

St James the Great, Cradley
Minutes of PCC meeting – 3rd September 2024 at 19.30
Held at Reafields, courtesy of Di and Chris Roberts

Present:

The Rector, Di and Chris Roberts, Sue and Peter Warner, Ian and Sue Bailey, Eryl Copp, Jane MacFarlane, John Parsons

1. The meeting opened at 19.40 with a wonderfully appropriate 1,000-year-old prayer from Winchester Cathedral.
2. Apologies were received from Mike Hames and Margaret Edgar.
3. There were no declarations of interest.
4. The minutes of the last business meeting [4/6/24] were signed as a true record.
5. Matters arising.

Eco Church

John updated the meeting regarding our application.

He explained some of the reasons for doing this: that caring for God's creation and treating it with prudence and moderation is 'good practice', and is especially important in these days; that many, mainly poor, people in the world are adversely affected by climate change - it is therefore a moral issue, and we should do everything we can to help; that we are a major organisation in the village and this would be an important aspect of witness and outreach. Unfortunately, there are no cash prizes!

There are five sections on the form, and to get an overall award, for example Silver, a church has to get at least Silver in *all* categories.

The categories, and our current level in each are:

A] Worship and teaching – GOLD

B] Buildings – SILVER

C] Land – GOLD

D] Community and global engagement – SILVER

E] Lifestyle – FAIL

At the moment, therefore, we do not qualify for an award, and we need to focus on the 'Lifestyle' category. The idea is that we should encourage members of the congregation, and members of the wider community to make changes in their own lives to: reduce energy consumption; reduce waste; use ethically sourced and fairly-traded goods; buy local and organic food where possible; use ethical banking/investments where possible, etc.

It is necessary that we encourage this in as many ways as we can. For example, a series of articles in the Newsletter, copied to the website, a brief talk at a church service, notices put up in church where members and visitors can easily see them.

We are, as individuals, encouraged to undertake a carbon footprint audit. This can be fiddly and time-consuming, but we certainly ought to do this as a church. Becoming a Fair-Trade church would also be a good idea, and help towards an Eco Church award.

John said that if we can raise our game in the Lifestyle category, we should get a Bronze, or even a Silver award.

Sue Warner and Eryl suggested that we involve children from the school in a Church4All service with an 'eco' or climate theme. This was thought to be a very good idea. Eryl said that the Diocesan Education Dept is emphasising this subject at the moment, and that there could be opportunities to link with them.

It was suggested that the church could apply for a bin for dry recycling.

Job description for Licenced Local Lay Ministers.

Jane has a copy of this, and she will send a copy to Sue Warner to attach to these minutes.

Audio/visual equipment

Peter is expecting a second quote, and will seek a third. He will also look into possible sources of grants.

Piano

John reported that Terry Robshaw has generously paid for a piano, in memory of his wife, and that a good Welmar has been purchased from Vale Pianos. It's a 1980s instrument, and has had some restoration work carried out. With thanks to Wynne Harries for his assistance.

A further amount of money has been promised by anonymous donors to cover extras, such as safety castors, a cover, and a stool. Chris has paid the invoice, which also covers the castors. All were agreed that the additional money could be spent on a cover and a stool if required.

The first outing for the piano will be at the concert on Nov 9th, and Sue Warner will write to Terry, thanking him for his generous donation, and inviting him to the concert, at which the piano may be dedicated or blessed by Robert.

A suitable plaque will be attached to the piano in due course.

6. Reports

A Churchwardens.

It was reported that the cream teas have been successful again this year.

B Treasurer.

Chris talked the meeting through his figures. Robert had a few minor queries which were answered by Chris.

Ian asked if Rosa Speyer [Parish Giving Advisor] could help the church with a stewardship campaign, and perhaps visit the church to give a talk. Chris said he would ask her.

C Churchyard

See Tony's report – attached.

D Deanery Synod

There was no report from Deanery Synod (no meeting had taken place)

E Fabric

Ian reported that the repair to vestry roof seems to be working.

The pointing has been carried out, but revealed that the stone cross on the chancel roof is crumbling. A quote from Worcester Stonemasons has been received for £2,047, which is very substantially less than a previous quote, and all were agreed that WS should be employed, after further clarification of the details of the work to be done.

Ian has received a very competitive quote from Complete Roofing to replace the tiles on the nave roof, and all were agreed that they should be employed to carry out this essential work.

The window cleaner who was lined up to do the church windows is now unavailable, so Ian will pursue an alternative.

David Hext, who was to help Ian to replace the distribution board in the vestry, now cannot undertake the work. Ian is pursuing a quote from Paul Walton, who can do the work for about £1,500. All were agreed this should go ahead.

Ian needs a cherry-picker to check the church alarms, and all were agreed that he could hire this; about £65 for a morning.

All the above projects will use up the majority of the funds in NCT and Fabric funds, leaving only about £1,000. Nevertheless, it was thought by all, that this essential work must go ahead.

F O&E

Jane spoke about the concert on Nov 9th, and handed round her draft poster.

G Worship Committee.

No report.

7. Benefice meeting [10th August]

Robert said the long list of suggestions needed shaping and rationalising, and that all three parishes need to be able to respond, also that they all take ownership of the discussions and decisions. He is keen for action points to be forthcoming.

Peter said that each PCC should discuss the suggestions and produce its own action plan.

John suggested that if there any benefice issues, they should be addressed at a joint meeting by representatives from each parish. It was agreed that such a meeting should take place.

It was decided that each PCC member should consider the suggestions, highlight their 'top five', and email these to Sue Warner within three weeks. The PCC should then discuss these in a special PCC meeting.

There was a feeling that, despite many such meetings over the years, little action has been forthcoming. However, we agreed that there is now a new willingness to put ideas into action, and that there is cause to be optimistic.

8. Church chest

Funds would have to be found from elsewhere to undertake the work outlined in the report, without which we cannot proceed. It was decided to discuss this again in the next meeting, when Mike is present.

9. Mike proposed, in his absence, that the PCC:

“adopt from now onwards the policy of publishing the agendas and approved minutes of all PCC meetings, excluding any confidential matters, and that a copy of the agenda of all PCC

meetings, and the agreed minutes, will be displayed in the church porch and published on-line.”

The meeting felt, however, that it is not necessary to publish agendas, and also not necessary to pin up hard copy in the porch, so the following sentence was agreed upon:

“The PCC agreed that from now onwards it will publish approved minutes of all PCC meetings [with confidential elements redacted] on the church website.”

As minutes are approved at a subsequent meeting, it will be decided if anything needs to be redacted. John will make the alterations, and send this version to Kevin for the website.

The above policy was agreed: 8 were in favour, with one against, and one abstention.

- 10. There were no entries in the H&S book.
- 11. There were no safeguarding announcements or issues.
- 12. **AOB**

Eryl reported that Open the Book now has two new members [recruited by Katharine Parsons].

Jane pointed out that she is on the O&E and Worship committees. This was duly noted.

Ian said that Mathon has two party tents [8X4m] and are offering them to Cradley church. It was felt that we should take advantage of this, and find somewhere to store them in due course.

Ian asked if the new version of the lay-led service is permanent. Jane and Robert said that it is, but that, having sought feedback from the congregation and the PCC the Lord’s Prayer would be said in its traditional form in future.

- 13. Follow-up PCC meeting re the benefice meeting: 14th Oct, 7.30 at the Warners'
Next ordinary meeting of the PCC: 6th Nov, 7.30 at Reafields.

The meeting ended with the Grace at 22.14.

Signed.....

Date.....