

**Parish of St. John the Divine, Selsdon**  
**Minutes of the Parochial Church Council Meeting**  
**Held on Wednesday 3rd July, 2024 at 7.30 pm in the Church Hall**

**Present:** Debbie Brown, Sue Tilley, Helen Lishmund, Martyn Brown, Ian Harley, Alice and Andrew Hicks, Jim Gordon, Simon Archer, John Harris, Jane Gugliemi, Gill Sharpe.

**1. Opening Prayer.** In the absence of the Rector, Martyn Brown (Churchwarden), opened the meeting and asked Simon Archer to commence the proceedings with prayer.

**2. Apologies** were received from Reverend Younis Francis, Janice White, Sarah Parsons, Suki Puttock, Stephen Srikantha, and Alison Graham.

**3. Notice of Any Other Business.** None was given.

**4. Minutes of the meetings** held on the 15th May 2024 were held to be a true record.

*Proposed by Alice Hicks and seconded by Jim Gordon and passed unanimously.*

**5. Matters arising.** 1) Martyn Brown informed the meeting that as the church architect, Clive England, had retired St. John's had to appoint someone else. From a list given by the diocese Sue Kent, who had worked with the Rector before, had been selected and he was hoping to arrange an appointment to see her. 2) Helen Lishmund informed the meeting that the owner of 10 Upper Selsdon Road, who had applied for planning permission for a nursery on the premises, had been in touch to apologise for the errors in the application documents suggesting that the church had given permission for her clients and staff to use the church car park. She had amended the documents, had subsequently sent a card and flowers in apology and has since used the hall for an event connected with her nursery.

3) John Harris asked when places for the disabled in church were to be installed, and was advised that the matter was in hand. He also asked why the piano was situated at the back of church. This had been requested by the choir sometime ago. The piano is easily moved for musical events.

**6. Correspondence.** Helen Lishmund told the meeting that she had received correspondence from the Diocese regarding the annual PCC Secretaries' Conference, the Parish Support Fund, and Online returns. Hilary Richardson had written about the final winding-up of the Drama Group, enclosing a cheque of £585.00 for the church funds. A similar amount had been sent to the Contact Centre in Selsdon and the Selsdon Retirement Centre.

## **7. Reports from Officers.**

**a) Churchwardens (including fabric).** Martyn Brown reported that no progress had been made on the parapet wall as we were still waiting for the appointment of an architect.

**b) PCC Secretary - including the Standing Committee Report.** Helen Lishmund reported that as PCC Secretary she had been asked to ascertain PCC support for Simon Archer's application for Reader Ministry Selection.

*The PCC members had been contacted by email, and an agreement was reached to support the application unanimously.*

She also reported that she had attended the PCC Secretaries' Conference on 22nd June. The Diocese have produced a Handbook for PCC Secretaries, and diocesan staff encouraged parishes to take advantage of their support when needed. She had found it interesting to talk with Parish Secretaries from other churches, many of which were struggling with rather fewer resources than St. John's enjoyed.

**The Standing Committee** had met on Friday, 28th June to set the agenda for today's meeting.

**c) PCC Treasurer.** Sue Tilley presented the accounts up to the end of June 2024. She said that:

1) the expenditure for the total resurfacing of the car park, which included the painting of parking bays etc., came to £21,000, which she felt was a very reasonable amount, and that the finished result was excellent.

2) She drew attention to the £943.00 raised for Christian Aid through a coffee morning and lunch, which came to £734.00 after expenses.

3) The St. Albans trip had made a loss of £80, despite Janice's hard work.

4) The Boiler Fund stood at £143,000. The Parish had received a generous legacy of £30,000 from Patrick Hall's estate. The Standing Committee recommend this money goes into a fund for the general upkeep of the church. which was beginning to show wear and tear. It was agreed that upgrading the lighting is a priority.

5) There was discussion about the church's quota for the Parish Support Fund for next year. The Diocese is asking for a rise of 3.5%, which would bring the amount requested to £54,648.00. We are about to finish paying the loan raised for building the Garden Room and money would be available to cover the increased donation.

Andrew Hicks drew the attention of the meeting to the fact that we would be paying considerably more for the new heating system because of the insistence of the Diocese that we used heat pumps and that this would also make for higher running costs. This would inevitably make inroads into the church's funding, and he suggested that we should consider reducing the amount of the PSF to cover this extra drain on our resources. Much discussion ensued.

The general feeling of the meeting was that we did not want to risk antagonising the Diocese when we had the funds to cover this extra cost. It was also reported that the Rector was not happy with the amount requested being reduced. It was decided that, should the costs prove too much in the future, we should reserve the right to bring this up again.

*It was proposed that the financial report should be accepted: proposed by Sue Tilley, seconded by Ian Harley and passed unanimously.*

**d) Electoral Roll Officer.** In the absence of Janice White, Helen Lishmund said that the electoral roll count stood at 185.

**e) Church Hall Management.** Martyn Brown reported that the undercroft of the stage had finally been cleared of the Dramatic Society belongings and was now being used for storage of items needed for the Christmas Fair. Jane Gugliemi asked whether the side door of the hall was safe as it was so easy to open from the inside, but she was reassured to hear that it could not possibly be opened from outside.

**f) Events.** In Janice White's absence, Helen gave the Events Report.

1) The Film Club continued to do well and attracted many visitors.

2) The Quiz and Curry Night was again a great success, and the £800 raised contributed to the Warm Church Fund.

3) The well-supported Summer Concert held on 8th June made £1,125.00 for Selsdon Contact. The next concert is on 8th December and will again support the Royal Marsden Hospital. Helen said that the acoustics in the Church were very good for musical events and raised the possibility of the church being used more widely for future events, thus raising funds for St. John's or other causes. A warmer church with, perhaps, better seating, etc. might prove a popular venue for future events, such as organ recitals. It could also be regarded as part of St. John's charitable support and would be an opportunity for outreach to the local community.

4) 37 members of the congregation took part in a pilgrimage to St. Albans Cathedral which was very successful, despite a financial loss of £100.

5) Forthcoming events include the Parish BBQ on 14th July, and an outing to Littlehampton on 14th August at a cost of £24.00.

6) There will be a fish and chip Quiz Night on 19th October.

7) The Harvest Festival on 29th September was raised and the issue of where donations should be sent was discussed. *Debbie Brown proposed that they should be given to St. Francis for their food bank, and it was seconded by Helen Lishmund, and passed unanimously.*

**8. Deanery Synod Report.** Helen Lishmund reported that there had been a good turnout from St. John's, but that it had been poorly attended by other churches, and the local clergy were conspicuous by their absence. There had been a speaker from

Christian Aid who came from the Elephant and Castle who gave an interesting presentation advising Christian Aid are happy to support churches with presentations on generous giving and legacies.

**9. Health and Safeguarding.** Sue Tilley reported that there were no safeguarding issues to report, but that access to lighting in the church was likely to prove a very significant issue in the future. The lighting in the Choir was impossible to reach, and the bulbs needed changing to LEDs.

**10. Project Warm Church.** Martyn Brown submitted a detailed report to the PCC about meetings and discussions which had taken place with the DAC, and the details of the outcome. This was for a system which included heat pumps with a gas boiler as a back-up in the event of heat pump failure or excessively cold weather. The issue of whether a smart control system would be required was discussed, but it was agreed that it was necessary in order to get the best out of the system, which Martyn had found impressive. However, the cost of the new system has more than doubled. The possibility of opening up the church more to help pay for the system, as was raised earlier in the meeting, was discussed further. Further research was needed to find out what loans, sources of funding, etc. might be available to raise the extra £100,000 needed to pay for the system. Martyn was looking for PCC approval for the project.

*Simon Archer proposed that the meeting accept this report, it was seconded by John Harris, and carried unanimously.*

**11. Parish Support Fund.** This issue had been dealt with earlier in the meeting (under item 7c).

**12. Insurance.** The meeting gave full approval for it to be renewed.

*Proposed by Sue Tilley, seconded by Debbie Brown and carried unanimously.*

**13. Any Other Business.** Helen Lishmund asked that the date of the November meeting be changed because she would be away. It was agreed that the date be changed from 13th November to 27th November.

**There being no other business to discuss, the meeting ended  
with the Grace at 8.45 p.m.**

