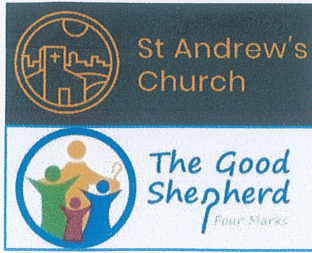


21 January 2025  
Howard Wright



**The Parish of Medstead and Four Marks**  
**Minutes of a PCC Meeting**  
**Tuesday 3rd December 2024,**  
**6.30pm meal at the Vicarage**  
**8pm meeting at Church of the Good Shepherd**

**Present:** Howard Wright (Chair), Debby Barnes, David Duffin, Jeremy Griggs, Jackie Jurd, Frank Maloney, Pam Maloney, Bob Meekums, Jill Williams, David Williams (Secretary)

- 1. Welcome and Apologies**  
Howard welcomed everyone to the eighth PM&FM PCC meeting of 2024  
Apologies were received from Andrew Walters, Peter George-Jones, Timothy James, John Lofthouse, Ian Trotter.  
Tracey George-Jones had been unhappy about the reporting of a Safeguarding issue at Medstead CofE Junior School and of the discussion of Parish finances at the previous two meetings. It was with sadness that PCC received her letter of resignation with immediate effect.  
Peter George-Jones had written an open letter to the Parish informing of his intention to stand down as Churchwarden with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024.
- 2. Worship and Prayer**  
Howard led us in prayers and responsive readings, selected from the CofE Evening Prayer (Contemporary) for 3<sup>rd</sup> December.
- 3. Declarations of (Financial) Interest**  
None
- 4. PCC Meetings of ~~30<sup>th</sup> April 2023~~**
  - a. Meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024
    - i. Addition of missing contribution under item 11b, Safeguarding  
PCC received revised minutes of that meeting, containing additional report of discussion about a missing DBS check on the Parish Youth and Children’s Minister by Medstead CofE Junior School. Howard reported that the school was now making the appropriate application.
    - ii. Approval of Minutes – doc: *PCC Minutes 24-10-15 (Revised).pdf*  
These revised minutes were approved *nem con*.
    - iii. Matters arising  
Howard reported that the Head Teachers of both CofE Junior Schools in the Parish had given notice of resignation w.e.f. Summer 2025. It is hoped that with the long lead time, successors might be recruited in time for the start of Autumn Term 2025.
  - b. Meeting of 12th November 2024
    - i. Approval of Minutes – doc: *PCC Minutes 24-11-12.pdf*  
The minutes of the extra PCC meeting were approved *nem con*.
    - ii. Matters arising  
No matters arising not covered by the agenda of this meeting.

## 5. Clergy Wellbeing

doc: *Deanery Reps - 24.11.20 Meeting notes.pdf*

Pam outlined the discussion noted from the meeting. The biggest sources of stress for Howard were the absence of a Treasurer and a Safeguarding Officer – the latter indirectly affecting Howard because it took away some of Matt's time.

Angela's voluntary support for 3-4 hours pw was very welcome but because she had another job her time at the office could not be regular.

Frank asked if Small Groups could pick up more of the Pastoral Visiting. Howard reported that Esther Lailey, a regular at St. Andrew's, was already helping in this role at and had received her DBS clearance but felt unable to lead a parish Pastoral Team.

Jeremy asked about the legitimacy of other members of the Parish who did not have Bishop's Permission taking communion to those who could not for good reason come to services. Howard said that would it was possible for those authorised by PCC to take communion to people in their homes, but that for services, the current policy in the Diocese was that only Licensed Lay Ministers, or in case of extreme urgency a Churchwarden, was allowed to take that responsibility.

## 6. LCG Meetings

- a. St Andrew's – doc: *Notes of a meeting of St Andrews LCG 2024-11-14.pdf*

In addition to the discussion recorded at that meeting, a quote for necessary repairs to both the St Andrew's church and church hall roofs had been received from Henry Feltham at HCF Roofing. Approval for the spend of £6.5k was sought from PCC as this amount exceeded the £500 limit that LCGs could authorise. Questions were raised about:

- whether VAT was additionally payable,
- if permission was needed from the Diocese, and
- whether it was appropriate to draw on CCLA funds for the work.

The LCG would check on Faculty regulations about these issues. Howard **proposed** and Frank **seconded** that the spend be allowed anyway. **Agreed nem con.**

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Note following the PCC meeting:

Money needed to be released from CCLA eventually to cover this. It was therefore proposed that the CCLA account should be closed and all money transferred to the existing St Andrew's bank account with NatWest (the nominated account for withdrawals from CCLA).

Peter drew up a formal **proposal**, to which all PCC members were asked via email for their agreement:

*That the CCLA account that holds St Andrew's invested reserves is closed forthwith and the fund's transferred to the St Andrew's NatWest account, in line with the mandated rules.*

*That Wilma Hainsworth and Sarah Rees, currently signatories on the CCLA account, previous but not current members of the PCC, be given authority by the PCC to administer that transfer as soon as is possible.*

PCC **agreed** unanimously to authorise Wilma Hainsworth and Sarah Rees to administer the proposed transfer of all funds from CCLA to St Andrews' NatWest account.

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- b. COGS – no meeting had taken place since the previous main PCC meeting.

## 7. Christmas

Many events are in preparation, particularly with local children's nurseries and the parish schools coming into their local church buildings for Christmas events. Services are planned in one of the two local care homes.

Two outdoor events will run (weather permitting): Medstead Trees at St Andrew's led by Howard and Helena, and carol singing outside the shops in Four Marks.

There will be COGS 'Bumps and Babies', 'Tots', Messy Church, two Carol services, 'Tea & Praise'.

Finally, there are Christmas Eve Crib and Christingle services concurrent in both our buildings, midnight communion and Christmas morning services. Bishop David will be presiding at St Andrew's on Christmas Day.

## 8. Finance

- a. Outstanding questions following the Extra-PCC

Howard spoke to a document: *PCC Finance Proposal Document - November 2024.docx*. There are three main proposals:

1. The parish-wide deficit appears to be running at about £4.5k pcm. There had been an encouraging response to an appeal through the weekly newsletter and in services, with about £20k promised since the end-of-October figures had been calculated. Bob asked about how much of that new giving might be augmented through Gift Aid. Howard agreed to ask Tori.  
It is proposed that we cover the immediate deficit from existing funds, COGS having received back from the Diocese the £55k formally on deposit there. Frank observed that we will then be in a position not to have to report a deficit to the Charity Commission when making our Annual Return.  
Howard formally **proposed** that that we cover the cost for any deficit from the monies held in cash in the COGS bank account. Frank **seconded** the proposal. It was agreed **unanimously**.
2. Everyone agreed that the parish needs a Treasurer. The intention from the previous meeting to set up a Finance group to prepare the ground has not materialised. A few suggestions were made about external individuals experienced in advising churches on change in financial management, but nobody suitable and available was found.  
Howard reported back from meeting with Diocesan Stewardship Adviser, Rev Georgi Thompson Leask. She will try to find someone from another church who can be seconded to us for 2-3 months, giving us help to get the accounts into order for the new Benefice. It might then be easier for someone to step into the ongoing role of Treasurer. Howard had given a warning to the Diocese that in our present situation we might need to reduce our CMF contribution – we currently pay our full amount.
3. Howard proposed the appointment of a small team, to:

- a. Identify the key questions and look for answers,
- b. Build on Frank's work in drafting a 2025 budget,
- c. Continue the conversation with Georgi T-L about raising income,
- d. Report to the January 21<sup>st</sup> meeting (i.e. within 6-7 weeks).

Membership of the team. Frank had already begun identifying issues. It was recognised that the group need not be limited to PCC members. David D agreed to ask particularly individuals with financial expertise. There should be at least one person from each congregation. Several names were mentioned, including some who are not on PCC but do have relevant financial experience. Jill urged that the team be constituted and able to meet at least once before Christmas, perhaps dividing the subtasks between them and putting everything together before the January meeting.

During the discussion, several additional points were made that might have resource implications.

- There seemed to be two unpalatable options available to the parish to cut expenditure, by reducing either CMF or staff. Both would be damaging to furthering the mission of the Parish.
- Opening of new Parish bank account.  
Paperwork (4 documents) submitted to NatWest. We await successful opening of the account.
- Jeremy observed that some income is generated by St Andrew's through the running of events and asked if that were COGS practice. Howard reflected on the long-standing policy of COGS not to charge for events and to see them as our gift to the community. But he had noticed that there was a £5 charge for the up-coming J John meeting which was sold out. So maybe COGS could learn from the experience of St Andrew's and others above this kind of fund-raising.
- Frank and Jeremy asked about employment of Youth Workers around the Deanery and Diocese. Virginia is the only Youth and Children's Minister in the Deanery and perhaps in any local church. Alton Parish of the Resurrection are trying to recruit, as is the Alresford Deanery. Odiham has just succeeded in doing so. Christchurch Winchester has several children's workers. A big problem in attracting candidates is the lack of available accommodation; Alresford recognise that fact in their recruitment efforts. Meanwhile as our Parish lies within Perin's School (Alresford) catchment area Virginia has been encouraged in links with them. Our whole area is particularly short of accommodation for single people; even Alton would be easier. After six months Virginia is still lodging with church members. Availability of transport is also posing problems
- Frank observed that the Church also supports outreach in the community through Kid's Church and Messy Church. Extra volunteers have been recruited to support that work. It's in line with the vision shared at our Leaders' Day in May – showing God's love to everyone.
- Messy Church at COGS is full, so hasn't been announced at St Andrew's before. There is a possibility of starting a smaller monthly family event in Medstead and some members there are experienced with similar activities. Together with start-up staff support from the Parish, it could be introduced to the St Andrew's local community.

- To the surprise of members, Frank had discovered that “Bumps and Babies” and the Toddler Group reach as many families as does Messy Church. These are also run by staff and volunteers and need significant resources to continue.
- Jill observed that while some parishes would receive further clergy support for Family and Children’s work, paid for out of the Diocesan Common Mission Fund (CMF), our Benefice is paying full CMF and additionally paying our own staff. She asked Howard to draw this inequity to the Stewardship Advisor.

- b. Financial Statement to end of October 2024, and  
 c. Preliminary Budget for FY 2025 – including financing this budget.  
 Frank presented his draft for a budget for 2025 in two documents:

*Frank's DRAFT budget - Notes for PCC v2.docx*

*Frank's DRAFT budget - 25 Draft Budget for Dec PCC .1.xlsx*

He had found that some £7k of expenditure on St Andrew’s bells had been financed outside of the Parish accounts, being paid by Friends of St Andrew’s Church (FOSAC). Thus it should not be included under parish expenditure in the present financial year.

As it had not been possible for PCC members to study the documents in detail, Howard asked that rather than examining them in the meeting, they should be used as the basis for the new Finance Group’s discussion.

- d. Request for support from Weston Church Youth Project  
 doc: *WCYP Fundraising Letter 1.4.pdf*  
 It was agreed that, in our current position we are unable to provide financial support for the project. At Jeremy’s suggestion, PCC will write back indicating that while we cannot provide finance, we offer our prayer support.

**9. Safeguarding**

No issue to report.

**10. Health and Safety**

Frank spoke to paper *24.12.03 Health & Safety Rpt.docx*.

Suggestions were made about who is available who is portable appliance testing (PAT) certified. Mick Collins is to be approached.

Lightning conductor checking was referred back to the COGS LCG.

**11. Any Other Business**

(to be notified before the meeting)

None notified.

**12. Date of Next Meeting**

PCC: Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025, 7.30pm at St Andrew’s Church Hall

**13. Closing Prayers**

Howard closed the meeting with prayer at 10pm