

Parish of St Cuthburga, Wimborne Minster

PCC Minutes, March 21st , 2024 at 19.15 hrs in Church House Lounge.

(Chair: Rector, Andrew JW Rowland.)

Attendees: Canon Andrew Rowland, **CW Peter Cook, CW Bruce Jensen, DCW Andrew Patrick, Treasurer Richard Knott**, Sheila Soper, Sarah Steele, Elfie Mills Hon Treasurer Richard Knott, DCW Andrew Patrick, Alison Francis, David Allen, John Waldsax, Dennis Child, Andrew Kelley, Heather Davey, Heather Waldsax (Ex officio).

PCC Secretary Beatrice Dopita.

Minutes

1. **Welcome and Prayers.** The Rector, and the PCC, thanked CW Peter Cook for his six years' service as Churchwarden, recognising that this was his last meeting before the APCM.
2. **Apologies:** De Ashton.
3. **Declarations of new interests: Trustees' register of interests** none.
4. **Safeguarding:**

An historic safeguarding concern has been mentioned to the Diocese after a note regarding the matter was left at the Minster. Advice to the Rector was to make a general well-being enquiry to the person concerned if they come into the Minster but not to raise the specific concern unless directed to do so.

Claire Lehmann, Families Outreach Worker, suggested that all Minster staff & volunteers should wear their lanyards and identity badges when working in the Minster so that members of the public are aware of who to approach for information or to share any concerns.

Esther Davey (Colin & Heather's daughter) has arranged to do work experience in the Minster, the first week in July; Peter Cook is the person in charge of this and has completed the necessary paperwork and duty of care requirements of the school and the connect organisation which is handling safeguarding etc. She will work across the Minster spending time with all the staff and will be given

a induction session on her first day. Peter will work with Claire Lehmann to produce a schedule of work for Esther. Any issues should be addressed directly to Peter who is the authorised link between the school and the Minster.

5. **GDPR:** Usual advice to keep all PCC papers password protected and not to pass anything on to others, unless directed to do so by the Rector or CWs.
6. **Correspondence:** none
7. **Minutes** of the January PCC meeting. Unanimously accepted as an accurate record of the proceedings. Proposed Jane Davidson
Seconded David Allen.
8. **Treasurer's Report: Richard Knott:**

The 2023 accounts are still with the accountant who is waiting for the various reports to be written so that she can include them in the final Annual Report.

The accounts for Jan – Feb 2024 are attached. It is too early in the year to make any meaningful comments but the fact that income is slightly higher than budgeted for and expenditure lower is good. I have highlighted the column on the first page, which shows ‘% of budget to date,’ and included some explanatory notes on the second page. We have about six months expenditure in reserve, which is healthy, although that includes monies such as Brenda’s Fund, which we tend to use for specific projects rather than running costs.

Page two in the accounts shows that we only have enough money to pay Claire for three years. We have applied for a grant from the Aldhelm Mission Fund, run by the diocese, so that we can extend this. They met on 14th March and I hope to have heard from them by the PCC meeting, although they have already told us informally that the application was strong.

We have recently been told to expect a legacy of about £15k. Together with the above grant, this will allow us to offer Claire

a further contract when her 3-year contract ends, of two more years.

9. **Churchwarden Peter Cook's Report:**

1. **Mission Statement.** Completed and submitted.
2. **Fees for booked Minster tours.** These are currently £3.50. Following a short discussion, it was agreed to raise these to £5 per person.
3. **Breast Cancer pink event.** This is a request to light up the Minster in pink. Corfe Castle and Sherborne Abbey have agreed to take part. It was agreed, for the Minster to take part; Churchwardens will meet with the organisers on the 9th April.
4. **Electrical work in Minster and Church House** (Hand dryer, water heater and office lights). Contractor is awaiting parts before starting work.
5. **Forest Garden Fence** is unsteady in one place and CW Peter has contacted the contractor who did the refurbishment last year.
6. **Chained Library.** Through contacts made at the Major Churches Conference last year CW Peter has been able to make contact with the Canon Chancellor of Wells Cathedral for the Minster librarians to visit, probably in July. A Chained Library email is in the process of being set up.
7. **Licences** – CW Peter has contacted the two licensing authorities we use; CCLI and PRS, and clarified exactly what we need. As a result, we will be cancelling one CCLI licence - which is duplicated by the PRS* (see below).
CW Peter will look at the details of this with Jackie and we may need to amend the details on the booking form so that the current potential for duplication of payment of fees is avoided.
8. **MMM re-launch on 21st April** at Evensong with a reception. Website currently under revision and new brochure being produced (Currently at the printers).

10. **Churchwarden Bruce Jensen's Report:**

Windows

For years, we have had trouble with the two arrow-slit windows in the Chained Library staircase. They leak, sometimes so much there is a puddle on the stairs. Cold damp air and rain coming in is not good for the CL environment, and there is a strong safety hazard. The firm that repaired and cleaned the South Transept window quoted £820+VAT to repair these windows, along with repairing a hole in a stained glass window in the north aisle (Joseph lowered into the well). It was decided to go ahead with this repair work.

Clock

The new re-winders on the clock were fitted by Peter Hyde of Cumbria Clocks and that work is now complete.

Holt Furniture and pulpit

Since Holt Church was closed and the building was sold, we were advised by the diocese to remove the removeable church fittings and furniture before the new owners took possession. This includes church linen, some silver, a strong box and trunk, and the Jacobean oak pulpit that was formerly in the Minster. Vergers Martin and John have made an inventory and we are talking to the village churchwardens about what they need from this collection of items.

Silver

In addition to the silver from Holt Church, we have newly acquired a communion set, including two silver flagons. These items are marked as gifts to Moor Crichel church from Sir Nathaniel Napier (1636-1709) and passed to Witchampton church when Moor Crichel closed. Recently, they had been held by the Dorset County Museum in Dorchester. In the past week, they came to us and are in our safe. Our insurers have been informed and we are planning to have a valuation. **ACTION: CW Bruce**

Children's Corner

In October 2022, Ellis & Co came to repair & re-plaster the west wall of the Children's Corner, but we were told this wall needs to dry out before it can be re-plastered. Some loose plaster was removed but the wall seems to have not dried out. It was discussed and agreed that when the scaffolding was up for the replacement of the iron cramps in the monument, we should ask Ellis to remove all plaster from that wall. We have already done in the southeast corner of Trinity Chapel. The wall could be re-plastered in the future when and if the damp problem is sorted.

Meal Vouchers

CW De Ashton and Revd Vanessa instituted a meal voucher scheme at the Minster. This was intended as an emergency measure so that homeless people, passing through Wimborne, might get something to eat at a local café. The voucher allows someone to get food and drink up to £6. The café owner brings the voucher back to the church office to be reimbursed out of petty cash. The Standing Committee recommended that we stop this scheme for two reasons:

1] The vast majority of people requesting vouchers are now local people on benefits. Many come to the Minster for a voucher several times a week. The Vergers were instructed to limit the number given, but hasn't proved effective.

2] There is a way for anyone to get, 'café-style', a hot drink and a sandwich at the Wimborne Community Food Supply which is based at the Allendale Centre. They are open Monday – Saturday and will feed anyone who asks. They also deliver frozen meals to homes and sometimes serve hot meals at the Allendale Centre. Several of the Minster congregation volunteer there and they are well-known to us.

It was generally agreed, that the Minster should stop the voucher scheme. There followed a discussion of how we might continue to help feed the hungry. It was suggested that we might use the money spent on vouchers and financially support the Wimborne Community Food Supply. Richard Knott wrote in an e-mail (March 12) "We spent £732 on vouchers in 2023, and £252 so far this year." After a discussion, it was decided that we should give the WCFS £500 per year. People coming to the Minster, seeking a meal should be given directions to the Allendale Centre by the Vergers and be told about this alternative resource.

11. DCW's Report: (Andrew Patrick).

PCC noted Item 11 of the Standing Committee Minutes circulated prior to the PCC meeting. DCW Andrew updated this by advising that:

- 1) Dorset Council sent us their officer's Pre-Application advice on 12 March but to the wrong email address so we did not receive it until 18th; it is very unhelpful because, although they support in principle demolition and rebuilding of the Vestry Block, they do not support its expansion in any form that would give us the minimum floor space we need;
- 2) Following the Site Visit by Archdeacon Penny Sayers and DAC advisory Architect Chris Romaine, DAC written advice is expected to be much more positive, but is still awaited;

- 3) The English Heritage Site Visit date has yet to be finalised, because they need to involve other bodies such as Church Buildings Council and Victorian Society, but will hopefully; it is thus likely to be May before we have formal feedback from them as well as DAC and Dorset Council;
- 4) Consultation will thus have taken 7 months instead of the 3 originally envisaged, which is very frustrating;
- 5) When we do eventually get all the feedback, we will need to review where we go from there: do we stick to our guns and persuade the Planning Committee or, failing that, a Planning Inspector, to overturn any officer's recommendation to refuse planning permission? Alternatively, do we come up with an alternative plan not requiring planning permission? We may well need to sketch out alternative such plans to demonstrate that expanding the Vestry Block to the size we need is the best alternative;
- 6) DCW Andrew emphasised that it is essential everyone continues to pray about this project;
- 7) Meanwhile, an item explaining our progress, by mid-March, will appear in the April Parish Magazine and an updated Report will be included in the Reports to be circulated before the APCM.

12. **Rector's Matters:**

- 1) New Rectory planning update as per the SC Minutes, nothing more to report.
- 2) Disabled Access – the Rector explained that following further discussion that the decision of the SC is still not to allow disabled parking on the gravel at the back of the Minster. The heavy gates make access unsuitable and the gravel is not a safe surface for those using walking aids. There is disabled parking available nearby in King St car park and in the Minster car park. Police & Fire Service advice is not to allow unsupervised parking in this area. We cannot allocate a Verger to open the gates and check drivers' identities at service times. The gate is too cumbersome for our elderly/disabled to self-operate.
- 3) CW posts – Peter Cook has agreed to swap roles with DCW Andrew Patrick to assist him in his first year as Churchwarden. CW Bruce Jensen has agreed to continue for another year. The Rector advised that he was unaware of any other person intending to stand for election.
- 4) Benefice organisation – the Rector thanked Revd Heather for agreeing to overseeing a rota, for the benefice clergy team clergy (and guests) to cover all the services. He advised that there would be no stipendiary priest to replace Revd Suzie Allen, but repeated that the incoming curate, would work across the entire benefice. It was felt that we could maintain the villages pattern of worship – at least for the

foreseeable future. Discussions were ongoing with Archdeacon Penny Sayer.

The meeting ended with Prayers & the Grace at 20.50.hrs.

APCM Meeting, Thursday 25th April, at 19.15, in the Minster.

Minutes approved at PCC Meeting 25.2024

Signed by Rector