



The Astwell Benefice

*St Mary Magdalene Helmdon with Stuchbury & St Lawrence Radstone
St James the Great Syresham,
St John the Evangelist Whitfield,
St Mary and St Peter Lois Weedon & Weston with Plumpton
St Mary the Virgin Wappenham*
www.astwellparishes.org.uk



Minutes of the BPCC MEETING Monday 10th July 2023,

Present: Sheena Warren, Bill Elkington, Alice Palmer, Judith Elkington, Cliff Netten, Paul Stothard, Penny Bonner, Peter Oliver, Penny Bonner, Claire Bonner, Sue Timmis
Apologies: Wiggy Smith, Sarah Rudkin

The meeting opened with Prayer

1. **Approval of minutes of previous BPCC meeting, 17th April 2023 (attached):**
These were approved unanimously.
2. **Matters arising**
Improved communications: If someone is on a service rota and can't attend a service they should please let the rota organiser know or organise a replacement.
PS will set up a Whatsapp group to let people know if a service has been moved or cancelled.
Action PS
3. **Brief updates by Committee Chairs and Churchwardens/representatives:**
 - **Finance** (see attached report) We have paid 45% of our Parish Share. We need to check that our church rooves are covered using insurance approved smart water.
Action All 'Wardens' as necessary
 - **Worship:** The worship committee have met and reviewed the last quarters services, thanks to Sarah for all the organising. We should send thank you gifts to the retired clergy around Christmas. They discussed forward planning up to Christmas using similar schedules to the services in 2022. Harvest Festivals have been booked in. Someone was concerned about the spread of services. PS has done some analysis:

Breakdown of main Sunday Services for May-July (excluding Benefice Services)					
	Helmdon	Lois	Syresham	Wappenham	Whitfield
PRS – HC ext	3		1	1	2
PRS MW					3
Lay (incl WS)	3	3	7	7	
Ordained(HC)	3	3	3	3	1
Total	11	6	11	11	6
<i>Total excl Lay</i>	6	3	4	4	6

- We discussed Whitfield's problems. It was decided that we continue to resource two services per month in Whitfield but to cancel if there is likely to be no-one around. The Patronal Festival worked well. We may need to reconsider the winter with the church being so cold.
- **Social and Fundraising:** (see attached report) Fundraising has been very positive. They are planning to do the Barn Dance again. Please could we check for clashes in dates. Please could everyone use the benefice calendar checking it before planning and asking SR or AP to add events to the calendar.

Action All

- **Pastoral Care** There has been another tea party in Whitfield. We need to let WS know of anyone bereaved in the villages.
- **Safeguarding** JE is doing level 2 training. AP to send JE contact details for S Connery.

Action AP

- **Hope Centre** is still running coordinated by Andrew North.
- **Helmdon** (see attached notes): An excellent fete result of around £2,400. The Visual System needs re-checking as the screen is still not working. The sound system itself is great.
- **Lois Weedon**: Not present. Fundraising is greatly improved due to coffee mornings. BE will offer to attend the next church council meeting to support the team.

Action BE

- **Syresham** (see attached notes): The Coronation service was a success, next invitation service will be Harvest. Building works for the QI standard items have started, these will be covered by money drawn down from our trust fund. Fundraising for the Parish Share has begun, the Note-Ability concert raised ~£250, there will be a Fete on September 9th. They await a detailed specification for the steeple works, fundraising for that will be separate.
- **Wappenham** (See attached notes) There were a couple of questions from the Council to the BPCC:
 - o Rational of paying the full parish share during the interregnum. We discussed what the diocese is doing: paying for services, courses, school support and looking after the Rectory. We are also part of the Diocese and should therefore follow the rules set. We have not paid our full share for over five years. We might have more to say on this if the interregnum goes on for a long time.
 - o Situation with regard to applicants for a new Rector. We discussed the problem of general lack of applicants in rural areas. Despite this we should not just accept the first person who applies.
- **Whitfield** (see attached notes) Worship was discussed above.

4. **Recruitment of the new Rector** We are interviewing on the 18th of August in Wappenham. BE had heard good reports of the applicant. Itinerary 9am start in Helmdon and then round the villages as planned previously. PS will chauffeur him around. BE will send the schedule around. Lunch will be a finger buffet, each parish to contribute: Sheena open sandwiches for 10 and a cake. AP soft drink. Others to say what they would like to bring – sandwiches/crisps/sausage rolls/cake etc. We are catering for around 16 people. BE will write to Cheryl to find out about questions for the interview. If the post was offered and accepted the applicant would need up to 4 months notice and settling in period before taking up the post.

Action BE & all

5. **Any Other Business**

For the Calendar

29th July Wappenham Dog Show with bacon sandwiches

9th September Wappenham Village Fete.

Next Deanery Synod in the autumn is at Helmdon – bring and share supper after the communion service.

Deanery Synod are looking for a secretary - it's not an onerous task involving sending out notices and payment reminders.

Please send pictures of events to AP for Facebook.

6. **Date for next BPCC Meeting:** 9th October 2023, 7.15pm at Wappenham Village Hall

The Grace was said and the meeting ended.