

ST PETER'S, TIVERTON

Parochial Church Council

Minutes of the meeting held at St Peter's Church
on Thursday 11 July 2024 at 7.30 pm

Present: The Revd Christian Hill (CH), in the chair; John Brewster (JB), David Catchpole (DC), Emma Cobbledick (EC), Joanna Hall-Tomkin (JH-T), Kate Henshall (KH), Mark Heritage (MH), Nickie Johnson (NJ), Sally Mundy (SM), David Ricks (DR) and William Zarrett (WZ).

1 The meeting opened with prayer. A thank you card and gift was presented to David Catchpole for all his dedicated and diligent work as PCC secretary over the years.

2 Apologies were received from Susannah Emson and Tom Mitchell.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 9 May 2024 were approved and signed.

4 Matters arising from the minutes

Choral evensong (minute 2.2): Choral Evensong will be held on Sunday 13th October at 6pm by the choir from St James' in Exeter with around 25 choristers. St Peter's choir would not be involved this time, but this could be explored in future.

Hired Cleaners (minute 2.4): EC and KH each have spoken to cleaners (Cobweb Fairies and an independent lady called Sheila) who would be willing to clean the church on a regular basis. Both could clean once a fortnight in the hopes they could cover each other's holidays. Costs are between £16-£18 hour. Duties would include the toilets, kitchen area, children's area and Hoover of carpets. Dusting of pews and other areas of the church can be included as and when needed. They could use the ministers parking space. It was suggested a deep/high level industrial clean was made before the regular cleaning began.

Actions: DR to explore someone to undertake a high level/deep clean. EC and KH to contact regular cleaners after this has been completed.

GDPR form (minute 5.3): EC presented the form for PCC members to sign if they wished.

Marketing strategy (minute 11): Following discussion and feedback from the previous meeting, it has been decided not to pursue a contract with Stacey Gray.

EC has offered to set-up a social and fundraising group to coordinate a lot of the work which is currently undertaken by Bill and Gill in the organisation of events. In time this could expand but would start small. Initially EC is looking for 3-4 people who could help her centrally run the group with an extended group of volunteers who may be able to help at events. WZ is happy to help train volunteers in what needs doing.

Discussion followed about the need for more marketing of events, website/social media improvement and how to grow involvement from the wider community to make events more sustainable. It was remarked that the base of volunteers is getting smaller and that this is not unique to the Church, but is a problem faced by many organisations.

KH reported that she was putting together a spreadsheet of ideas which were gathered at the vision day to display and ask the congregation what they could help with. It was

suggested this could also include activities which need to be covered from the churchwarden's roles.

Actions:

ALL: consider if you can help in any way and reach out to EC if you can.

EC: set up initial meeting of social and fundraising group with those who have offered help.

KH: develop spreadsheet of ideas from vision day.

EC: check with Bill and Gill for any outstanding churchwarden roles and liaise with KH about whether this could be combined with her list.

5 Vestry meeting and APCM on 14 April

The revised minutes of the vestry meeting at APCM on 14 April were noted.

6 Church policies

EC reminded the PCC that we should be regularly reviewing and updating our policies to ensure they remain fit for purpose. She has begun this review by drawing up Terms of Reference for the PCC. Amendments were suggested for the sections on 'Terms of Office' and 'Failure to comply with the Terms'.

EC suggested one policy was reviewed at each PCC meeting. The next policy she will work on is a Privacy Policy.

EC is also updating the list of keyholders as there are a few people who are interested in helping with opening and locking the church but who do not have keys. If you have a key, please let EC know.

Actions:

EC to update Terms of Reference

All: let EC or CH know if you hold church keys. If you no longer require your key, please return it to EC or CH.

7 Safeguarding

JH-T reported that she is continuing to check training which needs to be completed but that it is problematic getting people to complete the basic awareness course. She noted that some people had come off the coffee rota because they don't feel they can complete the safeguarding training, but highlighted that given the church's history it was important that the whole church was onboard with training and being aware of what to look out for.

JH-T stressed that the training was not a test and that it was there to raise awareness and ensure that people knew what to look out for and with whom to raise any concerns. JH-T hopes to run one of the training sessions in church for those who would like some help, hopefully followed by a lunch. She also thanked KH and Sheila Schofield for their help in contacting the pastoral care group and bellringers and helping those individuals to complete their training. It is not possible for JH-T to chase everyone individually.

JH-T offered to run a 'safeguarding soundbite' at each PCC to highlight safeguarding, give an opportunity for anyone to ask questions they may have or to look at the hub resources.

Actions:

JH-T: organise a safeguarding training session in church. EC can help with refreshments depending on the day.

JH-T: contact clergy who need to update training.

SM: contact those on the coffee rota and remind them to complete training.

8 Worship Committee

NJ presented the worship committee minutes and highlighted the discussion on the welcome sheet.

The printing of the sheet had been discontinued as there was little evidence of people following the readings and the hymns were now shown on the hymn boards in church. The welcome sheet is emailed to those on the mailing list, but few print it off. It was remarked that the welcome sheet was useful to take away with details of events and that it was good to give something to newcomers.

KH presented a sheet which had been produced to give to anyone new to St Peter's with information on the church including details of services, church groups, parish magazine, mailing list, parish office telephone number and website.

Actions:

Social and Fundraising group: explore producing a monthly sheet of upcoming events.

9 Pastoral Care Group

KH reported on the re-established pastoral care group. The group have now completed the required safeguarding training and are working through the list of people who have requested visits. The visits are greatly appreciated and valued. An article on the group will go into an upcoming edition of the Parish Magazine to raise awareness of their work.

Actions:

KH to email details of the next meeting to the group.

10 Finance Committee

WZ gave a summary of the finance committee minutes. The deficit is beyond that budgeted due to emergency maintenance and the last of the reordering work. Next year is anticipated to be nearer the budget.

The Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) has lost around 6 or 7 members so regular giving is down, although general funds remain substantial. The number of regular participants has also dropped, by about 20%, so the common fund contribution will likely reduce next year.

It was reported that the money for the bell restoration and structural work had been raised in full and that the fundraising board could be brought into church to celebrate the great effort which had been made to support this work. Other successful fundraising events were noted, including a concert to raise money for the Children's Hospice. It was highlighted that fundraising could extend to other local charities within the wider community. Remarks were made that fundraising is often more successful if it is for a specific project or activity, rather than general funds.

A question was raised about the organ restoration. This is estimated to cost around £50K and will happen over a number of years. It is hoped funds can be met through grant applications but no work is planned as yet.

11 Fabric

Vestry Work: These works are now complete including the heating panels in the suspended ceiling. The room is being used as a changing room for the ladies choir and as a sacristy. No defects with the work have been noted.

Greenway Chapel Electricity Meter: Arrangements are being made to remove the electricity meter from the Greenway chapel as it is no longer in use. They have been sending us estimated readings which will now be terminated from the cut off date.

Children's Area: The children's area has now been carpeted and further furnishings are being considered. The carpet was kindly donated so the money raised for this will be used for other materials for the children's area. The cupboards have been fitted with locks.

Contactless Card Giving: Further to the presentation given at the last PCC meeting by Philip Whitlock the offer of a new card reader was accepted and has been installed on a trial basis for a few months. With stewarding now starting and the church being open on a regular basis, donations through the card reader are increasing.

The previous card reader has been relocated to the servery counter.

Quinquennial Inspection: The architect hopes to complete his quinquennial inspection on Friday 12th July. The roof level inspection is outstanding and is weather dependant.

Kitchen: It was noted that sharps should be locked away, possibly in one of the cupboards.

Actions:

Fabric group: explore locks on kitchen cupboard and check motion alarms.

12 Library report

EC reported that the bookshelves were all coated with Dacrylate museum sealant throughout May and have now had the recommended two months to 'off gas' so the books were now being transferred to the shelving. EC is in the process of sorting how the books will be arranged but would appreciate some help with the move once this is confirmed. EC also requested if users of the office could get into the habit of locking the door to the library.

EC has deposited the non-library material with the Devon Heritage Centre. They currently have a very large backlog of accessions so it will be around 6-12 months before the material is available on their catalogue. If any material needs to be viewed during that time, then we can request it. Please direct any enquiries to EC.

EC has had her request to extend the grant from the Church Buildings Council of £9643 approved for another year until July 2025. This grant includes basic conservation materials, book shoes for the Newte part of the collection, environmental monitoring and a training day in basic collection care. EC is waiting on confirmation from the Conservator that she can complete the work for the book shoes in this timescale.

At the beginning of June a volume in the Library, which was donated by Samuel Wesley, was loaned to the Lifepath event held at St Pauls. Lifepath involved representatives from 10 churches and was attended by 7 schools from Tiverton and the surrounding areas and followed the lives of the Wesley family. EC engaged with the diocese to waive the faculty process and fee for the loan, but this remains a blocker for future loans and conservation, especially the fees which equate to the conservation of one or two volumes. EC is discussing with other parochial libraries how they have overcome this issue.

EC has paused the application to National Heritage Lottery Fund partially due to lack of time, but also because they require a lot more governance to be in place to offer grants since their programme refresh at the beginning of the year. EC will compile the relevant documentation over the coming months with a view to applying in the Winter.

Actions:

All: continue clearing of the Memorial Chapel. EC will have moved books by the beginning of August.

EC: explore options for short terms loans of the collection.

EC: develop Governance documentation including fire policy with MH.

13 Churchyard trees

WZ reported that Angus Gordon from the Castle was concerned about trees near the chorle. Mid Devon Council have approved the work, which includes felling an Ash Tree and raising the crown of trees in the north churchyard. Mr Gordon has offered to pay for the work in return for the wood.

The work was approved by the PCC.

Actions:

WZ to complete faculty application and notify Mr Gordon.

14 Deanery Synod report

EC reported the Deanery synod had received a very moving and thought-provoking talk on grief by Andrea Corrie. The meeting was open to everyone in the Deanery and received a good turnout. She also highlighted there will be a 'churches tent' at the Mid-Devon Show on 27th July - please say hello to them if you are visiting – and that The Right Reverend Mike Harrison was appointed as Bishop of Exeter on 4th June.

The next Deanery Synod meeting is also open to anyone and is being held on Monday 30th September at 7:30pm at Calverleigh Village Hall. The guest speaker is Colin Smallacombe from the Farming Community Network.

15 Summer stewarding

EC reported that stewarding was going well with many visitors in the first couple weeks. Some stewards have offered refreshments which has been greatly received by visitors. Any donations for refreshments can be placed in the box on the end of the pew where the hymnbooks are kept. Some visitors have also asked about the possibility of purchasing post cards.

There are still gaps on the rota, including Friday morning with EC. If you can help, even if it is just one or two days please speak to EC or Gill Heard.

Actions:

ALL: Speak to EC if you can help with stewarding on a Friday morning 10am-12 noon, or speak to Gill Heard for other days and times.

16 AOB

Use of Office for small groups:

The office and vestry can be used for small groups. Please check the calendar on the website or email the parish office to check the room is free beforehand.

Parish Administrator: EC reported that Tim Bayton, our parish administrator, has notified us of his intention to pursue other work in September and his desire to finish as our administrator. He will cover the post until a replacement is found, but his time will be reduced from September. It was requested that this role be based within the church office more frequently.

Action:

The standing committee will take this forward and the PCC vote via email on any proposed changes to the role so it can be advertised as soon as possible.

Hot water tap: JH-T remarked that the hot water tap runs out very quickly and the pressure can be very low, especially when toilets are being used. She proposed using the urn during large events which was agreed.

Gardening: JH-T asked if there was a budget for gardening and if some wildflower seed or similar could be bought and sown. This was agreed.

Action: JH-T to send any receipts to WZ for reimbursing.

Hire agreements: JH-T asked what the procedure was for those wishing to hire the church for events to support safeguarding. WZ confirmed that anyone wishing to hire the church had to provide a copy of their safeguarding policy.

Aileen Stenlake's funeral: Since the PCC the date of Thursday 1st August has been confirmed for the funeral. If anyone would like to send a card to Aileen's family they can contact SM for details.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9pm with the Grace.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 5 September, 7:30pm at St Peter's Church.

Signed:

Date: