

ST MARY'S CHURCH, DALMAHOY
MINUTES OF VESTRY MEETING 8TH MAY 2018

Attendance:

Revd Christine Downey
Gavin Craig
Geoff Angell
Caroline Gunn
Carole MacBride
Ted Tracey-Bower
Rona Finlayson
Rosie Mann
Alan Coupe

Apologies:

Lord Morton
Douglas Walker
Jane Russell

Opening prayer and welcome:

Christine welcomed all to the meeting, and instead of a prayer, read out a lengthy letter from a visitor from U.S A. (Kenneth) who attended a service over Easter. He mentioned in glowing terms how much he enjoyed the service, the atmosphere, and the welcome received. This was very good to hear, and was very encouraging for us all for the future. The letter will be displayed on the notice board.

Minutes of last meeting – April 9th 2018:

Minutes have not been provided by the retiring secretary, and Christine will contact her to ascertain the position. Hopefully, they will be available shortly, and we will approve at next month's meeting. If not, we shall put together a summary with salient points.

Financial Matters:

Gavin produced an update on the position of accounts as at 30 April 2018. This showed a balance in the general account of £47,246 after adjustment for April stipend and admin salary. Within this figure, the following items were ring fenced for specific purpose – Organ Fund £1,390. Rector's discretionary fund £1,112, Legacy Fund £4,843.

Total income for the financial year is £40,577, whilst expenditure was £37,755(including the above adjustment). However, the HMRC refund is included in that figure, so the picture is not as rosy as it may appear. Additionally, April was an unusually good month for giving, with Easter etc, and in reality there will be a shortfall, as Geoff has previously highlighted in figures presented at the last meeting. Notwithstanding the apparent healthy cash balances, we must not allow monthly shortfalls to continue, and the situation must be addressed with urgency. It was agreed that this matter should be addressed with some urgency at the forthcoming Vestry Away-Day.

At Carole's request, we asked Gavin to produce approximate figures for necessary

monthly outgoings to present to the congregation. However, notwithstanding this, we should look with all urgency to find a positive longer term outlook re giving.

Toilet twinning

This was raised last time in respect of the provision of hygiene facilities in the third world under the auspices of a specific charity. A donation of 6 x £60 – ie £360 out of our Charitable giving budget, which was agreed at £4,000 - ie 10% approx. of total giving.

Business Arising:

Organ

Some concern has arisen relating to the condition of the organ, especially bearing in mind the very expensive refurbishment undertaken some 9 years ago. We arranged for the contractors, Henry Willis, to inspect matters. The problem has arisen re bent trumpets, and these have now been removed and are being fixed at the factory – this will take a few weeks. Contractors will try to make things more stable, but the issue may recur in about 10 years. Meantime, we can still use the organ with little noticeable difference to the casual listener. Fortunately the cost will not be unduly excessive, and will be covered from the Organ Fund.

Hall Committee Report:

Rona reported that a Hall Committee has been formed comprising Rona, Mandy, Carole, Jane Russell, Rosemary, Ella, Rosie, Olive, John Douglas, and Ben Bright. In particular thanks to John Douglas for getting involved (use of trailer etc). Thanks to Rona for getting this up and going.

1. Re – Car parking – Cottage residents will be notified prior to events. Current 'Residents Parking' notices to be put out by stewards prior to services. We are suggesting that new signs could be produced, perhaps one to go on each resident's fence. Carole will speak to Tommy. Funding up to £400 agreed via Charitable Giving, as this would go via Tommy to Grassmarket Project.
2. Vermin Control / card stand / notice board – likely cost £100 agreed. Alan mentioned that the use of mint (herb) is a deterrent re vermin, who hate it !
3. Schools Choir Concert – Via Ella, we are anxious to repeat this event which helps us to engage with the community, and young people. However, schools have a limited budget re transport etc, and we would like to cover those costs to ensure participation. Suggested that this could be covered to the extent of £500 by specific fund raising. A very worthwhile event.
4. The question of people working in church alone was raised. This should be avoided where possible, but probably not practical in many cases. Suggested that those people should have a speed dial on their phones for emergency.
5. Many other matters have been discussed by committee, not least the need to decorate and re-paint the hall. We have a responsibility to Douglas Trustees in that respect.

Wardens Report:

Alan expressed concern at the number of people needed to read / do intercessions / chalice / gospel at each service. He was anxious that we should not have to ask

individuals to undertake these tasks too often. Christine offered to produce an intercessions template which could simply be read out – this should make folk less reticent to do this. Readings could be carried out from pews with the aid of mobile microphone, which would help those who have difficulty going to the lectern. Maybe we could revert to teams to formalise this somewhat.

VP Co-ordinator Report / General Data Protection Regulation

Caroline mentioned that there should be a report at each Vestry meeting. She has attended a course regarding an audit of safeguarding at the behest of the diocese. This involves risk assessments / notice board and other information. Caroline already has such information on the hall notice board. Additionally, for congregational visitors there should be a safeguarding pamphlet, which is available in the hall.

In respect of GDPR, Christine advised that we have already carried out most of the work, and that she will liaise with Paula to have the necessary confirmatory emails sent out. The deadline for the new regulations is 25th May.

Rector's Report:

Outreach events –

1. Canada Day – 1st July – A BBQ is to be held at the rectory on that day to which all are invited. Christine will also invite others from outwith St Mary's with local interest and indeed other churches to ensure that we get our message across to as many people as possible. Details to follow, but fingers crossed for the weather.
2. Candle making in August
3. St Scruffs dog event – date to be arranged
4. Choir festival – See above.
5. Vestry away-day – date set for either 9th or 23rd June. Christine will email people for preferred date.

Vestry Secretary:

There have been no volunteers for this task (which should not now be too onerous), so we shall cast around for further offers. For this month only, Alan has agreed to do minutes.

Rector's Holiday:

Christine will be on holiday 4th to 13th July. She has arranged for Tim Tunley (Mission to Seafarers), who is well known to us to cover on Sunday 8th July.

Further Business:

1. We have purchased a new key box for the hall, which will be affixed at the main entry. This will be controlled by a code which, when installed, will be divulged to any relevant parties, and will avoid the need for key entry. Big improvement.
2. Carole reported that a relatively recent grave in the churchyard is a mess, and badly needs tidying up. It is unclear whether this is the responsibility of Greaves of West Calder or West Lothian Council, who would have actually dug the grave. Paula has subsequently phoned Greaves, and awaits a call back.
3. Rosie's poppies – Rosie Mann has proposed that, as part of WW1 centenary, an initiative to make knitted poppies of differing colours would be an attractive venture, with the final products to adorn the pulpit / lectern for a short period. She feels

others may be keen to participate, and she is happy to organise. Happy to give the go-ahead.

4. Alan mentioned the long running saga of mice / rats at the rectory which dates back well into Deryck's time. We have over the past several months engaged Harry Lawrie, a local pest control man to install bait – this has completely controlled matters over the winter months, when the beasties are most active indoors, and there has not been an issue. As we believe they are likely to spend most of their time outdoors in the summer months, we wondered if it is appropriate to dispense with the monthly pest control at this time, thereby saving money. Alan will make enquiries and report back. Planting of mint may help ?
5. Christine mentioned that she has been making enquiries about insulation and draught proofing at the rectory. She said that some grant funding should be available, so that any cost to the church should not be great.
6. Redemptionists – We have for some time been receiving the Link leaflet which is placed on all the pews for people to see. In recent times, we have (free of charge) received weekly copies of readings, which are superfluous bearing in mind our own service sheets. Paula is to cancel these copies, whilst retaining the Link sheets.

Next meeting – Monday 4th June – 7.30 pm in hall