

The Parish of Corbridge St. Andrew with Halton

Minutes of PCC meeting Wed. 22nd Nov. 2023, 7.30pm in St Andrew's Cottage

David Kennedy opened the meeting with a reading from Revelations, and a prayer.

1. Present:

Canon David Kennedy (Chair), Revd Linda Hunter, Val Barnes, Alice Bryant, John Clark, Jane Darbyshire-Walker (for item 2 only), Jo Eldridge, Janet Kennedy, David McEwan, Carol Moffatt, Max Philbrick, Edward Pybus, Nahida Remy, Jean Wilks (minutes), John Wilson, Cliff Wright.

2. Lady Chapel project.

David K introduced Jane, a retired architect and new Maintenance Committee member, attending for this item to explain the process and answer any questions.

He said the Maintenance Committee had interviewed three architect practices and agreed to recommend the appointment of Neil Turner of Howarth Litchfield. Neil had submitted a draft programme incl. costs to the end of RIBA Stage 2 (Feasibility), and this had been circulated to PCC members. Funds were already in place from the Ross bequest to meet all these initial costs. Further funds would be raised through grant applications and a community appeal.

Jane explained the need for the feasibility stage, including Measured Survey which provides the necessary detail for work involving glazing and sensitive architecture. The feasibility phase and the resulting plans and drawings would give us a basis for presenting the project to the church community, and for raising the necessary funds.

David requested PCC's approval (i) for Neil Turner to be appointed as Architect and Project Manager, on the basis outlined in the draft plan, to progress the Lady Chapel project, and (ii) for funds from the Ross bequest to be used to meet the up-front costs. Approval was proposed by Alice Bryant, seconded by Nahida Remy, and agreed unanimously.

3. Acceptance of minutes of the last PCC meeting on Wed. 18th Oct. 2023 was proposed by Edward Pybus, seconded by Val Barnes, and agreed unanimously.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes: none.

5. Ministry Team.

David K said Sam Lohead will return in January from his placement at the Cathedral. Meanwhile Claire Robson has become a valuable member of the team, and we are waiting for the Bishop to confirm a date for her to be licensed as an Associate Priest with this parish.

6. Mission and Ministry.

1) **Mission Statement: Living out and sharing the gospel.**

David K said that interpreting the gospel is an essential part of sharing it. He proposed that, as part of the 1350 celebrations, we agree a statement of our core beliefs, and find ways to communicate this to our visitors, (i) by a display relating it to the church building, and (ii) through a series of leaflets. He circulated his initial ideas for a statement of beliefs, and samples of some leaflets used at Sheffield Cathedral.

PCC members welcomed this enthusiastically. It was suggested there could be smaller displays connecting aspects of faith with specific features within the building, e.g. stonework, or stained glass; many visitors come primarily to see the architecture, so we should use this as a way of communicating our message to them.

David hoped we could start work on this in the new year, and aim to have displays in place by the autumn. This will need a working group, and he encouraged anyone interested to speak to him about it.

Also David would like us to offer another "Start" course like the one we ran in 2020.

2) **Worship and Discipleship:** the booklet of Advent and Christmas services and events is now available. A group of people convened by Bob and Jo Eldridge have delivered them in the new estate and Cragside and Jameson Drive.

3) **1350th Anniversary update.** The working group has been busy and has a detailed and evolving planning document which Linda will provide for circulation to PCC. The plans include a launch weekend, art exhibitions, small heritage group, products for merchandise (learning from the Abbey's experiences), and a cascade of knitted flowers! They will be meeting bi-monthly starting in January.

4) **Take 5.**

Minutes had been circulated, including the group's proposals for disbursement of the £8000 grant monies: £900 to A Rocha, £2850 to Getachew, £1250 to GAP, £1000 to Lighthouse/MINE, and £2000 to CMS Pearts. Acceptance of these was proposed by Max Philbrick, seconded by Alice Bryant, and agreed unanimously.

Linda asked if the group could supply some current information on Getachew for our website where the last update shown was 2 years ago; Max will feed this request back to the group. (It was explained that Getachew works for Wycliffe Ethiopia Bible Translation, for which he is paid very little, so he depends on our support to help meet his family's living and schooling costs.)

Phil and Sylvie Good, now retired from CMS, are to visit St Andrew's on 28th January, and will take part in the 10am service and River.

7. **Parish Administrator.** Two applications have been received, we believe there may be a third, and interviews will be in early December.
8. **Finance.**
 - 1) **Finance update:** nothing to report.
 - 2) **Legacies:** a draft policy was circulated for comments at the last meeting; no comments have been received; it was today accepted with unanimous agreement.
9. **Reports.**
 - 1) **Safeguarding:** nothing to report.
 - 2) **Deanery Synod.** At the last meeting, all parishes gave presentations on their current activities. There are five working groups taking forward a Deanery Plan. A Deanery Prayer Diary is to be compiled. Minutes to follow when available.
 - 3) **Halton:** see Maintenance. Nothing further to report.
 - 4) **Maintenance:**
 - a) **Maintenance Committee:** Recent minutes had been circulated. Jane Darbyshire-Walker and Peter Cooke have recently joined the committee, both bringing valuable experience. David K expressed thanks to all Maintenance Committee members and especially the churchwardens for all the work that goes into maintaining our buildings.
 - b) **Cottage:** Peter Stienlet and Jane Darbyshire-Walker are obtaining some quotes for damproofing measures to enable the kitchen upgrade to move forward.
 - c) **Halton:** David M is liaising with Sir Hugh Blackett; they are requesting quotes from Sir Hugh's regular contractor, to compare with the two quotes already received for repair work to (i) the church and (ii) the chest tomb.
 - d) **Newton churchyard.**

David K had circulated a discussion paper and proposal. St James' Newton is now owned by Mowden Hall School; however, the churchyard remains the responsibility of this PCC, because it cannot be closed while there are still unused grave spaces. Mowden Hall maintains the churchyard but wants to stop doing so.

David has been advised by Lucy Burfield (Diocesan Advisory Committee) that we could apply for a Faculty to convert the remaining grave spaces to a memorial garden for cremated remains. We could then apply to the Ministry of Justice to close the churchyard, meaning it would be maintained by the local authority. The process would take about 2 years. David reminded them that they received the services of a chaplain (Linda) free. Mowden Hall is willing to continue its maintenance until such time as the

churchyard is closed and the responsibility is handed over to the local council.

Therefore David proposed that PCC approves the application for a Faculty to designate the Eastern area of St James' Newton as a memorial garden. Approval was proposed by Alice Bryant, seconded by Val Barnes and agreed unanimously.

We need to get the application to the DAC's January meeting. It will need photos, and details of the location of a plinth for names of those whose ashes are interred.

David further asked for volunteers to clear moss from the churchyard path which has become very slippery.

Meanwhile, Linda has spoken to the insurers and confirmed that the churchyard is covered by our policy, at no extra cost.

- e) **Health and Safety.** Risk assessments for the Tree Festival are being updated.
- 5) **Eco and Environment Committee:** no report.
- 6) **Events Committee update.**

Linda said we have had a very successful run of high-quality concerts.

The Tree Festival begins next week with 84 trees already expected. It will include a preview afternoon for care home residents, and three community carol sessions.

The church Christmas party will take place in the Hub on 16th December.

Tea and Chat is growing in popularity, with 37 attendees at today's meeting.

- 7) **Corbridge Community Partnership.** There have been no recent meetings. The new lease starts in January, meaning CCP now has to cover its costs. The group is working very hard to achieve this. St Andrew's was able to nominate CCP as the organisation to receive £1000 raised at a recent charity concert held in our church.

10. Correspondence: none.

11. Any other business: none.

12. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 24th January 2024. PCC will now meet six times per year, instead of eight, because clergy now also need to attend PCCs elsewhere in the Deanery.

JW 23.11.23