

# ST BRIDE'S CHURCH, FLEET STREET, LONDON.

## Minutes of the meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

**Present:** *Venerable David Meara (Rector and Chairman); Emmanuel Adeniji; Gerald Bowey; Geoffrey Burgess; Eric Davies; Clive Hill-Archer (Deanery Synod representative); Beverly Leach (Treasurer); Rosemary Lewin (Deanery Synod representative); David Lowish; Lindsay Nicholson (Churchwarden); Janet Smith (Electoral Roll Officer); Terence Smith (Deanery Synod representative); Grace Stedman (Deanery Synod Representative); Mary Walker; Jerry Wright (Churchwarden).*

**Co-opted members:** *Claire Seaton (Music Secretary); John Smith (Architect).*

In the absence of the PCC Secretary Janet Smith agreed to take the Minutes.

### 1. **Opening prayers**

The Rector opened the meeting with Prayers.

### 2. **Apologies for absence:**

*Revd George Pitcher; Christopher Betterton; Helen Fraser; Janet Kitchen; Peter Silver (Churchwarden); David Smith; James Irving (Administrator); Robert Jones (Director of Music).*

### 3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2012.**

Accepted and signed as an accurate record.

### 4. **Matters arising not on the agenda**

Beverly felt that Christopher Betterton should be a co-opted member not an elected member of the PCC, as he is a paid member of the Church Staff. She felt that this was not allowed by the charity commission. Terence pointed out that the previous PCC had stated that they would prefer that the Secretary be an elected member not co-opted. Beverly agreed to seek clarification from the Auditors. With the exception of Terence it was agreed to Co-opt Christopher to the PCC to allow him to continue as Secretary.

### 5. **Mission Action Plan.**

The Mission Action plan 2012 – 2015 had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Rector pointed out that this plan should be about where we want to go and the goals over the next three years.

The meeting went through the Action plan, discussing at length various items within the Targets and Strategic Priorities.

The main points were:-

- The title of the document should be reconsidered to remove the reference to the media world,
- One deletion was accepted.
- Suggestions were made to change some of the wording.
- There was also a need to include working groups and timelines.

All members were asked to reflect on the document and the discussions that had taken place. Any further thoughts or comments should be sent to Jerry.

### 6. **Financial Report**

Beverly stated that the current financial position was shown in the accounts document circulated before the meeting. She then presented her report.

- **Common Fund Contribution 2013**  
I have had verbal confirmation from the Archdeacon that our offer of £71,508 has been accepted.
- **Gift Aid Envelopes**  
As we run out of current gift aid envelopes, we have taken the opportunity to design a new one. We have designed a new envelope, which we hope will be more informative and eye-catching. Gloria is just in the process of getting printing quotes.

- Financial Statements at 30 June 2012  
There is a deficit of £60,680 for the first six months of the year. While it is a significant amount it is not unusual for this time in the annual cycle as income is not spread evenly over the year. We still have the Freshfields' donation of £10,000 to come and I am informed that it may be increased to £15,000. News International's contribution of £13,500 is expected to arrive soon, and demands for the church rates (budget £52,000) are currently being prepared so the receipts should arrive in the second half of the year. Hopefully the legacy of \$40,000 from Francine Swift's mother will also arrive before year end! We have had a further confirmation from her US attorneys that it is due to us.
- We have separated out the Inspire! Appeal income and costs on separate lines. On the income side, £41,191 from the City Churches Grants Committee has been claimed and a further £24,534 will come from the St Bride's Appeal account to cover administrative costs and VAT dating back to the start of the Appeal. This is all shown in the Grants Receivable part of the income account. This income covers expenditures to date of £57,612. These Inspire! start-up items were not budgeted and before we proceed much further with the project I would recommend that the PCC approve a budget for the Inspire! Appeal.
- Collections of £57,790 are lower than hoped for but there are many more weddings booked for the second half of the year as well as four memorials and a full carol service programme, so hopefully we'll come in at or around budget by year end.
- Event at diocesan house  
There is an information evening for PCC members at Causton Street on 16th October. For the moment they can accept two representatives from each parish and we have indicated that Christopher Betterton and I will attend on behalf of St Bride's.

The Rector thanked Beverly for her report.

#### 7. **Capital Vision 2020**

All churches in the diocese had been asked by the Bishop to consider the three questions in the **Capital Vision 2020** document.

1. What is the Spirit saying to us in the life of London?
2. Where does the (our) Church invest effort and resources currently?
3. In what ways do we need to rethink and act differently?

There followed a discussion on a paper which had been circulated to PCC members, suggesting possible answers to the above questions. The Rector pointed out that the Capital Vision 2020 paper was intended to follow on from the London Challenge. It was noted that there were various stages of the consultation and the launch would be in June 2013.

After a number of questions and discussion, members were asked to let Jerry have any further comments or feedback by the end of September, so he could incorporate them into the response.

#### 8. **Rector's Report**

- The Olympic Festival week went very well and the Victory parade had taken place today.
- It will be a busy Autumn with weddings, memorials and special services.
- The Duchess of Cornwall is coming to the Journalist service on 22<sup>nd</sup> October. David had been in touch with Clarence House and is very happy to report that the Duchess is to become the Patron of the Guild of Saint Bride. This will be for a period of five years from August 2012. The members of the Guild Court were informed of this at their last meeting and have been asked to consider how best to use this opportunity over the next five years. This is not public knowledge until the press release.

#### 9. **INSPIRE! Appeal Report.**

Gerald Bowey presented his latest report to the meeting:

Gerald Bowey circulated a 'draft' [still in development] copy of the first INSPIRE! Appeal Update, drawing attention to the two INSPIRE! events taking place on Wednesday 26th September and Thursday 18th October.

He added that the Ambassadors structure, to assist fund raising, was now in place and two further events were planned; a visit on Tuesday 16th October to St Bride's by existing Ambassadors and an update presentation of progress with fund raising activities. And a 'new' Ambassadors dinner on Tuesday 20th November, when it is planned to formalize 'giving' by Ambassadors and their contacts to the Appeal.

Gerald further reported that the working panel, looking at Trusts and Heritage Funds supporting the Appeal, was now reviewing our current position with approaches [already made] and in the process of targeting specific trust funds [in the architecture/property sectors]. In addition a 'campaign' was underway to target City Livery Companies [not already supporting St Bride's].

At the end of Gerald's report questions were asked about how the appeal was going. Gerald provided further information but when asked how much had been raised so far he said that James would have to give that information.

#### **10. Wren Centre Proposal.**

The report of the Wren Centre working group prepared by Eric had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Eric gave a brief outline of the report. The working party brief had been to look into the feasibility of having the Wren centre in the Crypt while still preserving its use for other activities (e.g. the Sunday School and Services).

John presented his report (See Appendix 1) this included detailed pictures of various parts of the Crypt.

Gerald presented a report (see Appendix 2 for details) which highlighted the importance of the Crypt to the continuing ministry of the Church.

A discussion took place and various questions were asked.

Janet asked when considering this project had the whole needs of the Sunday School been taken into account. She pointed out that the whole area was used for the children each week and it would be very difficult if the main space was in any way minimised. She felt strongly that the needs of the Sunday School were a priority for the Church, as well as this project.

Eric said this had been taken into account and a teacher from the congregation was part of the working group. He also invited anyone who wanted to join the group to let him know. Janet said she would like to join the group.

It was then discussed how we would take the project to the next stage.

It was suggested that tenders / designs (with costings) would be requested with detailed proposals to implement the project.

The meeting agreed to this proposal provided it was done at zero cost to the Church.

#### **11. Electoral Roll Officer's Report**

Janet Smith reported as follows:

- The Electoral Roll currently stands at 483
- Since the last PCC meeting there have been no deletions.
- There have been received 14 correctly completed forms from:-  
Michael Christopher Base; Katharyn Rose Butterfield; Gregory Gordon Antonio Campbell; Richard James Delaney; Sarah Forster; Matthew George Long; Errol Neil McKie; Catherine Louise Park; Jonathan Richard Pike; Paul David Raggatt; Imogen Alexandra Simpson; Amy Mary Talbot; Lucia Paulina Vernon; John William Waterlow.

There had also been received 3 incorrectly completed forms from:-

Giles Hugh Alexander Fagan; Murdoch MacLennan; Elsa Jane MacLennan.

It was proposed subject to the three incorrect forms being followed up 17 people were added to the Roll. This was unanimously agreed.

Janet reminded the meeting that next year (2013) the roll will be 'wiped clean' and everyone will need to reapply for membership.

She would be starting work on this in early 2013.

#### **12. Architect's Report**

John Smith presented the following written report.

- Over the summer several items of minor maintenance have been undertaken in the church. These included the painting of the Assembly Room and corridor, providing Blinds in the Assembly room. Repairs to church glazing and making a roof outlet leaf guard.

- A new comprehensive crypt plan has been prepared.
- Normal inspections of the church have also been undertaken and support given to the 'Inspire!' appeal and Wren centre groups.
- Instructions have been received to embark on seeking approvals and preparation of contractual documentation for cleaning and repair of the spire and tower as a first phase of the Inspire' work.

The Rector thanked John for his report.

**13. Any Other Business**

There was no other Business.

**Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2012.

**14. Closing prayers**

All joined in saying The Grace.

**Janet Smith**  
**Acting Secretary to the PCC**

**David G. Meara**  
**Rector and Chairman**

Attached documents

Appendix 1 Wren Centre Report – PCC Meeting 10th September 2012

Appendix 2 Gerald's Wren Centre report - PCC meeting 10<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

Tangram Architects Ltd  
**St Bride's Church, Fleet Street**  
 Wren Centre at St Brides  
 PCC report 10 September 2012

### Plan & Photographs

We have considered other places but the Crypt is the only realistic place in the church. The plan shows the areas we considered; North to the bottom.  
 Photo positions shown on the plan - some old, some new.

This is the stair,  
 The East vault too narrow.  
 The two chapels in use for worship & private prayer.  
 Pantry & Pumps Lavatories & Bones room required to be where they are.  
 Bones Room work nevertheless needed to facilitate removal of bones not being studied.  
 SE Vault & Well Chamber too constricted although an escape route.  
 Medieval remains of curfew tower, tiled paving and column bases.

With much interactive, and digitally accessed & screen displayed material perhaps we shall only need the exhibition area for the Wren material and extend later if necessary.

It is possible that memorials, St Bride's & local historical material might be organised in the North vaults.

### Uses in the crypt

Public worship and private prayer,  
 Sunday school.

Public exhibition / display / information:

- St Bride's history and archaeology.
- Local archaeology and social history.
- Fleet Street's journalism and printing: the journalist's church.
- Memorials.

Bones research (and display).

Meetings and receptions,

Refreshments and toilets,

Engineering plant (boilers, pumps, electrical and water distribution).

Storage:

- Administration materials and records
- Publications
- Music
- Furniture
- Refreshment materials
- Maintenance, cleaning and 'house\*' stores
- Archaeology and relics not publicly displayed

### Storage

Storage is a problem.

Some can be moved to a better position on new racking.

Some bones perhaps taken elsewhere,

Some other things can be disposed of.

Dealing with re-siting stored things is likely to be very much part of the project's feasibility.

Tangram Architects Ltd  
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**Strengths**

A historic setting  
A most notable Wren building  
Central location  
(Advantageous good international links)  
(Communications experience and contacts)

**Weaknesses**

Awkward public access  
Poor disabled access  
No public toilets  
Limited space for growth

**Opportunities**

Improve condition facilities and accessibility  
Widen use of the Crypt  
(Strong, premier resource for Wren information and study)  
(Raise St Bride's profile)  
(Unique Focus for education)  
(Multiple use possibilities)  
(Strengthen international links)  
(External funding)

**Threats**

Poor disabled access  
Is there actually enough space for what we want to do?  
How complicated will the environmental engineering work actually be?  
Are heavier maintenance costs likely?  
(Growth of other future Wren institutions)

**Physical Problems**

Uneven floors - stone, concrete ductboard  
Unfinished walls  
Dampness  
Air movement,  
Fire safety arrangements

**Costs** £1.28m

**Summary**

A lot of work will be needed and it might be complicated.  
But feasible.

Gerald Bowey concluded the Wren Centre Working Group report by expressing his deep appreciation for Eric's outstanding chairmanship of the Group and for his careful attention to detail and forensic approach in both setting out the terms of the brief and making the meaningful recommendations in his report.

He added that St Bride's had been most fortunate in having some expert views around the meeting table and that Eric and John's excellent disputation should be sufficient to proceed.

However, he went on to emphasis - in support of both the Mission Action Plan (item 5) and the Capital Vision 2020 draft (item 7) that the future of St Bride's and its growing contribution to the Common Fund (which will not go away or diminish in future years) relies equally on the spiritual engagement of the congregation and the need to sustain and grow the well being and use of St Bride's as a centre for education and support to the media and local businesses will providing a range of services to the community, whoever and whatever that may be in a given set of circumstances.

Here are some simple facts:

- The Church of England needs cash after a poor run of investments left a big deficit in the funds for retired clergy.
- The annual cost of maintaining a network that includes 16,000 churches, 10,000 lay readers and 8,500 priests is currently £1.3 billion.
- The church's flock is dwindling, while at the same time ever more generous.
- The number of people turning up for Sunday services fell by almost half between 1970 and 2009 to 826,000.
- By 2050, according to Christian Research, the statistical arm of the Bible Society, the number could have fallen below 88,000 – that's fewer than six people to every church.
- As we know Parishes are being squeezed for cash by the church's 43 dioceses. This is because the dioceses, themselves often in parlous financial positions, are under pressure to help plug a black hole in the church's flagship pension scheme.
- At the last triennial valuation in 2009 the shortfall had grown to £262m.
- It is expected to widen again when it is measured at the end of this year – driven by low interest rates.
- Dioceses are feeling the pain as a result. The annual amount each must contribute to the church's retirement pot alone has risen from £4,872 per pensioned member in 2003 to £7,804.
- To fill the gap would require a one-off contribution in the region of £11m from each diocese!

Gerald pointed out that these facts [on public record] help to support the real need for the PCC to look at ways to sustain and grow our business base; for without developing a business plan that assesses and embraces all possible means at our disposal - to make full use of what is available to us at St Bride's - we cannot hope to sustain the ministry, as outlined in the Mission Action Plan, and pay our part [contribution] in supporting the Common Fund.

He urged the PCC to approve the Working Group's recommendations to take the development of the crypt to the next stage and establish a Centre for all things Wren; to support our existing artifacts and Sunday School while making the area a multi purpose space aimed at schools, tourists and the local community.