

**Minutes of the meeting of the PCC of Milborne Port held on
Monday 25 September 2023 in The Lady Chapel**

Those present – Chair: Rev. Rona Stuart-Bourne (RSB). Harold Clarke (HC); Nicki Edwards (NE); Pat Elliott (PE); Jacquie Hall (JH); David Johnson (DS); Amanda Macintosh (AM); Richard Redman (RR); Louisa Schreiber (LS); Graham Sharpless (GS); Paul Springett (PS)

Apologies - Elaine Ennis-Bunt, David Grant, June Goodman, Linda Mumford, Susan Wales

Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 23rd May 2023 – these had been previously circulated and were agreed as a true record, with no amendments, and duly signed.

Matters arising from minutes - Milborne Wick has arranged to pay its Parish Share direct to Diocese. PS has arranged direct payments for reimbursing clergy/organist/ringers. JH clarified that the Diocese had awarded Foodshare a Cost of Living Grant of £500, which PS had transferred to the account. GS commented on the introduction of monthly Pew News: he thought the facts/environmental implications/time should be established before any decision on the changes. NE said that it was using up an inordinate amount of Helen Solomon's time, time which would be better spent supporting RS-B.

Milborne Wick – The cream tea event at the end of August was most successful and made more money than last year. The church also benefitted from income received from the bottle stall at the 'pop concert' held at the beginning of July. Tickets were still available at £20 per head for the Harvest Supper to be held on 8th October at 6.00pm. A new organ has been installed - the piano had been sold on eBay. Wick was enjoying a boost in congregation numbers from those apparently preferring the service to Matins at St John's.

Deanery Synod – The most recent meeting voted in favour of the following motion: *"Bruton and Cary Deanery Synod approves the adoption of Option 3a (as outlined in the paper 'Pastoral Reorganisation 2023 - Motion for July Synod') as the basis for the pastoral reorganisation of the Deanery . This means that the parishes of Blackford, Compton Pauncefoot and Maperton are probably going to be added to our Benefice. There was a talk about the churches hosting a venue for Somerset Arts Week - our Art Exhibition on September 30th was going to be a trial run.*

Finance update – PS distributed summaries of the recent financial position, which looks quite stable. SSDC were on the war path because the Lottery licence fee had not been paid which resulted in the law being broken. PS had his name on raffle tickets - should complete a form detailing prizes. No payment traced from last Aug although Robert Hall had initiated one. Two people are required to be named on future Lottery licence applications – NE and HC volunteered. A direct debit was to be set up. PS explained the different funds to new members. Banks are changing ways they deal with charities especially when dealing with amounts of cash paid in over the counter. This will result in unnecessary charges and regular givers (there are still some individuals who make out weekly cheques) should be actively encouraged to use online methods of donating: the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS); via BACS; and using the contactless SumUp machine. RS-B is waiting for forms from PGS at Diocese. It is a very simple way of giving - no fees for cheques or cash and it is easy to change the amount given and given opportunity to increase annually. Contactless (SumUp): Gift Aid can be claimed on payments up to £30 under the Small Donations Scheme(GADS). Gift Aid authorisation is required to reclaim gift aid for payments over £30. NE to devise a form. RS-B recommended the use of a contactless machine on its own stand but then we would have to pay more for its use. GS felt that the PCC should have a budget to enable us to easily see what can be afforded. This had been discussed at the FGP at which it was decided that a budget was not necessary as we did not make optional purchases without first assessing our financial position, and we could not predict what our income was likely to be, and how many weddings/funerals there would be.

Fabric update – The boiler service was due this week by Heatwave; E-bound service of the roof alarm is due next week; Heating - waiting for information about new Infra-red heaters (Halo heaters); Floodlights - two are not working and need replacing.

Website update - Highlights from GS - £106 for annual charge for website certificate.(see email)

- Bill Closs to help on digital website committee for Charlton Horethorne;

- RSB.: At Merrow a friend took photos of baptisms and offered them to the family for donations with permission to put on website. HC has a friend who is ex MP photographer - he will ask them;
- GS asked for more photos of church activities;
- Charlton Horethorne editor to send monthly letter to church website;
- Ways to give is a new Diocesan initiative which GS to put on website;
- GS asking for text and photos to load onto website.

Foodshare - The new system for distribution was working well and JH is to provide a list for donation requests to HS to inform potential donors.

Safeguarding – The Diocese had enlisted commercial back up to help with Safeguarding incidents. There is now a 2/3 days turnaround for DBS checks now eg Open the Book volunteers. Parish Dashboard still needs completing. HC, LS and DJ needed to complete their Safeguarding training.

Health and Safety – A fire practice/ drill should be carried out soon.

Vision for our Benefice – Caroline Bruce is to come and facilitate us in building a vision on Saturday 17th February with representatives from each church, also including representatives from the three new parishes. The Bible study course held during August was most successful. The next (Loving Disagreement - dealing with conflict) will be held over four sessions in Charlton Horethorne Village Hall beginning 10th October. RS-B – recommended registering for Eco Church - <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/resources/>. Charlie Beney is to be the representative from Charlton Horethorne, and HC will find a Goathill rep. Milborne Port will need to find a rep. and there will need to be a Benefice coordinator.

AOB –

- New Communion booklets are almost ready for printing;
- Open the Book - 'Joseph the Dreamer' performances at Charlton Horethorne and Milborne Port schools this week and in church on Sunday 1st October instead Sermon + Readings;
- RS-B reported that SoMP had asked the church to host the "light up" festivities on Friday 24th November by having stalls around church. Santa's Grotto would be in choir vestry. Church would provide Storytime - possibly a St Nicholas link. Clare Silk and RS-B are thinking of suitable activities. This will provide a wonderful opportunity to link with village.
- **Welcome packs** were suggested by RS-B for new residents of the estate being built. JH recounted what was done in the past and offered to contact MP Council to see if they still have packs. We could then visit new residents with a pack and cake. JH to talk to NH about welcome packs.
- Advent wreath -LS agreed to make advent wreath with candles for the school.

Dates of next meetings:

- Tuesday 21st November in Church House

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.50pm with prayer.