

TIDENHAM PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL



"where the river flows everything will live"

Minutes of Tidenham PCC Meeting held in St Luke at 19:30 on Tuesday 8th April 2025

ITEM		ACTION
1.	Attendance: Brian Duerden (BD) Chair, Robin Riordan (RR), Revd Nicki Bullivant (NB), Paul Coombs (PC), Nicholette Flatman (NF), Oliver Hinton (OH), Molly Mayo (MM), Emma Phillips (EP), Tanya White (TW) and Emma Durbin (ED), CYF Missioner, who usually attends PCC as an observer.	
	Apologies for absence: Marilyn Henderson (MH), Iain Gardiner (IG), Polly Morgan (PM), Andy Palmer (AP) and James Parsons (JP).	
2	<p>Welcome – NB read from Hebrews 12:2 and opened in prayer. As we continue in vacancy let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and encourage each other. BD thanked NB and the rest of the clerical team for all their work during the vacancy.</p> <p>This is the last PCC meeting before the annual church meetings on 11 May and OH has advised that he intends to stand down then. PCC members thanked OH for his valuable and constructive contributions. PC planning to stand again.</p> <p>ACTION IG to write formally to PCC members who step down this year.</p>	IG
3	Declarations of Interest: item 5.1 NB and ED	
	ITEMS FOR DECISION [information had been distributed to members in advance]	
4	<p>Trustees' Report and Annual Accounts for 2024 (BD)</p> <p>Our Independent Examiner Andy Royle has made a few minor changes to the previously agreed document. The final version had been sent to all PCC members, so NF proposed and RR seconded that PCC formally accept the Trustees' Report and Annual Accounts for 2024. Agreed unanimously.</p> <p>IG will send it to Gloucester Diocese Finance Dept and PC will present it to our church community at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) on Sunday 11 May.</p> <p>ACTION PC/IG</p>	PC/IG
5	<p>Matters arising from PCC Finance Committee (FC) meeting held on 28 February</p> <p>The 2-page draft minutes had been circulated and were commended to PCC members. Recommendations from the FC were discussed (see below).</p>	
5.1	<p>Funding Children, Youth and Families (CYF) work in Tidenham Parish (BD)</p> <p>ED concludes her CYF Missioner contract this summer. FC recommended that PCC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> confirm it had sufficient pledges to fund CYF work for 2 years before it advertised for a new CYF post, <i>and meanwhile</i> take steps now to mobilise volunteers to ensure that vital CYF work continues in the likely event there was no-one in post for 01 September. 	

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<p>5.1 (Cont'd)</p>	<p>BD set out the current financial situation of CYF work and the Wellbeing Ministry. The CYF Restricted Fund will be exhausted by 31 August 2025. There is £39k in the Wellbeing Ministry (WM) Restricted Fund, which could underwrite the Wellbeing Chaplain for the next 2 years. Additional WM funding has been sourced for this year and promised for future years. RR has made a grant application to Gloucester Diocese's 10:10 Fund seeking £5k for CYF work in 2026/27 and £40k for 2027/28. PCC could decide to use £20k from a designated fund to guarantee CYF work.</p> <p>PCC concluded that the financial position of CYF work in our parish remains unclear. It is now a number of years since church members were asked to support any of our Wellbeing Ministry initiatives, so FC recommended that after Easter, the PCC set out its plans for CYF work and ask church members to fund it. After a wide-ranging discussion TW proposed, EP seconded and all agreed: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on the need for a 2-year contract for a part-time (3 days a week) CYF Missioner, at a total cost of approx. £40k • to produce a Pledge Leaflet in May seeking funds from our church community for a CYF Missioner. ACTION RR • to seek a small number of people to act as guarantors for £20k in the unlikely event that the funding campaign / grant applications fall short of the monies needed to underwrite the 2-year cost of a part time CYF Missioner. ACTION FC • to use £20k from a designated fund to guarantee CYF work should it be needed, recognising that there were other potential claims on that money. <p>For a CYF Missioner to be in post by 01 September we would need to advertise now, but there is insufficient funding for the 2nd year of the CYF contract even with the £20k from the designated fund. FC was unhappy to recommend that PCC advertise a 2 year post when it did not know where the money was coming from.</p> <p>PCC asked FC to review CYF finances after a few weeks of the funding campaign and email PCC members when enough funding had been sourced. ACTION FC That would enable the CYF post to be adverted without further delay. NF advised a small group was already working on the replacement job description, which has been sent to the diocese for their review. BD expressed thanks to that group.</p>	<p>RR</p> <p>FC</p> <p>FC</p>
<p>5.2</p>	<p>Stewardship campaign for our General Fund to cover day to day church activities.</p> <p>MM concerned that although PC regularly advised that the running costs of our churches exceeded our income, the long-promised campaign to address the issue had not taken place. MM queried if this was the right time to raise funds for CYF work when our General Fund (GF) was declining.</p> <p>The FC had recommended that PCC should agree to fund CYF work as it was the highest priority, being vital for the very future of our church. BD affirmed that people are very reluctant to increase their regular giving to a General Fund when 75% of our disposable income is given to Gloucester Diocese via our Parish Share, even when we have no vicar.</p> <p>The time for a stewardship campaign for General Funds is therefore after our new vicar is in post. RR agreed that the health of our GF was very important and FC is reviewing our ability to meet our 2025 parish share commitment. ACTION FC</p> <p>NB stressed the need for a new focus on day to day Stewardship giving during Sunday services. Members agreed that service leaders should reinstate Revd David Treharne's sentences prior to the plate being brought forward to the altar.</p>	<p>FC</p>

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ITEM		ACTION
5.2 (Cont'd)	<p>Passing the plate could be reinstated, but it had fallen out of use even before Covid as PCC had encouraged giving by standing order. Card readers have now been installed at Tutshill and Tidenham, which has reduced our cash handling, so the card reader could be brought up on the plate.</p> <p>An article for the Link magazine is required so that people know what happens to their donations to the General Fund. ACTION RR to write one for the next edition.</p> <p>PCC agreed the need to raise awareness among our congregations of regular giving for church activities, especially as we have new church members. ED said coffee donations increased significantly the previous week after an announcement.</p>	RR
5.3	<p>Fire extinguishers contract (Currently Chubb until autumn 2025)</p> <p>Chubb provide and implement their advice on fire safety, and every year they maintain their 12 extinguishers under a 5-year contract. Fire brigade advice if there is a fire is to get everyone out first, so training our sidespeople is an issue we need to address.</p> <p>ACTION BD / RR</p> <p>BD advised that having a risk assessment and the correct number and type of fire extinguishers is an essential part of our church insurance policy.</p> <p>PC has contacted alternative local suppliers used by other parishes in our Diocese. The option of buying our own fire extinguishers, which have a 10 year life, means an initial £750 outlay, but offers significant potential savings. Over 5 years Chubb costs approx. £2.5k vs £1.5k if we purchase fire extinguishers and use local contractors to maintain them. After discussion NF proposed and NB seconded that PC obtain 3 detailed quotations from local suppliers and make a detailed proposal to PCC in May / June. Agreed unanimously. ACTION PC</p>	BD/RR PC
5.4	<p>Proposed Gas and Electricity Utilities Contract</p> <p>On 26 March PC and IG met Jim Hackford, our long-standing energy broker from Gaia Energy Brokers Ltd (Gaia), in Bristol to review our utilities contract with SSE, which expires on 31 December 2025. As PCC will not renew with SSE, Jim plans to give us options in May/June for a new 3-year contract starting on 01 January 2026.</p> <p>Gaia's Letter of Authority (LOA) expired on 31 March, so FC recommends that PCC authorise IG to sign a new LOA to enable Gaia to act on our behalf.</p> <p>Gaia does receive commission for their work, but FC is not aware of anyone in our church community who is competent to negotiate a utilities deal on our behalf. We have had good deals in the past from Gaia so EP proposed and NB seconded that IG sign a new LOA. Agreed unanimously. ACTION IG.</p> <p>NF advised that many parishes in our diocese now use a contractor to negotiate with energy companies.</p>	IG
6	<p>Proposed additional Events to develop our Youth activities, June – July 2025</p> <p>NF proposed and MM seconded ED's proposals for 3 additional events: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shopping trip and tour of BBC Studios Cardiff, Saturday 7 June • family picnic breakfast and Duck-race at Blakeney Straits on Sunday 29 June • weekend away at Newent TRAC (activity centre) with the Youth on 5 & 6 July <p>The events on 7 June and 5/6 July are Boys Brigade events and we have been invited to join them. Agreed unanimously.</p>	

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7	<p>Renewal of Fairtrade Certificates for our 3 churches (expires on 22 May 2025).</p> <p>TW spoke to her paper and confirmed she was happy to complete the necessary paperwork provided PCC members were happy to support the application. TW proposed and EP seconded that we seek recertification. All agreed ACTION TW</p>	TW
8	<p>Play the Organ Day at Chase church (BD)</p> <p>The Royal College of Organists has declared 2025 “Play the Organ Year”, which is supported by Gloucester Diocese. Susanna Jacks would like to offer people the chance to play Chase organ on a couple of Saturday mornings in May. Marjorie Duerden is keen to help, so NB proposed and RR seconded the event in order that it is covered by our church insurance. All agreed. ACTION BD</p>	BD
9	<p>Flowers at Chase “For the Parish - from the parish” (BD)</p> <p>Susanna Jacks is offering to provide local sustainable flowers and foliage at Chase for anyone wanting to remember a loved one or a memorable event. We could include them in church prayers that week if requested. Donations would be welcomed but not essential. Susanna would like to start this at Easter by putting a card on the table in Chase church, next to a donation box. The intention is to put a card by the flowers in the nave with the name on for the week. TW proposed and NB seconded. All agreed.</p>	
10	<p>Caring for God’s Acre - A national secular charity based in Craven Arms, Shropshire. This is the conservation charity for Burial Grounds across the UK, “<i>Protecting Wildlife - Preserving Heritage - Involving People</i>”. It is supported by the Church of England. Susanna Jacks has transferred her personal membership to the Parish so Tidenham PCC is now a member. As we manage Chase churchyard we can choose to implement the principles set out by <i>Caring for God’s Acre</i> – e.g. how often to mow the grass or to create wild flower areas.</p> <p>This will have minimal impact on Chase churchyard - grassed areas are no longer cut as frequently as before, but access is maintained and we do have stunning wild flowers. Children are encouraged to visit the churchyard and then go on to Poor’s Allotment. As Tidenham and Tutshill are closed churchyards managed by Tidenham Parish Council, we don’t want to inadvertently take back their management. Susanna /BD plan to write an article for the Link magazine. ACTION BD</p>	BD
	BD asked the meeting for a pause for prayer for the items already discussed. NB did so and mentioned that we are the church – it’s not just a building.	
	ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION	
11	<p>Current Finance Update (PC)</p> <p>PC had provided the usual reports on the status of each restricted fund, plus a new report: an <i>Outturn</i> i.e. the anticipated figures for the General Fund Income and Expenditure position at 31 December 2025, when set against the budget.</p> <p>Our Lloyds bank balances at 17:00hrs today: No1 £13,569; No 2 £4,176; No 3 Fabric: £4,114, which is where Scarecrow Trail cash receipts are deposited.</p> <p>The Scarecrow Trail uses two electronic systems for donations – <i>SumUp</i> machine at the shop and <i>Just Giving</i> for remote online players – both working OK.</p> <p>Tidenham Tower Works Update</p> <p>The final invoice is still awaited, so PC is retaining money in No 1 account to pay it.</p>	

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11 (Cont.'d)	<p>Tower Restricted Fund contains £22.5k and we expect to receive £7.3k VAT refund via Listed Places of Worship (LPOW) scheme by 18 April – making £30k in total.</p> <p>Tidenham North Aisle - The final very complicated VAT refund for £1,690 under LPOW has been passed for payment. This was submitted before 31 March 2025 so it won't count towards the new £25k buildings limit in 2025/26 financial year.</p> <p>Our Reserves - We are £4.2k below where we need to be, but most of this will be recovered via the next Gift Aid submission.</p> <p>The Outturn is based on our first quarter (Q1) results, and the report will become more reliable as the year progresses. It predicts Income will be £9k below budget and Expenditure will be £7k over budget. Big items are: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parish share where we have maintained our 2024 monthly payment - we had been asked to contribute >75% of our unrestricted income, and PC believes we will need to reduce it still further this year <i>and</i> • Utilities. We now pay actual invoices so Q1 results are always high and Q2 and Q3 should be much lighter, given that building work at Tidenham has finished. <p>NF advised that to save money, some churches in Gloucester diocese have changed their heating policy and now switch it off at 31 March instead of 30 April. Other churches publish how much money is paid in each month, so that people can see the scale of the challenge, though expenditure also needs to be shown.</p>	
12	<p>Parish Share 2025 /2026.</p> <p>On 29 April RR, NF, PC, MM and IG will meet a team from Gloucester Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) at Bream church to discuss their proposals for the 2026 Parish Share process. This is part of a diocesan wide conversation that builds on from the responses to their questionnaire, which we submitted in early February. Members expressed full support to those attending that meeting to explain that we will pay only what is reasonable and affordable in our current circumstances, noting that by 31 December 2025 we will probably have been without a vicar for 18 months.</p> <p>Note: Tidenham, St Briavels and Hewelsfield parishes between them paid £88k in parish share in 2024, and along with other deanery parishes, we are without a vicar.</p> <p>The FC meeting on 9 May will review both the outcome of the DBF meeting on 29 April and our contribution to the 2025 parish share. FC will then make a recommendation to the PCC meeting on 13 May. ACTION FC</p>	FC
13	<p>The Vacancy – Update by BD / RR</p> <p>The vacancy will be readvertised on 9 May, with an interview date of pm 23 June.</p> <p>The wardens had a positive review meeting with the Ministry Team, looking at the vicarage, the mission and evangelism strategy and the future of our Benefice in Plurality. Three changes were proposed: - the Wording of The Church Times advert, the Bishop's letter and the prospectus. RR will circulate the revised prospectus document to PCC members for comments. ACTION RR</p> <p>EP to enquire if Woodcroft Christian Centre is available for 23 June. ACTION EP</p> <p>PCC will need to reconfirm the availability of its representatives. ACTION BD/RR</p> <p>Note: Two weeks before Revd David and family were due to move out of the old vicarage the diocese decided to delay demolishing the building until plans are in place for the whole site, and now intends to install guardians. This meant significant cleaning to make it fit for use. PCC noted "A distinct lack of joined up thinking".</p>	RR EP BD/RR

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14	<p>Annual Church Meetings: 12 noon in Tutshill Church on Sunday 11 May</p> <p>BD has signed the legal notices advising all concerned about the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), which will then be posted on all of our church notice boards. The weekly briefing will also advise our church community about these meetings and announcements will be made in all three churches for at least 2 weeks prior to the meetings.</p> <p>Nomination forms for churchwardens and PCC membership will also be available at the back of each church. Prospective PCC members need to be on the new church electoral roll for at least 6 months prior to the APCM. BD and RR asked members to prayerfully consider who to approach to suggest they join the PCC, as we need to have an active and representative PCC. ACTION ALL</p> <p>New Church electoral roll.</p> <p>130 application forms received so far: some 50 short of the existing roll. PCC discussed how to ensure that everyone who wanted to be on the roll was able to do so.</p>	ALL
15	<p>Safeguarding: No new issues reported.</p> <p>Safeguarding Committee met and Rosalind Seward, our Parish Safeguarding Officer, will provide an update to PCC on 13 May.</p> <p>Children's faces. NB advised that we can't now post children's faces on Facebook or on our website, this is to prevent people stealing children's images. RR confirmed that we have wiped all such images from our Facebook pages and from our website. NB has advised Sedbury Space to do the same.</p>	
16	<p>Tidenham Church Tower building works – Update (JP) :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Tower work has been completed apart from connecting the new roof drain. This is the first time water won't be cascading down from the tower roof! • All is ready for the wedding on Saturday 12 April, when the Bells will ring out. • New Bell ropes still to be installed and clock to be restarted. • BD to arrange for a Bishop to bless the bell ropes, plus the refurbished North Aisle and Tower, and to deconsecrate the altar from the north aisle. ACTION BD 	BD
17	<p>Tidenham Church Nave - Ceiling repairs. BD is leading for this.</p> <p>BD reported limited progress, as we await our plasterer's detailed report on the work required and the cost of repairs. We need to advise our insurers. The plasterer is now reluctant to arrange for the scaffolding, and we don't want that responsibility as it comes with the need for risk assessments, and liability for any delays by the plasterer. The ceiling is safe meantime and BD will chase the plasterer for his report. The opportunity may be taken to repaint the ceiling at the same time. ACTION BD</p>	BD
18	<p>Opening Tidenham Church to the public</p> <p>BD is in discussion with Tidenham Friends and all interested parties to fulfil our commitment to the National Churches Trust. ACTION BD</p>	BD
19	<p>Health & Safety: No incidents reported.</p> <p>RR has advised MM about safety issues for Tidenham 10 May Fun Day</p> <p>Food hygiene course changes. ED and NB to check changed requirements for serving toast, coffee etc, and that volunteers' certificates are up to date. ACTION ED and NB</p>	ED/ NB

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ITEM		ACTION
20	Approve draft minutes of PCC Meeting held on 04 March: A number of agreed alterations had been made and drafts circulated, so NF proposed and EP seconded that the minutes be approved. Agreed unanimously.	
21	What's Coming up? – Easter events – all services in hand, but NB has a huge workload, so please pray for her. Sunday 27 April: Only 1 service in the parish - 11:00 at Tutshill. Website to be updated. Tidenham Church: Fun Day 10 May; Gala concert 14 June; Flower festival 21/22 June Ascension Day 29 May: 06:00 at Tutshill, then breakfast - to be arranged after Easter.	
22	AOB	
22.1	Key for Tutshill School field beside the church ED now has a key, and has been given permission to use it on sunny Sundays.	
22.2	Tidenham Vicarage Post-box Cost of redirecting church mail is £675 [as opposed to £35 for personal mail], so RR has cancelled the planned redirection. As the Diocese is delaying bulldozing the Vicarage until plans are in place for the whole site, our post-box there will remain in use until the Diocese arranges for Guardians to occupy the property, when we will need further discussion. NF has already updated Colin at Gloucester Diocese property dept.	
22.3	Foundation Governor to Forest Edge Federation (includes Tutshill CoE Primary School) Members congratulated NB on her appointment by Gloucester Diocesan Board of Education. Her 4-year term runs from 01 March 2025 – 28 February 2029.	
22.4	Tidenham church North Aisle heating – Requested update (OH). PCC await further advice /a recommendation from Tidenham Friends. ACTION BD	BD
22.5	Poor State of Tidenham Chase church. BD has received a letter from Susanna Jacks and Angela Fryer, addressed to PCC members, asking why the PCC has not actioned the 2022 Quinquennial Inspection recommendations; and seeking to know the PCC's strategy for Chase church and the diocese's plans for it. BD will circulate it and respond. ACTION BD The PCC strategy for churches in Tidenham parish was set out some time ago: to apply for grants to firstly reorder Tutshill, then reorder Tidenham and then repair Chase. BD and IG had encouraged Susanna to join the PCC in order to see the bigger picture.	BD
22.6	Scarecrow Trail Feedback. MM had heard some large families were finding it too costly to pay for a sheet for every child. ED advised the Team had discussed this and as prices have not increased for some time they felt it did provide good value for money.	
23	Let's share some Good News! - 2 out of 4 potholes at Chase have been repaired!	
	ITEMS FOR INFORMATION	
24	GDPR: No issues.	
25	Changes to Church Electoral Roll since the last PCC meeting on 4 March: NIL	
	Closing Prayer: RR read the vacancy prayer. Meeting closed at 22:00. Next meeting at St Luke's Tutshill on 13th May at 19:30 hrs.	