

THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF BARDSEY WITH EAST KESWICK

Registered Charity 1134014

The Parish Church of All Hallows, Bardsey and the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene, East Keswick

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH AND PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Held at St Mary Magdalene Church on Tuesday 7th May 2024 at 7 pm

The meetings were both chaired by the incumbent, Reverend Angela Hannafin.

Angela opened the meetings at 7.05 pm with words of welcome. She then led the meeting in prayer.

19 parishioners were present at the meeting. Apologies had been received from Gaynor and Peter Anning, Robert Siekierkowski and Anna Wallis.

THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

1. Minutes of the 2023 meeting

The acceptance of the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2nd May 2023 was proposed by Stephen Scales, seconded by Charlotte Meek and approved by all present. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

2. Election of two Churchwardens

Jacquie Earnshaw (All Hallows) and Fiona Siekierkowski (Saint Mary Magdalene) were proposed jointly for re-election by Helen Render, seconded by Terry Wheeler and elected unanimously by the meeting. Angela expressed her thanks for all the churchwardens do, to keep the church services and buildings going. Angela also noted that the sabbatical for Fiona which was discussed at the last APCM has not actually happened. It was noted that Jacquie has served since 2015 and Fiona since 2016. The churchwardens were thanked for all they do by the meeting with a round of applause.

Both churchwardens then gave a summary of recent activities and achievements in their churches over the last year.

Fiona Siekierkowski - Saint Mary Magdalene (St MM)

Fiona noted that her reports always start with a review of the Patronal Festival which is held in July, and is one of the first events of the year after the APCM. She said that again this year her report would start with the Patronal Festival, but unlike in recent years in 2023 it rained on the day of the patronal festival and so the service and lunch took place inside the church. Thanks to a fabulous team of willing volunteers an enjoyable time was had by all despite the weather.

At Christmas, a good number of new faces were welcomed to the services, many visiting relatives and family locally. The Christingle in the afternoon was held as it was becoming dark outside and felt atmospheric and was well attended. Carol organised a cake sale afterwards in aid of the Children's Society. The Crib Service was standing room only with mulled wine served afterwards. Over the Christmas period the Art Club also organised an exhibition in the church which was open daily with atmospheric carols playing in the background.

Fiona reported that after Christmas the parish reverted to a pattern of joint services to save on heating costs, and the Wednesday morning communion service moved to the vestry to save heating. The normal pattern of services resumed after Easter.

The noticeboard on the back wall of the church has been replaced and the new mini-recycling hub inside the door of the church is now well used, particularly the blister pack collection. A screen has also been installed in the Nave and was first used at the Remembrance Day service in November. Fiona expressed her thanks to Robert to overseeing its installation

and first use, and for training volunteers to operate it on Sundays. A disabled parking space has now been painted on the road by the Lytch gate and is particularly helpful when we have joint services.

Fiona then thanked Liz Parr for all the work she has done in the churchyard and to promote all things 'Eco', including a count of wild flower species undertaken in conjunction with East Keswick Wildlife Trust which found a 70% increase since the last survey 15 years ago. Bardsey Beavers visited St MM one evening in June to build bug hotels, search for wild flowers and have some reflective time in church, and East Keswick Brownies also visited and undertook a more comprehensive hunt for wild flowers. The Brownies then returned in the autumn to look at gravestones and reflect on the lives of previous EK residents. Both groups also hunted for mice in the church. Fiona explained that the success of these visits to the church was largely due to the planning put in by Liz Parr and the activities and quizzes she had prepared for use in the churchyard.

Fiona then reflected on the events at St MM for the recent Fundraising weekend. On Saturday lunchtime families met for the family forage, with hot dogs served outside the church before children completed activities inside and outside the church before the trail to AH. She reported that the event was so well attended that the sausages ran out, but the butchers in East Keswick kindly donated more which were then quickly cooked and served. The Sunday night musical concert coordinated by Sue Lees was spectacular and all tickets had sold out. Wine was served before the concert and at the interval, and the raffle was run from a gazebo in the churchyard. Fiona noted that as it was a cold weekend the heating had to work overtime, and so it might be a good idea to hold future concerts at the church in summer when the weather is warmer.

Fiona also noted that some members of the community at St MM have taken over some of her duties on a rota, although her plan for a sabbatical was somewhat thwarted the switch from paper copies to the screen. Fiona now hopes to have some quiet time over the summer.

Jacquie Earnshaw - All Hallows (AH)

Jacquie noted that the year at AH started with a wall and ended with a wall. The wall and gas were repaired, but we have now lost guttering, lychgate roof and another wall. These repairs will be covered by insurance, unlike the collapsed wall last year, and she is now waiting for the Archdeacon's approval and then work will start soon.

Jacquie reported that there have been a great number of funerals and ashes interments this year, and very few weddings, although there are still regular baptisms. The Green Fair in September was very successful, and the Harvest and Patronal services followed by lunch were held as usual. The Callister Café continues to go from strength to strength. The children's corner at AH is currently used as much as ever, both during Sunday services and when the church is open in the week. Several members of the local community who are not regular church goers help with locking and unlocking the church, for which Jacquie is very grateful.

Jacquie reported that the Christmas services were a great success, with attendance back to pre-Covid numbers. At AH the church was completely full for the crib service, with all other services also well attended. There was also good attendance at Easter. She noted that we have several visitors to the churches at Christmas and Easter who visit relations in the villages and whom we don't see at other times of the year but see back annually.

Jacquie concluded by summarising that it has been a really good and busy year. She hopes to get the repairs done in the near future and also have some rest over the summer.

Angela commented that our parish identity has become even stronger in the last year, with both churches working as one parish while retaining their own distinctive styles. She added that both churchwardens work very well together, and in each service people from both churches also help out which is a real positive and demonstrates the increasingly strong links between the churches in our parish.

The meeting closed at 7.20 pm.

THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

1. Minutes of the 2023 Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2nd May 2023 were proposed by Stephen Scales, seconded by Fiona Siekierkowski and approved unanimously by all those present.

2. Electoral Roll Report – given by Electoral Roll Officer Stephen Scales

Stephen noted that the electoral roll is revised every year and renewed every 6 years. The next full renewal will be in 2025 and so was just revised this year and now shows 95 names, with two people joining the electoral roll since the last meeting and one leaving. Anyone else wishing to join the electoral roll should contact Stephen at any point during the year and he will supply them with the necessary forms, which also mean that they are then eligible to vote at this meeting.

3. Safeguarding Report – given by Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) Charlotte Meek

As last year, Charlotte explained her role as Parish Safeguarding Officer, and that the PCC and the Incumbent of any parish have a duty of care to ensure the protection of the vulnerable in their community. She explained that as such she has a duty to report back at this meeting. Our safeguarding responsibilities also mean that the PCC members have been trained appropriately for their roles, as a parish we display safeguarding information in our churches and on our website, and we respond to any issues promptly, at all times complying with data protection legislation. We complete activity risk assessments and a safeguarding report is a standing agenda at every PCC meeting. We have also been using the Parish Dashboard which is an online tool for organising our safeguarding records and this ensures that we are reminded of dates such as renewing training and that we are complying with everything that the Church of England insist on or recommend.

Charlotte will be attending a PSO induction course for new and existing PSOs in the coming months and will report back to the PCC.

Charlotte highlighted that we all have a responsibility to keep our eyes open for anything that seems a little odd as safeguarding is everyone's concern. As a parish we are now more willing to report anything that seems worrying, and any concerns should be discussed with Charlotte or Angela. Charlotte noted that she can be contacted using the details available in both churches and on the parish website, and Angela can also be contacted with any safeguarding concerns. Charlotte reminded the meeting that safeguarding can be likened to a jigsaw, with lots of different pieces often contributing to a bigger picture, so stressed the importance of reporting anything you notice relating to safeguarding as it may help add to the bigger picture.

Charlotte concluded by thanking those present at the meeting or their continued vigilance with safeguarding matters.

4. Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Report 2023 (TAR)

Kathy Jones gave the report. She started by explaining that she took over in Treasurer as August last year and expressed her thanks to her predecessor, Elizabeth Otty for all her hard work. Kathy noted that it has been a steep learning curve to get her head around the details of Church of England accounts.

The Trustees Annual Report has been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and the relevant Financial Reporting Standards. It has been approved by the PCC and independently examined and signed off by Temporal Lennon and Company Limited. An electronic copy of the full accounts is available on request.

Kathy highlighted that our expenditure as a parish is increasing while our income is decreasing. She showed graphs on the screen indicating that the planned and plate giving is decreasing year on year. The most recent high point was £81k in 2020. Income then took a big hit during the Covid pandemic but has continued to drop since then and was only £48k in 2023 which was an 8% drop on the previous year. Meanwhile expenditure over all increased by 9 %. One of the main contributors to that was the utility costs, which are increasing rapidly. Those costs have more than doubled from around £6.5k in 2022 to nearly £16k in 2023. Kathy noted that we will all be aware of these increases on a personal level, and as a Parish we are doing everything we reasonably can to keep them to a minimum. We have continued to have some joint services particularly during the winter months to try to reduce the expense but the bills continue to be high despite this. Our overall income has benefitted from a number of very generous and much appreciated donations during the year but that is not the type of income you can build a budget on. We continue to claim gift aid wherever possible and that brought

in a total of about £22.5k last year at no additional cost to the individual givers so completing a gift aid form is really important when giving.

Kathy reported that there has been some non- recurring major expenditure incurred during the year some of which was planned and some not. We could not have predicted the gas pipe repairs and the rebuilding of the wall that were required at All Hallows and cost around £11.5k. At St MM we have done some decorating as well as installing and setting up the screen which is proving to be a very worthwhile addition.

There have also been generous donations of around £20,000 specifically for distribution to social causes, and these have been made to charities such as St Aidans foodbank, Leeds Riding for the Disabled, Baby Basics and Zarach all of whom are very grateful for our support.

After a lot of thought and prayer the PCC decided that we could not pay the Parish Share in full in 2023. Our income provides sufficient to cover day to day expenditure but doesn't provide anywhere near enough to cover our Parish Share. Therefore £55,000 of the £80,308 invoice was paid with some of that money being withdrawn from investment accounts. Our reserves policy requires us to set £30,000 aside which means we are left with around £80,000 currently in the two investment accounts that we can withdraw money from for any purpose agreed by the PCC. There is therefore a balance to be had around paying as much parish share as we can in any one year, and having funds to help enable us to keep paying over the coming years. We do continue to have the large endowment fund for churchyard maintenance at StMM; this account continues to grow but we cannot touch the money directly. We are able to use the interest generated by the account to cover the regular churchyard maintenance bills, which it does but doesn't leave much spare for anything additional that needs doing.

Looking towards the future, the PCC have agreed to the Parish joining the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS). This will mean that all regular donations will be made through the scheme, the gift aid will be claimed on our behalf and then the Parish will receive it all in one payment per month. This service is provided for free and will make the whole process much easier. Kathy highlighted that a very important element offered by the scheme is that giving is reviewed annually with an option for an annual inflationary increase to donations which is something that tends to get forgotten about. One off or irregular donations can also be made through the scheme and there will be straightforward links and even a QR code that we can use to promote it in our buildings and on all our literature. Kathy is undertaking some training on the scheme later this week and then will be able to provide further updates.

Kathy concluded by explaining that the Parish remains solvent but we must continue to look for ways to mitigate the impact of the financial challenges we face now and in the future. She finished on a very positive note by announcing that the current total from the fundraising weekend is around £24.5k, and thanked everyone who supported it in any way.

Elizabeth Otty asked a question about how the Diocese responded to the news that we could not pay the parish share in full for 2023, and Kathy reported that they were positive about what we were able to pay, possibly reflecting the fact that lots of parishes are currently having problems to pay. She also noted that we have already made a payment towards the 2024 parish share so that the Diocese have money to work with at this point in the year. Elizabeth also asked when information about the PGS would follow, and Kathy said that further information will be shared once she has attended a training course next week. Kathy also reported that she has spoken to clergy in other parishes where the response to the PGS has been overwhelmingly positive. Kathy will also be able to assist anyone who needs help to deal with the paperwork to switch their giving to the PGS. Elizabeth also asked whether the Callister Hall was currently paying its way, and Kathy was able to answer that it is.

It was also asked how many responses to the fundraising campaign had been received from those in the local community who do not usually attend church, in response to the letters sent to every house in the parish. Kathy reported that it is hard to identify where the donations come from, but she did have direct contact with more than one household as a result of the letter, including someone who has volunteered to help us see if we can reduce our utility bills.

A request was made that quarterly accounts could also be made available to the wider congregation, and Kathy volunteered to produce such a summary and make it available at the back of the church.

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Jacquie Earnshaw seconded by Charlotte Meek and agreed unanimously by those present.

Angela extended her thanks to Kathy for all she has done since taking over the treasurer role, and also expressed her thanks to Elizabeth for her work as Kathy's predecessor. Angela also noted the considerable success of the recent fundraising campaign and thanked all those involved.

5. Elections to the Parochial Church Council

Three PCC members were due to retire: Phil Jones, Peter Lord and Marjorie Wilson. Peter Lord had decided to not stand again and was thanked by Angela and the meeting for everything that he had contributed to the PCC over several years. It was also noted that Peter Lord will remain in post as the safeguarding officer for St MM, working under Charlotte. Phil and Marjorie wished to stand for a further two years and had returned completed nomination forms. Kathy Jones and Geoffrey Marson had also submitted completed nomination forms and were standing for election. The approval of the four nominations en bloc was proposed by Charlotte Meek and seconded by Fiona Siekierkowski with all present in agreement.

7. Appointment of the Independent Examiner

The reappointment of the PCC current independent examiners, Temporal Lennon and Company Limited, for a further year was proposed by Alan Otty, seconded by Kathy Jones and passed unanimously.

8. Closing Remarks by the Reverend Angela Hannafin

Angela summarised events in the parish in the last year, and awarded marks out of three with green hearts (to represent the fact we are an Eco parish) to represent our current progress with each area of our 5 year plan.

Growing in our faith (2 hearts)

Angela reported that we have seen the growth in the parish in the past year. Spiritual growth has been seen with the monthly bible study, prayer course and the Lent course run in partnership with the Methodist Church in East Keswick through the Churches Together group. There has been more sharing and openness, and deeper commitment from individuals in these groups. She also noted that several new people have joined our congregations, even since Christmas, including regular families attending our family service on the second Sunday of each month.

Welcoming spaces to workshop (1 heart)

Angela summarised that it has not been a bad year, but there has been a lot to do with repairs at AH. Angela again expressed her thanks to Jacquie for all she has done to coordinate these. The craft areas and open churches have continued to attract families at both churches, and the team at St MM has grown in confidence as more people have taken on responsibility for the running of the church and roles during services.

Varied styles of worship (2 hearts)

We have an established pattern of varied services, and while some people would like to see all Holy Communion services, that then limits the involvement of lay people in leading services. The variety of services in the year including the use of the Iona Liturgy at Wednesday Holy Communion and the Tenebrae service for Good Friday was noted as a positive. Angela also highlighted the new structure of the intergenerational family service. She referred to a fledgling group of lay service leaders, including Robert doing some preaching, Terry leading morning worship and Lorraine taking on some leadership of services too, although Angela noted that more can be done and expressed her hopes to grow the current small pool of service leaders.

Develop inside and outside church (1 heart)

The Callister Café has really taken off as its reputation for excellent, plentiful food has spread. The new screen at St MM has been used effectively in services, including to display media to enhance sermons. During the recent fundraising campaign, space both inside and outside the churches was used to great effect, although there is still more to do in this area.

Church at the heart of community (3 hearts)

Angela expressed her view that this is where we have really excelled this year, because of great teamwork and partnership. The St Aidan's Foodshare teams coordinated by Carol Bone involves people inside and outside the churches, and the Churches Together team continues to work well, and the November quiz was noted as a particular success, raising £1000

with Charlotte Meek as quizmaster. Angela also highlighted the recent fundraising events as an example of working with the community for which we should be grateful to God.

Climate change and Eco issues (2 hearts)

Over 300 people attended the Green Fair at AH in September. A new green group is also meeting regularly to steer the Eco issues in the parish. Recycling hubs from the charity Recycle Me Up have been set up at both churches, and a 'calendar' of ideas is being promoted each month to encourage the congregations to be more Eco and can be found on the website and parish magazine. Angela also reported that a Carbon Literacy Pilot course is running in the parish, starting on May 21st, and will be led by Angela and Stephen Scales. People will develop their carbon literacy and see what they can do in their lives to reduce their footprint over 5 consecutive Tuesday evening sessions. She noted that we had big momentum with the Green fair, but with the green group we are seeing that slow and steady wins the race as we keep going in little ways to encourage the congregation to come with us. Angela has moved our celebration of Climate Sunday to 1st September at the Joint Service with The Revd Dr Jan Goodair preaching for us.

New in 2023-24

Angela reflected on what was new in the parish since the last APCM. She highlighted the new way of working at St MM with a team working on a rota to run services, the first entirely lay led service in the parish in February, and several events in the parish which now run without the vicar present such as the bible study and art club. Angela also noted that our joint services on the 1st Sunday of each month are enabling us to build fellowship together and expressed her view that it is great when there are more of us together and to sing and enjoy being together.

Challenges

Angela then highlighted the challenges currently facing our parish. She identified lack of volunteers as a key challenge, as when people who have done things for a long while step back it's often because they are tired. In the parish there are a few people doing too much and are at risk as burnout, and we need to consider as a parish what we can do to prevent that, building the future.

Angela noted that God has been good to us this year in the parish in the ways we have grown, how we have been able to handle our finances, and the donations given to us so we could bless others with them. Confidence is growing and she expressed her view that as a parish we should keep on going in the same direction.

Angela then referred the meeting back to the scripture Acts 2:42-end which has been used by the PCC in the past year in lectio divina at every PCC meeting, studying the scripture and allowing it to live in us. Angela commented that she thinks that this scripture has changed us as a parish and we are now more like it. She read it aloud to the meeting. Angela noted that she will find a different scripture for our next PCC year, starting on Tuesday next week when the new PCC will meet for the first time.

9. Comments from the floor

Charlotte Meek added that the choir has recently been growing too and has been able to sing at StMM and AH at a range of services. She also thanked Angela for leading us as a parish, pushing some of us to do things we would not have done if we had not been asked, and for the excellent job which she does on behalf of us all.

The meeting closed at 8 pm with prayers, concluding with the Grace.