

MINUTES OF THE CHURCH SUPPORT GROUP COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN
ST MARGARET'S CHURCH ON MONDAY 5 JUNE 2017

PRESENT: David Frost, Penny Savill, Michael Scott and Harold Taylor

1. CHURCHYARD SURVEY

Michael's map, which divided the churchyard into meaningful sections, was used as a point of reference for a walk round the churchyard. The churchyard checklist agreed during the survey is appended to the minutes. The following highlights some of the comments made by the committee.

Front of the church

The rose bed needs reshaping. The mixed coppice to the right of the gates and opposite the grassed area in front of the Old Rectory would benefit from the removal of brambles and other self rooted vegetation growing under the trees. The shrubs to the east front of the church need pruning and the leak in the water tap by the shrubbery fixing.

Who owns and maintains the lawn in front of the Old Rectory to be confirmed. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**
(Since the meeting it has been confirmed that the church owns and maintains the lawn.)

West side of the church

A two metre wide grass path leading off the shingled path to the south end of the churchyard is required for funerals. All overgrown vegetation and self rooted shrubs should be cleared to the boundary railings. Two of the beech trees in the row planted to form a south west boundary hedge should be allowed to grow to full height.

East side of the church

The brambles growing in the box and hawthorn hedge need clearing. The ancient rose bush needs protecting. The bay tree must be reduced in height.

We acknowledged the churchyard checklist plan is labour intensive. A piece in the Five Towers and Margaretting News about the churchyard plans may attract new helpers. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**

2. NOTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26 APRIL 2017

These were agreed as a correct record.

3. MATTERS ARISING NOT ON THE AGENDA

Wallpaper pasting boards: All the boards and the plastic trestle table stored in the vestry have been recycled - three people responded to the newsletter advert.

Church website: Penny confirmed she now has editing access to the website. A separate churchyard page has been created by the website manager.

South boundary beech hedge: The letter to Patrick Wreathall thanking him for cutting back the south facing hedge will be sent this week. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**

4. CHURCHYARD IMPROVEMENTS AND MAINTENANCE

Gravestones and management plan

We agreed to adopt Michael's outline churchyard plan. A copy is attached to the minutes.

A number of gravestones require attention. Kerbstones need lifting and fixing in place - some are covered by ivy and grass. One of our two commonwealth war graves is completely covered by the grass. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission will be informed and asked for help and advice on how best to repair and look after this grave. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**

Trees, hedges and grass: Penny will contact MDL and Greenscapes to see if they are interested in quoting for the churchyard grass cutting. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**

Front, side and rear paths: The reshingling of these paths will take place after the drainage works to the porch.

5. CHURCH BUILDING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Porch drainage: We are waiting for a start date. The contractor needs to know the dates of any weddings booked. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**

Roof tiles and gutters: We agreed the gutters should be checked and cleared twice a year. Michael and David agreed to inspect and make good a damaged gutter. Penny will pass on the details of an offer for the free use of some pop up scaffolding to David and Michael. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**

Dampness problem: Bakers of Danbury have installed the new hopper and repaired the internal plaster work. Baker's invoice has been forwarded to the PCC for payment.

Chancel – east wall: David reported how the spring clean had drawn attention to several places in the church in need of attention. This included dampness on the alter steps, the plaster crumbling away from the arch above the Jesse window, the dirty glass in the Jesse window and the pargeting. Bakers of Danbury had been asked to quote for this work.

Bakers' quote totalling £4,600 plus VAT for repairing the plaster, cleaning the window and the pargeting was discussed. Bakers' advice that all this work would require multi-platform scaffolding and it would be cost effective to carry out the three areas of work in succession was reflected in the quote. After further discussion we agreed to accept Bakers of Danbury's quote and to seek the PCC's authorisation to proceed with the work. **ACTION: D. FROST and P. SAVILL**

6. CHURCH SUPPORT GROUP FINANCES AND MEMBERSHIP

Harold reported on our current financial situation. We now have £3,370.59 in the bank. The outstanding membership renewals are to be chased. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**

7. PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Penny reported on the various matters discussed at the APCM and PCC meetings held on 27 April. The church electoral roll now lists 12 people - nine from within the parish and three from outside the parish. The PCC comprises four members only – Revd Patrick, Revd Andy, David and Penny. Revd Celia's last church service in St Margaret's is on Sunday, 2 July.

8. FUND RAISING

U3A Church Tour – 8 May: The Rayleigh church group kindly gave a donation to our funds

Art Demonstration: The PCC has no objections to Susan and Jennie holding an art demonstration in the church next summer. Susan requires dates to consider. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**

Music Concert: Penny to ask Liz to contact her daughter to see if Cantate would organise a concert next summer. *(Since the meeting Liz has confirmed the choir her daughter supports performs two concerts only a year and organising a concert in St Margaret's would not be possible.)*

Soul Appreciation: Tim Boem is willing to organise another soul appreciation event in the church.

Song Cycle: Penny to check to see if this group would be willing to organise a fund raising event in St Margaret's next summer. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**

9. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Monday, 11 September 2017 at 11am.