

Minutes of a Meeting of Harwell PCC
held on Tuesday 14th March 2006 at 7.45pm in Harwell Church Extension

Present

Jean Barton	Tim Roberts	Chris Stott (Chair)
Kate Evans	Wendy Sinclair	Frances Taylor
Sid Gale	Clive Silver	Marilyn Thomas
Georgina Greer	Ruth Slatter	Tony Ullmer
Clive House	Martin Speed (Secretary)	

1. Opening

Chris opened the meeting with reflection and prayer based on 1 Thessalonians 1:2 (focussing on Christians serving as a model and being people from whom the good news rings out).

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Tim Roberts, Rob Thomas, Mad Gibson, Steve Tunstall and Cath Convery.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting on Tuesday 24th January 2006 were signed as a correct record.

4. Matters arising

- a) **GB Tree in the churchyard:** Ruth reported that the new tree (a flowering pear) should be planted in the next two to three weeks.

Action: Ruth to report further progress.

- b) **Pew sale:** Tim sent a message to the meeting to report that the pews have now been moved from the barn to the Scouts pig pen, where they will be able to stay (free of charge) for several months (and that thanks were due to Tony Hughes, Malcolm Birkinshaw and Sid Gale for helping with this). Prior to them being moved, photos were taken for sending off to the diocese so that we can get the go-ahead for disposal. This should be through before end April.

Action: Tim to continue to progress.

- c) **Nappy issues:** This was carried forward as Mad was not at the meeting to report.

Action: Mad to progress the selection of the changing table.

- d) **Disposal of items in the annex:** Chris reported that George Lang continues to work towards selling the speakers through e-bay.

Action: Chris to progress and report back.

- e) **Donation for Bishop Richard:** Clive reported that the donation which the last meeting agreed had been sent.

- f) **Gift for work with Children:** Marilyn’s decision (following discussion with the Childrens’ leaders) was that a third of the gift should be used in Chilton to fund activity days, and that the remainder would be similarly used in Harwell as additional resource for funding activity days and summer schemes, though thought would be given to using some of the funds to help provide a collection of instruments for use by the younger children in church. (It was noted that ‘professional’ instruments would be too expensive and that it was hoped that donations from the congregation would answer much of the need anyway. The gift may be used to ‘bolster’ the collection.) This decision was endorsed by the meeting.
- g) **Songs of praise:** Kate reported that the project was ‘under control’, with initial planning meetings having been held and commitments for support obtained from those who had helped in the past. The response from all had been favourable. It was intended this year to ensure Chilton was more involved.

Action: Kate to report further progress.

- h) **UKGraves.com:** Kate reported that she had researched the way the gravestones had been moved to line the path to the church – the action that had drawn unfavourable comment from the author of the web site. (The work was done in 1939 with the agreement of the PCC, Rector, and Dr Rice and the only living relative at the time who could be linked to the ‘owners’ of any of the headstones. The work was undertaken to address two problems: many of the stones had fallen and were making the work of the gardener impossible, and the banks of the path were collapsing with the risk of exposing past burials. Contrary to the report on UKGraves.com all of the stones are at the height they were at in their original positions. She learnt that around 20 of the ‘blank’ headstones were made specially for their current role.) Kate has made preliminary contact with the person who is responsible for the UKGraves.com web-site and will provide a response to their criticism which could be included on the site. The meeting thanked Kate for her efforts and supported her endeavour to provide a response that sets out the history correctly.
- i) **Purchase of a digital projector:** in the discussion of the minutes of the last meeting two new issues arose. Clive S had not been aware that the meeting had been told that it was the suggestion of the Marilyn and Rob Thomas that their gift be used to purchase a digital projector. On reflection the recollection of the majority of the meeting was that this had indeed been the case (and hence the minutes were signed as a correct record), however there was sympathy for Clive’s position because it was acknowledged that the discussion of the issue had been disjointed and aspects of the discussion were recalled in more than one way by different members of the PCC. As a result it emerged that there were differing opinions on whether the decision to adjust the budget to acknowledge that the Thomas’s gift would cover the cost of a projector represented a *firm decision to buy one* or merely *agreement that if there was a decision to buy one* (after further debate on options for visual aids in the Church) *then this would be how such a purchase would be financed.*

It was agreed to clarify this with a resolution:

Resolution	That a digital projector be purchased for use in the Church.				
Moved	Clive	Seconded	Kate	Passed	With one against

Jean apologised to Marilyn for any way in which this debate appeared to show a lack of gratitude for what had been such a generous gift. The meeting was *completely* in agreement in expressing its thanks for the gift.

5. Financial report

Report on current financial position

Clive H provided a report on the current expenses and income against budget for the year to date. Though this seemed to show a reduction in giving, he explained that the figures did not include some income from standing orders, and that when adjusted for that the income was in line with the budget.

However, he did note that following the presentations made by himself and Tim to the Church about the church finances and the need to increase giving that although there appeared to have been an increase in giving via envelopes, there was no increase in the standing orders. In part it was agreed that this may reflect the time it would take for a change to a standing order to take effect – but it may also reflect the fact that some who had intended to make a change have forgotten. It was suggested by Clive that a note should go into the notice sheet to remind people.

Action: *Clive H* to progress draft an appropriate note for the notice sheet.

Audited accounts for 2006

Clive H talked the meeting through the audited accounts.

Resolution	That the audited accounts be approved and accepted by the PCC.				
Moved	Sid	Seconded	Ruth	Passed	Unanimously

Clive H reported that Alison had agreed to act as auditor for next year, and the meeting expressed their gratitude for this.

6. Church annual general meeting

Adoption of an annual report

Following the correction of some minor errors¹ and in anticipation of the attendance figures from Ruth being inserted on page one, the annual report was put forward for adoption by the PCC.

Resolution	That the annual report be adopted by the PCC.				
Moved	Tony	Seconded	Frances	Passed	Unanimously

Jean noted that the report summarised the business of the PCC, and that in some aspects, such as the formation of a new 'Welcome Group', that the full range of Church activities were not covered. She suggested that all groups connected with the Church should be encouraged to provide an annual report. However, it was unclear as to how this information could be disseminated appropriately. It was also noted that these organisations should have an opportunity for affirmation and support through review by the PCC. An alternative suggestion was put forward therefore to incorporate into the PCC timetable reporting by such groups staggered over the course of the year.

Action: *Martin* to progress draft a proposal and timetable for next year.

¹ p1, para 4, dates are a year behind; p3, para 5, 'for in' should be just 'in'; and p4, last line 'will drain' should be 'may drain'.

Preparation for the meeting

The following presentations were agreed should be prepared for the meeting:

- Election of sidespeople Ruth
- Key elements from the annual report Martin
- Financial Clive H
- Fabric and ornaments Tim
- Electoral roll Wendy
- Deanery Synod Clive
- Organisations reports from:
 - Bell ringers
 - Visiting team
 - Scouts

Action: **Chris** to invite reports from the organisations, and **all those nominated to present reports** to prepare their individual reports.

It was noted that the Fabric and Ornaments report should have been provided at this meeting for adoption by the PCC. It was agreed that the report would be circulated to all when available, and that it would then be formally approved by the standing committee.

Action: **Martin:** to request and circulate the report.

Georgina offered to do teas and coffees before the meeting. The suggestion was warmly received by the PCC, and it was suggested that the notice sheet should let people know that this was available.

Action: **Martin:** to ask Naomi to put a note in the notice sheet about this.

7. Church weekend away and trip to Holy Land

Church Weekend

Chris summarised the opportunity outlined in the paper that had been circulated prior to the meeting for a church weekend. This proposed a church weekend based at the Ocean View Hotel in Bournemouth (where St Mary's Cholsey had successfully held two church weekends). It is a three star hotel with very good facilities and in January/February 2007 the cost would be £75 (with children & youth aged 5-15 half price) for 2 nights DB & B and Sunday lunch, plus two coffee breaks. The hotel would ask for a deposit of £200 non-returnable, and would expect at least 60 people.

Resolution	That a church week-end will be held at the Ocean View Hotel in January/February 2007, and that the deposit be paid to confirm the booking.				
Moved	Frances	Seconded	Kate	Passed	Unanimously

Action: **All:** to consider putting themselves forward to Chris to help with the organisation of this.

Trip to the Holy Land

Chris drew everyone's attention to his plan to lead a visit to Egypt, Sinai and the Holy Land in November 2007. The full visit would be two weeks with the option for people to join just for the second week (the part in the Holy Land.) At least 10 people would be needed to make the trip viable.

8. Didcot western development and its implications for Harwell Church

Chris led a discussion on the impact of the western development of Didcot, which he reported would bring 3,300 houses and around ten thousand people into the development which was expected to start in two year's time and include three new primary schools, three community centres and a secondary school. This area was currently in two parishes: Harwell and Didcot (All Saints'). Chris also pointed out that at the same time Chilton was planned to double in size. The Archdeacon had called a meeting which Chris attended to consider the issues raised.

Chris opened the discussion by suggesting that there could be a wide range of responses: the church in Harwell could work towards 'church planting' or lobbying for church schools or it could argue for the boundaries to be re-drawn to take this area out of the parish.

Among the opinions aired were the following points:

- Harwell residents generally had a perception of themselves as separate from Didcot and it would be more natural for the development to associate itself with Didcot. However the existing homes at that end of the parish were used to looking to the church in Harwell as their spiritual home.
- Irrespective of where boundaries were, it was thought that there would be likely to be some residents of the new development who would want to worship in Harwell. This could put pressure on car parking. It was possible that the car park that was planned for the new development in the Lay's barns would provide a car park that could be used by the Church at the week-end, though it was some distance from the Church.
- In allocating resources for supporting evangelism in 'new housing developments', it would be more familiar and natural for Harwell to devote resources to supporting Chilton than it would be to work in part of Didcot.

No specific policies or actions arose from this discussion.

9. Church web-site

Kate briefed the meeting on the work being undertaken to update the church website by Naomi, David and herself. The web-site will provide a 'home page' for both Harwell and Chilton, but will link to separate sites for each parish. Kate reported that e-mail addresses for contacting key people in the church would be set up through the office using generic 'functional' descriptions (such as 'orchestra@harwellChurch.fsnet.co.uk') and that Naomi would forward incoming mail to personal mail accounts for the correct people. Kate asked whether the PCC would like to have their names on the web site. It was decided that protect the privacy of the PCC it was better not to do so.

10. Future dates

3 rd April 2006	Childrens' activity morning
4 th April 2006	Annual General Meeting
7 th May 2006	Youth service at 18:15
10 th to 14 th April (Holy week)	Series of presentations on the Passsion. Monday: Passion of Christ in Art (C). Tuesday: Passion of Christ in Music (H) and Wednesday: Passion of Christ in Quiet
14 th April	Event for Children to coincide with the Good Friday service.
11 th May 2006	Bishop Stephen's visit. (N.b. The proposed evening meeting has been cancelled.)
23 rd May 2006	Archdeacon's visit and evening meal (obligatory for church wardens but

	open to Synod members by application via a form available from Ruth.)
28 th May 2006 (Feast weekend)	Songs of praise
29 th May 2006	Helping with the pig roast at the Feast
10 th June	Childrens' activity morning in Chilton
25 th June 2006	Bring and share lunch at Chilton Village Hall
2 nd July 2006	Rob's ordination at Wells Cathedral

11. Other Business

- a) **Lead on the tower roof:** Although there was no buildings report for this PCC, Tony Hughes sent an e-mail to the secretary to alert the PCC to a problem with the tower roof. He writes:
- One of the items on our longer term list of renovations is to replace the lead on the tower roof. Unfortunately the recent rains exposed some leaks into the bell chamber which on inspection came from cracks in the old lead (some emanating from where graffiti mongers of old have cut into the lead). These cracks have been temporarily sealed, but it is clear that replacement of the lead is more urgent than we (and the church architect in the quinquennial inspection) thought. We are looking into the implications, but I am afraid that it will be complicated and expensive.*
- This report was noted by the meeting.
- b) **Easter family communion:** The 11:00 Easter service will be a 'family communion' intended to be welcoming to all ages. To be in keeping with this Jean asked whether the PCC would support her in not wearing robes for the service, and this was agreed to. To reduce the time it takes to administer communion it was proposed that there should be two stations for communion and that this would be taken standing. This was agreed to.
- c) **Pam Rolls:** Chris reported that that Pam Rolls would be seeing the Berkshire DDO to test her vocation to the Ordained Local Ministry.
- d) **Andrew Thomas:** Marilyn reported that Andrew was exploring ordination further. Having had a meeting with the bishop he now has a selection conference (Bishops' Advisory Panel) on the 8th and 10th of May.
- e) **Deanery Synod:** Clive S reported on the last meeting of the Deanery Synod. This had been a very positive meeting identifying the important role the Deanery could play as distinct from the local parishes.
- f) **Church hall cleaning:** Wendy reported that she had taken over the Church hall cleaning on a voluntary basis. The meeting expressed their thanks to Wendy for taking this on.
- g) **Marilyn's last PCC:** Chris noted that this was the last Harwell PCC that Marilyn would attend and thanked her for her years of service in this role – thanks which were echoed by all.

12. Close

The meeting closed with prayer at 9:45 pm.

13. Next Meeting

Tuesday 9th May at 7.45 pm in the Church Extension.

..... Chris Stott, chairman

..... Martin Speed, secretary

PAPERS

- PCC05M7 Minutes of previous meeting
- PCCP-M8-01 Audited accounts for 2005
- PCCP-M8-02 Annual report for 2005/6
- PCCP-M8-03 Memo to all PCC members re: Church Weekend
- PCCP-M8-04 Expenses and Income against expenditure for 2006 to date