

St Mary's Episcopal Church, Aberfoyle

Rector: Revd. Richard Grosse

www.stmarychurchaberfoyle.org.uk

A charity registered in Scotland: SC023266

Minutes of Vestry Meeting

held in the Church Room on 16 January 2009

Present: Mark Seymour (Chairman); Richard Grosse (Rector); Margie Stephen; Robin Willis; Nick Cooke; John Dymond; David Thompson and George Willis.

1. The meeting commenced at 7.40 p.m. with a prayer
2. **Apologies.** Susan Forsyth; Alastair Gardner; Philip Gaskell; Margaret Johnson; Peter Joynson; Jonny North and Anne Winther. Although unable to attend this meeting Jonny North was welcomed to the Vestry by the Chairman.
3. **Minutes.** The Minutes of the meeting held on 4th November 2008 were approved, and signed by the Chairman.
4. **Appointment of Secretary**

On behalf of the Vestry the Chairman thanked John Dymond for all his excellent work over nine years as Vestry Secretary from which he has now retired. Vestry approved and welcomed David Thompson to this position.

5. **Secretary's Business**

5.1 *Completion of Diocesan Forms*

Following the AGM the forms required by the Diocesan Office have been passed to Nick for completion. **Action: Nick**

5.2 *AGM Draft Minutes*

These are with Mark and Nick for approval. **Action: Mark & Nick**
Thereafter to be circulated to Vestry. **Action: David**

5.3 *Child Protection Co-ordinator*

Hannah Sanderson has kindly agreed to take on this role. Forms for completion and signature by Vestry Chairman, Secretary and Hannah who also has to nominate character referee. To be sent to Revd. Ann Mazur, Diocesan Child Protection Officer.

Action: David & Hannah

5.4 *Boundary Discrepancy between St Mary's and Aberfoyle Motors*

No communication has been received since our last meeting regarding the boundary discrepancy and it is presumed that this matter has now been satisfactorily concluded by Pagan Osborn and the Diocesan Office.

5. *Handover*

David thanked John for handing over and explaining so clearly the nature of the files and records now his responsibility. He would do his best to maintain the very high standard set in the minuting of Vestry meetings. It will be very helpful if the current practice of written reports being circulated to Vestry members at least a week before each meeting whenever possible can continue.

5.6 *Letterhead, etc.*

The need to include all information as required by OSCR and the National Lottery on all external correspondence was stressed and the layout and inclusion of the Church logo already established will continue.

6. **Eco-Congregation**

6.1 *Anne's Temporary Unavailability*

No report for this meeting has been received and Vestry recognises that Anne's current family commitments prevent her from being as involved as she would like. Once the Renovation Project is completed Nick hopes he can devote more time to this area.

6.2 *Eco Conference*

Nick reported that he had been advised of a conference taking place on 24 January 2009 at Church House, Dunblane open to all interested. He will circulate details. **Action: Nick**

7. **Rector's Report**

In a written report previously circulated the Rector noted:

7.1 *Anticipated timetable*

25th February 19.30 Ash Wednesday Evening Service

Lent Groups

w/b 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th March Lent Group joint with St Andrew's (Mondays at 19.30) and also separate meetings based at Croftamie (details to be announced.)

Sunday 1st March (1st of Lent)

Visit of Bishop David

Sunday 22nd March

Mothering Sunday

Maundy Thursday 9th April

19.30 Joint Service at St Andrews (Commemoration of the Last Supper)

Good Friday 10th April

10.30 Devotion

Easter Sunday 12th April

11.15 Family Communion.

7.2 *Lay Administration of the Chalice*

Another assistant needs to be appointed. Mark agreed to be proposed and has to be approved by Bishop David. Susan and Philip were also suggested and Richard will ask them.

Action: Richard

7.3 *Campanologist*

As reported at the last Vestry meeting the bell is in working order and Richard will ask James Gardner if he would ring it before Morning Service.

Action: Richard

8. **Lay Representative's Report**

No report was given.

8.1 *Future of Area Councils*

Philip has sent Bishop David's paper 'Future of Area Councils' to Mark who will now circulate this to Vestry.

Action: Mark

9. **Fabric & Gardens**

No report was given, but for Fabric matters see Item 13: Renovation Report

10 **Music & Worship**

Copies of the Minutes of the Music & Worship Group's meeting held on 25 November 2008 had been circulated to Vestry members in advance of this Vestry meeting and the main points are detailed below.

10.1 *Evensong*

Two Evensong services had been held in the Autumn. In future it has been decided to hold only one Evensong in the Autumn, probably before 'Summer Time' ends, in order to improve attendance.

10.2 *Sermons*

At the Away Day it was suggested guest speakers should be invited and so far several speakers have talked about Outreach with which they were personally involved.

10.3 *Sound System*

The present system is unpredictable and unsatisfactory at times. Mark is investigating the options for replacement.

Action: Mark

In the meantime it is suggested that the first lesson reader takes responsibility for adjusting the volume of the microphones. Keith Gibb to be asked to include this as part of lesson readers' duties when issuing future rotas.

Note from the Chairman: Although this is minuted in the M&W discussions, it MUST be noted that NO ONE is to adjust ANY of the controls on the sound system unless they have

received suitable training from Northern Acoustics. All the controls are clearly marked 'Do not touch'. Keith Gibbs is asked NOT to include the suggested instructions to Lesson readers.
Action: Margie

It was emphasised that the system must continue to be used for those using the Induction Loop facility.

10.4 *Carol Service*

Despite the difficult conditions due to the Renovation activities a successful Carol Service was held with Revd. Linda Stewart leading the intercessions and with readers chosen by Richard. The usual refreshments were provided afterwards.

10.5 *Alternative Music & Worship*

Once the Renovation work is completed and the responses to the questionnaires analysed it is hoped that some different forms of music and worship may be introduced which, hopefully would also appeal to a wider age range.

10.6 *Ash Wednesday*

Possibility of a Taize style service proposed, and supported by Vestry. Margie to arrange the Service.
Action: Margie

10.7 *Lent Group*

Notice to be included in St Mary's Newsletter regarding Strathendrick Lent Group. Karen and Margie will lead in their respective houses. The Riches may also wish to be included – Margie will speak to them. Proposed dates: Wednesdays starting on 4th March. Bishop David/Diocese to be asked for guidance regarding study material.
Action: Margie

10.8 *Worship Questionnaire*

Some completed questionnaires still to be collected before individual responses are considered at next Music & Worship Group meeting.

10.9 *Communications*

While the weekly Announcements sheet is proving very helpful to those with electronic access concern was expressed for those without this access. However, it was noted that relevant notices are also displayed at the back of the Church.

11 Communications

11.1 *Yearbook*

Any amendments should be notified to Karen immediately. Final copy deadline 17 January.

Vestry wishes to record its appreciation and thanks to Karen for the huge amount of work by her in this endeavour.

11.2 *Database of Church Contacts*

Lists of contacts being checked by Mark & Richard.

11.3 *Member Database*

Work on this by Mark ongoing.

11.4 *St Mary's Order of Service*

It was noted that this may be progressed by Karen once the Yearbook work is completed.

12 **Financial Stewardship Team Report & Church Giving**

In a written report previously circulated the Treasurer noted that:

12.1 *Cash Flow*

The end December balance of £8,500 in the main bank account remains healthy. The Renovation Fund bank account balance currently stands at £27,500 and all works contract and fee payments are fully up to date. Gift Aid claims amounting to £15,000 in total covering all three designated Funds have now been lodged with HMRC for the financial year ending 30 September 2008. Claims amounting to £20,000 for the SEC and SCAHT grants to the Renovation Fund have also been submitted, and the first VAT repayment claim under the Listed Places of Worship grant scheme is in preparation, also for the Renovation Fund.

12.2 *Report & Accounts for Year Ending 30 September*

Iain Kyle CA, our Independent Financial Examiner, has now signed off the Accounts as adopted at last month's AGM. Filing copies of these are being sent to the Diocesan Office and to OSCR together with the relevant annual returns. Iain has indicated he will act as IFE to St Mary's for one more year as he is no longer Vestry Treasurer at St Saviour's, Bridge of Allan.

12.3 *New Bank Mandates*

Following John's retirement as Vestry Secretary at the AGM, new mandates are being lodged to cover the two accounts held with the Bank of Scotland, Callander. In addition to myself, Mark and David will now act as signatories. All cheques over £300 will be countersigned by one of them, following the existing procedures.

12.4 *Church Giving Fund*

Following a good response to the Christmas Carol Service special collections, the current balance in the Church Giving Fund has now risen to £1,092. As previously agreed, the January and July meetings of Vestry will be used to consider and approve donations to UK charities nominated by members of St Mary's. To date, the following nominations have been put forward for consideration at this meeting:

- Maxie Richards Foundation (Bill Richardson)
- Chesney Trust (John Dymond & Bill Richardson)
- Callander Youth Project Trust (Nick Cooke)

It may be relevant to add that the Rector plans to invite Gillian Forster to speak in the Church next spring about Green Routes as several members have suggested that St Mary's should support the work of this local charity with young people in the walled garden of Gartmore House.

12.5 *Donation Nominations*

In addition to the above three charities Vestry also considered two further nominations made at the meeting – The Matthew Miller Cancer Fund and Art-Link Central. Of these five it was decided to make donations of £250 each to the Maxie Richards Foundation, Chesney Trust and Callander Youth Project Trust. The other two charities nominated would be reconsidered for the second half of 2009. Vestry members not present at this meeting should be given an opportunity to comment on the above within a week of circulation of these minutes.

13. **Update on Church Renovation Project and Appeal**

In a written report previously circulated the Treasurer noted that:

Contractors' Works Schedule and Progress Meetings

- a) Hunter & Clark have now been on site for three months and the works contract is in full progress, with an updated completion date of 13th March. The overhaul of the roof has not revealed any major hidden defects. The masonry and plastering work in the south transept is nearing completion, and the reorganisation of the Vestry Room is also well under way with the new disabled WC now being fitted out. The stabilisation of the porch will be the next major piece of work.
- b) Monthly progress review meetings chaired by John Sanders of Simpson & Brown and attended by the contractor and QS as well as Mark and myself have been held in the Church Room on 19th November and 15th December, with the next meeting scheduled for 19th January. David and George, as the other members of the Vestry's Working Group for the Renovation Project, are being copied the minutes of these meetings. George is very kindly keeping a photographic diary of the whole works programme on site.
- c) Two potential additional pieces of work, not originally included in the agreed contract are now being actively considered – (a) the modification of the existing weather vane and its incorporation into the original finial for installation on the bellcote roof, and (b) the removal of the stained glass from the south transept window and incorporation into the west window above the nave. Costed specifications for both items are being prepared and will be discussed at the next progress review meeting. Prior approval from the Diocesan Buildings Advisory Committee will be required if item (b) is to go ahead, as it constitutes a re-ordering of the Church building; however, we are assured this can be agreed quite simply on the basis of full details being provided to the DBAC convenor, who is aware of this.
- d) We have confirmed that in the closing stages of the works programme the entire interior of the Church will be repainted, and the exterior harling on the Rectory will also be painted for the first time to match that on the Church. These elements of the overall renovation project may be contracted out under a separate tender.

13.2 ***The Crawford Railings***

- a) Professional examination of the railings indicates these are in very poor condition. We are planning to replace the section of rails along the steps from the gate to the porch which are in most need of attention, with the approval of Captain David Crawford. Two quotations are being obtained for that purpose and specific grant funding for this work is being sought from the Ironmongers Federation and other trusts. ***Action: Mark to speak to Captain Crawford***

13.3 ***Heritage Lottery Fund – Repairs Grant***

- a) The initial 50% tranche of the HLF grant amounting to £45,950 received in October has now been largely spent on payments to contractors and Simpson & Brown will now provide a progress report on the works to date which will form the basis of our request for the second 40% tranche of HLF grant. The exact amount of this will be set in the light of modifications to the figure for actual eligible fabric repair costs confirmed by the QS.

13.4 *Organ Restoration Contract*

- a) Paul Miller of PM Pipe Organ Maintenance Ltd has now begun work on the organ restoration. In the context of the recent AGM debate, he has confirmed that the size of the organ parts, especially the swell box, will make it very difficult to alter the layout of the pipes to allow any significant amount of light from the south transept window once the organ is reinstated.

13.5 *Renovation Project Budget & Cash Flow Forecast*

- a) I have intentionally not updated the overall Summary Budget statement as the progress to date as recorded above indicates there will be significant changes (in both directions) in the cost of the original main contract and additional works. These movements have still to be confirmed. I am also seeking clarification from HLF on the correct treatment of funds received as VAT reclaimed under the LPW grant scheme which relate to eligible costs that are also grant aided by HLF. Once this is confirmed, I will also be able to update the budget and complete the cash flow forecast for the whole project.
- b) Monthly contract payments are now being made to Hunter & Clark as well as professional fee payments to Simpson & Brown and KLM.

13.6 *Renovation Appeal – Update*

- a) The majority of St Mary's members have now made or pledged personal contributions to the Appeal, on a remarkably generous scale, and the emphasis is now shifting to fund raising events. The Christmas Fayre jumble sale held at Dounans, Aberfoyle on 6th December, was a great success and raised £1,000 for the Appeal, thanks to a lot of work by Hannah and her team.
- b) Planning of other fundraising events for the Appeal is in progress, including the second sponsored pilgrimage from Aberfoyle to Whithorn to be undertaken by Mark and myself.
- c) The new Linkage yearbook will have a cover price of £3.00 and all proceeds from this will go to the Appeal by agreement with Karen.
- d) I am most grateful to Mark for his continuing work on grant submissions to trust funds. It is now a year since we first began this task and if any Vestry members know of likely trust funds sympathetic to Church renovation work, particularly those not listed in reference sources, please let me or Mark know.

13.7 *Interpretation & Publicity*

- a) No further work has been done on developing the template for a 'triptch' style wall mounted interpretive panel as described in my last report. This will be taken forward shortly.
- b) A short piece on the renovation project was included in the December issue of the 'Strathard News' to coincide with the Christmas Fayre at Dounans. This has resulted in an offer from a website design and promotional firm offering to support a 'Sponsor A Roof Tile' fundraising campaign for our Appeal, which I am investigating further.

13.8 *Points discussed at meeting relating to this report*

- a) *Disabled toilet*

Concern was expressed at the miniscule washbasin fitted and the need for a larger 'sink'. To be

referred to the architects.

Action: Nick

b) *Separate Projects and Funding*

Two quotes for the Crawford Railings were now to hand and were £5600 + VAT and £6121 + VAT respectively

This along with the proposed new Sound System (referred to earlier) and George's suggestion for floodlighting the Church would all be separate projects from the Renovation work currently in hand.

Concern was expressed if this would mean returning to the congregation for more funding given the difficult financial times we are now in. Mark said that other sources of funding would be pursued in the first instance.

c) *Renovation Project Costs to Date*

In response to a question on costs to date Nick indicated payments to Hunter Clark and fee payments together so far were c. £50K.

d) *Renovation Appeal Fundraising Events*

This subject was not fully covered at the meeting and the Chairman has subsequently reported as follows:

Lady Edmonstone has confirmed the arrangements for the proposed Garden Opening at Duntreath to be held on 31st May 2009. Sir Archie and Lady Edmonstone have kindly agreed to donate one half of the net gate receipts on the day with the other half going to the RDA. Lady Edmonstone has agreed to host and arrange a lunch prior to the opening in a marquee which will already be in situ for a private wedding. Net proceeds to St Mary's. St Mary's has been invited to arrange a Home Produce stall in order to generate further income. Lady Stirling has agreed to head a small group who will organise this and will be asking for suitable contributions. A meeting of the group was held at Duntreath on 16th December 2008 and full minutes of that meeting have been circulated to those involved. The Vestry is very grateful to Sir Archie and Lady Edmonstone for their generosity.

14. **A.O.C.B**

14.1 *Conference*

A Provincial Conference in Aviemore in early October open to all has been advised. Richard to provide further details. *Action: Richard*

15. **Dates of Next Vestry Meetings**

Vestry meetings in 2009 are arranged for Wed. 29th April, Fri. 24th July and Wed. 28th October.

The meeting closed with The Grace at 9.10 pm.

Signed.....

Date

Church\Minutes\Jan.09 doc.

