



The Parish Church of St. Oswald, Croxley Green

14 April 2026

Dear Church Member,

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS AND ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING 2026.

I am pleased to provide with this letter a portfolio of documents in preparation for the above meetings which will take place on **SUNDAY 26 APRIL** at 11.30 am in the church.

We issue the documents before the meetings to give you an opportunity to think about the matters to be discussed, and I hope you will read and digest the contents.

An important part of the meeting is the election of Churchwardens and members of the P.C.C. Please consider carefully whom you feel should represent the congregation in this way. Details of current members are given in the document entitled Elections 2026 attached. If your name is on the Electoral Roll and you would like to stand, or nominate someone else, please contact the Secretary, Brian Thomson (01923 226850 or email secretary@stoswaldschurch.org.uk) for a nomination form or collect one from the back of the church.

It is important that we hear from you and I very much hope that you will participate if you can.

Yours sincerely,

Helen McAlpine
Churchwarden

Documents attached
Agenda
Minutes of APCM 2025
Budget comparison 2025
Budget 2026
Churchwardens' report
Deanery Synod report
Elections 2026

Separate document
Annual Report and Financial Statements of the PCC 2025



**St. Oswald's Church Croxley Green
Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting
to be held in the Church on Sunday 26 April 2026 at 11.30**

AGENDA

Opening Prayers
Apologies for absence

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

To elect Churchwardens for the year 2026/2027

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

1. To approve the minutes of the APCM held on 27 April, 2025
2. To receive a report on the Electoral Roll
3. To receive the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the P.C.C. for the year ended 31 December, 2025
4. To note the budget for the year ending 31 December, 2026
5. To appoint an Independent Examiner for the year
6. To receive a Report from the Churchwardens on the Fabric, Goods, and Ornaments of the Church.
7. To receive a Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod.
8. To elect Members of the Deanery Synod and the P.C.C.
9. To receive a Report on Safeguarding issues
10. Churchwardens' remarks
11. Any Other Business
12. Closing Prayers

2. ST OSWALD'S PARISH CHURCH, CROXLEY GREEN

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PARISHIONERS AND ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

HELD ON SUNDAY 27 APRIL 2025 IN THE CHURCH

Present: 2 Churchwardens and 40 parishioners

Apologies: 9 parishioners

Welcome

Tony Barton welcomed people to the meeting and opened the meeting with a prayer.

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

The meeting elected Tony Barton to chair the meeting. (Proposed Brian Thomson, Seconded Margaret Cox)

Election of Churchwardens

Helen McAlpine (proposed Michael Hart, seconded Chris Gregory) and Anne-Georgina Barnes (proposed Brian Thomson, seconded Alison Lee) had both offered to continue to serve as Churchwardens for 2025/26. As no other nominations were received before the start of the meeting both were elected. The meeting thanked Helen and Anne-Georgina for agreeing to continue and wished them well particularly during the vacancy.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The meeting elected Helen McAlpine to chair the meeting (proposed Brian Thomson, seconded Jonathan Cox).

1 Minutes of the 2024 Annual Meetings

The meeting approved the minutes (proposed by Guy Parks and seconded by Brita Blackwell). There were no matters arising.

2 Electoral Roll Report

The Electoral Roll Officer, Brian Thomson, reported that the roll had been renewed this year and there were 98 names on it compared to 102 in 2024.

The meeting thanked Brian for his work and expressed thanks that he was willing to continue in this role for the forthcoming year.

3 Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 and Budget for 2025

The Annual Report was noted and there were no questions or matters arising from that report.

The Treasurer, Karen Pryse, explained that after the report was printed Michael Hart had pointed out an inconsistency in the way the accounts were presented. Consequently she had revised the accounts and the revised figures had been distributed to members at the meeting.

The Treasurer focussed on the receipts and payments account, pointing out that, as usual, St Oswald's had paid its Diocesan share in full. The cost of gas had increased considerably and the church was in dispute with the previous supplier about that. Partly for that reason the church had suffered a deficit of £3,892. The Treasurer drew attention to the significant capital expenditure last year on audio-visual equipment, church kitchen refurbishment and the new organ. The church was grateful for the donations that had made that possible. There had also been some unexpected repairs and maintenance expenses too. Tony Barton pointed out that the church had not been able to add to its reserves for several years and they were now much reduced. The Treasurer added that, for that reason, this year's fund-raising would be for St Oswald's projects

The Treasurer presented the budget for 2025 which showed a deficit of over £6,000. However, she had managed to change gas supplier and hoped that there could be a reduction in costs as a result.

Karen expressed thanks to David Warman for recouping gift-aid and to the Hall Bookings Team for their work ensuring that the hall was let as much as possible and income from this source maximised.

Several members asked about the financial implications of the vacancy. Helen McAlpine explained that the Diocese was planning some refurbishment of the Vicarage and they were looking to find a short-term tenant. If they were successful then the Diocese would be fully responsible for managing the property during the tenancy. However, in the short-term the parish was responsible for keeping the premises tidy and covering the utility bills. The expense could be reclaimed from the Diocese in due course. Tony Barton commented that the reduction in the Parish Share during the vacancy was unlikely to be large. Karen Pryse pointed out that the expenses of visiting ministers would need to be met.

4 Appointment of Independent Examiner

The meeting thanked Anna McLean for undertaking the role of Independent Examiner for the past year. She was prepared to continue and was appointed for the forthcoming year (proposed by Geoff Cox and seconded by Karen Muskett).

5 Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church

The meeting received a written report from the Churchwardens on developments in 2024.

Alan Restarick asked about progress on the additional parking spaces near Shaftesbury Court. Helen McAlpine said that action rested with Sanctuary Housing and it was hoped that the matter would be concluded in 2025. There would be no expense for the church. Thanks were expressed to Helen McAlpine and Anne-Georgina Barnes for their work during the year.

6 Deanery Synod Report

The meeting received a written report from the lay representatives on the Deanery Synod. Thanks were expressed to Tony Barton, Guy Parks and Richard Doughty who will continue in office for the year.

7 Elections to the Parochial Church Council

Helen McAlpine thanked the three retiring members of the PCC, Val Edwards, Clare Hook and Margaret Cox, for their important contributions during their terms on the PCC. As a result of the Electoral Roll falling below 100 St Oswald's was entitled to 9 elected members instead of 12 as before. Since 8 members were continuing on the PCC there was one vacancy. One nomination had been received for Clare Hook (proposed Michael Hart, seconded Alan Restarick). Since no other nominations were forthcoming Clare was elected to the PCC. The PCC would be commissioned on Sunday 11th May.

Val Edwards pointed out the importance of the PCC paying proper attention to safeguarding issues. Helen McAlpine said that she would recommend to the PCC that Val, as Safeguarding Officer, and Margaret Cox, as Deputy Warden, should be co-opted as members of the PCC.

8 Safeguarding Report

Val Edwards, Safeguarding Officer, described the recent improvements in Church of England practice. She reported that all members of the PCC and Church Officers, if eligible, have DBS clearance and have completed the required training including Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse. Both Church Wardens have completed the Safer Recruitment and People Management course.

All volunteer leaders and helpers currently working with vulnerable groups, have DBS clearance and have completed the required training apart from a small number of volunteers who should complete the Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse training soon. All new volunteers interested in working with vulnerable groups or volunteers moving into a different role are and will be safely recruited.

Val and Catherine Farman have made progress with the Parish Dashboard to ensure all safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and kept up to date. We have progressed from level two to level three on the Dashboard.

Safeguarding posters with contact numbers are displayed at the back of the Church as well as the 'Promoting a Safer Church' and 'Responding to Domestic Abuse' policies. These can also be found on the Church website.

Val thanked those present for support and co-operation in helping to keep St Oswald's compliant and all children and vulnerable adults safe. The meeting thanked Val and Catherine for their important work.

9 Churchwarden's Remarks

Anne-Georgina Barnes introduced arrangements for the vacancy. The Churchwardens had already met the Archdeacon. There is a smaller pool of clergy available than at the last vacancy. The church should expect that the vacancy will last from 9 to 12 months. On Thursday 5th June at 7.30pm there will be an important meeting with Bishop Jane and Archdeacon Charles at which we will have the opportunity to express our views on the kind of Vicar we are looking for. In response to a question Helen McAlpine said that members who could not be present should email their views to the churchwardens. Richard Doughty suggested that some form of 'postbox' could be set up where people could express views.

Following the meeting a church profile will be prepared before advertisements are issued at the end of August with interviews planned for 15th October. However it may take several months after that before a new Vicar could take up the position.

In answer to a question the churchwardens said that they were prepared to be the church's representatives on the interview panel but the decision would rest with the PCC. Members had varying views on the value of advertising widely. Michael Hart pointed out that it was rare for anyone to be appointed from outside the Diocese. Val Edwards said that advertising was an important part of safer recruitment. Jonathan Cox suggested that space should be made for candidates to have informal meetings with the PCC in addition to formal interviews.

10 Any other business

(i) Helen McAlpine read out the following message from Revd Robert Riley-Braleay: -

"My sincere thanks for such a wonderful send-off last Sunday and the extraordinarily generous gift that I received. The warmth and kindness expressed were typical of all that I have experienced at St Oswald's over the last 17 years and for which I am so grateful.

Although absent from today's APCM, St Oswald's will be in my thoughts and prayers today and in the years to come." Robert

In response to a question, the Treasurer said that the monetary gift amounted to £1,650

(ii) Church Kneelers. Clare Hook updated the meeting. Much work and care had gone into creating attractive kneelers for the church's diamond jubilee in 1997. Following the removal of pews the church had some 50 more kneelers than needed. Thanks to work by Janet Staerck and Clare Hook a full record of the kneelers had been created showing who donated and worked them and, where known, in whose memory they were dedicated. A spiral bound booklet of this record is planned to be placed at the back of the church. Clare said that those who had donated or worked kneelers were welcome to retrieve them if they wished but she asked that she be notified so that the records could be kept up-to-date. A number of those concerned had already removed kneelers and she was continuing to contact people who might want to do the same. Once this had been done it would be clear how many surplus kneelers remained. Kneelers which had been given explicitly in memory of someone

had been kept separate and were hanging in the pews. Brian Thomson added that some kneelers had been placed at the back of the church and members were welcome to take those in return for a donation.

The meeting closed with a prayer for the vacancy and the grace.

3. BUDGET COMPARISON 2025

		BUDGET		ACTUAL	
		2025		2025	
		£			
RECEIPTS					
Voluntary Receipts					
	Planned Giving	50000		51996	
	Collections & other giving	2000		1113	
	Income Tax Recovered	12500	64500	11920	65029
Other voluntary Income					
	Donations and gifts		2000		3970
Receipts from activities for generating funds					
	Magazine income		300		300
Receipts from Church Activities					
	Fees	500		434	
	Café O	3500		4875	
	Remembrance book	200		121	
	Outreach	1000		1631	
	Miscellaneous	200		355	
	fund raising	300		3167	
	use of church	650	6350	700	
	SSE repayment re heating and light	0		2291	13574
Receipts from Investments					
	Bank & CBF Deposit account interest		200		447
TOTAL RECEIPTS				73350	83320
PAYMENTS					
Church Activities:	Diocesan Parish Share (Quota)	70470		65759	
	Clergy expenses	500		485	
	vacancy costs	0		1212	
	Fees & Wages	80		100	
	Education, Books & Music	1500		945	
	Outreach	350		404	
	Altar requisites	150		229	
	Administration	1500		1191	
	Communications	400		60	
	Sundry	750		567	
	Remembrance book	200		113	
	Stationery & Printing	450		166	
	Cafe O	20		57	
	Magazine	0		28	
	Gifts	100	76470	1775	73091
	Heating, Lighting, Insurance	8000		3514	
	Insurance	1500		1530	
	Laundry & cleaning	1500		957	
	Minor repairs	1000		549	
		0	12000		6550
TOTAL PAYMENTS				-76470	-79641
(SHORTFALL)/EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER PAYMENTS				-3120	3679

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BUDGET COMPARISON 2025 CONTINUED					
		BUDGET		ACTUAL	
CHURCH HALL					
Receipts	Church lettings	1000		1280	
	Non Church lettings	25000	26000	26985	
	SSE repayment re heating and light	0		2340	30605
Payments	Wages & Cleaning materials	6700		7373	
	Heating, lighting, & phone	6500		2350	
	Insurance	1000		1064	
	Repairs & maintenance	1000		1196	
	Rates	1800	-17000	1949	-13932
EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER PAYMENTS			9000		16673
NET SURPLUS/deficit FOR THE YEAR			5880		20352

4. BUDGET 2026

		2026		
<u>RECEIPTS</u>		£		
<u>Voluntary Receipts</u>				
	Planned Giving	52000		
	Collections & other giving	1000		
	Income Tax Recovered	14000	67000	
<u>Other voluntary Income</u>				
	Donations		2000	
<u>Receipts from activities for generating funds</u>				
	Magazine income		275	
<u>Receipts from Church Activities</u>				
	Fees	500		
	Café O	4000		
	Remembrance book	200		
	Outreach	850		
	Miscellaneous	500		
	use of church	640	6690	
<u>Receipts from Investments</u>				
	Bank & CBF Deposit account interest		250	
TOTAL RECEIPTS			76215	
<u>PAYMENTS</u>				
<u>Church Activities</u>	Diocesan Parish Share (Quota)	63390		
	Clergy expenses	500		
	vacancy costs	300		
	Quinquennial inspection	750		
	Fees & Wages	500		
	Education, Books & Music	1000		
	Outreach	600		
	Altar requisites	250		
	Administration	1100		
	Communications	100		
	Sundry	500		
	Remembrance book	150		
	Stationery & Printing	150		
	Cafe O	30		
	Gifts	0	-69320	
	Heating, Lighting, Insurance	2500		
	Insurance	1393		
	Laundry & cleaning	1259		
	Minor repairs	649		
	vacancy costs	300	-6101	
TOTAL PAYMENTS			-75421	
(SHORTFALL)/EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER PAYMENTS			794	
CONTINUED ON NEXT SHEET				

BUDGET 2026 CONTINUED			
		£2026	
<u>CHURCH HALL</u>			
<u>Receipts</u>	Church lettings	1000	
	Non Church lettings	25000	26000
<u>Payments</u>	Wages & Cleaning materials	7500	
	Heating, lighting, & phone	3000	
	Insurance	1200	
	Repairs & maintenance	1000	
	Rates	1650	-14350
	EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER PAYMENTS		11650
	NET SURPLUS/deficit FOR THE YEAR		12444 please note that £14000 is usually needed to go to reserves

5. ST OSWALD'S CROXLEY GREEN

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT ON THE FABRIC AND GOODS OF THE CHURCH

It has continued to be a busy time in maintaining and refurbishing the Church and the Hall. Electrics, plumbing, painting etc have been a continuous theme and we would like to thank everyone who contributed to maintenance during 2025. As well as this, we have:

Organ relocation: Our new organ, installed in October 2024, has been relocated from its old position behind the Lady Chapel wall to a new position in the Lady Chapel behind the choir stalls. After consultations with the Choir, the organ has remained in its new position; it is on wheels so it could in fact be moved but the new place for it allows better visibility for organists to the altar and Spotlight band. The DAC has not objected to this move. We would like to thank Martin Robinson for his outstanding organ playing during our services.

Cracks in the Vestry Walls: it was a long, hot and very dry summer, which has caused some problems with the building. It was noted in July that the vestry door was sticking, plus there are cracks in the back wall of the vestry as the ground sank away in the drought. We have now had a very wet winter, and the cracks are sealing up, but Guy Parks, Tony Barton and Mark Saunders are continuing to monitor the situation and making adjustments where required. We are especially concerned about the presence of large tree roots under the building.

Pew removal: In September two more pews were relocated, one from each side of the main aisle in the nave was moved to the baptistry. This was done as a temporary measure in advance of applying for a Faculty. This change allows for more space for our very successful Hotdog and Donut Clubs as well as Cafe O. This extra space has been much appreciated by these organisations. The flooring where the pews were still looks a little discoloured, but this will be rectified when we have the Hall floor redone later this year. We are very grateful to Jonathan Cox and Mark Saunders for organising this.

Kneelers display: after much consideration and discussion, the PCC has decided to allow a kneelers' display on the wall of the Baptistry and an application for permission to do this has been sent to the Diocese. Going forward, we are grateful to Clare Hook, Janet Staerk, Brian Thomson and Chris Gregory for investigating the cost and specifications for the display. There will also be a reference booklet about the history of the kneelers.

Hall matters: We are in the process of researching ways in which to update the Hall Kitchen. Since this kitchen is an important part of our outreach and an important community facility, our Hall Hirers are being consulted about what they would like to see in the future. Margaret Cox and Guy Parks are masterminding this project. We note that the Co-op are providing grants towards community activities and making an application is being considered. The Kitchen is our fundraising project for this year. As of January 2026 we have raised £10,500! A number of unexpected repairs were required in the Hall during the course of the year. These included the replacement of the water tank in the loft above the kitchen, new flooring in the disabled toilet, repairing a leak in the toilet nearest the office and upgrading the taps and sinks in the women's toilets and associated works. In addition, the PCC agreed

that the Parish Council could install a defibrillator on the hall wall. This year we plan to strip and refinish the Hall floor.

Jubilee Room escape door: the down pipe near the door was blocked and overflowing, and we are very grateful to Mark Saunders for clearing this and the soakaway. The rotted door has been replaced in 2026.

Generating income from our buildings: on 21st November Richard Jackson (Diocesan Advisor for Income Generation) came and did an extensive tour of the Church, Hall and grounds. He offered us advice about generating income while using our facilities as outreach to the community. We have a list of suggestions that we would like to consider going forward. We would also like to pursue net zero carbon and there is advice available from the Diocese about doing this. We will re-engage with this work over the coming months, following the arrival of the new vicar.

Shaftesbury Court: During the year, negotiations have continued with Sanctuary Housing regarding the installation of two new parking spaces at Shaftesbury Court. We are very grateful for the time and effort that Guy Parks has dedicated to this; Shaftesbury Court are to have eight parking permits to allocate to their residents.

General maintenance of the buildings and grounds: Throughout the year, there have also been several clear up mornings as well as other events to carry out deep cleaning, tidying, general maintenance and gardening. We are extremely grateful to all those who come along to help on these occasions and are keen to encourage others to help if they feel able to contribute to this important work throughout the year. It is all part of our stewardship of the Church, Hall and Grounds at St Oswald's. Much work is also carried out during the year at other times to ensure that minor repairs, grass mowing, drain clearance and general building and grounds maintenance work is carried out. Sincere thanks are due to all those who have dedicated so much time and effort to do this.

Helen McAlpine and Anne-Georgina Barnes March 2026

6. Deanery Synod Report 2025-2026 (Guy Parks - 13 April 2026)

The Synod met three times during the last year.

July 2025 - a talk by The Rev'd Canon Dr Tim Bull FRSA, Director of Vocations and Diocesan Director of Ordinands: 'Living as a human in an AI world.' Faith and AI (Artificial Intelligence)

Tim set his guiding principles for the use of AI: Be wise in your use of AI; Keep alert for truths; Keep using your physical and mental attributes; Don't expect AI to save the world and Do uniquely human things to stay fully alive.

We thanked Tim for an illuminating and entertaining talk explaining the journey to AI, its usefulness in many ways, such as ChatGPT, but also the shortcomings and dangers of unthinking use.

November 2025 - Listening exercise led by Rev'd Mark Rodel on Corporate Spiritual Discernment.

Mark explained that a new Diocesan Ministry strategy is being prepared, and the evening's exercise will help to feed into that strategy. The aim is to help with a way forward on discipleship, vocation and discernment. It is to support lifelong ministry and learning using our resources wisely. We need to consider if we are being cared for with inclusion and diversity. The exercise is not about cutting posts but about best channelling our efforts. The idea is to tap into the collective wisdom of all church members, and feed this back in the context of the new strategy. Mark divided us up into three groups of 7. Each group discussed one of the questions: Where have you seen ministry (lay or ordained) make a real difference? What's helping people discover and step into lay and ordained ministry in the Church? What helps ministry (lay and ordained) grow and flourish?

March 2026 - Talk by Nigel Hollington on Gaza and the West Bank. Nigel is a member of the Baptist Church at Bovingdon. He has visited the area twice, the last time in November 2025 along with a group of 20 people of different faiths from different countries ranging in age from 20 to 85. Nigel spoke with reference to a speech by Archbishop Stephen Cottrell (who was visiting at the same time) published on 18 November 2025, available on the C of E website. On the visit they held 30 meetings with different people/groups living in the area to assess what it is like to live there in the current regime. The Archbishop framed his visit as a 'Pilgrimage of prayer and solidarity.'

They visited the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem where Jesus was born. Lots of Palestinians are Christian and there are several churches but only one Mosque in Bethlehem. There are Christians in Gaza too. Christians make up 20% of the population in Palestine.

Nigel explored the following aspects of the situation in Palestine: Solidarity; Apartheid; Ethnic Cleansing; Settler violence; Genocidal acts; Antisemitism;

The Carlisle Motion. This is a motion in support of Palestine and Bethlehem against these violent acts proposed by the Diocese of Carlisle. This could be brought forward to general Synod to show support.

Until 2028 : Clare Hook

Co-opted : Margaret Cox, Val Edwards

St Oswald's has twelve spaces for elected members of the PCC now that the Electoral Roll exceeds 100. That is three more than in 2025. Normally, elected PCC members serve for three years, and one-third of the members retire each year with two thirds continuing so as to provide continuity. Four members step down this year leaving five elected members. Consequently, there are seven vacancies; three for the period until 2028 and four for the period 2026-2029. Persons to be elected should be aged 16 or over, an actual communicant and on the electoral roll of the parish. If nominations do not exceed the number of vacancies, all are declared elected. If there are more nominations than vacancies, an election is held (in which only members of the revised Electoral Roll may vote) and those with the highest votes are elected.

If an election is needed, each voter is entitled to the same number of votes as there are vacancies, and only one vote may be given to any one candidate.

This year Debbie Clifford, Steve Clifford, Jonathan Cox and Brian Thomson step down at the end of their terms. If willing to stand for re-election and nominated in writing before the start of the meeting, they are eligible for re-election for a further three years.

Brian Thomson

13 April 2026