



PARISH OF GREAT BERKHAMSTED

Meeting of the Parochial Church Council held in the Court House
Tuesday 16th September 2025 at 8pm

Attendees:

Sarah Elder (SE)
Carolynne Charman (CC)
Chris Chatterton (ChCh)
Carole Dell (CD)
Susan Holmes (SH)
Hillary Elliot (HE)
Stuart Owen (SO)
Henry Snow (HS)
Richard Hackworth (RH)

A G E N D A

Start Time: 20:00

1. **Prayers**
2. **Apologies** – none had been received.
3. **Notification of matters for consideration under Any Other Business** – Church WiFi. Prayers of Love and Faith. Foundation Governor. Standing Committee. All Saints House.
4. **Approval of Minutes of the PCC Meeting held on 1st July 2025** – approved
5. **Matters Arising** –
12 £500 set up costs for Festival of Light approved.
15 Chris Cartwright was appointed to The Castle Federation Governing Board as a Diocesan Foundation Governor and so did not require nomination by the PCC.
6. **Financial Report.**
The current financial situation was comparable with last year, but with some reduction in Stewardship and in Court House bookings income.
7. **Committee/Group Reports**
 - **Buildings Committee**
CC £800 remained from a grant from the Town Council. Cost of two radiators in the Court House Long Room would be around £1500. PCC agreed costs up to £1000.
CC Richard Oxley visited on September 4th to inspect works needed on North Transept. Awaiting his report.
 - **Fundraising Committee**
CC awaiting report from Richard Oxley.
 - **Pastoral Committee**

HE New risk assessment had been prepared for pastoral visitors.

HE WhatsApp group for pastoral visitors had been created, both for the wellbeing of the visitors themselves and also to track who was being visited and who might be being overlooked.

HE A small group prayed Compline together via Zoom each week. With some help regarding the technology others might be interested in joining. RH offered to assist with setting up Zoom for some people.

8. Children and families

SE Good turnout at the Blessing of the Backpacks service this year.

SE Next big event will be Harvest, and children will sell cakes in CH after the service.

SE Safeguarding Forms had been prepared for children who attend Sunday School regularly.

9. Mission Action Plan

SO suggested timetable. October 19th after service an opportunity for people to share their ideas for the future of St Peter's. October 21st, PCC members meet to collate the responses, identify themes, and produce ideas to go to full PCC meeting in November.

November 18th, PCC agrees a Mission Action Plan of up to six items (including at least one suggestion *from* children and young people, and at least one focused on serving the wider community). November 30th (Advent Sunday) launch new MAP after Sunday Service.

Hillary Elliot, Richard Hackworth and Carolynne Charman agreed to assist SO with 'fleshing out' this timetable.

10. All Saints House and Court House Cottage

RH spoke to papers which had been circulated regarding ASH. Some years ago (2019?) it was recognised that ASH was held under two different trusts and that it would be prudent to regularise the situation. Advice had been taken from the DBF who are Custodian Trustees of the property. The PCC agreed to the proposal to seek to regularise the situation so that the whole of ASH is incorporated into one Charity Commission Scheme. The PCC agreed to this proposal.

RH had prepared a paper on the long-term future of the property. There was some discussion about whether it would make more financial sense at some point to sell the property and invest the capital. This would be further discussed once the scheme discussed had been approved by the Charity Commission.

11. Safeguarding

HE had participated in the Archdeacon's Visitation alongside CC, but it had not been as focused on Safeguarding as anticipated.

The categories of people who needed to receive Safeguarding training was being expanded, and HE and Rachel Below would be offering group sessions in the CH.

12. Whistleblowing Policy

SO We're required to have Whistleblowing Policy but there is no CofE or Diocesan template. A template had been found on the website thechurchoffice.org.uk, which SO had amended for use at St Peter's. RH noted that in some parts of the policy it was not clear who was the responsible party(ies) were. SO would review the Policy. The PCC agreed to send the amended policy to the Archdeacon's office for further guidance.

13. Dates of Next Meetings

19th October, 8pm, The Rectory – informal gathering of the PCC to review congregational responses regarding Mission Action Plan.

18th November, 8pm, Court House – full PCC meeting.

15. Any Other Business-

CC Mike Below had prepared a background paper and a faculty for updating the CCTV system in the church and for linking the WiFi system in the church to the Court House so that there was no need for the church to have a separate phone line, at a saving of around £600 per annum. The PCC approved the proposed scheme and faculty application.

SO spoke about the Church of England's publication of liturgical material, 'Prayers of Love and Faith', which *'are offered as resources in praying with and for a same-sex couple who love one another and who wish to give thanks for and mark that love in faith before God'*.¹ SO affirmed that he would be happy to make use of this material. The PCC discussed the use of the material and affirmed its support of SO's willingness to offer such prayers.

SO proposed Laura Edwards to be a PCC Foundation Governor on The Castle Federation Governing Body. CC seconded the nomination and the PCC approved.

HS proposed RH be appointed to the Standing Committee. SE seconded the nomination and the PCC approved.

HS reported that the current tenants of ASH wanted to move out before the end of their tenancy agreement on 5th January 2026. After some discussion the PCC agreed to agree to this if new tenants could be found by 31st October.

16. The Grace

Future Meetings

16th September

18th November

2026

20th January

17th March

¹ <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/prayers-love-and-faith>