

THE PARISH OF CENTRAL EXETER

Minutes for the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council 3pm on Wednesday 6th March 2024 in St Petrock's church

Present: Revd Sheila Swarbrick (chair), Betsy Allen, Claire Mayer, Richard Skinner, Viv Asher, Celia Smith, Helen Evans, Jim Pilkington & Mary Keaney (PCC sec)

Apologies: Keith Walton and Jessica Claridge

1. **Welcome & Prayer:** Sheila welcomed everyone with a special mention to Celia who has returned from a period of recuperation. She read a Lent prayer. Sheila also held Bobby Burn in our prayers.

2. **Minutes of meeting on Wednesday 6th December 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 24th March: Palm Sunday service in St Olave's at 10.30am

Maunday Thursday 28th March: Agapé Meal at Southernhay URC 6pm

Action: Mary to email parish re: numbers for this

Sunday 31st March: Easter service with David ? to preach at St Stephen's 10.30am

Thursday 9th May: Ascension Day. Musical Extravaganza with Clare Bryden to be held in St Olave's at 7pm to be followed by Compline (church to be left open).

Saturday 11th May: Exeter Pride service at St Stephen's at 11am-11.30am

Sunday 2nd June: Liz Dunbar to speak at St Stephen's service about Single Friendly Church Network

Sunday 30th June: Peter Beacham's 50th anniversary to the priesthood – service in St Martin's (5th Sunday)

4.3 **Parish Social and Events:**

APCM: Sunday 7th April with shared lunch after the meeting

Parish Social: Discussion around an afternoon tea with decision deferred.

Churches Conservation Trust: Historic churches tour of Exeter on Wednesday 26th June to include St Mary Steps, St Olave's, St Martin's and St Pancras'.

July Lunchtime Concerts: St Stephen's to host the annual concerts on each Thursday in July

Art & Craft Exhibition: Saturday 6th July in St Stephen's from 10am to 4pm (raising funds for ECI)

4.4 **Formal arrangement with orthodox churches:**

Sheila has spoken with Fr Porphyrios from the Orthodox Community of St Pancras and he has confirmed that they are under the umbrella of Churches Together in Devon.

Action: Sheila to speak with Fr Julian from the Romanian Orthodox Church

5. **Church Buildings:**

5.1 **St Stephen's:**

5.1.a Quinquennial Inspection: Jeremy (architect) has apologised for the late arrival of the reports for St Stephen's and St Olave's. The report is detailed and follows the prescribed format. It looked at the general maintenance of the church and noted the water ingress which will need a faculty for repair. Keith will give a fuller report at the next meeting as he has given apologies for this one.

5.1.b EICR update: Home Exeter Ltd have conducted the EICR and remedial works on the 4 churches and have issued 2 Satisfactory Certificates to date.

Action: Mary to chase Home Exeter Ltd for the final 2 certificates.

5.1.c Storage: One trolley of chairs will be stored within the church body. Groups who require further chairs can access more from the chair store using the key safe.

Action: Richard to put the key safe to the right of the chair store asap.

5.1.d Trap Door:

Action: Jim (caretaker) to put padlock on trapdoor handle.

5.1.e Heritage Cupboards: These are full of mould and should probably be professionally cleaned.

5.2 St Petrock's:

Homeless Day Centre – Building Issues: Agreed to proceed with replacement of collapsed guttering in cast iron at a total cost of £2,670.

Post Meeting Update: Keith has submitted a List B to the Archdeacon for the St Petrock's Day Centre replacement guttering

5.3 St Petrock's Pall: The Cathedral have acquired lottery funding and would like to have conservation work completed on the Pall to cost of approx. £7,000. This meeting formally agreed permission for the Deed of Gift to enable this to happen.

Action: to draft a formal Deed of Gift letter.

5.4 St Pancras'

5.4.a EICR: See 5.1.b

5.4.b The pulpit floor is in a state of disrepair.

Action: Viv to ask Dave to repair pulpit floor

5.5 St Olave's:

5.5.a QI : See 5.1.a St Olave's also suffers with water ingress especially around window 7.

5.5.b EICR: Jim reported that no sockets are currently working.

Action: Jim to contact Home Exeter to look at CCTV and sockets (Mary to send Jim the contact details for Home Exeter).

5.6 St Mary Arches:

Building Officer: Keith is working with Matt on recruiting a Building Officer/Administrator but this is taking time. Viv suggested her husband's relative as a prospective candidate.

Post Meeting Update: Keith and Matt to meet to discuss hourly rate for post and number of hours to be worked. Also as no likely applicant from Unlimited how and where to advertise will need to be addressed.

- 6. Social Media:** Sheila gave an account of the 'Let Women Speak' issue we had on Saturday 20th January in St Stephen's. This was where the church had been booked for a private event. The women were gathering before being stewards for the 'Let Women Speak' public meeting to be held in Bedford Square. Sheila received a couple of letters of complaint about the group using St Stephen's as the women had taken a photo of themselves inside the church which was later posted on social media. Helen researched this event on Youtube which showed the women in Bedford Square. We received advice from Chloe Axford at the Diocese (Director of Communications and Engagement). This event has raised some issues with our booking policies which needs to be addressed. Another member of the parish has visited the trans community to apologise on behalf of the parish.

Action: Following a pro-trans rally in Bedford Square Sheila will contact Lena who is a representative from the University Trans Café about the Exeter Pride service being held in St Stephen's on Saturday 11th May.

Action: Helen to contact Ann Richards about advice with regard to revising our booking policy.

Action: Helen, Keith and Mary to devise draft guidelines

Sheila has been liaising with Peter Davies from Co Create about using St Stephen's for his poetry sessions and conversations with Jesus, only. We are awaiting his Safeguarding Policy and a signed Hirers Agreement.

Generally, we agreed to say no to private bookings.

7. **Inner Room:** Helen gave a brief report. **Room to Write:** these sessions continue fortnightly on Mondays and are largely self-supporting thanks to Peter Hart from Exeter Quakers. **Poetry at the Priory** and **Room by the River** were 2 successful events from the end of 2023. Inner Room featured in an article in the journal 'The Use of English'. The IR mailing list is about 60. Helen plans to hold an IR team meeting in April/May to discuss the future of the ministry, the summer programme of events, National Poetry Day on 3rd October and GDPR admin. Helen is holding a residential retreat at Shaldon (8-10th March) to which several parishioners are attending. Finally, Helen thanked the Inner Room team of Keith, Sheila, Richard and Sue Knight. Betsy and Richard thanked Helen for the richness and inclusivity of these activities.

8. **Finance:**

8.1 2023 accounts to approve: Sheila reported on the budget to year end. It was noted that we have carried over approx. £3,000 should Exeter Safe Space resume their use of St Stephen's in 2024. Keith has completed the Annual Report and added the accounts. We are waiting for the Independent examiner to add his report.

The Diocesan Share has fluctuated as the amount depends on the number of buildings for which we are responsible and the number of participants in the parish as well as an increase of 6% expected for 2024.

Action: Mary to check if the Cathedral are using St Petrocks and/or St Pancras'

The Annual Report was approved. Proposed: Betsy Allen and Seconded: Richard Skinner.

8.1.b APCM preparation: An Electoral Roll form given to Mary to add to the Roll. The APCM is on Sunday 7th April in St Stephen's church. All reports to be sent to Mary by 24th March 2024.

Post Meeting Update: Keith to write a Fabric report in lieu of having a Buildings Officer.

9. **Safeguarding and Health & Safety:**

9.1 **Safeguarding Report:** Circulated prior to the meeting.

9.2 **Review of non-church activities:** The Hire agreement has been signed by ENC but no response from the 2 AA groups after leaving letters in the cupboard.

Action: Mary to possibly contact the local AA headquarters.

10. **CTAX/CTCE:** The Lent course with Chris Bryan has 6-7 attendees. The Maunday Thursday Agapé meal is 6pm at Southernhay URC. Passion for Exeter – 10am at Exeter Cathedral followed by worship and witness on Cathedral Green – Good Friday. Prayer Around the Cross – 7pm at St Pancras' on Good Friday, 29th March.

Sunday 28th April – Eco Church celebration at Exeter Cathedral from 12.30pm to 3.30pm with Evensong at 4pm. This is an afternoon event celebrating the eco church scheme in Devon.

11. **Correspondence:** Day Centre thank you letter for donation from Grace Notes Christmas concert.

12. **A.O.B.**

12.1 St Olave's salver: The salver is safe. Keith will bring it to the APCM to show everyone and then return to safe.

12.2 Plaster on Gallery: Richard reported that Julie (cleaner) has noticed how much the plaster has deteriorated on the gallery.

13. **Date and Place of future meetings:**

APCM Sunday 7th April 2024; Wednesday 22nd May; Wednesday 4th September; Wednesday 4th December TBC

The meeting closed at 5pm with a Lenten blessing.

