

Amesbury Parish Church

PCC Minutes of the Meeting of Wednesday 17th November 2021 at 7.30pm.

(1) **Prayers.** Collect of Saint Hugh of Lincoln. ¹

(2.1) **Those present at the meeting:** Father Darren A'Court (FrD), Lisa Courtney (LC), Ruth Davies (RD), Barbara Maddocks (BM), Sophie Moody (via Zoom link) (SM), John Swindlehurst (JS), Andrew Robson (Acting Secretary) (AR). Also attended by Emma Mullen, of St. Ann's Gate Architects (EM).

(2.2) **Apologies** were received from Julie Lewis (JL).

(3) **Declarations of Interest:**

John Swindlehurst: Wyndham Hall and Town Council.

(4.1) **Presentation by the architect and discussion:**

The first part of the meeting (to 8.20pm) was a presentation by EM of her advice in relation to the maintenance and repair of the church building. Specifically this was about the need for remedial work as a result of the QI Inspection and some additional matters.

EM commented that the work on the nave roof was completed a year ago and looks fantastic. There is an aesthetic issue with staining in one of the panels. The contractor has agreed to remedy this without charge. It will require the installation of scaffolding in one of the bays for two weeks. There will be no need to move pews.

(4.2) It was agreed that this work could be done in the 2nd, 3rd, or 4th weeks of January 2022.

Action: EM.

(4.3) **Other defect:**

There is a small brown stain at the ridge where rain has been driven in. It is well-ventilated, so it will dry out. It is recommended that this should be monitored.

Action: EM.

(4.4) **Rainwater disposal and the removal of fallen leaves from gutters etc**

EM referred to a table of pictures and notes sent out to members via email. BW advised that the clearance of gutters forms part of the agreement with Bawdens Managed Landscapes, and that they need to come in late November each year to remove fallen leaves from gutters and gulleys. EM observed that much of the vegetation growing on the building has been reduced since her last visit. She advises that we should ask Bawdens to place 'balloons' on the nave outlets to prevent clogging. EM will 'price up' suitable remedial work on the drains that could be done one or two at a time.

(4.5) **Priorities**

EM suggests that in order of priority are the following:

The First Priority: The roofs of the church; the main nave roof is now done. The tower roof needs complete refurbishment; further patching will not now suffice. EM's advice is that this is the *highest priority*, together with the *chancel roof*. Vegetation needs to be cleared and there is a need for some masonry work and repointing of the stair turret coping stones. One stone is particularly decayed.

¹ St. Hugh of Lincoln was Bishop of Lincoln and died on November 17th 1200. He showed great compassion for the poor and the oppressed, ensuring that sufferers of leprosy were cared for and not persecuted. He revived Lincoln's schools and enlarged the cathedral.

The cost is likely to be c£20,000 for the above work with c£6,000 for the scaffolding of the chancel and tower.

BW advised that it is possible that this work could be funded from a bequest to the church.

BW drew attention to the question of the flagpole, and the trap door, which, she suggests, should be replaced.

(4.6) It was agreed that EM should seek quotes for the above work from three contractors.

Other matters that need attention

(4.7) **The roof of the north transept.** Water is entering at the wallhead and is causing some dampness.

(4.8) **The roof of the south transept;** a patch of damp at the abutment with the tower; there is a risk of timber decay. There have been some temporary repairs completed in the last five or ten years. This matter could wait until the next QI.

(5) **Next steps**

(5.1) EM will write up a schedule of repairs, and draw up a list of three contractors. She will set up a tender, and analyse the contractors' submissions. A decision will need to be made about which contractor to engage for the work, and a faculty will be applied for. A statement of significant need will be drawn up.

EM observed that it might be possible to do this work under 'List B' and she will investigate whether or not this will be possible.

(5.2) **Invoices for the work:** BW asked that invoices for the costs should be submitted on a monthly basis.

(5.3) **Bat Survey:** There will need to be a bat survey, probably in March 2022.

(5.4) **Maintenance of trees near to the church building**

EM observed that some trees are almost touching the building and advises that these should be cut back at an early opportunity. She also suggested that the trees at the west end of the church could be thinned out. This would allow more light into the building and reduce the leaf litter clogging the gutters. BW advised that we have a contractor for this work and that gutter clearance should be done in late November.

(5.5) **Action: BW** will get in touch with the contractor to expedite the gutter clearance work. She will also ask them to install leaf guards for each outlet on the nave roof.

EM was thanked for her contribution to the meeting and she left at 8.20pm.

(5.6) **Minutes of the previous meeting of Monday 4th October 2021.**

The minutes were approved as a correct record and signed by Father Darren.

(6) **Matters arising**

(6.1) **Broken heaters;** the heaters have received some attention from the electrician; however the heaters above the choirstalls are not working and trip the switches when turned on.

(6.2) **Action: AR** to email FrD Darren about this matter.

(6.3) **Action: FrD** to contact the electrician to remedy the situation

(6.4) **Carpet squares for the floor in the choirstalls and the vestry.**

It was agreed that it would be a good idea to get some of these items.

Action: BW

(6.5) **Safe for donations.** JL is looking into the idea of providing a freestanding safe box.

(6.6) **Action: JL (pending).**

(6.7) **Wyndham Hall Asbestos Report.**
Wilson's have received the asbestos report.

(6.8) **Wyndham Hall Office**
Boxes have been purchased and the receipt passed to LC.
The laptop is defunct and will be disposed of securely.
RD will be given the disk of files.
RD has passed a bag of cheque stubs and similar items to LC.

(6.9) **Bank**
BM has arranged for communications from the bank to be addressed to the Vicarage in future.

(6.10) **Car parking**
The amount of available space is short at the moment and the situation is being monitored.

(7) Safeguarding

(7.1) RD declared that there is nothing new to report (from the diocese).

(7.2) The matter of a youth seeking to play the organ has been resolved because he and his family have moved away from Amesbury.

(7.3) FrD spoke of the intention to produce role descriptions to comply with accepted best practice in this area.

(7.4) RD advised that all attendances at diocesan safeguarding training events are recorded on the diocesan website, and that the system now works more effectively.

(7.5) Youth Choir visit to the pantomime Friday 17th December 2021.

Michael Nottage, Acting Director of Music, has applied for permission to take a small number of Youth Choir members to the pantomime at Salisbury Playhouse. It involves three choir members who are under the age of eighteen. One parent would accompany her own two girls. The third girl would be taken by car by Michael Nottage and RD, travelling together, with the parents' permission.

(7.6) **Approval for this choir activity** was given; also for the safeguarding arrangements set out above.

(8) Health and Safety

(8.1) Exterior lighting.

BW spoke about the need to provide suitable lighting on the pathways in the churchyard. This is especially needed for the Advent and Christmas evening services. It is feared that some people are deterred from coming to church on winter evenings because of the darkness on the approach to the church. She proposed the purchase of suitable chargeable battery-operated lights, available from Screwfix, that can be set out in the churchyard when needed and otherwise stored in the church.

(8.2) This proposal was approved.

(8.3) Lone Working Policy

The Lone Working Policy needs updating.

(8.4) **Action: RD**, who will report on this at the January meeting.

(9) **Finance and Stewardship**

(9.1) David Ferguson, (DF) , has requested an explanation for our non-contribution to the Parish Share this year. He advises that we should make an appeal regarding the new Share Allocations.

(9.2) We need to make a list of the regular contributions made by parishioners, and others, including communicants, etc. DF is prepared to help us draft an appeal to the deanery. We understand that the Share will rise by 5% in 2022. BW observed that our number on roll will be less than 131 since the start of the Covid pandemic. FrD suggests that we work out a narrative in relation to last year's financial situation and to look to restarting payments at an early opportunity; the amount of the payments to be decided at a subsequent meeting. It is important also to encourage people to use newer ways of giving, particularly electronically.

(9.3) **Action: FrD, BW and LC to meet to discuss and action the above items** and to compose a narrative about last year's financial situation.

Action: LC to liaise with DF.

(9.4) **The Financial Spreadsheet**

LC spoke of the matters of the Parish Share and the loan repayment.

(9.5) **It was unanimously agreed that we should now repay the loan in full.**

(9.6) **'Thank You' cards**

It was agreed that we should present '*thank you*' cards to all individuals for their regular financial contributions to the church.

(9.7) **Action: LC.**

(10) **Mission and Outreach**

It was agreed that the PCC should provide funds for the purchase of extra choir robes following a request from Leah Davies, who looks after the choir robes.

(10.1) This was agreed.

(10.2) **Action: BW** will ask Leah to provide a submission regarding the costs.

(11) **Any Other Business**

(11.1) **Service booklets** for the Advent Carol Service and the Christmas Carol Service.

(11.2) It was agreed that we should get them printed commercially this year.

(11.3) **Action: FrD** will produce the master copies of each booklet,

(11.4) **BW** will arrange to get them printed.

(11.5) **Sale of the Wyndham Hall**

SM asks that PCC members read the emailed letter from Sue Russell of Wilsons regarding her list of questions. ***If you know the answers to any of them please contact SM.***

Father Darren asked that his objection to this sale of the Wyndham Hall, on ethical grounds, be recorded. He has previously shared his concerns with the PCC.

(11.6) **Last Saturday's concert**

We borrowed and returned 26 chairs from the Wyndham Hall, with permission.

(11.7) **Sale of the Wyndham Hall**

We are delighted that SM has taken on the lead role for this project.

(11.8) **Clearance of items from the Wyndham Hall**

RD informs us that she will bring the loaded trolleys over to the church from the hall within the next week, with the help of Ben Mathias. We thank them both for undertaking this task.

Date of next meeting of the PCC: January 19th 2022.