

**St Mary the Virgin - Henley
Parochial Church Council
PCC Meeting Wednesday 8th March 2016
8.00 pm, Chantry House
(7.30 Eucharist)**

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Fr Martyn Griffiths (Rector and Chairman), Sheila Croton (Secretary), Sally Batty, Sue Hockley (Churchwarden), Kathryn Turner (Treasurer), Carol Brook-Partridge (Churchwarden & Dean Rep), Stephen Nichols, Martin Whittaker and Gary Sieling (Music Dir)

APOLOGIES

James Hurst, Mary Wood (Dean Rep), Geoffrey Taylor (Dean Rep), Peter Raven and Liz Houldsworth

Geoffrey Taylor has decided to stand down as one of our Deanery Representatives and will therefore no longer attend PCC meetings.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the PCC meetings for October were accepted as a true record proposed Sue Hockey and seconded by Stephen Nichols.

MATTERS ARISING

Picture Sale - Father Martyn will contact the diocese again.
APCM - the date has moved forward by one week to 17th April 2016

TREASURER'S REPORT

All members present received a copy of last year's draft accounts for discussion and acceptance.

Kathryn gave a highlight report which is printed below

Year ending 31 December 2015

The accounts for this year show net increase in funds of £18,907 compared to a decrease in funds last year of £76,627. Admittedly we had a one off donation of £20,000 and spent only £3,722 on major repairs. However, this is the third year I have presented the accounts to you and for the first time both planned giving and open plate giving has increased. The number of people paying by standing order went up from 28 to 38 and the amount raised had increased by £800 per month by the end of the year. We are very grateful for peoples' generosity in what is still a difficult climate for people on fixed incomes or relying on investment income.

On the expenditure side the parish share and the deanery quota were down on the previous year and Father Martyn has been frugal as regards clergy expenses and sacristy expenses. We have also saved approximately £3000 on light and heat for the church and chantry house. We entered into new contracts for gas and electricity and also had smart meters fitted which means the suppliers have accurate regular readings.

We ended the year with cash at bank of £31,282 compared to last year £18,659

2016

Parish share

The parish share for this year is £85,879, an increase of £24. Given our improved financial position I am aiming to make ten instalments of approximately £8,500. I have issued the second instalment today.

Ellen Buckland Fund

This stands at £148,362. As previously stated, in 2014 £100,000 was transferred out of this fund to the Fabric Fund and £20,000 to the general fund to pay the parish share. The Altar frontal repairs were also funded from here.

Fabric Fund

This stands at £53,474. As stated above, £3,722 has been paid out of the fund for the final stage of the first tranche of major repairs.

General Resources

The balance in Barclays Bank at the end of February was £48,522. We pay our insurance in mid-March by direct debit. We had a visit from the company's inspector about a year ago but despite a subsequent revaluation, this continues to be in the region of £10,000.

We have recently received a one off donation of £10,000.

The outlook is more cheerful than last year but we should bear in mind that major repairs to the roof are still pending which is why Martin Whittaker has put in another grant application. In addition, the Chantry House is not covering its costs and is being supported by the church rather than the other way round as used to be the case. We do need to make sure that we can at least continue to cover our day to day costs from our own recurring income.

The report was proposed by Carol PP and seconded by Martin W. All agreed its acceptance which will be presented at the forthcoming APCM.

Organ Repair:

The organ is in need of repair and this will be undertaken shortly at a cost of approx. £1000.00

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Henley Municipal Charities have budgeted £35,000 to St Mary's for the financial years 2016/2017 and 2017/2018.

Bequest. A bequest has been received from the family of Mr Badcock.

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

A meeting was held at St John's, Stoke Row on 1st March.

As there is no secretary, there was no agenda so the Area Dean introduced each item.

The accounts were presented by the treasurer who said that in 2015 88% of the Deanery Share was paid to the Diocese. The accounts were accepted. This year each parish will be asked to contribute 0.6% of its Parish share to the Deanery, which is less than last year.

The Area Dean appealed for someone to take on the secretary role - but there were no volunteers.

The Area Dean then spoke about the development of St John's, which had had a declining electoral role and was not able to pay its parish share. A parishioner had had a vision to remove the pews but nothing was done until a chance conversation between the Area Dean and the Head of the primary school, next to the church, which led to the decision that the pews would go and the area of the church made into a hall which the school would use. This was paid for by the School (Grant Aided), and the PCC went on to raise £125,000 for a kitchen and toilets to be added. The church now looks forward to the future.

There was an exchange of Parish news and finally members were divided into small groups to pray for the needs of the Deanery. The meeting ended with the Grace.

FORTHCOMING DATES

- 19th March 2016 - Choir singing at Southwark Cathedral
- 17th April 2016 - APCM
- 8th June 2016 - Archdeacons Visitation

BUILDINGS

The May 2013 Quinquennial inspection identified significant necessary work to the church involving the roof, stonework, windows, and other areas etc. with the level of urgency categorised over a five-year period.

In April 2014 we made an unsuccessful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund Grants for Places of Worship Scheme for a grant of £205,000 towards a £295,000 project covering work necessary within three years.

Following the failure of that application the PCC decided to immediately deal with the most urgent roof repairs and these were completed in the late Summer of 2014 at a cost of around £45,000

In November of the same year we made a further application to the same scheme which was also unsuccessful, this time for a grant of £175,000 towards a £360,000 project.

In January 2015 we made an application to the new Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund for a grant of £75,000 towards a £140,000 project to complete the remainder of the work necessary to the roofs and rainwater items. We were not successful.

The government then made more money available to the fund and early last month a further application was submitted this time for a £75,000 grant against a £150,000 project. The result of this application should be announced in June. Our

chances of success would appear to be poor both because as we are competing for a slice of the available funds against numerous other churches, chapels, and other related buildings, and also due to the level of unrestricted funds shown in our accounts.

If this latest application should fail, then the PCC may in due course wish to decide what level of funding it is able to make available for the more urgent remaining roof repairs and the architect can then be tasked to identify precisely which works should be done within that budget.

Lighting. The system is about 13 years old. It is true that the halogen lamps are more costly to run than would be the case with modern LED's. The possibility of changing to LED's has been looked at within the past 12 months and the Rector and Martin had a number of meetings about this with Active Electrical who put a lot of (unpaid) time and energy into researching the matter. We were advised that it was not possible or practical to simply adapt the existing system to take LED lamps. Apparently one of the reasons is that the manufacturers of the central control units are not prepared to share with us the codes for those boxes without the payment of a really significant sum. Although somewhat more expensive to run than we might wish the current system is generally well designed and it does work. The design and installation costs for a new system would be significant. It was agreed that this is not the right time to consider a new system. We think that our prime responsibility for the building has to be the roof and rainwater arrangements and that this should be the focus of our energies at the moment.

Churchyard sheds. Prices will be obtained for painting both sheds and renewing the roof coverings, as appropriate for one or both of them.

CHURCHYARD

Sheds

Sally reported that the large branch which had been resting on the shed needed a faculty for removal. The Vale of the White Horse council, have now carried out the work after liaising directly with the Archdeacon who gave permission for the work to be undertaken.

Churchyard Tidy Up

The date for this is 21st May. A note will go in the pew sheets asking for volunteers. An advisory notice will be put in the notice board.

CHANTRY HOUSE

Red Lion.

Sally gave an update on the concerns John Radice had regarding the changes made by the Red Lion both structural and usage. A meeting was held on 1st Feb between all interested parties including Mr Gill, (not the usual one). A report is to be made which will probably state the need for planning permission. Mr Gill mentioned that he wishes to re-design the complete area again and it will be used as residential so "change of use" planning permission will definitely need to be sought. The lease states nonresidential use but there is some query as to when the change of use came into force and what the law was at that time as recent legal changes have taken place. Mr Gill may need to prove he had changed to residential use prior to the changes in the law. This will all be at the expense of the Red Lion. KT asked if

there is any chance of the Chantry House being refunded for its expenditure in consulting John Radice.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Fire Risk Assessment - This work is to be carried out next week. (MW)

AOB

None

Dates of future PCC Meeting dates

- Sunday 17th April (APCM) 2016
- Wednesday 11th May 2016
- Wednesday 13th July 2016
- Wednesday 28th September 2016
- Wednesday 23rd November 2016
- Tuesday 14th March 2017
- Sunday 30th April (APCM) 2017
- Tuesday 18th July 2017
- Tuesday 19th September 2017
- Tuesday 28th November 2017

The meeting closed at 9.00pm with prayers.

Signed by the Chairman

Dated