

The Parish of St Mary-the-Virgin, Wivenhoe
Minutes of the PCC Meeting on Tuesday 12th November 2024
at 7.30pm in The Annexe

To welcome & opening prayer: Erwin read out the prayer of General Thanksgiving from Prayers in Love and Faith.

Present: Erwin Lammens, Rick Cawley; Sara Batts-Neale; Jane Taylor; Gary Ranford; Mary Jakens; Eric Jakens; Sue Jones; Sandra Osborne; Glyn Stanway; Claudia Alsdorf, Heather Edwards, Hannah Cole; Sam Belcher

Apologies: Bonnie Hill; Douglas McCormick; Nick Gustard; Greg Butler:

Conflict of Interest: Mary Jakens cannot vote for the Verger fees

Conflict of Interest & Fit & Proper Person Forms – completed

Minute 2024\104

Minutes of the PCC meeting held on the 8th October were approved and signed.

Minute 2024\105 Matters Arising

a) **Visitors Leaflet** – more copies needed for the Art Trail weekend.

b) **No Mow May** – update from WTC still waiting

Minute 2024\106 Correspondence Letter from EBM (photocopier) to notify of change of company ownership. Bonnie Hill has been assured that although the new owner is Midlands based the local office and staff will remain.

Minute 2024\107 Finance – Douglas McCormick

a) **Cash in funds as at 31st October 2024**

Statement

	Nominal Account Name	September 2024	October 2024
Free of restrictions	General fund for running Church	£101,038.94	£98,538.78
Restricted	Bell fund	£12,244.67	£12,244.67
Restricted	Choir fund	£800.27	£800.27
Restricted	Fabric general	£7,685.30	£7,685.30
Designated	Legacies	£52,245.89	£52,245.89
Restricted	Flower fund	£719.15	£719.15
Restricted	FOSM	£10,036.66	£10,056.66
Restricted	Cory maintenance fund	£2,535.00	£2,535.00
Restricted	Organ fund	£370.00	£370.00
Designated	Sunday Club	£3,554.44	£3,579.44
Restricted	Wivenhoe St Mary's Music Society	£2,400.22	£3350.58
Total Funds		£193,630.54	£192,125.74

Notes:

- The overall Funds balance exactly with our various bank accounts and those held in the CCLA investment account. The split between the nominal accounts reflects the Treasurer's understanding of those accounts.
 - Legacy of £3000 to come from the estate of the late Elizabeth Anne Jackson – not yet received.
 - The funds raised by Wivenhoe Music Society will be reconciled in due course.
 - The gas contract with Total Energies is due to expire. I would like to terminate this contract and find a more competent supplier. PCC are asked to delegate the authority to sort out the energy supply contracts to the Treasurer.
 - Erwin noted that the General Fund for running the church is reduced by £2000 a month and this cannot continue. One way to increase the income would be by asking for an increase in standing orders.
- b) **Additional signatories**
In hand.
- c) **Termination of gas contract and delegation of power to appoint a new supplier.**
After discussion it was **proposed by** Eric Jakens and **seconded by** Gary Ranford that

Douglas McCormick in his role of Church Treasurer should be given delegated powers to review and enter into a new contract for the supply of gas on behalf of the PCC. This was **unanimously approved** by PCC.

d) **Increase in cleaners hourly rate due to recent increase in the national minimum wage.**

After discussion it was **proposed** by Sara Batts-Neale and **seconded** by Claudia Alsdorf that due to the increase in the real living wage rising that the rate per hour for our cleaner be raised from £12.00 to £12.60 if in agreement with the treasurer. This was **unanimously agreed**.

Minute 2024\108 Fabric and Health & Safety matters Douglas McCormick & Mary Jakens

a) **Roof, stonework repairs and Quinquennial Report**

No action is being taken to address the roof contracts until sufficient funds have been raised to provide adequate contingency.

Other matters worthy of note are the requirements of the Quinquennial Report in respect of repairs to railings, external stone repairs and the fact that included in the Transformation Project but not undertaken were the redecoration requirements for the main Church.

Two new filters have been purchased for the water heaters.

On 9 January 2025 E-Bound will service the roof alarm.

b) **Churchyard**

A group of very willing and able volunteers met in the churchyard on a beautifully dry, sunny and warm Tuesday morning in order to sow our wildflower seeds! The site was cleared of weeds and the soil turned before a mixture of 36,000 seeds was scattered. Finally, the whole area was raked to give the greatest opportunity of germination.

We appreciate that we are dependent on the right weather conditions together with wild (and domestic!) animals resisting the temptation to disturb the soil, but hopefully next spring will see an impressive display of colourful wildflowers.

Thanks to Margaret, Hilary, Mary and Eric for their assistance on the day; to Bonnie for her financial support; to Hilary for her expert advice and additionally to Margaret for providing and planting native bluebells and daffodils in other areas of the churchyard.

Thanks given on behalf of the PCC to Peter Terry and his team.

c) **Health & Safety**

The following actions are put before the PCC for information.

Purchasing a First Aid kit for the Annexe (done – Mary)

Updating the First Aid box and purchasing missing items regularly – in particular anything that helps wipe and cleaning wounds such as dressings.

Organising another First Aid Course with other people who attend events in church regularly- discussed by the PCC that Sandra and Mary may like to attend a future first Aid course as they were able to help in two recent incidents without being first aid trained.

Exploring, planning and deciding about improving the lighting on the path in the churchyard- One incident happened outside in the dark so Erwin suggested that the fabric committee will need to look again at how to light the paths.

Encouraging people to use the West Street entrance for events organised in the Annexe.

Ensuring that the accident book is completed after each accident (done by Mary, Sandra, Lyn).

First Aiders to be reminded of their duties when an accident happens.

The following members of St Mary's attended the First Aid Course organised by the church last summer. Subsequently they have received their certificate which is valid for 3 years. There is a list of their names at the back of the church.

Revd Dr. Sara Batts-Neale

Heather Edwards

Louise Harrison

Douglas McCormick

Linda Panton

Kerry Rooke

The accident book has now been completed after the recent incidences.

Minute 2024\109Safeguarding – Gill Black

The courses required for PCC members are: Basic Awareness, Foundation and Domestic Abuse. The link is

[e-Learning \(online\) safeguarding courses | The Diocese of Chelmsford \(anglican.org\)](https://www.anglican.org/safeguarding)

Minute 2024\110 Mission & Ministry Partnership – Erwin Lammens

Monthly prayer meetings continue. This month's is on Tuesday morning 12 November at the Annexe with representatives of the Greenstead churches, St John's, St Mary's and University Anglican Chaplaincy.

Minute 2024\111 Inclusive Church – Sara Batts–Neale

An annual donation between £50 and £500 is needed to complete Inclusive Church application- Sara Batts-Neale suggested £100. This was proposed by Hannah and seconded by Sandra Osborn and unanimously carried.

Gary highlighted that he didn't know that donations could be given to St Marys by standing order. It was discussed that a reminder would be useful.

Minute 2024\112 Adult & Childrens Ministry – Erwin Lammens and Youth ministry

Children's and Youth ministry

- a) **Harvest Festival** on 6 October was well attended with the participation of Broomgrove Junior and Millfields Primary. The schools organised a successful collection of non-perishable food items which our volunteers brought to Beacon House, Night Shelter and Wivenhoe Foodbank. 16 plants were purchased and delivered to the housebound, ill and bereaved. Broomgrove Infants organised their own Harvest celebration on 18 October at school.
- b) **Sunday Club and The Way** are doing well. Remember our young and their families in your prayers.
- c) **Family events in December organised by St Mary's**
St Nicholas on Saturday 30 November at 11am and Christingle on 1 December at 4pm, Father Christmas at the Christmas Market on 5 December, Nativity play and Sunday Club Christmas Party on 15 December, Crib Service on Christmas Eve, Carols on the Quay on 22 December at 6pm and much more.
- d) The **All Together Team** will be revived for the February All Together after its hibernation.
- e) **Open the Book**
Revd Emma Smith is building a team of volunteers who are willing to help with telling and acting out Bible stories at our schools. Can you help?
- f) **Adult ministry**
We are considering running the radical welcome course (Inclusive Church) in the New Year. Lucy Crocker represented St Mary's in a panel debate about the Vision Away Days in the Colchester deanery at the Deanery Synod at St Peter's church, Colchester on 16 October.

Minute 2024\113 Away Day – Erwin Lammens

Joining Inclusive Church is an implementation of suggestions made on the Away Day.

Minute 2024\114 To receive reports and take questions on the reports from the following committees.

a) **Fundraising Committee – Heather Edwards**

Christmas Market Thursday 5th December 2024 6 - 8pm.

Fr Christmas requested that this year he would be delighted to meet families in Rev Erwin's Vestry, as he used to. The Nave is fully booked with stalls including Gifts, FOSM, Raffle and Friendly Club, In the Annexe the Kitchen will be used for refreshments and stalls. To date we also have 8 fully booked stalls outside and 7 more we are waiting for their confirmation and payment. We currently have two on the waiting list for an inside stall should there be a cancellation at the last minute. PCC members have been asked to donate items to a Hamper for the Raffle. A Box will be at the back of the church - after the Remembrance Services, for everyone who wish to donate a prize or good item for the gift stall. There are plans to put as much lighting as possible up outside as it gets dark before the Christmas Lights are switched on by the Mayor and the Town Cryer. As usual there is a plea for extra help behind a stall; an extra Marshal or two; helpers to put up the lighting and the double gazebo which will be set up after 2:30pm on the day and to aid clearing up afterwards.

b) **Catering – Susan Potter**

Once again, we held a very enjoyable and successful Harvest Lunch. Erwin made a lovely presentation to start the proceedings and there was the added bonus of 9 children and their parents which not only halved the age group but also made for a lot of fun. The children proved to be great helpers to the catering team as well. Thanks to a very generous donation from a member of our congregation (who wishes to remain anonymous) we raised £275 (this is normally a non-fundraising event) and she also paid for the flowers throughout the church which looked stunning.

c) **Worship Group – Graham Wadley**

The Worship Group met at the Rectory on 15th October 2024.

Recent past services were reviewed and details of forward services considered and planned.

There was some consideration of the service pattern particularly the First Sunday. This to remain as current pattern with a review in the spring.

Erwin reinforced the policy of not allowing wafers to be dipped in the wine. Various investigations underway re gluten free wafers etc.

d) **Colchester Deanery** – Rick Cawley – no report

e) **Wivenhoe Churches Together** – no report

f) **FOSM** – Bill & Vivien Eborn

Sales continue well at Wyvern Stores and plans are being made for a stall at the Christmas Market.

g) **Pastoral Visitors**- Gill Strudwick

Our last group meeting was on 16th Oct 2024.

Erwin was supported by a team of volunteers. Our team have approached several church members in recent weeks to see if they would like a regular phone call or visit, but it seems that several members who are finding life difficult do not wish to take advantage of our support.

We know that soon those identified will need help and then it becomes a more serious and complicated situation because as a group we are volunteers not professional social workers.

We are in the process of having the Pastoral Identification Lanyard finalised. Our next meeting is at 10am on Wed 7th February at the Rectory.

h) **Administration** – Lynne Horner – nothing to report.

i) **Spirituality Steering Group** – Janet Driver – nothing to report

j) **Church Bookings** – a schedule of bookings was circulated.

k) **Bellringers** – Heather Edwards

On Wednesday 30th October 2024 the St Mary's Bells Team rang a quarter peal. The quarter was part of the northeast district of the Essex Association of change ringers quarter peal month. Objective is for each tower in the district to ring a quarter during October. They rang 1260 changes for plain Bob Doubles in 45 minutes on and the ringers were:-

1 Lucy Taylor

2 Jane Taylor

3 Eileen Redfern

4 Gillian M Sparling (C)

5 Adrienne Wood

6 Tim Batts-Neale

First quarter at first attempt. All St Mary's ringers except Gillian.

The NE Essex Association of change ringers reported that it was very well done and a massive achievement.

l) **Electoral roll** – Mary Jakens – nothing to report

Minute 2024\115 – Community – Peter Hill Chairman of the following groups

Friendly Club

a) **Friendly Club & Café**

If everybody came to the Friendly Club who had come before, we would have 88 people come to it. Obviously not everyone is free to come every week.

Overall our numbers are growing although our numbers have been down a bit from where we were during the summer. We can see this in the 50% share of the £2 we give to the Church every two months. This time the share is: £334.78

b) **Wivenhoe St Mary's Music Society**

Our concert with the popular trio called The Churchfitters was at the beginning of October. This was another sell-out concert and we have got them booked in for December 2025 for what they call their Christmas Cracker concert. We now look forward to the Wivenhoe Orchestra playing on Friday 15th November.

c) **Open Gardens Team**

The team with some new members after Jane & Glyn Stanway, and Dot Mathieson, announced their retirement after Open Gardens this year met on 30th September and confirmed that they are willing to organise Open Gardens in 2025. The date will be the weekend of 17th / 18th May. The team also confirmed that the profit will be shared between St Mary's Church Fabric Fund and The Wivenhoe Society

Sandra has joined the team.

Minute 2024\116 GDPR; Communications; Licensing; AV and Streaming System – no report

Minute 2024\117 Overseas – Heather Edwards – no report

Minute 2024\118 Any Other Notified Business

a) Marika Footring raised two issues – lack of cupboard space and the purchase of a dishwasher.

Erwin suggested there was space at the back of the church for a cupboard. Douglas is

looking into the costs of installing a dishwasher.

Erwin suggested that removing chairs and replace them by folding chairs could create more space in the shed.

b) **Church and Annexe Hire Fees for 2025**

The current hourly charges had been circulated to members of the PCC in preparation for a discussion on this subject.

It was decided that the rate per hour should be increased. The PCC were concerned about whether the fees were covering the costs.

Erwin suggested:- -

Nave increased to £40 and discounted rate to £25

Annexe and kitchen increased to £20 and discounted rate to £15

Church, Annexe and Kitchen to £55 discounted to £35

Sound system stays at £60.

Proposed by Gary Ranford, Rick Cawley seconder and unanimous approval.

d) **Wedding and Funeral Fees 2025**

The PCC had received the information in advance of the meeting.

The fees applicable to those undertaking roles at St Mary's were discussed and the payments fixed.

It was **proposed** by Hannah Cole **seconded** by Claudia Alsdorf that the new fee schedule be approved and adopted. This was agreed **unanimously**.

e) **Garden Community**

Erwin explained that on 22 November 2024 from 5pm to 7pm a consultation is available in the Church to find out about the new housing development plans.

f) A **candlelit soiree** will be advertised for 13 December 2024

g) **Christmas charity** will be Namalemba- unanimously approved

h) Erwin explained that he is involved in another church in the Deanery who he is looking after, so may be required there more often.

i) **Next PCC Meeting – Tuesday 10th December 2024** at 19.30 at The Rectory.

The meeting closed at **21.00** with everyone joining together in saying The Grace.