

ST MARY'S CHURCH, HADLOW

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Minutes of the PCC Meeting held on Monday 16th March 2026 7.30pm 2026

1. Welcome

Members present

Mike Harvey (MH); Jim May (JM); Janice Massy (JM), Martin Massy (MM); Richard Hopkinson (RH); Katerina Nixon (KN) Iris Shaw (IS); Cathy Brill (CB), John Speed (JS); and Sharon Vanns (SV)

Guest for first item: Carol Wickham

Apologies for absence: Jenny Hopkins (JH) , (NC), Kirsty Finch (KF)

2. Presentation about Flower arranging: A motion passed by the C/E General Synod last week. Sustainable flower displays.

Carol had distributed a note about this in advance of the meeting. Carol explained the difficulties about the advice in this motion and there followed a broad discussion on the issues.

Following the discussion and having gained an understanding of the difficulties this creates for the flower team, the PCC backed the strategy that the flower arranging team should **work towards** the aims of the note, using local materials where relevant and possible, and further considering how to make more than single use of any plastics involved in the support for arrangements. The team should look out for cost effective alternatives for using plastics and look at the biodegradable types of foam such as Oasis Bio.

Carol asked the PCC to look out for opportunities to purchase a glass bead bowl and support for water-based displays, however there are safety concerns about using glass (beads or vases) in a situation where they might get broken by children.

The PCC confirmed, unanimously, that they were very keen to support the Flower team and encourage them. The PCC thank them for their wonderful work which the PCC and congregation, greatly appreciate.

After this discussion Carol Wickham left the meeting

3. Approval of the Minutes of the PCC Meeting held 17.11.2025 , with minor amendment to notes regarding safeguarding . RH to issue revision for website and notice board,

3.1 Matters Arising (not otherwise covered by the agenda) It was noted that the ramps to North Porch were now in place but that a call button for assistance to alert the requirement to open the inner doors was yet to be purchased. (action MM)

3.2 JS offered to provide a lockable filing cabinet to be located in the vestry where any sensitive material can be kept, accessible only to the Safeguarding team.

5. Inter regnum update:

- i) The advert has been placed. The invoice has yet to be received.
- b) JS has secured visiting priests or alternative lay leadership up to September
- c) Interviews are planned for 20th May.
- d) A service of the word will be led by JS with Michael Payne preaching on the first Sunday after Easter.
- e) The Vicarage garden needs attention, NC is coordinating work and working party is proposed for the 28th. **NC** to confirm details.
- f) The hall carpet and other areas (bedrooms) needs replacing as it is heavily worn. **JS/KN** to notify the Diocese and ask when they are inspecting.

6. APCM:

Actions in preparation of the APCM :

The draft annual report had been circulated. Two sections need completing (the Worship Committee report and The reflections) **JS** undertook to do this before the end of the week. 20th March

RH to distribute the dates related to the public notices and ensure these are met.

RH to issue the arrangements for elections and officers that need to re-stand.

The **Annual report Financial Statement** to Dec 2025 was approved.

MM was thanked for this and he asked the PCC to thank David Lear for his assistance in preparing this. He confirmed the Independent Assessor has approved the draft.

JS/ KN to sign these papers

JS will chair the APCM

4. Treasurers report:

This report was received, and the content noted.

MM was thanked for his diligence in preparing this. There were no particular concerns as it is early in the year and figures were in line with the budget broadly.

5. Sub Committees:

Fabric : Meeting notes have been distributed,

The lime tree will be felled on the 15th April 2026 as organised by the Parish Council. A faculty was in place for this.

Project 2030 update:

RH reported verbally: A written report and Risk register will be distributed with the draft minutes. Main points are that the Faculty is proceeding with out risk and the two bids have been submitted, and one is in draft awaiting the grant of the Faculty. No questions received as yet. We have met with the preferred contractor and have had his reassurance that we won't need a supply upgrade.

The Friends Group have been notified and the need for further fund raising in due course was noted. RH reported that there are 30+ members of the Friends group and a few more have been added recently

Finance: see treasurers report above

Social and Fundraising: The next meeting was postponed until After Easter. The events in the spring have been successful with particularly well supported Quiz night. The PCC thanked the winning team for donating their winnings to the project fund.

Next events are: The soiree in May and the Summer fete. Plans were in good shape for both these events.

Worship and Mission: JS gave a verbal report on the arrangements for Easter that are as set out in the Pew Sheet.

Easter vigil (4th April) at 8.00pm will be led by Christopher all being well. JS to confirm music requirements to MH. Cake to be provided JM to organise.

A special service for Christopher is being planned to celebrate 50 years of ordained service, on the 28th June. 6.00pm with the bishop.

8 Deanery Synod report- MH gave a verbal report on a meeting he was unable to attend and will issue a summary for the PCC record. Main points relate to the number of churches in Interregnum in the Deanery and that this may have an impact on our Vicar if he is appointed by September as he is likely to be asked to help out in other churches.

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Safeguarding: CB updated the meeting based on her reports she has issued in advance of the meeting.

A discussion was held relating to the 'Promoting a healthy and safe culture' Worksheet 1A

The PC considered and discussed the following questions:

What are some of the strengths of church culture?

The PCC felt the culture was open and friendly with a leadership group who know and support each other well, that was operating well in the interregnum.

A strong and well defined process for safeguarding, understood by all PCC members, for reporting any concerns. Members of the church look out for each other and communicate any concerns in a community which has often know each other for many years. People show respect for each other, even when challenging views are expressed. The safeguarding officer confirmed that there had been concerns raised during the last year and that these had been dealt with appropriately, in her view. CB acknowledged the importance of the diocesan safeguarding team who offer information and advice.

What are the main weaknesses of our church culture?

A relatively small group of people working closely in the PCC could be seen as a close knit group inhibiting criticism of each other. Newcomers might feel excluded or that their contributions might not be valued. New ideas and perspectives might not be acknowledged

when the existing order has been long established. The PCC is considering ways of communicating more effectively and openly with the whole congregation, especially newcomers. For example, a Who's who list (including job descriptions) will be displayed prominently in church and on the website.

10 Aob

Assisted access: **RH** to notify VB of ramp changes, **MM** to complete purchase of call point.

Bell Ringers Physical Safety management: in the light of a report of a significant accident in the diocese it was agreed that **RH** should press for a response to the emails sent on this from the Tower Captain.

DONM:

APCM 11.00am 26th April

Full PCC Monday 1.6. 2026 7.30pm

RH 17.3.26