

Parish of Sutton with Seaford

Minutes of the Parochial Church Council Meeting held in St Leonard's Church at 7.30pm on Wednesday 11th March 2026

Present: Revd Derreck Lee-Philpot (DLP), Revd Carole Darling (CD), Fred Bass (FB), Elizabeth Morgan-Jones (EMJ), Janet Kent (JK), Paul Waller (PW), Paul Bloxham (PB), Bob Carrington (BC), Mark Gill (MG), Lizzie Jackson (LJ), Sue Topp (STo), Diana Dixon (DD), David Robertson (DR), Elaine Day (ED), Stephanie Baker (SBa), Kim Cuthbert (KC),

1. **Welcome:** Carole Darling as chair welcomed all.
2. **Prayer:** Psalm 63 v1-5 was read, hymn 466, Praise my Soul the King of Heaven sung.
3. **Apologies for Absence:** Revd James Hollingsworth (JH), Revd Lucy Hollingsworth (LHo), Julia Lawson (JL), Carole Kay (CK), Michael Holmes (MH), Stephan Bracher (SBr), Sally Thompson (STh), Geoff Thomas (GT), Ann Richards (AR), Sam Fowler (SF).
5. **Approval of minutes:** The minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2026 were approved and signed having been circulated ahead of the meeting. **Proposed by David Robertson, seconded by Mark Gill, carried with one abstention of a member not present at the meeting.**
6. **Matters Arising:**
 - a. FB, JH and LMJ met regarding the confidential item.
 - b. SBr passed on PCC's thanks to Charlene for organising the bookings during the decoration of St Luke's.
 - c. Following feedback the lanyard design has been chosen.
 - d. The talk by Charlie Grimble went ahead, the tickets having sold out. Another date is booked and nearly fully booked.
4. **Our Parish – Key Issues:**
 - a. **Building Project:** Following the required permissions being granted in early February work began in mid-February. The previously discussed 10ft container for storage may not now be needed. We are still awaiting a quote for the cupboards in the Chapel. 70-80% of the excavation is now done but due to remains being found (to date 38, some pre 1700) by the archaeologists the builder has been focussing on other works inside the Church such as the piers for the new door in the north aisle and the stud wall in the Choir Vestry. Shortly we may have to stop using the toilet when the portaloo is placed in the tower arch beside the main door. The gas will be capped off on March 19th to allow removal of the boiler and boiler room floor etc. After this there will be no heating in the Church. The Tots group and Wednesday services have been moved or suspended temporarily. The choir have moved to the Chapel and some items have been evacuated from the choir vestry. Further temporary shifting will continue as work progresses. At the moment it is still ok to use the Chapel door for entry/exit to the Church.
 - b. **Children, Youth and Families:** Report circulated ahead of the meeting and appended to these minutes.

Tots is going well at both churches. There will be an Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Saturday and the Easter Garden will be made shortly.

Sparks numbers had dropped but are now around 17/18, their knowledge is growing too.

Joint Youth Services: these include Lewes Trinity, Denton, Newhaven, Barcombe Church groups. St Peter's are considering joining too.

Mothering Sunday Breakfast: 15 children came. Thanks to Jayne Bass for the cooking.

Glow is going well with the children taking part and learning.

Messy numbers keep rising. There will be Messy on Good Friday when a walk of witness may be incorporated.

School visits: there have been visits to years 1,2 and 4 at Chyngton Primary talking about Easter.

Parish Church Weekend Together, 14 – 17 August: This is a time for everyone to join together camping, attending for a day or days as they prefer. There will be a minibus to help those with transport issues.

Safeguarding Training: The Domestic Abuse training is now compulsory rather than an optional extra. There will be an in-person training session hopefully in June, exact date to be confirmed.

Proposal for PCC approval for activities: **PCC approves the following activities with appropriate risk assessments**

Tot's Treats at both churches, Sparks, Ignite, Fuelled, Glow, Glow Gardening, Messy Church, Holiday Club, Tot's Outings. Proposed by Sue Topp, seconded by David Robertson, unanimous.

Questions: Is there any crossover between the school visits and group activities? A. The appropriate groups are mentioned and the students are becoming familiar with the groups offered. PCC recorded thanks to Kim

- c. **Grants:** There are no applications in place at present, Sto and John Huggins are completing 2 applications to be submitted. Prayer requested for their success.
- d. **APCM:** The annual report has been circulated and JH should be notified of any errors noted.

7. Statutory Items:

- a. **Safeguarding:** Martin Waite has successfully completed the safer recruitment process and DBS checks and is now the Parish Safeguarding Officer.
The Dashboard is a diocesan record of the measures we have in place, CD and Sto meet monthly to keep on top of this. CD has asked for the policies to go up on the website. A dedicated phone for safeguarding is needed.
Proposal: PCC approve expenditure of a suitable phone, case at a cost of approximately £180 and sim package £5-8 per month. Proposed by Paul Waller, seconded by Bob Carrington, carried unanimously.

It is possible a suitable phone may be donated. The IMEI number of the phone must be recorded in case the police need to take it for forensic analysis.

Policy notices with Martin's photo are needed in both churches and the belfry and the May meeting needs to adopt the policy.

- b. **Health and Safety:** Report circulated ahead of the meeting and appended to these minutes.
The PAT testing is complete. The electrical testing at St Luke's is complete but St Leonard's will wait until the building work is complete. A revised Fire Risk Assessment plan is in place for St Leonard's during the work.
Cleaning at St Luke's: this is not satisfactory, the bins have not been put out and are now overflowing and a regular hirer has formally complained.
First Aid Training: It was suggested that this should be provided by St John's Ambulance as it is a more comprehensive course.
- c. **Finance:** Reports were circulated at the meeting and are appended to these minutes. Due to a large legacy and the proceeds of the hall sale the last 2 years have shown a surplus. This year there will be big spending, we still have a deficit of £10k per month but on the whole the accounts are not gloomy.
PW will be moving away in May or June. There is someone willing to take on the treasurer role and PW would like to work with them in the next few months.
Proposal: PCC agree to Paul Waller starting to work on a succession plan. Proposed by Fred Bass, seconded by Revd Derreck Lee-Philpott, carried unanimously.
PCC were asked to receive the accounts for 2024 ahead of the APCM.
Proposal: PCC receive the 2024 accounts. Proposed by David Robertson, seconded by Liz Morgan-Jones, carried unanimously.

8. Fabric:

- a. **Fabric Team:** Michael Holmes will step down and there will be a fabric team comprising FB, MG, Mark Brunet, LMJ, PB and JH. There will be a Zoom meeting on April 8th. Fb will be responsible for reporting to PCC.
- b. **St Luke's Boiler:** This has failed and needs replacing. David Egan has quoted £2400 for a like for like replacement if the flue can be reused.
Proposal: PCC agree expenditure of £2400 plus 20% contingency to replace the boiler at St Luke's. Proposed by Fred Bass, seconded by David Robertson, carried unanimously.

9. Reports:

- a. **Mission Support:** Report circulated ahead of the meeting and appended to these minutes.
- b. **Pastoral Care Team:** Nothing new to report, next meeting 30th March
- c. **Deanery Synod:** All Deanery Synod members must be re-elected this year. The parish can have 5 representatives, 3-4 volunteers needed. BC and LJ are willing to stand. This is a very important year because of diocesan and general synod elections. There are usually 4 meetings a year.

10. Future Events:

- a. **PCC meetings:** Wednesdays May 13th, July 8th, Sep 9th, Nov 11th, Jan 20th, Mar 17th
- b. **Standing Committee:** Jun 10th, Aug 12th, Oct 14th, Dec 9th, Feb 17th
- c. **APCM 2026:** Sunday 26th April, 11.30 am in St Leonard's

11. AOB:

- a. **St Luke's Processional Cross:** JH has been asked by a vicar for the loan of a processional cross. There are 2 at St Luke's and the metal one could be loaned as long as everyone at St Luke's is aware. The question of history attached to the cross should also be investigated.
Proposal: If there are no objections from the St Luke's congregation the cross should be loaned on an annual basis with an appropriate letter and annual reviews. Proposed by Rev Carole Darling, seconded by Sue Topp, carried unanimously.
- b. **SSM Associate Vicar Job Description:** This was read to the meeting. There will be an interview on 27th March of a person already licensed to the parish.
Question: Is it a parish decision that there will not be a replacement stipendiary associate vicar or a diocesan one? FB will get this clarified.
Proposal: PCC agree the job description for a SSM Associate Vicar and that the planned interview should proceed. Proposed by Fred Bass, seconded by David Robertson, carried unanimously.
- c. **Monday Club and banking:** The Monday Club were responsible for counting and recording cash and cheque donations for many years. There is no longer need for a team and BC has undertaken this for more than 10 years, he is now standing down and handing over responsibility for collecting and banking collected monies to GT from the end of April. PCC recorded thanks to BC.
- d. **Mum Bible Study, Daytime Alpha and Pub Bible Study:** These groups are thriving and formal PCC approval is required.
Proposal: PCC approve the above groups continue. Proposed by Rev Carole Darling, seconded by Fred Bass, carried unanimously.
- e. **Administration:** No further action at present.
- f. **Open Church April:** Fred and Jayne Bass are away for the April open church and volunteers are needed to run this, see Fred if you can help.
- g. **Salary Increases:** Before this was discussed KB and CD left the meeting. The parish commits to paying the living wage to hourly employed staff. This is an increase of just under 4%. PW suggested that all staff, hourly paid and salaried receive an increase of 4%. This will cost £8.5k for 7 employees. This does not include the cleaner at St Luke's who is self employed.
Proposal: All staff to receive a 4% wage increase from April 1st 2026. Proposed by Fred Bass, seconded by David Robertson, 13 in favour, 1 abstention declaring an interest and 2 members who had left the meeting before the discussion. Proposal carried.

12. Items to be regarded as confidential minutes: None

13. Actions arising from the minutes:

- a. FB To clarify who decides on appointment of stipendiary clergy.
- b. PW to proceed on a succession plan for the treasurer post.
- c. SBr/KC to action procurement of a Safeguarding phone and contract.

14. Date of next meeting: Wednesday, 13th May 2026, 7.30pm at St Leonard's

The meeting closed with prayer