



CHURCH OF ST NICOLAS, CRANLEIGH
Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Held on Wednesday 15th April 2025 in Church

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS or VESTRY MEETING AT 7.30 PM

Susan Clarke (Vice Chairman) welcomed parishioners to the meeting and said the opening prayer. 43 parishioners attended the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence to cover both meetings: Maggie Booth, Jill Saunders, Sue Martin, Julie Connor, Peter Hancock, Jane Hancock, Bill Rothwell, Dorothy Walton, Claire Oxborough, Tim Oxborough, David Cox, Sue Tresman, Richard Ansell, Gill Bowles, Margaret Garstone, Nicola Craven-Smith

2. Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners 30th April 2025 were presente
John Ashworth proposed that they be accepted, seconded by Joan Connolly. The minutes were accepted, with all in favour.

3. Matters arising: None

4. Election of Churchwardens: Susan Clarke and Alan Walton were the only ones standing for election. There being no other candidates they were unanimously elected to serve for the coming year. Susan Clarke was proposed by Nicola-Craven-Smith and seconded by Paul Jenkins. Alan Walton was also proposed by Nicola Craven-Smith and seconded by Paul Jenkins.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

1. Minutes of the last APCM held Wednesday 30th April 2025

John Ashworth proposed that they be accepted, seconded by Caroline Bagot. The minutes were accepted, with all in favour.

2. Matters Arising: None

3. Election of Parochial Church Councillors

This year there were three vacancies, each for a period of three years, and there were three nominations:

Margie Nursey, nominated by John Upperton, seconded by Jeff Wood

Susan Knight, nominated by Susan Clarke, seconded by Alan Walton
David Cox, nominated by Malcolm Keeping, seconded by Alan Walton

All three were duly elected.

4. Election to Deanery Synod

There were six vacancies, each for a period of three years, and there were four nominations:

Maurice Bowles, nominated by Susan Clarke, seconded by Sue Knight
Sandra Keeping, nominated by Petula Sole, seconded by Frank Sole
Mike Roberts, nominated by Paul Jenkins, seconded by Celia Jenkins
Jane Dyer, nominated by Susan Clarke, seconded by Mike Roberts

All four were duly elected, leaving two vacancies which could be filled at some point in the future if anyone were to volunteer.

5. Presentation of the Electoral Roll.

Margie Nursey, the Electoral Roll Officer, reported that there were 211 people on the Electoral Roll. This figure represents an increase of two on last year. Four have died, two have moved away and eight new members have joined.

6. Annual Report & Financial Statement

The Chair of the Finance Team, Richard Tuck, on behalf of the Treasurer, presented the Annual Report and Financial Statement. This had been available on the church website prior to the meeting and would remain on the website for anyone to see. The Financial Statement had been independently examined, with no issues raised, and had been formally adopted by the PCC at their March meeting.

Richard presented a series of slides giving a summary of the church's financial position. He reported that we had received two grants – the first from the local authority, to cover the cost of the new kitchen, and the second from the diocese for the installation of LED. We had also received income from 1170 (helping to maintain the Church Building), the letting of the Church Rooms, receipts from the Car Park and Fund Raising (including the Rectory Fete and the Christmas Tree Festival). Parish Giving had not increased with inflation, and in future this would have to be addressed. However, several legacies had boosted our income. Mission Giving had been maintained at £10,000, including £1,000 which had been retained for 'mission' within the parish. The overall surplus for the year was £7,000.

The Financial Statement was accepted. Richard and the Finance Team and Alistair, in his absence, were thanked for their efforts.

7. Stewardship Recorder's Report

The Stewardship Recorder, Frank Sole, explained how Gift Aid increases the church's income. He said it was important for individuals to let him know of any change of circumstances. Gift Aid is indicative of the level of giving and he had noticed that the total giving over his time as Stewardship Recorder had not shown any noticeable increase; we need to rise to the challenge! A full report is contained in the Annual Report.

8. Churchwardens' Reports

Susan Clarke:

Susan began by pointing out that a detailed report is contained in the Annual Report, which can be found in the St Nicolas Website, under the heading PCC. She then went on to draw attention to the following:

Worship: At a special service on Trinity Sunday led by Bishop Paul there were two adult baptisms and four adult and six teenage confirmations. In September, anticipating the vacancy, we changed our service pattern to the format described in the Annual Report, adapting our 10 a.m. service to include all ages every Sunday. Ignite was established as a group for teenagers and some popular activities were arranged.

Church Attendance in 2025: There was an increase in church attendance at Sunday services and in particular at Easter and Christmas. The livestreaming of services was popular with people in nursing homes, ill or housebound, away on holiday or watching as their marriage banns are read. It is also a popular feature of wedding and funeral services.

Pastoral Ministry: Our church is open every day, which leads to many spontaneous conversations with visitors who come in for private prayer. Pastoral visits were made to families in connection with 30 baptisms, 38 funerals and 8 weddings. We are very grateful to the Revd Martin Booth who has been leading our Pastoral Assistants Team.

Social Events: Susan summarised the social events of 2025, pointing out that they had all been a good way of promoting community spirit as well as providing a welcome boost to church funds. She thanked everyone who helped organise and all who attended these events.

The most significant event of the year was when we said our fond farewells to our Rector Roy and his wife Kate. At a special farewell service on October 19th, at which all our congregations combined, Roy spoke encouragingly of the time ahead for us, and we gave appreciative thanks for all his hard work and dedication to the parish. The service was followed by a spectacular bring-and-share lunch.

Farewells: In 2025 we mourned the loss of several notable members of St Nicolas, including Tricia Hislop, Anthony Harrow, Valerie Speers, Jeremy Watts, Edna McSorley and Chris Robinson.

Thankyou: Susan said how grateful we are to all our volunteers, and she went on to list the many groups and teams that serve in their various capacities. She also thanked her fellow churchwarden, Alan, for dealing with all the issues that arise regarding the church and church buildings; and for all the extra work that has arisen during the vacancy. Ongoing thanks to Nicola, who is such a key figure in supporting all we do.

Prayer: Susan ended her report by thanking us all for our prayers and asking us to continue to pray for the Lord's blessing and guidance over all we do at St Nicolas Church.

Alan Walton:

1.0 Buildings & Churchyard

AW advised that the church building and churchyard continue to be costly in maintenance and repairs and will do so for the foreseeable future due to the age of the church building and especially its status as a Grade 2 Star Listed Place of Worship.

The churchyard also has a number of large trees that require monitoring in collaboration with the arboriculturalist. The cost of maintenance of the safety of the trees has increased over the past year and particularly with the large oak behind the church rooms and the Atlas cedar tree in the churchyard. Both of which required major reductions by the appointed arborists.

For a more detailed account of the buildings and churchyard please see pages 9 and 10 of the Annual Report.

2.0. Thank you to Erik - AW thanked Erik especially for his support and leadership of the church's services each week during the vacancy.

3.0 The Vacancy

3.1 Vacancy Management Team (VMT)

The VMT meets monthly and follows a structured agenda for the meetings as determined by the diocese in the 'Vacancy Handbook'.

The VMT membership is - Martin Booth, Susan and Michael Clarke, Nicola Craven-Smith, Erik Heemskerk, Claire Jones, Claire Oxborough, Sue Tresman, Richard Tuck, Alan Walton (Chair). Sarah Hutton, Area Dean, is also a member of the VMT.

Senior figures from the deanery and diocese have been complimentary regarding how well we are managing the parish during the Vacancy.

3.2. Recruiting to the Vacancy

The advert for the Rector of Cranleigh was placed in the Church Times, Diocese website and the CofE Pathways recruitment website on Friday 3rd April. The Parish Profile is embedded in the vacancy advert and is also available on St Nicolas' website.

The shortlisting will be undertaken online via Teams on 15th May.

Informal visit with spouses/partners also invited, will be on 3rd June. This will include meeting the clergy team, visits to the church, rectory, CofE school and a tour of the village.

Following the informal visit there will be a bring-and-share meal in the late afternoon with the PCC and candidates.

The formal interviews will be held on 4th June.

Please continue to pray for St Nicolas church during the vacancy and for the interviews in June, that the Lord will guide the panel to choose the candidate most suited to the role of Rector of Cranleigh.

Finally, my thanks to Roy and Susan for their invaluable support during the period of this report and to you all for your support for us as we undertake the challenging role of churchwardens.

9. Safeguarding Officer's Report

Child and Adult Safeguarding

PCC Actions

Following the APCM in 2025, the PCC agreed to continue to adopt the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy and ensure that the PCC will comply with the duty to have due regard to the House of Bishop's Practice Guidance.

Brian Boxall the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) attended a PCC meeting early in the new church year, to introduce himself to new members, and to remind all members of their safeguarding duties and the responsibilities of the PCC. Safeguarding is a standing PCC agenda item.

In September 2025 Brian stepped down as PSO and I took over the role. Brian, thankfully, remains the DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) manager for the parish.

The Parish Dashboard is a Diocesan tool which records the level of safeguarding measures within a parish and highlights any areas we need to attend to. We have now managed to attain level 3, which also means that we will have further areas of safeguarding to look at.

The term Vulnerable Adults was replaced by Adults with Safeguarding Needs (although I suspect Vulnerable adults will continue to be used)

A livestreaming policy was introduced in November 2025 to protect any children who may appear on the camera – anyone without consent must not be filmed.

There have been two raised concerns, but these have not been substantiated and so there remains no safeguarding incidents during the year.

Recruitment, Training

I have worked on the required Safer Recruitment procedures for the parish, and these are now in place and ready to be put into practice. We have role descriptions for the various volunteer positions and there are just some induction procedures outstanding.

(I have today received a new 103 page document on safer recruitment and people management, but on an initial read through can see nothing that we need to change in relation to recruiting volunteers!)

We have worked on ensuring that all who are in contact with children or adults with safeguarding needs have completed the necessary training and this included our welcome team and home groups.

Following Safeguarding Sunday in November an invitation was issued to the whole church family to complete the basic training. I am pleased that some have taken this up and a parish group session will be planned soon – this has been delayed because of the amount of work I have had with, amongst other things, the introduction of the new DBS provider. The Diocese also offered to facilitate this, but it did not materialise.

The new DSO Vicki Boxall is now in post and is keen to provide support to parishes. I have spoken with her this week and we are looking to find a date as soon as possible.

Following a reported Data Breach in August 2025 a hold was placed on all DBS checks. A temporary provider was secured but the appointment of a permanent new DBS provider has recently been put in place. This has been a fairly lengthy process.

At the time of writing we have some 46 individuals with DBS checks, covering both children and vulnerable adults.

I am grateful to everyone who realises the importance of having safeguarding at the centre of all we do. My particular thanks go to Brian Boxall for his ongoing help with DBS applications, to Erik and Susan Clarke for their support, help and advice, to Nicola for her admin help and Martin Booth for his insight on the pastoral side.

Conclusion

See It, Hear It, Report It.

The church should be a place in which the most vulnerable individuals, adults or children, are safe and feel supported. Whilst we have the policies in place and individuals trained, we need to remember that it is the responsibility of each one of us to look out for the children, young people and those adults with safeguarding needs in our parish and take immediate positive action if we have concerns.

Katherine Tuck, PSO
April 2026

10. Reports of Church Organisations

These are in the Annual Report on the website, and were taken as read.

11. The Rector's Report:

No report, as we are in vacancy. Susan recommended that we read not only the Annual Report but also the Parish Profile, which is a very good summary of St Nicolas and our hopes for the future. She also encouraged us to continue praying for discernment and the leading of the Holy Spirit as we approach the time for shortlisting and interviews for our new Rector.

12. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Oakwood Business Consultants, Unit 3, The Dairy, Tilehouse Farm Offices, East Shalford Lane, Guildford were appointed as Independent Examiner for the coming year – proposed by Richard Tuck, seconded by Frank Sole, with all in favour.

Next PCC Meeting: Wednesday 13th May, 7.30 p.m.

Any Other Business: None. Before saying the Closing Prayer, Erik our curate reminded everyone that he will be moving on in the next few months. He will miss Cranleigh, where

he has found so much faith and love in the church and community and a wonderful home for himself and his family.

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.