

Minutes of the meeting of St Mark's Church Council

16 February 2011

The meeting opened with a reading and prayers.

Apologies: Jane Mason, Sam Cappleman, Margaret Appleton, Mike Elliott, Marion Prior,

Mary Stubbs, Janet Day, Alison Holden

Minutes: The minutes of the last meeting were accepted with the following amendments: -

Wendy Rider and Janet Ibberson were added to the apologies for the last meeting.

Leadership:

Delia had reported back to the Leadership Team regarding the future funding for Clubhouse. Bedford Borough will provide funding for a further 6 months, which represents half of the current funding needed. From October clients will be given individual funds or personal budgets. It was anticipated that procedures would be in place to ensure the budgets were spent in the correct way. Funding was, therefore, sufficient in the short term but would need to be monitored to ensure future viability. Funding for potential redundancies has been ring fenced within the Church accounts.

We are awaiting a response from the Diocese regarding our charity registration, which is complicated because of our status as an L.E.P. A notice promoting Messy Church will be included on the monitor screen in the Church entrance area and on the main Church notice board.

The new chairs will arrive shortly.

Bedford Town Band has been booked for Christmas 2011.

Dates for the Lent Course have been arranged; 17 March, 31 March, 7 April.

The folder containing minutes of Church Meetings is to be updated.

Donations for flowers for the Church displays on Sundays were always needed. The distribution of them after the service to people in the parish was very warmly received and thanks were recorded to Margaret Appleton for introducing this.

Centre Management:

Bookings are going well and, since the last meeting, five new regular groups have started: four of which are weekly bookings. In March two further groups will start up.

The next Centre Forum meeting will be held on 9 March. Meetings are held every 2 months and meeting dates for 2011 have been sent to all groups who are encouraged to send a representative.

A key pad lock has been fitted to the door in the small hall which leads into the back lobby area.

Re-decoration work will be carried out in the large and small halls as part of the ongoing maintenance of the premises. It is also planned to power wash all paths over the following two weeks.

Some concern expressed in respect to how clean and tidy the Wren Room is left by hirers. This would be reviewed, but could involve additional cleaning costs.

A heater and pump have been installed in the Garden of Remembrance pond. - Marion and Jean continue to maintain the garden in excellent condition, but Malcolm is no longer able to cut the grass. A rota of volunteers will be drawn up.

Work is ongoing to raise funding to develop the entrance foyer. Grant applications have been submitted, with offers of around £8000 having been made so far.

Some future redecoration will be needed in the toilets, when funding is available.

Finance:

Ian reviewed the accounts to Jan 2011, which showed that income was running slightly behind budget and expenditure was on target. The figures did not, however, include Putnoe Heights proportion of the Anglican Quota, which would be due in the next 7 days.

The first solar energy claim had been submitted.

The organ fund stands at £10 026 and the profit from the quiz night would be added to the fund. The faculty to replace the organ has been received and council members voted unanimously that we should aim to replace the organ in the coming months.

Clubhouse is running well currently but Ian, Charlie, Delia and Karen are closely monitoring the potential impact of funding changes.

Pre-school is full and therefore operating well financially. Staff have asked to be paid an hourly rate rather than by session. This will be easier to calculate and will be introduced. In addition it was proposed to set up a salary system where staff would be paid direct to their bank accounts. This will be arranged through Nat West with Charlie and Jim Williams as the principal authorisation. (forms completed)

By October 2012 stake holder pensions will have to be introduced. The Church is to accrue 1% towards this provision, which will also affect Putnoe.

Gift Aided giving was being maintained. The claim for the second 6 months of the tax year will be submitted after 5 April.

Council members thanked Ian once again for all the work he continues to undertake in looking after the Church finances.

Pre-school:

All running well with the curriculum and the books are full.

Storybox:

All is running well and the increased numbers have been maintained. Members thanked Janna and Valerie for the work that they do with the children.

Chat and Play:

Jo Garner was appointed as the new supervisor for Chat and Play in January. Numbers have increased and parents are involved in helping, which was really encouraging.

Junior Church:

Thanks were again recorded for the work done by Janna with the young people.

22 young people and parents had attended today's session of Messy Church which was excellent. Thanks to Wendy Waters and the team for all the background work that has gone into make this so successful.

It was agreed to install a remote projector in Church. This would greatly help activities with the young people and be of benefit to the whole Church and its users.

Pastoral Support:

The Pastoral Support Group is a very well used and valuable part of St Mark's. Following contact with Charlie, telephone calls and visits are made, when appropriate, by members of the team.

Telecare continues to be well used and thanks go to Jean, Valerie and Wendy who run this.

Home communions are taken by Charlie, Eric, Wendy, Valerie and Richard.

Monthly Holy Communion is taken by Charlie at Williams Harpur House.

Wendy Water (North Bedford) and Vera Pearson (Central Bedford) visit people through Friends for Life.

Jane keeps the team informed on activities at Anjulita Court and members from the Partnership give considerable voluntary help.

Thanks were recorded to Margaret Standley who regularly visits Iris Swallow.

Commemoration Services this year will be held on 6 November at The Crematorium and 13 November at St Mark's.

Members recorded their thanks to Mary and the team for all the work that they do.

Garden of Remembrance:

Many visitors came to the Garden over the Christmas period and continues to show how much the garden is appreciated by the

community.

Arrangements are to be made to carry out maintenance repairs and cleaning to the path areas. Also, some of the older memorial stones have been re-blackened.

It is hoped to set up the Chapel book of remembrance on screen shortly.

Volunteers led by Marion continue to keep the Garden look so well.

The Memorial Wall continues to be used. Thanks to Linda who looks after this aspect.

A quote for £300 had been received to trim the trees.

Around £15 000 is currently in the Garden of Remembrance account.

Woodland:

101 interments have been taken place since the Woodland opened.

A new sign for Kestrel has been made and it is anticipated that this will be installed at the same time as a new bench which Ed Burnet is awaiting instructions on.

The bio pots have been very well received. Neil Kinsely would like us to look at his proposals.

No further news from Pell's yet regarding the oak trees.

St Thomas Moore are to make bird boxes for the Woodland.

An approach had been received from a catering firm who had been advised that, as a matter of policy, we were not able to give recommendations.

The new glade has been partially plotted and it is proposed to name it Goldcrest.

Consideration was being given to advertising in the North Bedford magazine Rural Grunch.

Feedback forms had been sent to NDC in November. We received a glowing reference but more mature trees were required.

Some problems had been encountered over the Christmas period when decorations had been left on graves. It was planned to amend the regulations shown in the Woodland booklet to address this.

The date of the Open Day this year will be the 14th May 2pm – 5 pm, with the AGM being held on the 15th May.

Missions:

The 2010 Partnership Missions project for Kisiizi raised over £5 000.

The 2011 Partnership Missions project will be co-ordinated by Sam following discussion with the Leadership Teams. Circuit:

Preparations for the merger of the three Methodist Circuits into the North Bedfordshire Circuit are gather momentum.

Responsibility rests with the Steering Group, which meets monthly (tonight at Priory MC).

Meetings are chaired by the Superintendent Minister elect, the Reverend Andrew Hollins, and the key roll currently is the appointment of Circuit Officers for the new Circuit.

The final joint activity of the current Bedford North Circuit will be a service at Priory MC on Sunday 7th August. The inauguration of the new Circuit will take place on Saturday 3rd September at The Kings Arms Church Centre, Ampthill Road 3.00pm. (more detail to follow later)

Other meeting dates; Circuit Property Stewards and Treasurers 22nd Feb St. Mark's, Bedford North Circuit Meeting 15th March Sharnbrook MC.

Deanery:

Wendy Waters has been appointed as an advisor for new Readers within the Deanery, with the objective of increasing the number of vocational Readers.

The Deanery has tasked all Parishes to be proactive in respect to the Bishops message of Living Gods Love. This is to be discussed through the Leadership Team. The meeting closed with The Grace.