

The Parish of St Mary-the-Virgin, Wivenhoe
Minutes of the PCC Meeting on Tuesday 9th December 2025 at 7.30pm
At The Rectory

To welcome & opening prayer: Erwin opened the meeting with a prayer of thanksgiving.

Present: Erwin Lammens, Rick Cawley; Bonnie Hill; David Harrison; Lucy Wadley; Heather Edwards; Mary Jakens; Sandra Osborne; Hannah Cole; Martin Lucas; Kerry Rooke; Sam Belcher

Apologies: Nick Gustard; Gary Ranford; Douglas McCormick; Gio Timms-Bruno; Glyn Stanway

Conflict of Interest – Mary Jakens and Rick Cawley declared their conflict of interest when discussing Church fees Minute 2025\136 Finance.

Conflict of Interest & Fit & Proper Person Forms – only one set of forms remains outstanding.

Minute 2025\133

Minutes of the PCC meeting held on the 11th November 2025 were approved and signed.

Minute 2025\134 Matters Arising – none

Minute 2025\135 Correspondence - none

Minute 2025\136 Finance – Douglas McCormick

Cash in funds as at 30th November 2025 - Statement

| | Nominal Account Name | October | November |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Free of restrictions | General fund for running Church | £62,877.82 | £58,381.48 |
| Restricted | Bell fund | £12,244.67 | £12,244.67 |
| Restricted | Roof Fund | £60,000.00 | £60,000.00 |
| Restricted | Choir fund | £800.27 | £800.27 |
| Restricted | Fabric general | £4,682.25 | £4,682.25 |
| Designated | Legacies | £26,293.28 | £26,293.28 |
| Restricted | Flower fund | £719.15 | £719.15 |
| Restricted | FOSM | £10,869.30 | £10,869.30 |
| Restricted | Cory maintenance fund | £2,535.00 | £2,535.00 |
| Restricted | Organ fund | £370.00 | £370.00 |
| Designated | Sunday Club | £5,319.44 | £5339.44 |
| Restricted | Wivenhoe St Mary's Music Society | £1,032.41 | £1,032.41 |
| Total Funds | | £187,743.59 | £183,267.25 |

Notes:

1. 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.
2. Anglican Chaplaincy funds of £1,820.13 held in account for University Chaplain.
3. Auditors arranged for January 2026 to produce accounts and Independent Certification
4. Rates for Church Administrator and increased rate for Church Cleaner implemented.
5. 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.

Church Fees

The fees had been circulated before the meeting. Changes were proposed – an increase in the vergers fee to £40.00 and for the live streaming system to £60.00 per session. The renewal of Wedding Vows to be increased to £100.00 and the named cross at funerals to £15.00. An amendment was made to the live streaming fee to reflect that £30.00 will be given to the operator and £30.00 for the upkeep of the system. All these increases were approved by the PCC.

Cleaner – It was proposed that the rate per hour be increased to £13.00. The increase was agreed by those present.

Minute 2025\137 Fabric and Health & Safety matters Douglas McCormick & Mary Jakens – no report

Minute 2025\138 Roof Repairs – Lucy Crocker

Lucy said that a meeting will be held at the beginning of January to take this forward.

Minute 2025\139 Safeguarding – Gill Black safeguardingstmarywiv@gmail.com - Lyn Smith has stepped down as our DBS person and Louise Daniel the new Administrator will take over. Louise will be meeting with Lyn Smith for a handover in the near future.

Minute 2025\140 Adult & Children's Ministry – Erwin Lammens and others

Children's and Youth ministry

Open the Book

Monthly sessions at Millfields Primary are very successful and continue under Emma's leadership. At least one extra storyteller needed.

St Mary's Youth Drama Group

With thanks to Hannah Cole for organising, arranging and coordinating the Live Nativity in the Wivenhoe streets on Sunday 21 December at 4.30pm ending at Carols on the Quay. Rehearsals are taking place.

Confirmation

Sunday 5 July at 11am by Bishop Roger. A highlight in Parish Church life.

Safer recruitment of children's and youth leaders

Everyone new in a role or post is required to fulfil the process.

Adult ministry

Administrative assistant

Louise Daniel has started her work as administrative assistant. An introduction to the PCC and congregation will be arranged in the new year.

Pastoral ministry

Jackie has now three people on her visiting list for home communion.

A successor for Gill Strudwick as coordinator of the Pastoral Visitors Group hasn't come forward yet. If you can think of anyone, please let Erwin know.

Minute 2025\141 Radical Welcome Course – Erwin Lammens

On Saturday 17 January 9.30am for 10.00am start. Ending at 4.00pm. Free lunch included. Bookings until 15 December. PCC members are required to join the course which sets out the lines for St Mary's inclusive ethos.

At the last vision day we decided to become an inclusive church and we want to ensure that we are undertaking this. There are several levels – people who have issues (including sight, hearing etc.) so a focused approach.

Someone who is not a church attendee to attend the course. Due to the nature of the content it was felt that it wouldn't work for that person if they had never attended a service. The person was upset when told of the decision. The matter was put to the PCC and they agreed with the decision. An invitation to come to services and if she wishes to attend a person will be allocated to look after her.

Perhaps consider a community open day with the theme of come and meet us. "Have you ever wondered what happens at St. Mary's."

Minute 2025\142 To receive reports and take questions on the reports from the following committees.

a) **Fundraising** - Heather Edwards

The Christmas market is all planned out and by the time you read this you will know the results. I hope to have an update to give you at our meeting. Susan Potter has the Christmas Supper well planned and tickets are already on sale and going fast. The Skills Audit is proving very useful. Just under £1973 has been raised at December Market.

b) **Catering** – Susan Potter

We had another successful breakfast club on the first Sunday of the month with a lot of people coming for coffee and tea before the 11am service. Susan Potter will be moving from Wivenhoe and so a replacement will be needed.

c) **Worship Group** – Graham Wadley- nothing to report

d) **Colchester Deanery** – no report

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

f) **FOSM** – Vivien & Bill Eborn – nothing to report

g) **Pastoral Visitors** – Gill Strudwick – nothing to report

h) **Administration** – Lynne Horner – no report.

i) **Church Bookings** – Nothing to report.

j) **Bellringers** – Adrienne Wood

The Bells go up. The bells go down. There is a lot of bell ringing going on at the moment and planned for in December including chiming for the Christmas Market. The electric folk who are in charge of the Christmas Lights, have been working in the Tower and for safety reasons, the Bells will be rung up and down a lot.

k) **Electoral Roll** – Mary Jakens – two people have been removed from the role.

l) **Environmental** – Jane Taylor

Jane has made a start on completing the first survey towards the Ecochurch bronze award but will have to return to the questions where she wasn't sure of the answer.

The questions are very prescriptive such as asking the degree to which 'creation care' is addressed in preparation for baptism; confirmation; work with young people; a talk by guest speakers; prayers; confession of damage to creation and so on. She thinks some of this is bending towards a more humanistic approach with a strong emphasis on environmental concerns.

This is reflected in the statement of commitment which was forwarded in the last report which specifically has these words:

'Our church recognises and teaches that creation care and action to address the climate and nature crises are integral to Christian faith, life and worship and has made a **visible** commitment to A Rocha UK's Eco Church award scheme'.

The statement should be published on the church website but the PCC may wish to revise the words of this declaration of commitment to better reflect St Mary's approach.

Revd. Emma Smith will attend the February PCC meeting to explain and assist us in moving forward with this.

m) **Mens Group** – Chris Amos

I am glad to say we have some good news, on only our second outing since we started we had a full house for the Bowling at Clacton. Six of us ventured into the night including Erwin, who has been hiding his light under a bushel, he played an excellent game, and I came last. We pray that relationships will be cemented as we move into the new year. Ian and Susan have offered to host a Christmas meal again, and if we have the same numbers we will have to change the venue.

n) **Sunday Club** – Teresa Warren

Marise is now an official member of the Sunday club team. There are 7 of us. 5 leaders and 2 assistant leaders. Occasionally members of The Way youth group may join in and help as young leaders.

Some of the leaders attended a training session in the annexe on Saturday 15th November called 'School ministry 101'. It was lead by CYO Colchester (Christian youth outreach).

Nothing more to report other than preparations and plans are in place for the upcoming nativity and Christmas party.

o) **The Way** – Kerry Rooke

The Way youth group have been busy with making things to sell for the Christmas Market and have now started working with Hillary on the nativity.

We have a new member join the last couple of weeks which is fantastic.

We have also started getting the kids to join the Sunday club as young leaders which feedback was really positive.

We are also ordering the children T-shirts with the way logo and young leaders on the back! Very excited for when they arrive!!

We have decided that we won't meet over the Christmas break and will decide if we remain open in holidays and half terms in the new year.

Minute 2025/143 Community (Music Society; Friendly Club – Peter Hill)

Friendly Club

The numbers of people coming each week seem to be consistently high although there are a lot of people who don't come every week.

I am grateful to the Church flower arranging team for offering to be the main attraction for our meeting on the 11th December with their offer to get members of the Friendly Club making Christmas table decorations.

The following Thursday 18th December, will be our Christmas Party with singing of carols etc. This will be our last Friendly Club meeting of 2025 as the following Thursday is Christmas Day and the one after that is New Year's Day. So the first meeting of 2026 will be on Thursday 8th January.

A year ago, following an approach by Diane Kilgour and Bev Strutt, we formed an Advice Team, as an arm of the Dementia Support Group and the Friendly Club. These two ladies provide help and advice to anyone who needs it. In the last 12 months they have helped 25 people in different ways.

Wivenhoe St Mary's Music Society

Our last event was a concert with the Wivenhoe Orchestra on 14th November. This turned out to be very successful with lots of people buying their tickets at the last minute as well as on the

night. In consequence the evening made a profit of £466 (before PRS fees). The Orchestra were magnificent with lots of different pieces of music and genres. 4 members of the Orchestra formed a Saxophone Quartet especially for the evening . They were delightful. This was the eighth year that the Orchestra have played for us

Our next concert is on Friday 5th December featuring The Churchfitters. Tickets have been selling well. This will be the 4th time The Churchfitters have played for us.

The Medieval Carol concert on Friday 19th December is arranged by the 5 singers from Opus Anglicanum themselves and is already sold out. The group though are selling 20 tickets at half price ie £10 to be seated in the choir pews. Many of those have already been sold. The Music Society will be helping to steward this event as well as run a wine bar with profits going to the Music Society.

Minute 2025\144 GDPR; Communications; Licensing; AV and Streaming System – Marika Footring

Because we've been having such ongoing problems using Windows we're looking into the possibility of switching from MS Windows to a Linux OS, with OBS instead of vMix as the streaming software.

Those are all Open Source, free and stable.

We intend trialling it in January using a spare laptop I have that has the Linux OS and the OBS software installed.

Rick said that finding a church using Linux would be a great help before they change to the new system.

Minute 2025\145 Overseas

Christmas cards and some items have been on sale in church after the Sunday Services and will continue up to Christmas. All funds raised go to Namalemba.

Minute 2025\146 Any Other Notified Business

- a) Glyn Stanway – attendance at PCC meetings now his status has changed. The PCC agreed that he could be “in attendance” at meetings but would not be able to vote and he will then go forward for election in May 2026.
- b) Douglas McCormick had indicated that he would like to continue training now that he has completed his Authorised Local Preacher. He will receive his certificate from Bishop Roger in February. He wishes to train to be a Licensed Lay Minister (Reader).
It was proposed by Hannah Cole, seconded by Mary Jakens and unanimously approved that Douglas got forward with the LLM training.
- c) Revd. Emma Smith will be continuing with St Mary's until 24th May 2026.
- d) Erwin thanked all those present for their work and support during the past year.
- e) The meeting closed at 20.24 with everyone joining together in saying The Grace.
- f) **Next PCC meeting Tuesday 13th January 2026 at 19.30 in The Annexe**