



AVON VALLEY CHURCHES

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AVC PCC HANDBOOK

A GUIDE FOR THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL AND LOCAL CHURCH COUNCILS OF THE AVON VALLEY CHURCHES, AND OUR CONGREGATIONS

From November 2019 until September 2020 a ‘Simplification Working Group’ was given the task by the then four PCCs of considering whether the AVC would be better served with one PCC rather than four.

This document summarises where the conversations led us, and was offered to the PCCs and wider congregations for their consideration. The PCCs each agreed by very large majorities in separate formal votes by September 21st, 2020, on the Proposal for the Avon Valley Churches to become one Parish.

After that there were two formal rounds of consultation, one from the Diocese and one from the Church Commissioners, and the Scheme to create the new Parish came into effect on the first of July, 2021.

The results of the discussions now form the ‘modus operandi’ for the working of the PCC and LCCs. This document is not intended to be set in stone, and can be varied by agreement of the PCC/LCCs for minor matters, and by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting for more major changes.

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Covering letter from Canon Gary Philbrick

Dear Friends –

The PCC, LCCs and Congregations of the Avon Valley Churches, and anyone else who is interested,

THE BACKGROUND TO THE NEW STRUCTURE OF THE AVC

In the autumn of 2019, the then four Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) of the Avon Valley Churches (Breamore, Fordingbridge, Hale & Woodgreen, Hyde) began having conversations about the legal and missional organisation of our seven Churches and their communities.

In November 2019, a Simplification Working Group was set up to look at the proposal to have just one PCC, and that Group met regularly, especially during the first Covid-19 Lockdown, looking at the possibilities and proposals in great detail.

The Working Group comprised two members from each former Parish (regardless of the relative sizes of the Parishes), some of the Staff Team, and one or two others. Here is the list:

Jon Whale, Facilitator (Jon is the 'Benefice of the Future Project Officer' for the Diocese of Winchester, and was brought in as an independent Chair.

Canon Gary Philbrick, Rector
Revd Nicky Davies, Associate Priest
Revd Mike Trotman, Curate
Mark Ward, Licensed Lay Minister

Hale & Woodgreen: Amanda Clarke and Lynn
Dudman (sometimes with advice from Brenda
Templeton, Treasurer)

Breamore: Malcolm Turner & Richard Williams
(sometimes joined by Andy Finch, Treasurer)

Hyde: Andrew Briggs & Carrie Darke (sometimes
joined by Heather Clark, Churchwarden,
representing the Treasurer)

Fordingbridge: John Dowsett & Ian Newman

Martin Calver, on behalf of the Treasurers
Judith Dowsett, Secretary

After some introductory reflections on the rationale from myself and Mark Ward, there are seven sections on different aspects of the way our single PCC will work, creating a strong central core, whilst encouraging local autonomy and creativity, all of which came from the Working Group's work.

An Open Meeting of the Four PCCs, to which anyone was welcome, took place on Thursday June 11th, 2020. The aim of the Meeting was to hear what people thought was good in the version of the Papers at that time, and to identify what was missing, and what needed changing. To prepare for this meeting everyone was invited to send in their responses, questions and ideas in advance. As a result, the Papers were changed and discussed further by the PCCs and the Simplification Group. After a further round of open consultations, each PCC took a formal vote on the Proposal for the Avon Valley Churches to become one Parish at Meetings held by September 21st, 2020, and the processes of formal consultation were then completed.

With Best Wishes,



Canon Gary Philbrick
Rector

SOME THOUGHTS ON WHY THE FORMATION OF A SINGLE PCC FOR THE AVC WAS PROPOSED, FROM THE RECTOR

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the body that, with the Minister, steers the life of the Church in its mission, witness and service in the Parish.

What were seen as the benefits of having one PCC for the Avon Valley Churches to the 'mission, witness and service' of the AVC?

All the four previous Parishes were closely linked to each other – we share the same clergy and lay ministers; we share the Church Office; many people worship and serve in more than one former Parish; many activities outside Sunday Worship have teams of people from different former Parishes; and those who attend come from all over the AVC and beyond. We are inter-dependent – and we are a distinct part of the Body of Christ in this place. We are 'in cooperation', not 'in competition'.

In recent years, and certainly since the Lockdown, we have grown closer together, and more and more have appreciated each other's gifts and strengths. It seemed a natural next step that we should look at our relationships across the AVC, and have a body which can hold the overall vision for our life and ministry here.

But alongside that, we recognised that the Church is rooted in its local area – the town and villages of the AVC. We have an incarnational view of the Church, that it is God's gift to each place where it exists, and that the Holy Spirit works in the many different expressions of the Church that we have here. So, we also all wanted strong local leadership in each place, and the distinctive ministries to which each of our former Parishes is called. I strongly advocated that this could very effectively be led by what we now call the 'Local Church Committees' (LCC) for each 'Local Church Area' (LCA). Under the overall guidance of the PCC, with equal representation from each LCA, the LCCs have delegated powers to guide the life of the Churches of each LCA, and, hopefully, are able effectively to meet the needs of mission, worship and service in that Local Church Area, as well as contributing to the Parish as a whole.

We want the Churches in each place to flourish, and proposed that could better be done under the coordinating guidance of a single PCC which represents each place.

I believed that this would be the next step in our journey under God together, which has been going on for some 20 years now, and that it would help us to grow the Church here, to reduce duplication of effort, to guide and inspire our Local Churches, and, incidentally, make the post of Rector here much more attractive to my successor, whenever the time comes to appoint one.

Whenever there is change, there is fear. But we trust in a God of love, and we try to model the sacrificial love and service which we see in Jesus Christ in our own lives and in our Church structures. I argued that becoming one Parish would help us in that task, and that the very careful discussions we have had, the fruits of which you can see in the following sections, should not cause any of our former Parishes to feel afraid, or to worry that somehow their local ethos will be changed without their agreement.

There is no (or, should not be any) such thing as autonomy in the Church. We are the Body of Christ, and in our interdependency, we can model the loving God, of the Holy Trinity, who will be with us throughout this journey.

The Role of the PCC

The PCC's role is governed by law (the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956) which says:

(1) It shall be the duty of the Minister and the Parochial Church Council to consult together on matters of general concern and importance to the parish.

(2) The functions of Parochial Church Councils shall include—

(a) co-operation with the Minister in promoting in the Parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical;

(b) the consideration and discussions of matters concerning the Church of England or any other matters of religious or public interest, but not the declaration of the doctrine of the Church on any question;

(c) making known and putting into effect any provision made by the Diocesan Synod or the Deanery Synod, but without prejudice to the powers of the Council on any particular matter;

(d) giving advice to the Diocesan Synod and the Deanery Synod on any matter referred to the Council;

(e) raising such matters as the Council consider appropriate with the Diocesan Synod or Deanery Synod.

(3) In the exercise of its functions the Parochial Church Council shall take into consideration any expression of opinion by any Parochial Church Meeting.

This could be put more simply as:

- The PCC should be concerned with the overall picture across the AVC – it should be focussed on **vision and growth**.
- That means having **oversight** of the whole spectrum of Church activity – including mission, outreach, service, worship, safeguarding, good governance and finance.
- As far as possible, things should **be done only once** – policies, returns, accounts, and so on, taking into account the needs of each Church/Local Church Area, and making good decisions by looking at those needs within the overall aims of AVC's ministry, mission and resources.
- The PCC should look for **efficiencies** of time and finance.
- It is what might these days be called a 'Strategic Role'; but what we might prefer to call an '**Enabling Role**' – enabling all of the Local Church Committees to get on with the mission and ministry which helps the Church to grow in each place.

The Role of the Local Church Committees

As far as possible, the Local Church Committees should have the burden of routine paperwork, policy-making, financial oversight, etc., lifted from them, so that they can concentrate on the things which are most likely to grow the Church in each place.

I have summarised these as the 'Three Cs':

- **Community** – developing the Church in each place as a sending place for our service to the wider community. ***How do we serve the communities in which we are placed, thinking of the spiritual, physical, mental and societal needs?***
- **Congregation** – the pastoral care and spiritual growth of our congregations, including growing vocations of all sorts and deepening discipleship. ***How do we become more and more the Body of Christ in each place, as a part of the whole?***
- **Church Building** – caring for the Church building, its maintenance and development. ***How do our Churches become more and more loved by our congregations and communities, and how do we serve the community by using these gifts and burdens as well as possible?***

Summary

To summarise:

- Our main reason for considering this was to enable us, across the AVC, better to promote '*in the Parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical*' (see above). Our prayer is that having one PCC will enable us better to serve God and love our neighbour in the whole AVC which God has given us the privilege of caring for.
- There may be some savings in terms of finance and time. But these are not good enough reasons for having one PCC.
- The Rector would not automatically be the Chair of the Church Committees – possibly reducing the amount of committee responsibility the Rector has, and making the post of Incumbent here more attractive to a successor whenever that might happen. But that is not a good enough reason for having one PCC.
- **But**, having a PCC which is able to ensure good governance and to offer strategic leadership for growth; and having Local Church Committees which can focus on the 'Three Cs' in their particular areas; these seem to be good reasons for having one PCC.
- We hope there will also be gains in having a wider group of people chairing the meetings of Local Church Committees; and membership of these is more flexible, which, we hope, will encourage more people to take part in them.

As before, we need a balance between the Benefice-wide focus, and the local focus. This will be maintained and enhanced with one strong, efficient PCC, and four creative and strong Local Church Committees. Our prayer is that this structure will bring new energy to our overall vision and governance, and also to our work in and around each of our Churches.

Canon Gary Philbrick
Rector

WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST

A THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON OUR JOURNEY OF SIMPLIFICATION, FROM MARK WARD, LICENSED LAY MINISTER & FORMER LAY CHAIR OF CHRISTCHURCH DEANERY SYNOD

We considered bringing the four parishes of AVC together as one single parish because we believe that we are all part of one body. As St Paul reminds us (*1 Cor 12:12ff.*), the one body is made up of different parts, all of which enable it to do many different things. This is so with us – we all want to achieve the same aim, spreading the good news, reaching out to those who don't know Jesus, supporting our communities, but we all do that differently, including our wide range of service traditions and the different ways each Church community supports its local wider community. So, we want to keep what makes each place unique but pursue our vision in unity as one.

We are all striving to be disciples and to understand what being a true disciple is. This is a process which is with us life-long as we grow into the values of love and generosity.

These elements should be our focus, and certainly the focus of our clergy and those who serve as members of the PCC and LCCs, striving to take the Church forward in faith, but doing so together, easing burdens and sharing our joys together. Many of us have already experienced something of this because we have had to do things differently to deal with Covid-19, and we have already found new friends joining us from near and far, friendships and events that aren't governed by parish boundaries.

By coming closer together, we pool our talents and abilities and, over time, we should be able to free up space which is currently spent by those who offer themselves in leadership, lay and ordained, doing much more practical tasks which, although necessary, can divert us from our main purpose. And, by reorganising how we do things, more people should be able to be involved in the life of the Church because opportunities will grow.

The following seven sections deal with different aspects of the organisation of the PCC for the Avon Valley Churches. They deal with the practicalities which arose from our wish to enhance our mission as the seven Churches of the AVC. They allow as great a scope as possible for forward vision and good governance, whilst, at the same time, retaining local ownership of the things that matter locally; looking after the wider community, the day-to-day worship, and our wonderful Church buildings (See *'The Three Cs' above*) – the things that define the God-given uniqueness of each place.

Mark Ward

I – The Structure of our Parish

1. We aim to have a structure in which we do centrally those things which are best done once; and do locally those things which are best done differently in each place.

The benefits should include:

- More time for Mission
 - Working more closely together, building trust
 - Safeguarding – a better, more centralised process
 - Legal/Statutory requirements: e.g., Charity Commission, Health and Safety, Faculties, etc.
- one set of documents
 - Good financial practice
 - Lower CMF payment if one Parish
 - Makes the Benefice more attractive to any successor for Gary
 - Clergy time freed up for mission, not meetings
 - Lay helpers have more time for local initiatives as well as being on PCC
 - Allows individual Churches to look after their own events/buildings, greater enthusiasm, etc.
 - Don't want to manage a Church in decline
 - Promote different services.
2. We also recognise that there may be problems and challenges with a new structure. These could include:
 - Loyalty to one Church rather than the Benefice
 - Potential impact on giving
 - Greater burden on the Treasurer of the PCC
 - Church Office growing, and may need to grow further.
 3. Our Parish structure maintains local representation and delegated financial responsibility, through the creation of Local Church Committees (LCCs).
 4. There will be one Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), which will rotate around venues across the Parish.
 5. This change to a single PCC has no effect on the legal status of any of the Churches of each Local Church Area, nor on Weddings, Baptisms and Funerals. A Qualifying Connection here entitles a couple to be married in any Church of the Parish where marriages can legally take place (i.e., all except Sandleheath Uniting Church). The Incumbent retains the right to decide who is interred in any of the open Churchyards in the Parish (which is usually done in discussion with Churchwardens and others), and the expectation is that permission would only be given if the person was a resident of, or had a strong connection with, the appropriate Local Church Area,
 6. The existing Patrons are Patrons of the whole Parish.

2 – Membership of the PCC

1. The Parochial Church Council is the single legal entity for the Benefice¹. Alongside the PCC there are four Local Church Committees who will have responsibilities for the day-to-day maintenance of the Church Buildings and local fundraising in their Local Church Areas, amongst other things. Wider issues such as organising Quinquennial Inspections and major works are the responsibility of the PCC, assisted by LCCs.
2. Electoral Roll: there is one Electoral Roll (ER) for the Parish. Eligibility for being on the ER is as given in Appendix 1. Parishioners are asked to declare their affiliation to one or more Local Church Areas by virtue of residence and/or habitual public worship, which is then noted on the ER.
3. Membership of the PCC represents all of the Local Church Areas in the Benefice as equally as possible. Therefore, there are two Churchwardens elected to represent each Local Church Area and one other lay representative of the Local Church Area, who may be known as the Assistant Warden. The Churchwardens represent their Local Church Area but by virtue of their office they are Churchwardens of the whole Parish.
4. The Election of Churchwardens takes place according to the Churchwardens Measure 2001. Only those persons on the Electoral Roll of the Parish and declaring affiliation to the Local Church Area may nominate eligible person(s) to the office of Churchwarden (*See Appendix 2 for eligibility of persons to be Churchwarden*). Parishioners may only nominate persons for the Local Church Areas to which they have declared affiliation. More nominations may be received than there are vacancies (two vacancies per Local Church Area), in which case there will be an election at the Annual Meeting of Parishioners. Each Churchwarden will be elected to office by simple majority vote of those eligible to vote for the Local Church Areas for which they have a declared affiliation, and those in attendance at the Annual Meeting of Parishioners resident in that Local Church Area and also on a register of local government electors by reason of such residence. Eligible parishioners may only vote for up to two Churchwardens for each of the Local Church Areas for which they have a declared affiliation.
5. Election of representatives of each Local Church Area to the PCC shall take place in the following manner. Only those persons on the Electoral Roll of the Parish and declaring affiliation to the Local Church Area may nominate eligible person(s) to be a lay representative of that Local Church Area on the PCC. Voting on these nominations takes place at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), known locally as the Annual Parish Celebration. Representatives are elected by the members of the Electoral Roll declaring their affiliation to that specific Local Church Area. Each representative is elected to office by simple majority vote of those eligible to vote for Local Church Area for which they have a declared affiliation and in attendance at the APCM. Eligible parishioners only have one vote for each of the Local Church Areas for which they have a declared affiliation.
6. If there are not enough nominations from a particular Local Church Area in order to allow equal representation, then there is a vacancy, and the PCC may co-opt from that Local Church Area.

¹ For clarity, the term 'Benefice', whilst correct, in future will be replaced on an everyday basis with the term 'Parish'.

7. The membership of the PCC is set at around twenty, in order to create a tightly-knit and efficient group (see *list below*). It is not possible under existing Church Regulations to nominate deputies as they could not be Trustees; however, if the PCC member for a Local Church Area cannot attend a meeting, a deputy may be invited to represent that Local Church Area as a non-voting participant. Before the election of other representatives of the laity, those serving in this capacity shall be nominated from those eligible and habitually worshipping at each of the Local Church Areas and elected to office by simple majority vote of those eligible to vote and in attendance at the APCM.
8. The membership of the single PCC is made up as follows:
- The Rector
 - 2 Churchwardens from each Local Church Area (=8)
 - 1 PCC Member from each Local Church Area (= 4)
 - Any licensed Clergy (including Curates)
 - 4 Deanery Representatives (*current number in September 2020*)
 - 1 or more Licensed Lay Ministers, as determined by the Church Representation Rules²

Total **≈ 20** (*varying according to Clergy/LLMs, etc.*)

9. The PCC elects or appoints a Secretary and Treasurer (if those people are not already members of the PCC, they may attend, but not vote – they do not become PCC Members). Consideration could be given to funding for these posts if that would be of benefit to the Parish. Decisions are voted on in the usual way with one vote per member. The spending from restricted funds is based on recommendations from the Local Church Areas which originally received the bequest or donation.
10. Deanery Representatives: currently the PCC is entitled to 4 Deanery representatives. Ideally, there should be one Deanery representative from each Local Church Area. Legally it is not possible to guarantee that, but it is encouraged. The first APCM of the new Parish can make a resolution that this should be so, as long as the Electoral Roll for the new Parish does not fall below 200 (See *Appendix 3*). Each Church congregation can nominate as many people as are willing to stand for the role of Deanery Synod representative. The election of 4 people would take place at the APCM and elected to office by simple majority vote of those eligible to vote and in attendance at the APCM.
11. The PCC will operate in accordance with all the legal requirements, statutory duties, and other guidelines of the Church of England.
12. Standing and other Committees are established by the PCC and may contain members from all of the Local Church Areas.
13. Some Parishioners may be eligible to vote in more than one place for representatives to the Local Church Committees by virtue of residence in one Local Church Area and habitual worship in another Local Church Area (See *Section 4*).

² See Church Representation Rules, 2020, M15 (1)(h)

Appendix 1: Electoral Roll

Eligibility for enrolment on the Church Electoral Roll of a Parish: *(taken from Church Representation Rules 2020)*

Note: In this context Parish means Ecclesiastical Parish.

Applicant must be baptised, a lay person and over 16 and declare one of the following:

- A. I am a member of the C of E or of a Church in communion with the C of E **and am resident in the parish OR**
- B. I am a Member of the Cof E or of a Church in communion with the C of E **in and am not resident in the parish, but have habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months OR**
- C. I am a member in good standing of a Church which is not in communion with the C of E but subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and **am also a member of the C of E, and have habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months.**

(Applicants only chose one of A, B or C)

Appendix 2: Churchwarden eligibility, referring to Churchwardens Measure 2001

Eligibility for nomination: have been baptised, on the Church Electoral Roll of the Parish, actual communicant in the Local Church Area for which they have declared an affiliation as noted on the ER, who are at least 21 years old, and not disqualified from holding office.

Appendix 3: Membership of Deanery Synod

Under the Church Representation Rules (CRR), the numbers of lay members elected by the Parishes to Deanery Synods is determined by a resolution of the Diocesan Synod and is related to the number on the Electoral Roll at the Annual Meeting in the year previous to the election (even if the number subsequently changes). This number is then fixed for the three years of that Synod.

Electoral Roll Numbers Lay Representatives to be elected

1 - 25	1
26 - 100	2
101 - 200	3
201 - 300	4
301 - 400	5

3 – Decision-Making Process

1. Decisions are made at the most appropriate level in order to help the Parish to operate safely and efficiently while taking into account the views and the needs of all four Local Church Areas (Breamore, Fordingbridge, Hale & Woodgreen, Hyde), and of the wider community.
2. Decisions are voted on in the usual way, with one vote per member. In case of a tied vote, the Chair has the casting vote. Agendas and papers will be published in advance.
3. The table below gives an indication of which decisions will be made at which level:

Decision to be made	Single PCC	Local Church Committee
Style of worship	✓	✓ In an advisory role – see note below
Pattern of services	✓	✓ In an advisory role – see note below
Safeguarding	✓	✓ Recommending to PCC
Stewardship & Parish Giving Scheme	✓	✓ Policy Implementation
Common Mission Fund payments	✓	
Fund raising	✓	✓
Recommendations for spending of restricted funds		✓

Financial planning and overall budget	✓	
Overall care of buildings including quinquennial inspections	✓	
Day to day upkeep of Churches using delegated funds		✓
Faculties	✓	✓ (Preparation as delegated)
Utility bills, insurance and staff costs	✓	
Raising of funds for specific projects, with PCC approval		✓

FROM THE CANONS OF THE CHURCH ENGLAND ON WORSHIP.

B 1 Of conformity of worship

2. Every minister shall use only the forms of service authorized by this Canon, except so far as s/he may exercise the discretion permitted by Canon B 5. It is the minister's responsibility to have a good understanding of the forms of service used and s/he shall endeavour to ensure that the worship offered glorifies God and edifies the people.

B 3 Of the form of service to be used where alternative forms are authorized

1. Decisions as to which of the forms of service authorized by Canon B 1, other than the services known as occasional offices, are to be used in any church in a parish... shall be taken jointly by the minister and the parochial church council... In this Canon 'church' includes any building or part of a building licensed by the bishop for public worship according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England.

4 – Local Church Committees

Introduction - Legal Situation

1. Each Local Church Committee (LCC) is a sub-committee of the PCC and is to adhere to the Terms of Reference laid down in this or other documents. There will initially be one LCC for each of the four Local Church Areas (Breamore, Fordingbridge, Hale & Woodgreen, Hyde).

The PCC is ultimately responsible for the ministry and mission of each Local Church, is the only legal trust body and therefore cannot delegate overall financial responsibility or overall safeguarding responsibility or overall responsibility for buildings and property. The LCCs cannot employ anyone; only the PCC can do this.

2. The LCCs exist to assist the PCC in its mission and ministry at a local level. They have no authority or legal status of their own but act under delegation from the PCC. If an occasion arises when the LCCs are unable to make a decision or a serious disagreement occurs, and the matter may not be resolved by the majority view of the locally elected PCC members, nor by the decision of the Churchwardens, it must be referred to the full PCC for resolution.
3. The PCC must agree the Terms of Reference for the LCCs.

Structure

4. The membership of the LCC includes:
 - a. The Incumbent (ex-officio a member of the LCC, but is not usually expected to chair the meetings. If possible, a member of the staff would normally attend).
 - b. The Churchwardens and the PCC Member in the reserved places for the Local Church Area (one of whom would usually chair the LCC).
 - c. Any minister who in their license has a responsibility for the area covered by the Local Church.
 - d. Lay members of the PCC (such as Deanery or Diocesan Synod Members, or Co-Opted) who are habitual worshippers in that Local Church Area.
 - e. A number of lay members of the congregation of the Church, usually 6, but as determined by the PCC from time-to-time, nominated and elected by the congregation whose names appear on the ER of that Local Church Area, at a meeting (equivalent of a local APCM) convened annually after the APCM of the Parish.
5. At the first meeting following the APCM the LCC elects its own chair – usually a Churchwarden/ Assistant Warden – and other members of the Committee for particular tasks, as determined by the LCC or PCC. One of these will be the Assistant/LCC Treasurer³.

³ There has been some debate about the title for the LCC or Assistant Treasurer. Each Treasurer with their LCC can decide the title they prefer.

Role

6. The role of the LCC may be summarised as the 3Cs:

- **C**ommunity – developing the Church in each place as a sending place for our service to the wider community. To find ways to serve the communities in which we are placed, thinking of the spiritual, physical, mental and societal needs.
- **C**ongregation – the pastoral care and spiritual growth of our congregations, including growing vocations of all sorts and deepening discipleship. To become more and more the Body of Christ in each place, as a part of the whole.
- **C**hurch Building – caring for the Church building, its maintenance and development. To commit to our Churches becoming more and more loved by our congregations and communities, and to find ways to serve the community by using these gifts and burdens as well as possible.

And that includes the responsibilities:

- a. To advance the mission of the Church locally.
- b. To attend to daily administrative matters relating to the local Church.
- c. To refer matters of legal import to the PCC for approval or action.
- d. To act as a link between the local Church and community and the work of the PCC.
- e. To assist with any further tasks requested by the PCC and in consultation with the PCC.

Areas of responsibility

7. Reporting any safeguarding issues to the Parish Safeguarding Officer (or when a more urgent response is needed, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, and when someone might be in immediate danger the Police).
8. Care of the Church building and its resources, health and safety, and preparations for Quinquennial inspections and reporting any concerns of import to the PCC.
9. Care of the churchyard and reporting any concerns of import to the PCC.
10. Keeping the Church registers up to date and secure. Baptism, Marriage and Burial Registers, together with Banns and Confirmation registers, will be held centrally via the Parish Office.
11. Following PCC guidance in counting, recording, holding and banking financial collections and donations.
12. The organisation and running of fundraising and Church social events.
13. Only spending within agreed budget unless PCC authority is given.
14. The provision of necessities and staffing (other than Clergy) for the purposes of public worship and occasional offices.
15. Management of rotas for readers, intercessors, cleaners, sidespersons and hospitality.
16. Opening and locking the Church(es).
17. Keeping an up-to-date list of Church Members, in accordance with GDPR guidelines.

18. Local pastoral care, keeping the Incumbent/Priest-in-Charge informed of any significant pastoral concerns.
19. Communication within the town or village of local and Parish events.
20. Make recommendations for the spending of restricted funds.
21. Raise funds for specific projects approved by the PCC, such as a new window, etc.
22. Raise funds for charitable purposes, such as Christian Aid, Royal British Legion, etc.
23. Recommending persons from the Local Church Area as sidespeople to the PCC for appointment (See *CRR M6.6*).
24. The LCC will be consulted upon:
 - a. Proposed changes in patterns of worship. There is a commitment by the Incumbent and PCC to seek agreement with the LCC on any changes in the style of worship in that LCA.
 - b. When there is a Vacancy for an Incumbent, arrangements will be made to ensure that the voice of each LCA will be heard during the selection process, preferably (but this is by permission of the Bishop) by having one representative from each LCA, in addition to Patrons, Bishop, Archdeacon, Area Dean, etc. If the latter is not possible, other arrangements will be made
25. The LCC may not:
 - a. Sign contracts (e.g., fire extinguishers, photocopiers, utilities)
 - b. Have responsibility for trust funds (such as property) even if it relates to a local matter (See *Section 2, Point 10*).

Frequency of meetings

26. The LCC is to meet:
 - a. At the request of the PCC or its Standing Committee.
 - b. When a matter is referred to the LCC by the PCC for discussion or action.
 - c. Before an Annual Parochial Church Meeting in order to discuss PCC membership for the coming year and local contributions to the Annual Report.
 - d. At any other such times as it sees fit in order to achieve the work of the Church in that place.
 - e. In total not less than three times a year.

Reporting

27. Concise minutes of decisions should be made and passed onto the PCC Secretary and Incumbent within a week of any LCC meeting, including action points.

Review

28. These Terms of Reference are to be reviewed by the PCC after six months and thereafter on an annual basis following the APCM.

Termination, Creation or Amalgamation

29. Once set up, changes to the pattern and number of LCCs can only be made by a decision of the Annual Meeting, which would need a proposal from the PCC, after agreement of the LCCs concerned.
30. A suggestion to close, create or amalgamate an LCC may come from the LCC, PCC or Annual Meeting.

5 – Financial Arrangements

1. The PCC has legal responsibility for the financial duties and reporting for the Parish, including Common Mission Fund. It will abide by all legal requirements and always act in the best financial interests of the all the parishioners in the Parish.
2. The PCC will elect a Treasurer who will, in consultation with the LCC/Assistant Treasurers, prepare, plan and deliver an Annual Budget for the Parish. The PCC may appoint or recruit a person or persons to assist with this (See Section 4 for LCC/Assistant Treasurers).
3. All financial plans and reports will be made available to each Local Church Committee and will also be available at the Annual Meeting.
4. The PCC will seek to improve the financial health of the Parish by seeking any efficiencies which may be available in the following areas of Church life:
 - Utility bills
 - Insurance
 - Purchasing
 - Gift Aid
 - Use of contactless giving in our Churches
5. The financial structure will recognise and respect the money previously held by the four previous Parishes in their Restricted, Designated and General Funds. Restricted Funds may only be used for expenditure in the Local Church Area (i.e., the former Parish) which originally received the money, and for the original purpose of the restriction. For clarity, all future gifts will have restrictions put on them if they are given for particular purposes in any of the LCAs.
6. Legacies to any of the former Parishes (now LCAs) shall be held by the PCC for the benefit of that LCA as a Restricted asset (See Section 2, Point 10).
7. Delegation of Funds – the PCC will agree a budget with each LCC for their Church/Local Church Area. Funding to the agreed amount will then be delegated to the LCC to spend in accordance with the agreed priorities.
8. Parish Giving Scheme: each LCA will retain the PGS code and bank account number of the former Parish, so the former arrangements will continue.
9. The exact structure of the bank account(s) will be decided by the PCC, but every effort will be made to maintain local giving and fundraising for the benefit of both the Local Church Area and the wider Parish. This will be an evolving process, and the proposal is that eventually each Church's money is kept in separately accountable 'Funds' within the whole PCC accounts. This includes the Designated, Restricted and General Funds of the former PCCs. Significant changes will need to be agreed by the PCC and LCCs, and then confirmed at the next Annual Parish Meeting.

The raising of funds for charitable purposes, such as Christian Aid, etc., can be done at both Parish level and LCC level (See Section 4).
10. LCCs may raise funds for specific projects approved by the PCC, such as a new window, etc., and these funds be kept in the LCA 'Fund' in the central PCC account.
11. Delegated spending levels to be agreed.

Outcome of a Finance Meeting on the 15th May, 2020:

The following points are recommended from the Simplification Working Group:

- That individual bank accounts continue to run for as long as individual LCAs deem necessary
- But we will continue to work towards fewer bank accounts
- That a central PCC bank account be set up for CMF payment and possibly Gift Aid claims
- When it is decided to consolidate the accounts, this should take place at the end of the financial year
- Paying in and paying out slips could be adopted to clarify where each transaction should be posted in the accounts.

6 – Communications

1. Communications will be central to the success or failure of the PCC structure for Avon Valley Churches.
2. It is the responsibility of all members of both the PCC and the LCCs to share relevant information as openly and as frequently as possible with our parishioners. This will be done whilst also respecting the need for confidentiality and the requirements of GDPR when dealing with any personal information.
3. Ways in which we can achieve good communications include:
 - Proactively supporting those who lack the technological skills, equipment or ability to access on-line materials so that nobody will be disadvantaged
 - Whenever possible, sharing PCC papers and reports in advance
 - Making the minutes of PCC/LCC meetings freely available
 - Making summaries available via the AVC Website and through parish newsletters, and in the Churches.
4. At its first meeting, the PCC will consider whether to appoint a person to lead on communications, and will receive quarterly updates on progress.
5. Methods of communication:
 - Website – the new AVC website aims to create a set of more modern and interactive pages which can link automatically to both our Facebook account and to our Church Desk system. As well as pages for each of the Local Churches, that will a dedicated page for the PCC; this can then be used as a library for all relevant minutes and reports.
 - Facebook – AVC already makes extensive use of Facebook to promote events and to engage with the community. Since the advent of the Lockdown, this use has developed even further, particularly in relation to streaming. It is suggested that Facebook can be used to publicise the meetings of the PCC and to share links to the website page.
 - Zoom – having made such wide use of Zoom meeting during the period of the lockdown, it is suggested that key meetings such as the APCM could be streamed live in this way as well as being a traditional meeting. This would make the event accessible to a wider number of parishioners, using a technology with which many of them are now familiar.
 - E-mail – we will continue to make use of new and improved e-mail systems to share information and documents.
 - Other social media – the Parish can consider use of other social media platforms to publicise our activities. These include Twitter, Instagram and WhatsApp. These may be particularly relevant to the under 35 age group. As with our use of Facebook, we will have procedures in place to ensure compliance with all the current guidelines on data protection and safeguarding.

7 – Review

1. There will be a full review 12 months after the Scheme comes into operation. This review will be led by the Chair of the PCC and will be open to comments and input from all parishioners.
2. The review period will last for 2 months in order to give sufficient time for comment.