

MINUTES OF GREAT BRICKHILL ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING,
HELD IN THE CHURCH ON TUESDAY 28th APRIL 2015 AT 7.30pm.

The Reverend John Waller took the chair.

The Rector opened the meeting with prayer, and welcomed all those attending.

PART I: THE ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING

ELECTION OF THE CHURCH WARDENS:

The Rector explained that with the New Church Wardens' Measure in 2001, the maximum term of office for a Church Warden is 6 years without a break – an exemption is possible for this Rule if a motion is passed before the meeting commences. Dr. Agambar who has served for 10 years said that she is happy to continue as Warden. A motion was passed that there is an exemption to the Rules in order to allow Dr. Agambar to stand for a further year of office. This was agreed by all present.

The following nominations had been received prior to the Meeting:-

- Dr. Christine Agambar proposed by Mrs. Helle Hopkinson, seconded by Mrs. Chris Baker.
- Mrs. Valerie Beardmore-Baldwin proposed by Mrs. Phillipa Cook and seconded by Mrs. Helle Hopkinson.

Dr. Agambar and Mrs. Beardmore-Baldwin were duly elected.

On behalf of all present the Rector thanked Dr. Agambar and Mrs. Beardmore-Baldwin for their work over the last twelve months as Wardens. The Rector said that he was very pleased that Dr. Agambar and Mrs. Beardmore-Baldwin would be serving for the coming year.

PART II: THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

APOLOGIES were received from 5 people:- Mrs. Beardmore-Baldwin, Mr. Simon Bennett, Mrs. Juliet Bennett, Mrs. Margretta Smith and Mrs. Pauline Waller.

An Attendance Sheet was circulated. A total of 19 parishioners were in attendance incl. nine PCC members.

MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 29th APRIL 2014

The Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting had been available in advance. The Minutes were approved and signed by the Rector as a true record (proposed by Mr. Jeremy Hopkinson and seconded by Lady Sally Duncombe).

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

None.

ELECTIONS:

a). Nine Members of the PCC.

The Rector informed the Meeting that the number of PCC members allowed for the size of our Electoral Roll is 9. At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in 2004 provision was made for the annual appointment of representatives on the PCC. There is also facility for two people to be co-opted on to the PCC during the year if there is good reason to add more people

The Rector expressed his thanks to the members of the PCC members for serving for the last twelve months and for agreeing to stand again for this coming year.

Details of all the Nominations, received prior to the meeting:-

<u>Name of Nominee:</u>	<u>Proposed By:</u>	<u>Seconded By:</u>
Clare Amies	Simon Bennett	Julia Turner
Simon Bennett	Juliet Bennett	Phillipa Cook
Phillipa Cook	Chris Baker	Julia Turner
David Duncombe	Julia Turner	Phillipa Cook
Angela Northen	James Northen	Phillipa Cook
Margretta Smith	Andrew Smith	Julia Turner
Julia Turner	Phillipa Cook	Betty Kinsey
Joy Wilson	Julia Turner	Betty Kinsey

As the number of Nominations was eight there would not need to be an election. All eight people were duly elected to serve on the PCC.

The current Deanery Synod Representative is Mr. Jeremy Hopkinson - the three-year term of office comes to and end next year when there will need to be an election. The second post remains vacant.

b). Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2016.

The Treasurer said that Mr. David Beatty had acted as Independent Examiner for this year and was willing to continue. Proposed by Mrs. Clare Amies and seconded by Mrs. Julia Turner, Mr. Beatty was duly appointed as Independent Examiner for 2016. The Treasurer recorded his thanks to Mr. Beatty.

c). Sidesmen.

The Rector gave the names of those who currently serve as Sidesmen:- Clare Amies, Tim Amies, Chris Baker, Phillipa Cook and Betty Kinsey.

The Rector thanked them for fulfilling the role of Sidesman saying that others can be added informally to the list during the year. Following a proposal by Sir David Duncombe, seconded by Mrs. Joy Wilson all the Sidesmen on the above list were elected for the forthcoming year.

TREASURER'S REPORT INCL. ANNUAL REPORT:

Copies of the Annual Report had been distributed in advance of the Meeting. The Treasurer, Mr. Neil Cook, presented the Accounts and referred to the "Review of the Accounts" section in the Annual Report. As the regulations for accruals accounts are now very onerous the accounts are prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis.

The Parish Share had been paid in full. The Share for next year will see an increase of 2½%.

The Rector said that the amount raised by the fund raising and gift aid donations was an encouragement and blessing. Meeting the costs of the running church and parish share is always a challenge to people's direct giving.

The Rector said that the written part of the Annual Report had been streamlined this year but includes everything that is required by the Charities Commission. The Rector gave an update on the section dealing with the Deanery:

- Jeremy Hopkinson is our Deanery Synod Representative

- There had been a number of changes to clergy within the Deanery. All incumbent posts are now filled. A new post had been created – Revd Val Plumb would be taking up the post of full time Dean to cover our Deanery and others.

Adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts was proposed by Mr. Joy Wilson and seconded by Mrs. Angela Northen. All were in favour of the adoption of the report.

The Rector thanked the Treasurer for his continuing work as Treasurer.

ELECTORAL ROLL:

Mr Jeremy Hopkinson reported that four new members had joined the Electoral Roll since the start of the year. The current number on the Roll is 54.

WARDENS' REPORT ON THE CHURCH BUILDING AND ITS FABRIC:

Dr. Christine Agambar presented the Wardens' report:-

“Val and I would like to thank everyone for the support that they have given us during the past year.

This report concerns the state of the church building, its interior and the churchyard and Val and I believe that we have good news to report. As you will probably have already read, in Bulletin number 2, we have carried out a number of repairs to the exterior of the building and we have also revealed the church to the world as they travel up Manor Hill. The problems that this work remedied were all recommended in the 2014 Quinquennial Report that was carried out by the Church Architect in May 2014, just after the last Annual meeting. At the last Annual Meeting I told you about our concerns that water was coming into the church in several places where the roof met the masonry walls. I also mentioned the dampness located in the wall behind the font. Unsurprisingly, both of these issues featured in the Quinquennial Report.

The report concentrated on four issues that required immediate attention. The most pressing were the repairs to the roof. We were also required to find a solution to the land and down pipe drainage, especially on the south side of the church and immediately adjacent to the porch. We were also asked to improve the air circulation around the church, especially on the North side, where the high trees were preventing the walls from getting the air and light needed to dry out properly and one tree was brushing the masonry and needed to be cut back. The architect also commented on the safety hazard of the back path steps and the damage to ancient gravestones due to low hanging branches. Finally our architect recommended an immediate conservation repair to the clunch stone dressings around the windows and doors and a repair to the masonry that had been eroded away by frost in the French drain and at the base of the wall buttresses. In addition he advised that we had an infestation of masonry bees that had eaten away the lime mortar especially on the chancel walls.

We set about getting in local contractors to undertake this work and applied for the necessary permissions to the tree work in a conservation area. The benefits of being in a Benefice became apparent in that we were able to get reliable contractors on recommendation from our three partner churches. Both the roofing contractor and the stonemason are real ‘finds’ and are willing to undertake two yearly inspections for us to remedy any incipient problems before they need costly solutions. The tree pruning work caused us the most heartache because we knew that the change would be dramatic. However, it seems to have met with universal approval and we are busy doing the conservation work on long-since covered ancient grave stones. The bank has been regraded and will be seeded with grass when we have a wet spell. The old gate and posts of Victorian wrought iron are being stored in a safe place. We are extremely grateful to David Duncombe, our Patron, for his support in this tree work and for his smart new boundary fence. We are about to treat large patches of brambles and nettles with brushwood killer.

Very little has changed in the interior of the church over the last year although we are now using the Lady Chapel as a flexible space for a variety of purposes, while ensuring that, between these uses, the Chapel is available for quiet reflection and prayer.

The organ contract with Midland Organ Company is working very well. Combining tuning with immediate and timely repairs twice a year means that the organ is playing really well.

Our links with Mr Darlow and his generous uncharged-for-support means that we have got to grips with the mouse infestation. Thanks go to Steve for dealing with the corpses in the most trying places and also for emptying the chemical toilet regularly.

We have got rid of the jackdaw and rook infestation in the Bell Tower only to find that now we have small birds causing a problem, but a solution is available by putting up some fine material netting.

Looking to the coming year, we are about to apply for three faculties to undertake small changes inside the church. Two of these are prompted by accidents to those using the church.

First we are applying to change the profile of the font plinth. The plinth is valuable, raising the Rector and family during Baptism. However the plinth has an overhang and your toes just fit underneath causing people to trip and fall. Our plan is to reprofile the edge of the plinth to remove the overhang while keeping the Victorian edge tiles and making these attractive tiles more visible.

Second, we are applying to remove the altar plinth in the Lady Chapel. The Rector finds the plinth awkward when he presides at Communion and the stone edging is sharp and we worry that the toddlers and young children using this area to play and toddle will fall and hit their head on the edge. The stone plinth will be recycled in the third planned project.

Thirdly, we are applying to remove the two long front-most pews to increase the space between the lectern, pulpit and chancel steps. We believe that a range of users will welcome this additional space. One pew will be relocated in the Lady Chapel and the second will be safely stored. Stone from the altar plinth will be used to cover the floor when the wooden plinth is removed. No other changes to the interior are being planned at the moment.

We trust that you are content with this programme of works and we are happy to answer any questions that you may have.”

Mrs. Anne Marlow thanked the Wardens for all their hard work during the last year and this was endorsed by all those present.

RECTOR’S REPORT:

The Rector gave an informal report using a power point presentation, which included photographs of many of the events that had taken place during the year. The power point presentation is an Appendix to these minutes.

The report was split into six different headings:-

Mission

Bishop John emphasis – he is keen for us to enhance mission as normal life of the church. This is a challenge to churches and is being dealt with through the MAP (Mission Action Plan) process.

There is a new structure of PCC agendas across the Benefice – priority to mission, but realisation that what we did more mission work before than we realised.

(The following points are aspects of or related to mission)

Worshipping

Regular pattern of services (inc. Family Services) – spiritual life at the heart

Special services – Songs of Praise, High Ash (inc. Pop UK), Christmas, other festivals, etc.

(Example:- The Nativity Service featured a procession from the Old Red Lion followed by service in the Church with 63 children & 90 adults)

Average weekly attendance on a normal Sunday:- 25. The Average for Family Services (excluding special services e.g. baptisms):- 44

Gathering

Church/village events - Christmas Fair, Snowdrop Walk, Plant Fayre, etc.
Concerts, and choir activities

Giving

Volunteer's contribution to church life. Annual Coffee Morning (huge range of ways that a large number of people contribute to our church life) 80 invitations to people who help on various church rota –50 attendees.

Direct giving from PCC funds (inc. 2014 'Pop UK'/School, 2015 Youth Cafe (thank-you card received) – both are part of mission)

Support for other charity collections, inc. Christian Aid, British Legion, Ebola appeal at Christmas, meeting target of giving 10% of total income.

Opening

Importance of building being open daily

Trees, improved view – already mentioned

Working on additional facilities – Bulletins published when there is any update.

Groups and events, current and future – new Happy Coffee Club on Monday mornings

Future – new housing development in parish? A distance away but would be close in church terms with two thirds in our parish, one third in Little Brickhill parish.

Thanksgiving – and Challenge

We can, and should, give thanks for these, and many more blessings

Personal word of thanks for support for me and Pauline

Encouraged by a lot of what we have seen this evening but there is always a challenge to do more, do better, with God's help and strength.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

There were no matters raised.

The Reverend John Waller thanked everyone for attending and the meeting concluded with prayer and reflection from the IONA Community Group at 8.50pm.

These Minutes should be read in conjunction with the presentation of slides. This is available as a PDF file on the website on the following page:-

www. <http://brickhillschurches.org.uk/great-brickhill/annual-church-meeting/>