

ST PETER'S CHURCH, TIVERTON

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 April 2018
at 7.15 p.m. in the Tiverton Baptist Church Hall

The Revd Robert Gordon was in the chair, and 42 members of St Peter's Church attended.

Apologies for absence were received from several members (cf. Vestry Meeting minutes).

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 27 April 2017 were approved and signed.

2 Electoral Roll report

Catherine Makepeace reported that current membership of the Electoral Roll stands at 151 (27 resident in the parish; 124 non-resident), a net increase of 4 in the course of the year.

3 Finance report

David Pope presented the Annual Report and the Church accounts, which had already been received and approved by the PCC and confirmed by Apsleys, and which had been made available to members online. He reported as follows:

Freewill giving, including tax recovered at £50,962 was £1,500 above our budget but was still £537 below the previous year (£51,499). This was partly helped by a few more using the Parish Giving Scheme and by the inflationary increase built in to the Parish Giving scheme being taken up by two-thirds of those subscribing. A legacy of £2,000 from the estate of David Gibling, a former parishioner, was much appreciated. Other notable items of income were a £1,000 donation from the Girdlers Company and £1,900 from the winding up of the Friends of St Peter's. *Seedtime to Harvest* garnered £3,538 (last year £2,636), due to its promotion for the benefit of the new sound system.

On the expenditure side most was in line with expectations: we met our obligation to the Diocese in full, £50,261; further preliminary work on re-ordering amounted to £12,112 plus the cost of the new sound system, £19,463, to give a re-ordering total of £31,515. Expenditure on the Greenway Chapel repairs at £80,612 includes almost all the contractor's work. We were able to reclaim the VAT on this work through the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme and claims so far received are reflected in the total. £7,511 was spent on the replacement of the organ blower which was funded from the Doris Osman Dean Fund.

Overall the deficit for the year stood at £119,752 (expenditure £213,709 less income £93,957), a figure which takes into account the cost of the new sound system and the repair of the Greenway Chapel. It should be noted that revaluation of assets at £133,510 gives us an exceptionally strong balance sheet, due the continuing buoyancy of the stock market, but future volatility could have an effect either way.

Time Together and other young people's work continues to be funded from the Fresh Expression Fund, and alternative venue costs are borne by the Church House Charity Fund. It has been difficult to recruit a full complement of Music Scholars but the grantors, the Amory Trust, now

adjust their grants accordingly. As ever, we greatly appreciate the efforts of Roy Webber, our in-house printer/publisher in meeting almost all our needs in printed matter.

The meeting recorded its gratitude to the Treasurer for all his work on the accounts.

4 Fabric report

4.1 William Zarrett provided a report on the fabric during the last year, as follows:

The past year has been one highlighted by three meaningful projects that will see us well into the future.

Early in the year the organ blower gave its last gasp and required replacement. Our organ builder, Michael Farley installed two smaller but more efficient blowers which use the latest technology. The electrical supply was updated and new lighting installed to better see the pedals. All reports from our organists are that the instrument has greatly benefitted from the replacement.

The major project of the year, lasting nearly six months, was the repair, restoration and conservation of the Greenway Chapel. The work was done with great care by a lovely crew from SSH Conservation and was completed in time to celebrate the Chapel's 500th anniversary, and at a cost that was 30% less than the amount approved by the PCC. This restoration should protect the most architecturally significant portion of our church for decades to come.

Thirdly, we are now all benefitting from the installation of a new, state-of-the-art sound system. While we are still learning what it can do, all agree that it is much easier to hear our services clearly.

The more mundane fabric events included the annual servicing of our security systems, the tower clock, the heating system, fire extinguishers and lightning conductors. All are fit for use for the foreseeable future.

He concluded by thanking the members of the Tuesday group, whose practical care of the fabric had been saving the church from a great deal of expenditure, and by observing that over the years unflinching support and encouragement had been received from all who love being a part of St. Peter's. It had been heart-warming to come into the church, only to find work being done quietly and consistently, with no reward or recognition expected.

4.2 A supplementary report on the progress of the re-ordering project was provided by David Ricks. During the last twelve months significant, if rather frustratingly slow, progress has been made with our proposals for the re-ordering of St Peter's.

The budget for the works: Due to the decision taken to reduce the original budget for the works from £750k to £500k, the scope of the works has reduced, and the brief to our architects has been amended accordingly. The budget reduction was proposed by the finance committee and accepted as a necessity in view of our current annual budget deficit. The budget is generally in line with the Church House Fund, and the Development Fund remains untouched.

The scope of the works: The decision has been taken not to replace the current heating system. Although it is slightly inefficient and costly to run, its replacement would take a significant part of our budget and it was felt the money could be better spent in other ways. The current system is easily maintained and has a long life expectancy.

This leaves the following areas within the current scope of works.

- Rebuilding of the external toilet block to provide for the addition of accessible toilet accommodation. This rebuild is required as the area at the base of the tower will now continue to be used by the heating system ductwork.
- Removal of pews at the west end to allow an enlarged open area.
- Removal of pews in front of the Greenway Chapel to allow the relocation of the font.
- New kitchen/servery in the north-west corner.
- Improvements to the children's area.
- New glazed porch and opening up of the greeting area.
- Removal of pews at the east end of the nave to allow the construction of an enlarged dais for a nave altar and performance platform.

The budget reduction has necessitated the omission of the following areas of our original master plan.

- The formation of a meeting room in the south-east corner, with glass enclosures and access ramps.
- The moving of the Corporation Pews, to allow the above.
- The conversion of the library to form a new parish office.
- All external works – access and parking.

It will only be possible to confirm with certainty the extent of the works when we have approval in principle from the DAC, and when our quantity surveyor is able to prepare a revised cost plan.

Approvals: Towards the end of last year our proposals were sufficiently advanced to enable us to apply for preliminary advice from the two regulatory authorities.

1 Town Planning

Application was made to Mid Devon District Council for advice on rebuilding the external toilet block; external development to a listed building falls within their jurisdiction. The conservation officer has indicated that the new toilet building will be acceptable, subject to further detailed information and a full application.

2 The DAC

A Faculty Application was made to the DAC for preliminary informal advice on our proposed internal works. A delegation of members visited the church in early December and the outcome of the DAC's deliberations was forwarded to us in early January 2018. The DAC indicated their broad support for our proposals and noted that our reduced general intentions seem appropriate to our needs (compared to our previous discussions with them in 2014).

The Committee do not think that the historical value of the pews will stand in the way of our proposed changes. However, they feel that the provenance of the pews as a whole is far from straightforward, and as such the information in the Historical Study (GHK June 2010) as submitted is not complete. They require further investigative works before they will agree to the removal of specific pews to make sure nothing of individual significance is lost.

We, together with our architects, do not believe a completely new study (and its cost) is required or justified. Our architects requested further clarification of their concerns from the DAC, and a rather unsatisfactory written response was received in early February. We feel their comments remain unacceptably unspecific in scope and detail.

A planned meeting with DAC members in church in March, to understand better their concerns, had to be abandoned due to bad weather and was rescheduled for 17 April. David Ricks gave a verbal update on the outcome of this meeting.

The reduction in the scope of the works, as detailed above, was explained to the DAC in greater detail and illustrated on a revised General Arrangement drawing number 0552.P.005RevC, copies of which were distributed to the meeting.

Because it was proposed in the new plan that fewer pews be removed, the DAC relaxed its requirement for an additional investigative study. They will now be content with a survey of the pews, showing date and identification of common details, which can be undertaken by our architect.

The important requirement is to ensure that the pews for removal do not display any unique details and that every variety of pew will remain represented after re-ordering. Relocation and substitution with another pew will be permitted. This study will be supplemented with archival quality photographs and the dismantling works on site will be watched by a conservation consultant.

5 Tiverton and Cullompton Deanery Synod report

The St Peter's representatives, Sally Mundy, Mary Seaton and Richard Stenlake, reported on the last year's activity at Deanery Synod level.

'In October 2017 we were introduced to our new Rural Dean, the Revd Simon Talbot from Willand.

'The theme of our meeting continues to be the three tenets given to us by Bishop Robert: 'Growing in Prayer, Growing in Discipleship, and Serving the people of Devon with joy'.

'Lots of examples of successful outreach in even the smallest parishes were shared, and how a Memory Cafe in Uffculme run together by all the Churches in the village is proving so valuable to everyone who attends, especially the carers. It only needs one enthusiastic person to get things moving – which could well apply to CHAT which was the brainchild of one person and just grew.

'It was very good to see a large attendance for our meeting in February, which was open to everyone, when Bishop Robert came to talk to us about Prayer. This was something very special, and thoroughly enjoyed by all attending, and very thought provoking, with many quotes given to us. 'Pray as you can, not as you can't', in other words, 'don't be a hero, be a natural'. At a retreat in a Convent, a quiet little nun said to him that prayer was like making jam. You have to generate lots of heat, and all the 'grot' rises to the surface where it can be skimmed off, so that the jam can set. Let it come up, God will skim it off and you will feel the peace of wholeness. What a wonderful thought Bishop Robert left us with. The Rural Dean also reminded us that in prayer we need three 'Ss': soft hearts, syringed ears and still moments.

'Synod meetings have certainly changed over the last few years, moving up a few paces, and are now most enjoyable and informative.'

6 Elections

David Catchpole, Rod Hilton, Jean Jenner, Averil Long, Helen Wakely and Roy Webber were elected to serve on the PCC for the three-year period 2018-2021.

7 Appointment of sidespersons

The following were appointed to act as sidespersons for 2017/18, the appointments to be confirmed at the Archdeacon's Visitation: Penny Drysdale, Rod Hilton, Denis and Prissie Holwill, Alan Hopkins, Jean Jenner, Averil Long, Sally Mundy, Jennifer Palmer, Steve Pillinger, Shelia Richardson, Bob Robson, Mary Seaton, Brenda and Keith Stocker, Peter and Vicky Stuckey, Rose Tidball, Eric and June Virtue, Tina Ware, Roy Webber, Diane and Keith White, Carole and Mike Youngs, and Mary and William Zarrett.

8 Appointment of independent examiner

David Pope proposed, and it was agreed *nem con*, that Apsleys be asked to act as independent examiner for the period to the APCM in 2019.

9 Reports

Reports from leaders of St Peter's organisations had been collated, made available online, and received by the meeting. The Rector thanked all members who had undertaken these responsibilities and indeed all who contributed, often quietly and unobtrusively, to the life, the welcoming atmosphere, and the effective working of St Peter's.

10 Personalia

10.1 The Rector reported that he had received from Pam Cornwell a letter of resignation from her role as a reader. He paid tribute to the unique contribution she had made over 15 years. The assembled company shared in sending her their thanks and best wishes for the future.

10.2 Averil Long voiced the gratitude of the whole community of St Peter's for the ministry and leadership, the steady support and personal encouragement, which the Rector continued to give the whole community of St Peter's.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.45 pm.

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After refreshments the Rector introduced a survey of the life of St Peter's, emphasising the continued commitment and concern at PCC level with the wellbeing of the church. He outlined a possible agenda for a day of reflection, to be held on Saturday 23 June (11.00-3.30) in St Andrew's Church Hall.

Signed:

Date: