

MINUTES of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council of the Parish of St Paul's New Beckenham held in the church hall on Monday 9th March 2026.

2025 / 2026 No. 8

Present: Rev'd Rachel Winn (in the chair), Maria Adu (for minutes 1338 – 1348(ii), David Charlesworth, Andrew Griffiths (for minutes 1348 – 1359), Anne Harkness, Sandra Horner, Anne Howick, Paul Lashmar, Penny Power, Anthea Prendergast, Roger Wells.

Apologies for absence had been received from Sarah Butler, Wesley Guy, Clari Harrington, Keith Howick and Ian Johnson.

Roger Wells opened the meeting in prayer.

11338 Appointment of leader for *Your PCC Matters*

Roger Wells offered to prepare a report on the meeting for the notice sheet.

1339 Conflict of Interest

David Charlesworth declared a Conflict of Interest regarding the rates for hire of the hall as the band sometimes rehearses in the hall.

1340 Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 9th February 2026

The minutes of the PCC meeting held on 9th February 2026 had been received. Anthea Prendergast proposed, seconded Paul Lashmar, that the minutes of the PCC meeting held on 9th February 2026 be received as an accurate record of the meeting. **Agreed, with three abstentions as three people had not attended the meeting.**

1341 Matters arising

(i) Minute 1325(iii), Church lobby. Rev'd Rachel and Martin Steele would be meeting on 10th March. Ideally future church alternations would be done all together. However it is deemed important to make the welcome foyer an earlier project to spend some very dated legacy monies. These are likely to go toward automatic glass doors.

(ii) Minute 1325(iv), Review of Services. It was noted that the Church Administrator is backing up the services on OneDrive.

(iii) Minute 1325(vi). Correction – Appointment of Assistant Church Administrator.

(iv) Minute 1325(vii), Booking for Children's party. Ecclesiastical Insurance had spoken with Brian Woolmer and had confirmed that people should have their own insurance. The hirer should have Public Liability insurance and Household insurance should cover incidents occurring during a booking. The vicar commented regarding the need for an additional risk assessment if children will be taken outside, as the standard risk assessment for parties does not include the grounds. It would be helpful to speak to Pre-School regarding the use of barriers. Hirers need to be made aware of their responsibility and that every child must be supervised by an adult, particularly if they are in the garden.

(v) Minute 1327(iv), Temporary Faculty. Anne Harkness and Rev'd Rachel had met and submitted a request for removal of one or two front pews. They were waiting for a response from the DAC. A Faculty had also been submitted regarding the AV area.

(vi) Minute 1327(vi), Champions for new noticeboards. Rev'd Rachel thanked Sarah Butler for her work. Three new noticeboards had arrived. Rev'd Rachel also thanked those who had set them up.

(vii) Minute 1330(iii), Hall hire. The hall hire rate had been discussed at a Leadership meeting. Anne Harkness proposed, seconded Sandra Horner, that the hourly rate for a Hall booking should rise from £30 per hour to £35 per hour. **Agreed.**

1342 Action Sheet

David Charlesworth requested that in future the Action Sheet be sent round with the PCC minutes.

(i) Minute 994, Church heater – see minute 1346.

(ii) Minute 1179, South porch walls in cupboard. Three plaster companies had visited and one quote had been received.

(iii) Minute 1221, Faculty for new notice boards. The required Planning permission for this is being prepared by David Charlesworth and Anne Harkness.

(iv) Minute 1228, Temporary Faculty – see minute 1341(v).

(v) Minute 1260, Minor Repairs Improvement Grant. The new rails had been installed and St Paul's had received a grant of £500.

(vi) Minute 1291, Purchase of Water Butts. Adam Winn was organising purchase of one butt to be placed outside and is liaising with Moreen Lane about the location.

(vii) Minute 1327, Photographs of new Pastoral Care team members. At the prayer meeting on 18th March Rev'd Rachel planned to take photographs and will be putting the display board together before the APCM.

(viii) Minute 1325(ix), Purchase of bench. See minute 1357.

(ix) Minute 1326, Date of APCM Preparation meeting. The PCC Secretary confirmed that she had advised the Teams of the date and when they needed to submit their reports.

1343 Safeguarding and Inclusion

Sandra Horner reported that as well as the opportunities for individuals to undertake this online, there are currently a number of in-house group safeguarding training courses taking place, and reminded members of the dates for these. Quite a number of people would need to update their qualifications in 2026 and she encouraged everyone to talk to her if interested in attending the courses at St Paul's. On 16th March Sandra had attended a Zoom meeting for PSOs in the area and had received updates on training. Following on from Sandra's report the PCC undertook a safeguarding scenario.

1344 Financial matters

(i) Parish Giving Scheme. During the recent Community Café on 28th February Rosemary Dear had been in the church office to help with information about the Parish Giving Scheme. There had been one enquiry. One or two more people had signed up. There were still

problems with the signing up process. Anne Harkness had been available on 1st March but had not received any enquiries. One person had said they would be going to sign up.

1345 Legacy Policy – review of leaflet

The PCC agreed to defer review of this leaflet until the next PCC meeting.

1346 Heating Working Group

A report of the meetings on 8th January, 22nd January, 13th February and 25th February had been received.

(i) Consultants. The team had decided that engaging with independent engineering and building consultants would be important. Quotes had been received from Reheat (£9,500 + vat) and Wilson & Partners (£3,500 + vat). In the interest of speed, the Working Group had instructed Wilson & Partners to proceed on their fixed cost basis. They would be visiting the church on 10th March.

(ii) Digital Survey. Three digital surveying companies had been approached for quotes, following suggestions from the Diocesan team. One company had declined to quote due to other commitments. Quotes had been received from City Geomatics (£5,500 +vat) and Sitech Surveying (£7,900 + vat). Anne Harkness proposed, seconded David Charlesworth, that City Geomatics are confirmed and instructed to carry out a digital survey of the church and halls at a cost of £5,500 + vat. **Agreed.**

(iii) Penny Power would be taking a lead on planning and Anne Harkness would be seeking grants.

(iv) Herschel and Shadow had been approached for proposals regarding long wave infra-red pendant heaters. Shadow had produced a proposal based around the 200 Amp 3-Phase electricity supply to the church building. The equipment-only quote from Shadow, which would provide heating for the nave, chancel, and chapel, but part only of the side aisles, constrained by the current electrical supply, was £83,000. Herschel had not yet provided a quote.

It had been suggested that the Standing Committee should be authorised to make decisions at short notice on behalf of the PCC when necessary. It was noted that some members of the Heating Working Group were also on the Standing Committee. Members were reminded of the Church Representation Rules regarding the Standing Committee. Members were concerned that this would be a huge decision regarding a potentially large amount of money and felt that the PCC should all be aware of the need for a quick decision and show due diligence. The PCC agreed that there should be a vote by email, and members must respond within 48 hours of the request. There must be a majority vote and if necessary there should be an urgent meeting, in person or by Zoom. It was agreed that at the next PCC meeting there should be a discussion of the financial limit which the Standing Committee can approve.

1347 Mission Team

A report of a meeting of the Mission Team held on 19th February 2026 had been received. Rev'd Rachel commented that she felt Mary Omojole, the Church Engagement Officer for SAT-7, had presented well at the service on 8th March, and the IT had worked well. Ben and Katy Ray would be visiting St Paul's on 12th July 2026 and attending from 9.00am and speaking at the 10.30 am service. Rev'd Rachel and Alison Dockray would be meeting

regarding possible dates for a visit from Welcare in Bromley. Hope into Action Bromley is the Mission of the Month for May and June, and Rev'd Rachel is liaising with Clari Harrington about supplying information for the display board. £120 had been raised from the Christmas tree tags donations for Open Doors.

Julia Birkett had returned to England and was looking for work in the UK. Rev'd Rachel planned to write to Julia on behalf of St Paul's to formally acknowledge our 'goodbye' and to wish her well. Members were grateful for the letters which Julia still sends regarding OMF.

1348 Climate & Ecology Team

(i) A draft document, regarding a climate and ecological crisis, had been circulated. It was agreed that there should be discussion at the next PCC meeting regarding whether the PCC commits to require that every decision made by St Paul's passes specific ecological scrutiny before it can be taken forward.

(ii) St Paul's Environmental Policy. A draft of the policy had been circulated. Following discussion David Charlesworth proposed, seconded Anthea Prendergast, that the PCC approve the draft Environmental Policy as a standalone document. **Agreed.** Each PCC team should have a member of the Climate & Ecology team on its committee, and the PCC should commit to ensuring that such a member is on the PCC. All the other teams would be asked to look at the declaration.

(iii) Procurement Policy. Anthea Prendergast proposed, seconded Anne Harkness, that members approve the wording of this policy. **Agreed.**

1349 Sustainable, environmentally-friendly church practices

Rev'd Rachel had prepared a document following General Synod's motion on the use of sustainable flowers in churches. The principles of the Sustainable Flowers movement is to promote the use of local, seasonal, biodegradable or compostable flowers and foliage, to encourage churches to source them locally and to eliminate the use of floral foam (oasis) and non-reuseable products and techniques. St Paul's aims to use locally cut flowers and current practice means that almost all of the foliage is taken from the church gardens. The Climate & Ecology team had provided information and guidance on ways to change some of our practices. For the time being certain members of the flower group at St Paul's would continue to use oasis whilst other members explore sustainable practices. She hoped St Paul's could aim to move towards using a sustainable alternative to oasis by the end of April 2026. She was aware that some of the flower team might not be happy with the proposal, and thanked Anne Howick for her work with the flower team and for looking to purchase non-breakable vases and indoor potted plants for the Sanctuary.

1350 Communications Team

The minutes of a meeting held on 20th February 2026 had been received.

(i) Electoral Roll. Anne Harkness had been asked to look at combining the Electoral Roll form and the Data gathering form to avoid duplication. This had been done and, with the addition of the abbreviation 'PTO' the form is ready and is more user-friendly.

(ii) Connect Communications. David Charlesworth would be preparing the Easter Parish magazine but wished to hand over his role as co-editor after Easter. There would need to be a new editor to ensure there is a Christmas magazine. Members agreed this should be mentioned at the APCM meeting in May 2026.

(iii) AV Project. A Faculty had been submitted, and the Diocese electrician expert had requested that there was an inspection soon of the fixed electrics and that they should receive the latest certificate. The inspection would probably be in May. There had been a couple of suggestions for minor changes to the desk design, including the location of the camera. There were suggestions about where the fixed camera might be placed, behind the frame of the Holman Hunt picture, which is a more discreet position.

1351 Church Halls

Anne Harkness reported that the Buildings Team had been thinking about how to develop the halls space in the future. It was many years since money had been spent and the halls were getting rather shabby and needed upgrading. The halls are used a lot. Some of the radiator covers were broken, the floor had been damaged so might need replacing, and the curtains and rails were looking uncared for. She suggested that the Buildings Team should look into getting quotes for repairs and maintenance. Rev'd Rachel felt it would be helpful to have some idea of the costs of the repairs. There are restricted funds available for development and a repair and maintenance fund.

The kitchenette at the back of church is not fit for purpose. There are leaks, and it is difficult to put the drawers back in place easily. The water heater would need to be repaired. It was agreed that the Buildings Team should look into the costs of the changes. If there was to be a new kitchen the space might change, and Rev'd Rachel wondered about including a work top and cupboard.

1352 Role Descriptions

Role descriptions and person specifications had been circulated with respect to the leader/co-ordinator of Babies & Toddlers, the Friendship group, the leader of the Knit and Natter, Craft and Chatter group, and members of the Prayer Ministry Team. Sandra Horner proposed, seconded David Charlesworth, that these role descriptions should be accepted. **Agreed.**

1353 Deanery Synod

There had been a service of worship at St Mary's Shortlands. This was the last of the Worship Deanery services. The future meetings would focus more on a formal Synod agenda.

1354 Electoral Roll

Caroline Welby and Eleanor Welby were welcomed on to the Electoral Roll.

1355 It was noted that the next PCC meeting would be taking place on Wednesday 15th April. On 23rd April there would be a pre APCM PCC meeting.

1356 PCC Vision and Planning meetings

These would be taking place on 19th April and 3rd May. A PCC Vision subgroup would need to meet to prepare a Draft Mission Action Plan in time for the meeting on 19th April. Rev'd Rachel, David Charlesworth, Clari Harrington and Anthea Prendergast agreed to form the working group and to meet before Easter on 1st April.

1357 Commemorative Bench

A report had been received from the vicar. In February 2026 the PCC had agreed that St Paul's could purchase a commemorative bench for parishioners. It had been agreed that the bench could be shared with others who might wish to add a commemorative plaque. The plaque would be no larger than 13 cm x 5 cm. Possible wording had been suggested. Parishioners would be invited to give a donation towards the new bench. The wording on the plaque would be something similar to: In Loving Memory of (Name of deceased). Date from – to. Rest in Peace.

Following discussion Revd Rachel proposed, seconded Anne Howick, that the wording on the plaque should be as proposed. **Agreed.**

1358 Statement of Terms of Employment

A report regarding the statement of terms of employment for Sarah Clarke, as the Assistant Church Administrator, had been circulated. Sarah would be coming to St Paul's for some induction days, and starting work in the Church Office on 20th April 2026. David Charlesworth asked about the Grievance procedure. If there was a problem with the line manager then this should be referred to one of the Churchwardens.

Anne Harkness reported to the PCC that it would be necessary to purchase a new laptop at a cost of up to £2,000 for Sarah Clarke. It would have a higher spec compared to the one currently used by Stephanie Fox. Following discussion Anne Harkness proposed, seconded Anthea Prendergast, that St Paul's purchase a new laptop for use by Sarah Clarke at a cost of up to £2,000. **Agreed.**

PCC members were asked to send any amendments to the document to Anne Harkness urgently. Anthea Prendergast proposed, seconded David Charlesworth, that, subject to any amendments requested by the PCC by 10th March, the Statement of Terms of Employment should be approved. **Agreed.**

1359 Items for Your PCC Matters

Faculty for temporary removal of the front pews had been applied for.

The heating was being looked at by consultants and working towards replacing it as soon as possible.

Commemorative bench and plaques.

Environmental policy and Procurement policies would be available to view in the church office.

Appointment of Assistant Church Administrator.

PCC continues to do safeguarding scenarios regularly.

Buildings Team looking at getting quotes for renovations to the halls and kitchenette.

There being no further business, the vicar closed the meeting with prayer and the Grace at 10.00 pm.