

St Peter's, Loudwater
Annual Review
and 108th Annual Parochial Church Meeting
held on Tuesday 25th April 2023



Present: Danny Rodgers (Vicar and Chairman), Jon Shallow (Churchwarden); and 75 other people.

Apologies received from Helen & Steven Andrews, Sue Breeze, Sue Dalby, Peter Dusek, Heather Joy, Gill & Rod LeRoux, Colin Murray, Dinah Roberts, Sue Smithies and Nick Weiss,

1. Opening Worship

2. Welcome & Introduction

Danny Rodgers welcomed everyone to the APCM and Jon Shallow opened in prayer. Everyone on the Electoral Roll had received an agenda, minutes from last year's APCM and a copy of the annual report and accounts. Danny then outlined the rules of conduct regarding voting. Tracey Dalby was then appointed as APCM & PCC secretary. Proposed by Ann Cartland and seconded by Richard Smithies.

3. Meeting of Parishioners (Vestry meeting): resolution and election of Wardens

While the Vestry meeting is technically a separate meeting, in practice it normally occurs immediately before the APCM. Its purpose is to elect Churchwardens. We elect two Churchwardens annually. Danny outlined the role of the Churchwardens and thanked Jon Shallow & Sue Smithies for their support to him. Sue Smithies is standing down after serving as Churchwarden for six years. Unfortunately, she was unable to attend and Danny intends to thank her publicly for all her service once she is well.

Two nominations had been received for the two positions of Churchwarden: Jon Shallow (proposed by Sue Smithies, seconded by Peter Loadman) and Nicola Rayner (proposed by Jon Shallow, seconded by Sue Smithies). Everyone was in favour.

There was a time of prayer for Jon and Nicola.

4. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

No amendments were needed for The Minutes from last year's APCM. Proposed by Alan Biggs and seconded by Paul Breeze. The Minutes for the 2022 APCM were then approved. There were no matters arising.

5. Deanery Synod Elections

The Deanery is a collection of local churches, Danny explained the role of the Deanery Synod. Four representatives are elected to the Deanery for a period of three years.

Ann Cartland is standing down as a Deanery Synod representative this year after serving there for 40 years. She was thanked for her long service.

There were four nominations for the four vacancies: Ian Cheffy (proposed by Jon Shallow, seconded by Frank Boreham), Peter Loadman (proposed by Jon Shallow, seconded by Tracey Dalby), Nigel Peach (proposed by Jon Shallow, seconded by Richard Smithies) & Jonathan Walne (proposed by Peter Loadman, seconded by Nigel Peach) . Everyone was in favour and they were duly elected.

6. PCC Elections

The PCC play a vital role in helping to discern the vision for the church and ensuring that the church works well. Danny thanked Alan Biggs, Elaine Faulkner & Jan Hill for serving on the PCC.

There were five nominations for the PCC. These were Ann Cartland (proposed by Jon Shallow, seconded by Tracey Dalby), Daniel Joy (proposed by Geraldine Shiels, seconded by Peter Loadman), Geraldine Shiels (proposed by Emily Plumridge, seconded by Tracey Dalby), Howard Sinton (proposed by Jon Shallow, seconded by Kimberley Murray) & Angie Wilkie (proposed by Sue Smithies, seconded by Heather Flood). These were approved by the meeting and duly elected. The other current members for the PCC are Paul Breeze, Ben Gill and Heather Flood as Treasurer.

There was a time of prayer for all those elected to serve on the PCC and Deanery Synod.

7. Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Measures Jurisdiction Measure and Electoral Roll.

The Ecclesiastical Measures report had been approved by the PCC in March and had been circulated to all electoral roll members before the meeting. The electoral roll was available for inspection.

There was then a break for coffee and cake.

8. Vicar's Update and Mission Priorities Update

Danny outlined how the APCM is a good time to affirm our vision and remind us what it is as we celebrate what God has done. Our vision is to Love God and Love Loudwater. St Peter's exists to demonstrate the Love of God by being a source of spiritual hope, practical help and authentic community. We have five ministry priorities: Love Loudwater, Children & Youth, Worshipping Communities, Seniors Ministry and Discipleship. Our values describe who we are called to be. The real challenge is how have we embodied these values in the past year? Love is at the heart of the vision as love is at the heart of the Christian faith.

There had been many highlights over the past year. One particular one was the recent Easter weekend with the Funday seeing over five hundred people on site and the Sunday service rejoicing in the hope of the resurrection. It was a visible demonstration of the moves which we are making. We are on the road to being at the heart of the community. People are noticing and we are becoming a church without walls.

Danny thanked every person who has contributed to the vision over the past year. More importantly, all you do and give is seen by God.

If anyone had any questions regarding the vision they were encouraged to speak to Danny or a member of the staff team.

Kids, Youth & Families: Mark Humphries thanked everyone who had helped over the past year, They could not do what they do without everyone helping.

Thinking about what had been done over the past year there had been an astounding amount of community support. In Friday Club parents are now coming along to serve on the team.

Lunch Club was started with the Boxes of Hope initiative during lockdown. The Early Intervention Programme offers one-to-one with a child for a whole year and changes lives. The Youth community is growing and are doing all sorts of different things. They are joining with other local churches where up to sixty young people will meet together. They are also going to New Day again this year where you can see the impact of Jesus changing young people's lives. St Peter's Kids does a variety of things including water fights, building a community and giving the opportunity for the kids to hear the gospel. Most of the activities which are offered are funded through grants.

There is also Lighthouse Loudwater where all the kids who come to weekly things can meet for the week. Also Tuesday Tots and Friday Friends which are thriving. It is exciting to see what God has planned for the next year.

The Alpha for parents whose children attend Friday Club had seen three parents exploring their faith. There are plans to run another course. It is great to see people engaging spiritually as well as having fun.

Danny thanked Mark & Charlotte for all they do and also all the volunteers. There was a time of prayer for the ministry to Youth and Children.

Seniors: Richard Smithies reminded everyone that the Senior's ministry had been going on for at least thirty-five years. There is an amazing team and he extended a big thank you to them.

The numbers coming to term time meetings are increasing with over thirty most weeks now. He extended a thank you to those who come along to do the talks and lead the worship. The monthly tea parties are the main outreach opportunities with over fifty people. There have been a variety of talks on topics from Mercy Ships to Hearing Dogs for the Deaf to Alpha International.

There are now termly Holy Communion services followed by lunch. They are also looking to introduce craft sessions.

They would love to form a larger team so that they can visit those members who can't get to St Peter's to chat and pray with them. If anyone was interested in helping with that they should let Richard know.

Danny thanked Richard. He underlined that both the Youth and Kids ministry and the ministry to seniors are equally important and both demonstrate our vision.

Danny and Alison: Jon Shallow then thanked Danny for all that he is doing at St Peter's. Three years ago when he first arrived no one could imagine the curveball of the pandemic which was about to be thrown at us. We have a wonderful team in Danny and Alison who works behind the scenes and we thank them both.

It is wonderful to sit and listen to Danny because what he says comes from his heart. He is the power house behind the vision. He has a wise head on his shoulders and we appreciate his wisdom. After a presentation of flowers and a gift everyone stood and prayed for Danny, Alison & the family.

9. **Finance:**

Heather Flood, the treasurer, thanked the Church for their giving especially in the current financial situation. She also thanked Jan Hill for all her work as Gift Aid Secretary as well as Nick Weiss and Tracey Dalby.

We received £307k in donations, with no legacies last year. The total income was £375k, higher than forecast by £55k due to one-off gifts, a VAT refund grant from the building works on the church and income from all our activities. Expenditure was more than expected at £452k due to the church building works. After adjusting for designated funds and also depreciation, this gives a loss for the year of £58K which came out of our free cash reserves – excess funds that had been built up over the years. The 2022 £98k deficit we expected ended up being £40k less at £58k. The PCC agreed to move legacy fund income and expenditure, which was received in 2020 & 2021, to a separate designated fund so it is not spent on running costs but used for bigger projects.

Apart from £20k spent in 2021, the rest of these legacies has been put aside for the upcoming building project. We have £241k set aside to spend.

The original 2023 budget was for a £50k deficit but this has been revised to a £33k deficit based on income and expenditure to the end of March and projections for the rest of the year. In particular, we have been blessed by a £20k gift. Having another deficit is not something the PCC agreed to lightly but we have seen God's provision last year and want to continue all we are doing.

Our reserves were £140k at the end of 2020, by the end of this year after 3 years of using our savings, we are only projected to carry reserves of £29k into 2024.

There had been three questions submitted prior to the meeting:

- What is the total deficit amount?
For last year, the general fund deficit was £58k and for this year, the forecast is for a £33k deficit.

- What is the worship pastor's total budget for purchasing resources excluding licences?
The total in the forecast for this year is £9k. This includes the Audio-visual budget, we have already purchased a new microphone this year.
- Ad hoc donations rose in 2022 and accounted for £49k or 16% of donation income. Can you please tell us tonight how much we are relying on ad hoc donations in 2023 to restrict the budget deficit to £50k?
The original budget expects £24k in ad hoc donations, which has been revised to £47k (13% of donation income) in the revised forecast of a £33k deficit. January-March we have already received £29k of this.

The Annual Report and Accounts had been circulated to all Electoral Roll members before the meeting. The 2022 accounts were proposed by Ray Douglas and seconded by Nigel Peach. All were in agreement and the accounts were accepted.

Dale Mitchell has been our Independent Examiner and he was proposed again by Alan Biggs and seconded by Elaine Faulkner. All were in favour of using him again.

A huge thank you was extended to Heather for all the work she does.

10. **Building Works Update:**

Geraldine Shiels presented an update on the building works. We want the site to be a hub for the village and we are starting to see that. In 2021 we were left a legacy of £270k which we want to use to bless the community. The halls need updating. A building subcommittee has been formed who have considered various different options and now have a clearer plan. We need to be mindful that we have quite a modest budget. It is hoped that the project can be started at the end of July although that may be optimistic. The works will cause disruption for six to eight weeks. Geraldine is happy to talk through the plans.

There was then a time for questions.

- What has actually been approved so far?
The PCC has approved up to stage 4 which is everything up to the construction bids and construction phase.
- Are the current toilets going to be refurbished?
The present hall toilets will also be upgraded during the works.
- Is this the best time to be going ahead with the project or should we wait?
The country's financial situation doesn't show any sign of improving so there seems no reason to delay going ahead. We continue to pray and discern.

There was then a time for any further questions which hadn't been covered before.

- As members, where can the PCC Minutes be seen?
The minutes can't be posted on the website for privacy reasons. Those who would like to read the PCC minutes should contact the church office and the approved PCC Minutes can be sent out via email to those who have expressed an interest.

There was then a time of corporate prayer and worship with Nicola Rayner closing in prayer.

The meeting closed at 21.30 after the final blessing.