

SULHAMSTEAD ABBOTS & BANNISTER WITH UFTON NERVET ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING HELD ON 17 APRIL 2016

PRESENT: Anthony Peabody, Jenny Peabody, Dorcas Green, Rosalind Coulson, Tess Watson-Smith, Margaret Griffiths-Eyton, David Shelley, Elisabeth Shelley, Irene Bokitko, Roger Taylor, Liz Taylor, Tony Holden, Julie Howell, Peter Plant, Jean Barlow, Ron Brobyn, Gareth Price, Barbara Young, Sylvia Davies, Antony Aitken, Ursula Aitken, Jill Brooks, Nancy Beabey, Rosemary Wallace, Peter Hazelden, Diana Bagshaw, Peter Newall, Angie Newall, Nora Frith, Ann Gillis, Shelagh Frost, Caryl Bucknall, Edward Bucknall, Keith Chopping, Penee Chopping, Pat Willoughby, Peter Sanders-Rose, Rosemary Sanders-Rose, David Smith, Ron Ponting,

APOLOGIES: Franny Hornblow, Sheila Price, Felicity Holden.

ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHONERS

1. Election of Church Wardens

Revd Anthony Peabody (AJP) opened with a prayer.

Ros Coulson (RC) and Dorcas Green (DG) were happy to stand as Church Wardens for the next year and were duly elected.

2. Appointment of Lay Vice Chair

Ros Coulson was happy to continue to serve and was duly appointed.

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

3. Minutes of the 2015 APCM.

RC thanked everybody for attending and drew attention to the minutes of the 2015 APCM meeting which had been circulated previously. There were no amendments and these were proposed by David Smith and seconded by Dorcas Green. All in favour and RC duly signed the minutes.

4. Election of PCC members.

Penee Chopping and Andrew Hyde, whose three year term is ended, have agreed to stand again. This was proposed by RC and seconded by Tess Watson-Smith. Peter Plant has agreed to stand for one of the PCC vacancies, proposed by Jenny Peabody and seconded by David Smith. Edward Bucknall has agreed to stand for the second vacancy, proposed by AJP and seconded by Diana Bagshaw. Julie Howell has agreed to stand again as a co-opted member, proposed by RC and seconded by DG. member. All present were in favour of all candidates,

Simon Lindley stood down as Honorary Treasurer in 2015 and Franny Hornblow has kindly agreed to stand, proposed by Tess Watson-Smith and seconded by RC. All present were in favour.

5. Report and Election of Sidesmen

Mrs Pat Willoughby thanked all the sidesmen for their excellent service, both on Sundays and larger services such as festivals and funerals. Elisabeth and Mark Shaw-Brookman left last summer and their duties have been filled by Peter Hazelden and Sheila Price. David Mott has agreed to join the team and the following have agreed to stand for re-election: Antony Aitken, Guy Betts, Irene Bokitko, Dorcas Green, Margaret Griffiths-Eyton, Peter Hazelden, Peter Plant, Gareth Price, Sheila Price, Roger Taylor, Pat Willoughby and David Mott. These were proposed by Pat Willoughby and seconded by Peter Sanders-Rose. All present were in favour. Pat also passed on thanks from Sheila Price to the church cleaners and particularly to Jenny Peabody for all their efforts.

6. Annual report

RC commented that in reviewing the annual report, how wonderful it is that so many people are involved in working for the parish in various ways. Highlights of the year included moving the Iona Service to the first Sunday, the new roof and particularly the tile signing. She expressed thanks to Tony and Felicity Holden for their help in transporting tiles to the school for signature. The SUN School retreat day in June was a true first and the summer fund raising events has been most memorable. RC expressed her thanks to Penee Chopping and her fundraising team. The church website was also noted as a very important part of our future and RC expressed thanks to Tony Holden for maintaining this.

7. Financial Report and Election of Independent Examiner

Franny Hornblow was unable to attend but produced a detailed report. Expenditure has been high but there has been much support from our community, as well as the fundraising team. Jo Wells has agreed to stand as the new independent examiner: this has been approved by the PCC and was now proposed to those present. There were no questions and proposal to accept the report and the appointment of Mrs Wells was proposed by David Smith and seconded by Antony Aitken.

8. Electoral Roll Report

Jean Barlow reported that five names had been removed from the roll following deaths and moves. Several others had joined and there are now 106 on the role. Mrs Barlow thanked Jenny Peabody for her help and Pat Willoughby for printing the new roll. RC thanked Jean for her efforts and

reminded those present that maintaining this number is vital as it allows us to retain our three Deanery Synod members

9. Magazine Report

RC reminded those present of the importance of the parish magazine as a visible church presence in the community. Felicity Holden kindly agreed to edit the magazine when the Shaw-Brookmans moved last year: Felicity was unable to attend so Tony Holden presented her report. The magazine continues to be distributed throughout the local area and made a small profit this year. Sheila Price has handed over distribution of the magazine to Diana Bagshaw and thanks were noted to Sheila for her hard work and to all those who deliver the magazine each month. Felicity also thanked the regular contributors and encouraged new contributors. RC thanked Felicity for her sterling work.

10. Report on Fabric, Goods and Ornaments

RC reported that the quinquennial inspection took place in November and no major issues were noted although there are several small things to be taken care of. The good condition of the church is down to previous generations who have cared for it and also for those who are currently concerned with its care. The generosity of organisations and individuals who contributed to the cost of the new roof was overwhelming and particular thanks go to the Fuel Allotment Charity, Astor Foundation, Englefield Trust and the Berkshire Churches Association. Without their donations and the generosity of the parishioners, the roof would not have been paid for. The church also benefits from the weekly care provided by the teams of cleaners. We have a wonderful new stained glass window which provides a great pleasure to us all and a great big thank you to Ron Ponting. More mundane jobs have included the certification for heating and lighting in line with statutory requirements and the heating was automated. We are deeply indebted to a parishioner who donated the money for this.

11. Clergy Report:

AJP reported that we had done well over the year! Numbers have remained constant for ordinary Sunday services which demonstrates that we are a viable, vibrant church community. Occasional services, particularly those in the evening, have had a less successful response and AJP reminded those present that we need to maintain momentum. The first Sunday is now the Iona service, with sung matins on the fifth Sunday which means we now have an additional BCP service on the fifth Sunday. AJP expressed his gratitude to all those who assist with services, particularly David Smith our Sacristan, who has now trained Julie Howell in this role. Their efficiency ensure that things run smoothly, along with input from sidesmen, intercessors, flower ladies, PA system operators, lawn cutters and car park attendants! Operating the organ

is a skilled task and we now have a growing band of people able to do this. Special mention was made of Jenny Peabody's excellent support and both Rosemary Wallace and Peter Sanders-Rose commended the lent course, a sentiment endorsed by RC. Peter Hazelden thanked those who read the lessons.

12. Church Warden's report

Mrs Dorcas Green began by thanking AJP and Jenny for their tireless work on behalf of the parish. Aply supported by David, Julie and Mark, he has provided a warm welcome to both regular and new members of the congregation. On behalf of the parish Dorcas offered our thanks to them all. Over the last 12 months we have seen some huge changes to St Marys and been blessed with a number of visits from Bishop Andrew this year. He joined Anthony to preach at one of our Easter services, as well as his unforgettable climb up a ladder to bless the new roof! His final visit was another blessing, that of the beautiful 'Ponting' stained-glass window and another first for St Mary's – a full brass band in the chancel!

The team is always keen to try out new ideas and amongst the interesting services this year iwere walking the boundaries on Rogation Sunday and our Congregations' choice for our Patronal Songs of Praise. Innovative ideas have also been part of our out-reach programme and schools involvement too. July saw the first SUN school retreat day for those children about to leave: Dorcas thanked all involved in this and also for the SUN website, both of which were highlights at the Deanery Resource Day which we attended in September. This was hosted by the Rev Will Watts and it gave St Mary's an opportunity to showcase our church, activities and future plans: we are indebted to Rev Watts, our Priest in Charge, for his continued support throughout the last 12 months.

As we move into another year we remain positive and optimistic for our future: with every's support and prayers for the future we can only get stronger.

13. Deanery Synod report

Mrs Jenny Peabody reported that the Deanery Synod representatives have been David Smith, Peter Hazelden and herself. There have been three meetings, to which all members attend. The Deanery share was paid in full so that the parish received full rebate. In 2014, when we broke plurality with Burghfield, we agreed to honour the same parish share for 2015. At the June meeting, David Smith was elected as Deanery Secretary and the Deaneyr Resource Day was proposed at the same meeting. At the October meeting, an excellent presentation was given by the Secretary to the DAC on the system for obtaining faculties. The Deanery Resource Day was a success and the SUN contribution received wide acclaim. The deanery is on target to

meet the full share, with help from the contingency fund. The Deanery share showed overall increases of 4.2%: there is outstanding debate about the SUN parish contribution during 2016 which is based upon the parish having a house for duty priest.

14. Fund raising report

RC apologised that this was omitted from the agenda. Mrs Penee Chopping confirmed funds raised from previous events: Burns Supper was £1074, Bradfield concert £407, summer lunch £841 and the fete which raised £4856. The harvest lunch, although not a fund raiser, produced £280 profit and the grand total for the year was £7458. Included in this are proceeds from the 100 Club which currently has 111 members. Forthcoming events for 2016, include the garden lunch, an event with the Ufton scouts and the Fete which is being held on 4th September. Harvest lunch this year will be a BBQ at Ufton Court on 9th October which may involve the school and scouts too. Penee thanked her fund raising team and invited members of the parish to join this.

RC thanked Penee for all her efforts and emphasised how much work went on behind the scenes.

15. SUN School report

Mrs Diana Bagshaw reported that it had been a busy year with meetings with the head and teachers. There is a family assembly on Friday's to which all parish members are invited. The Explorers continue to meet in the Parish Room every Wednesday with Gill Tallett and Jane Evans. The Iona Service has attracted some children to attend and Christmas and Easter workshops were well attended. Ufton scouts helped to run the Produce Show at the Fete and 20 children from the school sang at the window dedication service. The nativity service on Christmas Eve was full. The roof tile signing was very successful with over 200 tiles being transported to school. The governors and PCC enjoyed a social evening in December and the retreat day was so important to the children. Diana confirmed that church and school are really integrated and the future looks bright!

RC thanked Diana for spending so much time in the school. AJP added that he sees our young people at Willink, in his role as a school pastor, and their integration into the wider world. He raised that more school pastors are needed and it is a way of easily associating with our young people in a slightly different way.

16. Future of the Parish

RC reported that, although we technically have Rev Will Watts as our priest in charge, the reality is more like an interregnum. The Church Wardens met with the Bishop recently but matters are more complicated with the departure

of Rev Gill Lovell from Burghfield and uncertainty about Rev Alison Jones's next move, who is currently occupying our rectory. Both the Bishop and the Archdeacon understand our dilemma but are unable to give any answers at the current time. The most likely option is that the rectory will be occupied by a priest whose role is split between our parish and other Diocesan duties. As an interim measure, the Church Wardens proposed to the bishop that Julie Howell, who has already spent a great deal of time in the parish, be appointed to the role of pastoral assistant for a 12 month period, to assist AJP.

RC invited Julie to explain and she described the role as one which serves the church, the congregation and the wider community, supporting AJP and church wardens including administration pastoral and sick visits, outreach to the school and other community projects. She has been a school pastor and used to be parish coordinator at Burghfield; Julie also has a licence to preach and give communion by extension so can offer a wide range of support to the church.

Julie left the meeting and discussion followed regarding the likelihood of a permanent priest being appointed, ownership of the rectory and funding of salary for Julie's proposed role. All agreed that the parish future was bound up with the rectory and RC confirmed that the Bishop and Archdeacon acknowledged this. However, AJP pointed out that our parish is an anomaly: we are probably the only single benefice rural parish in the Diocese and there is not enough work to support a full time parish priest. Equally, it is unlikely that there would be many priests looking to come to a parish like ours.

RC asked the parish to consider that we offer Julie the post of pastoral assistant for 20 hours per week on a 12 months' fixed term paying £12.50 per hour. This is on the basis that she must live in within the Deanery. AJP commended Julie to the parish and asked those present to encourage her in her vocation. David Smith added that Julie has done a fantastic job as sacristan in his absence. He also pointed out that, as St Mary's parish share is approximately £13k more than we should be paying without a house for duty priest, an approach is to be made to the Deanery for this money to be made available to pay Julie. The Church Wardens put the proposal to the APCM that Julie be appointed as pastoral assistant for 20 hours per week, at a salary of £12.50 per hour. This was proposed by Keith Chopping, seconded by Peter Sanders-Rose and voted unanimously by all present.

14. Lay Vice Chair Report.

Since all issues had been comprehensively covered in other reports, RC did not propose to make a separate report.

Pat Willoughby gave a vote of thanks to AJP and the church wardens, which was heartily endorsed by all present.

There was no other business and the meeting closed at 1.15pm with a prayer.