**The Astwell Benefice**

*Helmdon with Stuchbury and Radstone, and Syresham with Whitfield,Lois Weedon with Weston and Plumpton and Wappenham*

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Syresham Church Council – AGENDA 26/6/23 2pm

**Present:** Alice Palmer, Kathleen Brunning, Margaret Miller, Brenda Faragher, Sallie Connery

**Apologies** : David Wright

**Minutes 23/3/23**

**Matters Arising**

Churchyard

The Friends have now paid for the step to the cemetery. The Parish Council paid for half of the work on the Yew Trees, Robert Swinford is continuing to cut back the Laurels at the side of the churchyard with no charge – many thanks to him. We have had to agree to take on responsibility for the new churchyard as no written evidence of the Parish Council taking responsibility could be found. We could apply for the closed churchyard to be handed back to the council – but it would have to be in good order to do that.

Brian Miller has purchased lime filler to work on the worst parts of the churchyard wall. AP has spoken to Rob Powell about the sycamore tree growing out of the wall by the Priory. We have agreed to put work on removing it on hold for a year. The quote to remove it was £840.

The mower has agreed to leave some parts of the churchyard mown only once a year. There is some overtaking of meadowsweet that needs to be removed. Sally Earl-Davis has agreed to look at plants to enhance the wild areas possibly along with her neighbour and Sheila North. The Friends have agreed to set aside £300 to cover the cost of any plants.

Architect

Adrian Ringrose has agreed to be our architect. He has had a hospital procedure but is starting work on the specification for the roof this week. We will then need a faculty and firm quotations before we can proceed with fundraising.

Trustees report - Brenda supplied this to the Trustees.

A frame poster & prayer.

The Aframe with welcome notice and prayer as you leave church are now in place.

**Chair’s correspondence & notes**

**Steeple update** – The plans are noted above. We now have over £6000 in the Steeple fund and the Friends have just agreed to set aside £2000 this year and £2000 next year for the fund.

*CWP* We now have a good group of folk helping with the churchyard. We have tackled many of the jobs in the Quinquennial report and continue with wood and wall preservation alongside enhancing the wild areas in the churchyard. We are trying to keep the cremated remains are tidy. The lawn mower has been serviced – we just need to find somewhere to store it. A sycamore has been removed from the south wall and another is to be taken out from further down. AP is still negotiating storage for the tables. We are very grateful to the Billinghams for all the work they have done on the windows – inside and out.

Worship It has been good to welcome some different folk to worship especially Lisa and Nicola joining the rota easing some of the pressure. We have a family who want their three children baptised in September. The family who were in church on Sunday may start coming more often and may join Messy Church.

Building works Simon Elbrow and co should start work on the Quinquennial tasks next week – they estimate it will take 6 weeks. They have already been out to look at the work and to look at the leak above the sound system that caused consternation last week. AP has asked Ian Duffield to fix the light in the vestry and the emergency exit light in the ball tower.

**Financial Report – how are we doing**

BF reported that we have a balance in the ban of £31,782.98. Monies have been received from the CCLA via Brian Miller, this is from the superfluous accounts the trust fund are closing and will be added to the steeple fund. We have also received an anonymous donation of £500 for the steeple fund.

All invoices are paid to date. We have paid £4,100 to the Benefice for our Parish Share so far. Utility costs are down.

Preparations are being made for an Autumn Fair and then the Christmas bazaar. AP reported that Sue Palmer had raised £10 on her Scarecrow Stall.

Monies have been spent on the churchyard, these are covered by the Trust contribution and a donation from the Friends.

We agreed to send another £1000 to our Parish Share taking us to 30%. AP will add a Steeple column to the accounts spreadsheet.

**Action BF AP**

**Fund Raising**

Our Note-ability concert is this Saturday. The Millers have bought wine and will take payment from the donations on the day. AP and BF will provide soft drinks. AP will also bring nibbles and Jane Thompson is making some nibbles too. Toby Lamley is taking the money. We agreed to arrive early to help set up the nibbles and drinks.

We agree to move the fete date to September 9th, the venue is still to be finally decided. KB agreed to do the raffle stall on the day.

**Trust Report – accounts for Friends & Trustees**

AP reported that the Trustees of the Madge and Maud Payne funds are looking again at the management of the funds. Currently Fortitude manage our investments via two other investment managers in particular Quilter for the larger fund. This means we have to pay costs for all three firms. The Trustees are considering investing directly with Quilter, meaning we no longer need Fortitude. The council members agreed that they would accept the Trustees decision on this.

**Actions Trustees to report back**

SC reported that the Hammond Trust bank account is being moved to Lloyds from Barclays. BF reported that she had had further trouble with Barclays. She has been assured that it won’t happen again. We encouraged her to switch banks if she has any further problems.

**Upcoming Worship**

We are going to try and run a Messy Church July 15th 11am. KB will check that she is able to help. Seven families, including the family who visited last Sunday, have been invited but some are busy.

We agreed that our Patronal Festival on July 23rd at 11am will be a songs of praise followed by drinks and nibbles. AP is to ask Lisa to supply them. AP invited everyone to choose hymns, Brenda suggested 121.

**Action AP all**

AP invited people to suggest topics for Praise & Prayer services in the future.

We agreed to hold our Harvest Festival at 5pm on September 24th followed by slow cook supper. KB will provide baked potatoes.

**Action All**

**Pastoral Care Needs**

We went through a list of folk needing Pastoral Care and discussed who might be invited to the next Tea Party. AP passed the list to KB.

SC also reminded us that the Hammond Trust has money for any people we thought had need of help or a plant.

**School**

AP made cakes during SATs week. SC suggested that the Hammond Fund could supply cakes this term. She will ask Shirley Turnham to deliver some during sports week.

**Action SC**

**Safeguarding**

KB has completed her safeguarding DBF. SC and DW to do.

**Action SC & DW**

**AOB**

**Date of next meeting October 2nd 2pm @ Vine Cottage.**