

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 28 July 2008

Present: Mark Seymour (Chairman), Richard Grosse (Rector); Susan Forsyth, Karen Gaskell, Margie Stephen; Nick Cooke, John Dymond, Alastair Gardner, Philip Gaskell, David Thompson and George Willis.

1. The meeting commenced at 7.35 p.m. with a prayer.
2. **Apologies.** Margaret Johnson, Robin Willis, Anne Winther.
3. **Minutes.** The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd April 2008 were approved, and signed by the Chairman.

4 Eco-Congregation.

Arrangements have been made for putting up the last of the bird boxes. An article on Tetrapak is to be written for the next Newsletter.

5 Rector's Report

The Rector gave notice of the following dates and events:

Saturday 9th August

14.00 Pilgrimage around medieval churches surrounding Auchterarder. Meet at St Kessog's

19.30 Joint concert with St Andrews. Duo Kyiv Classic Accordion Concert

Tuesday 12th August: 18.00 Croftamie Fellowship Group

Tuesday 9th September: 18.00 Croftamie Fellowship Group

Friday 12th September: Linkage Harvest Supper and activity

Sunday 14th September: Harvest Festival. Donations of produce etc to Braendam House

Saturday 20th September: Extraordinary Diocesan Synod

Sunday 28th September: 11.15 Confirmation Service

Sunday 5th October: 18.30 Linkage Choral Evensong Preacher Revd Linda Stewart

Tuesday 14th October: 18.00 Croftamie Fellowship Group

Sunday 26th October: Clocks go back one hour

Sunday 9th November: Remembrance Sunday: No Morning Service at St.Mary's

10.45 Joint Service at Aberfoyle Kirk 18.00 Evensong at St Mary's.

Tuesday 11th November: 18.00 Croftamie Fellowship Group

Saturday 22nd November: Kirk Hall Callander 10.00. St Andrew's Christmas Fayre

Sunday 14th December Change of service time - 10.30 Holy Communion followed by AGM

18.30 Callander Carol Service

Sunday 21st December Note: no morning service at St Mary's 16.00 Carol Service

Wednesday 24th December: 23.30 Midnight Mass

Thursday 25th December: 11.15 Holy Communion.

6. Worship and Music Team Report

A questionnaire has been prepared for Area Contacts to take to people in their area (or to discuss with them over the 'phone) to obtain feedback on what they enjoy about St. Mary's and its services. The aim is to find out what attracts people to St. Mary's, and why those on the fringes come only occasionally, and to see if the Church can help them in any way. A preliminary meeting of Area Contacts is to be arranged. Catherine and Christopher Riches were thanked for their work in drawing up the questionnaire.

7. Lay Representative's Report

The last meeting of the Area Council had been in Auchterarder. They were planning a Pilgrimage in August (see Rector's Report above), and looking forward to discussing the Diocesan Review.

8. Fabric and Gardens

In Alastair's absence, work parties had been tidying the gardens.

9. Newsletter

Karen was congratulated on the appearance and content of the recent Newsletter. A new edition of the Yearbook is being prepared for production in-house by Karen. This will include a section on eco-congregations. Approval was being sought for inclusion of names and addresses etc in the accompanying congregational list. *Action: Karen*

10 Financial Stewardship Team Report & Church Giving.

In a written report, which had been previously circulated, the Treasurer noted that:

10.1 Cash Flow

The end-June balance of £10,000 in the main bank account reflects the continuing stability of St Mary's finances and overall budget surplus. Work is in hand on the annual Gift Aid tax reclaim, which will increase the level of working funds.

10.2 Renovation Project Bank Account

The new Treasurers account set up with the Bank of Scotland is up and running. As noted in the Renovation Project report, however, it appears that the Bank is unable to offer any form of loan or overdraft on this type of account, although we are still seeking confirmation of this.

10.3 Aberfoyle Motors Ltd

Total donations from the garage to St Mary's in this financial year arising from the Rector's bus driving duties will be at least £5,000. This is considerably more than allowed for in the budget, and once again we are indebted to Richard for this situation.

10.4 Church Giving Fund

A donation of £200 has been made from the Fund to the local Area appeal for this year's Christian Aid via Jean Sykes, as we did in 2007.

The Treasurer confirmed that following the recent donation to Friends of CINI in support of the 'Adopt A Mother and Save Her Child' programme, the Kalcota office of the charity has now provided details of the young woman Raji Mahato whose particular case is being supported via St Mary's donation.

The current balance in the Church Giving Fund stands at £430. The Harvest Festival will provide the next input to the fund.

11. Church Renovation Project Report and Appeal.

In a written report, the Treasurer noted that:

11.1 *Action Points from Extraordinary General Meeting on 11 May 2008*

As minuted elsewhere, the recommendations made by Vestry to the EGM held in the Church on the implementation of the Renovation Project were adopted by an overwhelming majority of the members of the congregation present. The key decisions taken at the EGM are reflected in this report to Vestry.

11.2. *Contractors' Tender*

- a) Vestry's approval of Hunter & Clark's adjusted tender of £198,786 for the agreed programme of fabric repairs and renovation has been notified to the contractor, who has agreed to keep this price open until 1st October. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has indicated approval of this procedure. It is now our intention that Hunter & Clark should start work on site earlier than 1st October if possible, to allow for autumn weather conditions during the overhaul of the roof and other factors.
- b) As noted during the EGM discussion, Vestry will enter into a contract with Hunter & Clark on confirmation of the Stage 2 grant contract with the Heritage Lottery Fund – see below.
- c) Also as noted before, the architects advise that the Church building will remain in use for Sunday services throughout the scheduled 20 week period of the works contract, although some disruption to the porch access may be expected at times.

11.3. *Heritage Lottery Fund – Development Grant Contract*

We have received the initial 50% instalment of grant amounting to £3,000 from HLF, and now that the fee notes of the architects and quantity surveyors for project development work totalling £8,000 have been paid the remaining portion of grant will be claimed, up to the £6,000 agreed total figure for the Development Grant.

11.4. *Heritage Lottery Fund – Fabric Repairs Grant Contract*

- a) The architect has now sent HLF (a) the final tender report from the QS plus (b) a public access audit statement and (c) a maintenance plan. Our HLF casework officer has now informed me that these documents will form the basis of the Stage 2 contract, with grant set at 38% of total eligible costs of £239,580 as agreed with the QS. On this basis, the maximum amount of HLF grant payable will be £91,041, as per the summary budget (copies of which had been sent out to Vestry members).
- b) The HLF casework officer expects to send the grants contract documents to the Treasurer in early August. The Diocesan Registrar, Bill Pagan, has advised that the Diocesan Trustees will only sign the HLF grant contract as nominees – i.e. it is the Vestry and not the Diocesan Trustees who are the principal parties to the works and funding contracts. The Registrar also advises that provided Vestry decisions on the contract are correctly documented and minuted, individual Vestry members are not liable, although we may wish to set up trustee indemnity insurance cover in any event as part of St Mary's charity governance procedures. It was agreed to investigate trustee indemnity insurance cover before the contracts are signed off, and noted that the Insurance Company would have to be advised of the work.

Action: Nick

11.5. *Renovation Appeal – Progress Report*

- a) The Treasurer had sent out a Summary Budget statement up to today's date. Since the last statement was tabled at the EGM, good progress has been made with the Appeal. Over 90% of our total funding requirement is now secured and the balance outstanding has now fallen to £24,000, with an additional recent donation of £4,000. The total value of external contributions including grants from trusts now stands at £39,050. Most encouragingly, individual pledges and donations from St Mary's congregation stand at £63,379 including

Gift Aid tax recoverable, and the net proceeds of fundraising events for the Appeal have added a further £1,503 – making £64,882 as the total internal contribution. The Chairman's letter to all members following the EGM has been an important factor in this. The Treasurer advised that he would be making Gift Aid tax reclaims every few months, in view of the large sums involved.

- b) Vestry should also note that, in addition to the above, personal loan guarantees worth up to £25,000 have been pledged by members and, although we will avoid making use of these if at all possible, it is nevertheless extremely important we can quote this position to the Diocese in view of St Mary's apparent inability as a charge to set up any form of bank loan or overdraft facility, although the Treasurer was meeting a bank contact in a few days time to discuss this further. The Registrar has advised that Vestry does have the power to sell investments as a last resort. Given the expected negative cash flow position in the later stages of the Project due to the VAT reclaim procedure, the guarantees may have a wider relevance as noted at the EGM discussion. A cash flow forecast will be prepared.

Action: Nick

- c) We are all greatly indebted to David and Saffrey Miller for organising such a successful and enjoyable 'Flowers & Folderols' musical evening at Blairuskin Lodge on 23rd May, followed two days later by a well attended Garden Open Day, both events being held in aid of the Appeal. Further fundraising events are being planned or discussed by individuals. These include a long distance sponsored walk from St Mary's to Iona this September followed by a separate walk to Whithorn next spring, and a series of talks to local Burns Clubs on private archive material relating to Robert Burns' family. Julie Edmonstone had offered to host a marquee sandwich lunch coinciding with a Garden Open Day at Duntreath Castle on May 31st 2009 - this was accepted with thanks by Vestry. With all these events our aim will be to secure support from a wider constituency of friends and contacts outside St Mary's own members, and where possible we will promote the use of on-line sponsorship via St Mary's website and / or the web portal operated by www.workwithus.org to which we subscribe.
- d) The high level of commitment to the Appeal from St Mary's members will reinforce the approaches that the Chairman and Treasurer are still making to external funders. Wider coverage of the Appeal has also been set up by Bishop David via the www.standrews.anglican.org website. It is currently intended to keep the Appeal open until summer 2009, after the completion of the main works programme on the Church building.
- e) It had been proposed earlier to produce an Appeal signboard and 'thermometer'. However, it was decided not to pursue this idea, but to place an article, mentioning the history of the Church, in local newspapers.

Action: ???

Vestry thanked the Treasurer and Chairman for all the work that they continued to do on this Project.

With the assured level of cash income, Vestry authorised a request that the Diocesan Trustees should sign the HLF documentation on our behalf.

Vestry agreed to delegate powers to a subcommittee to be known as the Renovation Project Working Group, consisting of Nick (Chair), Mark, David and George, to manage the Project. This working group will sign off the contract with Hunter & Clark.

12. Discussion Topic: The Away Day Action and The Diocesan Review

Away day Action Points – with comments - were:

1. Organise an ecumenical workshop with a similar agenda to the St. Mary's May 2008 Away Day (medium term)
2. Complete the Eco-congregation modules on worship and prayer (almost completed)
3. Create a leaflet showing the services of all local churches (SEC, Kirk, RC, etc)

Action: Richard. Nick to put Richard in touch with RC Father

4. Organise a joint activity with other churches in the area (barbecue/ picnic + litter pick on river in Aberfoyle a possibility in 2009).
5. Vary the liturgical diet to offer alternative services (Worship & Music Group are preparing a questionnaire to seek feedback from members of the congregation).
6. Organise regular concerts (***Action: Mark*** to ask David Wilson if he would become involved / the organist at Hyndland church might play (George is the link).
- Regularise Jenny Denholm's input with Jean (Jenny will play at 4 services per year).
7. Promote the prayer group, which is a powerful medium for those who are comfortable with open prayer. (This monthly meeting is now advertised. Area contacts will mention it to their groups).
8. Promulgate to the community the existence of our church-giving fund and invite comments on where this should be spent.
9. Find out what is happening in the community so as to focus our own thinking and activities.
(Invite presentations to the Vestry from Susan Forsyth - addressing social issues in Aberfoyle
Action: Philip to identify useful contacts and get in touch with social services to do a needs assessment, David Sanderson /Callander Youth Project – on partnerships, Green Routes - community initiative for disabled in Gartmore House).
10. Display our activities in the Church room and in the Church. (***Action: Philip*** to provide a noticeboard, and Robin to be asked to keep it up to date).
11. Create a leaflet about St Mary's, with a note on the history of the church (***Action: Mark*** to update).
12. Find a communications leader (defer to later)
13. Hold an annual meeting for area contacts
14. Ask David Sanderson to organise a walk (defer to later)
15. Consider what other opportunities there may be for spiritual growth (postpone till the Diocesan review is implemented).
16. Organise more parish pilgrimages. (Forthcoming pilgrimage in Auchterarder – see Rector's report)

Karen was thanked for all her input. It was agreed to wait until the renovation project is completed before embarking on a planning mode.

13. **Any Other Business**

David or Marie Thomson will be Gartmore Area Contacts.

14. **Date of next Vestry Meeting.** Tuesday 14th October, 2008.

The meeting closed with a Prayer and The Grace at 10.10 p.m.

Signed.....

Date 14/10/08

