

## **MINUTES OF GREAT BRICKHILL ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING,**

**HELD IN THE CHURCH ON WEDNESDAY 27th APRIL 2016 AT 7.30pm.**

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:-

<http://brickhillschurches.org.uk/great-brickhill/annual-church-meeting/annual-meeting-2917/>

### **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:**

Neither of the current Wardens were seeking re-election. The following nomination had been received prior to the Meeting:- Mrs. Julia Turner proposed by Mrs. Phillipa Cook and seconded by Mrs. Joy Wilson. Mrs. Turner was duly elected.

On behalf of all present the Rector thanked Dr. Agambar and Mrs. Beardmore-Baldwin for their hard work, not only during the last twelve months, but for the many years they had served as Wardens – 11 years for Dr. Agambar, two of those as sole Warden, and Mrs. Beardmore-Baldwin for the last three years.

The Rector said that he was very pleased that Mrs. Turner had agreed to serve for a second term, the last time she was in this position was 2010.

## **PART II: THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

**APOLOGIES** were received from 5 people.

An Attendance Sheet was circulated. A total of 19 parishioners were in attendance.

### **MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 29th APRIL 2015**

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, with particular thanks to those who were standing down:- Mrs. Clare Amies, Sir David Duncombe and Mr. Simon Bennett.

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

<u>Name of Nominee:</u>	<u>Proposed By:</u>	<u>Seconded By:</u>
Phillipa Cook	Simon Bennett	Valerie Beardmore-Baldwin
Mary Maley	Phillipa Cook	Julia Turner
Angela Northen	James Northen	Mary Maley
Margretta Smith	Andrew Smith	Phillipa Cook
Joy Wilson	Julia Turner	Phillipa Cook

**Total = 5 ( Maximum No. to be elected = 2 )**

As the number of Nominations was five there would not need to be an election - all five 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 an end in 2017 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 2017. The Treasurer recorded his thanks to Mr. Beatty.

**c). Sidesmen.**

The Rector gave the names of those who currently serve as Sidesmen:- Clare Amies, Chris Baker, Phillipa Cook and Betty Kinsey. Pat Clarke was willing for her name to be added to the list. 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 above were elected as Sidesmen 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. He reminded the Meeting that, as the regulations for accruals accounts are now very onerous, the accounts are prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis.

Total disbursements to charitable causes represents approximately 13% of Income Received. The daily running costs of the Church are currently in the region of £97 per day, excluding any major restoration costs

The Parish Share payment to the Diocese had been paid in full, £22,267 (an increase of 4.7%). The Parish Share for 2016 will be £22,955 (a further increase of 3%).

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 the current number on the Roll is 53.

## **WARDENS' REPORT ON THE CHURCH BUILDING AND ITS FABRIC:**

Mrs. Beardmore-Baldwin presented the Wardens' report:-

“Christine and I would like to thank everyone for the support that they have given us during the past year. Sadly, we are both standing down at this Annual Meeting, but with a mixture of regret and relief. But, we trust that you will agree that the Church is in good repair and is running smoothly under our custodianship.

This report concentrates on four issues concerning the state of the church building; its interior and the churchyard. Last year we emphasized the work undertaken in response to the 2013 Quinquennial Report. We had hoped that we would have a quieter year during 2015/16. We were sadly disabused of this hope! On June 13th 2015 the heavens opened and we experienced abnormally heavy rain and winds. Rain literally poured into the church along the North side and, on investigation, we found that 40% of the lead on the North Aisle roof had been stolen during the night. This was a huge shock and the whole Church community felt angered and violated by what had happened. The first priority was to mop up, contain the damage to the fabric of the interior and put up some emergency cover on the roof. The theft was reported to: Thames Valley Police; Ecclesiastical Insurance; The Archdeacon; The Diocesan Advisory Committee and Historic England. Emergency Repairs by a roofing contractor supplied by Ecclesiastical Insurance cobbled together some heavy duty polythene sheeting although some leaks remained and additional temporary repairs were necessary using self-adhesive flashing - this was installed by us mainly around the abutment to the Bell Tower where the lead flashing had been dislodged and damaged.

An assessment of the damage revealed that not only had 45 square metres of lead sheeting had been removed but also the remaining lead sheets had been damaged in the process with the lead flashing dislodged and slates broken on the Nave Roof. Consultation with The DAC and Historic England confirmed that a repair to the North Aisle Roof with bitumen roofing felt would be allowed. Our established Roofing Contractor (who had recently completed the repairs to the roof that were specified in the Quinquennial Report) said he could undertake the work in a couple of weeks and without the use of scaffolding - a potential major cost to us. The cost of the total repair was £5,900.00 and was carried out from 16 July to 23 July 2015. No rain fell during this period. The interior of the church has been entirely dry since last July.

In addition to the repairs on the roof, we have continued to undertake tidying of the North side of the churchyard. Nettle beds have been cleared. Also, clearing the vegetation has exposed some ancient graves. We are particularly grateful to Sir David Duncombe for his help in re-grading the church bank and for his newly repaired and rebuilt door into the Manor grounds. We hope that you agree that the church aspect from Manor Hill now provides a positive message to all who live and drive through the village.

In consultation with Great Brickhill Parish Council we have been able to undertake some clearance work in the Cemetery including removing some substantial weed trees and clearing the walls of ivy. We would like to thank the VIC Committee of the Parish Council and Rectory Farm for their hard work in making this possible.

Very little has changed in the interior of the church over the last year, although you will have noted the smart red Pew Cushions made by a band of friends who were adept with a sewing machine. The cushions enhance the comfort of the pews and brighten the interior of the church. We have continued to discover greater versatility in the use of the Lady Chapel and yet are able to retain a quiet and dignified Worship Space at other times, enabling the Chapel to be available for quiet reflection and prayer.

Throughout the year we have sought to facilitate the PCC's emphasis on Mission by providing flexible and welcoming arrangements for many forms of service that will (hopefully) relate and inspire a greater range of people and ages. It is good to be able to report that, in our opinion, Church life here remains healthy and buoyant. We are particularly pleased to be able to provide facilities in support of Children's Church during Family Services and for the Drop-In Coffee Club

on a Monday mornings. We were also pleased to host services organized throughout the year by High Ash School and, for this year, the week-long Easter Experience. We have served coffee for parents before many of these services and this is much appreciated.

There has been very little time this year to undertake the desired work to modify the interior of the church a little (removal of front pews) although work on the font plinth is in hand. We pass these plans onto our successors to implement as time and money allows.

It is time to say farewell – but, to thank you all, once again for your support, friendship and valued advice. We leave the dratted sound system for others to curse – it will NOT be missed by us! ”

The Rector again 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.

### Thanksgiving:

For all services and activities, volunteers and helpers

For financial giving, and fund-raising

(Personal word of thanks for support for me and Pauline)

### Mission:

The church building – open and welcoming

New contacts through special services and events, baptisms, weddings, etc.

Care and help for others – often in quiet and informal ways

Giving to mission from PCC funds – this year to Bridgebuilder, cf work in High Ash  
(money given in memory of Tim Amies – use to support mission projects)

### Social life:

Supporting the community life of the village, various organisations and events

A wide range of informal relationships and contacts with people

Social (and fund-raising) events (recent change of emphasis in planning, publicity)

### Practical maintenance:

Voluntary help with many tasks around the church and churchyard

Care for the church building – and development for mission

Finances – direct giving and Gift Aid, as well as fund-raising

### Spiritual growth:

The centre of church life is in our worship and prayer, in our regular services and in home groups, Lent groups, etc. (could we do more?)

Archbishops’ Call to Prayer – ‘Thy Kingdom Come’, May 8th-15th

### Challenge:

Work at both the outer edge of mission and outreach,  
and the core of worship, prayer, spiritual life and growth

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

A report on the Bells had been received from the Tower Captain, David Middleton – see Appendix I

The Reverend John Waller thanked everyone for attending and the meeting concluded with Compline at 8.45pm.

## **APPENDIX: I**

### **Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Great Brickhill**

**Annual Church Meeting : 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2016**

### **Great Brickhill Bell Ringers - Tower Captain's Report**

#### **Ringling Activities**

This past 12 months we have been able to ring bells for the majority of services at our church, although we continue to have a shortage of ringers, which we are trying to rectify by recruiting and training new ringers, and, as always, we would encourage anyone over the age of 10, who would like to try ringing, to join us on our Wednesday practice nights at 7.30pm, or contact one of our bell ringers. We are currently training four new ringers, and continue to benefit from the help of external ringers. During last year, we lost one ringer, Janet Oakes, to the beauty of the Lake District.

During those 12 months, we have rung eight bells for three weddings last year, and one this year, with only one more remaining to be rung this year. We have also rung the bells half-muffled for Remembrance Day, for the funeral of our dear friend Tim Amies, and in memory of our long serving tower captain, Hugh Butler, for whom also quarter peals were rung on eight bells both here and at Woburn. Brickhill ringers rang also at his funeral at Whaddon.

Furthermore, for national celebrations, bells were rung to commemorate the bi-centenary of the Battle of Waterloo, the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day, and last Thursday for the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday, for which we rang here with the Woburn bell-ringers co-ordinating with lighting beacons on our village cricket ground and elsewhere nationwide.

Since October, when the Woburn bells ceased ringing for re-hanging, we have been ringing quarter peals at Great Brickhill once per month with the Woburn bell ringers, and, in order to enhance our ringing skills at Great Brickhill, we hope to continue those events after the Woburn bells are recommissioned.

#### **Tower maintenance**

After five years since re-hanging our bells, the bell ropes are showing signs of wear, and already we have spliced and replaced several broken ropes. We anticipate that within the next two years, we will have to replace most of the ropes, which will cost us approximately £1,600 from the bell-ringers rope fund, Additional expenditure is required also for ringing room fitments.

The wire netting over the belfry louvre windows which was replaced last year has proved to be inadequate to keep small birds out of the belfry, and they are fouling the bells and wheels. Consequently we will have to re-install the small gauge netting, and once again spring-clean the bells and belfry.

Furthermore, the bell-ringers are custodians of a set of hand-bells which are in very poor order, and we have been quoted nearly £2,000 to refurbish them. The bell-ringers are exploring ways in which we can raise that amount.

In **Conclusion**, it has been a successful ringing year at Great Brickhill, although we continue to need to enhance our skills and increase our complement of bell-ringers. Once again, if you, or anyone you know, would like to help us and learn to ring bells, we will be pleased to teach you, for which we continue to utilise the help of several very experienced external ringing teachers, so that we are able to cope with any numbers of new recruits.

David Middleton.