MINUTES OF THE CHURCH SUPPORT GROUP COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN

ST MARGARET’S CHURCH ON WEDNESDAY 1 MARCH 2017

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

APOLOGIES: Revd Celia Parkes

1. NOTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2016

These were agreed as a correct record.

2 MATTERS ARISING NOT ON THE AGENDA

Minute 2 Matters Arising

NADFAS (1976 report on St Margaret’s church): The Essex Records Office (ERO) has a copy of the NADFAS report - location: HQ3B335A4. Notes: 192.168.252.8. The report can be photocopied. First page £2.50 and subsequent pages £1.50 each. For a fee of £12 we can take a camera to the ERO and photograph the report.

3. PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Penny reported on the various matters discussed at the PCC meeting held on 26 January which included:

2016 Accounts: The financial summary for the year 2016 presented to the PCC showed an income of £8,122 and an expenditure of £9,525.

Church Cleaning: A spring clean has been organised for Saturday, 1st April at 10am. A request for volunteers to join a spring clean working party will appear in the March edition of Margaretting News. The PCC agreed to ask the Church Support Committee if it would be willing to monitor the cleaning.

Churchyard Maintenance: The PCC noted the Church Support Committee has a list of volunteers willing to help maintain the churchyard. The PCC agreed to ask the Church Support Committee to oversee the maintenance of the churchyard.

Fund Raising: The PCC is looking to hold a flower festival in the church in 2018. Liz Lawrence suggested the event be combined with a concert in the church. Liz volunteered to approach Cantate.

Church Repairs (dampness problem): The question of whether or not a faculty is needed for the exterior work had not been answered. **See Minute 6 below**.

We noted the PCC is due to meet again at 7.30pm on Thursday, 23 March 2017 and this year’s APCM is scheduled for Thursday, 27 April.

**The PCC’s request for the Church Support Committee’s support in monitoring the church cleaning and maintaining the churchyard was discussed and agreed.**

4. CHURCH SUPPORT GROUP FINANCES AND MEMBERSHIP

Harold reported on our current financial situation. We now have £4,139 in the bank. This includes £660 from renewal membership fees/donations, £172 from Margaretting Friends and £800 from a legacy.

The advantages of telephone banking for checking bank balances were discussed. It was unanimously agreed to register the account for telephone banking and that Harold be the authorised named person. **ACTION: H. TAYLOR**

5. CHURCHYARD IMPROVEMENTS AND MAINTENANCE

Front side and rear paths: We agreed the improvements to the paths should wait until the work to widen the sweep in the drive to the right of the porch is completed. We further agreed the Support Group would pay the labour costs for the widening of the drive. Harold and David agreed to organise and oversee the work. **ACTION: D. FROST AND H. TAYLOR**

Damaged Gravestone: We noted Michael, assisted by Harry Blurton, had pushed the gravestone back into place. We agreed to keep a watch for further damage.

Compost bin and signage: The work (new bin, signage and planting) to the compost area is finished. We noted Houghton’s invoice for £900 had been paid by Harold. Authorisation was given for Harold to be reimbursed from Support Group funds.

We agreed to write to Harry Blurton to thank him for organising and installing the new sign and to Tim Boem to thank him for donating the evergreen shrubs. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**

Michael reported plastic bits and pieces are still being dumped in the bin despite the sign asking folk to take home their non-compostable material. Michael agreed to write a short piece for April’s newsletter on the improvements made and the rules of the churchyard. **ACTION: M. SCOTT**

Grass, Hedges and Trees: Chelmsford’s Tree Officer has confirmed there are no Tree Preservation Orders on the trees in the churchyard. Michael agreed to contact Patrick Wreathal to confirm the date for pruning and cutting back the boundary hedges. **ACTION: M. SCOTT**

Spring Working Party: Michael reported Jean Offord is not feeling well and for the time being unable to help maintain the designated area for cremated remains in the churchyard. David suggested the west and south boundaries of the churchyard need tidying. He agreed to come up with a date for the working party to meet. Penny is to send David the contact details for the names of the three volunteers (C. Woods, Angus Macfarlane and Mark Batson) who have expressed an interest in helping to maintain the churchyard. **ACTION: D. FROST AND P. SAVILL**

6. CHURCH BUILDING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Porch drainage: We discussed Ian Houghton’s proposal and estimated cost to improve the drainage system to allow the surface water to be routed round the porch into the existing church gullies and drains. Drawings illustrating his proposal were circulated at the meeting. The question of whether there would be a need for an up-stand to the porch entrance was discussed also. We agreed to monitor the effectiveness of the existing drain in the porch. After further discussion we agreed to accept Ian Houghton’s quotation and for Harold to authorise the work. **ACTION: H. TAYLOR**

Roof tiles and gutters: R M Maintenance’s estimate has been accepted and we are waiting for them to start work to replace the missing tiles.

Dampness Problem: We noted that David had been authorised by the PCC in November to contact Bakers of Danbury to agree the dates for the remedial work to begin. David reported Bakers had been asked to measure up for the new drainage hopper. Penny confirmed Revd Celia had not applied for a faculty.

*Since the meeting information received from Bakers indicates a faculty may be needed for the external work because the new bin will be slightly larger The matter of whether a faculty is needed has now been referred to Archdeacon Elizabeth.*

Spring Clean: We agreed to ask Linda Elphick if there were any areas in the church that needed special attention. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**

7. FUND RAISING

Susan Keeble has mentioned organising an art demonstration in the church. Michael will contact Susan to discuss this. **ACTION M. SCOTT**

David reported he had been in church when visitors arrived and he had been happy to share his knowledge of the church with them. The visitors were U3A members and asked if David would be prepared to give ‘a guided tour’ to other U3A members. The U3A Rayleigh Church Group is due to visit the church on Monday, 8 May at 11am.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Vestry: There are a lot unused items being stored in this area, for example, a number of pasting boards. These had been used at a craft event held in John Currie’s barn many years ago. We agreed to ask the PCC for authority to remove them – either by selling or taking them to the recycling centre. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**

9. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 26 April 2017 at 11am.