

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 3.30pm on Sunday 23rd April 2023

Present: Revd James Hollingsworth (Vicar), Revd Derreck Lee-Philpot (Associate vicar), Fred Bass (Churchwarden), Paul Waller (Treasurer), Stephanie Baker (Secretary) and 52 parishioners whose names are listed with these minutes.

1) Welcome and Prayer :

The Vicar welcomed everyone to the meeting and the LyCiG prayer was 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. 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 on a **proposal by Revd James Hollingsworth, seconded by Margaret Smith and carried unanimously.**

3) Apologies for absence:

There were 13 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 304 (compared to 295 in 2021, 300 in 2020, 316 in 2019), 6 members died and there were 15 new.

5) Tabling of the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of 24th April 2022: The minutes were received having been approved at the PCC meeting on 11th May 2022.

6) Annual Reports for 2020.

a) **Safeguarding**

Ruth Saunders report was included in the annual report, appended to these minutes and widely available prior to the meeting. Ruth thanked all who had completed their C0 and C1 training on line and was pleased to report that in person training will be allowed again. The meeting recorded thanks to Ruth for her work with safeguarding.

b) **Deanery Synod proceedings:**

Recent and planned Deanery Synod news was summarised. This includes a Deanery mission action plan, carbon footprints and environmental matters. Parishes will be encouraged to share experience and learn from each other.

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

The Trustees Annual report was available on line before the meeting and is appended to these minutes. The PCC met, mostly in person 6 times during the year and one vote was undertaken by email. The Standing Committee met by Zoom bi-monthly. The minutes of meetings are available on request.

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

(the full text of Paul's speech is appended to these minutes)

Thanks were expressed to Stephen Gauntlett, the previous treasurer, the congregation for their generosity, Anna Owen for book keeping, David Bramley for reading utility meters monthly resulting in the identification of a costly water leak, Bob Carrington for counting and banking the cash and cheque donations, Charlie Christie and Tony Willer for invoicing and Fitzgerald Trust administration, Charlene Hobbs for St Luke's bookings and Chris Tyler, account examiner.

The generosity of giving and legacies has enabled the deficit of £46,000 last year to be reduced to £11358 this year, a £35,000 improvement. This was despite a £10,680 increase in our Parish Contribution to £120,000 and spending of £45,468 on church fabric repairs, hall sale preparation. Without this spending there would have been a surplus of more than £34,000.

Paul highlighted some items on the balance sheet and pointed out that with the hall sale our property values will change.

Questions were invited:

Q1. There is a £6k difference in income and expenditure between the figures and the report. Why?

A. There was a historic need to write off £6k income and expenditure which was not transferred to the report. Paul apologised.

Q2. Has the next year's budget been discussed and when will we hear about the hall and related

finances?

A. Fred Bass will update on this

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

The fabric team is led by Michael Holmes, the full report is part of the annual report.

Questions were invited

Q: will the bells be ringable for the coronation when the scaffolding is erected? A: Yes

The meeting expressed thanks to Michael.

Fred Bass added further information:

i. **St Leonard's**

i. **Heating:** This failed in the winter but is now has fixed.

ii. **Nave lighting:** Malcolm and Philip Anderson installed new bulbs in the nave, the ones in the chancel and one failed nave light will be fixed shortly using a special lift to reach the roof.

ii. **Buildings:** The planning department have requested some adaptations to the plans for the hall which will be dealt with by the architects. Planning permission for the extension to St Leonard's for accessible toilets has been approved by Lewes District Council. Now permissions are needed from bodies such as the diocesan advisory committee, English Heritage, The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and the Victorian Society.

The sale of the hall with planning permission should realise £400,000 which should fund the changes to St Leonard's and hopefully any VAT incurred will be recoverable. It is hoped the hall sale will be completed within a year. The work is likely to take 10+years and will have to include archaeological investigations and re-interment of any bones found when work starts on the extension foundations.

The meeting expressed thanks to Fred and Michael

f) **Parish Groups and Ministries:**

Group reports are included in the annual report, Stefan Bracher added to the Children, Youth and Families report.

i. **Tots Treats:** Attendance increased before Easter and the groups were oversubscribed at times.

ii. **Sparks:** There are 30 members and 2 families regularly attend worship. The team work hard with this group which includes children with special educational needs. The summer programme is in planning and a group of 10 will attend a camp in Cold Harbour Meadow in July. Help is needed to finance some members whose families cannot afford the fee.

iii. **Ignite:** In January attendance was 5 and last Friday 37. Morrison's and The Wellington pub support with donations of snacks etc enabling everything to remain free.

iv. **Messy:** 75 attended on Good Friday.

v. **Informal Service:** 130 attended. Stefan has been interviewed on Radio Sussex for this.

vi. **Glow Sunday School:** This group is growing

vii. **Deanery Children, Youth and Families Hub:** Stefan and Zara from Newhaven are leading this group enabling churches to share knowledge and support each other.

viii. **Holiday Club:** October half term, theme 'What are castles?' volunteers will be needed and a Quiz night will be held to finance it.

ix. **Summary:** 210 children connect with the church over a month and 150 each week, support is needed through prayer, new volunteers and also in the way we support and welcome each other.

Questions about the report invited, are any groups missed out?

x. **Fitzgerald Trust:** This not mentioned, the parish has been involved in the charity for 165 years, 4 members of the congregation including the incumbent are trustees. The trust supplies affordable housing in Seaford and has paid the parish £11k for administration services form the parish office. A report will be included next year.

xi. Why does the income from Fitzgerald Trust exceed the expenditure? 2022 was not a full year.

xii. Men's Meals and Deanery Synod are also missing

xiii. Finally: Thanks were expressed to Wendy Ogilvie who is standing down as Pastoral Care coordinator, a card was available to sign. The vicar read Ephesians 3 v 20

7) **Elections:**

- a) **Churchwardens:**
Fred Bass, proposed by Rev James Hollingsworth, seconded by Rev Derrek Lee-Philpot, unanimous.
Elizabeth Morgan-Jones, proposed by James Hollingsworth, seconded by Derrek Lee-Philpot, unanimous.
- b) **Deputy Churchwardens, for information only:**
St Leonards: Janet Kent, Paul Waller
St Luke's: Jo Lalla, a second person to be sought.
- c) **PCC:**
 James thanked Bob Carrington, standing down from PCC and standing for Deanery Synod. The following new members were elected:
Sue Topp, Proposed by James Hollingsworth, seconded by Fred Bass, unanimous
Sally Thompson, Proposed by James Hollingsworth, seconded Derrek Lee-Philpott, unanimous
Lizzie Jackson, Proposed by James Hollingsworth, seconded by Fred Bass
Deanery Synod:
 James thanked Bob Rice, standing down from Deanery Synod. The following were elected:
Nicola Ferguson, Proposed by James Hollingsworth, seconded by Fred Bass, unanimous
Bob Carrington, Proposed by James Hollingsworth, seconded by Fred Bass, unanimous
Carole Kay, Proposed by James Hollingsworth, seconded by Fred Bass, unanimous
Julia Lawson, Proposed by James Hollingsworth, seconded by Fred Bass, unanimous
- d) **Sidespeople:** This remains unchanged
- 8) **Appointment of independent examiners:**
Proposal: C R Tyler be appointed as independent examiner. Proposed by Paul Waller, seconded by Michael Holmes, unanimous.
- 9) **Vicar's Remarks:**
 A full copy of the vicar's remarks is appended to the minutes.
 James welcomed all, especially those attending APCM for the first time. He encouraged people to read the annual report pointing out that it is about the past year with its ups and downs always supported by God's love and emphasised the importance of prayer. He hoped the outward 'looking-ness' of the church was noticed, eg support for Ukrainian refugees and mission. Our ministry includes visits to 4 or 5 care homes, home visits and youth work. We were reminded that the Church is defined as existing for non-members.
 Other things to note are
 Ecology, we still have work to reduce our carbon footprint and being greener, the vicarage has become a Diocesan guinea pig for energy reduction. St Luke's is well insulated but St Leonard's is more challenging. The hall; the delay in progressing the sale has allowed time to come to terms with the plans.
 St Leonard's interior, local planning permission for the extension has been granted and ecclesiastical permission is now needed. The proposed plans are displayed in St Leonard's.
 Pastoral Care, Wendy Ogilvie has stepped down as coordinator, huge thanks for her sterling work (a card was available to sign). With such a large Church keeping on top of pastoral care can be difficult. The fortnightly pastoral letter is still sent out.
 Thanks, there are many people to thank; churchwardens, PCC, Church Watchers, Tech team, our youth worker and volunteers. The Church is good at looking out for each other – keep it up.
 James ended with the Licig prayer:
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. 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:**
- Q1.** What is happening with St Luke's garden?
 A. This is currently being transformed as a project for youth, help from those with gardening expertise is needed.
- Q2.** How easy is access to local schools?
 A. James and Stefan are working with Chyngton School and assisting with the new RE syllabus staff training. They also held a session on Holy Week for year 3 at Cradle Hill.
- Q3.** Is the stole on display for Damien Brennan?
 A. Yes. When he was ordained Deacon he was given a white stole, he will be ordained priest at St John Meads on Sunday 4th June and presented with a red one. Donations towards this can still be made.
- Q3.** PCC minutes used to be displayed in the churches, can this be done?

A. Yes but PCC meetings are bimonthly and there would be a time lag with approved minutes, PCC to discuss this.

Comment: Thanks to the retired clergy who take the Wednesday Communion service at St Leonard's which is regularly attended by 14 -15 people. Since the pandemic this has been valuable for people who avoid crowds.

11) Forthcoming Events:

- a) **Funeral Pam Gubbins:** Thursday 27th April at St Peter's East Blatchington
- b) **Ordination:** Sunday June 4th, Damien Brennan will be ordained priest at St John Meads.
- c) **Coronation Events:** Covered in weekly news sheet
- d) **Parish Lunch:** First Wednesday of the month, helpers needed
- e) **Vicar's Sabbatical:** Vicars are allowed a 3 month sabbatical every 10 years. James will be on sabbatical June – August this year. Although not available for parish matters he will keep a blog updated and requested prayers for this time.
- f) **Church Logo:** The regularly used name for the parish will be 'Seaford Parish Church, St Leonard's and St Luke's' in line with the website. The legal name 'The Parish of Sutton with Seaford' will remain the same.

12) Closing Worship:

The meeting closed with Compline led by Revd Derreck Lee-Philpot.

Signed:

Date: