

Hughenden Parish Church Council

Minutes of Meeting - Thursday 23rd January 2025 at 7.30 pm

Present

Clergy: Rev Keith Johnson, Rev Helen Peters
Churchwardens: Andrew Cole
Elected: Janet Booth, Clare Godfrey (Lay Chair), Mike Hill, Brian Morley,
Antony Rippon, Ben Sharp, Mark Sherrington
Secretary: Susan Brice

1. Opening Prayers

Keith opened in prayer

2. Apologies

Roger Grant, Frank Hawkins, David Tester

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 14th November

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

4. Actions from the previous minutes.

The actions were either in hand or will be held over until the next Standing Committee Meeting.

The Standing Committee will meet on Tuesday 11th February with Colin Wilkinson to discuss heating options. They will also meet on Monday 24th February.

Gift Day for 2025 has been set as 28th September.

5. Matters Arising not on the agenda

None

6. Treasurer's Report

Brian began by saying he felt we had finished the year in a reasonably good financial state.

The autumn Gift Day had raised over £9000 which was above budget.

The income from weddings and funerals was higher than expected but the running costs and general expenses were also far higher.

Gift Aid had been claimed back.

The Diocesan grant for the Children's and Families Minister was now coming in monthly.

Brian commented that the end of year accounts had been done but were not yet audited.

The VAT grant for listed buildings would continue for another year but will be phased out, which will cause a financial loss for any building projects we undertake in the future.

The PCC thanked Brian warmly for all the time and effort he puts into this role.

7. Tour of Church House Cottage and update

The PCC spent a short time familiarising themselves with the interior of the cottage before discussing the future of the building.

David Tester's thoughts on the matter were read out at his request. (David was absent from the meeting.) He felt strongly that the PCC should not move forward with letting the cottage and he listed several points that he considered to be problematical and that could well cause difficulties. Privacy, parking and our lack of choice as to whom the property might be let to were explored. The fact that we needed more space was discussed and as to whether the cottage could be utilised for this purpose.

A general discussion took place with many different opinions being voiced. Keith said that at this stage he was not asking the committee to vote on the future of the cottage. He proposed getting some professional advice in the near future.

Keith also said that he had given Chris Coyston permission to set up a temporary office in the cottage.

8. Fire Safety in the Tower/Vestry/ Bell Tower

Documents have been circulated concerning this.

Discussion about how to ensure safety from fire in the Bell Tower took place including the consideration of stand alone thermal cameras.

The committee were told that restricted funds existed for the bells and bell tower. Some people felt that whatever route was taken, the PCC should be responsible for the entire payment. Others would be happy for the Bell Tower to contribute to the costs.

There is now a candle policy that will be included within the fire policy.

9. Vision Group

Antony summarised where we were and what it was we wanted to achieve.

He told the committee that site meetings were planned to take place shortly.

The PCC were asked to consider who should be asked to be the project leader.

Antony said that a building scheme costing in the region of 2 - 3 million pounds was being contemplated.

10. Children and Families Minister

Chris Coyston, our new Children and Families Minister has begun work. He and his family have been welcomed and he is settling into his new home and job. He has already taken collective worship at Great Kingshill School and Keith has introduced him to Hughenden Primary School. For the time being Chris is working out of Church House Cottage.

11. Vicars Matters

Keith said that there had been a request for a memorial bench to be put in the churchyard. After looking at a photo, the PCC gave unanimous support for a faculty to be applied for. It was agreed to ask Frank about faculties that had been applied for with regard to the Biffa Bin and the Quiet Garden.

There is a dangerous overheating socket in the ringing chamber that Andrew said he will attend to.

Practical fire extinguisher training was requested by the ringers.

Andrew commented that he was arranging for the fire extinguishers to be serviced.

The ringers asked if a door bell could be installed outside the west door for late arrivals on practice nights. Ben Sharp said he would buy the correct sort of bell.

The idea of a Tower Open Day was discussed to happen this year which is the 150th anniversary of the opening of the restored and extended church in 1875. Possibilities were looked at including a family fun day and barbecue. Saturday 5th or 12th July were dates suggested and Chris Coyston would be consulted.

The problem of the cleaning and restoration of Disraeli's regalia in the chancel was discussed. The difficulty of getting the regalia down from the wall was accepted.

12. Churchwardens' Matters

Andrew reported that the nave ceiling has been repaired and the lightning protection has been sorted.

DM Music cannot yet set a date for coming and repairing the screen.

The Alpha course will start on 5th February.

A discussion took place regarding the need for a full electrical inspection of Church House and Church Cottage. Keith, Andrew and Antony will take this matter further.

13. PCC subgroups

Mission

In his report, David said that nearly £3000 had been given in the Christmas Charity collections. This had been divided equally between the 3 chosen charities: Embrace the Middle East, Shelter and Wycombe Women's Aid.

The focus for this quarter will be Growing Hope and there will be a speaker at the morning services on 23rd February.

Support for the Cables will stop when they leave Israel and move to America. David is researching possibilities that the group will discuss as to our future support to Mission.

14. Deanery and Diocesan Synods

Mike Hill told the committee that Julia Grant had been approached to become environmental advocate for the Deanery and he hoped this would happen after Easter.

15. Parish Safeguarding

Roger Grant's documents had been previously circulated to the PCC.

The 4 policies that required adoption were: Photo and Imaging, Whistle Blowing, Complaints, Social Media

All of them were given unanimous approval.

16. Electoral Roll

There was no report.

Forms are available online and in church for people to apply to be on the Electoral Roll.

17. AOB

None

Helen closed in prayer and the meeting finished at 9.43 pm.

ACTIONS

Held over from the November meeting:

- To get a proper display screen on the church smart meter.
- Clergy to meet to discuss how wedding and funeral fees are dealt with.
- Standing committee to create a policy for the letting of church house.
- Standing Committee to discuss safer recruitment policy to ensure they are compliant.

Actions from this meeting

- Keith to get professional advice about letting the cottage.
- PCC members to pray and think about who should be asked to lead our building project.
- Andrew to sort out bell tower socket that is overheating.
- Keith to talk to Chris Coyston about possible July dates for a Family Fun Day.
- Keith, Andrew and Antony to discuss a full electrical inspection of Church House and Cottage.

Susan Brice (PCC Secretary)

24th January 2025