

St Peter's Church, Shipley
Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
held on 30 April 2023

John Rainer opened the meeting saying that St Peter's was a registered charity and so obliged by law to have an annual meeting, The meeting would be in two parts: the vestry meeting for the election of churchwardens for all residents of the parish and the APCM for church business and election of PCC and Deanery Synod members, which electoral roll membership was needed to vote for.

Apologies for absence had been received in advance of the meeting and taken on the day. All of the documentation for the meeting had been available on the church's website.

Vestry Meeting

There were 61 adults present at the meeting.

1. **Minutes of the Vestry and Annual Parochial Church Meeting of 2022:** had been circulated in advance. These were **proposed by Jo Baxter and seconded by Martin Newman** and accepted by the meeting with 4 abstentions.
2. **Election of Churchwardens:** John had received two nominations Mervyn Silva, proposed by Eric Parker and seconded by Mike Moss, and Gemma Richards, also proposed by Eric Parker and seconded by Mike Moss. This meant there were two nominations for two posts and Mervyn and Gemma were declared properly elected as churchwardens for the 2023-24 year.

John said that every new churchwarden brought different things to the staff team, which were often quite important and this had been true of both Mervyn and Gemma. He wanted to say how grateful he was to both for their work on behalf of the church and for the unique things they both brought to the staff team.

Gemma thanked the congregation for their encouragement to her and Mervyn as churchwardens and said she had been struck by how many people behind the scenes do so much and so she thanked all for everything they did and for making it as easy as possible to be churchwardens. John added his thanks to the large group of people who look after the running of three services each Sunday, all of which needed a warden or deputy officially on duty, and he thanked all who took on that responsibility, which was vital to keeping the church running.

The vestry meeting was closed at 10.40am.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

This followed on from the Vestry Meeting. Those present were the same.

1. Minutes of APCM 2022:

The Minutes of the meeting in 2022 had been made available in advance.

The minutes of the meeting were proposed by Mark Jordan and seconded by John Rhodes and accepted as a correct record. There were 6 abstentions.

2. Annual Report of PCC Business 2021 and Accounts:

This was not an account of everything done but a summary of the PCC's business which needed to be presented to the Charities Commission along with the accounts of the PCC. Sections 1-3 had been written by Gemma and Mervyn as wardens and vice chairs of PCC during the vacancy and Section 4 was written by Mike as treasurer. The report had been approved by the PCC and circulated ahead of time. There were no questions on the report. The full accounts had also been available in advance and John asked Mike to address his report and the accounts.

Mike thanked everyone for their giving and the large group of people who did financial tasks, authorised signatories, Andree, Kerry, Gemma, Mervyn and Mark Jordan. Mark Davies kept us on the straight and narrow with Gift Aid, Kerry did an amazing job on invoicing and encouraging the use of our halls by other people which brought in income; Andree had been working on Shipley Neighbours and Warm Spaces accounting; Kerry, Duncan and Gemma had all been working on getting grant funding in; Elisabeth Sture did the banking each week and all the group leaders that collect in funding.

Last year we had completed the roof repair and got the solar panels up and working. Income had reduced about 12% on the previous year but last year was inflated by the roof repairs and all the generous giving on that. We did increase wages by 4% for all our staff and worked hard to make sure that we paid the living wage to all our staff as a minimum. We had paid 78% of the share that was requested by the diocese. We would have liked to pay 100% but we had paid more than our calculated share figure, which was reducing, but our requested total was still higher than our calculated share figure. We also employed a new administrator following Judith's retirement in February with Kerry joining at Easter.

Income was down to £239,000 and regular giving was slightly down and we had unfortunately lost one or two regular givers. Donations was lower - but because we weren't looking for roof appeal donations - and grants and gift aid

were reduced for the same reason, although we had had some grants last year, largely from the council for projects including warm spaces and Shipley Neighbours and the Platinum Jubilee Party. Hall hire was pleasing as this had increased by £12,000. A lot of this was down to Kerry and her managing keeping the halls busy. Some of the users were regular groups such as uniformed organisations but there were now others including AA and CoAnon and quite a number of different community groups. This year, we were expecting HIVE, the charity which works out of the Kirkgate Centre in Shipley, to relocate here for a year while their building was redeveloped, Monday-Friday in the upper room and the small hall, which would bring in a reasonable income as well as being able to reach out to the community and use the halls. A number of children's parties had been going on as well and were working out OK.

Expenditure was also down on last year and the main reason was that the hall roof repairs weren't included last year. Mission giving was up substantially on the previous year and we did pay more share than in the previous year although not the total asked for. Repairs were massively down last year and we had a number of things that came last year that we wouldn't normally expect to get on a regular basis – an electrical check of the whole of the church and the plant which was nearly £3,000, plastering in church and a lot of tree work done on the land at Fernhill to solve some issues for the sports clubs. There were a lot of bits and pieces that went on last year and we had put in the CCTV system which cost around £4,000 and installed a defibrillator. The defib came from money in the former LOC mission fund after we'd paid our funding for the CAP debt centre and so the defib was bought and installed for community use which had been activated 4 or 5 times already. Youth work was reduced because the youth worker left before the end of the year, general spend increased because of the staff salary increase. We tried to keep expenditure down as low as possible but there was a lot of use on the buildings which were aging and needing a lot of upkeep work.

The church does not have a massive amount on deposit, the mission fund looked low but this was because money in that fund built up over the year. Youth work fund had increased slightly since last year but this was because we hadn't had a youth worker. The LOC fund had ceased and funding used partly on CAP and partly on the Defbib. General fund had been largely spent as we tried to pay as much as possible from there to the Share and we put £500 away each month to build up a contingency fund and we would be looking at increasing that further. The fabric reserve fund went up slightly as all was allocated for different projects – lounge heating, the new av screens etc - so mostly allocated and largely spent already this year.

The youth work fund had £13,000 in currently and had now increased to nearly £17-18000. This still was not enough to run youth work for more than a couple of years and so the PCC was still looking at that situation.

Solar panels had generated 20,368 Kwh and exported 14,680, we had consumed 18 and imported 13. It was looking very good and we had benefitted by lower bills to the tune of around £760 and were getting around £150 income in, which would hopefully increase over the years so the solar panels had been worth doing.

In summary it was not too bad. We were looking for alternative funding sources and maximising the income we can get from property but that also had related costs so we needed people to continue to be generous.

Cynthia Hargreaves asked, with the increased use of the buildings, what the impact was on the cleaner/caretaker. Mike said we were doing our best not to increase work for Martin as the agreement with the hirers was that they cleared up after themselves. We were keeping an eye on the situation with regard to employment and we would probably be asking people to volunteer to let people in as this was the key issue, but we were keeping an eye on the situation.

Claire Wright said that the Scouts were grateful to the church for providing the halls. She asked whether money was moved around between funds. The restricted funds were kept separate as they could only be used for those purposes. If we decided we didn't need one of them, the PCC could make a decision to resuse the money for a different purpose but we would have to consult the givers as the money had been given for a purpose. Fabric was all for repairs and building work, youth fund was all for youth and children's work-related employment and general fund was for anything the PCC wanted to use it for.

Liz Bals said she did think it was very important that we had a youth worker. It took a lot of money but not having a youth worker was very detrimental to helping with the youth work across the church. Mike said we are trying to employ someone, the job had been advertised for some time but we had not received any applications.

Lisz Porritt asked how generally we proposed to seek alternative income as we were running at a deficit. Mike said technically we weren't running at a deficit so we were using up funds that were put aside on the deposit account. We would never go below 0 and would only spend what we get in. The deficit was that we didn't pay the parish share in full which was the only way of avoiding deficit. This wasn't good, as it paid for clergy and the diocese did need the funding in – they were struggling at the moment and were on a year on year deficit situation. Mike said we were trying to increase income through individual giving and he encouraged everyone to review their giving annually - the Parish Giving System did this automatically if people opted in – but the more people giving regularly to the church, the better. John added that the deficit was mostly to do with budgets rather than actual spending. Every year we have our hearts in our mouths and it somehow works out that we have

enough by the end of the year, apart from the share. Pete Criddle said he didn't know the youth worker role was being advertised in the first round and were there other things that could be done to get it out to a broader audience. Viv said we had not actually closed the Youth worker advertising and would be going out to a second round push in a few weeks and anyone with any suggestions as to where we could advertise should let John or Viv know and we would make sure they were followed up.

Grant funding was an important potential source of additional income for us in the future and John asked anyone who might feel called to volunteer to help with sourcing and producing grant applications – a time-consuming process – to let him know.

John thanked Mike for the work he had done. **Peter Dyer proposed and Jo Baxter seconded that the annual report and accounts for 2021, as already approved by the PCC, be adopted by the APCM. This was passed unanimously.**

3. **Appointment of Independent Examiner for the 2023 accounts** – John explained that our accounts were independently examined and accounted by Hart Wright Accountants who were a local firm who understood church finance very well and had done a good job for us over a number of years. **It was proposed by Mike Moss, seconded by Eric Parker and passed unanimously by the meeting that Hart Wright Accounting be reappointed as Independent Examiners for the 2023 accounts. This was passed unanimously.**

John explained that a number of annual reports on different areas of the church's life were produced and circulated but only some had to be brought before the meeting by law. :

4. **Electoral Roll Report.** This was a very short report but the numbers did not add up. John would investigate why the figures did not add up and would publish a corrected version after the meeting. The number had gone down because of the number of deaths that had happened over the past year.
5. **Fabric Report** – this report has to be formally passed by the meeting. There were no questions on the fabric report.

Martin Forbes asked about the cost of CCTV the cost of which wasn't included in the finance report. Mervyn confirmed that nearly £4,000 had been spent but Martin made the point that the amount should be correct. Mike confirmed the cost had been £4320. Mike explained that the installation of the CCTV had been included under equipment in the accounts and so had not been sent to the churchwarden for inclusion in the fabric report and apologised. John gave his thanks to all those involved in the upkeep of the building

John Rhodes proposed, Jo Baxter seconded and the meeting agreed to accept the fabric report for 2022 with one abstention.

6. Other reports:

Deanery and Diocesan Synod reports and Shipley Christians Together reports had been circulated in advance and there were no questions.

7. **Children's and youth report** – the report had been written by those involved in youth and children's work as the youth worker had now left for a new role. Matt Porrit asked whether the All Age service would be remaining in its current form and whether any changes were being put forward. John said there were no plans to change anything in the pattern of worship, although there might be opportunities to talk about the content of services and what went into them but there were no plans to scrap the current pattern of worship. Matt also asked whether there was anything being done to help with volunteering in the church which was a constant problem. John said we were always looking at this – we had just put a new Can You Help section onto the newsletter from this week with requests for new volunteers – John currently had 28 groups in the church who were asking for volunteers and it was difficult to keep asking with not enough response. Anyone with any ideas for increasing numbers of volunteers would be very welcome to put them forward. Some of the children's groups were very high priority on some of those lists.

Duncan said that he had been pleasantly shocked on visiting church on a Friday morning to see what was going on at See and Know – he commended everyone to come and see what was going on on a Friday and we needed to acknowledge that the congregation was not necessarily those who turned up on a Sunday morning alone and we needed to recognise the mission and the work that was going on, growing not only young people in the church but their families. We needed to seriously get behind Jessica and the team and get behind youth work and the new PCC needed to really sort out what was going on with youth work in the church.

Jessica thanked Duncan and said that God was moving among families in the church. Just before Easter we had had 64 under 5s and their families in the church hearing the Easting gospel and so many people were coming through the doors it was getting hard to keep the children safe because we didn't have enough pairs of hands to keep things going. She was worried that she might have to start turning people away. We had room for people but not the pairs of hands to keep them going. The children were coming into the church but not yet on a Sunday morning and she was trying really hard to get them along on a Sunday.

Karen Parkinson said that this was what church was about – Messy Church, See and Know and Warm Spaces but others needed to support the staff team and be prepared to get involved.

8. **Environment Report:** Jackie Loach said that we had had a good year and we were very close to our silver award as an eco-church but there were a few outstanding issues to do with buildings which were being worked on. She thanked everyone for their participation in the two services we had done in October and at Easter with a big focus on environmental issues and anyone who wanted to get involved would be very welcome. John thanked Jackie and Gemma for all the work they had done in driving this issue as we now thought about the environmental issues of every area of church life and they had helped us to understand what that means and start thinking in a different way.

8. **Elections to Parochial Church Council (PCC)**

John explained that there were elections to the Aire and Worth Deanery Synod (DS) this year and then to the PCC. Deanery Synod members were automatically members of the PCC.

We had four DS spaces and he had received 3 nominations :

Viv Brealey nominated by Sue Pedley and seconded by Frances Vose

Zahida Mallard nominated by Viv Brealey and seconded by Peter Dyer

Mike Moss nominated by Kerry Milwain seconded by Mervyn Silva.

John could take nominations from the floor for Deanery Synod membership and he asked for any nominations. None were forthcoming and so **the three were elected with one vacancy carried into the future.**

For the PCC there were 3 vacant spaces, 2 for 3 years and one for 2 years which had occurred as a result of the resignation of Duncan Milwain who was about to be ordained and could not continue in that role.

There was one nomination:

Frances Vose proposed by Viv Brealey and seconded by Julie Platt.

John could receive nominations from the floor for PCC places but none were forthcoming and so he declared Frances elected to the PCC, which would be really helpful especially from the point of view of her role in safeguarding in the church and we would carry forward 2 vacancies. The first meeting of the PCC would be on 15th May.

9. **Vicar's Report**

John started by saying a huge thank you to his staff team who have worked extremely hard sometimes under extreme pressure to keep the church going. In particular Kery, who picked up the administrator role just over a year ago and had presided over a near revolution in the office! John thanked her and wished her and Duncan well as they prepared both for the growth of the baby and for life after ordination at Bradford Cathedral. He was pleased to say that

we had made a maternity cover appointment in the office would be introducing everyone to Jenni Reid in due course.

To say the last year had been difficult was an understatement – we didn't expect Rachel to move on quite so quickly, and we had been one staff member down for over half a year. Never in 35 years in parish ministry had John talked to so many people describing burnout – volunteers and staff who needed to withdraw from frontline ministry to recover. This isn't just the case here – a great number of clergy colleagues were on long term sick leave for symptoms of burn out. John said he wondered if the church really knows how to minister to people experiencing this. We have to get handle on it as it will keep happening if we don't change the way we do church – any organisation relying heavily on volunteers is going to have great difficulty surviving in future. The position had also been affected by change in perceptions of mental health, the church now realised it had been sitting on a huge mental health problem and had panicked because the problem is so widespread. Many assumed the Bible has nothing to say because Jesus' healing ministry focussed on physical healing - but it is there. We know that God wants us healed and whole and we can pray for healing. At St Peter's, we do have a head start as we have a healing prayer team – but we need to remember it is not niche activity in a corner of church services and will have to be more prominent in future.

On 11 May John will have been vicar here for 20 years. In February this year, he had told the PCC that in November 2024 he will be obliged by Church of England rules to retire, as he will be 70. Last August, he had shared with the staff team and the bishop that he was considering retirement. He and Julie will be leaving St Peter's this coming autumn. At this point in time, they did not have an alternative home then and the search has been difficult as the property market been difficult. However, they were now about to exchange and looking at a count down to moving. This involves big change but was going to happen sooner or later and they feel this is the right time. Mike Moss, as lay chair of the deanery, would outline what happens when a vicar leaves. It was already clear that whatever happens, the next priest in charge won't stay for 20 years. The Diocese probably does have some sort of plan up its gaiters but we wait to see! The job will be to pray for the wardens, PCC and staff, who will have a major role in deciding what happens next. John asked people to pray that the values that have served us well are respected by them and any future staff, let that be your guide and don't just accept first the thing that comes along. The Bible, the cross and mission must continue as the basis for all we do. It hasn't always been easy and the diocese have not always given credit where deserved but it has always been a privilege to minister here.

Mike spoke about what the future process was likely to be. He said it was 21 years since we did this process before and things have changed and the current archdeacon runs a slightly different process. Usually, no process can begin

until incumbent has left or submitted formal documents which then means there is a state of limbo between announcement and leaving or retirement date. However, our Archdeacon likes to try and get things started before the incumbent leaves and so there would be a meeting with the PCC and the area dean and lay chair of deanery as soon as possible after current incumbent announces intention to leave. At that meeting he will ask the thoughts of the PCC for the way forward for the church and will lay out the process and any or all options. He explained current issues with regard to funding clergy and lack of clergy in training. A number of possibilities could be proposed. It might be like for like replacement. It might be a full time priest as vicar. However, it may also be decided we don't justify a full time priest - most of the decisions about that depends on the size of the parish. A Parish of our size is usually a half time priest role but we're a bigger church than most, so difficult to tell. Half stipend is 3 days a week plus Sundays. The diocese may decide that they want to suspend the living which means saying we won't have a vicar as such, but will have a Priest in Charge working in the church who will be responsible on a fixed term contract usually – could be full or half stipend and normally done where deanery and diocese see an advantage to possible changes, parishes working together and looking at reorganisation for example. They could look at an interim minister where a plan was already forming for future ministry and the role would be to see that plan through to fruition – probably a fixed term of around 3 years, such as Julie Bacon did after she left St Peter's in Kildwick, Connonley and Bradley. There are other options but those are the most likely. As a PCC representing this church we've already agreed to looking at the future ministry in Shipley when Brian Greenfield was appointed and also licensed here as an associate priest so that we could start to initiate conversation between 3 parishes about the future shape of ministry in Shipley, particularly as we knew John would have to retire before the end of 2024. There were lots of artificial boundaries in the area but any proposals that come forward for any pastoral reorganisation will have to go through a long and fairly tedious process and the PCC would have to be consulted at all stages. Mike would also be consulted as lay chair of the deanery. It was possible we may know before John goes what the option is but we will need to have a process that we follow, statutory meetings will need to take place, the production of a parish profile and brochure for the role but we can get started on that once we've met with the Archdeacon but it will all take time and effort. At the point we have the agreed parish profile and brochure, that can then go to an advert, then shortlisting and interviews were 2 people nominated by ourselves – normally churchwardens but can be anyone nominated by the PCC – alongside the archdeacon and the bishop. If someone is selected, checks and negotiations have to be done and the incoming priest may have to serve a notice period. There is an outside chance the bishop is aware of someone they think they could bring in quickly but not aware of that at the moment. Best case scenario, if everyone agrees

and there is a suitable candidate, could be by the end of the year but the more likely situation is that it will be spring to summer next year before anyone will be in place. In his memory, Mike can't remember a time when anyone has retired from this post and we've never had a situation going into an interregnum without a curate in place who could take on a lot of the work and do communion services. Times are going to be difficult and we are going to need people to stand up and help. We can't just rely on those who do it now. We will get help from the diocese but most of the priests will struggle with the workloads they have. We may have to look at different patterns of worship if we can't staff what we have now. We will try to keep you informed as much as we can and as much as we're allowed to but please be praying for John and Julie particularly as they retire. He asked the PCC members to stand and led a short time of prayer but stressed that there will be a long and difficult process to face.

10. Any Other Business for PCC attention: This was for individuals to raise matters that should be brought to the PCC's attention.

Liz Bals asked whether people were aware of how much work and what kind of work it needs to be on the PCC. John said the PCC were the trustee body for the charity and the key area for them was finance and whether the charity was being run properly as far as the Charities Commission was concerned. There was also an issue about vision and mission in churches as well.

Jessica Criddle said that in the church's values it says that we believe in outreach and active evangelism. What sort of activities - like Alpha courses telling people the gospel and giving them an opportunity to respond - are we doing or planning? See people coming into things that she leads, what this church is doing is great and really encouraging, great mission, all the enthusiasm for the eco church - all fantastic but we had not heard very much about mission and evangelism. John said the short answer was not very much at the moment partly because we were still looking at how we redevelop face to face things following the pandemic. Not gone as fast as we would like given the lack of volunteers but was being talked about and people could be sure it will happen.

Martin asked whether there were people here who would reconsider standing for PCC, given John's announcement. John said that the PCC does have the power to co-opt people so if people were interested they could be co-opted at the first meeting.

Joe Batt said that sometimes it seems to take quite a long time for people to find out what was happening following PCC discussions - could we have a short summary after each meeting so know what is discussed and what decisions are being made so people feel more part of what is going on. John said the PCC had already talked about this and the issue was being addressed.

Jo Baxter made an appeal for information to be communicated through the newsletter as well as on the website and the website was shown and explained to the meeting.

The meeting closed at 12.25pm in prayer