

PARISH OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, WOKINGHAM

WITH ST NICHOLAS'S, EMMBROOK

Minutes of the annual meeting of parishioners held in the Parish Rooms
on Sunday 27 April 2025 at 5pm.

Peter Wells opened with words of welcome and a prayer.

Present

Peter Wells in the Chair and forty one parishioners – Fiona Albinson, Susanna Allen, Paul Armitage, Lyn Austen, Teri Austen, Jane Bingham, Christine Barker, Mary Cassidy, Christopher Cipkin, Andy Clark, Louise Cole, Jane Creasy, Alan Crew, Gilly Crew, Jo Cullinane, Ken Davenport, Sue Davenport, Sally Dowling, Ann Eggleston, Stuart Fairhead, Liz Gallagher, Alan Harrison, Andrew Harte, Elizabeth Hunter, Derek Hutchinson, Vernon Riley, Susannah Riley, David Ruddock, Lesley Ruddock, Jerome Selwyn-Smith, Tina Selwyn-Smith, Lynn Smith, Nigel Traylor, Diana Tuck, Richard Turner, Jean Vaughan, Mary Walker, Pauline Wells, Fiona Williams, Penny Williams, Tom Williams.

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from John Albinson, Ann Battersby, Peter Baker, Sarah Baker, Joanna Brown, Alice Buddin, Maurice Buddin, Terence Cassidy, Stefanie Cetin, Jane Clark, Jean Davies, Ron Davies, Fiona Fairhead, Rhoda Hart, Sylvia Hill, Lynne Judge, Gordon Lupton, Kay Piggott, John Sutton, Pippa Sutton, Lionel Voke, Rosaline Voke.

Minutes of Meeting Held on 28 April 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2024 were accepted as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

Election of Churchwardens

Peter Wells announced that there were two posts of Churchwarden and two nominations had been received for Peter Wells and David Ruddock. In the absence of any other nominations, he declared them duly elected as Churchwarden, to general applause.

There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 5.10pm.

Lesley Ruddock

Chairman.....

Secretary

Date.....

PARISH OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, WOKINGHAM
WITH ST NICHOLAS'S, EMMBROOK
Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held in the Parish Rooms
on 27 April 2025

Present:

Peter Wells in the Chair and 41 parishioners - Fiona Albinson, Susanna Allen, Paul Armitage, Lyn Austen, Teri Austen, Jane Bingham, Christine Barker, Mary Cassidy, Christopher Cipkin, Andy Clark, Louise Cole, Jane Creasy, Alan Crew, Gilly Crew, Jo Cullinane, Ken Davenport, Sue Davenport, Sally Dowling, Ann Eggleston, Stuart Fairhead, Liz Gallagher, Alan Harrison, Andrew Harte, Elizabeth Hunter, Derek Hutchinson, Vernon Riley, Susannah Riley, David Ruddock, Lesley Ruddock, Jerome Selwyn-Smith, Tina Selwyn-Smith, Lynn Smith, Nigel Traylor, Diana Tuck, Richard Turner, Jean Vaughan, Mary Walker, Pauline Wells, Fiona Williams, Penny Williams, Tom Williams.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from John Albinson, Ann Battersby, Peter Baker, Sarah Baker, Joanna Brown, Alice Buddin, Maurice Buddin, Terence Cassidy, Stefanie Cetin, Jane Clark, Jean Davies, Ron Davies, Fiona Fairhead, Rhoda Hart, Sylvia Hill, Lynne Judge, Gordon Lupton, Kay Piggott, John Sutton, Pippa Sutton, Lionel Voke, Rosaline Voke.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 83 April 2024 were accepted as an accurate record and signed.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Election of Pro-Wardens of St Nicholas

There were two nominations for Pro-Warden. Mrs Liz Gallagher and Mrs Fiona Albinson having been duly proposed and seconded, and there being no other nominations, Peter Wells declared them elected as Pro-Wardens, to general applause.

5. Changes in the Electoral Roll since the last meeting

Mrs Teri Austen reminded those present that this year was a full revision of the Roll and she thanked Peter Wells for his help in dealing with online applications. The new Roll now stands at 179 as against 231 on 31 March 2024. Some people have left the area, some have died and some missed the deadline. This is a significant drop and would normally determine the number of PCC members. However, a resolution was passed in 2013 at the APCM that there would always be 15 elected members of PCC. The number of Deanery Synod reps may be affected next year and there is a very small effect on the Parish Share.

The Roll is now reopened and names can be added once more.

6. Election of Parochial Church Councillors

Peter Wells explained that 4 members of the PCC had come to the end of their term of office, and there were two additional vacancies. Lyn Austen, Stefanie Cetin, Stuart Fairhead and Vernon Riley were duly re-elected to serve for 3 years. There are still 2 vacancies.

7. Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Financial Statements for 2024

The Treasurer, Mr Llewellyn Austen, presented the statutory financial accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024, reminding everyone that the figures referred to both St Paul's and St Nicholas' churches. He then followed this with an explanation of the nature of the Funds, restricted and unrestricted, which are maintained by the church.

Mr Austen's formal presentation started with a reminder that at the start of the year his budget had indicated an expected deficit of £12,000 in General Fund finances. However, following the success of the fund-raising campaign launched in the earlier part of 2024, income had risen by more than £37,000 through a combination of one-off donations and an increase in pledged giving. Despite a 12% rise in operating expenses this had resulted in a significant surplus of £19,722 compared with £1,704 in 2023. Whilst most welcome he emphasised that this was very much an exceptional outcome.

Diverse items of income were then illustrated using a pie chart, and this was supplemented with a detailed explanation of their key sources. Of particular interest was income from planned giving and gift aid which, together, accounted for 71% of general fund receipts. A similar résumé of expenditure was then presented illustrating that Parish Share accounted for just over £80,600 or some 48% of total expenditure; this was once again paid in full and on time. Mr Austen then gave a concise report on the remaining items of expense, drawing particular attention to Diocesan fees, church running, parish administration, service and ministry costs. He also highlighted the church's continuing commitment in supporting our key mission partners.

The church's various Restricted Funds were then introduced and a more detailed analysis given relating to Lighting, Restoration, Organ and Churchyard Funds with an emphasis of the costs encountered in removing the cedar tree. In particular, he summarised the cash available for overall restoration and lighting projects which amounted to £164,616 at the end of the year,

which figure included a balance of £7,000 in the Lucky Numbers Fund (also set aside for church improvements).

The Treasurer then highlighted his expectations for 2025 which currently indicated a small deficit of £3,500. At the same time, he noted that the continuing Diocesan vacancy discount (applicable until August) might enable this to be turned into a small surplus.

In closing Mr Austen extended his appreciation to all who had assisted him in any way in administering the church finances, together with Jason Searancke for his very thorough and detailed examination of the accounts. All those in attendance accepted the accounts as presented, and the Treasurer was thanked for his work in preparing them.

8. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Lyn Austen stated that Jason Searancke has agreed to continue to be the examiner for 2025. Jason was formally proposed by Lyn Austen, seconded by Sally Dowling. ALL IN FAVOUR, no abstentions, and no votes against.

Lyn Austen has already thanked him for his work on this year's accounts.

9. Vice-Chairman's Report

Peter Wells' report can be found on p4 of the *Parish Reports*. He highlighted some of the significant changes during 2024 – the loss of the Cedar tree, the break in which caused considerable damage to the South Door which has now been completely refurbished. Fr Richard left in July for Norwich but we have continued to have healthy growth in our congregation, with the livestreaming still proving popular. We have replaced our hymnbooks, through generous sponsorship from the congregation.

We had to put together a Parish Profile in order to advertise for a replacement Rector. Our hopes of finding a suitable person before Christmas proved a little over-optimistic but in February we found a very suitable new priest, Fr Sam Korn, who will join us at the end of August.

We have continued to work at Safeguarding, reviewing our policies and procedures as necessary.

Peter thanked our priests, Mother Cara, Rev'd Jane and Rev'd Judi who have all worked hard to cover the priestly and organisational duties of the Rector as well as a variety of local, and not so local, visiting priests who have helped to keep the services going in all three churches.

Peter also thanked Louise and Vanessa in the Office who have been key to maintaining momentum in the church and the Parish Rooms and he thanked the many folk who have gone the extra mile to ensure everything has been well executed and quality maintained.

Penny Wallace spoke on behalf of the congregation to thank Peter particularly for all he has done.

10. Deanery Synod Report

Peter Wells encouraged people to read this report on p24 of the *Parish Reports*. Paul Armitage encouraged people to come to Deanery meetings as some of the topics and speakers are very interesting.

11. Churchwardens' Report on Fabric and Inventory 2024

Peter Wells referred everyone to p8 of the *Parish Reports*. David Ruddock and Peter highlighted the ongoing problem of plaster falling from the nave ceiling where the roof meets the tower and on the South side also. A plan is being formed to identify a safe means of getting up to the ceiling so the work should be done in the coming weeks. Following a question, Peter explained that the topographical survey is an accurate plan of the church, which we didn't have, that can be used to make plans for tendering for future works.

Andy Clark said he had been asked about a short term fix for the front wall of the churchyard which has been damaged by frost, the suggestion is that we could waterproof it and then fill in with concrete. Peter said he would consider the suggestion. The Churchwardens' Report was accepted and there were no further questions or comments.

12. Parish Rooms Trust

The 2024 accounts for the Parish Rooms Trust were included in the APCM documents. David Ruddock read out Rhoda's report. There were no questions on the accounts.

Rhoda Hart wished to record formally her thanks to Jason Searancke for examining these accounts, for his willingness to continue in 2025 and to Vanessa Hemmi for all her hard work in the office.

Jane Creasy asked about plans for refurbishing, she particularly mentioned the floor of the ladies toilets and the kitchen. In reply, Liz Gallagher said that the toilets are on the agenda for the next PRT Committee meeting and she would add the kitchen to the list.

13. Any Other Business

None

The meeting ended with the Grace.

Lesley Ruddock

Secretary

Chairman.....

Date.....