

**Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks
Monday, 25th April 2016**

Present: there were 48 present – Mr Geoffrey and Mrs Jenny Abery, Mr Philip and Mrs Patricia Andrews, Ms Penny Armstrong, Mr Robin and Mrs Sheila Ballard, Mr Jim and Mrs Gill Beveridge, Mr Rob Boulter, Lt-Col Richard Brooks, Mr Simon and Mrs Gillian Cauthery, Mr Ray Catling, Mrs Rosie Clayson, Mr Roger Coe, Mr David and Mrs Sheila Dunning, Mrs Ruth Eden, Mr Malcolm and Mrs Priscilla Flower-Smith, Mr Alan Frost, Brig Alastair Fyfe, Miss Jo Goldie, Mr Chris Gough, the Revd Tom Handy, Mr Steve and Mrs Sue Harrison, Mr Brian and Mrs Daphne Holden, Miss Dorothy Hudson, Mrs Brenda Joynes, Mrs Angela Laing, Miss Claire Mellish, Mrs Anna Novy, Mrs Susan Ogilvy, Mr Rod Page, Mr Tom Poole, Mrs Hazel Ricketts, Mr John and Mrs Sandra Roberts, Miss Mary Robertson, Miss Anne Shaw, Mrs Carol Talbot, Mrs Peggy Vaux, Mr David and Mrs Jane Ward, Mrs Paddy Ward,

Apologies: Mr Michael and Mrs Sarah Armstrong, Mrs Margaret Coe, the Revd Sue Hounsell, Mrs Amanda Jaggars, Mrs Vivien Jewsbury, Mrs Julia Lear, Mrs Joy Madge, Mrs Amanda Maggs, the Revd Laurence and Mrs Cathie Meering, Mrs Carol Pittard, Miss Annie Prichard, Mr Crispin Raikes, Mrs Ruth Taylor, Mrs Jean Willings.

- 1. Welcome and Opening Prayers:** The Revd Tom Handy welcomed those able to attend and opened the meeting with prayer.
- 2. Minutes of the Vestry Meeting, Monday, April 27th, 2015.** These were agreed as a true record.
- 3. Election of Churchwardens for 2016 – 2017.** Steve Harrison, Amanda Jaggars, Susan Ogilvy, and Carol Talbot, all having been nominated, were duly elected – proposed Geoff Abery, seconded David Dunning, with all in favour - there were no abstentions. Malcolm Flower-Smith was thanked for his service as churchwarden at St James’s last year.

The Meeting closed at 7.16 p.m.

----- ooo0ooo -----

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Church Meeting of South Petherton with the Seavingtons and the Lambrooks,
Monday, 25th April, 2016.**

Present and Apologies: as above.

1. (a) **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting, Monday, April 27th, 2015.** These were agreed as a true record.

(b) **Matters Arising.** There were none.

(c) There was a short audio-visual presentation consisting of photographs of events in the three churches during 2015.

3. **Rector's Reflections on the Year.** The Revd Tom Handy warmly thanked the retired clergy, the wardens, readers, vergers, musicians and many others who had contributed so much to the life and witness of the parish in the last year.

Bishop Peter Hancock has challenged the parishes to develop a vision for the Bath and Wells Diocese to generate growth in the current context of shrinking congregations and a shortfall of clergy to maintain the current level of worship and witness. This benefice is not representative of this national picture: we have maintained numbers/even had some growth; we have a wonderful team of retired clergy who contribute so much to what we are able to do and we have a developing lay leadership. The Diocese has articulated its strategy in a new document (available from the B&W website): "*Shaping our Future*". It places an emphasis on working with local contexts. The deaneries will have a critical role in developing key groups to lead locally on mission and pastoral care. Now and the near future is a time of considerable change in the diocese – new bishops, new archdeacons, a new cathedral dean all to settle into their roles and then to look to make an impact.

Progress has continued to be made with the aims of the Parish Profile. This begs the question 'what next?'; this is something we will need consider prayerfully. What is our vision now? How does that sit with the steer from the diocese in '*Shaping our Future*'? How do we continue to promote growth both in our numbers and in our own Christian lives?

4. **Annual Report of the PCC.** Steve Harrison said that this Report had tried to capture and celebrate what goes on in the whole Benefice and to look forward as well as back. In particular, he noted:-

- the continued growth of the *Seekers* children's group and involvement of a wider circle of leaders in order to make its organisation more manageable;
- the departure of Lisa Farley, the Infant School head teacher, and the school's continuing success;
- the thriving round of annual events, some like the harvest suppers with a long tradition and others like the folk fest and the Christmas lights switch-on that are becoming an established feature of village life;
- the many fund-raising initiatives, some to support our own finances and many to support directly charitable causes at home and abroad;
- the achievement of the team of ringers who established a new world record peal on 12 bells;
- the on-going financial support of the *Friends of St Peter & St Paul's*, and the *St Michael's, Seavington Trust*;

and he thanked in particular:-

- the clergy team, reader and lay worship assistants;
- the members of the PCC, particularly Sally Gough who is stepping down after many years;
- the many volunteers who contributed tirelessly to the life of the churches and the villages in the benefice, especially: Nigel Kinsman for his dedicated work for Christian Aid and Fair Trade, Nicola Eeles and Ruth Eden our organists, Brian Holden our ‘webmaster’ and the teams and individuals who routinely do the unglamorous tasks of keeping our churches clean and our churchyards tidy.

5. Annual Accounts for the Year, January 1st to December 31st 2015.

Jim Beveridge reported on the accounts for the year which show a welcome, if slightly deceptive surplus for the year. We have benefitted from a particularly large legacy which ensured our income exceeded our expenditure so while our finances are sound there is a worrying background that our income from regular on-going donations is not keeping up with our needs.

The budget for 2016/7 projects a £6k deficit. Our Parish Share is rising as the Diocese phases in the inclusion of church numbers from St James’s – in many ways we are fortunate that this is happening in a phased way rather than all at once, but it does mean our outgoings will continue to rise.

Jim also drew attention to the significance of Gift Aid which boosts our income significantly at no cost to the donor; he reminded all that it is a simple process which Julia Lear will be happy to assist with.

Jim thanked the Fundraising Committee for their important efforts in ensuring events happen and we get that critical boost into our income. He also thanked Tim Farley for his work as our Independent Examiner.

The accounts were accepted: proposed Rod Page, seconded Sheila Dunning – all in favour.

6. Other Reports Presented.

(a) Churchwardens’ Fabric Reports (Malcolm Flower-Smith for St James’s, East Lambrook; Manda Jagers and Carol Talbot for St Michael’s Seavington; Steve Harrison for St Peter & St Paul’s)

(b) Bells and Bell-Ringing (Sheila Ballard)

(c) Choir (Ruth Eden)

(d) Deanery Synod (Alastair Fyfe)

(e) Electoral Roll Mr Rod Page announced that there were 217 on the Roll.

(f) Fundraising Group (John Roberts)

(g) Small Groups (Cathie Meering)

(h) SP Mothers’ Union (Hazel Ricketts)

In answer to questions, Steve Harrison reported that in respect of proposals to upgrade the sound system at St Peter and St Paul’s quotes had been obtained from two suppliers, one being the company that installed our current system. Tom Handy, Crispin Raikes and Steve Harrison have also visited St Benedict’s, Street where they have installed a new sound/a-v system supplied by the other company and were impressed by the quality of sound. As the church is a Grade 1 listed building, the

next stage involves applying for a 'faculty' (in effect, a permission) from the Diocesan Advisory Committee for us to make the changes to the fabric of the church.

7. Election of PCC Members

3 members of the PCC have reached the end of their term of office as elected lay representatives: Jim Beveridge, Sally Gough and Susan Ogilvy. Susan re-joins the PCC as churchwarden for St James's, Jim is seeking re-election for a further three years, and Sally is stepping down.

According to the rules of composition of the PCC we need to appoint at least one person from St James's.

The following nominations had been received: Jim Beveridge (StP&P), Malcolm Flower-Smith (St J) and Anne Shaw (St M). There were no further nominations at the meeting. After discussion all three were elected – proposed Steve Harrison, seconded Geoff Aberly and carried none against.

8. Any Other Business.

None

The meeting ended at 8.36 p.m.