

**Draft** for approval by the PCC

## **ST BARNABAS CHURCH EMMER GREEN**

**Minutes** of meeting 05/2011 of the Parochial Church Council held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2012 in the Parish Centre.

**Present:** Derek Chandler (Chair), Mark Burton, Richard Cunningham, Jim Dunkley, Elizabeth Gash, Bill Harper, Sue Harper, Wendy Howell, Oliver Kent, Gillian Wilson.

**Apologies:** Robin Kent, Des Long, Alison Wood.

The meeting began with prayers.

**1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting** held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2011 were approved.

### **2. Matters Arising**

4. Further information on the “Confidence in Discipleship” evening event on 1<sup>st</sup> March in Bracknell had been circulated. It would be good if St Barnabas could be represented. Those willing to attend should inform the Secretary.

### **3. Financial Monitoring**

The final figures for 2011 were reported. The overall financial situation was good, with healthy balances on both the church and hall accounts. On the church a high level of donations had enabled additional repair and improvement work to be undertaken, and loans to be repaid at a higher rate than anticipated. In the hall the floor had been re-surfaced and the kitchen roof replaced, which had reduced the surplus for the year. Changes to the accounting treatment of fundraising events were explained.

### **4. Hall & Buildings**

The programme of work items for 2011 had been completed, including the very successful acoustic improvements in the Centre. A review would be put in hand on the best way of replacing stained ceiling panels in the hall. Attention was drawn to the good work being done in the gardens by Hitendra, the external volunteer.

### **5. Quinquennial Inspection**

5.1 The inspection had been carried out on December 15<sup>th</sup> with Bill and Jim present. The report, which was brief, but clear, had been circulated. In overall terms the church was seen to be well maintained. Some work was required on some of the flat roof areas, and assessments and quotes would be obtained in due course. There were normal maintenance activities to be undertaken, and monitoring of some long term condition issues would be continued. The Report will be referred to the Hall & Buildings Committee for action.

5.2 A letter had been received from the Deanery Inspections Officer querying the brevity and value for money of the report. The PCC expressed their satisfaction with the Report and full replies will be made to the points raised.

### **6. Health & Safety**

6.1 Details were given of the actions taken by Douglas Rae to ensure that all the buildings were covered by insurance for metal theft. Douglas would be thanked for his work on this.

6.2 A First Aid Course will be held on 4<sup>th</sup> February for the award or renewal of certificates. This had been opened to individuals who wanted to attend on a personal basis at cost.

## **7. Children and Young People**

7.1 The PCC were pleased that it had been possible to re-introduce the “Three Tier”, structure of meetings, with a new group for 7 to 11 year olds established. The first meetings of this group had been well attended. New volunteers had been recruited to enable the changes to be made, but the team is still stretched, and more support would be welcome.

7.2 Over a period of months comments had been received from the Study and Discussion Group about the disturbance that could occur when young children were present in the congregation. Information had been given on the steps that had been taken to try to provide arrangements to minimise possible disturbance. The concerns seem to remain, however, and it was appropriate for the PCC to review what is being done. There are two elements involved:

- i. The presence of children in services. This occurs in two situations – during the summer holidays and in Family Services. The summer arrangements – which had offered parents the option of taking children into the Centre if they became restless – were agreed as having worked as well as could be expected. Children are also present in the Family Service, and indeed the aim is that families with children are encouraged to be there. Whilst the option remains open of taking children into the Centre for short periods, there is no question of separate crèche provision being made for children in what is designed as an All Age service. This does mean, however, that the content of the service should specifically take account of the needs younger children without prejudicing its quality and appeal for the whole congregation.
- ii. Location and activity arrangements. Over the last two years experiments had been made with areas for children at both the front and rear of the church, and with the provision of activities. It was agreed that providing wider rows at the front, with carpet underneath, worked best and would be continued. Organising craft activities required additional volunteer effort and supervision, and the experience had been that it had taken the attention of the children away from what was going on in the service – even when it was for their benefit. There will not be organised crafts in future, but the activity bags are still provided and special service books for children are now available.

7.3 CRB clearance five year renewals are being progressed.

## **8. Summer Events 2012**

8.1 “More than Gold”. The withdrawal of St Barnabas support has been communicated, but the donation will still be made. We will promote the open air service and publicise the need for volunteers. The proposed Holiday Club is now planned for the June half term, but the location has still to be decided.

8.2 Jubilee Event 4<sup>th</sup> June. The EGRA “Picnic in the Park” event is going ahead with support from several local community groups. A further meeting is planned for 13<sup>th</sup> February.

## **9. Environmental Issues**

John Notton is acting as the contact point for the Reading area network, and is willing to organise another summer event. We do, however, need someone to act as “Champion” for environmental activities, and the lead the Eco-congregation initiative. The need for a volunteer will be communicated to the congregation.

## **10. Wider Church**

Reports were received on recent Deanery and Diocesan Synod meetings.

### **11. Grove Road Parking**

11.1 A letter had been sent to the Borough Council and Councillors about the sudden imposition of blanket parking restrictions in Grove Road. Individual congregation members had also written. Details were given of action taken by EGRA, the input made to the Neighbourhood Action Group, and of replies that Councillors had given. There did appear to be some possibility that the restriction outside the church (opposite the bus stop) might be relaxed.

11.2 Permission had been obtained to use the staff parking spaces at the Emmer Green Surgery on Sunday Mornings. This will be communicated to the congregation.

### **12. Support to Services**

Representations had been received from the Study and Discussion group about the benefits that could flow from more lay participation in service planning and delivery. The creation of a Worship Committee had been suggested. There was no support for the idea of another Committee, since additional administrative effort would be needed and what is required is active participation and not more discussion. Various ways of involving church members in services have been tried, with varying degrees of success. It was easy to underestimate the amount of advance planning required for even relatively short service elements.

There does appear to be an appetite for lay participation, and the Ministry Team would welcome new ideas and support. What is needed is some machinery that makes this happen without requiring the Ministry Team to devote more time to organisation than actual service preparation.

The PCC has no easy answers, and there would be benefit in having wider discussion of the issues involved. It was agreed that this topic will be covered in the presentation and discussion section of the APCM.

### **13. 5<sup>th</sup> February Service**

The first Sunday in February has traditionally been “Thanksgiving Sunday”, but last year the format and content had been changed to widen the view of giving and to link activity to the Mission of the Church. This approach would be further developed this year with an emphasis on celebrating the achievements of the past year. The aims and requirements for 2012 would then be presented. RE-Inspired and congregation participation would be identified as two areas where new initiatives are to be developed.

### **14. Sidesmen**

Some new volunteers had been recruited, and the booklet “Sidesmens’ Duties” was being updated and re-issued.

### **15. Future Meetings**

	SC	PCC
March	14 <sup>th</sup>	28 <sup>th</sup>

APCM Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April, 8pm in the church