

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WYMONDHAM ABBEY with SPOONER ROW

Registered Charity Number 1130495

Minutes of PCC meeting on Wednesday 15 November 2023 in St Benedicts

Present

Bishop Ian for item 2, Fr Christopher, Philip Aldred, Ruth Brett, Isabel Davidson, Kay Dorling, Chris Grant, Hilary Hunter, Andrew Naylor, Alex Perry, Barbara Randall, Brian Randall and Morwenna Thomas.

Apologies received from: Jim Hartley, Catherine Mack, Sarah Sayer

1 **Welcome and Prayer** led by Fr Christopher

We welcomed Bishop Ian and prayed especially for Archdeacon Steven Betts who was unable to attend the meeting due to illness.

2 **The appointment of the next Vicar**

Bishop Ian represented The Archdeacon to explain the appointment process.

Steven Betts had already had several meetings with the Churchwardens and the CWs had made good progress with starting to prepare a parish profile. The CWs were now asking for input from the PCC and to share their individual thoughts prior to circulating an amended document to the Electoral Roll.

There would be a forward by Bishop Graham to explain the issues of the recent past difficulties.

Bishop Ian said the 'bare bones' document was an excellent start but we needed to sell ourselves as a desirable place to live and a welcoming church community to come to. As a 'flagship' parish of the diocese we should be able to attract applicants from outside Norfolk. The growing town was a great opportunity for the church to reach out and attract new residents.

We needed to use social media and advertise widely to promote the vacancy. The Church Times was expensive but recommended by the Bishop for a post of this importance.

The design of the document was important and should include lots of photos of people and activities. The diocese could help with design if required to help draw the reader in as quickly as possible.

The most important sections of the profile and where we are particularly looking for suggestions are:

5. our vision – what we want to do
6. what we're looking for in a new incumbent
7. what we offer

Confirmation of the vacancy has to be received from Bishop Graham. Fr Christopher is expected to stay in post until the new incumbent arrives. Once the profile is completed and the new website is up and running a 'Section 11' meeting will be arranged at which the PCC will need to approve the profile, choose parish lay representatives and agree any advertising costs.

Bishop Ian suggested a tight time scale aiming to get an advert out by early January, interviews in February. The earliest appointment might be May/June but August/September would be more likely.

3 **Minutes of last meeting** held on 20 September 2023

The minutes were agreed as a correct record and were signed.

4 **Matters arising not on current agenda:**

Appointment of Youth and Families worker See item 5A

5 **MISSION / OUTREACH** – serving our community.

A Youth and Families

Appointment of Youth and Families worker

Since the September PCC meeting there had been an informal meeting with Lorna Goodrich the only applicant. It was a mutual decision that she would like to fulfil part of the role working with young children and their families. The PCC agreed this was a good solution and a job specification for her on a self-employed basis could now be discussed.

Appointment of Youth and Families worker continued

The role would be funded from the £4,000 promised by the Papillon Trust. Lorna is well placed to develop this role. She has 500 families on her contact list. Following a survey it was clear some families would be interested in an act of worship at another time in the week.

Jim Hartley had been looking at the possibility of advertising for a parish nurse similar to the nurse based in Sheringham looking after vulnerable families. The PCC agreed for this to be pursued and to ask if the person could come and talk to us. The job would be funded from a generous donation already in place.

B Abbey Hall – Wymondham Community Outreach Project

This is now fully operational. The group have a provisional hire agreement with permanent access to the hall unless it is needed for a hirer. Arnie is looking forward to when he has full use of the hall. He will then need a three-year lease for the whole building and with the project paying for all running costs and maintenance. First, a Trust has to be set up so that he can raise additional funding. We would continue to have shared use of the car park and we would expect to have access to secure storage facilities. There is likely to be modifications to the buildings possibly creating some office space.

C Guild of St Benedict

A report of the meeting on Tuesday 7 November has been circulated and is on the noticeboard. There would be a Cleaning Day on Sat 18 Nov and a volunteers' coffee morning on Tuesday 21 Nov. Sarah Sayer was stepping down from managing the shop after Christmas. The PCC were agreed that she had done an amazing job running the shop and setting up new systems. Financially she had raised nearly £20,000 this year with a profit margin of around 40%. She would write a person specification for the voluntary post.

D Website

The new website development was proceeding well with Chris from Clarity Digital in Norwich. BR said Chris was good to work with. Once set up we will be able to edit the content ourselves. Photos were being added to bring it to life.

E Concerts and Events update

An updated events diary was tabled. The Easter Spring Fair would be on Sat 6 April. The Town Mayor was organising a concert on Sat 13 April. Before then Wynterfest was on Sunday 26 November from 12 to 4pm and the Christmas Fair on Sat 2 December

The Christmas services card had been printed and were available to pick up at the welcome desk.

F Holy Trinity Spooner Row

Spooner row had agreed to contribute £3,500 towards the parish share this year.

They were going to remove the dais completely to improve access to the kitchen area.

6 Finance – Chris Grant

Thanks were given to Chris for the finance report which had been circulated to PCC members before the meeting. The report was encouraging and we currently have a small surplus and hoped to break even at the year end.

The PCC agreed that we should adopt the statutory fees for weddings and funerals. Wedding blessings do not attract a fee.

There was mention of choir fees which would need to be discussed further with the Director of Music.

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7 **Fabric Matters**

All items scheduled in the Chancellor's 'omnibus' faculty dated 10 November 2022 had been completed apart from the canopy under the East Tower.

At last the sound system was being completed during the next couple of weeks.

8 **Eco Church and Churchyard** – report from Hilary Hunter

Green Halloween was very successful with well over 70 adults and children attending. Fr C blessed the Wildlife Conservation Area. The children enjoyed the tour of the churchyard finding different species of fungi, lichens and snails before going into the abbey for pumpkin soup and craftwork. Then they went to do some bat detecting and were delighted to see a sky full of bats!

We have achieved an Eco Church Silver Award. I was asked to send photos and additional comments on the five categories which, they wrote 'were a joy to read and to hear all that your church is involved with'. Worship, Community and Land reached Gold standard so we need to work on Buildings and Lifestyle. Herb sales will fund a frame for the certificate to match those in the porch. We have been asked to show our commitment to Eco Church by buying an Eco Church plaque – handmade in Edinburgh! – at a cost of £96! The PCC did not agree to this!!

Bishop Ian's wife, Sue, offered to donate some houseplants and these will be ready for Wynterfest and the Christmas Fair. A helpful addition to the churchyard fund.

The paths have had their final mow for the year, herb garden weeded and the roses are being pruned and tied in.

9 **Safeguarding** – report from Diana Grant, Acting Parish Safeguarding Officer Nov 2023

We still have a way to go. There are 139 guild members, 57 are exempt which leaves 82. A total 34 people need reminding to complete their training. 20 of those haven't yet done their Basic so I need to find out why. Hayley and I are happy to provide one-to-one help and I'm happy to field any questions at any reasonable time.

It was noted that Catherine Mack was still PSO and would take up her post when her health improves.

10 **Health and Safety**

The Churchwardens had had a meeting with Iain Drayton to discuss outstanding issues.

11 **Any other urgent business**

Deanery Synod – Barbara Randall reported: *I'm afraid that as we have had no meetings members of Humbleyard Deanery have not had the opportunity to discuss the **Humbleyard Consultation** which clarifies that the expectation is that Humbleyard Deanery will be split between other deaneries and that Wymondham together with High Oak group will then be included in Thetford and Rockland Deanery.*

Next meeting scheduled for Monday 8 January at 5.30pm