

PARISH OF ST PETER'S, COLCHESTER

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council
held on Monday, September 4, 2023

Chairman: Revd Mark Wallace

1. Opening Bible Reading & Prayer

The meeting opened with extracts from Psalm 104, a reading (Acts 10. 34-35, 39-43), and prayer.

2. Apologies

Clare Reid / See Appendix I

3. Declaration of conflicts of interest

Mark Wallace re Items 5a, 5c (proposal).

4. Minutes of the previous meeting (July 3)

- a. The previous Minutes were approved as amended and signed by the Vicar.
- b. There were no matters arising.

5. Short Reports

Various matters and proposals in the reports were highlighted.

a. Vicar's Report

Mark Wallace highlighted the change in office hours for Bernice Watts due to her taking on a role at a local school. With due regard to workload and support, the arrangement will be monitored, but it has the support of the Standing Committee.

Also highlighted was the extension (by a month) of Mark's contract with the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. It was confirmed that this will neither conflict with planned work at St Peter's nor overload Mark.

b. Churchwardens' Report

c. Treasurer's Report and Financial Summary

With only a little uncertainty regarding the final bill, as is the norm, Richard Lawn was able to confirm that the funding for the Redevelopment Project has proved to be sufficient. Although there is outstanding payment due to the contractors (again, as is the norm), the only outstanding funding shortfall is around £3,000, in addition to a loan of £20,000. Mick Kavanagh reported that a funding application to the Joseph Rank Trust has been rejected, but it will be possible to try again in October.

The fundraising and accounting for the project constitute a remarkable achievement, and prompted both prayers of thanks, and thanks to Richard for his careful stewardship.

Parish Share has been estimated at around £44,000. This implies a need for slightly more moneyraising than last year when the church benefitted from gifts from other churches. Mark Wallace and Richard Lawn will attend the Deanery Share meeting in September to discuss this further.

Regarding the employment of Mark Wallace from October 1, 2023:

Proposal: That the PCC agrees to employ Rev Mark Wallace on a 50% part-time basis from October 1, 2023, so that he may extend his ministry duties to that of a full-time position.

Result: Agreed

- d. Church Manager's Report
- e. Safeguarding Report
- f. Synod Reports

6. Spotlight Report: Buildings, Fabric and Maintenance

Wendy Whitfield highlighted the need to repair the church roof. A grant approval from the Friends of Essex Churches Trust will expire soon and is unlikely to be extended. A letter explaining our situation will be written (between Richard Lawn, Wendy Whitfield, and Mick Kavanagh) to the organisation. Mark Wallace stressed that the work will need to be done at some point soon, at an approximate cost of £100,000. The Quinquennial inspection later this year should shed more light, and alternative materials may be considered.

Regarding the new church kitchen, Wendy underlined the need to avoid chemical cleaning products on the floor.

Wendy explained that the repairs to the Tower Clock would amount to a thorough stripping-down and rebuilding, could take three months, and would involve scaffolding on the front steps. How long the scaffolding would remain in place is uncertain.

The reredos is possibly going to find a new home in St James. The question of payment was raised.

The cost of repairing the Church Hall roof is uncertain (£25,000-£30,000 was quoted some time ago for the sloping areas).

The question of the Noodle Bar manhole cover remains to be settled.

The way forward regarding the Licence and Faculty re air-con units on the southern border remains unclear.

A couple of churchyard working parties will be needed during the winter.

Proposal: That the PCC a) enquire what permission is required to carry out repairs to the Tower Clock and b) explore what grants are available to help with the cost.

Result: Agreed.

Proposal: That the PCC explore the possibility of relocating the reredos to St James Church.

Result: Agreed.

7. Safeguarding (annual focus)

Mark Wallace explained that an annual report is required. We have appointed a Parish Safeguarding Officer (Sue Almond), and Clare Reid is our DBS Manager. A folder records both training requirements/completion, and DBS completion. Where training is outstanding, it is usually related to a new role; in a small number of cases Internet access is problematic, in which case Bernice Watts assists; and some updating is needed where the 3-year validity expires.

The only recent safeguarding concern relates to unaccompanied children attending church. A recent incident was handled competently.

Safeguarding Sunday will be in October.

8. Mission partnerships

There are two possibilities for partnership with individuals as opposed to organisations: a) the McCanns, with whom we have been in touch for some time, and the Spences (in Zimbabwe). The latter are known to Ed and Kristin Bradley. Ed told us what he knows of them and their mission, and the intention is to learn more about them over the coming weeks. Ed will let Mark Wallace/Mick Kavanagh have more information.

9. Deanery-funded church AwayDays in 2024

The Mission Opportunity Fund is to be used next year to encourage churches to think about engagement in mission. Each parish is invited to propose a costed plan (e.g., venue, transport, catering, provision for children).

Proposal: That the PCC support the submission of a plan.

Result: Agreed.

10. Bank mandate

Richard Lawn explained that due to the non-availability of some cheque signatories, it is necessary to delete out-of-date names and procure a new one.

Proposal: That the mandate for our Santander bank current account be updated as follows:

Remove these signatories for cheques: Geoffrey Tomlin, Emma Wisher, and Margaret Sawyer.

Add this signatory for cheques: John Hartwell.

Result: Agreed.

Richard also asked each member to fill in a Change of Details form for the Treasurer's Account.

11. Correspondence

- A letter to Mark Wallace from the Pensions Regulator confirming a re-declaration of compliance with the Pensions Regulator.
- A note to the PCC from Sheila and Stephen Lloyd to clarify their position with regard to active ministry at St Peter's; i.e. they confirm that they intend to remain active despite the lapsing of their PTO. Trevor Froude will reply to the Lloyds confirming that this is the PCC's understanding.
- A letter to Mark Wallace from Captain Mike Firth of 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, to ask if we would consider the laying-up of their colours in St Peter's at some point in early 2024.

Proposal: That the PCC agrees to the Regiment's request to lay up their colours.

Result: Agreed.

12. AOB

None

13. Future meetings

- a. Full PCC meetings: November 6, January 15, March 4, May 13
- b. Standing Committee meetings: October 9, December 18

Proposed date for Annual Church Meetings (AMP & APCM): Wednesday, March 20, 2024

14. Closing Prayers

The meeting was closed with prayer.

Appendix I

Mr Ed Bradley	present
Mr Duncan Breckels	present
Mr Trevor Froude	present
Mr John Hartwell	present
Mr Tim Hearn	absent
Mrs Anne Kavanagh	present
Dr Mick Kavanagh	present
Mr Richard Lawn	present
Mrs Val Morris	present
Mr Brian New	present
Mrs Clare Reid	absent
Revd Mark Wallace	present
Dr Dan Watts	present
Mrs Wendy Whitfield	present