

The Parish of St Mary-the-Virgin, Wivenhoe

Minutes of the PCC Meeting on Tuesday 4th June 2024 at 7.30pm at The Rectory

To welcome & opening prayer: the prayer was used at First Communion in 2023 and said by the candidates. Shirley Forsgate was remembered, she had been PCC Secretary in the past.

Present: Erwin Lammens, Bonnie Hill; Rick Cawley; Sara Batts-Neale; Heather Edwards; Jane Taylor; Gary Ranford; Mary Jakens; Eric Jakens; Greg Butler; Hannah Cole; Sue Jones; Claudia Alsdorf; Sandra Osborne and Sam Belcher

Apologies: Glyn Stanway; Nick Gustard; Douglas McCormick

Conflict of Interest: None

Conflict of Interest & Fit & Proper Person Forms – 15 forms were signed off and only three people need to complete the process.

Minute 2024\59 Resignations & Appointments

a) **Resignations**

Vivien Eborn has decided that she'll step down as **Electoral Roll Officer**. Having met with Vivien to find out what is involved Mary Jakens has volunteered to take on the role – the PCC were asked if they were content with the appointment – this was confirmed.

An email had been received from Glyn and Jane Stanway. After 12 years they have decided to step down from the **Open Gardens Committee** and the undertaking the catering during the weekend. Also Dot Mathieson wanted to step down but because of Glyn and Jane resigning she'll stay one more year. However, Dot and Jenny Heaps need two new volunteers alongside them to represent St Mary's church. The PCC were asked to think about who would be willing to volunteer.

Fran Bailey will leave the **Sunday Club team** in order to focus on obtaining an MA and will continue The Way leadership. Louise recently joined the Sunday Club team but could do with an extra leader.

Teresa has now officially handed over her responsibilities at **The Way** to Fran and Heather.

b) **Election of Churchwardens** – Douglas McCormick and Mary Jakens had been elected to those roles at the Annual Parish Meeting.

c) **Appointment of Treasurer** under Rule M20(3)&(4)

Douglas McCormick was prepared to undertake this role. The appointment of Douglas McCormick was proposed by Rick Cawley, seconded by Greg Butler and unanimously approved.

d) **Appointment of Secretary under Rule M20(1)&(4) and co-opted** under Rule M15(1k)

Bonnie Hill was prepared to undertake these roles. The appointment and co-option of Bonnie Hill was proposed by Hannah Cole, seconded by Heather Edwards and unanimously approved.

e) **Election of Standing Committee Members** under Rule M31(2)

The members of the Standing Committee currently were The Rector; two Churchwardens; Treasurer and Secretary: Those currently holding these posts are Revd. Erwin Lammens; Douglas McCormick; Mary Jakens and Bonnie Hill. The election of all those holding the positions listed above was proposed by Jane Taylor, seconded by Sandra Osborne and unanimously approved.

f) **Election of Sidespersons** Rule M6(6) – the following people are put forward for election: Bonnie Hill; Anne Williams; John Williams; Nick Gustard; Barry Smith; Lyn Smith; Ann Hanagan; Eric Jakens Austin Baines; Margaret Allison; Susan Darien; Maureen Smith; Jan Marks; Jackie Hopkins; Gio, Jonny and Leon Timms-Bruno. The election of all those listed above was proposed by Claudia Alsdorf, seconded by Greg Butler and unanimously approved.

Minute 2024\60

Minutes of the PCC meeting held on the 9th April 2024 were approved and signed.

Minute 2024\61 Matters Arising

a) **FOSM** - Vivien and Bill Eborn are happy to continue with the sales of the FOSM goods at several occasions but they would like some help and ideas for the future. PCC members were asked to identify volunteers who could assist.

b) **Blanket and pillow purchase** A blanket has been donated and the pillow has been purchased. Task completed

c) **Broken chairs** – of the two chairs returned to the manufacturer the wrong broken chair had been returned to us (the more severe damaged rather than the least damaged) and Lucy and Bonnie decided to cease the fight. Greg was asked to see if he could mend it sufficiently to

ensure it was safe to sit on.

d) **Defibrillator** – cupboard still to be sorted out.

e) **Draft Visitors Leaflet** – Jane Taylor – It was suggested that a team be put together to work further on it. Peter Terry, Lucy Crocker, Sue Clement and Erwin will join Jane to take it forward to print. Sara will try and attend the first meeting if she is available. Erwin will arrange the meeting date and time. Sara asked that a balance be found between facts and spirituality – perhaps places to pray identified.

Minute 2024\62 Correspondence

Covered under the relevant headings below.

Minute 2024\63 Finance – Douglas McCormick

a) Due to the early meeting date it was not possible to reconcile the accounts with the bank statement. The up-to-date figures would be circulated via email as soon as practicable.

Minute 2024\64 Fabric and Health & Safety matters Douglas McCormick & Mary Jakens

a) **Churchyard** - The Rhododendrons in the churchyard have been really great - lots of supportive comments from people passing by!

I'm really pleased that nearly all of the shrubs and plants that we have introduced over the last year seem to have become well established and should certainly make a good show in 2025! Over the last month or so we have been working on the area around the walnut and holly tree. This has proved to be quite difficult as there is a profusion of alkanet, brambles and ivy attempting to dominate the walls (and grow into the neighbouring gardens!) the large tombs and of course the aforementioned trees. We seem to be winning but a few more sessions are definitely required.

The area in front of the north wall and railings has now been designated as an experimental wild flower patch. We have already planted a number of ox-eye daisies and wild garlic. We are hoping to obtain some expert advice on what else we should plant and when to plant, and have made contact with Essex Wildlife Trust - watch this space!

If our weather eventually produces some warm dry periods I would be grateful if you could spend a few minutes with a watering can! There is a large one in the shed and a smaller, red one in the kitchen area of the annexe. The Rhododendrons near the kissing gate will probably be the neediest!

b) Wildlife

Following the letter from the Church Wardens to Wivenhoe Town Council a meeting was held with the Mayor and a positive way forward was agreed.

A meeting has also taken place in the churchyard with Kate Clifton the Deanery Environmental Champion from Christchurch in Colchester. Some useful information was forthcoming and funding has been provided to take this forward as soon as the appropriate advice is received on the way forward. It will probably be the autumn before anything is purchased for planting in the wildlife areas.

c) A **broken window** on the north side of the church was found on the 19th May. This was the result of several incidents of vandalism in the area that same evening. On Monday morning the company previously used for a similar repair was contacted, and a quote obtained – the cost was £250 + VAT. As this was within the discretionary spending limit of the Standing Committee the quotation was accepted and the work undertaken on Friday 24th May.

d) **Roof and stonework repairs** – in order to be absolutely sure about the extent of the work required a scaffolding tower to allow access at height to the various areas of the roof and stonework is required. The PCC gave permission for the expenditure by email and a decision log was made to record the replies. Permission was given by 16 PCC members with 2 members not replying to the email. The scaffolding will go up on 3rd and 4th June. Scaffolding has now been put in place to enable an assessment to be undertaken. This will enable a specification to be drawn up and tenders received. The work is planned for September through to November.

e) **Kissing Gate & Church Railings**– An estimate has now been received for the cost of repairing and repainting and had been circulated before the meeting. This matter will now go to the Fabric Committee for discussion. They will report back to the PCC in due course.

f) **Church shed** –a proposal document from Peter Terry had been circulated before the meeting. Having considered the five proposals concerning wooden timbers, blue chairs, the old porch door, Perspex frames to cover the shed windows and using some of the stones to create a hardstanding area. The shed at present is on wooden bearers and as they decrease in stability the wooden timbers could be used – therefore keep them. It was decided to sell the wooden door. 24 blue chairs will be kept and the others to be sold. Providing a noticeboard on the shed via Perspex frames – this was agreed – the noticeboard needs to be

kept up to date. It was agreed that the paving slabs be placed in front of the shed to provide hardstanding.

g) **Dishwasher** – the purchase is work in progress

h) **Essex Wildlife Trust Meeting**
 John Attiwell, who is a community ranger at the Trust and currently working on the Team Wilder, Urban Wildlife Champions and Nextdoor Nature projects will be coming to St Mary's on 19th June. The plan is to walk around the churchyard and get his views on a way forward for the set up and management of the various areas of the churchyard. Feedback will be shared after the meeting.

h) **No Mow May** – An email has been received from WTC Town Clerk
 The Estates team had had difficulty cutting the grass due to its length due to No Mow May. The suggestion was that only certain sections of the grass within the churchyard be subject to No Mow May. The PCC's views were sought on the proposal. The PCC decided to receive advice from the Essex Wildlife Ranger before making a decision.

i) **Cycle racks** – An email has been received from Cllr. Rik Andrew, Wivenhoe Town Council (WTC) Travel & Transportation Working Group asking for permission to install three or four cycle parking stands within the churchyard. The matter was first mentioned in February 2023 when St. Mary's was asked by Jo Wheatley of Wivenhoe Bike Kitchen if it was going to be possible to install cycle racks in the churchyard. The Standing Committee referred the cycle group to WTC. There has been no contact about this until now.
 Cllr. Andrew had been advised that a Faculty would be required before permission could be granted. The specification and installation details were requested and received which will hopefully be sufficient to enable a Faculty to be applied for.
 Douglas McCormick had contacted the Archdeacon's Office and permission could be given under List B. The position of the stands would be on the right-hand side of the main gate. The installation of 3 cycle racks within the churchyard was proposed by Revd. Sara Batts-Neale, seconded by Jane Taylor and unanimously agreed.

j) **Payment** – Tricia Harding has telephoned to report that a buddleia that was growing over the east wall of 1 Alma Street and the adjoining property on the end of East Street had been removed. Louise Mallett owner of the East Street property had suggested to Tricia that the church should pay half the cost of getting it cut down and disposed of. A payment of £20.00 was requested. There is a lilac bush which is also causing a difficulty in the same area – in this case Peter Terry had been in touch with WTC who would deal with it in the autumn. The PCC considered the approval of the payment of £20.00 as it may set a precedent for any future work undertaken by adjoining properties.
 It was decided by the PCC to pay the £20.00 but this does not set a precedent for any future claims.

k) **Damage to TV in the annexe** – On Tuesday 28th May a hirer accidentally damaged the TV screen when stacking chairs onto the trolley at the end of their child's birthday party. They got in contact the following day and offered to pay for the repair or replacement of the tv. An estimate for a replacement and installation of the tv has been obtained from KEL our sound and vision installers. Chris Gutteridge has said that a new tv will cost £499.00+VAT and the installation will be £160.00+VAT. Bonnie emailed the hirers advising them of the cost on Thursday 29th May. Mary\Eric have disconnected the TV so that it cannot be used but it remains in place for the time being.
 The hirers had agreed to pay for the replacement and installation of a new tv and the payment had been made. Chris Gutteridge had been instructed to order the new tv and give us a date for installation. A date is awaited.

l) **Visit by KEL** – Rick Cawley proposed that we make the most of Chris Gutteridge's forthcoming visit by getting him to adjust the ambient sound settings of the sound system. This needs adjusting to improve the streamed sound. The PCC were asked to approve the visit as it would save a separate visit, which would likely be a lot more expensive.
 Rick asked for an organist and a couple of singers to assist with the adjustments. Also the heater blowers needed to be running, though not necessarily providing heating. The aim is to eliminate as much as possible the roaring noise that sometimes is present on the livestreams. The PCC agreed to ask KEL to undertake the adjustments when they come to install the new tv.

m) **Microwave** – unfortunately the microwave in the annexe has ceased to work and a replacement is required. The PCC approved the purchase of a new microwave on the understanding that Susan Potter is consulted before going forward with the purchase.

Minute 2024\65 Safeguarding – Gill Black – nothing to report

Minute 2024\66 Mission & Ministry Partnership – Erwin Lammens

The newly appointed Vicar at St John's, Revd Paul Dever, will be licensed on Monday evening 9th September.

Licensed ordained and lay ministers in our MMP have met in prayer and fellowship on 21 May at the University Chaplaincy. Next prayer meeting is on 18 June at 10am at St Mary's Annexe.

Minute 2024\67 Adult & Children's Ministry – Erwin Lammens

Children's and Youth ministry

First Communion preparation is on Saturday 15 June from 10am until 12 noon. Book your child's place until 9 June. The actual First Communion is on 7 July. All children from the age of 7 are welcome if they have been baptised and took part in the preparation.

Sunday Club will continue until the schools break up in the summer for a few weeks.

The Way continues its fortnightly meetings. Teresa has stepped down as coordinator. The leadership is now in the hands of Heather Edwards, Fran Bailey and Sue Jones. There is also an aspirant leader.

The Toddler Group will be organising their summer party in the Rectory Garden on Tuesday 16 July from 10am until 1pm. Their leaders are asking for support by volunteers from St Mary's for the weekly gatherings to prepare snacks and drinks and clear the kitchen afterwards. It would involve one Tuesday morning per month from 10 until 12. At the moment only Glyn and Jane Stanway are helping the leaders on behalf of St Mary's. If you can help many thanks. Please pray for our young people and their families. Heather and Sandra volunteered to join the team.

Confirmation by Bishop Roger is on Thursday 12 September at 7.30pm. Keep the date in your diary so that candidates receive significant support on this weekday evening. If you haven't been confirmed and you wish to apply, tell Erwin before 8 July. The next confirmation at St Mary's after the September one will possibly be in two or three years. Confirmation is open to all from the age of 11.

Adult ministry and outreach

Revd Emma Smith will be on placement at St Mary's from mid-June for 4 weeks and will lead services and attend meetings during her time with us.

Minute 2024\68 Vision Day

The Vision group has gathered ideas and suggestions from our Vision Day for further analysis and discussion. The Group will look into implementing some of the proposals.

Minute 2024\69 To receive reports and take questions on the reports from the following committees.

a) **Fundraising Committee** – Heather Edwards

The June Market had taken place very successfully. The weather had been blowy but dry. There were lots of stalls and it was well supported by the community. The garden stall took a record amount of money and Peter Terry was congratulated. The final figure was not available but an initial indication of the cash payments was £2375.03 – the card payments were still to be added. There had been a bike donated and it had been put on various websites for sale. Erwin thanked Heather and the team for their organisation and time.

b) **Catering** – Susan Potter – nothing to report

c) **Worship Group** – Graham Wadley – nothing to report

d) **Colchester Deanery** – Rick Cawley – no report

e) **Wivenhoe Churches Together** – no report

f) **FOSM** – Vivien & Bill Eborn

We are pleased to have received the top up stock which we ordered in readiness for the June Market as sales continue to be strong.

g) **Pastoral Visitors**

At the present time there is nothing significant to report, as we have not had a meeting since March, our next meeting is on June 26th 2024 10am at the Rectory. Please speak to Gill or Erwin if you would like to join the team.

In total 11 people receive regular visits and/or phone calls. Unfortunately one person on our list passed away recently. We also keep in touch with a few others who don't wish to receive a visit or have moved away.

If we were given their contact details we liaise with the families when we have any concerns. The visiting team has five volunteers plus Erwin. Everyone – not just churchgoers – can ask to be added to the list for visits. The team welcomes new volunteers as well as there is a need due to the growing number of housebound or less mobile people in our community.

- h) **Administration** – Lynne Horner – nothing to report.
- i) **Spirituality Steering Group** – Janet Driver – nothing to report
- j) **Church Bookings** – a schedule of bookings was circulated.
- k) **Bellringers** – Heather Edwards – no report
- l) **Electoral roll** – Vivien Eborn
The number of parishioners on the Electoral Roll on the day of the APCM 2024 was 123, however we have now sadly lost Shirley Forsgate.

Minute 2024\70 – Community – Peter Hill Chairman of the following groups

Report from the Friendly Club & Café

We held a very successful Coffee Morning in the William Loveless Hall on Saturday 20th April which raised £397. We will be adding £200 to the collection we organised in Wivenhoe for Dementia Action Week for the Alzheimer's Society.

We launched a leaflet at the Coffee Morning containing contact details about organisations which can provide help and support those people who have been diagnosed with Dementia. It also promotes the Friendly Club & Café.

We want to make the Friendly Club a place where people can come for advice by having regular visits from people from Alzheimer's and Age Well East.

Report from the Wivenhoe St Mary's Music Society

Our first concert in 2024 with Quattro Amici was very successful. It also made a profit of £359 which was pleasing. We had our second concert on Friday 24th May with two world-class musicians, trumpeter Crispian Steele Perkins and organist Ian leGrice. They thoroughly entertained an audience of 80 people. The concert raised £385.

We now have a break until September when we have the Sea Shanty Extravaganza (Fri 6th Sept) followed in October by The Churchfitters and in November by the Wivenhoe Orchestra and guests.

Open Gardens 2024

Open Gardens this year featured 30 gardens and raised a total of £4,304.80 (2023 = £4,568). This will again be shared 50/50 between The Wivenhoe Society for local causes and for the fabric of St Mary's Church. In terms of numbers of people, we had slightly fewer people buy tickets (just £5) this year, 595 against 652 last year but Wivenhoe was buzzing with people that weekend with additional numbers because of the Art Trail.

We hope the Art Trail committee will organise their event on the same weekend next year as Open Gardens as the refreshments which Glyn & Jane Stanway again organised at the Church, plus items to sell, raised a magnificent total of £695.

Several members of the small OG team are retiring this year, including Jane & Glyn Stanway, after many years service. To keep going we need at least two replacement representatives from St Marys.

Peter Hill, The Open Gardens Team.

Minute 2024\71 GDPR; Communications; Licensing; AV and Streaming System – no report

Minute 2024\72 Overseas – Heather Edwards – no report

Minute 2024\73 Any Other Notified Business

- a) **A Thank You** - Erwin was overwhelmed and happy to see so many at his installation as non-residentiary Canon of the Cathedral in Chelmsford on Sunday 28th April. He also thanked those who stayed behind after the annual meeting for the presentation for a drink and cake, for the gifts and to those involved in organising the events.
- b) **Royal Mail Postage increase** On 1st July there will be yet another price increase for postage – our franking machine price will rise from 69p to 80p per copy of Tidings. The postage increase will be £23.10 (£144.90 to £168.00 for 210 copies). This is still much cheaper than paying for stamps even when the hire of the franking machine is taken into account.
- c) At Vision Day a card had been signed for **Hilary Cook**. Erwin had visited her with the card and some flowers on behalf of the congregation. She hoped to return after her treatment.
- d) **Next PCC Meeting** – Tuesday 9th July 2024 at 19.30 in the annexe.
- e) The meeting closed at 21.10 with everyone joining together in saying The Grace.