

MINUTES of PCC meeting held on Monday 8 Jan 2024 at 5.30pm in St Benedicts

Present: Fr Christopher, Philip Aldred, Isabel Davidson, Kay Dorling, Chris Grant, David Hamilton, Jim Hartley, Hilary Hunter, Catherine Mack, Andrew Naylor, Alex Perry, Barbara Randall, Brian Randall.

Iain Drayton (Health and Safety Officer)

Apologies: Ruth Brett, Morwenna Thomas

1 **Welcome and Prayer**

Fr C thanked those who had provided refreshments after the earlier meeting with the Parish Nurses.

Fr C reported that Sarah Sayer had resigned from the PCC as she was moving. She had served the Abbey for many years and more recently raised over £20,000 in the shop since it reopened 15 months ago.

The PCC agreed that there would be no election for the vacancy before the APCM.

2 **Minutes of last meeting** held on 15 November 2023 were accepted as a correct record and were duly signed.

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

Deanery news: a decision on the restructuring had been put in abeyance.

Bishop Ian currently had an additional workload as the Archdeacon of Norfolk was sick.

4 **Parish Profile and the appointment process** – update from Brian Randall

BR thanked everyone for their contributions to the profile which had been added. JH and BR had put a lot of work in and kept it focused on the challenges and attractions of the post to the right applicant, preferably from outside the Diocese. The profile will include some 'vox pox' quotes from members of the congregation.

The profile had now been passed to Bishop Ian for his comments.

A Diocesan officer will also assist and sharpen it up with graphic design input.

Once the profile is completed the PCC will see it but must keep it strictly confidential. A Section 11 meeting will be called, at which the profile and advertising costs will be approved and two representatives selected for the interview panel. The date for the section 11 meeting is not yet known but is expected to be in mid February.

An interview date had been set for 11 April and it was planned to get an advert out in early March.

In the process Fr C will resign as Priest-in-Charge and will become a Curate-in-Charge.

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

A Youth and Families

Fr C had not yet had a meeting with Lorna Goodrich about her expected new part-time role working in the church with young children and families.

B Abbey Hall – Wymondham Community Outreach Project update

There had been further reflections with Arnie McConnell and it had been agreed that we would offer a three-year licence rather than a lease and avoid handing the hall over in its entirety. Conversations were ongoing but it was felt this would keep our options open.

With the assistance of grants they would pay rent and costs. We've had a Diocesan grant of £3,000 and £2,000 from South Norfolk Council. There were other possible sources of funding that CG would look into.

C Guild of St Benedict – report from Jim Hartley

JH and Robert Culyer would be planning some events for Guild members which would value their work as volunteers.

Additional volunteers were needed to help manage the **Duck Race on Monday 6 May.**

Fr C suggested that choir members might be able to fulfil this need especially if part of funds raised went towards paying for an additional organist once a month.

The shop was currently being managed by a team: Vivien Clifford-Jackson was looking after rotas, Lorna Slade was looking after stock. A volunteer administrator was needed to actually do the buying and run a spreadsheet. CG was currently fulfilling this role.

D Website – report from Brian Randall

The new website was now live and had received much praise. It had been designed by Clarity Digital in Norwich. There were still amendments to be made and a section on safeguarding to be added.

A team would be responsible for editing the website. Chris Grant, Hayley Cornwell and Richard Barton-Wood were meeting the web designer on Friday to be shown how to edit. BR would have a later training session. There were currently a lot of generic email addresses in use which would be reduced.

It was noted that the team was posting on **Facebook** regularly but it was agreed responding to public comments should ideally be done every week.

E Concerts and Events 2024 – update from Barbara Randall

BaR had been updating the event details and booking organists for a series of Saturday morning recitals.

Talks in the Sundays at Three series included a talk on the Bells by Hayden Charles and two talks by Richard Barton-Wood relating to the 500-year anniversary of the Parish Bede Roll.

Suggestions for other speakers would be welcomed.

F Holy Trinity Spooner Row – report from Philip Aldred

£1,400 cash had gone into the bank current account now that it was finally accessible.

Church expenses exceeded income and it was hoped that some funds from the saver account could be used. It contained some reserved funds and it was unclear how their use were restricted.

It was agreed that Harry Gratton, previous Spooner Row Treasurer, should be consulted.

It was thought that there had been excess funds unused from a previous building project.

A quote was being obtained for removing the dais which would make the building more accessible for hirers and potentially increase income.

It was necessary to reduce visits from Tim, the gardener to reduce costs.

PA also requested a small honorarium for playing for services twice a month. £25 was agreed.

G Parish Nurse scheme

Most PCC members plus other interested members of the congregation were present at a meeting with two Parish Nurses to find out more about the role of Parish Nurses organised through Parish Nursing Ministries UK (PNMUK).

There was a lot of interest and we agreed to pursue the idea of developing a scheme in Wymondham.

We would set up a sub-group to progress this.

There is more information on the scheme on <https://parishnursing.org.uk/>

6 Finance – Treasurer's Report from Chris Grant

January 2024 Report is attached

Main points include:

- preliminary summary is subject to a few corrections to be done with our accountant on 8 Feb.
- for the APCM, a graph of 2023 Income and Expenditure will illustrate how we receive and spend funds.
- **total income figure for 2023 of £385,856** is encouraging
- after taking out reserved funds of £92,421 (Outreach and DoM fund including gift aid already received) we are left with £293,435 which after deducting expenses of £275,778 leaves a surplus of £17,657.
- payments of £10,892 for building work VAT back to W A Preservation Trust and Diocesan fees (weddings and funerals) of £4,465 made on 28 December 2023 but not processed until 2 Jan. so do not appear in 2023 figures.
- The **working surplus is more like £2,300**, a considerable improvement on the 2022 loss of £42,140.
- The encouraging figure is the total regular and visitor Giving of £104,000.
- We have paid the full parish share of £65,000 as well as outstanding Diocesan fees.

Bank Accounts: State of funds as of 6 Jan 2024:

PCC Main account £41,992, PCC Saver account £80,017 (Reserved funds Outreach, Director of Music)

Spooner Row Current account £2,924, Spooner Row Saver account £26,870

Spooner Row: Annual expenses for insurance, churchyard maintenance and electricity run to about £3,000 PA which is more than income. With savings of £26,870 we need to use some of these (subject to confirming any reserved amounts) to put towards future years.

To increase Abbey income we should encourage more people on the Electoral Roll to donate regularly.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF WYMONDHAM ABBEY with SPOONER ROW

Registered Charity Number 1130495

Shop: An end of year stock take has been completed amounting to a potential sales value of £5,838 and an estimated stock value of £3,503. Due to a lack of cost prices recorded for each item, this has been estimated using an average sales price margin of 40%. It is important that for all future orders, cost prices are recorded against each item so that we can build a better picture of item profit and simplify future stock take. The total sales in the attached summary of £24,351 will reduce to about £20,000 once donations, cafe and ticket sales sold through the EPOS system have been extracted.

With purchases of £12,761, the shop has produced a good result in its first full year.

Church cleaning – reducing the cost

The PCC considered the best use of time and resources whilst encouraging willing volunteers.

It was agreed that Fr C would find out whether Shirley would be willing to increase her hours.

JH would talk to Kelly with a view to reducing gently her hours.

7 Fabric Matters

The sedilia were currently receiving care from conservators paid for by WAPT.

Roofers would be doing more work this week.

The sound system was almost complete.

BR talked about care of the organs. Work was normally funded by The Friends of Wymondham Abbey. They had recently requested comparison quotes for work on the organ. He had sought advice from David Dunnett, the Diocesan Organ Advisor. He recommended setting up a regular twice-yearly tuning contract. It was agreed we should go with Richard Bower.

8 Eco Church and Churchyard – report from Hilary Hunter

Plants will not be for sale again until March. Plant sales for 2023 were very good but unfortunately a lot had to be spent on re-instating the wildlife conservation area which included removing metal posts and wires, 24 laurel bushes and stones, and building two compost bins to replace those which had been removed.

The abbey roses have all been winter pruned and will be mulched in a month or two.

The herb garden will be mulched too.

Ann Roberts (Norfolk Wildlife Trust) has carried out a wildlife survey in the churchyard throughout the year and her final report will soon be available.

We have received Diocesan permission to plant a James Grieve apple tree near the crab apples for pollination.

This tree will be in memory of James from Wymondham who was murdered in Ipswich last year.

There are five categories for EcoChurch awards. We had gold standard for three of them in our Silver Award application. Hopefully we can improve the other two areas so we may apply for a Gold Award soon.

9 Safeguarding report January 2024 – submitted by Diana Grant

The guidance for Safeguarding from the CofE and Norwich Diocese has proved somewhat inconsistent during the last year, with conflicting documents advising on which courses need to be completed by which roles within our church. For clarity, we have now decided to follow the most recent guidance on the CofE website covered in their e-manual

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual>

The critical section relating to “Who gets what training in the Parish?” is covered in the Parish Safeguarding Handbook, page 17 (a copy of the page is included below). This supersedes the Handbook that was handed out to PCC members last year and the one currently linked on the Norwich Diocese website which uses different course titles. The handbook is no longer being printed and is only available as a PDF download.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf>

The three main modules of Safeguarding training are: Basic awareness, Foundation and Leadership, and are completed online at <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/login>

*In summary, most of our Guild members are not required to complete any training modules but are ‘encouraged’ to complete Basic awareness. **PCC Members are required to complete Basic awareness.** If any members who have not completed their course require assistance, please contact me or Hayley, as we would like to sign off all as completed as soon as possible. Other roles that require higher levels of training are Church Wardens, Director of music, Choir leaders, Godly play leaders. I will be reviewing this with those concerned and offering any assistance required to help them complete. Hayley is in the process of updating the records of courses required and completed for all Guild members on the iKnow Church database, now that we have established the correct requirements.*

Diana Grant, Safeguarding Officer, ps0@wymondhamabbey.org.uk 07969 165319

10 Health and Safety report January 2024 – Iain Drayton

The non-compliance document dated 11 Nov 2021 has been analysed showing the details of the issues breaking them down into various categories. There were 65 Non-compliance's, (shown below) which might sound high, but many were due to documentation not being available at the time of the inspection. As the over-all assessment for both the Abbey and the Abbey Hall were medium, the need to quickly resolve specific issues does not arise. Thus, I suggested tackling the easier and quicker to resolve issues first. Having identified the resolution of the issues on non-compliance that relate to signage, COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) sheets, Fire Testing and Emergency lighting logbooks and a couple of other issues a meeting was held between Brian, Andrew and myself. At this meeting the signage issues were discussed and images of them passed to Brian for him to print out. Christmas with all its busyness has naturally slowed down progress of resolving these issues but shortly the signage should be completed.

I shall next turn my attention to the more difficult or time-consuming issues which relate to the Procedures, all of which need at least a review if not amendments. Once those issues have been catalogued, I shall pass these over to the Church Wardens for discussion as to their resolution or passing to the appropriate person to check / amend. There are a couple of new Procedures that are required by the initial non-compliance report and if these have not yet been completed they will need to be written. Likewise with the COSHH sheets.

The other issues detailing various system practices will need conversations with Church Wardens and thus will be the last area to be addressed. But it is planned that the resolution of all non-compliances will be completed no later than the end of 2024. Currently, with the exception of possibly a few sign, no equipment is required therefore currently there is no expectation of any expenditure.

Iain Drayton, Health and Safety Officer

The PCC thanked Iain for his diligent and gentle approach to H&S matters.

11 Preparation of annual report

Statistics for mission have been completed by Fr C showing increase in numbers over the course of 2023.

Baptisms	19 (inc 3 adults)
Weddings	7
Funerals	23
Average Sunday Attendance	154
Easter Communicants	194
Christmas Communicants	340
Home Communion	21 (monthly)
(approximately 30,000 visitors)	

Requests for annual reports on church activities have been sent out with the intention of having a draft report ready for the PCC meeting on 20 March.

12 Any other business – none

Next meetings:

- **Extraordinary meeting of the PCC (Section 11) – date tbc**
- **PCC meeting Wednesday 20 March at 5.30pm**
- **APCM: Saturday 20 April at 10.30am**

Barbara Randall 9 Jan 2024

Signed as a correct record of the meeting _____

Date _____