Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of the Parish of St Peter and St Paul, Exton, held on Tuesday 9 April 2019.

Present: The Rector (TF), the Revd Samantha Martell (SM), Annie Brannon (AB), David Frere-Cook, Treasurer (DF-C), Felicity Hindson (FH), Hugh Parry (HP), Heather Parry (Mrs HP), Bob Miles (RM), RoseMarie Miles (Mrs RM), and Richard Pepys, Secretary (RP).

**Vestry Meeting, Election of Church Wardens, 2018**

Nominations: Richard Pepys Proposed, DF-C, Seconded Chrissie Frere-Cook

There being no other nominations, RP took his places as Church Warden without the need for an election.

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting, 2018**

The meeting opened with Prayers

**Apologies**: Jane Pepys

**Minutes.** The minutes of the 2018 APCM meeting were discussed, and it was proposed by DF-C and seconded by AB that they be signed as a true record and the motion was carried, *nem con*.

**Rector’s Report**

The Rector précised his report to the meeting and before distributing copies of it he praised the progress made by SM in her job, with which the meeting was delighted to agree. Please find it as a separate appendix below these minutes.

**Electoral Roll**

On behalf of Jane Pepys, the Electoral Roll officer, RP reported that the roll now stood at 35 members after a complete revision where everyone had had to re-register. A further two names would be added after the meeting, their forms having been returned too late to be included before the date cut-off before the meeting. The Rector thanked Jane for all her work in renewing the roll, with which the meeting concurred.

**Church Wardens’ report**

* + 1. RP delivered the church wardens’ report into the work of the PCC. Please find it as a separate appendix below these minutes.

**Treasurer’s Report**

1. DF-C gave his report, similarly attached to these minutes.

**Fabric Report**

1. The Altar rail has been equipped with a hinge. The stanchion supporting the south section of the rail nearest the hinged section is insecurely fastened to the floor and this will be attended to shortly after the meeting. A brief discussion followed about the nature of the lime wash used when the church was last decorated, TF making reference to the redecorating of the Lady Chapel in Droxford parish church.

**Deanery Synod**

1. A précise of the activities of the Deanery Synod was given on behalf of Mrs HP by TF. Please find it as a separate appendix below these minutes.

**Election of PCC Members**

1. HP, having ceased to be a church warden, was proposed as a member of the PCC by RM and seconded by AB. Carried *nem con.*
2. The rest of the PCC, with two years to run as members, did not need to be re-elected.

**Appointment of Sidesmen**

It was proposed by RP and seconded by DF-C that RM and Heather King be reappointed as Sidesmen, with which RM was content.

**Appoint the independent examiner for a period of one year**

After some discussion RP proposed that a search be made to secure the services of a less expensive independent examiner than Maurice Crocker, with which the meeting agreed. Jonny Martell was mentioned as a possible examiner.

**A.O.B.**

1. Mrs RM raised the problem of plastic flowers appearing on graves in the church yard. The meeting agreed that the church warden would support any member of the PCC who raised this issue with anyone adorning a grave inappropriately. The Rector made the point that he would also be happy to be called on if matters became difficult.
2. SM thanked the meeting and TF in particular for all the support that she had received during the year.

**Date of next meeting**:

7.30 p.m. on Tuesday 21 April 2020

The meeting ended with prayers at 20.43

Signed……………………………………. Date……………………………..

**Address by the Rector 2018 for Exton: St Peter & St Paul APCM**

The reporting period for our APCM is the twelve months that end on 31st December 2018, three and one third years since I took on the office of Rector here.

In the wider Benefice, ‘Leading your Church in Growth’ (LyCiG) project remains at the heart of our mission and that of the Deanery; care for one another in good times and in more challenging times remains a strength of the Benefice in many places and in many ways; the care of our beautiful churches – not just in preserving them but in making plans to keep them living place of worship and fellowship shows huge commitment from the worshipping community, and the wider community. Giving is generous and some individuals have given extremely generously of time and money.

Turning to this parish specifically, the plans to repair the organ, provide simple facilities for coffee etc and to convert the shed into a lavatory were all put on hold because of the hole in the roof. We are just reaching a point when we can make a start on these in a small way thanks to the ongoing support we receive.

The Parish Share system, the methods of the church annual census and being in a three-parish benefice have left Exton with large and increasing bills, but the meticulous way in which the returns were made across the benefice to reduce the risk of Exton parish, as the smallest of the three, in effect, subsidising the other two parishes because we rightly encourage one another to worship in all our churches on our weekly rota, which the census system is not set up to accommodate. Perhaps, this is a symptom of a bigger underlying problem.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Corhampton & Meonstoke | Droxford | Exton |
| Persons | 759 | 675 | 203 |
| U18 | 172 | 134 | 38 |
| 18-75 | 343 | 318 | 107 |
| ER (% of 18+ residents) | 71 (12% of 18+)) | 43 (8%) | 35 (21%) |

Exton is less than one third the population of either of the other two parishes and we are trying to find 2 churchwardens, a synod representative and six PCC members out of an adult population of 165 (5.5% need to be recruited to a role), and that represents very nearly 9% of the population 18-75. Across the benefice, we need three PCCs, 6 Churchwardens, 3 treasurers, 3 secretaries etc from a total population aged 18-75 of around just 750 people. We need to think about how we are organised. The buildings are well used, with 1 in 20 (sometimes more) of the population attending weekly, using all four churches over the month. It is the population size that is stretching us. Having said that, having an electoral representing one fifth of the adult population shows interest and commitment in Exton. The fete, the summer and Advent sales, cleaning and flower-arranging, lent lunches are also just a few examples of how the churches are loved by the wider community too.

We all owe a debt of gratitude for the almost secret army of maintainers of the churchyard, church cleaners and flower-arrangers who keep the church and its surroundings looking so loved as well as beautiful. We are also indebted to Mr George Miles for his care of the churchyard he has served tirelessly. Our sincere thanks go to George for all that he does. We, the community owe a debt of gratitude to the PCC and the Church Wardens for their hard work. Without them the church would less well run and maintained, and the community would be all the poorer for it.

As I remind you each year, it is the determination and the friendliness of the people that make a community work – one in which people wish to stay and into which newcomers are welcomed. Fuel poverty, isolation, lack of access to services remain as rural problems – the need for a food bank in the area speaks volumes. The Church, the community care volunteers and countless good neighbours play a huge role in looking out for and looking after our friends and neighbours, and this has been especially evident in times of illness, bad weather and bereavement, but there remain people that we struggle to reach.

I would also like to record my thanks to all those who support the worshipping life and the pastoral care in the Benefice – formally, and especially our excellent curate – Samantha, ordained priest just last summer, Cathy, Anthony, Pauline, Ros Collins and Ruth Shipley. Messy Church went from strength in 2018; it is a wonderful example of church-school engagement and better still of church-family engagement with real and improving involvement. Our thanks to Heather for taking on the role of Foundation Governor in September.

And, to all those who do so much to make sure we are well looked after, who assist by serving at the altar or at communion with the chalice, including our crucifer James,   
our sidesmen and women, the secret army, I mentioned; Richard who has acted as our *de facto* Parish Secretary in the absence of an elected secretary; our Electoral Roll Officer, Jane Pepys; David our excellent treasurer; Sue Wells our wedding co-ordinator; Jane Beardmore our safeguarding officer, who stands down next month [situation vacant]; and, many more besides – THANK YOU ALL.

I briefly mentioned the office of churchwarden a moment ago, this is filled so ably and attentively by Richard and Hugh. I wish to restate my thanks to both Richard and Hugh, for their good advice and generous encouragement and kindness, for their capacity for hard work. A churchwarden is a vital part of parish life and the evidence of their work is all around us, but they probably won’t tell you that it was they who did this work or sorted out that problem.

Hugh has served tirelessly for five years and has now decided to step aside because his commitments abroad and the time they take. He has served with good humour, quiet efficiency, loyalty and dedication. He has worked especially hard on the plans for the new facilities. His faith has underpinned all he has done for us. Thank you to Hugh.

Members of the PCC nowadays increasingly need to play particular roles according to their areas of expertise or their gifts. We are blessed by very experienced and wise people, who know the village and the valley, but fresh insights and new blood would only enhance the ways in which we serve church and villages. Saints are ordinary people who manage to do extra-ordinary things – our PCC have been saints. Please do support them, however you can.

I also thank the organists who have played in the Benefice for us, especially Alan Hibbert and John Martin, Sarah Page and Richard Martin. It was sad enough to say goodbye to Sarah as she returned to Newtown to serve there, but it was such a shock to learn of Alan’s death in December and we mourn his passing so much, in so many ways.

I do hope and pray that all those who are grieving in 2019, including Jackie, experience comfort and hope from friends, family and from God’s love and our prayers.

We offer our thanks as always to Peter Mosse our conductor, Sheila Kenyon the *de facto* choir secretary, Chris Maxse, and the choir themselves, as well as others such as Sally, Lorna and Cathy, who all enrich our worshipping life with music.

And, what would we do without *The Bridge*? Many thanks indeed to Norman Bell for his editorial, type-setting and his team-leadership skills. Thank you.

**2019 and beyond?**

There is no development, community engagement or mission without time and money, so I record my thanks to all those who have worked so hard for the life of the church by making extremely generous gifts of time and hard work and financial gifts to the parish. We must continue to raise funds to provide the church with the much-needed facilities and maintenance and to get our projects back on track to keep us welcoming and living church, not just a heritage site. Financially things are tight and we face of ever higher hurdles to leap, we must do all we can to maintain our momentum in the fund-raising for the big projects, for maintenance, and for our core work serving the community and being active in our, no God’s, mission here. Giving is a thorny issue, and we are well-supported in many ways for which I give thanks. Tax-efficient and regular giving are key to building up modest resources, with which, we can not only pay the bills, but we can look after the dignity of people by providing the basic facilities to make the church even more hospitable and can even do some mission. I know from personal experience how hard it can be to keep charitable giving under review. Do please consider reviewing your giving and see whether it has been updated recently, and, if you do not already so do, please consider paying through the Parish Giving Scheme, or by standing order rather than through the envelopes. Droxford’s accounts have truly benefitted from PGS and it has kept them solvent through a time of very high expense.

Excitement and engagement are building for Corhampton 2020 – just down the road. Please do get involved. We are excited at the prospect of sharing those celebrations in 2020 with Wickham (St Nicholas 900) where, by then, Ruth will be serving as Assistant Curate. Ruth leaves at Petertide 2019 to be ordained deacon, and licensed to our neighbours in the united Benefice of Shedfield and Wickham. We wish Ruth, Edward and Annabel great joy in their new home and new community.

Our Strategic Priorities, which link well to the Diocese’s Live | Pray | Serve approach, remain:

to develop our prayer-lives & spirituality;  
to develop a church community, including the children and young people, to which all know they belong;  
to nurture and develop our understanding of our faith,   
and, in so doing, enable the laity;  
to develop our means of communication and integrate them;  
and then,  
to review and revise our patterns of worship;   
to develop a programme of special events (sacred and social); and,   
through the whole process build a ‘living’ Benefice

We are blessed with wonderful community groups, two outstanding local schools, a range of worshipping opportunities across the benefice: from informal worship, through to those special occasions, such as the great festivals and Eric Martin’s funeral service.

Despite the financial and challenges of looking after ancient buildings and an aging population, the future remains bright, if we all play our parts in God’s work here in the Meon Valley. Mission takes time, people and resources and it takes collaboration and understanding.

The Rev’d Tony Forrest  
Rector

9 April 2019

Report of the Churchwardens to the APCM, 9 April 2019

This year has, regrettably, seen the untimely death of Alan Hibbert, our Evensong organist and the resignation of Sarah Page, our Holy Communion organist. When we have been unable to obtain the services of an organist, we have started to use recorded music and this has meant that our services can include hymns. Psalms and canticles remain, for the time being, said. Not everyone has been impressed by this development, but we have thought it important to try to include singing in our worship.

The Summer fete was a more successful venture than in 2017, perhaps because it was so stylishly opened by the Revd Samantha Martell, our curate. Children from Meonstoke school provided delightful entertainment and the raffle was extremely successful.

The August Bank Holiday coffee morning, held in the church yard attracted a good number of people, as did our Christmas Fare on the last Saturday in November, which raised well over £1000. We are very grateful to all those who helped make both events so enjoyable.

During the year the PCC has decided on the way it wants to proceed with the works for which we have been granted a faculty. First and foremost, we want to find out if the organ can be given first-aid or if needs more extensive treatment. As well as that we intend to bring water into the West end vestry and provide a drain for removing waste water from the same location.

Despite the fact that our finances took such a hit with the repair of the roof, the PCC has continued to support those who so desperately need help through the disasters emergency fund, St Luke’s healthcare, the RBL and other aid providers.

As ever the PCC is extremely grateful to all those who help the church in any way at all. May I encourage you all to do everything in your power to attract those you know that they may help to contribute to the life of the church?

**Exton P.C.C AGM**

**Treasurer's Report for 2018**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Account Balance at 1.1.18 |  | £ |
|  | Barclays | 2113.26 |
|  | CAF | 868.29 |
|  | CCLA | 41.02 |
|  |  | 3022.57 |
|  |  |  |
| 2. Account Balance at 30.12.18 |  |  |
|  | Barclays | 2852.43 |
|  | CAF | 1024.03 |
|  | CCLA | 42.03 |
|  |  | 3918.49 |
|  |  |  |
| 3 Main Expenditure |  |  |
|  | Parish Share | 17,172 |
|  | Electricity | 640 |
|  | Accountants | 960 |
|  | Ecclesiastical Insurance | 1200 |
|  | Organ | 310 |
|  | Benefice Share | 580 |
|  | Lightening Conductor | 170 |
|  | Fabric Fund Winners | 350 |
|  | Water | 30 |
|  |  | 21,412 |
|  |  |  |
| 4. Main Income |  |  |
|  | Service Collections | 5,460 |
|  | Special and Incidental Services | |
|  | Fete | 2,030 |
|  | Autumn Fair | 1,080 |
|  | Fabric Fund | 450 |
|  | S/O | 6,550 |
|  | Headley Trust | 2,000 |
|  |  | 17,570 |
|  |  |  |
| 5. No donations were made to other charities | | |
|  |  |  |
| 6. Since the start of 2019 we have recouped £4,480 of VAT paid on the roof repairs in Autumn 2017 and made donations of | | |
| £200 to the Indonesian Tsunami | | |
| £150 to the Elizabeth Foundation | | |
|  |  |  |
| 7. The accounts are almost ready to go to Maurice Crocker for completion and auditing | | |

**Bishop's Waltham Deanery Synod**

Area Dean - Rev Gregg Mensingh  
Lay Chair - Norman Chapman

**Purpose:** To discover what God is calling us to do to be more effective in Mission across the Bishops Waltham Deanery

**During the Year**

The Revd. Edwina Fennemore – Presentation on Modern Day Slavery. For further details seewww.theclewerinitiative.org.

Victoria James, Stewardship Advisor – Parish Giving Scheme. All parishes encouraged to sign up to reduce workload for volunteers, especially treasurers and potentially increase income.

LyCiG and Mission with Andy Hargreaves, the Diocesan Mission Development Officer who outlined his role and discussed Thy Kingdom Come, #Pledge2Pray from 10 to 20 May 2018.

Soberton, Newtown and Hambledon continue to explore a United Benefice

Rev Claire Towns summarised initiatives in Swanmore including Barnaby’s Cafe, Pause to Pray, Cafe Church, Printed Christmas cards and a “Radical Welcome” course in May

Christian Aid Walk on 20 May 2018 started from Wickham – Droxford in 2019

***Transforming the Deanery - Mission:***

LyCiG and Mission. Live, Pray, Serve: this Diocesan initiative is there to provide encouragement for the Deaneries and parishes to do what they are already doing but better, such as connecting churches with their communities, equipping present church goers with the tools to reach out, evangelism etc. All leading to growth. The Deanery produced their Deanery Framework for Mission and, as part of this, set up the LyCiG course at the beginning of 2018.

Wiawso Link: Canon Graham Morris will still be visiting the link parishes to try to help re-stimulate meaningful contact. In 2019, this is still proving an intractable problem.

***Hackney Link***

The most natural connexion of our link with Hackney with the LYCIG projects is via Live Pray and Serve. Revised Intercessions Sheet has been produced by Daniel Gerrans, vicar of St Michael’s London Fields and Hackney Deanery representative for the Link.

The parishes we’re linked with at present are : St Olaves, 5 St John’s Brownswood Park. Middle - St James’ Clapton, St Pauls West Hackney and St Mark Dalston and bottom left, St John’s Hoxton. The two oldest links are the Winter Night Shelter and St Saviour’s Priory.

A reminder of the real gratitude of our partners for our practical support, the fellowship of prayer and the personal encouragement of knowing that another Deanery care is shown in the letters from three parishes – St Mark, St John’s Brownswood Park and St James’.

In 2018 Synod affirmed the future of the Link. St John’s Hoxton to ask if we might be able to support their Youth Leader’s work next year.

A Hackney Deanery visit to BW took place on Saturday June 30th, the day of the Upham Fete.

The Walk of Prayer when BW met Hackney partners was on Saturday August 11th.