

ST MARY'S NEWICK PCC MEETING
THURSDAY 26 JANUARY 2023 at 4:00pm

MINUTES

Present: Alan Young (Lay Chair), Rev Paul Mundy, Sara Fuller (Churchwarden), Patsy Bailey, Tony Bailey, Jeremy Burdett, Audrey Ford, Henry Ford, Linda Farmer, Kate Francis, Ian Reekie, Caroline Smith and Mandy Stockwell.

Alan Young took the Chair (as previously agreed) in the absence of the regular Lay Chair, Christopher Hume.

1. Opening Prayer

Rev Paul Mundy opened the meeting with a reading from the First Letter of Timothy, followed by prayer.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Christopher Hume, Geoff Clinton, Dan Cowley, Jonathan Fenton-Vince and Anthony Mallinson.

3. Minutes of Previous PCC Meeting, 28th November 2022

A correction was agreed to the published Draft Minute from the November meeting: the final sentence of the paragraph headed 'Parish Share' under Item 9, 'Finance' - to the effect that "our Parish Share for 2023 should be pledged at £668,668" - was amended to give the intended amount of £68,668. With this amendment, duly initialled in the printed copy by the acting Chair, Alan Young, and by the Rector), the Minute was proposed for acceptance by SF, seconded by IR, and agreed unanimously by those present.

4. Safeguarding / Serious Incident Reporting

CS advised everything is currently taking longer (DBS checks etc) so she is behind with some of the requests but still on the case.

Serious Incident Reporting: LF will alter existing policies as required by the advice received recently from the Diocese, as per the emails circulated and agreed in the week. Serious Incidents are to be reported to the nominated persons, these being Safeguarding Officer CS, the Rector PM, and the Churchwardens CH & SF. LF also confirmed she is currently working through all of the St Mary's policies and they will be ready for sign off at APCM in May.

5. 'State of Emergency' Paper from CH

AY explained from the Chair how this paper had originated in a conversation between CH and himself. This conversation had culminated in AY asking CH to put his concerns in writing for a paper to be considered at this meeting of the PCC.

AY then opened up the item for discussion.

Various views were voiced on the matter. PM informed the meeting that our most recent statistical returns to the Diocese showed that numbers attending services at St Mary's were relatively positive coming out of the pandemic, with an increase in attendance from extra services - Worship 2, Evensong, Healing Services, the Thanksgiving Service and Advent Carols.

The Chair reminded the meeting that the concerns expressed by CH in the paper were not simply about financial sustainability: the paper equally expresses anxieties about the relatively small number of people within our Church community who currently exercise a range of roles and responsibilities in the Parish; the increasing age profile of this 'core' group; and the lack of younger cohorts coming forward who can be encouraged and trained up ready to take on these key responsibilities as time moves on and

current postholders wish to relinquish and pass on these roles and responsibilities.

Views expressed around the table fell essentially into two distinct categories: those that emphasised the need to plan and act carefully in a strategic and analytical manner in order to address these concerns; and those which emphasised the role of prayer and prophecy, making time to 'Pause, Reflect, Ask & Yield' and trusting that God will provide the means and resources for whatever He wants His Church to undertake and achieve here in Newick.

PM emphasised the need to continue to push for legacies. Supported by the Diocesan Giving Officer, Rev Andrew Smith, our clergy and lay ministers will shortly be raising the issue of giving and fundraising, but PM emphasised that this coming year he wants us to think about what it means to "be Church", to trust in God, and celebrate all the good things that we as a Church are actually achieving.

6. Issues from the Rector

In addition to the points raised under Item 5 above, PM said he wanted us to be more prophetic, and to reconsider how we set out our agendas for PCC meetings. He expressed concerns about the way our agendas are currently set out: firstly, that initial items at each meeting tend to be those that could almost be seen as 'tick box' exercises demonstrating that we are compliant with the concerns and requirements of the Diocese; and secondly, that our agendas generally focus on 'problems' and on 'issues', whereas he feels we should focus more on mission and focus more on the good things that St Mary's is achieving here in Newick.

Coronation: We are all still waiting on more detailed instructions and expectations from the 'powers that be', however some aspects of what is likely to happen in Newick over the Coronation weekend are already becoming clear. Newick Parish Council and the Bonfire Society are planning fireworks and a

beacon lighting at some point. Andy Rees hopes to create an inter-Parish Coronation Choir to perform at St Mary's on the Saturday evening. LF advised that there would be extra flowers in Church for that weekend. KF asked that if there is to be a Marquee set up that weekend on the Green or in the Recreation Ground, we should consider asking to hold a service there: this idea was welcomed enthusiastically.

The PCC agreed to move St Mary's APCM away from its originally scheduled date (now part of the Coronation weekend) to the following Sunday, 14th May 2023, at 11:30am.

Christmas Services, 2023: Since Christmas Eve this year is a Sunday, the PCC was asked to consider the proposal that the 8:00am service that day should be dropped, to give the following pattern of services over the two days: on Christmas Eve (Sunday), the usual 8 o'clock Holy Communion, the Nativity at 4:00pm and then Midnight Mass; and on Christmas Day, services of Holy Communion at 8:00am and at 10:00am. This was proposed by LF, seconded by IR and passed unanimously.

7. Issues from the Churchwardens

No items were raised.

8. Barn Centre, including Barn Centre Upgrade Project

AY gave an update on progress in his role as Project Manager for the Upgrade. He expressed confidence that understanding of the need and rationale for the Upgrade Project was now widespread (although still not ubiquitous) within the congregation at St Mary's.

Presentation of the current plans after the main 10am service on 15th January had resulted in a number of fruitful and positive conversations, and some further ideas as to how the plans could be further improved had been taken on board. Principal among these was a suggestion that a porch be created at the Barn Centre

door nearest the Church, as the new path layout would effectively make this the new 'Main Entrance' to the Barn for people coming directly from the Church. The Architect for the Project, Clive Stillman, had already drawn up a design for a 'fully suspended' porch (one with no walls or pillars in contact with the ground, in other words, not extending the footprint of the building) for this corner of the Barn Centre.

TB then updated the PCC on his recent conversations with CS. CS is currently waiting to hear from the Structural Engineer and then will be looking to submit the plan for both the Barn Centre and the new pathways to the local Planning authorities. KF queried why the 'regular' toilets were being moved from one end of the Barn Centre to the other. This was explained to her satisfaction.

9. Finance

IR confirmed that year-end financial paperwork is being prepared for audit and presentation to the APCM. He talked through the change in Insurer to *Trinitas* and also that he has applied on our behalf for a £2.5k grant for Youth Work via the Winter Support Fund for East Sussex at Sussex Community Foundation. We should hear back from them in February with the outcome of the application. PM expressed his thanks to IR for all the work he has done on the *Trinitas* change, as well as the work he is doing with CH on Finance, and the excellent leaflet they had produced recently to encourage Legacies.

10. Newick Parish Magazine

IR advised that he doesn't currently have final figures for the Magazine as still waiting on some advertisers' fees to come in. He also advised that the Printers are holding the price for a further six months for us which is fantastic news.

TB advised there is work currently being taken on a logo for the front of the Magazine to represent St Mary's and will feedback to PCC when this is ready to view.

11. Pastoral Care / Mental Health & Wellbeing Support

PB presented her report, which was accepted by the PCC. PB advised there is a new member who has joined the Pastoral team which is great news. PB would love to have more people joining the team and in particular, younger people.

AY asked the meeting to consider, if the Church's mission was not simply to respond to instances of need on such a scale as and when each need arose, but might also involve a Prophetic role in questioning the nature of our country's social, political and economic values that appeared to be leaving so many people in conditions of such dire social, emotional and economic need and vulnerability. PM supported him enthusiastically in this suggestion.

LF suggested that PCC members might wish to contact an organisation she knew of that passed on and represented ordinary people's concerns about the quality of Local Government in the UK, and undertook to furnish details to PCC members following the meeting.

*(LF later circulated the details of two organisations that at one time or another represented such views: **Sussex and Surrey Association of Local Councils**, 212 High Street, Lewes East Sussex BN7 2NH and the **Sussex Rural Community Council**, Suite F1 Waterside Centre, North Street East Sussex BN7 2PE. LF emphasised in her communication that PCC members should first seek to clarify whether either or both of these organisations still carried out this role.)*

Mental Health & Wellbeing: AY advised there is to be a meeting of St Mary's MH&W Project Group on 1st February for to look at next steps for the programme following our exceptionally valuable and well-received *Mental Health & Wellbeing Awareness*

Session attended by representatives of a number of Village organisations and societies back in October 2022.

Various proposals are to be considered at the meeting on 1st February as to what might be the Group's focus for 2023. Proposals include the MH&W of Men, and that of Carers and those involved in Pastoral work and outreach.

A further proposal re- the MH&W of Young People had also been received; however, Group members believe this is a specialist area of endeavour, one for which they do not believe they possess the requisite skills. This request has therefore been redirected to those working generally with Children and Young People in the Parish.

12. Outward Giving

JB reported that AB will be unable to travel to Colombia this year to visit the project with the Wayuu people on our behalf, as had initially been hoped. JB is now looking to see if anyone else can. He noted that Links International are involved in various areas of Colombia, and he will see if they can help us with this.

PM advised there had been three letters of thanks from our other Outward Giving areas.

JB advised that Ron and June Perou will be stepping down from their role with the Leprosy Mission and a replacement will be needed. We should all pray on this. RP and JP will be thanked in an appropriate way for all they have contributed to the Leprosy Mission over the years.

13. Electoral Roll

MS advised the PCC that there were no changes to report at this time.

14. Fabric / Sexton's Report

The PCC expressed its thanks to TB for his comprehensive report.

TB advised that minor roof repairs are starting today (27th), and forensic DNA fluid as used by our new Insurer will be applied: it should be distinguishable from the old Smartwater fluid under UV light of the correct wavelength. All Smartwater signage currently on the lead valley as a visual deterrent will be removed, and replaced with Securitas labels.

There have been various problems with the boiler but it is currently ok.

The broken pipe in the lower churchyard is being repaired.

15. Churchyard

The date set for the Spring 2023 Churchyard Working Party will be confirmed with CH. *(The date has now been confirmed as Saturday, 15th April 2023.)*

16. Declaration of Confidential Items

No request was made for any of the above items at today's meeting to be regarded as Confidential.

17. A.O.B.

PB asked if there will always be communion now at Evensong. PM confirmed that no, there would not be.

PB asked how we should regard the historic painting of St Mary's that has been given to the Church. The PCC's agreed procedure for gifts to the Church was noted. The PCC agreed that for the present, the painting should remain on loan to the church rather than gifted.

PM advised he is on annual leave from the 5th until the 13th February inclusive. He will be back hosting a School Service on the 14th. He asked for volunteers for his two *Rector's Ramblings* slots in the Newsletter for 9th and 16th February. JB agreed to take on the 16th – anyone interested in writing the slot for the 9th February should be notified to him by Friday 3rd.

Lent Course: the PCC agreed, after some discussion of alternative possibilities, that this should continue to take place upstairs in the Barn Centre on a Thursday evening in 2023. PM is currently considering what the content of this year's course might be.

MS asked whether Worship2 should take place on Easter Day or not. This is being considered.

MS reminded the PCC that Josh will be heading off to Uni in September so we must consider his replacement for the AV desk.

AY confirmed that all being well he should be licensed as a Reader in Chichester Cathedral on the morning of Saturday, 30th September this year. Tickets will be allocated for Parishioners to attend the Licensing if they so wish.

18. Date and Time of next PCC Meeting

Thursday, 30th March 2023 at 7pm. The APCM will now be on 14th May 2023 in the Church at 11:30am.

The meeting ended at 5:45pm with the Grace.