

Minutes of St Andrews Church PCC, 10 Oct 2023, held at Bumbles, Five Ash Road, Medstead

Attendance:

Sharon Blackshaw (SB), Tracey George-Jones(TGJ), Jeremy Griggs (JG), Patricia Griggs (PG), Ian Jurd (IJ), Jackie Jurd (JJ) (from 8.00 pm), Anne Lofthouse (AL), Kerry Prior (KP),

- (1) **Opening Prayer**
- (2) **Apologies for Absence;** Wendy Busby (WB), Debby Barnes (DB)
- (3) **Declarations for AOB:** SB, JG, AL.
- (4) **Minutes of last meeting of 25 May 2023:** the minutes were approved and signed by IJ.

Matters arising: (i) Item 4: Safeguarding: all present confirmed they had passed the basic awareness DBS check but JG and PG had not registered their results with the COGS PSOs, save for KP who reported that she already had separate DBS clearance but had not undertaken the PCC test as she was going to be inactive for six months for medical reasons.

(ii) Item 5: Maggie Doggrell had declined the request that she take on the role of PCC Secretary.

(iii) Item 6: John Lofthouse, Stephen Blackshaw and Peter George-Jones had taken on the responsibility for maintenance, servicing and overseeing service contracts and renewals as proposed at the last meeting. Monthly maintenance sessions of the fabric committee had not been set up, but it was agreed these should be reinstated.

(iv) Item 11: The New Single Parish. See below at (7).

(v) Item 12: New Hymn Books: SB reported that WB and Patrick Busby's preference was for an updated/revised version of the present hymn book, Hymns Old and New: IJ proposed that any decision should be deferred pending the appointment of the new rector, who would be likely to want some input: there was concern that Rob Cragg's offer to replace the existing hymn books might lapse if nothing was done: many of the existing Hymns Old and New are disintegrating and need regular repair. Various views were expressed about maintenance of St Andrew's traditional forms of worship and the fact that hymns being projected on to a screen was not practical for the layout of the Church with the screen not being visible from the choir stalls. It was agreed that SB would speak to Rob Cragg to explain the position.

(5) **Appointment of PCC Secretary:** It was agreed that, pending the completion of the reorganisation of the parish, the matter be deferred, with minute taking at meetings being undertaken by WB, or on an *ad hoc* basis if she was not available..

(6) **Safeguarding** : see above at (4)(i) under Matters Arising.

(7) **Update on forming the New Parish** of Medstead and Four Marks: there has been a number of objections lodged with the Church Commissioners to the proposal for the reorganisation of the BLMS Benefice and the formation of the new parish of Medstead and Four Marks, so the matter would no longer be proceeding on 1st October as had been envisaged: the matter was likely to be on hold until at least 28th February 2024. The proposals and the objections would now be submitted to the Bishop of Winchester for his consideration following which he would make recommendations for the Church Commissioners. Unless they determined to act on his views without a hearing the matter would be referred a hearing which would take place on Feb 28th 2024. At that hearing anyone can attend and there can be representations made. In the meantime the PCC were required to complete a Form P100, a document summarising the parish, its make up, its structure, its nature and the various activities which take place here, for the assistance of the Church Commissioners in considering the way forward. IJ's draft was

considered and approved. There was debate as to whether we should include concern that our parish share had continued to increase notwithstanding there had been an interregnum without a pastor now approaching three years (Canon Edward Pruen had retired in Jan 2021) but IJ's advice was that, though the point was well made, this submission to the Church Commissioners was probably not the appropriate way of making it. It was confirmed that the PCC had been unanimous in its support for the draft proposed scheme for merging the parishes of Medstead and Four Marks and for the proposal in its final published form.

(8) **Update on The Hub:** Howard Wright had confirmed that there would be no requirement for the Hub as an office once the two parishes of Medstead and Four Marks had merged, assuming that in due course the merger proceeds: there were in place sufficient office facilities at COGS for the combined parish. The Hub is owned by the diocese and let to St Andrew's at a peppercorn rent. It is currently primarily used by St Andrew's Parish for storage. Although it was suggested that we surrender the lease and return the property to the diocese, it was agreed that this should be reconsidered as the rent is nominal and the building does have a continuing use to the parish for storage purposes. The photocopier that is kept there is believed to be owned outright by St Andrews but is currently not working. We do pay a monthly charge to Toshiba for its service and maintenance. Subject to IJ confirming with Tim Wettone the facts regarding ownership and the maintenance and servicing contract, it was agreed that the photocopier should be repaired and moved to the upper room in the Church Hall, on the basis that there is likely to be some continuing requirement by St Andrews for photocopying for the time being. If and when the merger with Four Marks parish has been completed, the issues regarding both the Hub and the photocopier can be revisited.

There is a further issue relating to the Hub which had been raised by John Wilkinson, a neighbour, who is concerned about the large size of the leylandii tree behind the Hub, which is apparently adversely affecting an adjacent septic tank. He wishes for the matter to be resolved by the tree being cut down. Although the Hub is owned by the diocese, they had referred the matter to the PCC. The PCC's view is that they would not object to the tree being cut down provided any expenses involved were borne by Mr Wilkinson. The matter however was not straightforward as the tree is subject to a TPO (a Tree Preservation Order). This means that before anything can be done to the tree, there would need to be permission from the local authority (East Hants District Council). Further the local authority would require the consent of the owner (the diocese) before authorising any action. It was proposed that we should therefore refer the matter back to the diocese, stating that as they are the owners the local authority would require them to consent, but that we, the PCC, do not object to the proposal that it be cut down.

The issue was canvassed whether the items stored in the Hub could not more conveniently be stored in the space of the former pipe organ behind the electric organ in the church. This was not practical as parts of the old organ had remained in situ on the basis that, when the electric organ had been installed, at some future date someone might wish to restore the old organ. A faculty would be required to remove those parts of the old organ still in situ. It now seems unlikely that the old organ is ever likely to be restored and in the longer term it may be the matter should be referred to the DAC (the Diocesan Advisory Committee) for their advice as to the way forward, and in particular whether it was appropriate for a faculty to be applied for to dispose of the parts of the old pipe organ.

(9) **Update on maintenance of the Fabric:** see 4(iii) above regarding appointments re heating and overseeing utilities bills. Monthly meetings of the Fabric Committee needed to be arranged.

(10) **Church Warden's report.** As DB was not present, no report from Church Warden.

11. **Social committee report:** SB reported on three forthcoming social events:

(i) A Jumble sale was scheduled to take place in two weeks 28 Oct in the church hall: it will be open from 9.30 am for receiving jumble sale items. The sale will finish at 3.30 pm.

(ii) A Christmas Carol: John Lofthouse is set to perform his one man show, A Christmas Carol, on the evening of 25th Nov in the Church. Staging will be required. Tickets will be £12. John required a 20 minutes interval, during which drinks will be available. If, as

anticipated, there was a full house (80 tickets), there was concern over the logistics of serving drinks and, following discussion, it was agreed that the North transept should be where the drinks should be prepared for distribution to patrons remaining in the pews. SB will sort out the licence.

(iii) Xmas tree festival, on Friday 1st December, in St Andrew's churchyard: KP, though indisposed, will make the arrangements with the exhibitors. John Lofthouse has agreed to lead the singing of Christmas songs. SB will ensure there are sufficient copies of carol/song sheets.

12. **Fabric report:** (i) The church bells: the quote for their repair of has been accepted but because one of the bells needs to be removed a full faculty is required but has not yet been applied for. IJ has been organising but needs to hand over to someone else. Grants are available to assist with the repair costs but have to be applied for. TGJ agreed to ask her husband Peter if he would take on this task of applying for the faculty and grants.

(ii) The church entrance gate: Martin Simons has not yet started but has indicated it could possibly be completed by Christmas / New Year. He was paid a deposit of £950 some two months ago.

(iii) The church notice board: the repairs are now complete and the board is back in place: the PCC expressed its thanks to KP, as well as her husband and her father for effecting this. Pending the resolution of the issues relating to the proposed new parish, the details of the incumbent and about services cannot be completed, but it was agreed that, *pro tem*, a laminated notice should be prepared with details of the services each month, together with a contact telephone number. SB & KP agreed to prepare a draft and get Wildly Upbeat, the printers in Alton, to print it up.

13. **Finance:** Tim Wettone had not prepared a finance report because he had believed the meeting was fixed for 17 Oct, as originally proposed. It was agreed that £75,000 of the funds in our current account be transferred to a deposit account with the diocese, securing an enhanced rate of interest: £10,000+ should remain in the current account an easy access funds.

14. **AOB:** (i) - forthcoming services:

(a) the arrangements for Remembrance Sunday were proving difficult. Brian Pritchard has taken the service for the last few years and is possibly available. Peter and Ingrid Owen Jones are not available. Possibly Rob Hughes, or David Bush could be asked. Andrew Micklefield, as Rural Dean, would be responsible for assisting us to find someone to lead the service if we were not able to do so. [Note Brian Pritchard has since confirmed that he is available].

(b) Christmas services: Christmas Eve is on the 4th Sunday of the month: a children's Nativity/Crib Service has been announced at the school as taking place on Christmas Eve at 4 pm: a leader to conduct the service has yet to be confirmed. Brian Pritchard will be taking the Midnight Mass service, starting at 11pm: Peter Owen Jones will be taking the service on Christmas morning, starting at 10 am.

(ii) A church web site: since the BLMS site was taken down it has been difficult to advertise matters relating to St Andrew's: it had been hoped that the matter would be resolved by the merger with Four Marks, but as this has dragged on we need to think again: SB reported that Dominic Clifford had been looking into setting up a website for us. The cost would be £15 a month: it would enable us to advertise the availability of the hall for hire, details of services, etc. It could be linked to COGS in due course. The PCC authorised SB to liaise with Dominic Clifford re setting this up.

(iii) Xmas cards advertising Christmas services etc: AL agreed to prepare an appropriate card, with SB providing details of services: it would be available for delivery around the parish before 1st December.

(iv) Emergency lighting in the church hall: there had been problems with the switching / timing: Ian Hainsworth had asked for permission for the system to be replaced using the services of Carl McHenery, whose labour costs would be £100 for 1/2 days work and an indicative cost of £250 in total. The PCC agreed that Ian Hainsworth be authorised to proceed as proposed

(v) Friends of St Andrews (FOSAC): JG reported on his discussions with Bill Dawson of FOSAC: a meeting had been held on 22 June 2023, attended by Deborah Jackson, Bill Dawson, DB, PG and JG when it had been proposed that under the anticipated new arrangements of the combined parish with Four Marks, the anticipated St Andrew's Local Church Committee could in effect take on the role of FOSAC, with the funds within FOSAC remaining exclusively for the use of St Andrew's Church. IJ proposed, seconded by JJ, that the PCC should invite FOSAC to amend its Constitution to enable the use of its funds to be extended to include the maintenance, repair and care of St Andrew's Church Hall, which was agreed *nem con*.

(vi) Funds for Church Flower Committee: after a talk by Marion Slater at the September Cafe Church meeting re the arrangements for flowers at St Andrew's, it was reported that people wanted to know how they might contribute to the costs of providing flowers for St Andrew's: after discussion it was agreed that the appropriate way forward was for people who wished to contribute, specifically to designate funds as for "The Flower Fund".

(15) **Next meeting:** Tuesday 16 Jan 2024. 7.30 Venue at 3 Woodfield Drive.

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