

THE PARISH OF CENTRAL EXETER

Minutes for the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council 3pm on Wednesday 6th September 2023 in St Petrock's church

Present: Revd Sheila Swarbrick (chair), Keith Walton, Betsy Allen, Claire Mayer, Helen Evans, Richard Skinner, Celia Smith, Jessica Claridge, & Mary Keaney (PCC sec)

Apologies: Viv Asher & Don Branton (resigned)

1. **Welcome & Prayer:** Sheila welcomed everyone to the meeting and read from Paul's prayer in Philippians.
2. **Minutes of meeting on Wednesday 24th May 2023:** The minutes were signed as an accurate record by Sheila.
3. **Matters Arising/Questions:** None

4. **Parish Activities:**

4.1 **Pastoral Care:** unminuted

4.2 **Pattern of services:**

Sunday 17th September: Ian Harvey (Kimbilio)

Sunday 24th September: Bob Burn at St Olave's

Sunday 1st October: Sheila at St Petrock's (Harvest with Michael Hocking, Exeter Foodbank)

Sunday 15th October: Crossing Place with Helen

Sunday 29th October: Chris Bryan at St Stephen's (5th Sunday)

Sunday 19th November: Crossing Place with Richard (Autumn Flea Market in Fore Street)

Sunday 3rd December: Mark Bate to preach (Advent Sunday)

Sunday 21st January 2024: Pulpit Exchange (Crossing Place)

4.3 **Parish Social and Events:**

Harvest Festival: Sunday 1st October service in St Petrock's at 10.30am with shared lunch in St Stephen's

National Poetry Day: Inner Room event in St Stephen's on Thursday 5th October with Helen and Ralph Pite

Soup Lunches: On first Sundays in November; February & March 2024

Exeter Carnival: St Stephen's being used as a Stewards Hub on Saturday 25th November

United Service: Sunday 26th November at The Mint Methodist church

Parish Social: Nativity! The musical at the Barnfield Theatre 1st – 9th December 2023 (to be arranged)

Parish Book Group: Chris Bryan to attend book group to talk about his book under discussion 'And God Spoke'. Venue to be Celia Smith's house (Dinham Crescent) on Saturday 18th November at 4pm.

Action: Sheila to speak with Chris and let him know date and venue

4.4 **Meeting with St David's update:**

St David's have begun their interregnum. The curate with retired priests and lay readers will be taking services. Betsy and Keith will be meeting with St David's two new churchwardens, Hilary Todd and Robert Mitchell.

4.5 **Formal arrangement with orthodox churches:**

Andrew Beane, Archdeacon, has advised that we need to have a formal church sharing agreement in place with both the Romanian Orthodox Church who use St Stephen's and the Orthodox Community of St Pancras who use St Pancras church. Both groups need to be part of the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland first.

***Action:** Sheila to talk with both groups about this.*

- 4.6 **Nigerian Pentecostal pastor request use of church:** A Nigerian pastor, Adebayo Olusola, has asked to use St Stephen's on Sunday evenings and has met with Sheila. They then discussed the possibility of using St Petrock's on a Sunday morning. Exeter has a branch of Redeemed Christian Church of God located at Wonford Community Centre and it was felt that the small group led by Pastor Olusola would be best served by joining this larger group.

***Action:** Sheila to contact Pastor Olusola to inform him of the PCC decision to not allow them to use St Stephen's or St Petrock's.*

5. Church Buildings:

- 5.1 **St Stephen's: Disabled access update** – After viewing the malfunctioning door Scutum West have advised contacting the company who installed the original equipment for a quote as they will likely be more cost effective. The original company is Entry Group.

***Action:** Mary to contact Entry Group and organise a visit from an engineer with a view to getting a quote for repairs/new system.*

Quinquennial Inspection: For St Stephen's and St Olave's took place on Friday 21st July 2023. No unexpected matters came up, but we are waiting for the full reports from the architect.

Gutters: The use of a drone has shown the gutters to be currently clear of debris.

***Action:** Keith to ask West Access Conservation Ltd to clean the gutters of all churches on an annual basis (with exception of St Pancras) and to be our general maintenance company.*

Electrical QI: We need an electrical QI for all churches.

***Action:** Our caretaker, Jim Pilkington, to contact electrician and organise this.*

Storage: A large container has appeared by the toy cupboard on the gallery.

***Action:** The broken table to be taken to the shop at the recycling centre.*

***Action:** A further clearing session to be organised*

***Action:** Surplus plates to be removed if not claimed. Mary to email users of church to ask if the plates belong to them. Betsy to take a photograph of the plates to send to Mary.*

***Action:** Mary to contact the Romanian Church about candle wax found in St Stephen's.*

Display Board: To be put on agenda for December meeting

Vintage Clothing Sales: Currently Second Life Fashion pay a suggested donation and donate 25% profit to ECI and wish to continue using us. A second group have a September booking with the hope this can become a regular booking. Also we have an independent trader selling off old stock with one booking in November. After a discussion the PCC decided to honour all current bookings but for this not to continue.

***Action:** Mary to contact Second Life Fashion after liaising with Keith to let them know the PCC decision. Also to contact George Wiltshire wishing him a good day on 30th September but that we will not be permitting further sales.*

***Action:** Mary to update User Guidelines to permit charitable organisations to hold clothing sales.*

5.2 St Petrock's:

- a. **Solar Panels (DAC and architect):** We are still waiting for the DAC and English Heritage approval of design for solar panels on roof. Finding a company to install the panels is proving difficult as the job is not straight forward.
- b. **Airband Installation:** The PCC heard of the problems faced by the Homelessness Centre in using broadband/wifi for their work caused by a lack of system connectivity within the church building. This can be remedied by the use of a disc which can be sited on the Tower. Sheila will be meeting an engineer onsite next Thursday to discuss the best location.

Agreed that a communication disc could be installed on the tower and any necessary permissions obtained.

- c. **Connecting door with Day Centre:** The Day Centre have requested a key to the connecting door between the Centre and the church so they can use it in an emergency.

Post Meeting Update: Sheila has had a key cut and is to hand it over to Peter Stephenson asap with a signed receipt. The receipt will be given to Mary to be filed.

QI: The last QI recommended a new tap for the teabar so a new flat top can be fitted. With the Tuesday AA group regularly using the sink as well as Julie for cleaning this needs to be pursued with specification details obtained from the architect.

5.3 St Pancras: An electrical QI is required (see 5.1) Sheila mentioned the British Science Festival who have an exhibition in St Pancras on Friday 8th September entitled Shame in Medicine: The Lost Forest. Betsy talked about the latest Small Pilgrimage Places poster for display in the church.

Action: Sheila to print the poster and display in St Pancras.

5.4 St Olave's:

QI date: The QI was held on Friday 21st July 2023 and we are waiting for the report from Jeremy (architect). One of the outside walls shows signs of damp. A downpipe away from the building may one solution to this problem. An electrical QI needs to be held (see 5.1) as organ and sound system not working.

Vestments: Sheila reported that Sue Roberts, Vicar at Honiton, is interested in the chasubles for a retired priest who cannot wear the church ones as they are too large. She will come to look at them soon. Helen suggested that Jacqui Parkinson, the Devon embroiderer and banner maker may be interested in the material. *Post meeting – Sue has taken a number of chasubles away.*

Red Coats: Dave Adcock, Visitor Facilities Manager, has requested a key for St Olave's so the Red Coats can access the church when it is closed due to drug activity on the premises. The meeting agreed that they should have a key to be kept at the Exeter Tickets office.

Post Meeting Update: Sheila has had a key cut and given it to the Exeter Tickets office with a signed receipt. The receipt will be given to Mary to be filed.

Drug Activity: St Olave's remains closed due to drug activity in there. Drugs have been stored in a hole beside one of the steps which is much larger than first thought. It requires repair.

Action: Mary to contact ENC for details of their carpenter to help repair the hole and possibly add shelving to the chair cupboard in St Stephen's.

Property: Jess mentioned a silver salver which was lent to RAMM some years ago and whether it has been returned.

Action: Betsy/Keith to contact the curator, Thomas Cadbury, of RAMM.

5.5 St Mary Arches:

Organ: Matt Clayton (Unlimited Church minister) is about to put in an application to the DAC, with Keith's help. This is so the organ can be dismantled and transported to Latvia. Unlimited Church has established a connection with a church within the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia who will transport the organ at their own cost and with a music professor and organ expert. The organ will be relocated to the St Maynard's Foundation in Riga who are working with Ukrainian refugees.

This has come about because the organ is not being used as originally planned when relocated from St Stephen's to SMA over 10 years ago. Although disappointing for the parish the organ will be used in its new home in Riga. We are hoping for some communication, including photographs, with the new owners once the organ is installed.

Post Meeting Update: The PCC suggested the idea of 'twinning' with the St Maynard's Foundation in Riga so that news of the use of the organ can be shared with the parish. .

6. Social Media: Helen continues to share information re: social events on our Facebook page and Mary updates the website regularly with services and documents. Thanks noted from Betsy to Helen and Mary for keeping both sites updated.

Action: Mary to forward social events to Helen as appropriate

Action: Jessica to email Mary with details of how to give feedback on the August banner display in Exeter Cathedral which can then be circulated to the parish.

- 7. Inner Room:** Helen and Inner Room celebrate their fifth National Poetry Day in St Stephen's on Thursday 5th October. Professor Ralph Pite will be welcomed and will give 2 talks during the day on the theme of how poetry can help us to respond to the climate emergency.
Helen has recently written a piece for the journal 'Use of English' (editor – Malcolm Hebron) where she mentions Inner Room.
- 8. Deanery Synod Report:** The next meeting is on Wednesday 18th October where different chaplains in Exeter have been invited to talk about their roles.
- 9. Finance:**
- 9.1 End of August 2023 Account:** Sheila reported on the budget which shows £24,000 under 'Use of PCC property' as Exeter Safe Space have paid their suggested donation for the year and resume use this month and a continuous nightly use during Fresher's Week (Fri 15th to Sunday 24th September). The parish made £925 profit after expenses from the July concerts. Thanks recorded to Jessica and the team.
The annual insurance bill is to be paid in the Autumn.
Sean, our treasurer, is in the process of changing the Utility company from Ecotricity to Parish Buying.
- 10. Safeguarding and Health & Safety:** Thanks recorded to Mary.
- 10.1 Safeguarding Report:** Circulated prior to the meeting.
- 10.2 Safeguarding Policy Statement:** The policy was circulated prior to the meeting and has been reviewed and approved.
- 10.3 Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy:** The policy was circulated prior to the meeting and has been reviewed and approved.
- 10.4 Health & Safety Policy:** The policy has been reviewed, updated and approved.
- 10.5 DBS checks:** Mary to invite Celia, Jessica and Claire to complete DBS checks in the Autumn.
- 11. CTAX/CTCE:** Sheila reported that the Church and Civic Leaders Conference on **Friday 20th October** (10am-3pm) at Belmont church will welcome Ben Bradshaw MP and Bishop Jackie as speakers.
Details of how to attend in the October Newsletter.
There is to be a small planning group established for the United Service on **Sunday 26th November** at the Mint. This will meet in early October to begin planning. Betsy and Richard expressed interest.
- 12. Correspondence:** The PCC would like to record its thanks to Don Branton for his many years of work given to the parish in his role of Buildings Officer on his resignation due to ill health.
Action: Mary to send email/letter of thanks to Don
Action: Betsy and Claire to organise a gift and card for Don.
- 13. A.O.B.**
- 13.1** Betsy reported on the ongoing problems with the sound system in St Stephen's and suggested purchase of a wireless speaker as back up.
Action: Betsy to do research on wireless speakers and report back
- 13.2** Claire issued thanks to Sheila, our churchwardens and Mary for all the work done on behalf of the parish.
- 14. Date and Place of future meetings:**
Wednesday 6th December; Wednesday 6th March 2024

The meeting closed at 5.05pm with a prayer from Sheila.