

Parish of St Nicolas Great Bookham  
Annual Meeting of Parishioners  
on  
Monday 29 April 2024

**DRAFT MINUTES (for APCM 2025)**

Present: The Chair, Alan Jenkins (the Rector), and 40 parishioners.

1. The Rector welcomed everyone, and opened the meeting with prayer. He referred to the hymn 'Great is Thy faithfulness', based on Lamentation 3v22-23, and reminded us that God is faithful despite life's ups and downs.
2. **Apologies for Absence**  
Apologies had been received from Peter Dyson, Jenny Evans, Peter Evans, John Lambert, Val Lambert, Bill Hibbert, Margaret Hibbert, Deborah Scrase, Terry Taylor and Sue Wall,
3. **Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners held on 17 April 2023.**  
Heather Gerrard proposed the minutes were approved, seconded by Carole Vaux and the minutes were approved by a large majority with no abstentions.
4. **Election of Churchwardens**  
The Rector thanked the churchwardens for their hard work during the past year.

There were 2 nominations to serve as churchwardens 2024-2025 :

<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Secunder</b>
Heather Gerrard	David Barnes	David Wall
Joy Lord	Tina Lambourn	Carole Vaux

Both nominations were approved, there being no other candidates and no objections raised.

5. **Any Other Business**  
None.

# Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Monday 29 April 2024

## DRAFT MINUTES

1. **Apologies for Absence**

As above.

2. **Confirmation of the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2023**

Heather Gerrard proposed and Carole Vaux seconded approval of the minutes. It was requested that surnames were added the first time a name was used, such as 4c. to read 'Nick **Garrett**', 5d. to read as 'Catherine **Jager**', and 6b. to read as Celeste '**Rios**'. Subject to these amendments, the minutes were approved by a large majority with no abstentions.

3. **Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2023**

None.

4. **Election of Lay Representatives**

a. **Conduct of Ballot**

All those nominated were declared duly elected, without a ballot being required.

b. **Election of the laity to the Parochial Church Council (5 vacancies)**

The Rector thanked Claire Hoath and Neil McDonald for serving 6 years (2 terms of 3 years) as elected members of the PCC. Neil McDonald was appointed Treasurer by the PCC from November 2023, and it is intended that the PCC at their next meeting will re-appoint him as Treasurer and co-opt him as a PCC member

**New members of the PCC**

<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Secunder</b>
Jackie Stephens	Amanda Rowland	Heather Gerrard
Nick Garrett	Peter Dyson	Romey Criswick
Robert Searle	Heather Gerrard	Nick Garrett
Tina Dennett	Amanda Rowland	Jackie Stevens
Chris Turner	Chris Holloway	Wendy Hoare

The above 5 candidates were declared duly elected.

**Deanery Synod**

There are no Deanery synod elections due this year. The Rector notified the meeting that Diocesan Synod elections will occur later this year. If you serve on the Diocesan Synod, you also have a place on the Deanery Synod and on the PCC.

5. **Reports from the Parochial Church Council**

a. **Electoral Roll Report;**

There are 235 on the Electoral Roll. The number is unchanged from last year's total\*. 7 names

have been removed and 7 have been added.

\*The Electoral Roll Officer corrected the number on the roll reported at the last APCM, which should have been 235 not 238.

**b. Report on the Proceedings of the PCC**

Amanda Rowland, PCC Secretary, gave a brief report on the activities of the PCC. The PCC met six times during the year with an average attendance of about 65%. Reports of the PCC meetings are published in the church magazine.

A particular highlight of 2023 was the successful completion of the building works in the church, and the week of celebrations in April 2023.

The Church Development Plan continues as a framework for some of our key activities and priorities, and the plan will be reviewed and restructured this year.

Solid work on safeguarding has continued under PSO Roland Martin and the PCC Safeguarding Lead, Anne Shears.

There was a query why attendance at PCCs was not higher than 65%, and it was explained that sometimes holidays or health issues lowered attendance, but there was always a quorum and both the PCC Secretary and the Rector assured the meeting that there was no adverse impact on the quality of debate and decision making.

**c. Trustees Report and Financial Statements;**

Neil McDonald, the Treasurer, thanked Nick Garrett for his help, and also Peter Lomax and Richard Scrase for their work. Neil also thanked Sue White for managing the rental and maintenance of 19 The Lorne (a house owned by the church, bought to provide accommodation for a curate, and currently rented out).

Details are presented in the church accounts for 2023, but the Treasurer outlined our financial position in broad terms. During 2023, the church's income was about £250k. There was about £9k surplus of income over expenditure and this was transferred to the Fabric Fund. Whilst this meant that the finance were only broadly in balance, St Nicolas is in a very fortunate position compared with other parishes in the diocese, and we are grateful to the generosity of the church congregation.

**Income:** This depends mainly on the congregation's giving. Other smaller sources of income are significant, especially the rental income from 19 The Lorne. Planned giving has steadily increased, despite the electoral roll being smaller than in 2015. However, inflation is increasing more than our income is rising.

In response to the recent stewardship campaign, 56 had replied, about a 30% response rate. The resulting pledges should lead to a 9% increase in our giving over a full year – about £15,000 including Gift Aid. In addition, £900 had been given in one-off donations.

**Expenditure:** Our parish share (paid to the diocese) for 2024 has been reduced by £1,600 and costs us about £104k. Our gas and electricity bills should also go down. On the other hand, the salaries of our Church Administrator, Director of Music and Families and Children's Minister had gone up.

In 2023, there had been planned expenditure on various repairs and the Building for the Future project had been completed with the interior redecoration of the church and the AV upgrade. As a result of that expenditure, our reserves are now fairly close to the recommended minimum levels. However, it should be noted that we were able to give nearly £20k in outward

giving to the charities we support.

The Treasurer concluded that the General Fund budget for 2024 shows a surplus of only £3,200. This would not be enough to cover out planned Fabric Fund expenditure so our reserves were likely to be lower at the end of the year than at the beginning. There might also be some unbudgeted items arising.

The Treasurer asked for questions, and Peter Lomax recommended that the rental income of £16k from The Lorne should be transferred to a separate account. Sue White supported this recommendation.

It was noted that not the Rector and the Standing Committee had decided not to apply for another curate for the time being, and 'The Lorne's' rental income after covering maintenance costs, was ear-marked to help offset the costs of employing a Families' and Children's Minister.

The Rector thanked Neil McDonald for his hard work, and thanked Nick Garrett for his work during many years as Treasurer.

#### **d. Churchwardens' Fabric Report**

Joy Lord presented a report on behalf of the churchwardens. A full report was provided in the booklet on Church Activities 2023/2024. It was noted that plans have been drawn up to refurbish the Church Room toilets and to provide an extra toilet. Fundraising will be needed to pay for this project.

As well as thanking the Fabric team, Joy thanked those who helped with the AV upgrade, the team that moves chairs, the Sidesmen and the team that opens and closes our church daily. She also thanked Nick Garrett for sending out a weekly email while Alan was on his extended ministerial development leave and her fellow churchwardens for all their hard work and support.

#### **e. Deanery Synod Report;**

A full report of the 3 meetings in 2023 was published in the booklet on Church Activities 2023/2024. The topics were the Eco church and climate change, Growing the core: the strategic priority post-Covid, and Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RHSE) in our schools.

### **6. Other Reports**

#### **a. Report of Church Groups and Activities;**

The reports in the booklet Church Activities 2023/2024 showed the wide range of activities and church groups. Alan Jenkins, the Rector thanked everyone who had contributed to this report. In particular he thanked Roland Martin the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), Anne Shears, the PCC Safeguarding Lead and Ruth Dyson the DBS Recruiter and Verifier for their work in reviewing and developing The Parish Safeguarding Policy, and helping us embed safe recruitment practices and training in our church.

#### **b. Families and Children's Minister Report;**

Celeste Rios, our Families' and Children's Minister, summarised the priorities of this work as sharing the Good News of the gospel, building relationships and growing disciples. Activities range from Tots Alive (the toddler group), the Sunday morning children's group GLOW, to

schools work, and work in the community (Rhyme-time at the library) and with the uniformed groups. Celeste thanked the volunteers working with her, and asked for our prayers for the projects and events planned for 2024.

c. **Rector's Report;**

Alan acknowledged his joy in the regular life of our church in our services, in our house groups, and in welcoming new people. He thanked all those who give greatly to the life of this church and to our community. Looking forward, he hoped we might find someone to lead on events in the church to capitalise on the space and the opportunities it provides and recognised the blessing new toilets would bring.

On a personal note, Alan remembered the sad loss of his mother in 2023, and he looked back with gratitude to his Extended Ministerial Development Leave as a privilege and a blessing.

Looking wider afield, he observed that our culture is changing rapidly and we are living in a post-Christian culture. Churches are either growing or decreasing. The debate over 'Living in love and faith' continues.

In our church, Alan recognises that we are an aging congregation and that despite some good initiatives over many years, it is proving very hard to change this. He longs to see younger families and those in their 40's and 50's, although it is true that most churches are struggling in this area.

He thanked Peter Lutton, leaving us in June after 20+ years serving as Director of Music. The post has been advertised but it is unlikely to be filled for a few months. Peter's leaving will inevitably mean that things do not continue exactly the same.

There are always new opportunities, and one aspect of our culture is that people are more unnerved, since the 2008 financial crash, environmental changes, covid, and increasing conflict in the world. Most weeks, there are newcomers coming to our church, and we need to welcome them and take the opportunities to share the good news.

We are starting to work towards resetting our Church Development Plan with a meeting with the Diocese on 18 May. If we are going to see anything happening in our church, we need to pray - either at home or through the regular church prayer meetings. After managing all the busyness of church, we need to give ourselves sufficient space to seek God's vision for His work among us.

7. **Appointment of an independent examiner for 2024**

After thorough research, and supported by the PCC, Neil McDonald proposed that we should appoint a new examiner for the 2024 church accounts. He was grateful for Aidan Crilly's work over many years, but it was perhaps time for a fresh approach. Neil proposed and Heather Gerrard seconded the proposal that we appoint Ellis Atkins as the independent examiner for 2024. The proposal was approved by all those voting on the proposal.

8. **Any Other Business**

Zena Rose (Inclusion Ambassador) asked if she might give a presentation at the next APCM on the theme of Inclusion, and although the request was welcomed, it was recognised that we encourage people to ensure a report is included within the Church Activities booklet.

BAHolloway/ 5 May 2024