

ST MARY'S CHURCH, HADLOW

STANDING COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting held Monday 14 October 2019

at 8pm at the Vicarage

The meeting opened with prayer.

1. Members present

Rev. Paul White (PW), Rev. Nicky Harvey (NH), Michael Payne (MP), Nicola Canham (NC), Martin Massy (MM, Secretary), Mike Harvey (MH, part time)

Apologies for absence: Barbara Smith (BS)

N.B. PCC to appoint another member to the Standing Committee.

2. Friends of St.Mary's

Friends of Seal Church

MH had been invited to talk about setting up a "Friends of St.Mary's" organisation (FOSM) as he had been instrumental in setting up Friends of Seal Church (FSC). FSC was set up as a charity over 10 years ago, with a board of trustees and its own constitution, including a Memorandum of Articles setting out the purpose of the charity. Monies received are intended for specific projects, including church repairs such as refurbishing the clock; they are not used for routine maintenance. It is possible in this way to attract donors from the community who have no interest in worshipping in the church but are keen to maintain a historical landmark and village institution in good order.

As it became difficult over time to fill positions on the board of trustees the charity was wound up and its activities brought under Seal church. FSC has a blog (<http://friendsofsealchurch.blogspot.com/>) and continues to raise £1000-£1500 per year through regular contributions. Money raised is in a Restricted Fund and kept in a bank account separate from the church accounts.

Fund-raising activities have included "buy a tile" to raise money for roof repairs – donors were able to sign tiles recording personal memories – and "buy a minute" for the clock repairs. FSC held events and had a regular newsletter as well as the ongoing blog.

Setting up Friends of St.Mary's

Friends of St.Mary's would link to the community and work closely with PCC/Fabric Committee to identify and promote projects. Ideas for a wishlist of projects, in no particular order, could include new stair carpet to the Upper Room, new chairs or chair cushions in the nave, new kitchen downstairs, redecoration, lighting upgrade. It was recognised that some of the ideas were rather boring, and a more exciting wishlist would be needed to market the idea of FOSM.

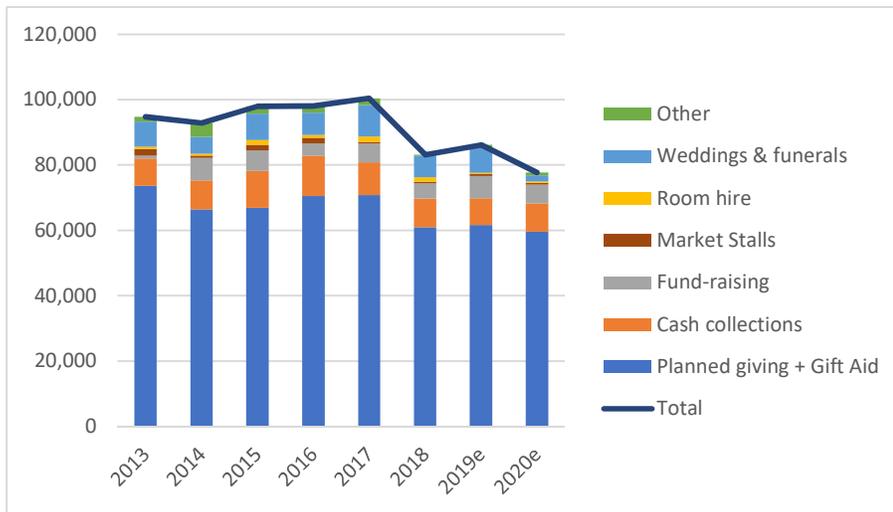
Ideas for recruiting people as Friends could include via the village newsletter, Historical Society, St.Mary's website, etc. FOSM could produce an [annual] newsletter and send regular emails to members.

It was agreed that MH should be invited to the next PCC meeting (18 November). The PCC would be asked to agree the idea of setting up Friends of St.Mary’s and to set up a committee to implement.

3. 2020 Draft Budget

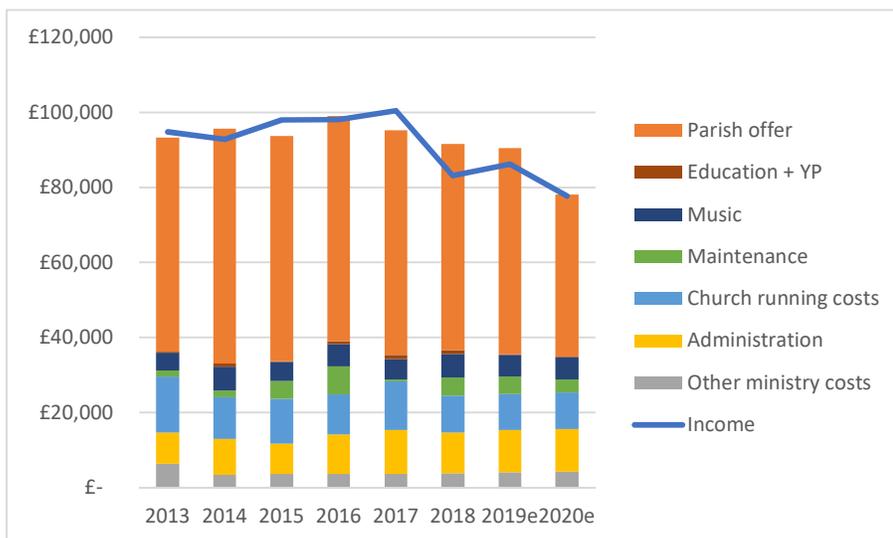
MM presented a first draft budget for 2020. Key points were that income was expected to be lower (see Figure 1), reflecting the drop-off in planned giving after 2017 (several generous givers moved away), expected lower income from fund-raising compared with this year, which has had a number of successful events, statutory wedding and funeral fees to be paid to the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) instead of retained as hitherto, and fewer weddings next year (2-3 instead of nine). The Upper Room is used by many groups, but income is much lower than it has been in the past.

Figure 1 Budget Income



Excluding our parish offer, overall expenditure in 2020 is budgeted just below the 2019 budget.

Figure 2 Budget Expenditure



Fees for funerals are quite complex, depending on whether held in church or at a crematorium, whether including burial or not, etc. PW and NH to tell MM the number of funerals at which they have officiated (Post-meeting note from MM: it would be helpful for calculating our parish offer to know information for 2017, 2018 and 2019. We will need to keep formal records from January 2020 to give quarterly updates to the diocese of the statutory fees collected).

As a result of anticipated falling income, we should (i) have a stewardship campaign early in 2020 and (ii) reduce our parish offer to the diocese to avoid a deficit. 2019 offer was £55,000, the indicative offer calculated by the diocese is £60,566. The current estimate of the parish offer that St.Mary's might afford is £3600/month, i.e. £43200/year, which is 21% less than 2019 and results in a minimal deficit.

MM will update expenditure for the year to end October and present revised 2020 budget to the full PCC for discussion and approval in November.

4. Chancel window update

MM reported that approval has been received from the insurance company to proceed with CG Durant for the window repair, who were slightly cheaper than Cathedral Studios of Canterbury. MM has applied for a faculty via the online system. MM to follow up with Sarah Anderson at DAC.

5. New downstairs kitchen

Concern was expressed over the overall look/appearance, e.g. whether IKEA units are suitable for the long term. The project could be taken up by a new Friends organisation and, with extra funding, done really well. The PCC to consider whether to hold back development until FOSM established.

6. Coffee Pots & Tiny Tots and Who Let the Dads Out

CPTT and WLTD0 are outreach activities in that they use church premises and have several helpers drawn from St.Mary's. Contributions to St.Mary's are minimal (CPTT ~£6/wk, WLTD0 sometimes zero). NH raised the question of how people could be encouraged to pay more towards the costs for refreshments, heating and lighting. 50 pence per family does not go far. PCC to consider how to increase revenues.

7. Smart heating controls

MM discussed installing smart heating controls to improve operation by optimising start and finish times based on inside and outside temperatures and the thermal characteristics of the building and enabling control via an app, which would allow remote control. The app would be installed on smartphones so several people could use it; there would also be manual override. Netatmo, Tado and Honeywell all make smart heating controls that meet our requirements. Front-runner at the moment is Netatmo (who also make home security, weather stations, etc.). Cost is typically around £200 for the hardware, plus installation. The church repair fund is partly intended for this purpose. The meeting agreed to allow MM to proceed with purchase and installation.

8. Harvest

Good points included a good sermon, bringing members of the community to church and having children from Hadlow Primary School in the choir, and we were lucky with the weather (again!). However, the main service felt too long, and Cubs and Scouts came to the outside service (where, incidentally, numbers have been falling) whereas schoolchildren and their parents came

to the main service. Next year the services could perhaps be combined, with a shorter service (possibly still a communion service) and having the band in church. For discussion at PCC.

9. Golden Green Hall

MP has made an inventory of the items returned from the Golden Green Hall following cessation of the monthly Sunday services there, and has been investigating the terms of the lease. Two Land Registry entries have been identified, one freehold, the other leasehold with a term of 45 years from 2003. MP is looking for a copy of the Lease Agreement to identify PCC responsibilities under the lease.

10. Confidentiality

There were no confidential items.

The meeting ended with The Grace.

APPROVED:

Signature

Date:

Date of next full PCC meeting 18 November 2019