenka, Lana Liu, Debbie Loughran, Alison Mattinson, Izzy McDonald-Booth, James Parkin, Kay Plumley, Nigel Russell-Sewell, Brent Swinburne, Janet Wilson, Libbie Wilson.

Apologies: Jonathan Booth.

1. The Chair opened the meeting with a scripture reading and prayer.
2. All were welcomed to the meeting.
3. **Standing item: Safeguarding**
 - 3.1 The Safeguarding Action Plan had been circulated for approval. Unanimous approval. Thanks were offered to Graham and Sophie from the Chair.

ACTION: Secretary
 - 3.2 A written report had been received and noted.
4. Apologies were noted.
5. **Declaration of Interests**
 - 5.1 No declarations of interest were made.

6. Minutes of the last meeting

- 6.1 The minutes of the PCC Meeting held on 19 November 2025 were approved (proposed: Kay Plumley; seconded: Izzy McDonald-Booth).

7. Matters arising and action log

- 7.1 See revised Action Log appended to the Minutes.
- 7.2 The signage for the Memorial Garden is in place. This has already had a positive impact in enabling the police to intervene in antisocial behaviour. The council have invited the Chair to apply for funding and an application has been submitted.
- 7.3 All PCC members were reminded of the legal requirement to complete safeguarding training.
- 7.4 James Parkin showed a couple of mock-ups for banners to encourage people to come into the church. PCC liked the idea of a banner under the main sign board. James will pursue further.
- 7.5 Kay Plumley noted that for planning permission for solar panels a bat survey is required. However, due to timing it might be possible to carry out a bat risk assessment. She is pursuing this further.

ACTION: Kay Plumley

8. Vision

- 8.1 Standing Committee had reverted to the four themes identified at the Vision Away Day:

Inclusive : Rooted in Christ : Inspiring Spaces : Serving You

This strapline is consonant with our activities, not least the Hub development. The strapline has been used with some success as a conversation starter.

- 8.2 In correspondence, Jonathan Booth had suggested 'rooted in Christ' should be first. a little cross be used as a separator. Agreed:

Rooted in Christ ✕ Inclusive ✕ Inspiring Spaces ✕ Serving You

All are asked to use this, as appropriate.

- 8.3 PCC will explore the vision under each of these areas in the future.

9. Student Engagement

- 9.1 James Parkin had contacted to all churches who want to be involved with Student Christian Movement (SCM). He has met Methodist representatives at Brunswick and will be meeting clergy later this month. He will be attending a 'beat the dark ages' (post-Christmas blues) dinner with students to introduce himself and gauge interest,

seeing what students might be interested in engaging in. This may lead to individual support and/or group activities in future. St James' URC have been circulating details to students.

- 9.2 The Chair has received her staff card which will enable her to begin chaplaincy support.

10. Standing item: Clergy Report

- 10.1 A written report had been received.
- 10.2 Noted: there is so much going on over the Advent/Christmas period and more volunteers are needed to support these services and events for safety. This is something that needs thinking about by PCC in September and a rota preparing.

ACTION: Secretary

- 10.3 Christmas services were very well attended and a positive opportunity for engagement.
- 10.4 Joan Grenfell noted that Christmas services and carol services happen in all of the care homes which are well-attended by residents and staff.
- 10.5 Anna Chaplaincy to be included in future agendas as a standing item.

ACTION: Secretary

11. Review of EV Charging (annual item)

- 11.1 Kay Plumley updated PCC about the potential opportunity for St George's to have its own charger and charging bay if we had a battery installed in future. To return to in 12 months.

12. Standing item: Finance

- 12.1 Tom Klenka, Honorary Treasurer, presented an overview of the 2025 accounts. The accounts have yet to be finalised, with the draft annual accounts to be presented at the March PCC meeting.
- 12.2 The Endowment Fund, which the previous treasurer spent a lot of time exploring, may be accessible for buildings work following discussions between the Chair and the Diocese.
- 12.3 The final accounts expect to show a marginal surplus for 2025. This shows that we are heading in the right direction, but there is no room for complacency.
- 12.4 The Chair thanked the Treasurer for all his work with the Parish Administrator to ensure the appropriate income and expenditure is set against the correct cost codes in the accounts. This means the accounts for 2025 will be far more accurate than previous years.

13. Standing item: Buildings and Grounds Group

13.1 The Memorial Garden railings are corroding, as are the gates to the church porch and need some work to maintain them. Quotes have been obtained for restoring these, along with the railings leading to the choir vestry and an option to include the railings around the green. PCC agreed urgent restoration is required to the Memorial Garden rails, porch gates and choir vestry railings, noting that money is available in the restricted buildings fund to cover this (£5,375 plus VAT). All in favour.

ACTION: Chair

13.2 The pulpit gate: Buildings and Grounds have been hesitant about this due to the complexity around installing a gate and the requirement for a faculty. An architect has advised that something *could* be put together for DAC approval, but this alone would cost £600 to prepare. The faculty approval would require an additional £250, and an appropriate gate would then be in the region of £5-6,000.

13.3 PCC concluded this has been explored as far as possible and will not pursue further. A risk assessment is being updated accordingly.

ACTION: Tom Klenka

13.4 Noted: Quinquennial work to address missing slates and other work in and around the porch was being carried out. PCC approved £3,104 plus VAT to be spent on this.

14. Standing item: St George's Community Hub 2025

14.1 Janet Wilson reported events are currently being organised; including a concert with the Community Choir in July, a talk on 'murders in Jesmond', and black tie dinner in October.

14.2 The model of the redesigned hall was unveiled. This will be available to support fund-raising and for the congregation to view.

14.3 Some members wanted to understand how the current design for the Church Hall had been generated and selected. It was agreed that a meeting would be held in the future to explain the design using the model which has been created.

ACTION: Chair

15. Standing item: Reports from Deanery/Diocesan/General Synods

15.1 No reports from General or Deanery synods as they have not met since the last PCC.

15.2 Diocesan Synod met on 29 November in St Thomas' Church. Kay Plumley reported key points:

- Elections will take place this year;
- The Bishop positively supported LLF and a motion was passed to send a letter to the House of Bishops to reconsider their decision;

- The Diocese is in a challenging financial position and has had to sell some property. As reported to General Synod at the last meeting, the Church Commissioners are considering revisions to the diocesan funding models;
- A new deanery plan is going to be circulated in due course;
- There will be a walk from Lindisfarne to Newcastle Cathedral and further information will be circulated in due course.

16. Churchwarden updates

- 16.1 Janet Wilson reported that there was a slip on the edge of the speed bump in the snow which resulted in a fractured shoulder. The accident book has been completed.
- 16.2 Occasional offices are increasing in number. They are all supported by one person: Barbara Peacock. Recommended that this should be acknowledged: the Secretary to write on behalf of PCC.

ACTION: Secretary

17. Any other business

- 17.1 The water butt project details had been circulated. Approved to proceed with one vote against.

ACTION: Kay Plumley

18. The meeting closed at 9.44 pm with The Grace.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

PCC Meeting	Deadline for Agenda items
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.

ACTION LOG

Future agenda items:

January 2022 Review of EV charging (annual)

March 2026 Solar panels on church roof (annual)

March 2026 APCM format (annual)

July 2026 Review Experian support (2025-09-7.2)

September 2026 Volunteers for Advent/Christmas events (2026-01-10.2)

Meeting	Item	Action	Progress	Status
25-05	19.1	Chair to pursue signage for Memorial Garden	Complete	
25-09	11.3	Janet to explore temporary staging for use at font	Debbie to look at creation of a platform	
25-09	16.3	Janet to explore locking bins	General waste bin now locks.	
25-11	3.3	All to send any activities not on list to Graham		
25-11	3.6	Graham to circulate action list via Secretary	Received, to be circulated with draft minutes	
25-11	3.7	All to check training is up-to-date and to complete any requested, sending certificates of completion to Graham	Some are not aware they have to do training and will wait for Graham	
25-11	4.3	Graham and Safeguarding Team to prepare social media policy to present to future PCC	In preparation for March 2026	
25-11	9.1	All to send ideas for what we can offer students to James	One item received	
25-11	9.2	James and Kay to explore banner	James created some mock-ups	

25-11	10.4	All to pilot 'Inclusive – Rooted in Christ – Serving You' as strapline for St George's		
25-11	17.1	Kay to pursue funding for hall solar panels	The solar panel project has progressed to an application for planning permission and listed building consent, which went in on December 9 th (David Cullingford). And 2 grant applications have gone in. One to BEST (Newcastle City Council) and one to the Community Foundation. I plan to submit one to the Diocesan Net Zero Quick Wins fund, but they don't yet know when their next application date will be.	
25-11	17.2	Chair to send letter to the Bishop	Sent	
26-01	3.1	Secretary to inform Safeguarding Office of approval of Action Plan	Complete	
26-01	7.5	Kay to pursue bat risk assessment	Complete (March agenda)	
26-01	10.5	Secretary to add Anna Chaplaincy to agenda as Standing Item	Complete (March agenda)	
26-01	13.1	Chair to commission restoration of railings		
26-01	13.3	Tom to update risk assessment for those visiting, using, exploring the building		
26-01	14.3	Chair to organise meeting		
26-01	16.2	Secretary to write to Barbara		
26-01	17.1	Kay to pursue water butt project		
NEW ACTION		COMPLETED	NOT YET COMPLETED (UP TO 4 MONTHS)	NOT YET COMPLETED (OVER 4 MONTHS)

