

The Parish of St Nicholas Church, Remenham.

Minutes of the meeting of the Parochial Church Council

held on Thursday 16th March, 2011 in The Chantry House.

Present: Father Martyn Griffiths (Rector), Nigel Gray (Treasurer), Rosemary Duckett (Secretary), Anthony West, Leslie Prescot, Ruth & Glen Palethorpe, Peter Sly, Ann Shemilt., Anthea Prescot (Deanery Synod representative).

Prayers: Led by the Rector.

Apologies: Charlotte Every (Churchwarden).

Minutes of last meeting: One amendment: in A.O.B. paragraph 2 'custodian trustees' should read 'administrative trustees', they were then passed unanimously and proposed by Nigel Gray and seconded by Anthony West.

Matters arising:

1. Building works, Peter Sly asked if the approval has been granted for the window guards. Rosemary Duckett stated that the notices have been up since 4th February, the deadline for comments was 9th March, but to date nothing has been heard from Wokingham District Council.

2. With regard to item 2 in A.O.B. Anthony West had written to the Diocese for clarification on the sale of the parish hall if it should arise. It was confirmed that the diocese does not have authority to sell it without the approval of the PCC. With regards to 'ecclesiastical use' the wording is not that narrow and the hall can be used for other purposes. The hall chairman could join the PCC but he would need to be a regular church goer. Any nomination to the hall committee should come before the PCC.

3. The quote from the possible garden contractor has not yet been received. Mr Symes has increased his rates from £14 to £15 per hour. Approximately 207 hours per annum are spent on both the church yards.

4. With regard to the parish share, all the incumbents have written to the Diocesan Bishop saying the parishes are reaching the end of their tethers over the parish share, he replied giving 4-5 points about how they are reducing stipendiary clergy, and introducing more lay people. With regard to Church House he stated that there was no way they could cut costs. The Area Dean and the incumbents are meeting with the Bishop of Dorchester, the Archdeacon and the Treasurer to have a discussion to see where savings can be made. Anthony West has downloaded their accounts

Finance: The treasurer presented the accounts saying that they were now a true record of our performance and the bottom line is that in 2009 the assets were

£100,000 and in 2010 were £102,000 but he pointed out the £85,000 is in 2 restricted funds, the hall & fabric fund, and the balance is £15,000 of which £10,000 is in the general fund, and having borrowed from the Strange Fund which now stands at £6,000.00 it will not be long before that will run out. Park Place paid for £15,000 worth of works last year and £18,000 this year which amounts to a total of £33,000 spent. It was stated that the hall was built on Glebe land therefore rent could go to the church. Anthony West pointed out that the church should have the money as it is in designated funds and not restricted funds. He also suggested that he and Nigel Gray should visit the accountants to clarify the position as to whether the church can use it. It was agreed that as the council did not have hard copies they could not be approved, so the Rector agreed to copy them to all the council members by Sunday 20th March, 2011 and silence will be deemed as consent, and any queries should be received by the Rector within one week. The Rector read the letter of representation from Villers Hayward and it was agreed that he could sign it.

Anthony West had drafted an appeal letter to all residents of Remenham, which the Rector read. A few alterations were suggested; the Rector would finalise them and it will then be circulated to the residents of Remenham. Should this be “circulated to the residents of the Parish of Remenham?”

Parish Hall: Planning permission has been received for the storage room extension, quotes are likely to be in the region of £40-50k. Quotations are due in shortly from builders.

Building Works: Electrics: The electrics have been causing problems. A full survey is under way and was due to take one day but so far has taken 3, verbal reports are that the heating and power are alright, but the lighting circuit is causing problems. The outside lights are not earthed. A written report will be received and approval was given that the standing committee could progress the recommendations. and the work would take priority over the damp work

Work to back of church: Estimates have been received but the work will go on hold.

It was brought to the attention of the council that some flint has fallen off the north side of the church and needs to be checked.

Henley Deanery Synod: Anthea Prescott presented her report.

1. Parish shares are to be discussed at the June meeting as the present policy is unfair to some parishes. Treasurers are to be contacted by post about this in an effort to regularise shares.
2. The Deanery Rural Officer reported that the Plough Wednesday held in January had been a success. South Oxfordshire is one of the most rural areas in the country and it was hoped that there would be a greater attendance next time. It would be

good if Plough Sunday, Lammas and Harvest could be planned into this year's services.

3. There is to be a new Area Dean later in the year.

4. Henley Deanery Synod's next meeting will be a discussion on the ordination of women to the Episcopate, with two speakers; the Bishop has asked for a straw poll to be taken. This was done and there were 2 in favour of women's ordination and the rest of the council against.

February's speaker was Rev. Dr. Michael Beasley on "Training for Lay Ministry". Clergy numbers are declining and stipendiary clergy will be hard to find in the future. At present 80% of the diocesan budget is for parochial ministry and way of cutting costs will be needed to be found. Closure of small churches would result in non-attendance rather than a move to more distant large church. Therefore lay ministers would hold the church together, with ordained ministers visiting to administer the sacraments.

A.O.B. Notices of the AGM have been posted in the lychgate porch. 2 members of the PCC are due to retire. There are 3 vacancies.

The Rector is due to have a sabbatical between July and September inclusive and cover has been put in place.

Date of the next meeting.

The AGM will take place after the service on 3rd April.

The dates of the standing committee and the PCC **HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO:**

Standing Committee meeting will be at **2pm on April 28th** in the parish office

The PCC will be on **12th May** in The Chantry House at 8.00pm.

The meeting closed at 21.40 following a blessing from the Rector.