

THE PARISH OF ST GEORGE, BENENDEN

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting on Monday 2nd October 2023 at 7.30 in the Memorial Hall

Present: In the chair Revd. D. Commander

Revd. Y. Blid -Mackenzie, Mrs. S. Fisher, Mr. D. Collard, Mrs. J. Collard, Mr. D. Harmsworth, Ms. C. Presgrave, Mrs. Sally-Ann Marks, Mr. R. Stubbings and Mr. C. Trollope.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Mr. D. Barnes, Mrs. J. Davies and Ms. H. Strouts.

Revd. David Commander commenced the meeting with a reading from Luke 9 v 46-48 followed by prayer.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 24th July 2023

After a couple of typing errors were pointed out the minutes were signed as a true copy.

3. Standing Committee minutes of 20th August 2023

Work on six trial pits in the church. The minutes had previously been circulated separately and already signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising

Fire Extinguishers

Mr. Charles Trollope had questioned the amount the church pays for an inspection of fire extinguishers/replacements. Chubb Fire & Security was consulted. This firm works to a different format to GE Fire Protection that we use. However, when both formats are compared together with their fees there is not much different in the cost of new fire extinguishers. Therefore this matter will be looked at again in a year's time and for the time being we will remain with GE Fire Protection.

Tower Top Door

It is understood the door has now been strengthened.

Non-return valve in kitchen area

Mr. Chris Leech has now done this work for us.

Deanery Synod

Revd. David Commander reported Mrs. Julia Collard (our PCC Secretary) has now been elected secretary to the Deanery Synod.

He also reported Revd Richard King has now been appointed Priest in Charge for Cranbrook. His installation by Bishop Rose will be on Wednesday 25th October at 7.00pm in St. Dunstan's, Cranbrook Heating

Lady Chapel

Mr. Rod Lebon has repaired the broken altar rail brass hinge.

Newcomers Lunch/Evening

The date for the Newcomers evening is 18th May 2024. If anyone knows of someone new to the village please let the PCC Secretary know their details.

Harvest Lunch

This went very well last Sunday. Mrs. Helen Commander was congratulated for organising it with the help of the church family. The produce collected has gone to Nourish in Tunbridge Wells, as has the collection of £100 taken at the lunch. £400 was sent to Water Aid from the church collection.

Heating

Revd. David Commander asked for the heating to be tested now it has been repaired.

5. Ministry Report

Revd. David Commander had previously circulated his report. He added the information that Vicki Young's ordination will take place on 29th June 2024, venue to be confirmed. Also, there are two funerals soon – Sir John Ure on 11th October at 2.30 pm and Trevor Ward's on Monday 23rd October at 11 am.

6. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer gave his quarterly report at our last meeting and had nothing further to report on the accounts. However, he did confirm that £1,000 has been received from the estate of Mr. C. Lenox-Conyngham. He also reported there is approximately £100,000 in cash on the general fund. He suggested £40,000 of this is invested in the investment fund to earn some income. This was passed unanimously by the committee.

7. Fabric Reports

New Church Path to Glebe

Mr. David Barns reports the extra work on this path starts on 4th October.

Church path near pond

Revd. Ylva Blid Mackenzie, David Harmsworth and Mr. David Sarton have looked at the winter problem with this path. Mr. Sarton has now given an estimate in excess of £6,000 + VAT. Mr. David Harmsworth feels they need more information from David Sarton before we move on. It was also suggested that Tompsett's are consulted as they are attending to the other path.

Clock

Mr. Charles Trollope reported Mr. Nick Eastwood got the clock going again. The Clock Committee have received the estimate from Cumbria Clock Co. and will recommend what should be done.

8. "How Village Churches Thrive". Chp 4 – Caring for God's Acre

This chapter is about use of the churchyard. The meeting felt we are doing quite well considering we have a large open churchyard. Perhaps we should run more events in the churchyard, expand the plant identification with the schoolchildren, keep records of findings etc. The churchyard is described as a 'local green space' in the Benenden Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Our large churchyard is overseen by the Churchyard Committee led by Mr. Dick Hill. They organise churchyard working parties to keep the churchyard looking its best. This is very laborious. Mr. Dick Hill has been masterminding this for many years and has done an excellent job. However, the committee wonder if he would appreciate us finding someone else to take this job on. Or we could perhaps employ contractors to do some of the harder jobs? Revd. David Commander will contact Mr. Hill to ascertain his thoughts.

9. Project 20/20 Update

Trial Pits

The paperwork for trial pits that need to be dug in the church to ascertain what will be found beneath the columns and pews has not been passed by the DAC as it we understand their adviser has not read the report yet! In the meantime Peter Brook, our project manager, will be asked to engage the community with what we are doing and provide pictorial information at the back of the church once the trial pits have been dug.

Lighting Scheme

Mr. Richard Stubbing has now received one design for lighting pendants for the side aisles.

Next Step

The next step is to go to the DAC with a pre-application on design information, lighting and heating hopefully on 13th October, expecting feedback from the DAC for 18th October. This will be reported to the next PCC meeting on 23rd October.

10. Primary School

The Primary School's Harvest Festival was in the church last Friday afternoon. The produce they took will be delivered to Nourish with that of the church family.

Revd. David Commander reported Rachael Tinker from the PTFA has written suggesting an evening of carols at the church as a fundraiser for the wellbeing garden at the Primary School. The meeting agreed they could use the church. Rev. Commander will reply to her request.

11. Mission Allocation

The Mission Allocation committee met recently and a copy of their report had been circulated. The PCC unanimously voted £7,900 is given to charities nominated with £1,000 held back to support other charities should there be a need during the coming year.

It was also suggested that there should be a talk about one of the charities on the first Sunday of the month.

12. Deanery

The Weald Deanery minutes of 7th September were previously circulated. Revd. David Commander Highlighted the Diocese Weald Deanery Roadshow which this year is at St. Dunstan's, Cranbrook on 12th October at 7 pm. This is an 'open' meeting and everyone is welcome.

Revd. David Commander also commented that the Chapter Meetings the deanery clergy have are starting to feel like a group which is coming together and talking.

13. Safeguarding

Revd. David Commander reported Mr. Ian Malaugh now has a list of DBS checks to be done. He will contact those concerned in due course. Regarding the bellringers, Mr. & Mrs Rod Lebon have been very co-operative and already completed their safeguarding training. Checks are being made to ensure all parishes have their Safeguarding policies displayed, which he confirmed ours is.

There is a man called Luke who is of concern to the Diocese Safeguarding team. He has been to Sandhurst but did no damage, just re-arranged certain items in the church.

14. Correspondence

There was none.

15. Confidentiality of Proceedings

There was one item.

16. Any Other Business

Sidesmen Training

Mr. David Collard reported he had conducted a session of training for half our sidesmen which also included fire training. He will shortly organise a session for the remaining sidesmen.

Fire Risk Assessment

Diocese have sent out a very large fire risk assessment document for parishes. We already have a fire risk assessment document in place and Mr. David Collard is currently reading through the one sent from Diocese to see if any alterations/amendments are needed to our present one. He has so far not found any major changes but reminded the meeting the PCC are responsible for having such a document in place.

Girl Guides

Revd. David Commander reported on Saturday 7th October there will be Girl Guides in our vicinity as while they are staying at Benenden School they are due to undertake a six mile walk and we are leaving our toilets open for them.

10th Anniversary

Sunday 15th October marks ten years since Revd. David Commander was appointed to our Benefice. There will be a celebration after the 10 am service.

Royal British Legion

The RBL have a new standard. This will be dedicated in church on 29th October in time for Mr. Ian Malaugh to parade it at the Albert Hall at this year’s Remembrance Day service.

17. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Monday 23rd October 2023 in St. George’s Church at 7.30 pm. This will be an important meeting to discuss Project 20/20.

The next PCC meeting will be on Monday 27th November 2023 in the Memorial Hall as usual.

The meeting closed at 9.18 pm.

Signed Dated