

Hughenden Parish Church Council

Minutes of Meeting - Thursday 14th November 2024 at 7.30pm in Church House

Present

Clergy: Rev Keith Johnson, Rev Helen Peters
Churchwardens: Andrew Cole, Frank Hawkins
Lay Reader: David Tester
Elected: Janet Booth, Clare Godfrey (Lay Chair), Roger Grant, Mike Hill,
Brian Morley, Antony Rippon.
Secretary: Susan Brice

(Colin Wilkinson visited the meeting for the first part.)

1. Opening Prayers

Keith showed a short film about safeguarding and Helen then read Psalm 91.

2. Apologies

Ben Sharp

3. Eco Church Heating feasibility report

Colin Wilkinson presented his report on the feasibility of various options for replacing the heating within the church.

Colin was invited to the next Standing Committee Meeting to move this discussion forward. The Committee expressed their thanks to Colin for his hard work in putting the report together.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 26th September 2024

These minutes were accepted by the PCC and signed by Clare Godfrey as Lay Chair.

5. Actions from previous minutes

These had been dealt with appropriately.

6. Matters arising not on the agenda.

None

7. National Lottery Funding

The PCC were asked if, in principle, they would be prepared to apply for and accept National Lottery funding for future church projects.

Discussion took place about this controversial and difficult subject but it was agreed that this was the only way to fund sizeable church schemes. The committee commented that careful thought would be needed before presenting this to the congregation and that 'community' was the vital word to keep in mind. It was pointed out that conditions are placed on Lottery funding of which the PCC should be aware. Any new building would have to be available to people of all faiths and of none. Keith said he would be quite happy with this as long as it did not involve worship by people of other faiths.

The PCC voted with 10 people in favour and one abstaining.

8. Treasurer's Report

Brian told the PCC that the oil heating would cost the church approximately £4,000 this year.

In the light of the Lottery discussion Brian commented that we would be seen as a sustainable church; important when making an application. We would need to demonstrate that we can invest in any future project and Brian suggested we could do so to the amount of £100,000.

Brian told the PCC that it seemed that from April 2025 listed places of worship would not be able to claim back VAT. This was in the recent government budget.

It was agreed that we should be working towards having architect's plans in place by the end of 2025 ready to apply for funding in 2026.

It was noted that the Parish Share for this year had gone down several thousand pounds.

Adele Russell (our auditor) had agreed to do the pay roll for the Children and Families Minister.

Antony noted that an electrical survey needed to be done in Church House. The inspection was overdue. He also told the PCC that fire safety had been reviewed in the Belltower and a camera might be required to show if fire had broken out there.

Frank commented that maintenance was needed at the bottom of the church path where tree roots under the tarmac are causing a hazard.

9. Display Screen Proposal

(Documents had been circulated)

It was agreed it was a good idea to have further monitors in the church to make life easier for the musicians and singers; both church and community.

Discussion took place about the possibility of asking for donations towards this cost. The committee voted in favour of the proposal with one abstention.

10. Vicar's Matters

The new sign (originally carved by Margaret Jaycock) will be placed on the wall by the gate of the MU garden. This was unanimously voted upon. The position was also agreed by the MU.

Shirley Brown had asked for agreement for a planter dedicated to Joan Steele (fully funded by the MU) to be placed on the MU garden wall. The PCC voted unanimously in favour.

Church Cottage - Keith told the PCC that a local firm had been employed to clear the cottage. It would then be deep cleaned and he envisaged that at the January meeting the committee would be able to visit the cottage, to enable informed discussion to take place about the future of the property.

Church Fees had been increased by 2.6% nationally and the 2025 fees had been circulated to committee members. The fees were unanimously agreed.

11. Churchwardens' Matters

Frank talked about ideas for Community Friends with thoughts of ways in which to further welcome people into the church.

Repairs to the nave ceiling would be completed by Christmas.

On the subject of candles in the church, it was agreed that at a future meeting the subject be brought back to the PCC, possibly once Antony and Keith had considered this further.

Andrew commented that the pest control firm had visited again. The Church House kitchen now seems clear but there had been problems in the North Room and North Chapel. Hopefully the situation had now been resolved.

12. PCC Subgroups

Mission

David thanked the PCC for their approval of the chosen Christmas charities.

He noted that Jen and Kevin Cable were at present in the USA before an expected return to Jaffa.

13. Deanery and Diocesan Synods

Mike Hill talked of the need for another lay member of the Deanery Synod and also one to replace him when he moves, as Environmental Representative for the Deanery. After discussion, it was agreed that this could be left until the 2025 APCM.

14. Safeguarding

No report

15. Electoral Roll

No report

16. AOB

Napfest 14th June 2025. Involvement in this event was discussed but no decision was reached. Possibly help at the bar would be offered.

Mike Hill finished the meeting in prayer and it was closed at 9.40 pm.

ACTIONS:

- **To get a proper display screen on the church smart meter. Who?**
- **Clergy to arrange a meeting to discuss how wedding and funeral fees are dealt with.**
- **Standing Committee to invite Colin Wilkinson to a meeting dedicated to heating proposals.**
- **Standing Committee to create a policy for the letting of Church House.**
- **Standing Committee to discuss safer recruitment policy to ensure they are compliant.**
- **Standing Committee to set Gift Day for 2025.**
- **Antony and Keith to discuss H and S situation with regard to candles in church.**

Susan Brice
(PCC secretary)

15th November 2024