



## Financial Safeguarding Policy

This statement was adopted at the Parochial Church Council meeting held on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and will be reviewed annually. Last review May 2026.

*“It is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy” (1 Cor 4:2).*

Wonderfully, the bible has a lot to say about the way we use and handle our money and our finances are something God really cares about.<sup>1</sup> One of the reasons it has such a high profile is because of the connection between a person's spiritual life, and their approach towards money and possessions. As Jesus warns us in Luke 12, we are to “be on [our] guard against all kinds of greed.”

As stewards of God’s resources (Ps 24:1) leaders in the church are called to live and act in a way that is above reproach (Tit 1:6). This includes the way we handle, spend and manage our finances. We also want to delight that our gracious Lord helps us to think wisely about how we use money to “seek first His Kingdom” (Mt 6:33).

### Statement of Aims

Our aims in developing this policy are:

- To give the church family confidence that their giving is being used wisely, carefully and appropriately.
- To safeguard the church from any allegations of fraud or financial misconduct.
- To safeguard those who handle our finances from any allegations of fraud or financial misconduct.
- To enable the easy transition between signatories and ensure no one has sole access to accounts.
- To encourage a godly approach to our finances.
- To work towards the long-term efficiency and financial health of the churches in these places.

Policies like this are standard practice for financial controls and observed even when we fully trust the treasurers (as we do!). The accounts are checked annually by the Independent Examiner who will look for the required documentary evidence such as invoices etc.

### Responsible Persons

The appointed treasurer(s) for the church are **Steve Clark and Gil Robinson**. Other signatories on the bank mandates are:

COGS	COGS Church Hall
Chris Rose (Church Member)	Marie Harvey (PCC Member)
Lynn Shaw (PCC Member)	Lynn Shaw (PCC Member)
Anne Monks (PCC Member)	Tom Brown (Vicar)
Tom Brown (Vicar)	-

There will always be at least 3 people on the mandate to ensure ongoing access in any scenario. The Vicar is one of the signatories and responsible persons, but their access is limited so they cannot make any payments. This allows them permission to talk to the bank etc, but not to make online payments without second authorisation (this restriction on payments excludes the Vicar’s use of the church debit card – see over).

Below are the financial controls of our finance policy which apply equally to cheques and online banking:

<sup>1</sup> There are roughly 2,350 verses concerning money in the Bible with nearly 15% of Jesus’ words relating to money and possessions and 16 out of his 38 parables!

### **Cheque Signatories and Bank Authorisation**

1. Do not pre-sign blank cheques and never co-sign a blank cheque.
2. When signing a cheque/authorising a bank payment, ask to see supporting evidence (invoices, receipts etc).
  - a) Always check payee and amount matches.
  - b) Make sure you are satisfied the proposed payment is valid and ask for further details if you're not.
  - c) Initial any invoices to show you have seen them and or keep any email trail if sent electronically.
3. The recipient of a payment should never be the same as the signatory or authoriser.
4. Any money and valuables will be kept locked in the safe and we will vary the days and times money is taken to the bank. The safety of the person(s) taking the money to the bank is important. The person normally responsible for banking should always carefully consider whether they should ask someone to accompany them, especially on occasions where there is a large amount of money to be banked (e.g., following special fundraising events).

### **Payment Procedure**

Because of the volume of transactions from the PCC Main Account, presenting invoices or receipts for every single payment would be burdensome. The Charity Commission's document on financial controls CC8 (Section 4.3) states that "clearly, arrangements have to be practical and proportionate".

As a result, the PCC adopt the following procedure for payments:

1. Every payment must have supporting documentation such as invoice, receipt or purchase order in order for the Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer to process the payment.
2. A second signatory is not required to authorise every payment but should be notified of it. The online bank App enables for a notification to be sent to other users every time a transaction is made.
  - a. The second person will not normally be shown all the documentation, but they're entitled to ask for it if there's a query or they're not satisfied the payment is a valid expense.
  - b. This is not in the expectation of finding fraud, but as a sensible safeguard for both the treasurer and the church.
3. Unbudgeted payments over the threshold of £500 must be approved by the PCC beforehand.
4. Treasurers will provide a monthly update to the PCC, alongside an annual budget forecast and APCM report.

### **Church Debit Card**

In November 2024 the PCC approved the request for a church debit card for use with expenses by Rev'd Tom Brown. As a result, we adopt the following procedure for payments:

1. Every payment must have supporting documentation such as invoice, receipt or purchase order.
2. Individual expenses over the threshold of £250 must be approved by the PCC beforehand.

### **What to do if you receive an allegation of, or suspect abuse of any kind**

If you suspect, or any allegation is made to you that some form of impropriety has taken place, please contact one of the 'responsible persons' listed below as soon as possible. In normal circumstances those nearer the top of the list should be approached first. However, if one or more of the individuals is implicated in the suspicion or allegation *you must not discuss the issue with them.*<sup>2</sup> Instead, please contact one of the other 'responsible persons'. If all are implicated, you will need to contact a responsible external agency (e.g., Diocese of Sheffield Safeguarding Office, or the Police).

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|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • The Minister:                       | <b>Tom Brown</b>                    |
| • The Parish Safeguarding Officer(s): | <b>Alisdair and Nikola Smith</b>    |
| • The Church Warden(s):               | <b>Richard Lillford</b>             |
| • The Church Treasurer(s):            | <b>Steve Clark and Gil Robinson</b> |

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<sup>2</sup> The money laundering regulations are staggeringly intense. If you are found guilty of what's called 'tipping off', that can be an imprisonable offence. Tipping off could be as simple as noticing something dubious and asking the one who made that payment. As such, it's crucial to state that you don't talk to anyone implicated.