

Minutes of St Mary Magdalen, Mulbarton, AMP & APCM meetings on Wednesday 28th May 2025

Present: Rev Adrian Miller (Chair), Rev Di Rowlandson, Tim Hayward, David Melling, Stephen McLeod, Heather Wells, Sue Mellows, Sarah Miller, Lynne Lambert, Chris Scales, Jill Wright, Stuart & Rachel Burchell, Chris & Marina Carter, Rachel Love, Jackie Hendry

Apologies: Trevor & Julie Hutley, Bev & Patrick Theobald, Christine Melling, Mollie Herron, Tracey Salisbury, Madeliene & Sally Hayward.

The meeting began with a prayer.

1 Annual Meeting of Parishioners (AMP)

AMP 25/01 Minutes of last PCC meeting for approval & signature

The minutes of the meeting on 15th May 2024 were unanimously approved & signed by Adrian.

AMP 25/02 Election of Churchwardens

There were 2 vacancies. Tim indicated he was willing to stand again, but there were no others willing. Tim was unanimously elected. Adrian expressed huge thanks to Tim for his service. In his remarks, Tim said that any help would be gratefully accepted, e.g. in meeting suppliers, who typically need to be met during the daytime when he is at work. **Action: PCC**

2 Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)

APCM 25/01 Appointment of APCM Minutes Secretary

Willing to act as minutes secretary, David was duly appointed.

APCM 25/02 Minutes of previous APCM held 15th May 2024

The minutes of the previous APCM were briefly reviewed. Jill queried p3 of the minutes and a revised wording was agreed as follows: 'The wall box raised £118.44 in collections, but most of the Church's total cash receipts were from Hanover Gardens'. The revised minutes were then approved and signed by Adrian.

APCM 25/03 Matters Arising not elsewhere on the agenda

From last year's AOB, Sarah reported that in the back of church we now have 'Past, Present & Future' boards where folk can pick up resources. There are prayer cards on or near the altar and in the new prayer space. Adrian reported that he had been contacting about 30 baptism families resident in the parish every month, and Sarah reported that she had been sending out cards annually to baptism families.

APCM 25/04 Electoral Roll Report

The new roll is up in the church porch having been rebuilt from scratch. The number now on the roll is 35.

APCM 25/05 Churchwarden's Report (Key points from Tim's Report/Presentation)

Memorial bench for Jack & Elsie Page, and Bike rack, have been added to Terrier's Inventory. The re-ordering of church interior faculty has been submitted and awaiting a visit from the DAC. The blinds faculty has been approved, and supplier sourced. Church flooring in poor condition and needs repairing with removal of grids & new carpet. Porch brickwork and areas of plaster and stone replacement inside and out yet to be restored. New laptop obtained for sound and vision system, to allow upgrading to HDMI connection to projectors, giving better quality. Churchyard Memorial Cherry tree in memory of lost unborn babies, has been planted. A plaque will be installed in 2025 as the tree becomes established. Commonwealth War grave has had a sign installed near the fence noticeboard. Tim raised the need for help with church flowers and Rachel (L) volunteered to help. Sarah raised the state of the carpet around the Communion area which is now looking tired and asked the PCC to consider. **Action: PCC** Adrian & attendees expressed their thanks to Tim for all his efforts.

APCM 25/06 Finance Report (Key points from Adrian's Report/Presentation)

Adrian explained a graph showing that over the last 9 years our unrestricted fund income has averaged c £65k per year (after a historic low of £50k in 2022). Since exhausting reserves, expenditure has tracked income, achieved by spending only what we can afford. PCC is grappling with which spend lines to prioritise and which lines to forfeit when the full budget cannot be afforded. This has included Parish Share (PS) which we have failed to meet in recent years, and are forecast to do again in the coming year, though by a much smaller shortfall than usual. The PS allocated to Mulbarton is £46.5k this year, and the currently f/c shortfall is £5.5k. The renting out of Harvest House income is helping. Adrian also reported increased giving from the Hardship Fund to help local households in need (£8.4k in 2024 impacting 34 households). In response to a question from Rachel (B), Adrian confirmed that the reduced Electoral Roll this year has no impact on the Parish Share calculation, and in spite of reduced numbers on the roll, we expect our income to remain fairly stable. Adrian also trailed that in its review of spending priorities the PCC currently is moving in favour of giving £6.5k to local charities in need, instead of towards the Parish Share shortfall. He outlined the pros and cons; one risk is that the Diocese might take account of non-payment of PS in its decision making around the provision & timeliness of any new clergy, were Adrian to leave. Nevertheless, Rachel (B) and Chris (C) indicated their support for the idea. Jill said that whatever is decided it would be wise to publicise & communicate the decision to the congregation, so that people knew what the church was doing with its income. **Action: PCC** Adrian drew attention to the 5 page 'Statement of Accounts', which have been approved by our independent examiner, ready to send to the diocese and Charity Commission.

APCM 25/07 Deanery Synod Report

Now part of Depwade deanery, Adrian reported that one meeting of the synod was held in 2024, at which the newly appointed Rural Dean (Rev Michael Windridge) was welcomed.

APCM 25/08 PCC Parish Report (Key Points from David's Report/Presentation)

Membership changes: David was elected to the PCC in May 2024. Sue resigned as Treasurer in May 2024 but continued as a PCC member. Mollie and Ajayi stood down in October 2024.

Stephen was coopted onto the PCC in September 2024, and was later appointed as treasurer.

Worship: Service pattern unchanged. Improvements made to audio visual system. New prayer space at back of church. Youth Group and 3 Home Groups continue. Bev licensed as AWA. Two new vergers appointed. Morning Prayer well supported. New Brunch & Prayer events introduced.

Mission: Food bank well used. Missionary giving to Nepal and Bukavu increased. Bibles again given to Reception & Year 6 classes in Mulbarton Primary School. (Jill raised a concern that one class in Yr 6 did not receive bibles this year as they were not given out; PCC asked to consider what can be done **Action PCC**). Naomi raised over £1500 for The Little Princess Trust and cancer counselling & support. 'Pilgrim Cross' walkers welcomed again in April for an evening meal in Harvest House and overnight accommodation in the Scout Hut. The Holiday Club team ran two successful Clubs with c 40 children in attendance at each event. Presence maintained at the rebranded "Holistic Wellbeing Fayres" (was Body, Mind, Spirit Fayre) in Village Hall.

Community engagement: 'Mardlers' & 'Mulbarton Community Choir' sponsored, supported and helped. Resources again offered to the "Warm Space" / "Community Hub" initiative run by Mulbarton Village Hall Charity. Lent summer marquee to primary school & in return were given 2 x HDMI monitors for church. Hosted General Election husting, which 97 folk attended in person and >500 on-line. MALGA given use of Harvest House and refreshments for Mulbarton Open Gardens event, helping it raise >£3k for the charity, Vision Norfolk.

Buildings & Property: largely addressed under earlier Church Warden's Report

Churchyard: PCC responsible for management of the churchyard, partly supported financially in previous years by Parish Council. Funding from Council has not yet been forthcoming for 2024. Discussions continue. In 2024, maintenance amended to incorporate recommendations from Norfolk Wildlife Trust (NWT) to improve churchyard biodiversity. David asked whether APCM satisfied with graves in NWT conservation zones being allowed to get overgrown, whether this was disrespectful to the dead & their families & potentially hazardous to footing, and whether NWT policy needs reviewing. Lynne was happy with new role the yard has taken on. Heather said it was now a nice environment for quiet meditation. Jill observed that the policy is in fact being amended in the coming year, as the grass will be cut earlier (July not September) and so

graves will be less overgrown. Heather said if we keep to the policy the grass will in time give way to more flowers and look less overgrown. Annual raking is the critical control activity. Jill suggested more paths could be created through the area to allow access. **Action: PCC** Heather advised she was putting a book in the porch for people to leave comments & concerns. Sarah asked whether the 2 families (unexpectedly) still tending graves had been approached for their views and that PCC should endeavour to do so. **Action: PCC** Chris (C) commented that signage and communications were critical **Action: PCC** Sue suggested we use Mardle & Parish magazines to get the message across and solicit feedback **Action: PCC** Churchyard also nearing capacity. Likely to be full within 2-3 years. PCC considering options. Parish Council is aware & engaged; it might have to take on responsibility for any new ground. **Eco Church:** We seek to respond to the climate & nature crises, through action on energy management, habitat creation on church grounds, sourcing of products & materials we use and promoting fair trade and sustainability. Thanks expressed to Rachel (B) & Sarah for their review of Harvest House & for Heather's leadership of Eco sub-committee (contact heather@mulbchurch.org.uk) New Churchyard Trail Guide / Map produced. Bird boxes erected. Rangers helped make bug hotels. Bulbs planted in the wooded area. Compost bin provided in churchyard. More environmentally friendly weed killer being used.

APCM 25/09 Safeguarding (Key points from Lynne's Report/Presentation)

Safeguarding everyone's responsibility, not just Lynne's. Her role is handling specific abuse incidents and supporting leaders & helpers of church activities for youth & vulnerable adults. Supported by David, driving training & key task compliance, & background DBS (criminal) checks, on which we are currently 100% compliant. Lynne confirmed no incidents this year. Plans to further engage Holiday Clubs, Mardlers & YOMMY and would like to use Safeguarding Sunday to promote safeguarding. Jill said some other churches mention safeguarding on all weekly service sheets and asked us to consider doing something similar, or at least in Mardle. **Action: Lynne** Thanks were expressed to Lynne & David

APCM 25/10 Election of PCC representatives

David is already on PCC and not due to stand down until 2027. Tim, Sue, Heather & Trevor stood down as required but agreed to stand again and were duly elected. Tim is an automatic member of PCC by virtue of his role as churchwarden, but also being an elected lay representative means his place on PCC does not depend on him being churchwarden. Stephen was also willing to stand. These appointments were proposed by Rachel (B), seconded by Lynne, and carried unanimously. This means all 6 vacancies were filled.

APCM 25/11 Election of Deanery Synod representative

There were no volunteers, though Lynne requested time to consider applying.

APCM 25/12 Any Other Business to bring to PCC

Rachel (B) thanked the PCC for its support, enabling her to continue to offer her Creative Nature workshops in Harvest House.

Rachel (B) asked the PCC to revisit heating arrangements at Harvest House, particularly whether it's possible to heat rooms separately. She had observed heating being left on unnecessarily.

Sarah responded that tenants do turn the heating up and down and often forget to return it to its original settings. The massage room needed to be warm, so with discussion, the tenants there have been using an additional heater, curtailing the need for heating other parts of the house. **(Action: PCC and also to review safety)**

Sarah asked the PCC to consider purchasing some chairs with arms to supplement existing (for hirers and church folk who struggle to stand) **Action: PCC**

Sarah also asked PCC to consider a 'refresh' downstairs at Harvest House as it was looking a little tired and in need of a lick of paint **Action: PCC**

The meeting then closed in prayer.

Signed.....

Date