

# St John's Hillingdon Annual General Meetings

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October at 10:30 am via Zoom

## Annual General Meeting of Parishioners Election of Churchwardens

### 1 Welcome and opening prayer

The vicar Alan Bradford (AB) welcomed everyone and prayed for the meeting. AB explained that for this particular meeting (the AGM of Parishioners) all those on the electoral role of the parish or who have registered to vote locally in the Hillingdon Ecclesiastical parish can vote. Others are welcome as observers.

### 2 Minutes of last year's meeting

The Minutes from the previous AGM (17<sup>th</sup> March 2019) were agreed.

### 3 Election of Churchwardens

AB advised the meeting that the current Churchwardens - Rick Williams (RW) and David Durston (DD) were both willing to continue in their roles. AB asked if there were any further nominees. There being none the meeting continued.

As DD had been in office for over six years, a resolution was required to enable him to continue as Churchwarden for another year. This was proposed by Christopher Clark and seconded by Roy Munday. The resolution was carried unanimously.

RW had been proposed by Roy Munday and seconded by Barbara Hosier. DD had been proposed by Brenda Hogg and seconded by Kenneth Hogg. A vote was held and RW and DD were duly re-appointed as Churchwardens for the forthcoming year. AB congratulated David and Rick and thanked them for their service during the previous year.

## Annual Parochial Church Meeting

### 1 Welcome, Overview and Opening Prayer

AB opened the meeting with a prayer and explained to those present that only those on the Electoral Roll of the Church would be able to vote although all were, of course, welcome to the meeting.

AB explained that the Agenda and AGM Report booklet was sent via email and on The Online Link and hand delivered to those that do not have access to a computer.

### 2. Some Highlights

AB Explained that this year we will look at the highlights of 2019 and also, as explained in the report booklet, there would be some reporting on relevant information

to this year 2020, as this years APCM had to be postponed due to the outbreak of coronavirus. It was important to not just refer back to 2019 as this is so removed from where we are now.

One of the highlights of 2019 and 2020 which we are all thrilled and delighted with is that a member of our congregation Caroline Reed has been accepted to train as an ordained priest. AB took the opportunity to spotlight Caroline, so that she was able to inform those present about what she has currently been doing in her training. AB congratulated Caroline on behalf of the church for all her commitment and continuous hard work.

AB shared our Vision Statement:

**“Loving, Growing, Sharing with Jesus to Transform Lives.”**

Other highlights of 2019 included

- the £20,000 grant which was awarded to our church plant at St Andrews Park, which we had been growing throughout 2019 and into 2020, prior to the coronavirus pandemic. We were encouraged by the monthly King’s Kids/Elevate Kids events held at the John Locke Academy within St. Andrew’s Park and we were encourage by how they were going.
- Let’s Go our weekly baby and toddler group which continued to grow in numbers. We’d heard earlier on Zoom from Mum Katie and her daughter Willow about how much they appreciated Let’s Go.
- All Stars, our children’s monthly events for all ages, were a good success in 2019. AB highlighted the great performances of all the children at our Children in Need Talent Show event last November.
- We had developed further our relationships with the local schools alongside our annual school carol services. We wished to invite more class groups and half-year groups into St John’s, so we need to develop more space in the building for this.
- With the continuing numbers growing throughout 2019 from the activities stated above, the PCC had been investigating how the St. John’s building could accommodate our larger numbers and how the church building could be adapted to suit this growing need. We also needed more space for visitors to have coffee and for many other flexible uses. AB Stated that more on this would be shared later during the meeting.
- The work in the Churchyard, Memorial Garden and to the tombs has been amazing thanks to the Churchyard Team who have been doing such a wonderful job in caring for our grounds and creating a space to enjoy God’s creation.
- The Alpha Course in 2019 was received very well with more than 30 people in attendance. The away day was very well supported on a Saturday. AB shared thanks to chef Anne Bradford for the wonderful meals and for helpers Caroline Reed and Jacque Shalloe.
- The ECO group have been busy in 2019 and continue to advise and help St John’s. This year the team have been approached to help other churches in the Deanery to become more eco efficient and to also work towards the Eco Church award.

AB passed on to Christine Bartlett to explain more.

Christine shared that the governing body of the Church of England have agreed that all churches, vicarages, church schools and church offices should be carbon neutral by 2030. With this in mind, the ECO team have been finding out what this means for St John's and will meet with the PCC to discuss their findings and hope in 2021 to introduce carbon neutral ideas to the congregation. From the beginning of 2021 the Eco group plan to be introducing AB, the Churchwardens and the PCC to the idea of becoming carbon neutral in the next 10 years. We will then pass the information and ideas on to all of you so that we can all play a part.

AB wished to thank the ECO team which comprises of Christine Bartlett, Brenda Thomas, Christine Rodrigues and Lynn Clark for all their help and guidance. The team will encourage and challenge us.

### **3. Apologies**

Apologies were received by Beth Bradford, Judy Cowan, Rebecca Delaney, Carol Turner and Janet Duncan

### **4. Minutes of last year's meeting**

The Minutes for last year were sent via The Online Link.  
AB gave some time to reflect on those and share any comments from the minutes.

### **5. Matters Arising & Signing**

There were 2 questions that had risen from last year's minutes. Both in relation with the church accounts AB asked the Treasurer Carol Toombs (CT) to comment.

1. Monies paid to Thomas Ford Partners from 2018 financial reports. CT stated this was paid to our then QI for the Grundon Room Roof repairs. This was a satisfactory explanation to the individual who posed the question.
2. Two rate payments had come out of St John's account to pay for Cobden Close, which is a property owned by the Baron Hillingdon Fund. In this case there was a question as to why money had come out of a church account for this, as we are not responsible as a church for payments concerning this property. This was not showing as being returned to the PCC account. The person who raised the question felt that all costs relating to Cobden Close should be coming out of the Baron Hillingdon account so why was this not done and why has it not been reimbursed? CT Stated that this may have been something that needed to be paid by cheque, the Baron Hillingdon fund does not have a cheque book, the money was returned to the PCC account, although the accounting software does not allow you to show this coming in. CT is currently working with the developers of the software to investigate how this can be shown on the accounts. This was acceptable to the person who raised the question.

Bob Lang asked that the PCC to consider making a claim to charge a management fee to the Baron Hillingdon Fund.

AB reported that Christine Bartlett had asked if regular financial reports on St. Johns

finances could be made available. AB stated that this would be looked at with a view to making the finances more available at more frequent intervals.

AB asked if everyone accepted the minutes as a true record of last year's meeting. There being no alterations necessary, the minutes were approved and signed by AB as an accurate record.

We had become over 2019 and 2020 more efficient in our management of finances including our payment of bills through electronic transfer.

AB wished to thank and praise God for Carol Toombs for all her skills and work for the church on the church accounts.

AB wished to thank everyone for all that they do at St John's, it would be impossible to thank everyone at this meeting, so AB added please consider yourself thanked.

## **6. Election/Appointments to the PCC & Confirmation of the Deanery Synod Representatives**

AB briefly explained the role of the Deanery Synod Representatives (DSR) to the meeting.

The Deanery Synod Representatives (who are also members of the PCC by right) are elected on a three-year basis. DSR nominations had been received by Lucy Pike and Keith Lunn; both had received nominators and seconders and were both unanimously elected onto the Deanery Synod on behalf of St. John's AB thanked them for being willing to act as our representatives on the Deanery Synod.

AB briefly explained the role of the PCC (the Parochial Church Council) to the meeting. The PCC are the Governing Body of the Church and generally meet at least every two months. The PCC look at the mission of the church and how it functions.

**The church is one of the only few organisations that exists primarily for those who are not yet its members!**

PCC representative nominations had been received from Roy Munday, Mark Robson, Kevin Clark, Paul Clevett, and Carol Williams all had nominators and seconders. These five were unanimously elected on to the PCC.

## **7. Highlights, Reports and Looking Forward**

Nikki Bell reported that the Electoral Roll currently stands at 154.

Nikki was thanked by AB and everyone for her dedication and for all that she does as the Church Administrator.

We wouldn't be able to function without Nikki.

AB reinforced our vision of "Loving, Growing, Sharing with Jesus to Transform Lives". AB shared Romans 12: chapter 11:

**"Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord".**

The report booklet was presented and accepted.

Turning to the previous year, AB reported on further highlights, challenges and developments looking forward:

### **Church Building**

AB reported that he had continued to build positive relationships with local schools, and the schools are really keen to come in and use the church building in half year groups or full year groups for study (History and RE). This would require sitting at tables and space would be needed to accommodate this. The growing numbers attending Lets Go, All Stars, and other all-year events like the Eco Festival, Summer events, Harvest, quizzes and the Last Supper Experience etc has also highlighted the growing need for flexible space inside the church. We would like to be more flexible with our worship, such as worship in a round and in other ways. With this in mind, the PCC have been looking at ways in which more flexible space might be made available. Areas under consideration include the two areas of the South Transept and South Aisle near the café area – removal of the pews would enable the coffee area to increase in size, to enable new comers to share in fellowship after services, larger classes of schools to visit the church; and be beneficial for social events such as additional stations for festivals, quizzes and the Last Supper Experience to name a few.

We have made some progress in the journey to create more flexible space. In July 2019 the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC), our Wardens, a member of the PCC, our Archdeacon Duncan Green, and our Quinquennial Inspector (QI) met together to discuss various options. The DAC were very encouraged by the possibilities and our provisional ideas to create further flexible space within the church. We got ‘the okay’ from them in writing to pursue looking at plans for the internal of the church and in looking at what we could do to make things more flexible.

On 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020 we continued in our explorations by having underfloor investigations in the church. Present on the day was our QI, an Archaeologist and a structural engineer. The Archaeologist discovered a box of bones, probably bones from the churchyard. (some of you know about these bones). We also discovered a box of ashes, a couple of vaults, one a big empty void with pew cushions in it, and another vault on the north side of the nave which was quite near the surface of the floorboards. These investigations confirmed that we can indeed do interior work. Nothing was found that would suggest that the floor area could not be lowered to allow for things to be all on the same level for more flexible space. A next phase would be to involve others from the community in seeking how we best develop our building.

There was a question and point from a member of the congregation regarding the Victorian Society and whether they would allow the alterations to be made as during the 2012 re-ordering there was some difficulty in passing some of the plans. AB stated that the process has evolved since then and that the Victorian Society could be involved in discussions, and the PCC would of course take on board any considerations of the society. However, more and more churches are re-ordering to accommodate the needs of the community and more and more Chancellors around the land had been agreeing to similar projects and giving permission for such reordering church plans to go ahead.

AB Stated that on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020 St John’s was officially placed on the Heritage at Risk register and this can now be seen on Historic England website. This should allow us to further access grants for the ongoing works that are needed to repair the church building. Areas in need are The Grundon Room, the dormer windows, the main roof, buttresses, guttering etc to name but a few.

We regularly had in 2019 and 2020, before the coronavirus, various groups and people using the church during the week – knitting group, ‘Words & Music’ Jazz groups, individual prayer, weddings and funerals, which Mary and Stuart our verger and technical verger support so well, to name just a few of the many uses. AB continued that a condition to accessing grants for repairs to the building is that we are developing the internal building to suit the needs of members of the church and the community. We are therefore developing plans for the internal and external of the building together.

### **Cupola Update**

AB reported that works to stabilise the cupola will be starting on 9<sup>th</sup> November and is likely to take up to 4 weeks. The grant of £24k from English Heritage and our generous donations for the additional money for this, and other similar works, has enabled this to take place, albeit slightly later than planned. This later start date is due to the number of grant applications that English Heritage have received which delayed the application process. AB wished to thank everyone especially those that have donated to this project and to other building repair works.

A member of the congregation asked: “Once the cupola works have been completed around the 9<sup>th</sup> December would Christmas services be able to take place?” AB stated that: “Yes the plan is to open and, if safe to do so, following government guidelines, we would be open for Christmas services although numbers may be limited”.

MR asked about PR and a possible leaflet drop in the community. We would need to plan for this ahead of time. AB stated that he would get clarification concerning whether leaflet dropping is allowable in the present circumstances. We can also go through some of the schools in our advertising.

### **Safeguarding**

At St John’s Safeguarding is taken very seriously. Richard Bell is our excellent Safeguarding Officer for St John’s and provides regular updates and training to the PCC. Those that work with children and vulnerable people have completed all DBS checks and these are reviewed accordingly. Richard also works alongside our Children’s Champion Lucy Pike.

### **IT Progressing Services**

We had grown in a number of ways in our use of IT. AB Wished to thank the IT tech team at St John’s for all their hard work in 2019 and 2020. Our tech team also includes some of our younger members of the congregation Daniel, Tom and DJ. who operate “Proclaim” and other software to project our services on to the screens at St. John’s, and at Elevate Church/King’s Kids. AB also thanked the sound desk team for all their hard work in 2019.

### **Social Media**

AB stated that work has increased on our Social Media platforms and in the reports you are able to see how we are increasing the numbers who view and join in through these sites.

Caroline Reed wished to thank all involved with our social media and our website. On the Church Growth course we were asked to show our website to others and we received very encouraging feedback. What we have at St John’s is at a high standard and so many people connect with us through these media even though we may not be aware of this. Many other churches have been impressed with St John’s.

### **Financial Report**

The Financial Report is at the back of the AGM booklet. The Report shows a figure of £5,321 for expenditure over income.

AB took the opportunity to thank Carol Toombs (CT) for all her hard work as Treasurer, and to thank Di Newman for her work with Stewardship.

The accounts and report booklets (which were sent out by email and delivered) were received.

### **Independent Examiner**

CT confirmed that our accounts had been audited by an Independent Examiner – Alan Rix. She confirmed that Alan Rix was most likely prepared to act as our IE for the forthcoming year. The proposal that Alan Rix be appointed our Independent Examiner was proposed by Carol Toombs and seconded by Mark Robson. The appointment was unanimous.

The meeting closed at 11.27am with a prayer.