

Otley Parish Church.

Minutes of Parochial Church Council Meeting held on Monday 19TH January 2026

The meeting was preceded by prayers from Barry

Present: Allan Boddy, Barry Milner, Glynis Milner, Martin Hird, Ken Dale, Norman Barr, Eric Cairns, Rosemary Ellen, Tom Raper, Kevin Keefe, Rev Aaron Kennedy, Jonathan Joslin, John Simkins, Tony Pike (online)

In Attendance: Jenny Liston for item 3, Geoff Park for Youth Work item.

1. **Apologies:** Jackie Hird, Maggie Lolashvili
2. **Declaration of interests** – None
3. **Safeguarding.**

3.1 Lone Working Policy

Barry is in the process of producing a final draft of the policy.

3.2 Lockable cupboards for volunteers.

Tom has arranged these, delivery imminent.

3.3 Security cameras in church.

This is in process; Tom is working on the List B application.

3.4 Management of offenders

Jenny wished to ensure the PCC that known offenders or others who may pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults are effectively managed and monitored in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and other bodies (police, probation service)

3.5 Domestic Abuse Training

Everyone working with children or vulnerable adults is required to complete the CofE Domestic Abuse online course. Proposed that we run a course open to the relevant people in the congregation.

3.6 Any other safeguarding matters:

Jenny is continuing to circulate and analyse the questionnaires to all church groups. There is new guidance on social media from the Diocese which Jenny will send to Kevin. Allan thanked Jenny for all her hard work on behalf of the PCC in this area.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on November 24th 2025.

Approval proposed by Eric, seconded by Tom, passed unanimously.

5. Matters arising not on the agenda: None

Youth Work: Geoff Park joined the meeting at this point to contribute to the discussion concerning Youth Work in the parish following the conclusion of the Missional Generation agreement. Aaron prayed for the situation and reported that Maria has found a position with Leeds Faith in Schools. The transition started on 18th January and

will continue until the end of her notice period at the end of March. Tony has dealt with the necessary change in payments between MG and LFIS.

Geoff, Katy and Abi have met to discuss the short-term future, from now until the end of the summer term. Currently youth groups meet every other Friday, Sunday mornings and Sunday evenings. Maria is either present at these sessions or prepares the material used and organises the sessions.

There are currently 11 volunteers involved in youth work.

The youth group leaders believe that they can continue with the Friday sessions twice a month, although Maria organised most of these sessions so her input will be hard to replace. The group feel they can continue to hold sessions during Sunday morning communion services. The Sunday evening sessions will be one per month.

Maria's daytime youth activities (Tuesday group, Prince Henry's and All Saints contacts) cannot be covered by current volunteers. It isn't known if Maria will continue with a contact with Prince Henry's through LFIS.

Having a dedicated youth resource has obviously been successful, thanks to Maria's hard work and talent.

Tony advised that the cost of direct employment of a youth worker would be slightly less than the current cost with Missional Generation, but would involve increased risks and responsibilities – redundancy, safeguarding, supervision. It is also felt that good youth workers are hard to find.

Geoff informed the PCC that the Diocese has put in a bid to the national church to employ 22 youth workers across the Diocese. They will be employed by the Diocese for 5 years when the cost needs to be taken on by the parishes (details not confirmed, probably some form of taper)

(ADDENDUM – Subsequent to our meeting, Geoff has confirmed that the Diocesan support is for 4 years in total – 3 years at 100% and 1 year at 50%)

There are 460 parishes in the Diocese!

Ken Dale proposed, seconded by Eric, that our parish should express an interest in this scheme. Passed unanimously. Aaron will contact the Diocese to do this,

Norman suggested that we should seek more support from the congregation for youth work.

Norman proposed that we form a sub-group of the PCC to take a broader look at the needs for all children's and youth work in the medium to longer term. Allan agreed to

convene such a group, to include representatives from the current volunteers. Jonathan was asked and agreed to be involved.

Allan thanked Geoff and all the youth team for the work they do and the extra burden they will shoulder when Maria's support ends.

6.0 Events

6.1 Advent and Christmas services.

8,554 visitors to the church were recorded in December.

Westgate Primary had a Christmas event in church for the first time and this was well received by parents.

Tom reported that the 4pm Christingle Service continued to be so popular that we had to turn people away at the door. Some way of avoiding this to be considered before next Christmas.

6.2 Christmas Tree Festival

3,278 visitors over the 4 days, 1,147 on the Saturday alone. £4,796.11

raised by the numerous charities. Proposed dates for next year:

Set up on 7/12/26 and 8/12/26

Festival to run 9/12/26 to 12/12/26

Take down 14/12/26

6.3 Forthcoming Events

24/12/26 – Baroque Concert

14/2/26 – Messy Church

7/3/26 – Prayer Breakfast and Leeds Guild of Singers (this clashes with PCC Away Day but will be managed)

14/3/26 Otley Choral Society - Elijah

6.4 Water pressure in Mezzanine toilets and sinks-

Standing Committee met to discuss this problem but felt they lacked the required expertise to decide between the various proposals and needed a further investigation and recommendation before proceeding with any upgrade to the system. Tom to look at the problem and try to determine the best and most cost-effective fix.

6.5 Any other matters pertaining to events:

Tom suggested that after the experience of the events in 2025 we should have a retiring collection for the Roof Fund at all events.

7.0 Finances

7.1 Finance Update –

Total income for general use for 2025 was £187,134.

Total spending was £195, 818. The deficit of £8,684 is substantial but significantly less than budgeted. However this is to a good degree the result of one-off factors and donations.

See Tony's report for full details.

7.2 Renewable Electricity Commitment certificate.

We use verified 100% renewable electricity from our new supplier, SmartestEnergy Business, and have received certification to that effect.

7.3 Church letting rates

Tony had circulated his proposals for hire fees for the coming year. These were seconded by Kevin, passed unanimously. We need to consider events which are run by charities. Are we prepared to offer 'charity rates?' To date the warden and Treasurer have offered lower rates in a few cases but would value any advice from PCC members.

7.4 Dorothy Mainprize Legacy

The church has received a legacy of £25,000 from the estate of Dorothy Mainprize. The legacy is unrestricted. The funds will be placed in a Designated Fund until PCC decide how we wish it to be allocated.

8.0 Properties

8.1 Carbon Net Zero

8.1.1 CNZ meetings held on 27th November 2025 and December 9th 2025 - Please refer to the comprehensive minutes circulated before meeting by Norman.

8.1.2 National Lottery Heritage Fund meeting January 8th 2026
Norman and Trevor attended an online meeting to continue the processing of our funding application.

8.1.3 Energy Audit – Ken is continuing to review the actions from the audit. Grant money of £3,000 is available but needs to be used in a single project. The cost of most options will probably be low so it will be difficult to access the full grant.

8.1.4 Next CNZ meeting – January 29th, Business Plan has been received and is being reviewed by the CNZ group prior to discussion at this meeting. Carl Andrews has produced initial drawings for ancillary work to the roof replacement, including the conversion of the mezzanine area.

Allan suggested that at some point it would be useful to schedule a meeting (maybe online) to give PCC members the opportunity to discuss the project in depth.

8.2 Regrouting nave and paths – Work was carried out as required.

9. Youth and Children’s Ministry – see earlier discussion.

10. Reports and correspondence received – see Norman’s report on the Community Groups Network Lunch held on November 26th

11. Community / Churches Together in Otley/ OPC Prayer Team – John reported that the Prayer Walk for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity had taken place on the morning of this meeting and had been attended by around 40 people from churches across the town, meeting for prayer in the various church buildings.

OPC Prayer Team – In January we will participate in two initiatives – Nationally ‘Turn the Battle’ prayer event (see their website for details) and the North West Deanery initiative to distribute ‘Try Praying’ booklets.

12. Any other business

12.1 Deanery Synod Representation – there will be vacancies for additional Parish Representatives to be elected at the next Annual Meeting.

12.2 Registration as a food supplier. This has been actioned by the Secretary and acknowledged by Leeds City Council. Evidence of an earlier registration in 1992 was found, but unclear whether this has lapsed. There will be an inspection visit to the church kitchen at some point.

12.3 Discussion at February Meeting about the way OPC is managed – Aaron will circulate a paper to PCC prior to next meeting

12.4 Any Other Business – Ken reported that the large screen TV used for services has been damaged. He will arrange a replacement, estimated cost £430.

13. Prayers at next meeting – Glynis

14. Date of next meeting- February 23rd 2026

Barry closed the meeting with prayers.

Proposed dates for future meetings:

2026	2027
	January 11th
February 23rd	February 8th
March 16th	March 15th
April 20th	May 10th
June 8th	June 21st
July 20th	July 19th
September 14th	September 6th
October 12th	October 11th
November 23rd	November 22nd
Away Day – March 7th	Away Day - January 16th