

**Minutes of the meeting of the PCC of Milborne Port held on  
Tuesday 24th January 2023 at 7.00 pm in Church House**

**Those present** – Rev. Rona Stuart-Bourne (RS-B), Chair: Nicki Edwards (NE), Harold Clarke, David Grant (DG), Robert Hall (RH), Amanda Mackintosh (AM), Linda Mumford (LM), Richard Redman (RR), Anne Salkeld (AS), Graham Sharpless (GS), Susan Wales (SW)

**Apologies** - Elaine Ennis-Bunt (EE-B), Mary Clothier (MC), Pat Elliott (PE), June Goodman (JG), Jacquie Hall (JH), Trevor John (TJ),

As Chair of the meeting, NE welcomed Rev. Rona Stuart-Bourne to her first meeting of the PCC of St John's, Milborne Port. RS-B then commenced the meeting with an opening prayer for the new calendar year.

**Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022** – these had been previously circulated and were agreed as a true record, with no amendments, and signed by NE.

**Matters arising from minutes** – Foodshare: It was noted that the helpers at had not received a thank you gift at Christmas. **(ACTION: NE/JH)**. Broadband in church : nothing to report from TJ as he was absent from the meeting. New treasurer – As previously noted, RH has asked to stand down after 10 years of dedicated service. With the prospect of the number of churches in Benefice increasing, it will be necessary to reassess how the Benefice will operate in terms of PCCs. Paul Springett, presently treasurer to the PCC of Charlton Horethorne, will oversee The Benefice and also Milborne Port's finances in the immediate future. RH will finish his term of office at the end of this financial year and will assist Paul in the handover. Matthew Pinnock, Diocesan Financial Officer, is due to visit soon and will assist also. RS-B offered the sincere thanks of the PCC for all RH's diligent service during his time as treasurer, and also thanked Paul for agreeing to stand as treasurer to both parishes.

RS-B then asked the members present to introduce themselves, and to state their feelings on whether or not they would like to continue as members of this PCC. Those willing to continue were: RH, GS, DG, RR, AM, HC, LM (+Deanery Synod), SW and NE. AS advised that she wishes to stand down at the APCM.

**Milborne Wick** – AM reported that the church was packed with 55 worshippers at the Carol Service. There were 13 present at church on the previous Sunday to the meeting, which was more than double the usual attendance. The date for their annual meeting has been set, and the accounts are in hand. New people have recently moved to the hamlet, but it is unclear if they will join the congregation. The Parish Share is paid to date. RH queried if an application had been made to the DBF offering money to help with the cost of heating but AM had not heard about this scheme so will need to apply ASAP.

AM left the meeting at 7.25.

**Deanery Synod** – It will be necessary to elect new lay representatives at the forthcoming APCM. We are allowed three representatives. HC, JH and LM usually attend the meetings. MC was also

on the Synod. The Deanery Chapter meeting next week will discuss the re-organisation of parishes, and the way forward for us all.

**2023 Parish Share and Parochial Fees** – in advance of the meeting, RS-B had emailed the PCC members seeking approval of the proposal made by RS-B as Priest in Charge, RH as Treasurer and NE and JH as Churchwardens regarding this year's Parish Share contribution, and whether to opt for Option A (which represents a 2% increase on 2022), or Option B (which represents a 6% increase on the 2022 Parish Share). The email fully explained the situation, and that the recommendation was to approve Option B. DG had raised a query about how we as a church could manage to afford the increase. This was discussed and NE emphasised that we do have sufficient reserves due to sound financial management and that now was the time to consider how we could assist those parishes that are less fortunate. RS-B is optimistic that we will be able to meet this, and continued by explaining the "Parish Giving Scheme". However, the B&W Diocese has yet to sign up to this scheme. Approval was also sought following the recommendation by RS-B, RH, NE and JH to adopt the scale of Parochial Fees as laid out by the National Church, as opposed to the B&W Diocese. Again, the rationale had been explained fully via the email that was sent prior to the meeting.

RH then apprised those present of the proposed increases in the Verger's remuneration, and our own Parish fees.

All proposals were voted upon, and all those present were in favour of the three recommendations, with none against.

**Finance update** – RH had prepared and Initial Financial Summary of 2022 which had been presented to members of the F&GP committee the previous week. A few issues have yet to be resolved. The figures show an increase at end of calendar year of some £15K compared with 2021, so overall 2022 proved to be a good year. However, regular giving is flat and it was suggested that the yellow envelopes be placed in the pews once again, and that the collection be reinstated during the offertory hymn as from the following Sunday. **(ACTION NE/JH)** RS-B once again thanked RH for his work in keeping the finances in good order.

RH reported that some progress had been made regarding the Prankerds Charity with Rev. Stuart Thomas attempting to resolve how the assets are used, to re-establish the dormant account and the trustees, and how to gain access to the fund to provide assistance to the less well-off in the community. There will be an announcement to this effect in the March edition of the magazine.

It was mentioned that the Prankerd's Charity has not been connected to the PCC for many years, and as the Charity is brought back into operation it will no longer be necessary to discuss this at the PCC unless the PCC have particular questions from the Charity's Trustees.

RH advised that additional signatories are needed to approve payments from the PCC. NE and SW will be added.

RS-B queried the fact that traditionally the Christmas collections at St John's have been given away to other charities. She proposed that, because of all the work that goes in to preparing and holding all these services, the money collected should be kept by the church, and that alternative charities be supported at other times of the year, and asked that the PCC vote. After discussion however, it was decided that this should not be done retrospectively for Christmas 2022, particularly as an announcement had been made at the beginning of the Carol Service that cash collections would be shared between Christian Aid and Foodshare. However, this issue will be considered for the Christmas 2023 cash collections

No further progress had been made on appointing a Parish Administrator.

GS raised the fees levied by the hosting company for the Benefice website, quoted as £113 per year with a 25% discount, and that, should our turnover goes above, we could get free service. RS-B suggested we ask for a donation to meet this cost.

**Fabric update** – JH had sent a report in advance of the meeting. NE read this to the members. It included an update on: work carried out to provide a working space in the Church House Office; repairs to two leaks at St John's Cottage; overhaul/repairs to the organ; heating in The Lady Chapel; work on the roof by West Country roofing; upcoming Quinquennial Inspection.

**Preparation for APCM** – SW will send out requests for contributions to the annual report.

**Foodshare** – EE-B had submitted a report updating on the present situation. After some discussion, NE suggested that now is the time for Foodshare to become a stand-alone entity. Historically, the PCC underwrote the setting up thereof. NE suggested that it would be wise for Foodshare to become a registered charity with its own committee and bank account. **(ACTION- JH and EE-B)** to discuss this suggestion and report back to the PCC. There was a great deal of praise and thanks for the sterling work of Foodshare, and as a Church we will continue to support the charity, but it no longer needs to be a part of our PCC meetings once it has its own Trustees and Bank Account.

**Churchyard: plans for 2023** – SW apprised those present of how work will continue to develop the churchyard into a more wildlife friendly place this year. The mowing regime from 2022 will continue, although the no-mow areas could be extended to the east end of the churchyard, and the seed heads cut down before the fete on 15<sup>th</sup> July. Cuttings need to be collected after each cut, and the importance of developing the compost heaps was emphasised by AS. RS-B is keen to include children from the school – maybe as an after-school club to make (e.g.) bug hotels. Swift boxes and signage are also areas for development. **(ACTION: HC, TJ and SW to feedback to Grasshoppers)**

**Safeguarding** - Updates on everyone's DBS checks are due, and NE advised that she will be contacting individuals in due course.

**Health and Safety** - AS reported on a potential trip hazard on the south-western corner of the church, where the movement of gravel has resulted in one of the wooden batons standing proud. **(ACTION TJ to please check)** DG raised the issue of dog excrement in the churchyard and this was discussed but no firm decision was made as to the way forward to address this.

**Vision for our Benefice** – RS-B then spoke about her vision for the future of the Benefice, based on the content of the Parish Profile, which ultimately drew her to this place. RS-B is keen that we need to plan how we can build on the work that was put into the compilation of the profile, and from that to develop a clear vision for the way forward in this Benefice. RS-B reminded us that we asked for an inspirational and innovative leader who can help us to use our strengths to serve our communities, discerning God's will as we journey together, and how we can achieve this. RS-B continued by reminding us that we said in the Parish profile that Worship is at the heart of all that we do and that hospitality is a strength, as is caring for our buildings and churchyards. Making Christianity seem relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century was one of the challenges

listed. RS-B's vision would be that together we could spend some time fine-tuning these, and develop a Vision with the maximum of three goals for the next five years. RS-B emphasised that this needs to be something with which we will all be happy, and certainly not something that is imposed upon us. RS-B then asked if someone would be prepared to take the lead on this. (Please note: - Proposed date for Vision Setting morning – Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 10-1230)

#### RS-B –

- Aumbrey: RS-B explained the purpose of an Aumbrey, one of which she is keen to have in our church. There is an appropriate space in the Gethsemane Chapel. A faculty would be needed, and someone to manufacture one. LM proposed, seconded by DG, with all in favour, for RS-B to explore options.
- Boards at back of church: RS-B is keen that these boards be repurposed and enlivened to incorporate photographs of baptisms and marriages (e.g.) and information about how the church is central to these life events. A volunteer to take this on will be sought.
- Communion: the need for communicants to NOT self-intinct needs to be emphasised to the congregation for hygiene reasons. An explanation as to this importance will be incorporated in Pew News.
- Lent Course: RS-B proposes to use the book "How to Eat Bread" as an inspiration and has asked for volunteers to take on a group. (Three needed).
- Lights and Music: To make the church building more welcoming, a light will be left on throughout the day. RS-B is keen that we invest in a new sound system so that music can be played too, to add to this welcome. Again, a volunteer to investigate options and/or to take on this project will be sought.
- Lady Chapel: RS-B has asked that some blow heaters be purchased to heat this space, as it is very cold on Wednesday mornings for the Mid-Week Communion Service congregation who are mainly older feel it keenly.
- Liturgy: The PCC were asked to consider the pros and cons of purchasing, for the whole Benefice, either the standard CofE communion book, or making our own and publishing it professionally. The cost would be comparable.

NE finished this by thanking RS-B for her vision for the Benefice and urged her to be encouraged.

**AOB** - Lent lunches – after a query from AS, R-SB explained how these would operate.

**Date(s) of next meeting(s)** - agreement of accounts: Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March in Church in Lady Chapel; APCM the afternoon of Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April to incorporate a parish tea etc.  
PCC Meetings Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June and Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 21.20 with individual and joint closing prayers.