

Minutes of St Sampson's PCC meeting held 13th February 7.30pm at the Vicarage, 7.30pm

Present: Debbie Dewes (Chair), Adina Grace, Rob Crow, Matt Smith, Paul Barnes, Dale Ford, Chris Anota, Jo Valpy (minutes) and Barry Hammond (Buildings Manager)

Apologies: Laura Brierley

1. DD welcomed everyone and began with words from Psalm 37 vs 3 and a reflection encouraging us to live in the truth.

2. Apologies received from Laura

3. Approval of minutes

The minutes from meeting on 21/11/24 were agreed as a true record and approved by all.

4. Email votes

On 14th December, St Sampson's PCC voted via email in favour of applying for the Boiler Hardship Replacement Grant with the resolution as follows: The PCC agree that in response to the Diocese suggestion we apply to the Boiler Hardship Replacement Grant run by the Church of England and that the Appeals Team can proceed with the application.

The resolution was ratified at our meeting on 13th Feb 2025 and all confirmed their approval.

5. Notification of AOB

The Diocese are carrying out an audit of memorials with historical links to the slave trade. They have asked if we would be willing to have a survey carried out at church. It is possible that do we have some of these memorials and the PCC agreed with the survey going ahead. AG will be the link person and confirmed that there is no expectation we will be asked to pay reparation. **Action – AG**

Barry circulated a cross-section model from the architect of possible flooring layers in church, including underfloor heating pipes. Just for an idea of what's possible. Still plenty of planning to work through.

6. Finance (report circulated)

St Sampson's accounts:

Main Account	£17,256	
Restricted Account	£11,451 broken down as follows:	
	Fabric Fund	£ 926
	Children's Charity	£ 1,014
	Organ	£ 3,155
	USPG	£ 1,030
	Refurbishment	£ 7,935 (Loans to repay £15,000)
	Hymn Books	£ 300
	Vicar's Discretionary Fund	£ 52
	Altar Frontal	£ 1,000
	Heating	£ -9,632

Main Account:

- We are meeting all our financial obligations and have a surplus
- Our winter electricity bills are running at around £900 a month. Matt has been researching a better tariff from our energy supplier and considers there is a better rate even paying the standing charge. We need to speak to Octopus to ascertain the cost of breaking our existing contract and changing to another with them. All were in favour of switching to the most cost effective tariff.

Restricted Account:

- No outstanding invoices to pay
- VAT still to be claimed on the 5 yearly Electrical Installation Condition Report.
- Replacement of sodium lights in the chancel with 2 new 100W LED floodlights with hire of suitable scaffolding estimate of £ 1125.00 + VAT at 20 has been completed. VAT still to be reclaimed.
- Night storage heaters have cost £7,998 with £4,037 received to date. One heater still to be paid for as it is not working correctly. Until it is, we are holding payment. Another donation may come in. £542.50 gift aid to be reclaimed. Money will need to be transferred from the main to the reserve account to balance them.
- The Children's Education Charity account has nearly run out and our Youth Worker contribution will then need to come out of the main account.

St Sampson's annual accounts have been audited ahead of the APCM, our thanks to Anne Garnett. AG proposed approval of the accounts, seconded by RC and all were in favour. AG has prepared a budget for the new financial year. It predicts an £8,000 shortfall, but the last two years have managed to break even, despite shortfall predictions, and we are hopeful that this will be the same. Grateful thanks to Adina for all her time and attention with church finances.

7. Fabric/Building/Refurbishment

Installing 3 phase electricity is a vital next step and several quotes are being prepared for works linked to this. The installation of an air source heat pump is under consideration and is likely to be sited where the oil tank currently sits in the church yard, not on the roof, as in previous plans, because of structural issues. Building regs and planning permission will be needed and there is a process to work through. The PCC agreed with this with the following resolution:

This PCC resolves not to put the air source heat pump on the church roof, but supports it being situated in a more suitable location, still to be finalised. Proposed by DD, seconded by CA, all approved.

A leak in the north transept is getting worse and the team are working with the architect putting a roof plan together.

We are still waiting for a response to the application for the boiler hardship grant.

Once again, the PCC expressed its very grateful thanks to Barry for his time managing the church building and all that this entails. Also, grateful thanks to Sarah Smith for her time and expertise, especially completing grant forms. There is a lot going on behind the scenes for the refurbishment committee – time commitment, research, fundraising, discussions and meetings with the architect and all sorts of contractors. Thank you to them all.

8. Heating/where to hold services

It has been uncomfortably cold in church since we lost the boiler. The storage heaters and under pew heating are simply not sufficient during the cold months and church is, on average, around 6 degrees. Some people are now staying away from Sunday services. We are aware that some people wish to remain in church for services and others are happy to move, or don't mind either way. After some discussion the PCC voted to keep the 8am service in church (it's only half an hour and everyone fits in the pews with under-pew heating) but to move the 10am Sunday service to the Jenner Hall with the following resolution:

The main 10am service will temporarily move into the Jenner Hall, starting this coming Sunday 16th February. It is our hope and intention to return to church for Good Friday services and subsequent 10am services. The 8am Sunday service will remain in church.

DD proposed, JV seconded, all in favour

9. Emergency Protocol

We have drafted a set of procedures in the event of a medical emergency in church during a service. The procedures should enable decisions to be made quickly, first aid to be administered where appropriate and emergency services to have access. JV to make amendments following discussion and discuss with 'named' people. The procedures can be shared across all four churches and made personal for each context. **Action – JV**

10. Church fees

AG proposed and MS seconded that fees in 2025 for weddings and funerals will remain the same as 2024. All were in favour.

11. Youth and Children

The NWMA Youth Alpha course is going extremely well with 14 young people from across North Wilts Deanery attending each week. NWMA:Youth future is uncertain because of funding, but there are grants to apply for and discussions with the Diocese too.

S Club and activities in the children's corner both continue – one of each per month. Messy Church at Ashton Keynes also takes place once a month and it is good to recognise that, as a Benefice, we are providing something for children and their families on 3 Sundays each month.

12. Eco Church

LB circulated notes on Eco Church survey questions for the first section - worship and teaching. We will be ready to work towards gold when the time comes and Laura will help us to keep our Eco Church focus.

13. Global Mission

The next giving day is Sunday 13th April.

14. Safeguarding

At the last joint PCC morning in January JV presented information to raise awareness of caring for vulnerable adults within our church community. We recognised that the needs of vulnerable adults will be varied and we will aim to respond with a flexible attitude in our care for and safeguarding of individuals, as different situations arise. Having the emergency procedures in place is one part of our response.

For the Dashboard, PCCs are asked to be aware of their responsibility to be ready to offer appropriate support for victims of abuse following a disclosure of allegation, even if the victim no

longer attends church. All agreed to honour this responsibility, working with PSO and seeking guidance from the Diocese or other professional bodies, as appropriate. Decisions this week at General Synod mean that CofE safeguarding is moving closer to scrutiny from an independent body. Safeguarding within Bristol Diocese has received positive comments following an audit within the last few months.

15. School

Open the Book continues each week and DD joins Collective Worship regularly.

16. Jenner Hall

Emma Mullen has been formally appointed as architect for works on the Jenner Hall, likely to start in June.

17. Deanery Synod

No meeting

18. Just One Thing

JOT for 2025 was discussed at the joint PCCs in January with various actions to carry out. There are more people starting to become involved in various 'fellowship' groups, whether homegroups, prayer groups or more social meetings.

19. PCC Membership

With the APCM approaching, it is good to consider our membership. Laura is reaching the end of her term of office and will finish on PCC. Our very grateful thanks to Laura for her valuable contributions over the last 3 years, especially with Eco Church and Global Mission.

We have up to 5 laity vacancies on PCC. It's an opportunity for others to get involved, so let's ask around and invite members of the congregation to consider standing for PCC.

20. Correspondence

None

21. Vicar's heads up

Rob Crow will be stepping down as Church Warden – thank you so much Rob! Someone has come forward and feels called to stand.

On Sunday 30th March (Mothering Sunday) we are all invited to attend the morning service at the Cathedral, our Mother church. We hope to find someone to co-ordinate transport and it's possible we may have the Open Door minibus. **Action – AG/JV**

22. AOB

Nothing further

23. Next meeting dates: _St Sampson's APCM – Sunday 23rd March 2025