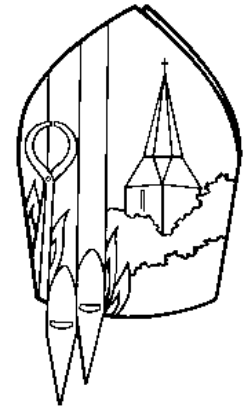


**MINUTES OF MEETING OF MAYFIELD & FIVE ASHES PCC**  
**Tuesday, 24 September 2024 at 7:00 pm in London House**



<b><u>Present:</u></b>	Father Michael Asquith	Chairman
	Deacon Di Blackden	
	Robin Holliday	Hon Treasurer
	Carl Walters	Church Warden
	Stephen Blurton	Church Warden
	David Whittall	
	Karen Dines	From 7:30pm
	Kate Sanday	
	Lindy James	
	Lucy Piercy	Guest – Director of Music
	Phyllida de Salis	
	Rachel Robinson	
	Sue Smith	From 7:45pm

Father Michael welcomed all PCC members and began the meeting with a prayer.

**1. Apologies for absence:**

Karen Mack  
Emma Ryder Richardson  
Guy Mantoura  
Roger Salwey  
Tim Reid

**2. Review of August services - 4 August '24 (Taizé) and 18 August '24 (Modern Culture)**

Introduced by Father Michael.

**Feedback:**

**PdS** – had not attended, but had heard from several that leadership of the singing by the choir would have been welcome.

**LJ** – Did not attend, but took feedback from three people who liked the Taizé format.

**MA** – The prayers with the music were well received. This worked well as the prayers were scripted tightly in conjunction with the Director of Music. He said he would not want to repeat either service in the same way.

However, he might occasionally use a Taizé chant at the time of communion in place of the communion hymn.

One spin-off has been the new programme for the congregation to choose a hymn with a personal introduction. This has proven popular. The first chosen hymn will be on Sunday, 6 October when Cynthia Baker will introduce her hymn of choice.

**LP** – With modern songs it is difficult to sing to a backing track. A piano rather than the organ is a better arrangement.

**DB** – Many thought the Taizé service was lovely but would be better received in the calm of an evening setting with its own time rather than as part of a regular Sunday Communion service.

### 3. “Mission through Music”

#### **Background / Introduction (MA):**

We have been considering a Youth & Families worker for some time.

Earlier in the year the PCC took feedback from the village schools and groups working with young people which was inconclusive. Most respondents were interested in what St Dunstan’s could do for them rather than how the relationship could be symbiotic with benefit to both organisations.

It was suggested that instead of trying to create something new we should play to our strengths and work to bring people into the Church through our established and recognised music tradition.

#### **Presentation (Lucy Piercy - Director of Music)**

Music is strong in our community. If we have a dedicated *Mission* to offer music as a conduit into Church life we will speak to more people. Through her work for the Roman Catholic Church sponsored **National Schools Singing Programme** in Kent, Lucy advised she has been able to engage with young people on the programme.

She would like to broaden the music offering at St Dunstan’s to appeal to younger people within our community through a Junior Choir programme reaching into our local schools (State and Private). This would include training and RSCM Medals for learning achievements.

#### **Why:**

To broaden our Church Community

To provide a musical introduction and insight to young people

To engage with their wider families

To continue our musical tradition

#### **How:**

Links with all the local schools

Links with other music groups in our community like the Silver Band

Links with Jack Gonzalez Harding and his work with young people

#### **Marketing:**

Facebook, TikTok and X etc – we can have fun as well as being serious.

### **Potential First Events:**

Vivaldi's Four Seasons set to modern music – 2025 is the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Burwash Concerts in April 2025

Community style choral training ahead of specific services like “Come and sing Evensong”

### **Proposal (MA)**

a. Do we think Mission through Music is a valid way go forward via a special programme?

*Carried unanimously.*

b. Does the PCC support an application to the Nicolson Trust for £10k per year for three years to fund the proposal?

*Carried unanimously.*

The Nicholson Trust meets in November 2024 when this proposal will be presented to them for consideration.

## **4. PCC Committees & Affiliated Groups (Please see Appendix 1)**

**MA** referred to the list of all the PCC Committees and affiliated groups in place. He felt some of these have fallen by the wayside and need to be re-formed and re-energised:

**a. Standing Committee** – In place – no changes proposed.

**b. Growth Committee** –We need to re-focus on what we want this group to do; an ‘ideas’ forum was suggested

**CW** suggested this could be more of a discussion group for people to get together to discuss key issues. It would be good to unpack it and go back to basics. Should be something where we think about what we do and how. A framed discussion Group reporting to the PCC with ideas and insights.

**MA** – In the new year should we use this for “*open forum*” discussions where we invite people to attend – either in Church or London House.

**KS** – Would be a good idea to lose the word “*Committee*”.

**RH** – This could be a good forum to discuss alternative service formats.

### **c. Stewardship:**

**MA** felt this is about encouraging people to review their giving and the options open to them. He cited the example of Will Giving which is high profile on the TV. We should have a Stewardship Officer engaged in getting to know the congregation well.

#### **d. Finance:**

**RH** Advised we need a Finance Committee to overview his work and our budgets for the year. The Committee should review our Financial Policy down to the level of how we fund raise and discuss money related matters. He was uncomfortable that this Committee has not met for over three years.

#### **e. Investment:**

Charles Marshall is the chair of this Committee.

**MA** – This committee works well, but there is room for more people to join.

#### **f. Social**

**MA** – This is strong and successful. However, we need people to step forward to support the core team in the delivery of events. An extra cadre of supporters is required to share the work when delivering events.

**LJ** – Committee thin on the ground and open to other people joining in and getting involved to support events.

**DW** – We should ask people directly to support via the Sunday News Sheet, the E News or Sunday Notices. People often assume all bases are covered which is seldom the case.

#### **h. Health & Safety**

**MA** – Emma has done an enormous amount of work on this front.

**CW** – Confirmed he is happy to be on Board to guide the process

#### **i. Eco Church**

**DB** - Advised we are working towards our Silver Award. Meet every two months. On top of things and a good group moving as fast as is possible.

#### **j. Fabric**

**SB** advised this has not met for some time due to the lack of significant projects. However, the Committee's role is to keep an eye on the general fabric of the building.

**RH** – Fabric Committee is also responsible for ensuring the wider use of the building is in order and compliant with our Health and Safety Policy.

Carl Walters, Stephen Blurton, Sue Smith & David Whittle volunteered to be part of a re-formed group.

**SB** undertook to arrange a meeting in October ahead of the next PCC meeting.

#### **k. Deanery Synod**

**MA** – Apologised to Sue Smith leaving her name off the list. No changes proposed here as there is a formal process for electing Synod members which works.

## **I. Organ Trust**

**MA** advised this is separate from the PCC, but accountable to the PCC. Its role is to promote the Organ and ensure it is maintained properly.

## **j. Bruxner Randall**

**MA** – This supports the choir in the provision of music. The committee reports to the PCC.

## **k. Church Yard**

Mike Hand Bowman and Stephen Blurton front this.

**PdS** – Should we have members from other Churches involved in the space as this is a village asset.

## **l. Flower Guild**

A well structured and established Group.

## **m. Holy Dusters**

A key cleaning group which works well with all participants working together.

**DB** – Commented that better cleaning is achieved with the whole team working in the building together rather than as loan workers.

## **5. Finance update**

**RH** – **Advised there are** no material changes following last month's half year update.

Regular giving is down about 4% on previous month.

### **Approval of Bruxner Randall Trust Budget**

MA advised the Committee had met in the week of 12 September. Whilst a formal Minute is not yet available the key outcomes were:

- Agreed with MA that £1,000 be allocated for the Director of Music to purchase new music for the Choir.
- The Trust would also like to support a Choral Scholarship for talented young Choir members.
- Payment of younger Choir Members whilst still at school remains under review.

Also, £500 is allocated annually to pay an organist so that the Director of Music can conduct at key services like Evensong.

Funding has been provided for Psalters for use by the Choir at Evensong.

**RH** – confirmed the fund has £40k invested. The fund is addressing some complex questions as to its long-term ambitions and plans.

## The Organ Trust

Minutes of the last Organ Trust Committee meeting which took place on 3 September 2024 are attached in Appendix 2. These were not discussed at the meeting but are made available here for PCC members to review.

## 6. Fabric report

There are four areas to report:

- **Re-pointing of the paths and general repairs** – Carl Walters has undertaken important work re-pointing several of the paths around the Church and London House.

He has also applied an anti-slip treatment to the brick path leading to the Church; repaired the handrail around the War Memorial (on behalf of the Parish Council), and cut back the ivy overhanging the path adjacent to Stone Court. On behalf of the PCC Stephen Blurton thanked Carl for this work.

- **Glass Doors** - John Bailey, architect, has been asked to prepare drawings of possible glass door installations for consideration by the PCC. He will prepare two options for us to consider:

- Glass Doors on the inside of the Church
- Glass Doors on the South Side of the existing Doors inside the porch

The budget for this work, £1750 + VAT, was approved at the January PCC Meeting.

This project has been initiated out of a desire for the Church to be open and accessible to all as part of our Mission.

**CW** drew **SB's** attention to papers on file from the last time glass doors were considered at the outer entrance to the porch.

- **Aynscombe Memorial** – John Bailey advised that the Glass Door project will not interfere with the renovation of the Aynscombe Memorial and we should proceed to secure a Faculty to allow this work to be undertaken.
- **Woodworm** - The Holy Dusters have identified concerning woodworm outbreaks. John Bailey inspected various sites during his visit on 9 September 2024. He was not able to locate any significant infestations and said we should monitor the situation treating outbreaks when identified.

## 7. Safeguarding update

**MA** advised it is with sadness Guy Mantoura has had to resign from the Safe Guarding post due to the pressure of his work commitments. Accordingly, a new Safeguarding Officer is required. The postholder does not have to be a member of the PCC.

Karen Dines is still a recruiter for the PCC. Whilst she has handed over to Guy, she can support in case of need.

We are legally required to have a Safeguarding officer, and this is a post we must fill.

## 8. Health and Safety Update

In anticipation of her absence Emma Ryder Richardson prepared a report to be shared with all attendees. Whilst the wording was not shared at the meeting, it is appropriate to attach Emma's advice to the PCC here:

*"Since the PCC agreed the Policy in March, we have been working on its implementation. Assessment forms for three areas listed in the Policy have yet to be completed but there has been a very positive response from most. I am grateful for the effort that has been put into the assessments – it is not always very easy! I am hoping that they will have been completed by the end of September.*

*I have been working closely with the Parish Administrator who is filing the completed assessment forms and also has an electronic record. The Policy and assessments will be reviewed annually at the March PCC.*

*Two areas of concern have been highlighted in the reviews – access / use of the Parvis Tower and the difficulty of opening the emergency exit in the Lady Chapel. I hope that these issues can be addressed in the near future."*

**CW** has started a Health and Safety activity log. This will be kept in the Health and Safety log in the cupboard at the back of the Church. All matters requiring attention should be recorded and remedial action will be taken.

**KS** – Reminded the PCC she and Karen Mack were going to look into a Risk Register.

This is a single document which identifies all kinds of risk – Health Safety, Safeguarding, Financial and Reputational. The aim is to give the PCC members clear sight of all the risks they are taking on. **KS** is happy to take this project forward. The purpose is to demonstrate that as a Group of Trustees we are fully informed of all associated risks.

**RH** – Advised this may already be in the Parish Office. We also need a designated Health & Safety Officer. As we do not have one this responsibility rests with the Chairman.

## 9. Christmas services

**MA** - We will repeat the 2023 programme.

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent will be Advent Carols led by the Choir.

Carol Service date is still under discussion.

### **Christmas Eve:**

5pm Christingle Service

11pm Midnight Mass

### **Christmas Day**

10:15am Holy Communion with carols

## 10. Minutes of the 16 July 2024 PCC meeting

Approved

## 11. Matters arising from the minutes

- **Second Handrail by steps. Appendix 3**

**SB** – Advised it had not been possible to secure further quotations for this work. He recommended that as a reasonable quotation has been received by a known local craftsman we should proceed on this basis.

Unanimous approval given.

**SB** will work secure a faculty which is required before the work can take place.

- **New noticeboard – Appendix 4**

**MA** advised that Wealden District Council Planning Department have advised that Planning Permission is not required. However, permission will be needed from the property owner, The Middle House, and he will seek this. The Shedders have been asked to give a quotation for undertaking the work.

- **The Wardens' Walk around the church to identify risk areas:**

Took place on Friday, 20 September 2024.

No significant issues identified.

A new Health & Safety sheet will be retained in Church. As mentioned earlier this has been designed by Carl Walters. A copy of the document is contained in Appendix 4.

- **Concerts update following Bishop Martin's edict – Appendix 6**

Following the last PCC **MA** wrote to the Diocesan Registrar to seek clarification as to how this should be interpreted. In the absence of a reply he has chased the Registrar for clarification prior to this meeting in respect of the 2026 Mayfield Festival. With events already being booked it is important we understand what is required of us.

**RH** – expressed concern that the Festival Budget of £100,00 could be at risk in the event of a Faculty being declined. **SB** suggested we should apply for a Faculty now to test the process and to ensure we are covered should any issues emerge. **SB & RH** to progress.

Copies of the Bishop's instructions are incorporated in Appendix 6a and 6b.

**Update:**

***The response received, after writing again, was that the large number of questions raised from churches were being collated and the Registrar would be responding soon. Advised we should wait until then.***



- **Nun's Burial Area**

**MA** advised Mike Hand Bowman is looking to take Jeff Mitchell around to view the site and estimate the cost of the extra management.

**RH** is Concerned the £20k endowment offered might not be enough to allow us to maintain the space in a fitting manner. We need to understand the cost of maintaining the space. As a Trustee RH is not happy that the liability is understood.

- **RR** Asked what we need to know to make a decision.

**MA** - Need Jeff to come up with an annual cost to maintain the area. All the headstones will be brand new to replace the wooden crosses in situ now.

Given the Order's long-term future is uncertain it is seen best to have a sum invested rather than monthly billing.

**MA** asked if a final decision could be left with the Standing Committee?

The meeting agreed this could be done.

## **12. Any Other Business**

No other business notified.

## **13. Closing prayer**

After a moment of quiet, FM closed the Meeting with the words of The Grace.

## **14. Date of Next Meeting:**

**Tuesday, 26 November 2024** at 6.30 pm for 7.00pm in London House.

**Coffee / Tea:** EMMA RYDER RICHARDSON

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**Signed as an accurate record by:** .....

**Name:** .....

**Date:** .....

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