



PARISH OF ALL SAINTS CHURCH, HIGH WYCOMBE
Minutes of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting at 7.30pm on
Wednesday 18th September 2024 in Church

Present : Fr. Anthony Searle (Chair of the PCC) (Fr.AS), Derek Lancaster Licensed Lay Minister, (DL), Robyn Connelly (Children and Families Minister & Safeguarding Officer) (RC), John Lord (Treasurer) (JL), Jean Johnson (JJ), Mark Johnson Church Operations Coordinator (MJ), Edgar Samuel (Deputy Honorary Churchwarden)(ES), Sue Lord (Deanery Synod Rep)(SL), Barry Titchen (Lead member of the Deanery Synod) (BT), Linda Titchen Moorcroft (LM), Joc Lucas (JLs), Michelle Neudecker (MN), Sheila Doig (SD), Jacqui Brearley (PCC Secretary)(JB)

Note. The minutes have, in some instances, been re-ordered to gather items together under the headings set out in the original agenda.

Welcome from Fr Anthony (Fr. AS)

The meeting began with a PCC Eucharist.

1. Apologies

Revd Jackie Lock (Associate Priest)(JLk), Ray Levy (Deanery Synod Rep) (RL), Mike Salem (MS), Kath Dunn (KD), & Barbara Bowman (BB).

2. Safeguarding:

The new **ASHW Safeguarding Policy Agreement** (to be adopted from Sept 2024) was circulated before the meeting along with the Code of Safer Working Practice and the Parish Safeguarding Handbook (76 pages). The ASHW Safeguarding Policy Agreement, proposed by RC and confirmed to be almost identical to last year's policy with a few minor amendments, was seconded by ES and approved and accepted by the PCC members present. It was agreed that RC and ES would sign the Agreement on behalf of the PCC, and it will be displayed in Church.

RC commended the pocketbook version of the Parish Safeguarding Handbook which is a succinct precis and more accessible.

The **Code of Safer Working Practice**, for volunteers to sign agreeing to abide by the ASHW Safeguarding policy, also needs to be approved by the PCC. The question was raised about obtaining written consent when *taking photographs on personal phones or cameras as this means that images are stored on personal devices*. Fr AS clarified that this is when working on behalf of the Parish and also that the images might be used in documentation.

A second issue was also identified regarding services which are broadcast live on Facebook and YouTube as it isn't practical to get written consent from the congregation coming into Church; although there is a sign up in Church confirming that Live Streaming is taking place. It was agreed that the wording of the Code of Safer Working Practice should be amended to reflect the sensitivity of this issue but emphasizing that photos of children and adults shouldn't be taken ideally without written consent. When live streaming, the camera is usually set to wide shot to avoid displaying anyone apart from those on the platform, especially children. It was confirmed that visitors to ASHW taking photos of the Church are legally allowed to display them on Facebook.

A further question was raised about Mustard Club volunteers who take photos and it was confirmed that written consent must be obtained.

Actions

- *The wording of the Code of Safer Working Practice will be revised appropriately and also the GDPR policy will be examined in detail by DL, BT & RC. Both policies will be proposed for approval at a Ministry meeting and then by the PCC at the November meeting.*
- *Fr AS requested that MJ purchase 50 copies of the Parish Safeguarding Pocket Handbook for PCC members with the overflow available for any appropriate volunteers.*

3. Review of ASHW Policies

MS has kindly agreed to look in detail at the other ASHW Policies (as he has relevant working experience) with Thistle (EM – Parish Administrator) and MJ and renew the wording as appropriately for approval by the PCC.

4. St Francis & ASHW shared pioneer priest.

This has now reached the stage of being before the Mission and Pastoral Committees and they are voting on a recent briefing regarding this matter and have started to put together a Parish Profile in preparation for advertising the role which will take some time.

5. Curate for ASHW

Fr AS announced that a curacy has been offered to Mr. Joshua Harris beginning next June although this information is confidential to the PCC at the moment. He is currently an ordinand at a monastery in Murfield College in Yorkshire and has attended a Sunday Eucharist at ASHW. He is a young, single man from Oxford and will be offered residency at Castle Place as no alternative accommodation has been offered by the Diocese and Joshua doesn't drive. The question was raised whether the current tenants at Castle Place have been served notice yet. It was confirmed that 6 months' notice is required & that the current tenants do not have a Church connection and are very attached to the property. Also, that although section 21 of the landlord and tenancy act can be used to seek possession and evict tenants, especially if there is legitimate reason, the law on this is currently under review. If the tenants refused to leave, then alternative accommodation would need to be found for Joshua.

Action - JL kindly agreed to discuss the Castle Place tenancy situation with the agents.

6. Future Events – Harvest, Patronal Festival, Advent and Christmas Charity partners visiting ASHW (CMS & WRP).

Harvest – in support of the One Can Trust – Sunday 22nd Sept.

Patronal Festival – beginning of November. There is a possibility that a celebratory meal will be organized after the Sunday Eucharist.

Light up a life service – 30th November.

Carol Service – 1st December,

Christmas Craft Fayre – 7th December,

Mayor's Carol Service – 8th December,

Switching on of the Christmas lights – 16th November - which unfortunately clashes with a concert at ASHW despite the Church's best efforts to coordinate with the lights switch on.

Christmas Tree Festival – 17th December

Service of Nine lessons and Carols – 22nd December

Christingle, Crib service and Midnight Mass – 24th December.

School carol services - there will be a series of these as in previous years.

Advent books - ASHW will publicize a series of suitable books as last year.

DL confirmed that The Church of England have launched a campaign called Calm (before Christmas) and Bright (after Christmas) to continue the 'follow a star message'. Reflections are available via an Everyday Faith devotional app to read and listen to the Advent and Christmas messages.

It was suggested that this information and app should be published to the congregation as it is available all year round. Also a QR code could be printed on the service sheet.

There was a reminder of the Tues evening Zoom Holy Women sessions run by DL with a link on the Worship page of the website.

7. Approval of the minutes of the PCC meeting on Wednesday 17th July 2024

The minutes were proposed by MN, seconded by SL, approved, without amendment, by all present and then signed by Fr AS.

8. Matters arising from the above minutes

- **Mustard Seed Café – Free refreshments update**

Fr AS has asked MJ to instruct volunteers to allow free drinks for anyone in need (who are mostly known to ASHW) within reason; so for example a twelfth cup was denied to a visitor recently.

- **Oakley Hall & WHC (Winter backup venue - Update)**

Dawn Segrue (DS) raised it at a recent meeting with the Oakley Hall (OH) committee, it was discussed but is still unresolved and DS is looking for alternative venues. Fr AS clarified that as this will arise extremely infrequently when weather is very severe and he proposed that ASHW should agree to be an emergency venue. This was seconded by DL and agreed by all present. The details of how this would work practically need to be sorted out.

- **Church Warden Tasks**

Following a meeting between Fr AS, DL and MS, JB sent out a finalised list of assigned Church wardens tasks based on what individual PCC members had volunteered for, although some things are relevant to all PCC members. The list takes immediate effect and indeed some tasks are already done by certain individuals.

Items relating to Church Building have been assigned to MJ but to liaise with Fr AS as needed for secondary backup. Further volunteers for some things are still welcome such as 'providing a listening ear'. Also there are relevant footnotes added where needed and only one item is unassigned, which is the South Porch currently under review by the fabric committee.

With regard to sides people or Communion assistants, if SL is away other PCC member should be prepared to help. So, Fr AS recommended that PCC members should be identifiable with a badge which would be worn in Church, and this was thought to be a good idea.

Action - MJ to source the badges.

9. Team Reports:

9.1 – Worship & Liturgy (DL)

At the recent Liturgy meeting Christmas and Advent matters were covered.

LBTS services - Fr AS and DL have decided that it will be on the 3rd Sunday of the month every other month, establishing a regular pattern. It was suggested that as this is such a special service with a differing format to other ASHW services, they should be advertised more to the ASHW congregation & to other Churches in the team.

Offertory – The offertory procession will be reimplemented to bring the elements up to the altar.

Communion Assistants – Will come up earlier in the service during the offertory hymn rather than during the Lord's prayer. David Adamson has communicated this with communion assistants by email.

Choral Evensong – There was some feedback from a non-regular attendee that the music was much enjoyed but that the sermon seemed wrongly placed at the end of the service. DL explained that this is a historic throwback to Thomas Cranmer adding in the sermon almost as an afterthought to the prayer book format. However, the sermon is delivered between hymns so not completely at the end.

9.2 - Churchyard update (DL)

Fr AS is meeting with the town committee representative following discussion with the Police about whether an automatic rising bollard would be useful to stop unwelcome visitors parking in ASHW churchyard. This kind of bollard may be dangerous to elderly drivers or those with accessibility issues and if rammed into would incur excessive repair costs. A lifting arm barrier would be more appropriate, might possibly be funded by the town committee but would need to be set far enough down the path to allow a vehicle to pull in. However, this would require a faculty and there would be an issue accessing power (across the graveyard or from the nearest lamp post). The barrier might be operated using a keypad which could be set remotely. If parking across the graves continues, wooden bollards with rope between could be used to prevent this and instead of a lifting barrier, a five barred gate could be fitted. The ideas of temporary planters across the path entrance and improved signage were explored. In the meantime, MJ is preparing new car permits for volunteers on ASHW business. Fr AS hopes that the Police will investigate cars without these permits, but this will take place after a nearby shop refurbishment is completed as two contractors/painters and decorators vehicles have been parking in the Churchyard for the duration of the project with promise of a suitable donation to ASHW to reflect this.

Fr AS hopes the Police might implement an 'Anti-Loitering order' to stop the inappropriate behaviour of some antisocial Churchyard visitors selling drugs, etc. and also to put a stop to camping in the Churchyard. The current camper has been attempting to clear some of the area litter around the tent.

Unfortunately, the planning application to have CCTV fitted at the East end of the Church was declined a certificate of lawfulness. So, the CCTV in the Churchyard has to have Archdeacons approval and a full faculty is required to proceed with it.

A Creation Care Group meeting is planned for the end of the month and it's hoped future plans and progress can be made to care for the Churchyard such as having wild grass areas roped off.

9.3 – Pastoral Matters (Fr AS/DL)

Outreach - Fr AS & DL have been visiting and taking services at various care homes e.g. Shelburne Lodge, Little Oaks & the Star and Garter; all very well attended by residents and often Christian care staff too. Maureen also holds services at Hughenden Village. This is also resulting in more people from these communities watching live streamed services.

Fr AS also mentioned that having Church open every morning is a blessing as people who need help/assistance come in specifically to ask for it across the community, including people from Africa and Asia.

9.4 Children, Youth and Family Ministry – RC

Lighthouse, at Highcrest Academy, Hatters Lane – went very well. Initially there was a concern that it may not go ahead but there were a number of last minute volunteers and several from the ASHW community involved. So, it is hoped that Lighthouse High Wycombe will go ahead in 2025.

Activities Weeks in the mornings (10am – 12, Mon- Sat) throughout the School Summer holiday held in Church were successful and again well supported by volunteers (duly thanked by RC). Attendance was variable, however many people came in, some with children, who connected with the activities, engaged in conversation, and/or patronized the café. A number of contact cards were filled in and some enquiries made about Small Saints.

Autumn term – Blessing of the backpacks was popular with each person (children, teachers and support workers) receiving a blessed ASHW tag. RC has a further 40 tags to be blessed for the Church of England school year 6s. It was noted that quite a few children didn't bring a backpack, perhaps forgotten, but perhaps shoes or simply the children themselves could be blessed instead.

Ark, & Small Saints. – RC is going on a SEN course in November to support those needs which includes approximately 15% of children attending.

Youth Group – takes place on Sundays after the morning Eucharist and it's hoped this can be held once a month or more frequently, if possible, but this is dependent on volunteer helpers coming forward. Fr AS mentioned that all that is required of volunteers is a willingness to listen to the young people who organise their own activities. Currently approximately 6 people attend of varying ages.

9.5 Stewardship and Finance – JL

JL presented the stewardship and finance update and notes, distributed before the meeting. The greatest need is for financing increased ministry resources next year and to cover the loss of income from the Castle Place tenancy. It is hoped that the pastoral letter from Fr AS will encourage an increase in giving from the congregation. JL also hopes that volunteers will come forward to join and assist the finance team which will help to lighten the load for the treasurer and encourage the next person to come forward to fill that role. Donations to the new Charity partners will be started and those to the old Charities were discontinued in July.

9.6 Tenancy update – JL

46 Great Ground, Aylesbury – The new tenants are in and paying £100/month more than the previous tenants. ASHW, via the agents, have been able to recoup some of the lost rental from the old tenants who agreed to pay £300 initially and an ongoing payment of £500 per month has been requested. This, along with some of the deposit, gives hope of clearing some of the rent arrears.

Not much work was required before the new tenants moved in. The old tenants removed some of the old smoke alarms that were going off inappropriately, so an electrician had to fit new ones.

9.7 Buildings & Fabric Summary – Tobit Curteis Associate report Deterioration in the South Porch stonework - Fr. AS

The next task is to ask an architect to inform ASHW how to organize the repair work to the South Porch. Fr AS suggested going back to Richard Oxley, a historic building Chartered surveyor, for guidance with a

way forward; given the problem of salt rising from the area under the floor and contaminating the stonework. The latter problem is exacerbated whenever it rains so the Victorian stonework will need to be replaced with something more robust.

It is important that the existing drainage must be kept clear of weeds and ensure that wastewater is carried away not deposited on the gravel. The rat problem also adds to the issues.

Fr AS mentioned that two volunteers have come forward offering to do bid writing and look for potential funding pots and bodies. In order for them to progress with that, communication is key, and LM has kindly offered to keep the volunteers informed of the next steps required for the South Porch renovation work, provided she is kept in the information loop. This was endorsed by Fr AS.

The question was raised whether the DAC secretary has been sent a copy of the Tobit Curteis report which may be helpful to keep the DAC onside with the project.

Actions - Fr AS would like to find a volunteer from the PCC or congregation with the necessary skills to create a timeline of actions to tackle the South Porch project.

- Fr AS to keep LM informed of developments with South Porch to communicate to the bid writing volunteers.

9.8 Fabric Committee Meeting – 11.9.24.

The meeting was unavoidably postponed.

9.9 Oakley Hall Report & Committee Meeting 10.9.24.

Two main items were discussed:

- Work is required to maintain the OH windows, but the landlord has denied responsibility for the windows. However, John Brearley (JSB) informed the committee of a precedent stipulating that it is the owners and not the lease holder's responsibility to pay for this work so a letter will be written to that effect.
- The Cruse Bereavement Care tenancy has terminated, and two new parties are potentially interested in the office, WHC and Emma Reynolds, MP for High Wycombe for her constituency office. JSB is hoping to find an architect to make scale drawings of the OH for leasing purposes. Also, it has been suggested that there might be a rationalization of tenant occupancy as some tenants may be in larger suites of offices than they require. The hiatus agreeing the tenancy with WHC delayed the decision to be the emergency fallback accommodation in the event of bad weather.

Action – JSB to find suitable architects to make scale drawings of the OH.

- A letter is to be written to the OH owners regarding responsibility for window maintenance.

10. Review of meeting dates.

All the meeting dates below were agreed. Fr AS will organize a new meeting date for the SLT Strategy meeting which was postponed from Wed 11th Sept.

11. Any Other Unplanned/Urgent Business

- **Noticeboards** – internal and external at ASHW need to be updated, reorganized and illuminated effectively. Fr AS hopes to present an idea to the PCC at the next meeting. This would enable ASHW to display more clearly what is happening, who's involved and how operations relate to the other Churches in the team. E.g. St Francis, Terriers have a new noticeboard which would be a good model for ASHW.
- **1 : 1 Meeting Space** – We need a warm and inviting space perhaps where the current prayer desk is near the South Porch. Fr AS has enquired about the source of the chairs at the Star & Garter care home which are very comfortable and would be ideally suitable for this area. Perhaps in time the South Porch may be used for this purpose in the fullness of time.
- **Clergy News** from within the Wycombe Deanery Churches. St Francis are still in an interregnum, Wendy Bull at St Annes and St Peters Wyc Marsh & Micklefield and Johny Dade at St Mary's and St Georges, Sands are both going on sabbatical next year. Simon Dust at St Andrews is looking after Bourne End to do Mission work although they have a curate (Lydia Lee) in a supporting role at St Andrews & at St Mary's and St Georges.
- **Fr AS Pastoral letter** – for early-October in preparation for Stewardship Sunday. Hopes to encourage more regular givers at ASHW to move to the stewardship scheme to enable gift aid to be recouped. (The maximum amount reclaimable is £2K on non-gift aided donations and ASHW claims against gift aided donations to a maximum of £8K which credits ASHW with £2K (25%) back.)
- **'Unseen Echo's'** – is a touring exhibition of poignant photos taken by Chris Hall, being coordinated by Thistle (EM) at ASHW for 23rd Oct – 6th Nov, 2024. The photos will be displayed around the pillars. Fr AS questioned whether it is possible to fix directly to the pillars? Command strips have been used in other churches.
- **Organ Report** – Philip Wayne (PW) has received a report back about the work required to return it to its prime condition of around 1930, which amounts to a complete rebuild apart from the shell with costings of £775 000. PW has sent a series of questions. Fr AS would like the PCC to see the report and discuss it at the next meeting.

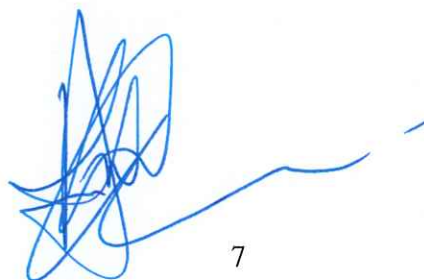
DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

SLT (Standing Committee) – Wednesday 6th November 2024

PCC – Wednesday 20th November 2024

*All on Wednesday. PCC meetings commence at 7:30pm in Church and SLT Meetings at 8pm at the Vicarage.
Unless otherwise stated.*

CLOSE: The meeting concluded with Fr. Anthony Searle leading everyone in prayer and closed at 9.45pm.



Approved in principle by the PCC

