

St. Mary's Church, Dalmahoy

Minutes of the Vestry Meeting 13th November 2023

1. Attendees:

Rev. Christine Downey

Pippa Crichton

Lord Morton

Denis King (Zoom)

Steve Haigh

Anne Clapham (Zoom)

2. Apologies for Absence:

Wilma Brown

Mandy Smart

Margaret King

John O'Connor

3. Opening Prayer and Welcome

Christine said a prayer and welcomed the attendees to the meeting.

4. Minutes of 2nd October Meeting

There was no errors or omissions noted from the minutes.

The minutes were thereafter approved by the meeting and will now be filed and displayed as normal.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

- **Fire Training Update:** New fire safety signs have been put up in both the church and the hall. Alan also intends to say a few words at the AGM.
- **AGM reports:** All of the AGM reports have been received and the completed report has been sent out to the congregation.
- **Garden / Grounds maintenance:** Christine spoke with the hotel groundskeepers and they have agreed to cutting the grass around the church and cemetery and to be called upon for any other maintenance needed, free of charge.
- **Charlie Spurway Tree Quote:** Charlie is currently very busy with Christmas trees so he will be approached in the New Year regarding the tree works.
- **Bell rope:** Christine has found a line of enquiry. It was suggested to her to contact the Bell Ringers of Scotland as this is an issue they will have experience in so will hopefully be able to offer a suggestion.

- **Water Jug at rear of church:** This has not been sorted yet, mainly due to lack of space. There is a jug ready to use so it will be organised.
- **Sponsorship Items:** There has not been much response to this idea yet. Christine thought perhaps suggesting people purchase items as a Christmas present for St Mary's may be a good idea.

The question was asked, how people go about donating towards the items they wish to sponsor. Christine explained that they need to complete 3 steps:

1 - Complete a bank transfer for the amount suggested. Reference: Sponsor. If you need bank details, please email Pippa or you can write a cheque to St Mary's Church Dalmahoy.

2 - Email Pippa / Christine to let them know, what item you are sponsoring, how much you have transferred / written a cheque for and if you would like your purchased acknowledged in the bulletin.

3 - Let Christine / Pippa know if the donation is gift aid-able.

- **Legacy Suggestions:** Further to previous discussions, Steve thought of a suggestion (from an eco rep point of view) of what money could go towards should money be left to the church in the future. The fluorescent lights in the hall will need to be replaced for more energy efficient lights.
- **Mar Thoma Rent increase:** Steve asked if there was any update to Mar Thoma being informed about the rent increasing. As yet the letter has only been drafted, a final copy has still to be sent. This will be progressed as soon as possible.

6. Other Matters from Christine

- The Hunters Moon concert was a great success, receiving lots of positive feedback and positive reviews on Facebook.
- More people attended the All-Souls service that expected, so next year we will be more ready for the numbers. Christine reached out to the local community and ask if they had any names they would like to be remembered, this seemed to be well received.
- Douglas Walker informed Christine that he really doesn't feel up to taking on the role of Treasurers Aid. Christine has approached Ollie from St. Mungo's to see if he had any suggestions of anyone that could help. This seems like it may be possible, Christine will continue to chat to Ollie with the hope of getting something sorted soon.
- Denis informed vestry that he has a very busy couple of weeks ahead so will be short of time to get things done. He also raised concerns about

Framework and not responding to his emails. He will monitor the situation and keep vestry updated.

7. Treasurer Report

Denis distributed his report which showed that the 31st October 2023 balance in the General Account was £45,813.12 (£ 47,676.07 previous month).

There is £2026.00 held in restricted funds or for other specific purposes, leaving **£43,787.00** in unrestricted funds (£1,829.50 previous month).

The St Mary's Trust Account stood at £935.12 (previous month £995.12).

St. Marys's Annual Income to date: £4,321

St Mary's Annual Expenditure to date: £6,184

- £200 Amazon voucher bought for Graeme MacBride
- £136 paid to TT Testing for PAT Testing.
- £700 received in funeral donations.
- £170 cheque to PDSA still to be cashed.
- Geoff has sent GA claim to HMRC, £3,380 should be received in Nov
- £60 to H Lawrie for Pest Control from St Mary's Trust Account.

9. Fabric Report

- **Proposed exterior repointing of church:** Carole is currently in the process of completing an online application to the FCC Action Fund for a grant to pay for the exterior repointing of the church. You can claim up to £40,000, Carole will be claiming for the full amount as that is what the work will cost. The application has to be completed by the first week of December and we should receive a decision around March. If we are successful, it is thought that the work would be completed in the summer time.
- Carole attended Vestry tonight to ask for permission from vestry and the Trustees to be considered as the lead on the application. Carole informed vestry that she has received 3 quotes for the work which she shared with vestry. It was decided that should we be successful with the grant; work would be carried out by Kevin Skey who St Mary's have used previously.
- All were in agreement that they are more than happy for Carole to make the application and to be the lead person.

10. Events Committee:

- Nothing as Margaret was unable to attend.

11. Lay Rep Report:

- Deferred to the AGM. Steve is unable to attend the AGM but has stated should anyone have any questions regarding his reports he would be happy for them to get in touch.

12. Eco – Rep Report:

- Steve informed vestry that a new version of the 2030 Net Zero action plan and tool kit were advertised at a recent webinar he attended. During the webinar they also mentioned that Heathack are running workshops. You need 6-8 persons from the church or associated with the church and 1 engineer. The workshops run for a total of 6 hours, split into 3x2-hour sessions. The sessions are very interactive and Steve feels that they sound good.

Vestry were very receptive to this idea and had some names in mind that may be interested. Christine thought that the hotel may have an engineer so this will be followed up. Steve will progress looking into this with a view of hopefully getting something organised.

- Christine mentioned that she recently spoke with Bethany who leads the Diocesan Environmental Group and she stated how pleased she was to see St Mary's taking an interest and progressing with what we can to become more Eco friendly.

13. AOB

- **Chalice Administration:** Christine took a poll and it was decided that most people would prefer to continue with the sanitary wipes.
- **Charitable Giving request:** Carole ask if a donation could be made to the Star of Wonder school, Kenya, to enable one student to continue in education for a year. To provide a uniform and a year of schooling for one child costs £280.00. Vestry were all in agreement that a donation could be made.
- **Vestry Meeting schedule:** Christine checked the constitution and it states that vestry should meet at least 4 times a year. Christine put forward a suggestion of meeting every 6 weeks instead of 4, to see if it may encourage others to join as its less of a commitment. It was agreed to trial this from January for 6 months. Pippa will send out the meeting dates to vestry.

- **Energy Prices:** Carole informed vestry that she has had a break through with reducing the cost of gas for the hall. She has been in contact with a broker who has managed to find a good rate through British Gas Lite. If this tariff is all agreed it should make a big difference.

Kiwi Cottage refurbishment update:

The main objective of tonight's meeting was to discuss the updates on the refurbishment of Kiwi Cottage.

Christine started by informing vestry of some amazing and exciting news. The Douglas Trust has offered a donation of £45,000 towards the refurbishment of the cottage. St Mary's has the £45,000 which was donated by Blackie so this means that things can now move forward.

Christine has received 4 quotes in total varying in different amounts from £58,000 - £144,000.

The quotes were all considered thoroughly. A couple of the lower quotes did not include VAT, and did not include finishings and decoration so that would be a considerable cost on top of the initial quote. The highest quote was dismissed straight away.

The decision was made to proceed with Done and Dusted. They quoted £85,000, which includes VAT (this will be confirmed in writing), and all finishings and decoration. The quote also includes a 10 percent buffer just in case. Done and Dusted will ensure that the costs do not go over the total quoted and in fact hope to come in lower.

Christine will monitor the money throughout the project and get regular updates as to where we are with funds and what is still left to do.

Planning permission will be needed so this will be the next step. But we are now otherwise good to go.

Once the cottage is completed and rented out. All profits will go to the church.

Date of Next Meeting:

The next vestry meeting will be held at **7.00pm on Monday 4th December 2023. This will be in person at the rectory or via zoom due to the darker evenings.**