

Minutes of Little Gransden PCC held Tuesday 8 March 2016: 7:30pm
at 2 Main Road, Little Gransden

Present: Nick Wareham (Acting Chair), Betty Bates, Janice Brown, Sheila George, Suzanne Lawrence, Donald Lester, Ian Ramsay (Treasurer), Stephen Sullivan (Secretary)

Apologies: Received from Rev. Catharine Furlong.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2015 were read, accepted and signed.

Matters Arising

The handover of Treasurer's responsibility to Ian Ramsay is progressing. There are still one or two issues that Donald Lester is working on. These do not involve the Accounts for 2015. Signatories for the bank accounts have been rearranged. Shirley Gillett has been replaced by Joe Ward as independent examiner. Shirley has been thanked for her past efforts.

TREASURER'S REPORT

(a) Year End Accounts December 2015

Expenditure has exceeded income by £2,856 (£800 more than last year) even though the Autumn Bazaar takings on this occasion went into the General Account. Income Tax and VAT refunds for the year remain to be claimed, however. The Accounts were approved unanimously.

£200,000 of the Pickard bequest has been deposited in a CCLA investment fund, with a further £50,000 placed in the Fabric Designated Fund, half held in the Barclays current account and half with a CCLA deposit account. As the CCLA investments are 'non-cash' they appear as a footnote in the tables describing the accumulated funds in the annual accounts. In much less than a full year, the investment income has so far been £2,393.

The Tower fund, as expected, has a deficit of £10,000. It was unanimously agreed to close the account as from next year, and write it off against the Fabric (Restricted) Fund.

There is a small fund for Bequests (containing £260). This should be spent on church goods, according to the wishes of the donors.

Donald Lester is working to find who holds the Trust Deeds and the Title Documents for the 11 acres of land.

The Accounts have been Examined and signed by Joe Ward. The Accounts and Report were approved unanimously by the Meeting (Proposed Sheila George, Seconded Betty Bates). Ian Ramsay was thanked for his efforts. We will provide Joe Ward with a small gift in appreciation of this work. **Action Nick Wareham**, to select an appropriate gift.

(b) Closure of Insurance and Special Purposes Accounts.

The insurance account contains £128. Since our insurance bill is nearly £2,000 p.a., the Treasurer does not think that this separate account is helpful and recommends that it is closed. This was agreed unanimously by the PCC. A similar discussion was held about the Special Purposes Account, which previously allowed the Treasurer of Little Gransden to act as banker for the other churches in the benefice. The Treasurer recommends that this also be closed, which was agreed unanimously by the PCC. **Action Ian Ramsay**, to close both accounts.

(c) Weekly envelopes

Seven members of the congregation use these envelopes (of whom only three are regular users). The Gift Aid mandate that they contain needs to be revised. **ACTION Ian Ramsay, who will ask those involved if they would be able to switch to a bankers' Standing Order instead.**

(d) Budget for 2016

The Meeting was informed that there is a general recommendation that church budgets be set in the Autumn, before the accounting year begins. It was resolved to strive to do this in future, with the proviso that our major outgoing (the Parish Share) may still be uncertain at that time of year.

The total anticipated expenditure for 2017 is likely to exceed income by approximately £2,900 but this imbalance may be lessened by recovered tax and VAT. We are also fortunate to be receiving investment income from the Pickard bequest, which will mitigate any deficit.

FABRIC REPORT

(a) Nave Roof Repair

The new architect reviewed the 2012 Quinquennial Report, which had other priorities beyond the Chancel Gable work that was completed in 2015. Specifically, the Nave Roof had been noted to be in need of attention within 18-24 months of the Report (i.e., by 2014). The Listed Places of Worship roof repair fund recently announced an opening for requests for funding to make urgent repairs to the roofs of listed churches. One of the application criteria is that an architect must have recently verified that the work is urgent. Since the Quinquennial Report of three years ago could not be used for this purpose, Nick Wareham has commissioned Purcell to draw up such a report, which confirms that the roof is in a bad state and provides plans for rectifying the situation. The total estimate for the work involved is £95,755. Nick Wareham has made an application on behalf of the PCC for this amount. PCC funds would provide £30,096, the LPW scheme would recover the VAT of £1,595, leaving a grant application of £49,700. The deadline for the application was the end of February 2016, and we are to hear the results in June 2016. Nick Wareham was thanked for his timely action in making this application.

It was agreed that work on the decoration and repair of the interior of the church would need to wait until the work on the roof had been completed. This work would need a Faculty and the involvement of the architect.

(b) Feasibility Study

Nick Wareham reported that he had commissioned Purcell to undertake a Feasibility Study of how we might improve the fabric of the church, for example with improved access for disabled people, a proper Vestry or robing room, kitchen facilities and toilets. It will include detailed plans and costings and will therefore be invaluable in making further grant applications. The cost of the Feasibility Study will be £4,250 + VAT. The PCC agreed unanimously that this should go ahead.

HEALTH & SAFETY

(a) Inspection 16 Feb 2016

Stephen Sullivan had made the annual Fire and HSW inspection, dated 16 February 2016, which was considered by the Meeting. It was noted that the PAT testing intended for June 2015 had not been done. There is no statutory requirement for frequency of PAT testing, but the PCC agreed that it would adopt a policy of doing this annually, which was commensurate with the

recommendations of our insurers. **ACTION Sheila George**, to ask Stuart Morton to carry out a further range of tests.

The First Aid box did not have a checklist or a list of contents. **ACTION Stephen Sullivan** who would provide one.

It was noted that the Foam fire extinguisher had been replaced by a further Water extinguisher, and that the LPG pipe supports under the South Door had been repaired.

(b) Inspection of Lightning Conductor

The contractors for the Lightning Conductor have reminded us that their annual inspection was now due. Ecclesiastical Insurance recommend an inspection every 2.5 years, according to the current British Standard (BS EN 62305) and an annual visual inspection by a church officer. The PCC therefore decided to work to this recommendation. Nick Wareham reported that the quotation from the contractors (JW Gray) was £230 + VAT for the test. However, they would do Little and Great Gransden together for £300 + VAT. Great Gransden are happy with this. **Action Nick Wareham**, to arrange testing for both churches with JW Gray.

APPOINTMENT OF ORGANIST

The new organist, appointed on a six-month trial from 1 March in the first instance, is David John from Croydon. His stipend will be divided 60:40 between Great and Little Gransden, which roughly reflects the balance of services.

ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER'S REPORT

Suzanne Lawrence reported that one name had been removed from the Electoral Roll and another added, so that the total remains at 30 (17 resident, 13 non-resident). Addresses will no longer appear on the published version of the Electoral Roll. The new Electoral Roll was approved by the Meeting.

MEETING WITH ARCHDEACON

The Churchwardens, and Rachel Fogg from Great Gransden, had met the Archdeacon, to discuss the future shape and direction of the parishes. The next step would be to commence a discussion about how the parishes could work more efficiently together. The Archdeacon was supportive of beginning a process of discussion which would not only include the PCC and the Annual Meeting of the Parishioners, but also in due course wider groups within the villages. The PCC agreed that it was timely to commence this discussion. One possible outcome would be the formation of a combined parish of Great and Little Gransden.

RETIREMENT OF CHURCHWARDEN

Sheila George is coming to the end of her second three-year term as Churchwarden, and is therefore required to stand down from that post. This means that we will have a vacancy for a Churchwarden as from the AGM. Catharine is making active enquiries to identify possible candidates for the vacancy. It was suggested that an open appeal could be made for volunteers to join the PCC. Action Nick Wareham, to discuss the churchwarden vacancy with Catharine and the proposal to make an announcement about PCC vacancies more widely.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting will be the Joint Annual Meeting on Tuesday 19 April, at 7.30 at Barnabas Oley School. It will be followed by a brief meeting of the newly-elected PCCs, and the meeting dates for the next year will be decided at that time.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 9.35pm with the Grace.

(Signed).....

Date.....