

MINUTES OF GREAT BRICKHILL ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING,

HELD IN THE CHURCH ON TUESDAY 9th APRIL 2024 AT 7.30pm.

Attached to these Minutes are PDF files for the 2024 Annual Meeting Presentation slides, the Warden's Report and the Rector's Reflections - available on the website on the following page:-
<https://brickhillschurches.org.uk/great-brickhill/annual-church-meeting/>

The Reverend John Waller took the chair.

The Rector opened the meeting with prayer, and welcomed all those attending.

PART I: THE ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING

ELECTION OF THE CHURCH WARDENS:

The Rector reminded the meeting that Church Wardens are elected by residents in the village. The current Warden, Julia Turner, was willing to seek re-election but gave notice that this would be her last year as Warden. Her nomination was proposed by Christine Agambar and seconded by Betty Kinsey. Julia Turner was duly elected.

The Rector gave huge thanks to Julia Turner for standing again and for the many things that she does for us.

PART II: THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

APOLOGIES – Janet Pritchard.

A total of 10 parishioners were in attendance.

MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 16th MAY 2023

The Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting had been made available in advance. There was no requirement to formally approve these Minutes.

ELECTIONS:

Deanery Synod Representative.

The position had been vacant since 1st October 2020. Nomination for the post was received from Jeremy Hopkinson, proposed by Stuart Jones, seconded by Diana Williams. Jeremy was duly elected. He had been serving as Deanery Treasurer for many years, but wished to stand down from that role.

Up to six Members of the PCC.

The Rector informed the Meeting that the number of PCC members allowed for the size of our Electoral Roll is 6. At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in 2004 provision was made for the annual appointment of representatives on the PCC. There is also facility for two people to be co-opted on to the PCC during the year if there is good reason to add more people.

The Rector thanked all the members of the PCC for their contribution over the last twelve months. Nominations had been received for five of the current members - Phillipa Cook, Clare Hankins-Lewis, Stuart Jones, Sophia Walmsley, Diana Williams. Joy Wilson stood down having served from 2012, continuing until the toilets were completed. The Rector thanked her for her considerable contribution over the years. With a total of five nominations, no vote was required and all five were appointed by a show of hands.

The Treasurer, Neil Cook, would be co-opted on to the PCC at the first meeting after the Annual Meeting. One other person could be co-opted at any point during the year.

The Rector noted that the ex-officio members of the PCC are himself as incumbent, Julia Turner as Warden and Jeremy Hopkinson as LLM and now Deanery Representative. The Rector informed the meeting that the PCC meets on five occasions, at roughly bi-monthly intervals.

Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2023.

The Treasurer said that David Beatty had again acted as Independent Examiner for this year's accounts and was willing to continue for the 2024 accounts. Proposed by Joy Wilson and seconded by Jeremy Hopkinson, Mr. Beatty was duly appointed as Independent Examiner for 2024. The Treasurer recorded his thanks to David Beatty.

ELECTORAL ROLL:

The Rector advised the meeting that every 6 years a new Electoral Roll is formed, the next time that will happen is 2025. Anyone can join the Roll at any time. The death of Lady Rachel Duncombe who played a very important part in the life of the village, was noted; also, Alan Poynter who had died two weeks ago.

Three people had joined the Electoral Roll and so the current number on the Roll was reported as one more than last year, 37 of whom 7 are not resident in the parish. These figures would be passed to the Diocese.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PARISH

The PCC secretary had prepared slides showing events and activities that had taken place over the last year, and referred to the main points in the written Annual Report, which had been made available in advance. The events covered were from the last Annual Meeting to the end of 2023, and also the current year 2024 to date:

- A summary of those whose Funerals or Thanksgiving Services had taken place
- Services including the special services and attendance records:
 - The Coronation, 6th May
 - Outdoor Benefice Service, 30th July
 - Harvest Festival, Rectory Farm, 15th October
 - The Nativity & Christmas Services
 - 2024 Palm Sunday Procession
- High Ash services and visit by Years 1 & 2 on 31st January
- Lent Course & Bible Group
- Monday Morning Coffee Club
- Food Box
- Workdays on Saturdays 12th August & 2nd September
- Thermal Survey by Andrew Smith
- New Notice Board sponsored by Marcus Feinhols
- Communications
- Fundraising and Events:-
 - Brickstock teas, Christmas Coffee Morning, Carol Singing, Advent Windows
- 2024 Services & Events:- Snowdrop Walks, Palm Sunday Procession, Easter Service

The Rector added that High Ash had been through difficult times with a very challenging Ofsted Report. The new Head Teacher had been absent for a prolonged period – a new Head Teacher was expected to be appointed quite soon.

Other items on the slides included:-

THE POLICY DOCUMENTS:

The Rector referred to this section and noted that this is taken very seriously. Philipa Cook is the Parish Safeguarding Officer and Sophia Walmsley had been very helpful with the training undertaken by all the PCC members. The annual Safeguarding review had taken place in November. The Safeguarding Policy was renewed, and a Domestic Abuse Policy was also approved. For the year to 31st October there was a "nil report" of safeguarding issues and no safeguarding incidents have been reported since then.

THE TREASURER'S REPORT INCL. THE ANNUAL REPORT:

Copies of the Annual Report and Accounts had been made available in advance of the Meeting. The Treasurer, Neil Cook, presented the financial statements for the year to 31st December 2023. He referred to the notes in the "Church Finances for 2023" section in the Annual Report. Slides were shown highlighting the main points.

The treasurer noted the higher payment this year of the Parish Share, £14k, made possible due to the two big fundraising events being very successful. The amount paid is still only two-thirds of the amount due to the Diocese, limited by the year end deficit as shown in the accounts.

The Rector added that it is not easy raising money in these challenging times, but the figures reflect a lot of generosity, both in the amount of giving and hard work that goes into fundraising. He thanked the treasurer for his hard work throughout the year.

The Annual Report is the written narrative report plus the accounts. Adoption of the Annual Report was proposed by Diana Williams and seconded by Julia Turner. All in favour.

WARDEN'S REPORT ON THE CHURCH BUILDING AND ITS FABRIC:

Julia Turner gave her Warden's report for the year – see separate file.

The Rector thanked Julia for all her hard work through the year.

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT:

The PCC Secretary referred to the Deanery Synod section of the Annual Report and the slides in the presentation.

NEW FACILITIES & ROOF REPAIR:

Slides were shown giving a summary of the work that has been done, along with photographs, and a note of the grants that have been received to date.

REFLECTION FROM THE RECTOR:

The Rector gave a short reflection "Sabbath Rests", ahead of his three-month sabbatical from 13th April to 1st July. Notes are available in a separate PDF file.

The Rector gave his personal thanks to all who had contributed to the life of the church and to all those who will be helping out during his sabbatical.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

None.

The Reverend John Waller thanked everyone for attending the meeting, which concluded with Compline at 8.30pm.