



Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership, Milton Keynes

Minutes of the Trustees' Meeting held on Thursday 20 September 2012 at 7.45 pm at Willen, St Mary Magdalene church

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1. Opening Prayer

Revd Paul Smith reflected that today is the feast day of St John Coleridge Patterson, missionary martyred 1871 in Melanesia. He thanked God for all the faithful servants who continue to promote the gospel, including those who even today risk their lives. He concluded by reading the collect for the day.

2. Advance Notification of Any Other Business

Safeguarding, NETwork magazine, wedding disbursements, Stantonbury youth centre and Bouncy Castle, Publicity for Christmas services, Great Linford Church School registration of Trustee Land

3. PCC Meeting

There was no new PCC business, but Revd Andy Jowitt reported that the defective lighting at St Lawrence's church had been replaced thanks to grant aid from the Cross & Stable Charities.

4. Minutes of the Meeting on 14 June 2012 for approval

Revd Andy Jowitt said that the SET paper archives are maintained at Bradwell Chapel, not Bradwell Abbey (Matters Arising, item 5, paragraph 4). Subject to this correction it was proposed by Bob Cross and seconded by Revd Paul Smith that the minutes be accepted as a true record. Agreed *Nem. Con.*

5. Matters Arising

Appointment of Deputy Chairman of Trustees

No names had been put forward for this proposed appointment. Revd Andy Jowitt pointed out that in any case the New Constitution made no provision for such a position. Mike Morris reminded Trustees that both the Chairman and Secretary will retire at the next Annual Congregational Meeting and Maggie Prisk said that she would

have to relinquish her position as Treasurer since her husband, Adrian Prisk, will be becoming Treasurer of the Mission Partnership and there is the potential for conflict of interest (she did also say, however, that she might be prepared to once more take on the role of SET Chairman).

Reconsideration of Redaction of Minutes when published on Website

Present policy is that the names of those attending a meeting or giving apologies are removed from the Minutes as displayed on the stantonbury.net website. There was some opinion that names recorded within the minutes should also be removed. However, under Freedom of Information legislation SET are in any case obliged to

make available copies of their full minutes if requested. The Chairman proposed that he should set up a sub-group to consider what should be done. **Action: Mike Morris**

Archiving of SET documents, including digital storage

There appeared to be considerable uncertainty on how long SET documents should be retained and whether older material should be sent to Aylesbury for storage in County Archives. PCC legal requirements must be observed. Revd Peter Ballantine reported that much older material was currently stored at Great Linford Rectory, Revd Andy Jowitt said that this could be accommodated at Bradwell Chapel until final disposition was agreed. There was divergence of opinion on whether paper records could be replaced by digital storage and if so, by what type of media. The sub-group could be asked to make recommendations on appropriate action. **Action: Mike Morris**

6. Sharing Agreement for New Bradwell

Revd Paul Smith reported that the draft Sharing Agreement was held up until financial arrangements had been finalised regarding transfer of funds from the sale of the Methodist Chapel and also controversy on whether Baptist references should be to 'Denomination' or to 'Church'. The latter was a lesser problem, but he would contact solicitor Lee Coley to determine whether there was any progress regarding finances. Once the New Bradwell agreement is in place, agreements for the other five SEP churches could follow suit --- generally the agreement is a permitting rather than a limiting document. **Action: Revd Paul Smith**

New Bradwell Community Centre

Adrian Prisk said that the NBCC committee is working well and finances are in order, but Geoffrey Leaver solicitors require further information before they can proceed with drawing-up a new lease. Once a 5-year agreement is in place the committee can expect to obtain grant aid to put the building into good order for community use.

7. Revised Constitution for Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership

There appears to be no movement regarding this.

8. Finance

The accounts had been circulated by the Treasurer ahead of the meeting (copy attached). Overall results appeared to be satisfactory to date and the target of £124,000 to the Mission Partnership should be met. The Soup Run funds are now £315.38 in debt. It appears likely that at the forthcoming LEP Treasurers' meeting the 2013 target will be based on the original Stantonbury assessment rather than the 15% reduced sum offered for 2012.

Stewardship Advisors

Revd Peter Ballantine confirmed that Dr Julian Pedley would be willing to come to SEP churches to talk about stewardship. It is up to each church to invite him.

9. Reports

Chairman of Trustees

The report by Mike Morris had been circulated to Trustees (copy attached). He particularly drew attention to the information about the Christian Foundation and the need for more and better links with churches. He would be willing to act as intermediary for contact of Trustees with the organisation

Team Leader

Revd Peter Ballantine thanked members for their support and prayers for his on-going illness and treatment. The new Ministerial arrangements appear to be working well since the retirement of Revd Chris Collinge. Amy and Paul Bright, who have been stalwart supporters of the church in our area, are now moving to Devon. They will leave a significant gap in our Partnership. The visit by Bishop Alan Wilson yesterday had been greatly encouraging. It is hoped that delegates from SEP will be able to attend the Conference for Church Leaders in the New Year. The full report is attached.

Citizens:MK

Revd Chris Howden relayed a report (attached) from Revd Brian Howden. The Living Wage project appears to be gaining support from local businesses, but Affordable Housing is making slow progress. The City Safe campaign is suffering from internal disagreements. Financial constraints have meant that it is no longer feasible to employ Mohammed Suleman as a full-time organiser and a Trustee Committee has been formed to oversee continuance of the organisation. A decision will be needed soon on whether or not SEP should continue with membership.

10. Any Other Business

Safeguarding

Judy Thorp said that it is important to remember that this applies to vulnerable adults as well as children. Training meetings have been held for SEP member churches over the summer and, to date, representatives from Willen, Downs Barn and Great Linford have completed training. Vulnerability depends on circumstances and anyone may be included through emotional, spiritual or financial reasons. There does not seem to be any regular training for clergy, it was recognised that this needs to be remedied. Judy proposes to produce a safeguarding information poster for SEP churches and a new Reporting Form is to be made available so that concerns can be recorded as early as possible. It was agreed that the current survey from Oxford Diocese should be completed for the Partnership as a whole, also that the Team Leader should attend safeguarding meetings on behalf of SEP. The Secretary was asked to provide a copy of the new SEP logo to Judy for use in producing the poster. **Action: Secretary**

Publicity for Christmas Services: Local Radio

It is proposed that Heart FM Radio should be used to advertise services and times for all churches in the Milton Keynes area. If all churches/LEP's subscribe costs would be about £30 each. Normally the Mission Partnership coordinates newspaper advertisements. Better use should be made of the stantonbury.net website. There was general support for the idea of the radio project provided costs are kept close to the estimated sum.

Great Linford St Andrew's Church School: Registration of Trustee Land

Revd Peter Ballantine said that the Diocesan solicitors are offering to carry out the legal work to clarify with the Land Registry the ownership of the four parcels of land presently occupied by the school. Costs will be met by an outside Trust.

Youth Centre at Stantonbury

Revd Chris Howden reported that there is the possibility of being able to lease one of the empty shops for use as a Youth Centre. Planning consent for change of use has already been obtained. It is envisaged that the centre would incorporate a café and be open in the evenings with computers and a place where homework could be done. The landlords, Messrs Sainsbury's, are to be petitioned to recognise this as a Community

Facility by granting a minimum fee rent. It was agreed that SEP would give support to the concept so that it could be said that the local churches were in favour of the idea.

Bouncy Castle

Sandra Kennedy had written to say that the Bouncy Castle that was donated to Stantonbury by the Civil Parish had been a valuable asset but was now worn out and unsafe for further use. It was agreed that the castle should be disposed of.

NETwork Magazine

Revd Andy Jowitt reported that the summer edition of the magazine had been well received as well as a financial success. Paul Brookman can no longer devote as much time as formerly to the editorial work and advertising sales and volunteers to join an editorial team are now being sought. It is anticipated that the next issue will be in the New Year or perhaps just before Christmas if possible.

Wedding Disbursements

It was agreed that, after holding these for three years, they would be increased by a small amount from January 2013 to Verger: £37, Organist: £53 (Organ fund remaining at £25), Bellringers: £130

If the service is video-recorded, an extra charge of £78 is made (£53 to the organist and £25 towards the cost of church copyright and licence). Churches may still charge extra for heating, as long as it is actually put on where a charge is made. The heating charges are set by individual churches in SEP.

Regarding charges for singers to assist congregational singing, as a guideline, it has been suggested that where the arrangement is made through the minister, the cost could be in line with the amount paid to the verger, i.e. £37 (but doubled if recorded). In many cases, however, arrangements for a choir or singer will be made directly between the couple and the providers, in which case costs and payment will be directly between those parties.

11. Forward Dates

The next Standing Committee Meeting will be on 17 October 2012 at Downs Barn commencing at 2.30 pm. The next Trustees' Meeting will be on 22 November 2012 at Great Linford, St Andrew's Church at 7.30 for 7.45 pm.

12. Closing Prayer

Mike Morris led the thoughts of Trustees in thanks for guidance for current concerns and for positive decisions made.