

Present:

Fr. Peter Mansfield, Gerry O'Donnell, Sue Carr, Roque Fernandes, Penne Hutton, Brenda Eydman, Pauline D'Mello-Maplesden, Bernadette Hallett, Bridget Hanlon, Peter McFall, Elsie Ofili, Erica Thurbon, Colin Wilding,

Minutes:

Bernadette Hallett

Agenda:

1. Welcome given to the group by Gerry. **Opening Prayer** by Colin.

2. Members 'check in' - all members in attendance.

3. Apologies for Absence - none

4. Minutes and Matters Arising

No matters arising from previous minutes, minutes accepted and passed.

5. Review of Arrangements for Easter services

Colin reported on behalf of Leonie who had taken overall charge of organising arrangements. All ran very smoothly, aided by people having used a similar system at Christmas and therefore knowing what to expect. Organisation was conducted through i) email ii) phone iii) paper booking mostly from weekday masses. Almost all people were appreciative and co-operative. The church was theoretically filled to the allowed capacity as far as possible. Good Friday and Sunday masses were filled within hours on the first day of booking. Good Friday service had a very long waiting list. Some people attended the Vigil mass having swapped from the Sunday in order to allow a few others to be able to attend on Sunday

Leonie had to switch people around in order to accommodate different needs. For future reference, places secured should be confirmed when reserved but seat numbers should not be allocated until the day before the mass so that seating plans can be consolidated.

Good Friday - 98 places, Vigil mass - 85 places, 9.00 - 81 places, 11.00 - 91 places used.

Not all marked seats can be used depending on number in group, eg 2 people seated on 3 stickers cluster.

It was a very time consuming process, and took a lot of work, but was a very successful achievement.

It was reported back from stewards that the seating plans ran very smoothly at all masses. Congratulations and deepest thanks were given to Leonie and Colin for all their hard work in planning the seating etc prior to Easter services and enabling the plans to run so smoothly. All of the organisation was handled personally, nothing was automated. Colin suggested there could be benefit in looking ahead with regard to seating. There are only 2 or 3 single seats marked out in the church and these should be used first.

In the gallery the seats at the balcony rail provide a good view, but the seats on the benches further back only allow a good view of the altar if people stand.

From Fr. Peter's perspective the organisation was excellent and ran seamlessly. He was very happy and offered grateful thanks for all that was done.

Gerry agreed that Leonie had done a fantastic job, both at Christmas and Easter, and handled people with tact and compassion. He asked Colin to convey our deepest thanks to Leonie.

* Gerry will write to Leonie to thank her for all her hard work.

6. Review of keeping the Parish connected

Updates -

Brenda sent out Easter cards to the parish sick and housebound. She has contacted people to ensure that phone contacts have continued to make calls, and has liaised with Leonie re Special Ministers and their contacts. Some feedback was given that a particular parishioner had been very pleased and appreciative to receive her card and to know that she had not been forgotten. Generally people are keeping well and are looking forward to visits from Fr. Peter and to Special Ministers resuming their visits. Most people have now had their first covid vaccination and some are slowly returning to church.

Fr. Peter has reviewed practices with Brenda. He stated that the way forward will be guided by distancing regulations. When rules are more relaxed people will feel more confident about returning to church life, including the various groups and activities. The next date we look forward to is 21st June when further restrictions are eased. Fr. Peter thinks that we are likely to receive new guidance then about the way forward. We have also been warned about a possible 3rd wave of coronavirus, with its implications for what we may be able to do. Hopefully by September we will be able to make progress with social distancing, possibly to use the hall for small group activities, and allow more people to be able to attend mass.

Fr. Peter has only been permitted to make a home visit in order to give the Last Rites. It has been his biggest heartache from the past year that he has been unable to visit the sick and offer support to the families. He hopes that from 21st June that he, Special Ministers, and the SVP may be able to visit the housebound again.

As opportunities begin to allow us to use the hall again Fr. Peter will negotiate use of the hall with the pharmacy who currently use the hall for giving vaccinations. He envisages that the vaccine centre and the parish may both be able to use the hall at different times when the time comes for parish groups and activities to resume.

The car park is being abused by people who are not using it for parking for their NHS jobs. The NHS stewards are able to guide cars for parking but are unable to prevent unauthorised people from parking. Locking the barriers is the only thing that works. Fr. Peter will speak with the pharmacy about giving the wardens authority to ban unwanted cars.

A request was made that we could have a larger sign at the front of the church to direct people round the church to the hall for their vaccinations. The Doctors' surgery use 6 permitted spaces and have ID to display saying they are from the surgery. The hall 'furniture' is currently left in situ overnight by the NHS as it takes so long to set up. Vaccines and computers are locked up overnight.

Digital platforms -

- Website - was adapted for Easter and is now back to its previous format.
- Mailchimp - going well and has 169 subscribers. We could possibly use this platform to seek opinions regarding who might be prepared to attend different masses to allow others to attend on a Sunday. We could possibly just focus on any new items or updates using a fresh approach and, in the hope that 'more is less' will enable people to engage with new items more readily.
- Facebook - has 176 members. There was a great response to Fr. Peter putting in an appearance! He received 62 'likes', and numerous positive comments. It was much appreciated by users. It was also appreciated when Bridget shared photos from her and David's wedding at St. Aidan's on their wedding anniversary. Could more people be encouraged to do this to make the parish Facebook account more interactive? Could also be used for photos of events, eg. fete, lunch club, etc in the future.
- Just Giving - people are still using this. Over £1,500 has been donated through this medium since it began, of which £500 has been donated this year, including donations for the Christmas and Easter offerings.
- YouTube - Fr. Peter expressed his concern as to how this platform may be used in the future by any other priest at St. Aidan's when he is absent for any reason. It will be difficult for someone to take over and to keep the YouTube service running. Long term this may not be viable for the parish. The camera view is manageable but prior to mass there is a lot of preparation and things to connect, and its use is very dependent on the priest or Roy to manage. It would be possible

to train someone to use the service and is possible to manage from home with the correct software.

There is sometimes a global audience viewing. Is there any way to get interactive with people who watch our masses? Fr. Peter will follow this up.

7. Communication to the Parish

Gerry will encourage people to use the parish Facebook page and ask them to contribute photos and comments. He will include this in his summary of this meeting and will back this up on Mailchimp mailings. Our Facebook page can be developed to become more socially interactive as we emerge from lockdown.

The Vigil service was lovely to watch online, and people still really appreciate having this facility to enable them to still feel part of the parish at this difficult time. Colin and Helena were complimented on their singing at the Vigil mass, it was really beautiful to hear, especially at this time when the churches have been devoid of music. Colin plans to sing the psalm at the 9.00am mass this Sunday, The bells used at the Vigil service were to encourage participation by the congregation as they are not currently allowed to sing. Fr. Peter reminded people that we are only really allowed the minimum of time as far as possible for masses, and should not include anything that extends the length of the mass or keeps people inside the building any longer than necessary. Group singing or congregational singing is currently not allowed.

The digital platforms could be looked at as ways to develop other media sites in the future. However, this would need someone with the appropriate skills to oversee this development.

8. Priest's notices

Fr. Peter gave an update regarding the grounds of the church and presbytery garden area which need developing. He thanked Elsie Ofili for her professional knowledge, support and guidance as she has been working with him on this over recent months. He has also been supported by Chris Collis who is on the parish Premises Committee. Both have business skills and contacts who have been invaluable in providing services that are good value for money and who are also regarded as reliable. A couple of other parishioners have also made suggestions with ideas. Seven different estimates have been obtained on how to improve and make best use of the land which has run wild and needs to be cleared. The area is secluded, and unlikely to be visited much but the surroundings need to be more pleasant and look cared for, and can be seen from the church hall.

Planning will break the area down into two separate areas.

- 1) Patio area with fencing to provide some privacy behind the presbytery. This could later be used by Fr. Peter with small groups for meetings.
- 2) Steps, hill and fencing area backing onto the hall outside space. Much consideration has been given to the development and the final decision is to use real grass on the incline. Fencing will be replaced.

The concrete area behind the garage is to be cleared and cleaned and could possibly be developed at a later date.

Work will be divided between different firms to get the best value for money.

Clearing will begin next week.

There are not enough funds to clear both sides of the steps yet but this could happen later.

The Finance Committee agreed a budget of £12,500 for the work. This money is still within the overall parish finances budget.

* Fr. Peter will inform the parish of developments in the newsletter this weekend.

9. AOB - none

The 200 club draw took place prior to the PPC meeting beginning.

The winner was no. 65, Rosa Shea

Volunteer to prepare Opening Prayer: Sue Carr

Closing Prayer - Fr. Peter used the blessing from the Easter Vigil.
He gave thanks to Gerry and the PPC members for all their contributions to the meeting and the running of the PPC.

Date of Next Meeting:

Date: Thursday 17th June

Time: 7.30pm

Place: Zoom