Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting of St Swithun's Church, Martyr Worthy followed by the Annual District Church Meeting, both immediately following Evensong at 6.00pm on Sunday 12th March 2023

Present: Sara Mason (Acting Chairman for the meeting and Churchwarden), Robin Greenwood (Churchwarden), Rolls and Verity Coleman, Peter Collings, Simon Ffennell , Guy Green, Gilly Greenwood, Andrew Impey, Liz Platt, Theo and Judith Mezger, John and Jane Prince, Richard and Lesley-Anne Ritchie, Richard and Amanda Seymour, Lee and Pauline Tovell, Philip and Emily Windsor-Aubrey and The Revd. Peter Walker, our Rector.

ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING

Welcome: The Revd. Peter welcomed everyone to both meetings, noted various highpoints at St Swithun's during the last year and thanked everyone for all that do for St Swithun's.

Chairman of the Meetings: Sarah Mason ("SM") said that Liz Platt "LP"), the Chairman of Martyr Worthy DCC, would prefer not to chair the meetings. It was agreed that SM would chair the meeting in her place.

SM went on to say that LP also wished to retire as Chairman of the DCC. SM thanked LP for all that she has done as Chairman of Martyr Worthy DCC and presented LP with a bunch of flowers on behalf of everyone. LP thanked everyone for the flowers.

Churchwardens: SM said that Robin Greenwood ("RG") would be standing down after eight years, two beyond the normal six, and that, with no one willing to put their name forward as a replacement, Theo Mezger ("TM") had generously offered, if invited, to stand for one year to bridge a gap and give SM and Simon Ffennell ("SF ") the operational support they are seeking. TM was thanked for his very generous offer.

It was proposed by John Prince and seconded by Simon Ffennell that Sarah Mason should be nominated again as a Churchwarden (this will be SM's fifth year); agreed. It was also proposed by Sara Mason and seconded by Simon Ffennell that Theo Mezger should be nominated as a Churchwarden; agreed.

Sidespersons: SF submitted a proposed list of sidespersons: Verity Coleman, Simon Ffennell, Guy Green, Robin & Gilly Greenwood, Andrew & Katherine Impey, John & Joanna Lang, Sara Mason, Liz Platt, John Prince, Robert & Joanna Sutcliffe, Angela Wheeler, Philip & Emily Windsor-Aubrey. The list was approved.

ANNUAL DISTRICT CHURCH MEETING

Apologies: Apologies were received from John and Nicky Barber, Katherine Impey and John and Joanna Lang.

Minutes: The Minutes of last year meeting on 13th March 2022 were approved. There were no matters arising which are not discussed below.

Chairman's report: SM wished to record how much the late John Platt had done for the church including having been Chairman of the Friends of St Swithun's. SM also repeated that LP was standing down as Chairman of the DCC and once again thanked LP for all that she has done.

SF also repeated that RG is retiring as a Churchwarden and thanked RG for all that he has done. SF added his thanks and said that he much appreciated RG's support as Churchwarden over the last eight years, as a member of the PCC over the last nine or ten years and for being on the DCC for 18 years and carrying out various executive roles and tasks throughout going back to 2005 when he started as Martyr Worthy's Treasurer in the early days after the merger. SF then presented RG with a present of a gift voucher at the

Rod Box, a gift voucher at Hilliers and a bottle of Churchwardens Arminac. RG thanked everyone for their very kind and generous presents and went to say that he had much enjoyed his time, was not going away and was willing to continue to sit on the DCC if invited but would wish to do so in a non-executive capacity.

SM then thanked all those who in a myriad number of ways had contributed to the running and maintenance and of the church, including Cathy Dickinson's team of cleaners, Lizzie Reid's team of flower arrangers, those who sing in SF's wonderful and much commented upon choir at Evensong, our bell ringers where SF has recruited Kelly Marriage and James and Libby Christie to join Vera and Peter Collings as part of our band of bellringers, those who help maintain the churchyard, including Lee Tovell who maintains the edges in the Churchyard, and those who open and close the church each day.

RG also wished to thank John Prince who banks collections, Paulene Tovell for laundering altar cloths, those who act as sidesmen, lesson readers, intercessors and chalice assistants, those who make coffee, our PCC representative, DCC members and last, but not least, our Verger.

Fabric and major repairs: RG reported that 2022 was another quiet year as a result of no major repairs needing to be done , apart from some storm damage to some tiles on the vestry roof and the main roof above it costing £816. Our 2022 Quinquennial Inspection took place on 7th April 2022 and revealed that no other major repairs were currently needed. We also felled a dangerous ash tree with ash dieback overhanging the lane in May 2022 which cost £360. Following the closure of Seymour & Bainbridge in May 2022, the PCC appointed Fiona Hudd at the Radley Partnership in January this year as the new reporting church architect for St Swithun's Church.

Finance: RG reported that MW's fabric fund stood at £17,277 as 31.12.2022, down slightly from £17,945 as at 31.12.21. This was mainly due the above expenditure of £1,176 on repairs, offset by the reimbursement of the outstanding VAT on church repairs in 2021 (£391) and Philip Windsor-Aubrey's woodwork sales (£123).

RG said the Treasurer will be saying in his annual finance report and at the forthcoming APCM that the Parish's planned giving is not yet at a level that will allow the Parish to operate at a surplus given the deficit forecast for 2023 and the fall in fundraising income over the last few years, and that the Parish needs to increase planned giving by 30% and will be working during the current year with The Revd. Peter to seek to achieve this.

Fundraising: RG reported that the profits from the second and third lectures of the 2021/22 Martyr Worthy Lecture Series, which were reported on last year, of £3,165 appear in the 2022 accounts, as does Philip Winsor-Aubrey's woodwork sales in 2022 of £123 for which we are most grateful.

RG said that it hoped that we can continue to hold the Martyr Worthy Lecture Series and that Gilly Greenwood is in discussions with various people to try and put a group together to organize it.

West Window: SF reminded everyone of the background and updated the meeting on where we have got to with the proposal to replace the glass in the west window with two new engraved panes. SF said that Tracey Sheppard has worked up a design in conjunction with the DCC which he then showed to those present and which he said the DCC are now happy with.

RG said that we have yet to firm up on the cost, but our current guestimate is in excess of £30,000, and probably c£32,000 plus a contingency to cover inflation. RG went on to say that we would not be able to look to the Itchen Valley Parish's existing funds, including the Martyr Worthy's Restricted Fabric Fund which needs to be earmarked for future repairs to the church which is inevitable with an old building. The costs of the project would therefore need to be met from fundraising. RG also said in answer to a question, that being realistic, we would need to look to those who live in, or have lived, in Martyr Worthy.

RG said that the next step, providing the DCC is happy to continue with the proposal, would be to go back to the DAC and seek their art advisor's approval of the design and then, assuming that they are happy with it, seek PCC permission to apply for a faculty. We would then apply for a faculty, which application will need to signed off by our Church Reporting Architect, and seek pledges while the faculty application is being considered. Then once we have received a faculty and pledges to cover the cost, we would seek PCC approval to commence the work subject to calling in the pledges and the money having been received.

In the meantime, the costs to date of £1,521 have been underwritten and paid for by members of the DCC.

A point was raised about whether we could proceed with the project while there was uncertainty over whether we could find two Churchwardens. SM said that the DCC have given thought to this important question; that the church has been well maintained; our 2022 Quinquennial Inspection had not revealed any major potential liabilities; that it was right to commemorate HM Queen Elizabeth II' reign. It was also pointed out that the church has been around for over 900 years and people will have been considering similar projects from time to time in the past in times of uncertainty. It was also observed that the church will look very different with the iron bars in the existing west window removed and the glass engraved, but the window should also attract interest in St Swithun's Church from outside the parish from both churchgoers and non-churchgoers, including followers of Tracey Sheppard.

Friends of St Swithun's Report: Guy Green ("GG") , who has succeeded the late John Platt as Chairman of the Friends, gave a brief report. GG thanked John Platt for all that he had done, including having been Chairman for the last 10 years. He said that the Friends is now in its 14th year having been set up in 2009, has a growing list of supporters who currently stand at 83, has provided c£30,000 of support to date and currently has a cash balance of c£42,000. GG said that as Chairman of the Friends he is happy to respond to any request to help with the West Window, but he could not speak for his fellow trustees.

Elections and appointments:

- Nominations for membership of the PCC: It was proposed by Sara Mason and seconded by Simon Ffennell that Nicky Barber should be nominated as Martyr Worthy's representative on the PCC: agreed. No one put their name forward to be an alternate.
- DCC membership election: SM repeated that LP wished to retire as Chairman of the DCC but was happy to remain on the DCC if invited and continue as Sacristan. SM repeated that RG was willing to continue to sit on the DCC if invited. SM said that Fiona Coulter was willing to join the DCC and was elected. Sara Mason, John Barber, Peter Collings, Simon Ffennell, Robin Greenwood, Andrew Impey and Liz Platt were also re-elected to the DCC. In the absence of anyone putting their name forward, SM agreed to be Acting Temporary Chairman until a new Chairman has been found. The post of DCC Secretary also remains vacant.
- Deputy Churchwardens: The appointments of Liz Platt and Simon Ffennell were approved.
- Verger: The appointment of Simon Ffennell was approved.
- Sacristan: The appointment of Liz Platt was approved.

Resourcing and future of St Swithun's Church: SM said that, if Martyr Worthy Church is to continue to exist, we all need to step up to the plate and this includes people becoming Churchwardens and joining the DCC and taking on the roles of Chairman and Secretary and performing the various executive tasks involved. RG added that we also need to fill vacancies in some of the other supporting roles where cracks are beginning to emerge.

In answer to a question, SF said that he is happy to continue as Verger providing Martyr Worthy has two Churchwardens as the burden on him would be too heavy with only one. SF also said that Martyr Worthy has run its ship very well up to now and he does not want to see it all fall apart with its obvious implications for the future of St Swithun's and all we love.

Philip Windsor-Aubrey said everyone needs to consider becoming a Churchwarden and this is Martyr Worthy's wake-up call and that we have one year to put things right.

AOB:

SM said that it looks as if Martyr Worthy's Patronal Service will be held at Evensong on Sunday 2nd July.

SM thanked The Revd. Peter for all that he does for us and the Parish.

SM was thanked for chairing the meeting and all that she does.

Ref: MW ADCM 2023 Minutes.docx 16.3.2023