

**Minutes of a meeting of Harwell PCC  
held on Tuesday 9 September 2003 in Harwell Church Extension**

**Present**

Chris Stott (chair)	Allan Macarthur	Frances Taylor
Jean Barton	Nancy Preston	Marilyn Thomas
Elizabeth Gill	Tim Roberts	Rob Thomas
Georgina Greer	Jim Sinclair (secretary)	Jean Twigger
Clive House	Wendy Sinclair	Tony Ullmer
Tony Hughes	Ruth Slatter	

**1. Opening**

Chris opened the meeting with a reading from Romans 12, referring especially to the gift of leadership. This was followed by prayer. Birthday wishes were expressed to Tony H.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Clive Silver and Steve Tunstall sent their apologies.

**3. Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting on 8 July were signed as a correct record, subject to the following minor corrections:

Item 4(a): 'delivery of these' to read 'delivery of the new keys'.

Item 4(f): correct spelling of the name Jane Woolley.

**4. Matters arising**

- a) Replacement Church Hall locks: delivery of the new keys is now expected within the next week.
- b) New red altar frontals: Wendy reported that this has now been delivered. Some spare fabric from both the green and the red is available, and Wendy would use this to make matching lectern falls, a communion burse and veil for each colour (if sufficient fabric).
- c) Christian Aid representative: Jean B reported that the Wednesday Morning group was willing to do the work of organising the annual collection, under Jean's oversight.
- d) Projector screen mount: investigation of best arrangement still pending.
- le e) Heater replacement: Tony H said that this was in hand, but the work (by Dark and Taylor) was not yet done.
- f) Fun Day: Marilyn reported that this had been a wonderful success. Forty-eight children attended, many from non-Church backgrounds. Great teamwork had resulted from the

use of many leaders' various gifts. Chris expressed many thanks to Marilyn for organising this event.

- g) Picnic: there had been good attendance, though not many children.

## 5. Finance

Elizabeth distributed the monthly statement as usual. The finances were on an 'even keel', roughly proportional to the budget for the time of year. The tax refund for declared Gift Aid donations and covenants was of a good size, and extraordinary donations were up.

The subject was raised of having an identifiable budget for the Visiting Team. Members of the Team do incur expenses, e.g. by taking people to hospital or day-centre. These expenses are currently not claimed, and in all likelihood will not be in the future, even if a budget fund is created. Most, however, felt that (as with expenditure on children's work), the PCC should create a framework for funding this expenditure, and have a policy of meeting it, so that no-one would feel in any way pressured to fund such work out of their own pocket. A budget of £100 was **agreed** for the current year, with the expectation that a larger sum should be set aside in a full year.

## 6. Report on Willow Creek Conference

Chris reported that this 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-day conference had been very stimulating and enjoyable. He had attended in company with a group of 17, who travelled and ate together, creating some personal touch in a gathering of thousands from around the world. Some Chicago sight-seeing, and optional pre-conference seminars, were included. There was a mix of speakers, some church leaders, and some people from the world of business.

Chris distributed sheets originating from Willow Creek Community Church, highlighting especially the identified key elements of their approach:

- Clarity of vision
- Passion to see God at work
- A culture of service
- Worship etc. that is culturally relevant
- A strategic approach to evangelism and discipleship
- Importance placed on small groups

To this, Chris added

- Emphasis on strong leadership

## 7. Report on Small Groups

Jean B asked the PCC to consider whether these should be promoted with renewed strength and passion.

Those who attend small groups do so to learn, to grow, to find friendship, pastoral care, encouragement for their life and in their Christian service. They can contribute personally, and get this input at a convenient time of the week.

Those who choose not to attend such groups may do so for a variety of reasons: no group at a convenient time, too many other commitments, family or work pressure, dislike of small-group situations, previous bad experience, a preference for quiet reflection, or simply from other things taking a higher priority.

Often in Lent there is a special campaign to encourage people to attend a group for a short trial period. Jean proposed having a similar campaign in November. This was **agreed**.

## 8. Worship Services

Jean B distributed samples of the revised service sheets, in different layouts. It was confirmed that the printing should be on card, using a format with an A4 sheet folded in three, with black printing.

It was reported that a small number of people have expressed their dislike of the current practice of sharing the peace at Holy Communion services. No decision on this was sought or made.

## 9. Buildings Committee Report

Tony H spoke to his pre-distributed paper, Review of the Audit on Access for People with Disabilities. The audit was our response to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, under which service organisations were obliged to make improvements to access in stages. From 2004, we should be taking reasonable steps to remove or alter physical barriers, rather than simply working to overcome any such barriers.

The distributed paper presented a table of ideas that had been considered for action after the audit in 2000. The picture presented was of generally satisfactory progress, with most of the actions having been done, being in progress, or under a 'watching brief'.

The report brought forward for consideration three possibilities for further action, in the light of the requirement to move to removing barriers:

- a) should a wheelchair be available for occasional use, e.g. for use when someone is taken ill?
- b) should kneelers be removed from some pews, to help those for whom they present an obstacle to taking their place?
- c) should the provision of a handrail, to help in mounting the steps to the platform, be considered yet again?

After discussion, the following **decisions** were agreed:

- a) a suitable wheelchair should be sought and purchased, looking for a second-hand one if available, and giving preference to one that could be compactly stored;
- b) sidesmen should be asked to exercise sensitivity to need, and be ready to remove kneelers when necessary, rather than establishing one or more particular pews as permanently having no kneelers;
- c) the Buildings Committee is asked to investigate in detail possibilities for provision of a permanent handrail to the platform;
- d) with regard to the incomplete provision of carpet-material seat runners on pews, work should proceed to add similar runners to pews in the side aisles.

## 10. PCC Members' Length of Service

Jim distributed a table showing how long each current member of the PCC had served under their current basis of membership (ordinary elected, ex officio as Deanery Synod representative, ex officio as Warden, coopted). Three are in their 4th year as elected members, four are in their

5th or greater year as elected members, one Deanery Synod representative is in his 4th year, and one Warden is in his 4th year.

Jim pointed out that this situation could lead to a significant turn-over of PCC membership in the next year or two, if the present informal policy of limiting continuous terms of service to 5 years were adhered to. Furthermore, some of those whose standard terms were coming to an end are exercising important roles.

Detailed discussion was deferred to the next meeting, with a view to deciding then on any modification to the present policy, and on any action to help ensure adequate succession.

### 11. Other Business

Chris had received a request through Kath Luker for the National Society of Genealogists and the County Family History Society to have access to records held in the Church and to have permission to photograph Harwell Church records held in the Berkshire archive. It was **agreed** that access to local records would be permitted, with the proviso that reading and photographing be done on the premises. It was **agreed** that permission be granted to photograph records held in the archives.

Jean B reported that she had been accepted to do Master of Theology studies for the University of Wales, on the subject of Preaching.

Forthcoming dates were notified:

- a) Harwell School assembly in Church Friday 3 October;
- b) Harvest Festival 5 October;
- c) Messiah Concert by Steventon Choral Society 11 October;
- d) Harwell Young Singers' concert for Children In Need 2<sup>0</sup>/<sub>9</sub> November;
- e) Discussion on Issues of Human Sexuality 16 October in Chilton Church.

### 12. Close

The meeting closed with prayer at 10.10 pm.

### Next Meeting

Tuesday 11 November 2003 at 7.45 pm in the Church Extension

..... Chris Stott, chairman

..... Jim Sinclair, secretary