

The Parish Church of St Margaret, Rainham
Parochial Church Council

Full meeting of the PCC on Thursday 16th April 2026
19:30 in Church



Present: Lorna Dyer (LD); Janet Garnons-Williams (JGW); Nick Grief (NG); Simon Hall (SH); Davina O'Brien (DOB) – Treasurer; David Ormiston (DO); Jean Penney (JP); Linda Randall (LR); Barbara Strachan (BS); Revd Nathan Ward (NW); Terry Whittaker (TW)

PCC MINUTES

Item	Details	Action
1.	Welcome and Opening Act of Worship:	
	The meeting opened with Compline.	
2.	Apologies:	
	These were received from Jo Whittaker (JW); Emi Inetianbor (EI)	
3.	Minutes of the Meeting on 19th March 2026:	
a.	Approval – these were approved with three minor amendments. Proposed by SH and seconded by NG.	
b.	Matters Arising (<i>not included elsewhere</i>):	
i.	<u>Acts Six Lease Update</u> - TW had been in touch with the diocese to chase them for a response regarding the lease. They advised that we would hear by tomorrow, Friday. Resolution: if the DBF do not respond by 5pm on Friday 17 th April, we shall instruct our solicitors to go ahead with the lease anyway. If either Acts Six or the PCC incur additional costs, we shall seek to recover them from the DBF. Proposed by TW and seconded by DOB. Agreed unanimously	TW
ii.	<u>Change of trust terms</u> – holding item, to be followed up once the Acts Six Lease is finalized.	
iii.	<u>Energy Footprint submission</u> – The bills are being gathered together for submission for the Energy Footprint.	NW
iv.	<u>Interments</u> – long term decision to be made re burial and memorialization. LD and Ana had identified 96 burial spaces in the New Yard, which would last about 10 years at our present rate. However, the situation in relation to interment of ashes was critical, because we have run out of space. It was agreed that failing to solve the problem would be very damaging to our relationship with the community. Three options were discussed: 1. the identification of a new garden of remembrance within the churchyard, along with a new stone for memorialisation. A space had been identified close to the church path and a quote for a new stone was awaited from Kent Memorials. This would only accommodate around 50 new interments, lasting about 18 months at our current rate of usage. 2. identify a triple depth grave, have a vault installed into which ashes could be poured, with a slab on top for memorialisation. This would provide space for about 2000 interments. The cost of designing a vault was £800. 3. install a columbarium in the tower. The issue in relation to this was memorialisation, because the tower steps were not safe for people to visit. NW pointed out that the PCC can create its own rules to add to the diocesan rules, but they have to be approved by the Chancellor of the diocese. This could include such matters as removing dead flowers or other material from graves. A discussion took place about the relative merit of applying for faculties separately for each option or all together, to demonstrate that we were taking emergency action, but have a sound longer term plan to meet the needs of our community.	

	Resolution: that £800 be released to get a vault designed and that a single faculty application be submitted as soon as the necessary information was available, but that we are dependent upon outside agencies giving us information. Proposed by TW and seconded by JGW. Agreed unanimously.	NW
4.	Safeguarding Dashboard:	
	A written report was circulated.	
5.	Finance:	
a.	<u>Position against budget, including unusual or unexpected</u> - DOB guided the PCC through the report, noting that church running costs, advertising and utilities were all over budget, but that there were reasons for this. Our utility costs were protected from the effects of the war in Iraq until October, when the fixed terms end. There was a query over staff costs which will be clarified for the next meeting.	
b.	<u>Annual Report and Accounts for y/e 31/12/25</u> - The annual report and accounts were with the examiner. It was hoped that they would be finalised by the APCM, but it was not unusual to present a draft to the meeting and this does not present a legal issue.	
6.	Church Overview:	
	It was noted that there had been a big increase on last year's attendance at Easter services. 100 people attended on Good Friday and 280 on Easter Sunday, making us one of the strongest churches in the area. There was evidence that we have depth as well as breadth in our congregation, in that Bible study notes were being used regularly, we had an established prayer group, a WhatsApp group for urgent prayer and more candidates for adult baptism and confirmation than any other parish in the deanery. Our online presence remained strong, especially on Facebook. We were doing more with less, having only one priest and no other paid post for ministry. There had been one incomplete application for the post of children and families worker. NW had extended the deadline to Sunday 19th April, as there was doubt about when the diocese circulated the application. We have advertised in the Church Times, New Wine network, and the Church of England portal, but there are very few people qualified to apply. If we do not recruit, the job description will be reviewed. If we have candidates, the discernment day will be 29th April 2026. We were facing the need for people to be developed into lay ministry, to fill the gap left by the lack of clergy. The new PCC would need to tackle this matter to encourage people to train at every level from volunteer speaker to ordination. Having more authorised lay leaders is the only way we can move from growth to service. A discussion took place about whether we could partner with the diocese of Harare for short term exchanges. Graham was integrating well and has already made arrangements to go into Mierscourt school and St Margaret's junior school. He has written some harmonies for the choir and is encouraging people to join in making music in services. All feedback had been positive.	
7.	PRF Update:	
	A suitably experienced fundraising consultant had been appointed to work on an Expression of Interest to the Heritage Lottery Fund. If we are successful, this will lead to an application for the Development phase, which has to be submitted by 5 th August. Consultation will take place at the June and July PCC meetings, when the application has been prepared. The PCC confirmed that it was content with this process.	
8.	Health and Safety:	
i.	Fire Risk Assessment - fire policy; contingency plan for non-fire related incidents. All policies should be in place for the new PCC.	
9.	Maintenance:	
i.	Quinquennial Work – A revised Quinquennial inspection report had been issued to take account of PAT testing. A discussion was needed between the inspecting architect and the Quantity Surveyor as to which work was essential and which	

	might be covered by PRF. It seems that the perimeter wall was the biggest area of risk; if necessary work was not done from the report, our insurance will be invalidated. A discussion took place concerning railings around monuments and whether they can be removed. This was a decision which would need to balance safety and financial priorities, following the meeting between the architect and QS. There was a fault with one of the boilers. A quote for remedial work had been received, but PCC agreed that we should obtain two further quotes. It was agreed that this information would be referred to Standing committee for a decision.	Standing Cttee
10.	Correspondence (if any):	
	None received.	
11.	AOB (to be notified to the Chair prior to the meeting):	
a.	Standing Committee decisions (if any): none to report	
b.	Thanks to retiring PCC and Deanery Synod Members - NW thanked the current PCC for all its work, emphasising how much had been achieved towards growing numerically and spiritually.	
12.	Dates of Next Meeting:	
	APCM – Tuesday 28 th April All meetings at 19:30 in Church: Thursday 21 st May (<i>*note change from usual pattern*</i>) Thursday 25 th June Thursday 23 rd July Thursday 24 th September Thursday 22 nd October Thursday 26 th November	
13.	Closing Act of Worship:	
	The meeting closed with compline.	