

Holy Innocents Church

Meeting of the PCC

5th June 2024

Those Present Rev. Benjamin Edwards (Chair), Kathy Drakes, Tim Frost, Betty Holdgate, Claire Mackichan, Angela Pearce, Peter Robinson, Linda Scoles, Jane Dalton

Fr. Ben welcomed all the PCC members and opened the Meeting with prayer, saying too that we should make decisions in the Spirit, not in the flesh.

1. *Minutes of the Last Meeting*

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th April 2024 were approved. Proposed by Kathy Drakes, seconded by Betty Holdgate, all in favour.

2. *Safeguarding*

Kathy has been “getting her head round” all that Safeguarding requires. She said that she must make sure that everyone has done their training. Kathy and Fr. Ben will have a meeting when Fr. Ben has done his Safeguarding Leadership Training. It is important to prevent Safeguarding issues from occurring.

3. *Finance*

Kathy went through her helpful Report.

It is important to find an *Examiner for the Accounts*. We urgently need someone to examine the 2022 Accounts, and the 2024 Accounts will need to be done. Neha who is doing the 2023 Accounts cannot do the 2022 ones, but Peter suggested that we ask Neha’s firm, and Kathy will enquire. And Neha may be able to recommend someone. Betty suggested Steve Bartrop in Stowmarket, and if necessary Betty would be happy to approach them. The decision on who does them doesn’t need PCC approval.

It is important that the Accounts are displayed publicly, and hopefully Kathy will have them soon. She will circulate them to the PCC.

It is important to appoint an Examiner for the 2024 Accounts, and the PCC were happy for Kathy to ask Neha if she would do them.

Treasurer As Kathy does not wish to continue as Treasurer, Betty and Peter have come forward and offered to help. So Kathy has agreed to stay on for a further year. The three of them have devised a plan to divide the role between them.

It was proposed that the *signatories* on our account should be : Kathy Drakes, Tim Frost, Peter Robinson, Betty Holdgate. The PCC were in agreement with this. Once this has been implemented, Betty and Peter will take over drawing up cheques with Tim and Kathy to sign when necessary.

Sarah Robinson will do the *banking*, and everyone was in favour of this.

Kathy will set up a *shared drive* with the financial information during the w/c 24/6/24

From July Betty will start to write up the *spreadsheet* and do the end of the month Reconciliation. Kathy will continue to do the analysis.

Finance Sub-Committee Fr. Ben asked if the Finance Sub Committee are happy to continue, and they are. The Committee comprises Kathy, Tim, Linda, Peter and Betty, and everyone is very happy with what they are doing.

4. *Church Buildings* Tim gave a helpful report

Drainpipes Several down pipes need to be renewed. They are cast iron and some have cracks, and rain may get into the building. Tim has two names for quotes, and will put this out to tender.

Toilet The plan had been to instal a new toilet where the present one is, and drainage would run from it in a pipe under the grass verge of the footpath to the driveway, for about twenty metres. The water and sewage would disperse naturally in the soil, and this is suitable for the light use that the toilet has. We haven't got estimates yet.

There was a discussion on the possibility of having the toilet inside the Church, where the Children's Area is, or built against the wall outside with access from the Church. This would considerably help the elderly and disabled, who have much difficulty in accessing the outside toilet in its present position. It was felt that this is well worth pursuing, and Tim will approach the Archdeacon and the DAC to see if they would give permission. The Refreshments drainage could hopefully be incorporated. The Children's Area could be moved to adjoin the Lady Chapel. Tim will take some photos for the Archdeacon and the DAC to see.

5. *Fundraising*

Various possibilities were discussed. The *Ely Choir* which goes around singing in different Churches would have a vacancy in March next year, which we will accept. and the Warwick Lowe Choir is a good possibility. We could raise funds for something specific, such as the toilet.

We could consider having a *Barbecue*, and approach food producers in our surrounding villages who may like to publicise their produce in an event like this. We could consider hiring the Village Hall, paying for this and the insurance.

Another event we could consider is a cheese and wine quiz. The social aspect is valuable.

It would be good to have a Benefice Diary, perhaps on the website, giving the dates for planned events so that we and St. Peter's do not clash with dates.

6. *House Groups*

It would be good if we could try having House Groups where people could share their insights and experiences and, perhaps having four or five questions to discuss, and coming together in prayer, strengthen the bonds of the Congregation.

We used to have House Groups before the pandemic, and they haven't been restored. Fr. Ben spoke to the Congregation about it, to see if anyone would like to organise this, but no-one came forward. He has spoken to some people who thought they might be interested in coming to a House Group. Kathy said she would be happy to host a Group if Fr. Ben would lead it (it's difficult to do both) and Fr. Ben said the Vicarage could be used. Once a year we could have a cheese-and-wine get-together. We will start this, and see how it develops.

7. *Pride Event*

Fr. Ben will be attending the Bury St. Edmunds Pride Event on 22nd June. The Rev. Ali Miller from Lark Valley and North Bury team will be with him there.

8. *Booklets for Children being baptised or having to deal with death*

The Mothers Union has produced a little booklet with prayers for children being baptised (£5.99), and there may be a booklet for children having to deal with death. And it would be good if we could keep in touch with these families, perhaps sending Christmas cards and Anniversary cards. We could ask if the children would be interested. Everyone agreed that this would be a good idea.

9. *Bibles for Children leaving the Primary School*

Kathy reported that last year when we asked for donations for individual Bibles we didn't get much, and the Bibles were £12 each. About 27 are needed. However it is a nice idea, and the School likes it. Perhaps we could just ask for donations towards the total cost, and indicate how many Bibles we are looking for.

10. *Mice and other pests in the Institute*

Mice have been getting in through little gaps in the doors, and through pipes, and it's important not to have food debris lying around to encourage them. And we don't want rats to come in. Fr Ben has a background in pest control, and will inspect as well as giving advice regarding discouraging mice and proofing works to be completed.

11. *Wild Flower Meadow*

Tim reported that the Wild Flower Meadow in the Churchyard had been sown, and the Parish Council will help towards the cost – possibly paying the full cost.

12. *Date of Next Meeting*

The next PCC Meeting will be held on Wednesday 4th September at 7.15 p.m. in the Church Institute.