

The Parish Church of St Nicholas Blundellsands
Annual Meeting of the electors held on Sunday 30th April 2023

A. Meeting to elect two Churchwardens:

The meeting began with prayer and welcome.

Beth expressed her thanks to Mrs Lesley Utley for completing a further year as our only Churchwarden, although she had, in effect, been more like two wardens than one. Lesley having declared her willingness to stand again, her nomination was proposed by Terri Deary, seconded by Julie Dray and agreed unanimously.

Miss Anne Dobie had also declared a willingness to stand, was proposed by Julie Dray, seconded by Lesley Utley and agreed unanimously.

B. Annual Parochial Church Meeting:

Present: Mrs H Pennington, Mrs L Jones, Revd C Jones, Mrs G Johnston, Mr T Johnston, Mr C Rooney, Mrs S Rooney, Mrs L Utley, Miss J Dray, Mrs N Jeens, Mr D Parkinson, Mr P Levick, Mrs J Levick, Miss R McGuire, Mrs N Farrag, Mr R Taylor, Prof P Batey, Mrs J Batey, Mr D Phillips, Mrs E Jenkins, Dr RG Macdonald, Mrs G Donnelly, Mr J Donnelly, Mrs P Gilford, Mrs G MacKenzie, Mrs G Cain, Mrs J Warren, Mr P Warren, Mr S Green,

Apologies were received from: Mr P and Mrs S Bonnett, Mrs J Parkinson, Mr I Hardman, Mrs B Johnson, Mr P Connolly.

Beth opened the meeting by expressing her thanks to all those who had contributed to the preparation of the various documents which were being presented.

Minutes of the last meeting:

The minutes of the APCM held on 8th May 2022 were proposed as an accurate record by Mrs G Cain, seconded by Mr S Green and agreed unanimously.

Matters arising:

- Independent Examiner: Upon the retirement of our long serving Independent Examiner, steps have been taken to make a new appointment
- Children's work: Beth felt that the main objective from last year's report, to develop children's work, had been largely achieved through the successful re-establishment of the Bridge and the newly established Picnic Praise.
- The four priorities of Fit for Mission had been embedded in this year's objectives
- Building: The new heating system had been successfully installed and was working well
- Organ restoration: We are happy with the work that has been done on the electrics so far, but work on the bellows is now urgently needed
- Tree planting: this had taken place successfully
- Social Team: A new team had been formed and a programme of events was being planned
- Still to be done: development of our audio-visual capacity in church

Safeguarding:

Mrs Elizabeth Sinker, St Nicholas' Safeguarding Officer, reported that there had been no incidents and that, with the invaluable help of Peter Warren, we were up to date with DBS checks for all new volunteers. All PCC members had also undergone training and he, Liz and Lesley Utley were all undergoing further training. Beth conveyed the thanks of the meeting for the important work which is being carried out in this regard.

Electoral Roll:

Lesley, our Electoral Roll Officer, commented that, as the report shows, we are still welcoming new people into our church and reminded the meeting that providing a warm welcome was everyone's job. If we see a new face we should make a particular effort to speak to them. Beth thanked Lesley for her hard work in keeping the roll up to date.

Deanery Synod Representatives:

The meeting was reminded that we are entitled to four representatives in all. Membership comes up for re-election every three years.

There were three nominees:

Prof Peter Batey, proposed by Mrs Gill Enstone, seconded by Mrs Lesley Utley

Mr Stephen Green, proposed by Mrs Barbara Qualtrough, seconded by Mr David Phillips

Mr David Phillips, proposed by Mrs Joan Parkinson, seconded by Miss Julie Dray

Acceptance was proposed by Mrs Nicola Jeens, seconded by Mrs Glenda Cain and agreed unanimously.

All Deanery Synod Representatives are ex-officio members of the PCC.

PCC Membership:

Two new members stood for election:

Mrs Alison Blundell, proposed by Mrs Lesley Utley, seconded by Mrs Helen Pennington

Mrs Joyce Batey, proposed by Mrs Gill Enstone, seconded by Mrs Lesley Utley

Acceptance was proposed by Mrs Glenda Cain, seconded by Mrs Glynis Johnston and agreed unanimously.

Independent Examiner:

For the final accounts for the year ending December 2022, Mrs Lorraine Mair had acted as our Independent Examiner and Treasurer Mrs Liz Sinker undertook to find out from her whether she would be willing to continue in this capacity. She can then be formally appointed by the PCC.

Finance:

Final Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2022 had been circulated. The Treasurer had pointed out that we had incurred a loss of £2,700, while our unrestricted reserves now stood at £9,000.

Hall income for the year was approaching £30,000 and energy costs this year had been cushioned by the grant of £10,000 received as a result of the changes to parish boundaries.

Parish Share will go up to £900 per month and all other costs continue to rise. Income from giving, on the other hand, has fallen.

Annual Report:

Beth commended the Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 2022 to the meeting. It was long but she felt that this was a positive sign

that we were emerging from Covid and was a testament to a great deal of hard work. For all the teams 2022 had been a year of achievements and also of challenges, but across the whole church there had been numerous examples of personal kindness, support and compassion.

We were now entering upon a period of significant change: Keith Thornborough would be licensed on 25th of June as Vicar of St Stephen's, Hightown and he goes knowing how much he is loved and appreciated by everyone at St Nicholas'; Mike Foy, our organist for twenty years, is also moving on to take up new challenges. Every effort will be made to maintain the tradition of wonderful music which we have always enjoyed at St Nicholas'.

Beth commented that change was always unsettling and that we must all therefore make every effort to keep communicating. She reminded the meeting that, when it had become necessary to move temporarily into the hall, we had decided to 'love each other through' the experience and we must do this now too.

All teams had reviewed what had gone well throughout the last year, to provide guidance for the way ahead, particularly in terms of community involvement, while the four Fit for Mission priorities from the Diocese had also provided a focus for our planning:

Introducing people to Jesus

Finding ways to increase discipleship.

Developing Christian leaders

Working for justice.

It was also important to find creative ways of having fun and building each other up.

Questions and Comments:

Plans for ministry after Keith's departure: Beth reassured the meeting that plans were well in hand to support her ministry after June.

Vision: The Importance of creating a vision for the future was emphasised. We should actively be building for sustainability, particularly through measures such as the fitting of solar panels.

Asylum seekers: Ways to provide housing and support should be explored.

Communication: It was suggested that this could be improved across many aspects of church life. As a start, signage was being improved both inside and out.

Soupa Thursday: This initiative had gone from strength to strength, but Beth commented that it was a lot of hard work for all concerned and new volunteers would always be welcome.

Organ: Joyce Batey drew attention to an appendix she had written to the main report regarding church music, commenting particularly on the organ. It was agreed that recent work had been carried out successfully but that work on the bellows was now needed urgently. She also emphasised that it was important that the organ received enough use, not only in continuation of our strong tradition of musical excellence but also as a means of keeping it in good working order. We have a duty of stewardship and Mike himself would always be welcome to play it.

With Mike's departure, it was confirmed that the Community Choir would no longer rehearse at St Nicholas', but would always be welcome back to perform, particularly as we hope to continue the tradition of holding an annual music festival.

The meeting ended with prayer.