



The PARISH CHURCH of ST NICHOLAS,
RECTORY LANE, STEVENAGE



In the United Benefice of St Nicholas with Graveley
Meeting of the Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 23 April 2017 at 11.00 am

1. Opening Prayers

2. Meeting of the Parishioners

(All those whose names are on the Electoral Roll and all those who reside in the Parish, whether on the Electoral Roll or not, are eligible to vote in this election)

2.1 Election of Churchwardens

3. Annual Parochial Church Meeting

3.1 Apologies for Absence

3.2 Minutes of the 2016 APCM

3.3 Matters Arising

3.4 Electoral Roll Officer's Report

3.5 Elections: (only those on the Electoral Roll are entitled to vote)

- ❖ Electoral Roll Officer
- ❖ Parochial Church Council Members
- ❖ Independent Examiner

3.6 Reports:

- ❖ Churchwardens' Reports, including the Fabric Report, Terrier and Inventory Report, and the Church Log Book
- ❖ Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Accounts
- ❖ Deanery Synod Report
- ❖ Safeguarding Report
- ❖ Rector's Report

3.7 Any Other Business and Questions

4. Closing Prayers



The PARISH CHURCH of ST NICHOLAS,
RECTORY LANE, STEVENAGE



In the United Benefice of St Nicholas with Graveley

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday 24 April 2016 at 11.00 am

1. **Opening Prayers** – Revd Dave Brown opened the meetings with prayer.
2. **Meeting of the Parishioners**
 - 2.1 Dave opened the meeting by thanking the Churchwardens for their dedication over the past year.

Election of Churchwardens - There were two nominations for Churchwarden: Steve Bamford, nominated by Karen Isted and seconded by Robin Bailey, and Nigel Brown, nominated by Sandy Taylor and seconded by Alison Hare. All agreed, and Dave declared that Steve and Nigel be duly elected as Churchwardens.
3. **Annual Parochial Church Meeting**
 - 3.1 Apologies for Absence – Amanda Steele. There were 40 members present.
 - 3.2 Minutes of the 2015 APCM - The minutes of the last APCM in April 2015 had been circulated before the meeting and were agreed as a true and correct record. Dave declared them accepted and signed the file copy.
 - 3.3 Matters Arising - there were no matters arising from the previous minutes.
 - 3.4 Electoral Roll Officer's Report – Steve Bamford, on behalf of Karen Isted, reported that the Electoral Roll now contains 118 names in total, (53 being residents in the parish, and 65 non-residents.) Dave thanked Steve and Karen for their work on the Electoral Roll this year.
 - 3.5 Elections:
 - ❖ Electoral Roll Officer – Karen Isted has agreed to act as the Electoral Roll Officer.
 - ❖ Parochial Church Council Members – Two candidates - Sarah Metcalfe, proposed by Alison Hare, seconded by Philip Walker, and Philip Walker, proposed by Don Cooper, seconded by John Taylor, stood for re-election to the PCC: Peter Gordon, proposed by Craig Hare, seconded by Robin Bailey, was also elected to the PCC for three years 2016 – 2019. All agreed. (Further members may be co-opted to the PCC if required.)
 - ❖ Deanery Synod Representatives – Peter Gordon has stood down as Deanery Rep. Stephen Lovelock, proposed by Sandy Taylor, seconded by Paul Drakes, was elected to act as Deanery Synod Rep until 2017. Cathy Bibby and Jayne Hale remain as Reps until 2017.

- ❖ Independent Examiner – The PCC has elected to subject the financial statements to independent examination and therefore, having made appropriate enquiries, propose to renew the appointment of Cook and Partners as independent examiner until the next APCM. Don Cooper proposed, seconded by Nigel Brown, and all agreed.

3.6 Reports:

- ❖ Churchwardens – Steve gave his fabric report to the meeting. The Terrier and Inventory, and the Church Log Book have been updated and signed off by the Rector, Churchwardens and 2 PCC members. Steve thanked Dave and Judy for all the hard work and support they give us all and for their continuing ministry.
Q: Church lych-gates – the joiner has made the gates, but as there seems to be no way of sourcing the particular hinges for the gates, no further progress has been made for the last two years. If this continues, it may be that the gates will simply be disposed of as they do not serve any real purpose anymore.
Dave thanked Steve and Nigel for all their work.
- ❖ Treasurer’s Report and Presentation of Accounts – Don gave his report and presentation to the meeting covering the last financial year and position to date in 2016. Don wished to thank all those who help with the background tasks involved with the finance of the church. It was noted that the Parish Share is to increase by 7.3% this year to £54.6K, which will require an increase in the congregation’s planned giving by £5K. Don asked if we could all prayerfully consider how, as individuals, we could respond to God’s generosity to us, by increasing our personal giving. Dave thanked Don for all his work on the accounts this year.
Q: Don was asked why the Parish Share has increased – following a recent restructuring of the parish share allocation by the Diocese, the figure for St Nicholas was increased due to changes in parish boundaries and the fact we are in a relatively wealthy part of the town.
It was noted that Don will be stepping down from his role as Treasurer in 2016, and so requested that a new Treasurer be in post by Nov 2016.
- ❖ Deanery Synod Report – this had been circulated with the Reports Pack prior to the meeting.
- ❖ Rector’s Report – Dave gave his report to the meeting, thanking the huge team who help with the day-to-day running of the church, and Judy for all her support.

Five Points for 2016 -

Growing Together – it is Dave’s aim that as a church we get to know each other better and grow new and strong Christian friendships. June will be “hospitality month” where we are encouraged to invite different people from church to share a meal or coffee and cake in our homes.

Learning Together – home groups help us to build our faith and knowledge of the Bible in a relaxed and informal environment, as well as strengthening friendships with other Christians, and Dave encouraged everyone to join a home group, of which there are six at present.

Praying Together – many more people are now in prayer triplets/quads, and Dave encouraged everyone to also consider coming along to the early morning prayer meetings on Tuesday mornings at 7 am, and/or the Prayer and Praise evenings at 7 pm every three months. Also this year, there will be a national

Week of Prayer in the 7 days leading up to Pentecost (Sun 8 – 15 May) when the church will be open at various times daily so we can join together in prayer for the nation, our town and our parish, as well as our friends and neighbours to hear and believe the good news about Jesus.

Planning Together – In the autumn, there will be a week of prayer leading up to an Away Day on Sat 12 Nov, for the whole church, along with St Mary's Graveley, for discussion and planning of our Mission Action Plan for the next 5 years.

Changing Together – there have been many changes to our church over the last five years, including a new kitchen, a ground-floor toilet, a refurbished organ and a new sound system. But there are more changes to come as we seek the best way to utilise the resources we have been blessed with in order to both preserve the beautiful building we have whilst also creating a more flexible space in which to worship God and welcome more people to events that will help our mission to reach out with the gospel.

3.7 Re-Ordering of the church – Report from Stuart Morris, Church Architect

Stuart Morris displayed and explained his detailed plans of the current layout of the church, alongside the proposed changes. These will be displayed for the next month during which time the congregation is asked for comments and suggestions. The changes allow for more flexible seating to be used, increasing capacity and improving visibility for more people during services. There will also be more room at the entrance to the church for welcoming people.

3.8 Preview of the new church website – Sam Freyhan

Sam Freyhan previewed the new website which she has been working on. More pictures are needed of clubs and events taking place at church to make it more personal. It will be going live in the next couple of months. Dave thanked Sam for the progress she has made so far.

3.9 Any Other Business and Questions

There was no other business and there were no questions.

4. **Closing Prayers** – Dave closed the meeting at 12.30 pm with prayer.

The Reports Pack 2016, Rector's Report 2016 and the Trustees' Report and Accounts 2015 can be found at: <http://www.saintnicholaschurch.org.uk/parish-news/annual-report/>



The PARISH CHURCH of ST NICHOLAS,
RECTORY LANE, STEVENAGE



Annual Parochial Church Meeting - Elections
Sunday 23 April 2017 at 11.00 am

- Electoral Roll Officer:** Karen Isted-Walker has served in this capacity for 2016 – 2017.
- Deanery Synod:** In 2014, 3 lay representatives to Deanery Synod were elected to serve a term of 3 years, 2014 to 2017. Therefore, there is the requirement for an election of three candidates this year. Stephen Lovelock can stand for re-election.
- PCC members:** Members are elected for a term of 3 years and may serve for 2 consecutive terms. People may be re-elected after taking a year-off.
- For the last year our elected representatives have been:
- | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| | Alison Hare | 2014 – 2017 | (1 st term) |
| | Bernie Matthews | 2014 – 2017 | (2 nd term) |
| (Treasurer until Jan 2017) | Don Cooper | 2015 - 2018 | (2 nd term) |
| | Sarah Metcalfe | 2016 - 2019 | (2 nd term) |
| | Philip Walker | 2016 – 2019 | (2 nd term) |
| | John Knight | 2014 – 2017 | (1 st term) |
| | Stephen Lovelock | 2016 - 2019 | (1 st term) |
| | Peter Gordon | 2016 – 2019 | (1 st term) |
| (co-opted from Jan 2017) | Arrie Branders | 2017 – 2017 | |

In accordance with the policy approved at the 2016 APCM the PCC may include up to 8 elected representatives of the laity.

Don Cooper resigned as Treasurer in January 2017, whilst Alison Hare, Bernie Matthews and John Knight retire by rotation, so that there are three vacancies. Alison and John are eligible for re-election.

- Independent Examiner:** Cook & Partners have served again as the independent examiner for the 2016 accounts. The PCC has elected to subject the financial statements to independent examination and, therefore, having made appropriate enquiries, propose to renew the appointment of Cook & Partners Ltd as independent examiner until the next APCM.

- Welcome Team:** The following people have served on the welcome team for part or all of the last year:

Sidespeople: Robin Bailey, Cathy Bibby, Alison Hare, Craig Hare, John Knight, Coral Lawrence, Bernie Matthews, Sarah Metcalfe, Jeannette Parker, Mark Parker and Philip Walker.

Deputy Wardens: Craig Hare, Helen Leisk, Jane Luff and Amanda Steele.

- Safeguarding Officer:** Jane Luff will be retiring as Safeguarding Officer.



The PARISH CHURCH of ST NICHOLAS,
RECTORY LANE, STEVENAGE



ANNUAL FABRIC REPORT

This report covers the year to 31 March 2017.

General maintenance

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) maintains a plan for the regular maintenance of the church and churchyard with scheduled inspections for critical items such as the lightning conductor, electrics, cess pit, boiler servicing, safety, CCTV, security lights etc. The schedule is detailed on the church calendar which is kept on Google drive, and monitored and implemented by the maintenance team. Maintenance work on the church and churchyard normally take place on Thursday morning. Every week at least one of the maintenance team attend the premises and undertake a list of scheduled activities including light bulb replacement, rubbish clearing, security check, safety check, ground level drain checks, and general inspection.

The church has managed and implemented maintenance of the churchyard, which includes manicure mowing of the grass at the front of the Church between the porch and the Lychgate to maintain a pleasing aspect for congregants, visitors, weddings etc. and a regular churchyard wide trim by outside contractors. The churchyard wide trim maintains the general appearance of the churchyard, encourages the optimal growth and flowering of wild flora, and keeps our frequent graveside visitors happy.

The PCC would like to thank the churchyard team for continuing to manage and maintain the churchyard. In particular the PCC very much thank Geoff Chambers, who is retiring, for his dedicated service and always cheerful demeanour. He has been presented with a gift voucher with which he has bought a radio.

The buildings maintenance team (Bernie Matthews, Paul Drakes and Stuart Marshall) also contribute to additional churchyard activities. Bernie Matthews arranges working parties when necessary where members of the congregation do supplemental tidy up work in the churchyard (grass and hedge cutting, raking).

An important contribution to maintaining the fabric is made by the cleaning team, and the PCC would like to thank them for their significant contribution.

During this period the chandelier bulbs in the sanctuary have been replaced with low energy bulbs, and 3 internal floodlights and 5 external security floods replaced with LED units. An additional light has been installed behind the organ to illuminate the safe and adjacent storage units.

The Wardens' annual inspection of the building and roof has been made. The building requires continuous maintenance, with many elements having been around for many years and even centuries. Every 5 years the quinquennial inspection identifies areas that need attention with 5 levels of urgency. In addition the church notes any visible degradation and reacts as required. In 2016 the architect produced a near term plan for structural maintenance which has been agreed by the PCC and a formal quote is awaited that can be presented to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) in order to progress this work. This work needs to close all category 3 items from the 2013 quinquennial inspection before the next inspection is due in 2018, as well as any more recent issues.

Fabric (Church building)

Roof

Last year there was evidence of a few minor leaks occurring in bad weather through the north clerestory parapet wall which has left some water stains on the plaster and degraded the plaster of some of the clerestory window arches. The internal face has been inspected and loose plaster and stone removed. This plaster damage has been caused by moisture soaking through the clerestory wall. An external inspection has identified that on the outside south face the sealant potting the lead upstand into the wall has degraded and needs replacing. Further there is no tile crease to provide a second barrier to rain running down into the join. It is proposed to renew the degraded sealant and install a tile crease. This would reflect the classic configuration on the South clerestory wall which has successfully dealt with leaks on that side that occurred in the past.

The architect has been asked to prepare a specification and cost estimate ready for an application to the DAC.

The remainder of the roof is in good condition with no visible degradation of either lead or stainless panels. This is also the case with the lead cladding of the spire.

The roof gutters have been inspected and cleaned.

The roof beams visible from inside the church also show no visible degradation or other signs of decay since the last year's inspection. Apart from the clerestory plaster decay no other significant material has dropped from the ceiling.

A full quinquennial inspection by the architect is due on 2018, where a full professional inspection will be made.

Lightning conductor

The lightning conductor grounding has been measured and meets the requirements for the combined resistance to ground. However even with the re-staking of the grounding spikes in 2013 at a cost of £1,000, two out of three resistances are above recommended values. The churchwardens are considering the need for further action and further advice is being obtained.

Structural

A considerable number of non-critical items needing repair were listed in the 2013 quinquennial inspection report. None of these repairs have been implemented this year, but the architect has now provided a proposal to deal with many of them. He is currently in the process of obtaining quotes for the work after which the PCC will approve the appointment of a contractor.

Electrical Installation

The full NAPIT electrical inspection has been completed and the formal report delivered (filed in the Log Book). Some obsolete switch gear items have been replaced.

Heating Installation

The new boiler failed to ignite properly as winter started. After an investigation the problem was attributed to the pilot light being blocked by debris which was remedied by a thorough clean. As a possible mitigation a low level vent has been installed to regulation standard. The room is now less exposed to debris entering via the old vent and fresh air is now directed to the boiler at low level. The boiler room has also been given cleaned and tidied to remove other sources of dust and debris. The gas distributor (National Grid) has indicated its intention to renew the gas service during 2017 and the boiler supplier has suggested that a filter be installed in the service.

Cess Pit

The Cess pit is filling up at a much greater rate than in previous years. This may be due to the greater amount of water being used in the church but may also be due to deterioration leading to a

loss of efficiency. An inspection has been commissioned to undertake an inspection to advise on its condition and recommend any action needed to satisfy current and future needs.

Internal Re-ordering

The church is now actively progressing an internal re-ordering project concurrently with repairing/replacing the stone and parquet flooring. This could include some repositioning of rood screens, opening out the East end of the church and changes in the electrical and heating installations.

Anthony Taylor has been appointed to act as project manager on behalf of the church wardens. The DAC suggested architects who might be approached, two of whom were interviewed at the church. Mark Eddison of MEB design has been appointed by the PCC.

On the architect's recommendation, the PCC has commissioned an architectural feasibility study which will lead to consent applications and specification of the work.

Churchyard

Maintenance

The maintenance of the churchyard has been funded by a grant from Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) but in summer 2016 the Council indicated that it was not willing to increase the annual maintenance grant. At its suggestion, at the end of December the PCC served notice under section 215 of the Local Government Act 1972 (requiring an authority to accept responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of a churchyard). The maintenance of the churchyard will be handed over to SBC from the 1st April 2017.

The Council manages the Weston Road cemetery adjacent to the churchyard and will be able to obtain efficiency savings by integrating the maintenance of the two sites. This will include some items that the church has had difficulty in managing within the SBC grant e.g. trees, paths, fences, walls and hedges.

There is no statutory obligation on the PCC as to the condition of the churchyard at handover but the churchwardens have agreed the church carry out the repairs identified in the 2013 quinquennial inspection. This includes the repair of the wall adjacent to the Lychgate and the wall surrounding the cottages. At 31 March 2017 the former has been completed and the latter is pending.

Lychgates

Following a prolonged delay in sourcing metalwork, the lychgates have been completed and were installed in December 2016.

Lychgate steps

The steps between the highway and the lychgate have deteriorated and two kerb stones have been removed as unstable.

The highway authorities, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and SBC, are denying responsibility for the lychgate steps. HCC repaired these steps in the past but they have redirected more recent queries to SBC. The Land Registry title plan for the church shows that the steps are outside the churchyard perimeter and this information has been passed to SBC. In order to exercise some duty of care to the general public it has been proposed that the builders undertake a temporary repair by re-setting the missing kerbstone.

Graves

Further information about the records of the memorials and grave lists has been discovered in Stevenage Museum. SBC is now responsible for maintaining these records and the information has been forwarded to them. It hopes to further map the grave numbers and names to their positions in the grave yard.

Audio Visual

This period has seen the installation of a new AV system, including a floor standing fixed mixing cabinet, four pillar mounted speakers, a range of microphones and ancillaries with fixed cabling running between these items.

Burymead

The Burymead lease has finally been agreed and is now in force.

Miscellaneous

The security system continues to operate, requiring minor adjustments and maintenance through the year. The PCC thank Paul Drakes who not only ensures the system is functioning properly but also reviews any overnight alarms (sometimes in real time) and keeps a check on unusual activities detected.

Property Register

The church property register (previously known as the Terrier and Inventory) has been updated and presented at the PCC meeting (28/03/16) prior to the APCM, and approved by the wardens, Priest in charge and PCC representatives. A hard copy along with supporting documentation is kept in the church vestry. An electronic copy of the register along with supporting descriptions is also stored on Google drive.

The additions and removals to the Inventory have been recorded in the DAC approved format and embedded in the inventory spreadsheet.

Log Book

The church log book has been updated and presented at the PCC meeting (28/03/16) prior to the APCM, and approved by the wardens, priest in charge and PCC representatives. The completed signed paper copy will be stored in the church vestry and a digital copy archived after the APCM on Google drive.

A live version of the log book entry sheets is kept and updated as the year progresses.

S. Bamford

N. Brown

Churchwardens

23/03/2017



The PARISH CHURCH of ST NICHOLAS,
RECTORY LANE, STEVENAGE



REPORT FOR ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

23rd APRIL 2017

STEVENAGE DEANERY SYNOD 2016 – 2017

Deanery Synod met three times.

28th June 2016 at Holy Trinity Church – Rev Will Gibbs, the Deanery's link with General Synod, spoke about General Synod. He explained that there are twenty deaneries in the Diocese and each of the five elected clergy and the five elected lay people were asked to act as links with two deaneries. He explained the historical background of the governance of the Church of England. The Church of England website carries papers and minutes of General Synod meetings.

The MAP and vision for Holy Trinity and Christ the King were presented.

11th October 2016 at All Saints Church – the progress of All Saints MAP was presented. Jill Adam gave a presentation on tips for raising grants.

22nd February 2017 at St Andrew and St George – this was a general meeting with no specific topic.

At each church an introduction is given and members take part in the type of worship in that congregation. Reports are given from General Synod, Diocesan Synod, Rural Dean's notices, Treasurer's Report, Mission and Pastoral Committee and CTIS.

Cathy Bibby
Deanery Synod Representative
13/04/2017



The PARISH CHURCH of ST NICHOLAS,
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In the United Benefice of St Nicholas with Graveley

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday 23 April 2017

Safeguarding Report

Introduction

Under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 ("the Measure") the PCC has a legal duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. One of the requirements is to submit an annual report to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting and this is the first report.

To comply with the Measure the PCC needs to be able to demonstrate that it has taken account of a number of documents issued by the Church of England. Some of these requirements are new and, following a recent report by our safeguarding officer, the PCC has decided to identify the actions it needs to take and agree a plan to complete them in 2017.

The St Nicholas Safeguarding Policy was reviewed and revised by a working group formed by Dan Freyhan, John Knight and Jane Luff and adopted by the PCC on 27 September 2016.

We need to ensure that the congregation is aware of the policy and help with its implementation as safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone in the church. The newer guidance regarding social media use needs to be highlighted.

Our Volunteers

This year we have 28 volunteers working with our children, an increase of 6 from last year. We also have 9 volunteers able to work with vulnerable adults, as part of the Pastoral Team. Some volunteers give their time to both the children's and adults' activities.

In addition there are the Churchwardens, Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Deputy Co-ordinator. Justine Hobbs has acted as Deputy Coordinator for several years and stepped down in 2016. John Knight has agreed to act as our new Deputy.

Several of our volunteers have just renewed their DBS clearances. This has to be carried out every 5 years, and so shows their commitment that they have served for so long! Thanks are due to all of them.

It is very important that volunteers have their clearance certificate before beginning their role. This understanding has improved greatly this year.

Training

Bridge Builders ran a training session in June 2016 for Safeguarding Children and several of our children's volunteers attended. Since the beginning of 2017 the Diocese of St Albans arranged a programme of training sessions and many of our volunteers have attended. John Knight is now keeping a record of all attendances so that we have a record that, as required, each person has been carried out training every 3 years.