

Notes of the Parish Open Meeting

held at 4pm on 13 May 07 in the Church Hall

Attending:

Paul Bishop (Chair), Fr Paul and 33 parishioners

Introduction

1. The Chair invited Fr Paul to open the meeting with a prayer

Approval of the record of the last meeting

2. The record was approved without amendment. Matters arising were dealt with under the remaining agenda items.

Financial Report

3. Tony Sloan presented the financial report details of which are at Enclosure 1. He explained that we are operating at a deficit primarily due to the works required to maintain the structure of the church and presbytery. This had caused a draw down of the reserve fund, which was currently at approx £25000 and was not sustainable in the long term. He also explained that the future projections recognised a significant loss of income from Papworth and an ongoing commitment to maintenance. Detail on the latter was added by Brian O'Hare. It was clear that the budget would need to be carefully managed this year and some additional targeted collections might be necessary to cover work on the interior of the church and the car park.

4. In response to a question Fr Paul explained that the proceeds from the sale of Papworth were being held by the diocese and would be until the overall way ahead in Papworth was known. Therefore they could not be assumed to be available for use in St Ives.

5. There was some debate about the level of bank charges incurred. It was apparent that this was due to the continuing need to deal with coin. This would ease if increasing use could be made of standing orders which also offered the opportunity of using the Gift Aid scheme. The discussion concluded that the Building and Finance Committee are doing their best to minimise unnecessary expenditure like bank charges.

Chairman's Report

6. The Chair commented that this had been a year of change particularly with the closure of Papworth. He outlined the involvement of the Steering group in the decisions and the development of a Parish Plan based on the Diocesan Pastoral Plan stating this plan was now well advanced. He noted the formation of a sub group consisting of John Bishop, Ellen Kemp and Fr Paul to deal with the provision of Mass and other issues associated with the planned future development at Northstowe.

7. He recognised the efforts of all the various groups which both raise funds and undertake other activities which bring us closer together as a community. In particular he highlighted the work of the Holy Land Committee, the Youth Group and Autumn Club and listed the various social events which had occurred throughout the past year.

8. He thanked the committee for their support in the last 12 months and stated that he was standing down from the committee as of this meeting having completed his 2 year tenure.

9. There were no questions.

10. A full version of the report is at Enclosure 2.

Election of New Members

11. The Chair noted there had been many changes in the committee and that the membership was different now from that elected 12 months ago because of the need to co-opt members to ensure each Mass remained represented. He suggested that Bridget Wells and Michael Sanderson who are currently co-opted should be proposed for election at this time. This was supported and each unanimously elected.

12. There remained a vacancy for the 11.00 am Mass representative and Elizabeth Barker was proposed and duly elected.

13. A list of the new committee members is at Enclosure 3.

Update on Northstowe

14. Ellen Kemp provided an update on Northstowe.

15. About 10,000 homes are planned to be built northwest of Cambridge and East of Longstanton and will fall within our parish. This will be the first new town to be built this century and the biggest since Milton Keynes in 1967. In comparison Camborne will have a total of 2600 houses when complete.

16. Planning approval is expected this summer and construction to start in 2008 with a 15-20 year phased development programme. A community centre could provide the venue for Mass from year 4 onwards. Further details are available on the South Cambridgeshire website @ www.scambs.gov.uk

17. Since the sub group had formed 6 months ago it has visited SCDC to review the plans, attended a 'Service Provider and Stakeholder Conference' and held a successful meeting with Bishop Michael and Priscilla Barlow, the County Ecumenical officer in April.

18. It has recommended

- a. Leafleting new homes when they are occupied to establish immediate contact.
- b. Developing a local network of support and weekday house masses when numbers are sufficient.
- c. Building the new Catholic Community as the overall project and other developments in the Diocese require.

19. These recommendations were noted and will be taken forward by the Steering Group.

20. In response to a question on developments at Longstanton, Ellen replied the group were concentrating on Northstowe but noted that there was every likelihood the green space between the two would be filled in as it is not going to be preserved.

21. Fr Paul thanked Ellen and John for their work and stated how essential it was to have support of this calibre to reduce his workload.

Ratification of the Parish Steering Group Constitution

22. The Chair outlined the minor amendments recommended by the Steering Group which covered three areas;

- a. Formalising the need for 2 Open meetings a year.
- b. Recognising the changes resulting from Papworth now being served from Huntingdon.
- c. Improvements in communication through the Grapevine and the church website.

23. These were approved and a revised constitution is at Enclosure 4.

Close

24. Fr Paul thanked the Chair for his help and support over the last 12 months during a difficult time.

25. The meeting closed with a prayer.



P R BISHOP
Chair

May 07

Enclosures

1. Finance Report
2. Chairman's Report
3. Steering Committee Membership
4. Revised Parish Steering Group Constitution

Enclosure 2

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE PARISH OPEN MEETING – May 07

1. This year has been one of considerable and significant change within the Parish. In particular we have seen the closure of the church of St Francis of Assisi in Papworth forced by the poor state of repair of the building after many years of neglect. This was a difficult time for many, including the committee itself which spent much time considering the various issues which arose and advising Fr Paul on the best way to deal with them. At the same time we continued to monitor the plans for the development of Northstowe which is within our Parish. The committee firmly believes will require further efforts and changes to ensure the anticipated Catholic population there is made to feel welcome. To respond to this challenge a small sub group has been formed consisting of Fr Paul, Ellen Kemp and John Bishop to keep track of things. Ellen will provide an update later in the meeting.

2. In other areas we have developed a Parish plan based on the Diocesan one outlining many of the things we might need to do. This plan recognises that the traditional role of the Parish priest has to change and we the people have to take greater responsibility for the other tasks which need to be done to support the church. We are generally well placed in this parish and many potential actions were quickly closed. Others produced some minor changes and the plan continues to be developed and implemented. One of our other considerations was whether we should replace the pews in the

church here at St Ives with chairs from Papworth – after much debate this was not agreed and an alternative solution to reducing the congestion which occurs in the aisle in front of the altar during weddings and funerals is now being pursued.

3. The Parish Steering committee is only one part of our church and at this point the work of the many groups in the Parish should be recognised.

a. The Holy Land Group continues to raise money to support projects in the Holy Land and in particular our twin parish in Aboud. It has raised almost £60,000 to date more than £20000 this year through generous donations, various fund raising events and initiatives. This money has been spent on supporting Palestinian students in the UK who are completing their studies here in the UK, the education of children in Aboud and supporting the community in Bethlehem in their time of desperate need. Last week we had the honour of a visit from the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Michel Sabah, who expressed his sincere gratitude for the work we do in this Parish.

b. The Youth group has also had a successful year with a steady increase in membership of young people between the ages of 11 and 14 years. The aim of the group is to allow our young people to socialise with other young Christians and to encourage them to take part in the life of the Parish. It is open to all young people in the Parish over the age of 11 and their non-Catholic friends. They have attended Diocesan youth events, such as "Hobble with the Bishop", which is a walk through Thetford Forest with Bishop Michael, ending with Mass and a B.B.Q. It is very encouraging that the non-Catholic members of the group attend the retreat and some of our Diocesan events. Six members of the youth group with Fr. Paul and three adults visited the Holyland. During the trip they spent two nights in the village of Aboud where we stayed with families and spent time with the young people of the village. The trip was enjoyable and unforgettable and the young people are keen to visit the Holyland again.

c. The Lunch Club which only runs for 9 months every year has raised over £1300 and supported good causes such as the Ebyon Trust, the Kanyike Project, the Red Cross, the De Paul Trust, East Anglian Air Ambulance, The Ridgeway School and Cancer Research UK. All are welcome.

4. There have been a number of social events not only supporting these causes but also looking to develop our church community; an evening enjoying a 'Taste of Palestine' run by the Youth Group, the traditional Parish Barbeque; a Ceilidh; a Christmas concert and a Quiz Night. The committee would like to thank all who have helped these events and all the groups run so successfully and helped bring us together as a community. It would also like ask those who are not involved consider whether they could help in any way. Many of the things that need to be done are neither difficult nor time consuming but they do need to be done. The Church is the people but equally the people are the Church.

5. Finally I would like to thank all those who have helped me as Chairman over the past twelve months in particular the committee itself which has gone through many changes of personnel for a variety of reasons. It has not been without its tensions and I never cease to be amazed at how much effort is so willingly given.

Paul Bishop
Chairman

Enclosure 3

List of Elected mass Representatives

5pm Ellen Kemp and Dot Wade
8am Michael Sanderson and Bridget Wells
11am Elizabeth Barker and John Bishop

Enclosure 4

Parish of the Sacred Heart – St Ives

Parish Steering Group

CONSTITUTION

Overview

The Parish Steering Group is accountable to parishioners and exists to:

- represent the views, concerns and suggestions of parishioners in the management of the parish's affairs;
- provide an additional line of two-way communication between the congregations at the parish churches, the parish priest and the diocese;
- facilitate and support open meetings of parishioners;
- advise the parish priest on the running of the parish, particularly in administrative matters.

There will be two Parish Open Meetings per year in the Spring and Autumn (normally in May and Nov) when a formal report of finances and proceedings will be provided. This will also be the forum at which members will be elected.

Membership of the Steering Group

The membership of the group comprises:

- the Parish Priest;
- parishioners nominated or elected by a parish open meeting on a basis which provides representation of the various parish communities, normally based on there being two representatives from each Mass;
- up to four co-opted members, to include one nominee from the parish finance committee, invited to join for their particular skills and experience, provided that a total of ten members is not exceeded.

The Steering Group will seek to maintain an appropriate balance of representation, skills and experience.

Membership of the committee will be deemed to have lapsed should a member miss two consecutive meetings without apologies.

The responsibilities and conduct of all Group members will be subject to the provisions of Canon Law, Diocesan Codes of Practice and the wishes of the parishioners as expressed through parish open meetings.

Operation of the Steering Group

- The Steering Group will appoint a Chairman (who need not be a member of the committee) at its first meeting following a change in membership at a Parish open meeting.
- The members will similarly appoint a Secretary (who need not be a member of the committee) who will produce notes of meetings according to normal minuting arrangements.
- Distribution of agendas, papers and notes will normally be by electronic means, with paper copies to those unable to receive or print electronic versions.
- Under the leadership of the Chairman, the Group will monitor and review implementation of past decisions and consider and make recommendations on any matters within its remit raised by the parish priest, other members or parishioners.
- The Steering Group will meet as often as it deems necessary and at least four times a year to conduct its business.
- A quorum for any meetings shall be fifty percent of the Group.
- In the event that a Group member cannot attend a particular meeting, there are no substitution arrangements. However, any Group member may nominate another Group member as a proxy for a single Group meeting, but not for two Group meetings in a row. Such a proxy arrangement shall be subject to the Chairman's approval and such approval will not be unreasonably withheld.
- In the absence of the appointed Chairman or Secretary at the start of a meeting, that meeting will commence its business by appointing a Chairman and/or Secretary for that meeting.
- Where votes are required, each member will have one vote. No casting vote is required as all decisions are recommendations to the parish priest who will make the final decision.
- The Group may appoint such sub-committees as it thinks appropriate with terms of reference and membership specified by the Group.
- Any recommendation from the Group or a sub-committee is subject to approval of the parish priest.

Communication

- A report of a meeting (or number of meetings) will appear in each issue of the parish magazine "The Grapevine" immediately. A member of the Steering Group will be appointed to liaise with the production team of "The Grapevine" to ensure effective communication between the Group and the parish.
- The minutes of the meeting will be made available on the notice boards of both churches within seven days after the meeting and published on the Parish website.

Periods of Office

- All ordinary members will be appointed for a two-year term and they may be re-appointed for a further two-year term. They may not be appointed for a third consecutive term.
- Co-opted members will be appointed on the same terms as ordinary members.

- For the avoidance of doubt, no Group member may hold office for more than a period of four years.
- Members of the Committee whose two-year period of office comes to an end, must resign and can only seek re-election in accordance with the rules of the Constitution.

Changing the Constitution

- This Constitution can be decided and amended by proposals which are supported by at least seventy-five per cent of the Group membership and are endorsed by the parish priest and the Open Meeting following the Group's decision, provided that any changes are consistent with Canon Law and Diocesan directives.
- This Constitution will be reviewed every five years.

May 2007

SACRED HEART PARISH
St. Ives, Cambridgeshire

Description	Actual 2006	Budget 2007	Actual 2005
Church Receipts			
Collections, etc	74,570	60,000	69,251
Grants	3,028	0	2,397
Interest	1,355	1,000	980
Rent	3,288	0	4,493
Repository (net)	612	500	229
Candles (net)	1,424	1,500	1,500
Chaplaincies	1,750	2,028	2,068
Other:-			
Stipends	1,812	1,800	1,206
Stole Fees	2,527	2,500	3,224
Hall / fundraising	2,445	2,500	1,738
Marriage Prep	210	0	240
RE Co-ordinator	0	0	4,000
Other	928	1,000	1,592
Sub total	93,949	72,828	92,918
Church Payments			
Property:			
Main./Repairs - Church	28,470	20,000	19,571
Main./Repairs - House	10,602	10,000	2,899
Rent / Rates	1,909	2,000	1,434
Power	3,131	3,200	3,437
Insurance	1,380	1,500	1,925
Other	2,250	2,500	8,024
Bank Charges	640	700	0
Priests, etc	16,889	13,000	12,283
Levies	22,525	18,200	20,742
Admin., etc	17,007	17,500	12,412
Hall fees (Brown & Co)	1,058	0	0
Trips	203	0	722
Confirmation / 1st Comm. Expenses	671	0	(290)
Other	1,057	1,000	1,045
Sub total	107,792	89,600	84,204
Church Surplus / (Deficit)	(13,843)	(16,772)	8,714

Notes - Actual 2006

1. Collection increase due to more parishioners gift aiding their contributions.
2. Main./Repairs includes Sacristy £14.0k, Tree Felling £3.5k, Windows £8.5k and Electrical Work £7.5k.
3. Deficit funded by existing cash reserves - BUT THIS CANNOT CONTINUE.
 Cannot afford to run down reserves as there will always be essential expenditure required for repairs, etc. We need to be careful with regard to non essential work and to continue to control our costs.

Notes - Budget 2007

1. The decrease in Collections compared to 2006 is due to the closure of St Francis in Papworth. This is also the reason why there is no longer any rental income.
2. Conversely, there are saving because of the above in the expense headings covering Priests, etc and Levies. The latter is based on percentages of collections received.

General

1. The more Parishioners who gift aid their collection, the greater will be our income.
2. The more that Parishioners make their donation electronically (ie by Standing Order / Direct debit) the lower will be our bank charges. The bank charges us for paying in notes and coins.