

# MULBARTON CHURCH 2023 ANNUAL MEETINGS

## MINUTES OF THE MULBARTON ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7.30pm in Harvest House

Present: Rev, Adrian Miller (Rector); Rachel Burchell, Stewart Burchell, Tim Hayward, Trevor Hutley, David Melling, Sarah Miller, Tom Taylor; Bev Theobald, Patrick Theobald, Heather Wells, and Jill Wright.

In attendance – Derrick Hill as Minutes Secretary

Apologies for Absence received from Teresa Burrell, Angie Fenn, Sally Hayward, Mollie Herron, Lynne Lambert, Sue Mellows and Dennis Wells.

The Rector chaired the meeting and began with a reading from Psalm 36. 5-9, which spoke of the abundance of God's love, before committing the meetings to God in prayer.

The circulated Minutes of the Annual Parish/Vestry Meeting held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2022 were read, accepted as an accurate record and signed.

The prime purpose of this meeting was the appointment of Churchwardens of which there was provision for two at Mulbarton Church. Tim Hayward had served singlehandedly for the last year – and thanks were given to Tim for his services.

Just one nomination for the vacancies was received – for Tim Hayward who indicated his willingness to continue to serve. Jill Wright proposed, and Heather Wells seconded, that Tim be appointed the sole Churchwarden for the coming year and this was unanimously agreed.

Hopes were expressed that a second volunteer might come forward. The Rector explained that such an appointment would require the calling of an additional meeting of parishioners, but this was possible.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.43pm.

# **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING FOR MULBARTON CHURCH**

**held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7.45pm in Harvest House.**

Present: Rev, Adrian Miller (Rector); Rachel Burchell, Stewart Burchell, Tim Hayward, Trevor Hutley, David Melling, Sarah Miller, , Tom Taylor; Bev Theobald, Patrick Theobald, Heather Wells, and Jill Wright.

In attendance – Derrick Hill as Minutes Secretary

Apologies for Absence received from Teresa Burrell, Angie Fenn, Sally Hayward, Mollie Herron, Lynne Lambert, Sue Mellows and Dennis Wells.

The Rector chaired the Meeting

1. Minutes. -The circulated minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2022 were read, approved and signed as an accurate record.
2. Appointment of Minutes Secretary – Derrick Hill was unanimously appointed as Minutes Secretary for the meeting.
3. Electoral Roll Report – In the absence of Teresa Burrell, Electoral Role Officer, the rector presented her report, explaining that numbers on the electoral roll had reduced from 68 to 63 due to the death of Brian McIlwrath and four others asking for their names to be removed from the roll.
4. Churchwarden's Report – Tim Hayward presented his report for 2021-2022 and in discussion the following issues were raised:
  - a. An assurance was given that the issues raised in the recent Electrical Installation Report which had graded the church installation as “not satisfactory” would be dealt with expeditiously so as not to impact the church's insurance cover. However, this would incur significant cost, the funding of which would be need to be discussed by the PCC.
  - b. The PCC was asked to give careful consideration before the suggestion of a flagpole was pursued, recognising both the safety implications of accessing the flagpole and the risk that, whilst those honoured might appreciate this, others may feel excluded by omission.
  - c. Gratitude was expressed to all who had contributed, through the Coronation Big Help Out Day and subsequently, to digging out and laying of the new pathway through the churchyard, a work which was now nearing completion. Once top surface levels had been finalised this would significantly improve disabled access to church and graveyard.

The Big Help Out Day had also facilitated the repainting of the white railings at the front of the church, although significant work remained to repair a number of joins between the arras rails and posts. Sponsorship by individuals was suggested as a means of funding this work.

The conduct of the project had also helped to establish new relationships between the church and community.

- d. Sarah Miller expressed particular thanks for Tim's work in maintaining the churchyard making it safer for visitors – a notable feature compared to some other churchyards she had visited.
  - e. Attention was drawn to the need to give attention to the grounds around Harvest House, and Heather Wells suggested this might be addressed by another working party day.
  - f. Concern was expressed that the furniture on the new gates funded through the Ramblers Association / County Council partnership had gone missing – this had been reported to the County Council by the Parish Council but it was as yet unclear where the financial responsibility for replacement lay.
5. Finance Report – In the absence of Sue Mellows, Treasurer, due to sickness, her Finance Report was presented by the Rector and the following issues were highlighted in discussion.
- a. The accounts for 2022 had been independently examined and were presented for approval which was agreed unanimously.
  - b. Bev Theobald proposed and Sarah Miller seconded that Ian Dunlop be appointed as Independent Examiner of Accounts for 2023 – and this was unanimously agreed.
  - c. It was noted that income during 2022 had risen over the previous year, but that this was largely due to increases in giving for restricted purposes. As a consequence, balances in the General Fund had fallen significantly and the PCC had been unable to pay more towards the Parish Share than the parish element, not contributing at all to the diocesan element, and this only by allowing the year end figure to fall temporarily below the agreed reserve.
  - d. Income from wedding fees had been particularly high in 2022 as weddings deferred during the pandemic were held, but this was not likely to be repeated – only one wedding was booked in Mulbarton for 2023.
  - e. Energy saving initiatives, various government support schemes and a diocesan grant in relation to energy costs meant that church budgets had not been affected as adversely as had been feared, although the level of future energy costs as activity increased were unclear.

- f. The Hardship Fund, established by local donations and grants from the Norfolk Community Foundation, had been particularly valued in the local community.
  - g. Rachel Burchell asked specifically that the PCC consider adopting Ethical Banking, pointing to the example of Hethel PCC who had transferred their accounts to the Co-operative bank and Triodor.
  - h. A round of applause was given to Sue in gratitude for her work as Treasurer.
6. Deanery Synod – Adrian reported that the Deanery Synod and Chapter had again not met in 2022 – with the position of Rural Dean remaining vacant for most of the year. Eight parishes from the Humbleyard Deanery had also been transferred to the Depwade Deanery during the year.

This meant that:

- Some usual clergy support mechanisms were not operating, although Adrian assured the meeting that he had made personal arrangements.
- Usual communication channels between the PCC and the Diocese through the Deanery had become blocked;
- There was uncertainty about the support that might be available to benefices in the event of pastoral incapacity or vacancy; and
- There was no mechanism for discussing the future of the Humbleyard Deanery

The Bracon Ash ACPM, the only one of the four ACPMs to have made a nomination to the Deanery Synod, had asked that the Benefice approach the Diocese over these issues and the Rector indicated that he was considering calling a meeting of parishioners across the four parishes to discuss how to proceed.

7. PCC and Parish Report – Derrick Hill read through the annual report of the PCC and, in addition to matters covered earlier in the meeting, the following points were discussed:
- a. Jill highlighted the importance, now that 10am Sunday Services would not usually be held on 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays, of reviewing publicity so that visitors and worshippers who did not receive emails were informed before setting out.
  - b. The improved storage facilities in the church porch for the Foodbank were welcomed and it was confirmed that Charles Strafford continues to transfer donations to the Foodbank on a regular basis. However, recently a number of non-food donations of second-hand goods had been received – and Sarah Miller was considering posting a notice that this facility was explicitly for food consumables!
  - c. Thanks were expressed to Eve Newberry-Jesse for her leading of the YOMMY youth group and it was agreed that a suitable presentation should be made to her on the occasion of her relocation to America next month.

d. In regard to disability access to buildings Sarah Miller pointed out the availability of the portable ramp at the church entrance which could also be transferred to Harvest House

8. Rector's Report – Adrian presented his report particularly highlighting the increasing links between the church and the community, especially through the Mulbarton Village Hall Trustees – in this connection mention was made of the proposed church quiet tent to be available for this year's Mulbarton Festival.

He also highlighted preliminary work being undertaken in regard to the redevelopment of the rear of the church building. Now that up to date plans had been received, he would be convening discussions as to the potential content of the development before applying for pre-faculty advice from the diocese before a formal faculty request could be made. Any work was expected to proceed in phases as funding became available, but he was hopeful that the church was in a good position to benefit from grant funding currently available as a consequence of local energy infrastructure projects and other sources.

Sarah Miller suggested that the PCC might also consider wider fundraising issues.

Gratitude was expressed to Adrian for the breadth of his work.

9. Elections– Attention was drawn to current vacancies for:

- A second church warden;
- Four additional members of the PCC; and
- A Representative on the Deanery Synod

but unfortunately no volunteers or nominations were forthcoming.

10. Issues referred to PCC – As the meeting drew to a close, Adrian reminded members that the following items would be referred for ongoing consideration by the PCC:

- a. Timely response to Electrical Installation report (minute 4a)
- b. Flagpole Issues (minute 4b)
- c. Harvest House Grounds Working Party (Minute 4e)
- d. Gate Furniture (minute 4f)
- e. Ethical Banking (Minute 5g)
- f. Deanery Issues (Minute 6)
- g. Service Times Publicity (Minute 7a)
- h. Non-food donations (Minute 7b)
- i. Presentation to Eve Newberry-Jesse (Minute 7c)
- j. Church Redevelopment (Minute 8)
- k. Fundraising (Minute 8)

11. Close – There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 9.30pm.

