



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 Benefice PCC MEETING held on Monday 29th January 2024

Present: BE (Chair), WS, ST, CB, SR, CN, AP, HW, FH, PO, PB

HW opened the meeting with a prayer.

1. **Apologies:** JE, SW and PS (it was agreed that Paul Stothard could attend in future as an ex-Officio member if he desired)
2. **Approval of minutes of previous BPCC meeting,** 9th October 2023 - the minutes were approved. AP has asked the Diocese for a formal acknowledgement of the legal status of the Benefice for insurance purposes, but no reply received yet. BE said he had contacted the Archdeacon and asked for recognition of our new status, and for a visit from the Bishop.
3. **Reports by Committee Chairs (all reports attached):**
 - a. **Finance** (see AP's report) – we are still not paying our full Parish Share and HW said we should be aiming to do so, as this would show the success of the 'United Benefice'. AP said that the Finance Comm were going to start a campaign to increase 'Regular Giving'. FH remarked that many people were happy to give for fabric purposes, but not for ministry.
 - b. **Worship** (HW – see AP's highlights of the Benefice Worship mtg) – **HW** to ask PS if he could take HC by ex (x2) on Easter Sunday (*PS has replied that he is unavailable*).
SR to ask John Roberts if he could do HC at Syresham on Easter Sunday (*done – JR available*)
HW to speak to Will Adams, who has asked not to do any more services, as he is finding them more difficult now.
SR to publicise the Lent Course on the PN and website (at Syresham Chapel Schoolroom from Wed 21st Feb, 7pm, and Helmdon Reading Room from Mon 19th Feb –morning (time tbc)
BE was concerned about Stations of the Cross in Holy Week at Helmdon, but agreed to set everything up earlier this year to allow time for everyone to visit.
 - c. **Social & Fundraising** (see SW's report) – BE said we should thank Sheena and her committee for their hard work and enthusiasm in raising a lot of money in the last year. AP reminded everyone to check for clashes on dates of social events in the Benefice, eg, the Barn Dance. Most events are publicised on the Benefice website calendar.
 - d. **Pastoral Care** (see WS's report) – WS said that the Committee is very short-staffed and asked BPCC members to think of anyone who could join. AP said that it was not necessary for new recruits to attend meetings, and FH reminded us that there was an 'informal' help system in most villages, even for non church-goers. WS said that there were approx. 40/50 people on the Pastoral Care 'books'.
 - e. **Safeguarding** (No report from JE) – BE said that the Benefice was now fully covered, JE had completed her training and that there were no safeguarding actions required at the moment.
 - f. **Hope Centre** (SR read out AN's report). BE said that the Helmdon 'Larder' was finishing, due to falling donations from supermarkets.

4. **Astwell Benefice Church Council Reports:**
- a. Helmdon & Radstone (see CN's report) - **CN** commented that now that we have a Rector in post, Helmdon could return to planning a reordering of the church vestry area.
 - b. Lois Weedon (see FH's report) – **FH** thanked HW for his work over Christmas and his contribution to the Benefice so far. He requested that HW become Chair of LW's 'Poor's Charity'.
 - c. Syresham (see AP's report) – Time to Pray is moving to 10am on Thurs with immediate effect.
 - d. Wappenham (see PO's report) – **PO** said that Diane Watts had died recently. He also asked which documents were required for completion for the APCM – **SR** to circulate a timetable etc asap
 - e. Whitfield (see CB's report) – AP asked if **CB & ST** could approve Whitfield's annual accounts asap.
5. **Any Other Business:**
- HW asked people if they would like to attend the installation of Bishop Debbie at Peterborough, 3pm on Sunday 3rd March. HW and PS are already invited, and 2 reps from each parish may also go. **All** to let HW know asap, **application deadline is 12th Feb.**
 - HW said that he had offered an Easter Vigil to Plumpton on Saturday 30th March (Easter Eve). This has been accepted, so that there is now no clash with the LW Easter Sunday service.
 - BE said that he had discovered that Parish Councils now have an obligation to include a precept for church fabric repairs in their budgets. **BE** will circulate info to BPCC.
6. **Dates of 2024 APCM and 2024 BPCC Meetings:**
- 2024 APCM date set for Monday 20th May, 7pm at Helmdon Reading Room (**CN to book – done**)
SR to circulate a timetable for actions leading up to the APCM asap.
 - 2024 BPCC dates set for:
 - Mon 29th April 2024 (for final approval of APCM report)
 - Mon 1st July 2024
 - Mon 7th October 2024
 - Mon 20th January 2025All to be held at 7.15pm at Wappenham Village Hall (**SW** to book hall)
7. **The Grace** was said and the meeting ended.