

PARISH OF ST PETER'S, COLCHESTER

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on Monday, May 13, 2024

1. Opening Bible Reading and Prayer: Acts 2: 42-47
2. Apologies: Mark Wallace
3. Declaration of conflicts of interest: None
4. Minutes of the previous meeting (March 11, 2024)
 - a. Approval: **Proposed (Wendy); Seconded (Richard). Result: Agreed.**
 - b. Matters arising:
 - Item 4b (Matters arising 4b) (Reredos): See Item 6, below.
 - Item 7 (Tower Clock repairs): See Item 6, below. A faculty was required and applied for (see Spotlight Report).
 - Item 8 (Vicar's sabbatical): Mark sent out information.
 - Item 10a (PSO situation): The PSO resigned before the meeting could be held.
 - Item 11 (Wi-Fi in the church): All the equipment has been procured. Richard and Duncan just need to trial it. This will not improve the sound quality, which depends on the phone being used. However, once the wi-fi is in place it may be possible to address other areas, like sound.
5. Short Reports
 - a. Churchwardens' Report

The churchwardens have tried to include in their report some elements of what Mark would normally write. There are good numbers on Sundays (85-90; i.e. around 70 adults and 15 children).

Regarding funding for Contagious, as of a couple of weeks ago, the figure stood at £130 (the full individual fee being £350). There are three young people attending (no others are known about). It was agreed that it might be good to encourage this more but, as applications close in February, it would be worth mentioning this much sooner. One idea would be to ask the participants to talk once they return in order to encourage others to attend.
 - b. Church Manager's Report

The question was asked as to whether enough people have passed the food hygiene course. Wendy noted that no more are needed until we produce more food in the kitchen.

c. Safeguarding Report

Clare Reid has agreed to be Parish Safeguarding Officer. (Trevor described this as an answer to prayer.) Now we will need to find someone to take on her current role dealing with DBS administration. Clare appreciates that safeguarding is a team effort. Anne extended an invitation to anyone who would consider taking on the DBS administration.

Anne (as Interim PSO) has been updating records and recently sent out emails (including to PCC members) to ask for copies of certificates, which are subject to a three-year limit. Training courses can be retaken at any time.

Dan thanked Anne for her work on this, and the PCC is very grateful to Clare.

d. Financial Report

Richard is to pick up the digital giving station on June 19. There is space to join him on the training that day should anyone wish.

Redevelopment figures have changed because we have paid off part of a loan, and also gained some interest.

Richard explained how the Ephesians Fund works.

6. Spotlight Report: Fabric, Buildings, and Maintenance Report (and Carbon Footprint meeting Report)

Based on the last Spotlight Report, items 17 to 22 remain unchanged, while all others have been updated.

There is water ingress in the nave, in proximity to the font and one pew. (It is also the case that the timber underneath the roof is likely to be rotting.) In the southwest corner there is a problem with dry rot or fungal growth. Wendy will ask for guidance at the Quinquennial Inspection.

The church roof will need attention soon; this will be expensive, although there are grants available for such work.

Regarding the tower clock, Wendy has contacted the contractors to schedule the work, with no date set as yet.

Regarding the reredos, Mark has advised Wendy to wait until the end of the summer to see if a response from St James is forthcoming.

The hall roof has let some water in near the piano; this is being monitored. The whole roof is very old and will need replacing at some point.

The boiler is not working and needs replacing. Richard is getting updated quotations; so far he has had two (of three) which have come in at £3830 and £3803. We hope to use SI06 money for this. Modern boilers condense, so we will also need somewhere for the water to escape, probably via a pump.

After the main Quinquennial Inspection in March, it is due to be completed this Friday when the tower will be inspected. There are then three months within which to issue the report, so we should expect this around June or July. There is a chance that the inspectors will look over the church roof from the tower, but it is unlikely the roof itself will be accessed.

In the churchyard, scaffolding will be needed for 157, High Street, and a licence is needed. Birkett Long wrote to the letting agency on April 25th, but have not had a reply yet. That is, we are taking prompt action to get the work done and now it is up to the other party.

Once the Quinquennial Inspection is done, the report will itemise, and suggest time periods and an order of priority for pieces of work.

Carbon footprint meeting:

The energy audit cost is per building.

Eco Church is an online tick box form, which can help us think of other things that might need to be done. In terms of observing how another church has done things and to get some advice, Richard suggested we could look at the copy of the energy audit from St Stephen's. St John's in Chelmsford have gold status and we can see online what they have done.

We are high energy users.

The use of solar panels appears to be possible even on listed buildings, and there is a chance that these days the DAC would be more sympathetic to such a suggestion. Our difficulty may be that the churchyard trees restrict the amount of light that can reach the roof.

We should be wary of losing sight of the gospel among the enthusiasm for greening the church environment; on the other hand, we are stewards of what we have been given.

Proposal (by Anne; seconded by Brian): That we arrange for an energy audit for the church building.

Result: Agreed.

6. Points resulting from the APCM: Vicars board; Church library

- a) Vicars board: It is not possible to extend the existing board, and there is no room for a new one. It was agreed that this is low priority.
- b) Church library: The church library was to be in the newly created area (north aisle), but without furniture (any orders for this will need approval from the DAC) we are unsure how much room will be available. It was agreed that for a trial period the bookcases should be placed next to the music area, at right angles to each other (as they cannot, without risk, stand freely). The idea is to see how this works for now.

7. Away Day Team

Proposal: Mark's proposal is to discontinue this, as there has been no response to the request to organise.

Result: Agreed.

8. Visiting preachers' 'Thank you' gift (£30 book token), as has been the case previously.

Proposal: Mark's proposal is to continue this practice.

Result: Agreed.

9. Laying-up of the Colours (Messy Church)

The colours will be placed on the gallery above the north aisle. Wendy is arranging the fixings, to be paid for by the Parachute Regiment. The formal civic service will be on Remembrance Sunday (November 10); therefore, there will be Messy Church in the hall on the assumption that this will suit many in the congregation better, especially children.

10. PSO vacancy

The PSO vacancy is now effectively a DBS Administrator vacancy. Anne suggested discussing this when Mark returns.

11. Correspondence

- a) Email to Mark Wallace from Neighbourhood Services, Colchester City Council:
After a routine inspection, there are churchyard trees which need some attention, for which the council has applied to the diocese for permission.
- b) Email to the PCC from the Churchwardens: The decision to defer Stephen and Sheila's upfront duties was explained in detail by the churchwardens following this

correspondence. The Churchwardens expressed gratitude for the support received from the PCC in this regard. Members of the PCC also conveyed their love and concern for the Lloyds.

- c) Email to the Churchwardens from Sian Simpkins, PA to The Ven. Ruth Patten, regarding a diocesan Grant Funding Workshop (June 1, in Sudbury).

12. AOB (to be raised with the Chairman before the start of the meeting)

As most of the foreseeable business has been covered in this meeting, we anticipate little necessary for the July PCC meeting. Trevor suggested that the July meeting may not therefore be necessary, and that a decision will be made at the next Standing Committee meeting (June 10).

13. Future meetings

- a. Full PCC meetings: July 8, September 9, November 11
- b. Standing Committee meetings: June 10, August 12, October 14, December 9

14. Closing Prayers