



Parish of Fleet
All Saints
St Philip & St James

Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting held on
Monday 24th April 2023 at 7.30pm in Fleet Parish Community Centre

1. Opening Prayers

The Revd. Mark Hayton opened the meeting with prayers. He welcomed everyone to the annual meeting.

2. Present

Revd. Mark Hayton (Chairman), Revd. Cally Burch (Curate), Nick Doran (PCC Secretary).

Mike Benham, Anne Biffin, Brian Biffin, Joan Blower, Sheila Buller, Richard Buller, Sue Butterfield, Amy Canham, Jean Carr, Jan Cole, Linda Dart, Kate Dashwood, Nancy Dawson, Richard Dexter, Dick Fawn, Mike Ford, Carolyn Ford, Chantelle Gardner, Mary Goodson, Sally Hastings, Jean Hawkins, Claire Holt, Sue Huddie, Antony Jones, Jane Jones, Karen Kite, Tim Kite, Sarah Leedham, Kerensa Pearson, Brian Tant, Susan Taylor, Jenny Thorne, Shauna van der Spuy, Ruth Waller, Dawn Ward, Peter Ward, Kate Wickenden, Anne Williamson and Rod Williamson.

2. Apologies

Sue Benham, Trish Brooker, Lynda Hix, Mike Huddie, Rosemary Jones, Judy Keep, Dian Kitts, Graham Kitts, Anne Richardson, Anne Smith, Robert Smith, Erica Taylor, Chris Waller, Elizabeth Waller, Geoff Wickes and Yvonne Wyatt.

3. Minutes of the last Vestry Meeting

The Annual Vestry Meeting Minutes of Monday 25th April 2022 were approved by the meeting with one correction. Proposed by Jean Carr, seconded by Mike Ford, agreed by all present.

4. Matters arising therefrom

None

5. Election of Church Wardens

Revd. Mark Hayton thanked Antony and Jenny for their extraordinary service, friendship and wisdom over the last year and reminded the meeting that much of their work is unseen by most people.

Antony Jones is standing down as Church Warden at this meeting after six years service – as required under CofE guidelines. He was presented with a card and gift on behalf of the Parish.

Mark explained that, at this time and despite various approaches, there was no candidate to replace Antony as Church Warden. He made clear that Antony would not be asked to stay on and nor would any former Church Wardens be approached. This matter needs to be resolved by 29th June at the latest, this being the planned date of the Archdeacon's visitation at which new wardens are officially appointed. He appealed to all present to think and pray for a resolution to this situation.

Jenny Thorne was proposed as Church Warden by Amy Canham and seconded by Jan Cole.

In the absence of any other nominations, Jenny Thorne was elected unanimously by all present.

The Churchwarden's Meeting closed at 7.40pm.

Signed.....



Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Monday 24th April 2023 at 7.40pm in Fleet Parish Community Centre

1. Present and Apologies

As Vestry meeting.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

There were no corrections to the minutes. ***The APCM Minutes of Monday 25th April 2022 were approved by the meeting without correction. Proposed by Antony Jones, seconded by Jan Cole, agreed by all present.***

3. Matters Arising

None.

4. Election of PCC Representatives

The Vicar thanked all PCC members for their service over the past year. He explained that four of them were due to step down at the end of their three year term – Richard Buller, Amy Canham, Jean Carr, Jean Hawkins plus Darren Wood had stepped down having left the Parish. This left five vacancies, with only two nominees – Jan Cole and Nick Doran.

In view of this Mark suggested that the parish rule - which requires a one year gap before a retiring PCC member can stand for re-election - be suspended for this year. This was proposed to the meeting by Jenny Thorne, seconded by Sheila Buller and agreed by all present with one abstention – Jane Jones.

Three of the retiring PCC members had agreed to continue in service, so the following were put forward to the meeting for election for a three year term.

	Proposed	Seconded
Amy Canham	Jan Cole	William Turner
Jean Carr	E Briscoe	Jenny Thorne
Jan Cole	Elizabeth Waller	Lynda Hix
Nick Doran	Richard Buller	Brian Biffin
Jean Hawkins	Jean Carr	Dawn Ward

There being no further nominations the above were duly elected to the PCC.

The new list of Elected PCC Members is as follows:

PCC Member	Remaining Term of Office
Amy Canham	3 years
Jean Carr	3 years
Jan Cole	3 years
Nick Doran	3 years
Jean Hawkins	3 years
Sarah Leedham	2 years
Dawn Ward	2 years
Peter Ward	2 years
Mike Benham	1 year
Linda Dart	1 year

5. Election of Deanery Synod Representatives

Deanery Synod elections take place every three years and new representatives are required to be elected this year for a three year term. The following nominations were received for Deanery Synod:

	Proposed	Seconded
Richard Fawn	Jane Jones	Antony Jones
Sally Hastings	Antony Jones	Sheila Buller
Jane Jones	Mike Ford	Erica Taylor

There being no further nominations the above were duly elected.

6. Presentation of Annual Accounts

The treasurer welcomed all to the presentation of the Parish Accounts and started his presentation with a caution that it should be noted that the accounting period (2022) still reflects the effects of Covid and was again not a “typical” year.

He went on to outline the major points from the accounts which showed:

Total Assets of £1.5m of which:

- Land/Buildings/Fixtures: £652k
- Unit Trusts: £111k (126K last year)
- Disposable cash (net current assets): £707K (£847k last year)

He clarified the net current assets as being predominantly the money highlighted for the All Saints development

The land, buildings etc figure is lower than last year as a) we continue to depreciate assets on an annual basis, b) we are not required to review the value of P&J for this purpose so we save money by not doing so and c) following discussion at last year’s meeting, and comments received from our independent examiner (and others) the PCC took the decision to write off in our accounts the £20k value of share of the minister’s house at Church on the Heath. Discussions with the Archdeacon continue

but as far as that figure is concerned the related house has been sold, we (Fleet) were not involved in the transaction (but the Diocese was) and we do not have a realisable interest in the new property. The item has to be removed from the accounts.

Effect of 2022 result on our money:

He stated that there was a general fund surplus of £13k (following previous years' surplus of £29k and a loss of £33k the year before) and the net cash available at 1st Jan 2023 for Parish activities was approx £174K .

The budgeted spend for 2023 is £247k (up from 212k), broadly: Parish share - £109K, F&M & Oasthouse Drive - £12k ; Parish Office - £28k (incl magazine, printing, postage, salaries, telephone, IT equip) and included other budget elements for social expenses / youth / training / outward giving, but he cautioned about the imminent effect of higher cleaning and utility costs

He then went on to list the highlights of 2022

- Parish Share (£108k): remains materially unchanged for 2022 and 2023
- Good income from recovery of income tax (£25k received in the year, plus ASF £6k).
- Significant Halls/ PJ Church lettings (£48k) – continuing the recovering from previous years' direct consequence of Covid.
- Social events and Coffee Bar income (£8k) (£6k the previous year).
- Magazine advertising income (£5k) - an important element of our outreach.
- Noticeable capital reduction in Unit Trusts (-£15k), and some dividends and bank interest (£9k) – interest rates started to come up late last year.
- Continue to progress the use of electronic income transactions (don't forget the card reader).
Too much cash (temporarily) in current bank accounts at year end (£400k) – further invoices expected from Buxton (£360k) but not appearing when we thought (being continually challenged by our architect and quantity surveyor), and it is impractical to invest when call on money will be instant.
- Direct Charitable Giving is low, £750 to the school, £300 for Mudeford, £144 to Historic Churches. We no longer have the pantomime raising funds for children's charities, but we do have Gift Days (Compassion UK, Leprosy Mission , Christingle and other collections). We are continuing to move more towards encouraging payment direct to charities, which will not be reflected in our accounts, to reduce cash handling and administration – especially for Gift Aid).
- Planned giving holding up at £94k. Many of our donors are now in the Direct Debit scheme, which provides for (optional) automatic inflationary increases to their giving. Nevertheless, overall giving levels are not keeping up with inflation (10%!) and this is a major concern.
- Current forecast budget deficits for each of next few years - 2023 £54k, 2024 £55k, 2025 £71k - although forecast deficits don't always materialise, the new All Saints, possible Children and Families Worker (in the plans), a

repaired roof for FPCC (new urgent item not in budget yet)– all need funding in some way

- To do this (our challenge) we need to maximise our income resources!
- Income resources is not the only area of giving to be maximised – giving of our time and talents are equally important and always welcomed.

In summary for the year we have seen some continued post Covid recovery. We have been very careful with our money.

He concluded by thanking the treasury team – all those who count, bank, advise, manage the planned giving scheme, and Richard Buller and the Finance and Admin Committee for their support. Tim Kite for examining the accounts – and volunteering to do it again this year; Juliet Worthington – for doing Payroll calculations; David Worthington and Jean Carr for controlling the planned giving and claiming the tax refunds from HMRC.

The Vicar then invited questions from the meeting:

Karensa Pearson had a question for clarification about the insurance situation with All Saints church. Mike explained that the final payout remains the subject of negotiation with our insurers (EIG) , ourselves and our professional advisers. The figure shown in the accounts is the amount received from EIG to enable the PCC to pay relatively small invoices directly . Until recently large invoices have been paid by EIG (now by the PCC).

Rod Williamson suggested that not everyone would use the card readers and perhaps we should reintroduce cash collections. Jenny Thorne said that a retiring cash collection had now started at All Saints. Mike explained the difficulties of banking cash with the closure of HSBC in Fleet, plus the higher average donation value received through the card reader and the desirability of encouraging donation via the direct debit scheme. Both cash and card payments fall under the Gift Aid small donations scheme so tax recovery can take place.

Revd. Cally Burch suggested that we should draw more attention to the QR code as an alternative to the card reader. It was agreed that this would be publicised more prominently.

Dick Fawn commented on some alternative investment cash accounts (such as CCLA) which could be worth investigation by the Parish finance team.

6. Review of Annual Reports

The Vicar guided the meeting through the Annual Report, commenting on the activities of each group and asking their members present to stand and receive the applause of the meeting. Specific comments raised included:

- Thanks to Sheila Buller for 23 years service as the Parish Safeguarding Officer, her successor is to be Liz Whiting.
- At P&J the Brian Meeres legacy has now all been spent on various improvements. Antony Jones needs a contact with the Meeres family so that can be thanked again.
- Richard Dexter had a question about the All Saints organ. It was explained that the current instrument is on temporary free loan, the permanent new one has been specified and awaits faculty approval.
- Mark stressed the importance of the Coffee Bar as a means of community outreach. Opening days will include Saturdays from 13th May onwards.
- Christian Aid Plant and Cake sale will be in P&J car park on 20th May – Karen Kite needs help with the refreshments.
- The musical life of the parish has improved greatly with the formation of the two new choirs and other changes. Thanks to Robert and Anne Smith for leading this.

7. Electoral Roll Report

Mary Goodson advised the meeting that 3 new people had joined the Electoral Roll, but 4 had left.

The total on the roll at the Annual Church Meeting 2023 is 160, representing 124 households.

8. Engagement of Independent Examiner

The Vicar thanked Tim Kite for examining the parish accounts and for his continued good advice to the Finance team.

Tim has agreed to undertake the independent examination of the Parish Accounts for a further year.

A motion to confirm the engagement of Tim Kite as Independent Examiner of the Parish Accounts was raised. Proposed by Claire Holt, seconded by Jean Carr and approved by all present with one abstention – Karen Kite.

9. Vicar's Report

The Vicar's report had been circulated in advance of the meeting and is shown below.

This has been an extraordinary year for us in the Fleet Parish, a momentous and exciting one during which we have seen not only the reopening of our beloved All Saints Church, but also growth in our congregations, big changes in our worship programme, and a number of new projects coming to fruition.

Quite simply God has been at work among us, doing wonderful and surprising things. He has brought us many delights and blessings, along with a few challenges, but overall, this has been a year of great blessing for which we offer our thanks and praise.

At the same time, I would like to offer my thanks to all of you who in any and every way contribute towards the rich and varied life and ministry of the Parish of Fleet. I will thank some individually at the APCM, but here I would just like to thank you all, whoever you are and whatever you do.

After the trials and struggles of recent years, and the long journey we have been on together, I would like to think that now and, in the year ahead, we will have the chance to enjoy and celebrate all that God has done and is doing here in our parish. We can sometimes be too distracted by small niggles and difficulties to enjoy the much bigger blessings that are right in front of us. So let's make this a year of celebration and enjoyment.

An old catechism used to sum up the meaning of life as this 'to know God and to enjoy him forever' and for me this still works pretty well!

As the people of Christ in this place, that is what we are here for, though our calling as a parish is to honour and praise God and to build his kingdom. We have the very great privilege of being a kind of 'Showhouse' for the Kingdom of God - to show the world what his kingdom is like, to build heaven on earth and to invite people to enter it.

Aware that this is God's work, and that he will complete it with us, without us or despite us; we have nevertheless been working extremely hard to build the kingdom on firmer foundations over the last year. To this end we have had some big projects in play...

- *Using All Saints to introduce more people to Christ.*
- *Reshaping our worship to better praise and honour our Lord.*
- *Helping more people to find their place in mission and ministry.*
- *Enabling more families and children to get to know Jesus and to become his disciples.*

In the year ahead we will continue to work on these areas of our life together, with particular emphasis on bringing more families and children to Christ. God is doing these things and he invites us to join in. What an exciting time this is! Don't miss the chance to get involved! May God bless you all in his service.

In his verbal comments Mark then asked the meeting two questions:

- Who would like to see more children in Church? (Most hands in the room went up.)

- Who would like to see radical change to our services? (Almost no hands went up.)

Mark used this to illustrate the dilemma we face – we cannot achieve the first objective without the second.

He then asked the meeting to discuss briefly the following two questions about our parish life - in small groups:

- What delights you most?
- What would be your one prayer?

There was no formal feedback, but many felt that the parish is already open-minded, friendly and welcoming. Looking forward there was strong feeling about the need to attract young families and children, and that new service styles such as Café Church are the way to achieve that.

In conclusion Mark specifically thanked Cally for all she has done during his recent illness. He also thanked Tina and all his family for their help and support.

On behalf of the meeting Jenny Thorne then thanked Mark for his hard work and strong leadership over the past year.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed

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