

ALL SAINTS CHURCH, HARTFORD.

MINUTES

OF THE PCC MEETING HELD ON 4TH SEPTEMBER, 2023

IN THE CHURCH ROOM AT 7P.M.

Present: Revd. Geoff Boucher, Revd. Sam Perez, Tony Humes, Helen Dowzall, Lesley Grant, Derek Colbert, Colin Jones, Pam Clark, Sue Craven, Paul Fearon, Elaine Levitt, Mary Adlam, Pam Fearon.

Apologies for absence were received from: Revd. Clifford Owen, Peter King, Carol King, Amanda Smith.

1. **The Minutes** of the PCC Meeting held on 19th June, 2023 were approved.
2. **There were no matters arising** from these minutes.
3. **Correspondence**. The Treasurer had received an acknowledgement and thank you for our contribution to Bishop Stephens leaving gift.
4. **Safeguarding and Training**. At the meeting Colin Jones was appointed safe guarding officer. His appointment was unanimously agreed by the PCC. Further safeguarding training needs to be done by the PCC Members and it was being looked at how this could be arranged as a group.
5. **Churchwardens Report**. The Report was read out in detail by Paul Fearon, the report having been compiled by Sue Craven and Paul Fearon. Details were given of events that have been held during the summer months and the total amounts each event had made towards Church Funds which was greatly appreciated.
The annual boiler check and service was carried out by Smart Heat on 27th July.
The COSHH Flammable & Chemical Storage cupboard was now in place and the old wooden cupboard disposed of, thanks to the help of Colin Jones. The cupboard is placed in the choir vestry as the previous one, very bright and cannot be missed.
The new notice board is at the signwriting stage and should be completed in the next few weeks. The existing notice board will be revarnished.
Plans for the Service of Confirmation which will be conducted by Bishop Dagmar are in place for 1st October, 2023.
Amanda Smith has asked for use of the back of the church on a Wednesday afternoon when back to back classes will be held and the lobby will not accommodate all people waiting. This has been agreed with a named person overseeing this along with clear guidance for its use.
Sharon Quince has been asked to do a full clean of the church before the Service of Confirmation.

Peter Haynes of the Town Council has been contacted by Pam Fearon regarding the Rowan Tree that the Church planted to mark the Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth 11. Sadly the tree has been poisoned and will need to be replaced. Peter has offered to replace the tree for us in the autumn. There have been other incidents of this kind of damage being done, it is not just our church.

Richard Bower will be undertaking the annual organ tune in September.

A dangerous knife was found in the churchyard, this has been removed and will be handed over to the police.

Clifford's LEJOG has generated a great deal of interest, the sum raised at the time of the meeting was £2,683.

6. **Treasurers Report.** The Treasurer's Report had been circulated. Paul made a few explanatory comments. He explained that the forecast for the year was now a small surplus of £612. When the budget for 2023 was approved by the PCC last November we expected a deficit of £5,641.

There are two things which have caused this significant improvement. The first is the receipt of £4,000 from two legacies bequeathed by the late Pauline Bath and the late Joan Walton. Another legacy is due to be received from the late Marjorie Patzer and at this stage we don't know how much this will be. The second is from Fundraising which is significantly higher than budgeted as Clifford's LEJOG cycle ride has far exceeded expectations.

We received a legacy at the end of August from Joan Walton of £3,000 for the fabric of the church and this has been placed in the Church Enhancement Fund.

The financial markets are continuing to experience a high level of volatility which is suppressing the recovery in the Investment Market. The number of people using the Parish Giving Scheme has increased to 32.

We are not immune from the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. The rate of inflation is beginning to fall, but the inflationary increases of the last eighteen months are now embedded in prices. Originally, he expected the cost of energy to be much lower in 2024, however the reduction may not be as much as anticipated due to the level of standing charges which are not capped for businesses. The new rates for the Energy Basket negotiated through the Parish Buying Scheme will be announced in the next few weeks.

We will not be able to reclaim the VAT of £281 for the repairs to the belfry as the rules for Listed Places of Worship have changed. In a 12-month period any claim has now to be above £500. The LPW scheme is now administered by the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport.

The forecast for Parochial Fees for 2023 have been reduced to £1,495. Since 2019 there has been a significant fall in Parochial Fees when they used to average between £4,000 and £5,000 annually.

The PCC had no questions for Paul about the Treasurer's Report.

7. **Update on Clifford's Cycle Ride.** Pat and Haleema Hawkins are keeping the website updated with a map showing where Clifford is and pictures each day as he arrives at the stopping place for that day.

8. **Service of Confirmation.** All arrangements are in place for the service on 1st October. After the service there will be the cutting of the confirmation cake and a variety of drinks available.
9. **Away Day.** The follow up to the previous away day will be on Saturday 21st October between 10am and 12.30pm.
10. **Altar Linen.** A much needed replacement of our altar linen has been organised. The items orders will be paid for from the money in our Wish List. These are as follows, 5 Purificators, 5 Lavabos and 3 Corporals. Each item is hand embroidered with a white cross. Delivery by mid-September hopefully.
11. **Events on the Church Calendar.** Harvest Festival on 8th October the list for lunch will be available shortly. It is hoped that some of the flower arrangements from the previous week will still be useable. Gifts of food, tinned items for the Food Bank would be made. Arrangements for the Christmas Fayre were all in hand for 18th November. The following dates for Christmas Services were made 17th December Carol Service at 4pm. 24th December 11am. Morning Prayer, 4pm. Nativity Service, Midnight Communion 11.30pm. 25th December, Christmas Day 11am Communion.
12. **There were no Diocesan/Deanery Reports.**
13. **Any Other Business.** On Thursday 28th September at St. Mary Magdalene Church Hall Brampton, there will be a talk given by Canon Nick Moir on the subject 'Living in Love and Faith', looking at how the church is trying to encompass the many relationships, partnerships and marriages and finding suitable prayers and blessings for these services.

There will be a service for All Souls Day on 2nd November in church.

It was noticed that our congregation is growing in numbers. It was felt that some of this was from Hartford Connects. People who receive this do come along to the events and find a very welcoming and friendly place to spend time in, perhaps from this experience they do come and try our church services.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm with the members sharing The Grace.

The next meeting of the PCC is on Monday 13th November, 2023.