



The Parish of St Thomas & St Edmund

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING (APCM)

MINUTES OF MEETING

- Venue:** Via Zoom Technology due to Pandemic restrictions
- Time and Date:** 12 noon Sunday 23 May 2021
- Present:** Rev. Canon Kelvin Inglis (Chair), Nick Beard, Ann Beard, Nigel Orchard, Ken Edwards, Pam Edwards, Jan Truckle, Pam Edwards, Shirley Mahoney, Shirley Ledingham, Bertie Ledingham, John Bruce-Ball, Sue Bruce-Ball, Fiona Green, Simon Green, Alan Gear, Julie Gear, Wendy Oliver, John Foster, Anne Foster, Jill Britton, Di Emsley, Ali Alexander, Bobbie Chettleburgh, Wendy Cooper, Rosie Norman, Howard Norman, Tom Clammer, Maureen Frost, Clare Tawney, Fiona Hulbert, Mark Manterfield, Selina Deacon, Wendy Pugh, Dermod Hill, Ian Alexander, Michael Warrander, Sheila Warrander, Ellen Ransome, Helen Inglis, John Broadley, Jane Broadley, Christine Hill, Richard Laughton, Ute Schwarting, Gillian Gailey, Michael Humphreys, Helen Harvey Humphreys, Alex Tetley, Berenice Elliott, Wendy Pugh, Shirley Evans, Tim Ricketts, John Coupe, Michael Pope, Yvonne Pope, Steve Hoffman, Jennie Hoffman, Brenda Whitehead, Brian Sharpe
A number of other people attended without providing full names on zoom

Apologies Jennie Hoare, Tony Rea, Pam Rea, Hadrian Cook, Peter Heier, Heather Heier, Philip Gray, Mary Gray, Susie Prance, Robert Prance, Linda Salter

INACCURACIES: Apologies from Linda Salter, Michael Humphreys – should read “serving as a churchwarden for the forthcoming year”

- 1. WELCOME**
The Rector welcomed everyone to the meeting and Ali Alexander opened the meeting with a prayer.
- 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**
The Minutes of the meeting on the 4th October 2020 were approved.
- 3. ELECTORAL ROLL**
Howard Norman introduced himself as the Electoral Roll Officer and presented the Electoral Roll report explaining the following:
 - There were currently 238 electors, which was an increase of 5 since the last APCM.
 - 59 electors were from within the Parish and 179 from outside
 - The Electoral Roll Report would be sent to the Diocesan Secretary following this meeting

ACTION

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It was felt that the increase in electors was encouraging particularly during a period where the Church had been closed due to the pandemic.

4. **LOG BOOK, INVENTORY AND TERRIER**

Michael Humphreys provided the Log Book, Inventory and Terrier and confirmed these were up to date. Michael confirmed that the new benches and chairs and other new items had been added to the Inventory. It was explained that The Terrier box contained a record of the Church boundaries and information relating to buildings and land owned.

5. **ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

Prior to the meeting the Annual Report, Accounts and Treasurer's Report were made available. Wendy Oliver provided the attached presentation and made the following general comments:

5.1 Income

- Last year £325K had been received as opposed to £456K in the previous year and all income generating and fundraising activities had reduced as a result of the church being closed.
- Income fell by 29% last year, notwithstanding the effect of Covid-19, this position was not surprising due to the costs associated with reordering
- The vitally important contribution of all volunteers and subsequent impact on the income was emphasised
- Investments income had been reduced as a result of some income being used to support reordering
- VAT is returned for some of the major reordering expenditure and also income received from Quest

5.2 Expenditure

- As an upfront payment of the Parish Share had not been possible the 1.5% reduction did not apply
- Overall £3K less was spent on the Church as a direct result of Covid-19 and not having the church open
- £14K had been set aside for specific items including the final payments for the organ
- The £50K for the Roof fund was increased by £10K annually in line with quinquennial report requirements
- Unrestricted funds had been increased this year
- Overall there were sufficient funds to meet the requirement to have six months of liquid funds available and currently there were no concerns regarding liquidity

5.3 2021

- Expected income was £227K
- Expected expenditure was £250K
- The Finance Committee has reviewed and reduced the expenditure as much as possible which has resulted in a potential shortfall of £20K. This shortfall will be covered by a forthcoming legacy of £20k and £10K from the Guild.
- The only outstanding payment will be the final staggered payments for the Organ. Nigel Orchard explained that following completion of acceptance testing a 17% payment was due on receipt of the invoice and the further 1% then due over the next three months. Other costs (e.g. adviser for acceptance testing) were included within the budget.
- The overall situation was therefore better than previously expected.

Questions and Queries

WO explained the following:

- There had been an increase to the Parish Share in 2020
- Missionary and Charitable giving in 2019 included the amount carried over from 2018 due to a late decision regarding the recipients. KI explained that there was now a Charities Sub Committee so this would not happen again.
- Although liquid funds have reduced for a number of years, some of this has been used to support reordering costs and it is intended that going forward there will not be a deficit and the budget will balance. The current situation has not been helped by the circumstances of the pandemic.
- The differential in Parish Share costs had resulted from the decision by the Accounts Department to give a 0.5% reduction after 1.5% had been factored into the budget.

The Annual Reports and Accounts were unanimously approved. KI thanked WO for all her dedicated work as Treasurer particularly at the moment whilst having to deal with not only the impact of Covid-19 but also the complexities of reordering.

6. **ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS**

Michael Humphreys and Berenice Elliott were elected to serve a second term as Churchwardens. These positions were unanimously approved.

7. **DEANERY SYNOD**

The nomination of Fiona Hulbert as a Deanery Synod representative was unanimously approved.

8. **ELECTION OF PCC MEMBERS**

The following new PCC members were unanimously approved:

- Newly elected PCC members
 - Richard Laughton
 - Clare Tawney

This left two vacancies: one for a full three-year term and one for one year

- The following PCC members had come to the end of their service:
 - Ken Edwards
 - Helen Harvey Humphreys

9. **FABRIC REPORT**

Nick Beard gave the following report:

The last three quarters of 2020 and first quarter of 2021 have been quite a contrast to 2019 and the first quarter of 2020 when major restoration and reordering works were undertaken including:

- Restoring the Doom Painting
- The Clerestory window
- Cleaning of the arches around the chancel
- Cleaning of the two Eyre Memorials
- Repainting and cleaning of the Nave flooring and boxing in some pipework
- Cleaning the columns of nave arches
- Moving the Eyre stones to the lady chapel

- Renewing the electrical system
- Moving radiators and installing a heating trench at the west end

The effect of lockdown was significant and impacted on all those involved including the external companies and council officials and also funding.

In December 2020 the Church Architect conducted The Quinquennial review. This provides a five-year roadmap of what is needed to maintain the church. The work carried out this year has been prioritised by:

- Matters of safety
- Urgent matters raised through the Quinquennial Review
- Priority matters raised by the PCC

The projects and work undertaken so far are:

- West end doors – currently waiting for quotes
- Restored the masonry at the top of the bell tower
- New/additional Toilets by the POD – drain investigation has been done and looked at by archaeologists. Approvals for digging trenches would now be sought from the Council and Archdeacon
- The Church Architect has produced a proposal for how to make the north churchyard path safer and less slippery.
- Routine maintenance continues and this included one of the two boilers breaking down. It is hoped that the temporary fix will suffice to keep this going in the short-term. St Thomas's House boiler also broke and this will need to be replaced at a cost of approx. £3.5K. Discussions with the Towards Net Zero Carbon Group has been useful in establishing the best and most appropriate action to take.
- A solution to the problems with the fire alarm system remains to be found.

Nick drew attention to the enormous amount of work undertaken by Robert Lewis during lockdown to make the Church look so good. Robert had also found an excellent way of illuminating the Eyre Memorials and this approach provided a useful prototype for lighting the north and south aisles.

Questions and Comments

The likelihood of lead being stolen from the roof was raised. Nick explained that he understood that Smart-water does not degrade but this would be checked and it was felt that the location of St Thomas's would make it difficult for thieves.

NB

Helen Harvey Humphreys passed on praise and appreciation from the liaison Guide for the Information Centre of the restoration work on the Doom paining.

10. **REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT TEAM (RPT) REPORT**

John Foster provided the following report:

“When I reported to you at the last APCM in October 2020 I was able to give you a rundown of everything we had put in place in the preceding year. I ended by saying that there was still one element of the overall project to finish and that I hoped the RPT could be pensioned off by the time the next APCM came round.

Sadly, that cannot happen just yet. By the end of December, we had put together yet another detailed faculty application for the DAC. This one for a new font to match the altar about a third of the way into the church, the removal of the existing font, and new chair cupboards around the SW corner. Once again Nigel Orchard must be thanked for his considerable work on the faculty application which is both detailed and time consuming.

Before submitting the application, we arranged for excavations to be undertaken under the floor of the central nave where the proposed new font will go to make sure that there is nothing to hinder its installation. Fortunately, it was as expected and no hindrance was found. Since then the DAC has met twice to discuss our plans and chosen not to support them on either occasion. This is both disappointing and frustrating. One cannot attend the meeting of the DAC and feedback is minimal. All we have to go on at present is the written opinion of the DAC that, 'The existing font has sufficient value and importance to be retained'. Without the support of the DAC we judge that it is highly unlikely that the Chancellor would grant us approval to go ahead. However, and we have to keep looking on the hopeful side, Nigel Orchard and I have a face-to-face meeting with the Archdeacon tomorrow. He is a member of the DAC and knows the history of this redevelopment project. We are hoping that, together, we can find a way to make progress and bring this entire project to a fitting and proper conclusion."

Questions and Comments

The Rector explained that the decision to remove the existing font was part of the original reordering plan which was to make the whole building more flexible and to support a stronger emphasis on baptism and holy communion by putting the font and altar on the centre line of the nave.

It was also explained that the DAC is an advisory Group which has freedom of movement and advises the decision maker.

It was suggested that the DAC could be invited to explain how they felt retaining the font in its current position would support our motivation for relocating it and the Rector confirmed that these points were continuing to be discussed.

RDT,
PCC

11.

QUEST 2020

REPORT from John Bruce-Ball

In the current circumstances there has been little fundraising in 2020 but a summary of the Guild's financial situation was provided on the back of the latest Quest magazine.

The position has not changed much since December 2020 and there is £50K in the Guild account which is ringfenced to pay for the new font, the removal of the old font and the new cupboards in the south west corner of the church. In the future the Quest income would come from legacies, Trusts and some income from events and we are looking forward to the next phase and raising the necessary funds.

John thanked everyone for the enthusiastic support that had enabled £500,000 to be spent on the church so far. The majority of the funds raised had come from church funds and the congregation and we can now look forward to getting back into our church and enjoying the fruits of our labours.

12. **RECTOR'S COMMENTS**

The Rector made the following comments:

- Everyone was encouraged to read the document entitled "A Year in the Life of the Parish 2020", copies of which were in the church.
- As we emerge from the pandemic, discussions and plans were underway to consider the future of St Thomas's and further information about this would be provided in due course. To assist with this three PCC sub committees had been formed - Charity, Community and Communication
- Thank you to everyone for helping to keep St Thomas's going irrespective of such a difficult year. In the main, financial viability has been maintained by the generous funding provided through planned giving. We have used some of our reserves to invest in the future of the Church by making improvements that will provide greater flexibility and support our Christian mission.
- Particular "Thank You's" to the following people who have led and worked so hard on the major church projects:
 - Nigel Orchard for the Organ Project and DAC Work
 - Nick Beard and Peter Heier for work on the Fabric Committee
 - John Bruce-Ball for work on the 2020 Appeal
 - John Foster for the Redevelopment Project
 - Robert Lewis for the significant amount of work done in the church
 - All other people involved with this work
- A number of people were standing down from roles after a number of years and very special thanks were given to:
 - John Cox was leaving after having organised the intercessions for many years
 - Tony Rea was standing down as Gift Aid Secretary after many years and handing over to Ruth Barlow
 - Yvonne Pope, Jennie Hoare and Jenny Vokes were closing down Tommy's Toddlers after many years of providing the service
 - Jennie Hoare was giving up organising Saturday Coffee mornings and this will be taken over by Brenda Whitehead
 - Helen Harvey Humphreys and Ken Edwards were leaving the PCC at the end of their term of office
- Remembering those who had died since the last annual meeting
 - Kathleen Darvill
 - John Kennerley
 - Kathleen Burch
 - Judith Marriott
 - Heather Wood
 - Mo Stowe
 - Jack Leeming

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

13.1 Thanks to the Rector

Michael Humphreys led a vote of thanks to the Rector for his dedicated and motivational support and for everything that he does for St Thomas's. Particular thanks were given for introducing and implementing the changes necessary to keep the Church going and provide regular services throughout the difficult months of pandemic.

Minutes prepared by Shirley Ledingham

The Choir

- 13.2 Ute Schwarting appealed to everyone to write formally to their MP/Government and complain about only six singers being allowed to sing in church.

On-line Services and activities

- 13.3 Pam Edwards gave heartfelt thanks to all those involved with providing the on-line services which had been a lifeline to so many during the pandemic and also grateful thanks to Ali Alexander and Selina Deacon for organising and running the zoom coffee mornings. Thanks for the hard work and committed efforts of Steve Hoffman, John Coupe, Ute Schwarting, Richard Loughton and everyone involved with the wonderful technical team were also expressed.

Helen Inglis

- 13.4 The Rector expressed grateful thanks to Helen for her unending support and help with everything.

14. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING** – To be decided

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