

Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Ross-on-Wye
Minutes of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council
Wednesday 11th January 2017 at 7.30pm in St Mary's Hall

Present: The Rector, J Setchfield and J Cooper (Church Wardens), P Eward (Vice-Chairman), K Vitale (Secretary), P Raddenbury (Treasurer), A Morris, K Richards, P Reynolds, the Rev L Mathew, A Purvis, V Allen, S Edwards, the Rev S Tarlton, Cllr R Mayo for item 3.

1. Opening Prayers

The Rev L Mathew opened with prayers.

2. Apologies

D Glover, F Davies, T Harding and M Sanderson

3. Town Council Report

Cllr. R Mayo has recently attended a meeting which considered the Churchyard.

The railings at the top of the steps will be addressed, the salt bin will be moved to a more convenient location, the Council section of the wall needs to be repaired, and the closed Churchyard is generally in good condition. There is a problem with the tower spotlights, Cllr R Mayo will contact an electrician to get them repaired.

Cllr R Mayo asked if anybody had experience or were qualified to assess the safety of the stonework ie. headstones etc. J Setchfield will contact the Diocese to find out if they have anybody and stated they should be checked for safety annually.

J Setchfield thanked Cllr R Mayo for his quick responses to requests and the work that has been undertaken promptly. The Rector mentioned that the steps by Okells have become a meeting place for our local youth who appear to be picking at the mortar in the wall, Cllr R Mayo will look at this and also arrange to remove the graffiti.

The padlock for the gates is still missing. The office has contacted all key holders to see if they have taken it by accident, but nobody has, and the padlock has not been replaced. J Setchfield reported that there has not, as yet, been a problem. Cllr R Mayo said he would prefer the gates to be locked, but was happy for the situation to be monitored.

P Reynolds expressed his concern over the poor disabled access to the church, and suggested that a ramp is put where the steps lead from the road opposite the Rectory, Cllr R Mayo asked P Reynolds to look into it and report back to him. J Cooper asked if it would be easier to put a ramp at the steps at the bottom of the road.

Cllr R Mayo left the meeting at 7.45.

4. Declaration of AOB

Tree Festival - V Allen

Quinquennial report - J Setchfield

5. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the November 2016 meeting having been previously circulated they were accepted with a few minor changes.

Proposed: J Cooper

Seconded: S Edwards

Unanimous

6. Matters Arising

The Rector has not yet had chance to speak with the Roman Catholic Church concerning the Strawberry Fayre.

P Eward reported back on the Auction of Promises held in 1985, which raised a lot of money but required a lot of hard work, and used 3 auctioneers. It is a good idea for the future.

The Diocese has paid for the recent recruitment advertising.

The Treasurer has received thank you letters from recipients of the recent charitable giving, and the Rev L Mathew has received pictures from Kagati showing what they have done with their donation.

7. Correspondence

The Secretary had received thanks from both See Beyond Borders and Phocas for our donation.

8. Finance

The Treasurer gave a brief verbal report to the meeting. The Finance Committee met recently and have estimated figures for the 2017 budget. More 2016 figures have been confirmed and the deficit is now estimated at £1783 rather than the £10k originally budgeted.

The accounts will be handed to D Bennet for examination and should be available for approval at the March PCC.

9. Rector's Business

Fees for Weddings and Funerals are set by Parliament, but we choose how much we charge for the heating, Verger, Organist etc.

Heating, lighting and cleaning was £35, now £36.

Verger was £38, now £40.

Organist was £64, now £65 for funerals, was £92 now £95 for Weddings.

Choir was £90 is now £95.

Proposed: P Reynolds

Seconded: J Cooper

Unanimous

The next APCM will be 5th April 2017.

The Rector has been approached by the Gwent Orchestra to hold a concert, and are offering an equal split on funds raised and have suggested they have their concert during the Open Gardens event. P Reynolds thought it was a good idea and maybe tickets could be sold during the Open Gardens event.

Item 10, MAP (Mission Action Plan) to be moved to the end of the agenda and will be discussed if time permits. The Rector informed the meeting that we should have a MAP ie. strengths, weaknesses, where do we want to go etc. This has come from the Spring requirement from the Diocese, they have a MAP in place which should flow down. The Rector has some forms for the PCC to look at.

The Rector informed the meeting on the progress of the House for Duty Priest, 3 candidates have applied for 2 positions, interviews have been arranged. Until these positions are filled we are currently 33% down and when the Rev L Mathew leaves we will be 50% down.

10. St Mary's Website

P Reynolds was on the original committee but has now been replaced by P Mason, who has more experience in this area. The PCC are very impressed with the work that has been done so far, and it was agreed that M Sanderson has done an excellent job.

11. Friends of St.Mary's

Planning is now proceeding for the Ross Open Gardens 2017. The dates are 24 – 25 June '17. The format will be very similar to 2015, though it is intended to charge a little more as many observed that the £5 charge was too low. Discussion around a £7.50 charge per person (ie £15 for a weekend for a couple) will be concluded at the next committee meeting.

There will be a Friends sponsored concert by the Hereford Police Male Voice Choir in the church on Sat 15 July.

12. St Mary's Hall and St Mary's Church Developments

J Setchfield informed the meeting that the last piece of paper has been submitted and we should then get the faculty for alterations to the church. A satisfactory meeting has also been held on finance and costings. The next step is to get quotes to choose a preferred builder. The Friends of St Mary's are fully funding the moving of the stained glass window for which a specialist will be needed.

A faculty has been received to cut down the ash tree in the Churchyard.

The floor in the vestry is in need of urgent repair, and J Setchfield is looking in to this.

Hall

The heater accident and resulting carpet damage requires attention. To repair the damage will cost £148, to replace the whole length of the corridor with carpet is £369 and with laminate is £395, these prices are inc. VAT.

The PCC agreed to the laminate option at £395.

Proposed: K Richards

Seconded: A Purvis

Unanimous

The Bi-annual service on the emergency lighting and extinguishers has taken place, some repairs are needed at a cost of £1008 inc.VAT It is a legal requirement for us to have these things in place and in full working order.

Work will be carried out by Herefordshire Fire Protection Services Ltd.

Proposed: K Richards

Seconded: P Reynolds

Unanimous

A development meeting has been held, but it has been decided to put a temporary hold on any developments of the hall until the work in the Church is under way, as only then will we know what funds are available. The Rector feels that we should continue to investigate

what funding from outside sources is potentially available. P Reynolds has a contact who could offer us advice on the best way to go about raising funds, The Rector thought this was a very good idea and asked if he could email her with some details.

K Richards has been asked to look at options for making the ramp into the hall safe and functional for at least 18 months.

K Richards has received a request from the Community Larder to remove the door between the 2 rooms that they use, which he has approved.

Andrew Morris has drawn up a licence agreement for the rental of the hall with Addaction, K Richards is waiting for final approval then Addaction can be invoiced. Funds from this rental will go to the Hall Committee.

Addaction have asked who cleans the upstairs toilet and stairs to the office; currently nobody does, K Richards will see if this can be done and what the extra cost would be. The Community Larder also use this toilet so they may contribute.

P Waters is no longer on the Hall committee.

J Cooper was concerned about the heater falling off the wall and asked if the other wall mounted heaters were safe. K Richards has done a survey of the other heaters and they are safe, but he will not be getting the one that fell re-hung.

The Rector raised her concern about how cold the hall gets and that the heaters really need replacing. The PCC agreed to replace the heaters, K Richards to get quotes.

J Setchfield asked that when the safety lights are being repaired the strip lighting is also repaired. K Richards will arrange this.

13. Deanery Synod

P Reynolds and A Morris attended the meeting, P Reynolds submitted a report for the PCC:

The main business at the Deanery Synod December meeting was an extensive and interesting discussion of a Motion put forward by the Rev Sarah Jones:

Motion:

'That this Synod request the House of Bishops to commend under Canon B4 an Order of Prayer and Dedication after a Civil Partnership or Same-Sex Marriage, indicative of no departure from the doctrine of the Church of England on any essential matter, and furnished with ample safeguards that no parish should be obliged to host, nor minister obliged to conduct, such a service.'

The discussion was lively and generally supportive of the motion, and in 2 votes, a motion to water down the original motion to exclude the words 'same sex marriage' was defeated by a 21 to 3 votes, the original motion was then approved, by 22 to 6 votes.

The motion (which has also been approved by another Deanery synod in the Diocese) will now be submitted for debate at the Diocesan synod.

P Reynolds would be very happy to explain the background more fully to anybody interested and has a copy of the Deanery Synod minutes which summarises the debate very well.

14. AOB

J Setchfield confirmed a quinquennial inspection has been completed, listing 8 items needing urgent attention for which the cost will be approx. £850. 16 items have been listed for attention within 18 months, some of which fall to the Town Council, and for which the approx. cost is £1930. Future items, over the next 5 years were identified at a cost of approx. £8k.

The Church is judged to be in good repair considering its size. J Setchfield felt most of the urgent things identified can be done easily if not already being done. The funds are available in a legacy which is only to be used for building works

V Allen has spoken with the Flower Festival Committee who have agreed to organise the Christmas Tree Festival in November 2017, for which the planning will start in May. The Festival will coincide with the Town festival. The Rector thanked the committee for organising this. The only potential problem is that the work in the Church should have started, but as long as this is considered in the planning it shouldn't be a problem.

The Gwent Chamber Orchestra - The Rector will do the initial liaising with them but asked if the fundraising committee could assist with the event. V Allen felt that it was something they could take on.

Auction of promises - The Rector asked if we could look at doing this for the Summer of 2018, and asked if P Eward would think about who we could ask to contribute to this event. The Rector suggested we aim the event at fundraising for the hall and making it very specific as to where the funds would be going.

V Allen asked if the board at the entrance inside the Church could be made more welcoming by improving the welcome poster and and general appearance of the board. To do this she asked if the Diocesan document could be moved, it was agreed it could be moved to the PCC board in the porch. V Allen will organise the new welcome poster.

The Rector reminded the PCC that this was the last meeting that the Rev L Mathew would attend before leaving us, and with applause from the members she thanked him for all his hard work and his contribution to both St.Mary's and Walford.

The Rector closed the meeting with prayers at 9.25

Next meeting - Wednesday 8 March 2017