

PARISH OF SUTTON WITH SEAFORD

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held

in St Leonard's Church at 11.00 am on Sunday 27th April 2025

Present: Revd James Hollingsworth (Vicar), Revd Derreck Lee-Philpot (Associate vicar), Rev Lucy Hollingsworth, Rev Carole Darling, Fred Bass (Churchwarden), Elizabeth Morgan-Jones, Paul Waller (Treasurer), Stephanie Baker (Secretary) and 56 parishioners whose names are listed with these minutes.

1) Welcome and Prayer :

The Vicar welcomed everyone to the meeting, the hymn ' Brother, Sister let me serve you' was sung and the LyCiG prayer said:

God of Mission Who alone brings growth to your Church, Send your Holy Spirit to give Vision to our planning, Wisdom to our actions, And power to our witness and joy to our worship. Help our church to grow in numbers, In spiritual commitment to you, And in service to our local community, Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

2) Proposal to combine the two meetings:

It was agreed that the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting should be combined.

3) Apologies for absence:

There were 19 apologies for absence which are listed with these minutes.

4) Reception of the Electoral Roll Review.

At the time of the meeting the electoral roll numbered 215 (compared to 303 in 2024, 304 in 2023, 296 in 2022, 295 in 2021, 300 in 2020, 316 in 2019). This year a new roll was made and an effort will be made to locate any members who missed registering before the meeting.

5) Tabling of the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of 28th April 2024: The minutes were received having been approved at the PCC meeting on 8th May 2024.

6) Annual Reports for 2024.

a) Safeguarding

Ruth Saunders report was included in the annual report, appended to these minutes and widely available prior to the meeting. There will be a face to face training session in St Leonard's Church on Saturday 7th June at 11.30 following Messy Church. The meeting recorded thanks to Ruth for her work with safeguarding.

b) Children, Youth and Families:

A comprehensive report can be found in the annual report appended to these minutes which Stefan added to.

Tots: Numbers at both Churches are stable at around 20 -30 although this dropped at St Leonard's during the winter when the heating was faulty

Sparks: Fridays 5.45 – 7.15 pm. There have been some behaviour issues but the group is stable and curious.

Ignite: Friday evenings. This is a youth club. We are very grateful to local

businesses that support financially and practically including the Wellington Hotel and Morrison's.

Glow: Alternate Sundays at St Luke's. This is like Sunday School or a mini Messy Church and includes Bible stories, singing, questions, dancing and craft.

Family Service: Alternate Sundays to Glow. This had included a baptism on the day of the meeting.

May Camp: There are 7 young people planning to attend May camp.

Joint Youth Services: These are held with Seaford Baptist Church and St Michael's Newhaven.

Parish Camp: Following the great success of last year's Parish Camp another is planned this year.

Additional Alpha Group: An Alpha group is being run by Rev Carole Darling for those who are not able to attend evening groups.

Volunteers: Stefan stressed how reliant the activities are on volunteers and thanked everyone who gives their time and energy to the groups. He also appealed for more people to volunteer so that additional groups can be run.

Assistant Children, Youth and Family Worker: Following a rigorous application and interview process which included leading a group session, a 'grill a vicar type session and questions Kim Cuthbert, who previously volunteered with youth groups, was appointed to the role and was introduced to the meeting.

New Groups: New groups are planned including: Glow gardening starting shortly. A faith based group for the Ignite age group like a Youth Alpha. A bible study group for volunteers starting after May half term.

What do we really need to work at?: As a parish really making sure that children and young people are able to lead in services, statics show really fully involving children, young people & where possible their families in service gives them some form of ownership and connection to the Church. They feel wanted and needed, whilst also not being overwhelmed with tasks to do.

There were no questions and the vicar led prayer for Kim in her new role.

c) **Parochial Church Council proceedings and general activities:**

The Trustees Annual report was available physically and on line before the meeting and is appended to these minutes.

The PCC met 6 times during the year and three votes was undertaken by email. The Standing Committee met by Zoom bi-monthly. The minutes of meetings are available on request and routinely displayed on both Church noticeboards.

d) **Statement of Financial Affairs and Balance Sheet:**

The treasurer's annual report, included in the annual report, was available physically and on line before the meeting and is appended to these minutes. Paul Waller reported that 2024 had been a good year financially with increased interest rates, letting income and received legacies producing an income of £30k annually. He stressed the importance of regular giving via the Planned Giving Scheme, standing order or the donation jar/box and card readers. He invited Lynne Crowther to explain Easy Fund Raising which anyone who shops on line can

register for and raise money for the parish at no cost to themselves.

The accounts have been examined independently by Chris Tyler of Chariot House Accountants.

Questions were invited:

Q. Are the asset values eg St Luke's Church £250k correct? A. These are historic values and below the current market values, revaluation would be costly and not worth the expense.

Thanks were recorded to Paul for his continuing diligent work.

e) **Fabric and Furnishings of Church Buildings:**

Hall Sale and St Leonard's reordering: The sale of the hall is complete and the money in the accounts to be invested while the plans for St Leonard's are finalised. Mark Gill has been liaising with the architect and his advice has reduced some costs. The next stage is complete drawings, seeking quotations and faculties. The work will be phased starting with digging in the churchyard (archaeological) and reordering the chapel. St Leonard's will remain in operation throughout the work.

Questions were invited:

Q1. Is the sale of the hall enough to cover the work? A. Not completely, £350k has been received and £500k is needed but we do have enough to apply for grants that require match funding, some have been received and some require the faculties in place before applications are considered. The proceeds of the hall sale is invested and earning interest.

Q2. Is the drainage sufficient for the extra toilets? A. Yes

Other fabric matters:

The vandalised Good Shepherd window at St Leonard's will be repaired very shortly and paid for by the insurance.

Quotations are being sourced for redecoration at St Luke's which is needed.

f) **Parish Groups and Ministries:**

Group reports are included in the annual report.

Questions were invited and there were none.

7) **Elections:**

a) **Churchwardens:**

**Fred Bass, proposed by Phil Armstrong, seconded by Gail Elhinn, unanimous.
Elizabeth Morgan-Jones, proposed by Wendy Ogilvie, seconded by Margaret Smith, unanimous.**

b) **Deputy Churchwardens, for information only:**

St Leonards: Janet Kent, Paul Waller

St Luke's: Jo Lalla, Paul Bloxham.

c) **PCC:**

James thanked Kim Cuthbert, Lucy Borthwick and Stephanie Baker standing down from PCC (Stephanie to continue as secretary and Kim as assistant CYFW). The following new members were elected:

David Robertson, Proposed by Fred Bass, seconded by Nicola Holding, unanimous

Geoff Thomas, Proposed by Fred Bass, seconded Sue Topp, unanimous
Michael Holmes, Proposed by , seconded by
Samantha Fowler, Proposed by , seconded by.....

Deanery Synod:

Mark Gill, Proposed by James Hollingsworth, seconded Charles Painter, unanimous

Sidespeople: The sidespeople/welcomers were thanked.

8) Appointment of independent examiners:

Proposal: C R Tyler of Chariot House Ltd be appointed as independent examiner.

Proposed by Paul Waller, seconded by Fred Bass, unanimous.

9) Vicar's Remarks:

A full copy of the vicar's remarks is appended to the minutes.

He welcomed all to the meeting and recommended reading the annual report which shows how busy we are as a Church and how we've seen so many prayers answered. He mentioned all the ways people are involved in the Church from Men's Group and Mothers Union to the Church watchers who welcome folk into St Leonard's during the week. All this is driving the reordering and the next steps to be taken, much prayer is needed as the necessary permissions are applied for. At St Luke's there is a new sound system and the garden is looking great. The online services are valued by those who see it on YouTube (thanks to the tech team) and the Facebook page has daily reflections and evening prayer.

The massive amount of youth work continues and it is important that we pray for Stefan, Kim and the team.

There is a lot of quiet pastoral work that goes on by various groups and individuals and he encouraged volunteering with youth work, coffee serving etc. He asked for prayer that the money given so generously is used wisely, grants applied for are successful and that God will bless the work we are planning and help us complete it. All joined in the prayer said at the start of the meeting.

God of Mission Who alone brings growth to your Church, Send your Holy Spirit to give Vision to our planning, Wisdom to our actions, And power to our witness and joy to our worship. Help our church to grow in numbers, In spiritual commitment to you, And in service to our local community, Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

10) Questions, Comments, Discussion:

a) Fitzgerald Trust: Charlie Grimble thanked the parish on behalf of the trustees for the administration, maintenance and cleaning service by Tony Willer, Charlie Christie and Heather Rice over the last four and a half years. The parish has been connected with Fitzgerald Charities for 177years and 6 of the 9 trustees worship at St Leonard's or St Luke's.

b) aRocha Bronze Award: Mark Gill expressed thanks to Nicola Ferguson for her work gaining the Eco Award and beginning work towards silver/gold

c) Thanks: Sue Topp thanked James and Derreck for leading the parish.

d) Bells: Lindsey Pritchard reported that the clapper had detached from one of the bells and until it is repaired only the bottom six can be used.

e) Noticeboards and posters: David Bramley who has regularly put up posters and kept

the noticeboards up to date is looking for someone to shadow him for a while with a view to taking over the responsibility.

11) Forthcoming Events:

a) **PCC:** Wednesday 14th May

b) **Confirmation:** Peacehaven Thursday 15th May

c) **VE day:** The bells will be rung at 6pm

d) **National Open Gardens Scheme:** Fred and Jayne Bass will be opening their garden on the first Sundays of June and July and all profits from refreshments will go towards youth work in the parish.

e) **Christian Aid Week:** Colin Pritchard reminded that CA week begins on Sunday 11 May

12) Closing Worship:

The meeting closed with the hymn 'Thine be the Glory' and prayer and ended at 12.30 pm.

Signed:

Date: