

## St Pauls – Parish meeting report - 30th September 2018

*Updates on the position in September 2019 are in [...] brackets.*

**Attendance:** Forty-three parishioners attended this annual Parish Discussion Meeting; they were a diverse cross representation of our Parish community, young and old.

**Stable and effective:** we must celebrate and be thankful for being a thriving parish; although we rely on visiting priests for our celebrations of the Eucharist and sacramental occasions, the regular mass numbers and active participation of our parishioners in parish activities is exceptional.

**Sing-along carol service:** New this year! Nobody stepped forward to organise our Christmas Fair (it is a lot of work), so it was agreed to postpone this year's fair. Then Tracey Derbyshire offered to organise a Parish community together this Christmas time. *[The sing-along carol service was a very popular and successful event. We are looking at options of how we could repeat a similar event this year]*

**Travelling crib:** discussion identified what a good idea this is, and that the housebound love to be involved. We agreed that a rota would be put in the Church Porch nearer to Christmas, asking for commitment to receiving the crib, and helping the housebound who are unable to collect and deliver.

**Support for parish activities:** those many parishioners who support the parish activities (and those who have retired) are essential part of our parish community; there are always groups who need extra pairs of hands, or who are only just coping. Special thanks for the invaluable support that the Parish Office Team play in the day to day running of the Parish, in handling the diverse requests from so many people and groups. However, we still need the parish's groups to largely run themselves, because the Office team are fully busy with their current workload. We need to encourage others, who have time and skills to support the activities in our parish. There are many roles (with different time demands and skills needed) where the level of involvement can be fitted in around existing commitments. A suggestion was made to ask for support from those people who elect to send their children to St. Paul's Primary School, perhaps through the school's weekly newsletter to parents.

**Eucharistic Ministers** are one group where extra support is needed to carry out the rewarding and privileged duty for our increasing numbers of Parish housebound. Debbie Cox offered to speak with anyone interested in finding out more, and Gerard Trainor offered to provide information and training sessions (a role he did at his previous Parish).

**Sacristans:** Jacqui Feely explained the honour of the role of a Sacristan is in helping in making the church available for use. Jacqui described the role of the Sacristans and talked through their duties. It is a straightforward role and there are "how-to" tick sheets that have been produced that list the required duties around church usage. Anyone interested should discuss this with Jacqui.

**Churches Together in Poynton** was described by Julie Johnson. We are keen to be involved and to support the various initiatives that the six churches in Poynton coordinate each year, from "page 2" in the Poynton Post, the Easter Cross in St George's, and events like the recent performance of Gospel Street. Julie would welcome support representing St. Paul's within this group.

**Church cleaning:** the current cleaning rota is on a 4-week cycle and additional help would be gratefully received by the existing team *[we are grateful that extra helpers joined the cleaning team in 2019]*.

**Confirmation programme and First Sacraments:** In 2018 we did not deliver a Confirmation Programme and we need more parishioners to lead this initiative, together with the First Sacrament team. The alternative is our young parishioners take part in programmes away from our Parish, however it is preferable to have our own Parish programme *[thanks to our parishioners getting involved, programmes were successfully run in 2019]*.

**Presbytery:** the building is now an important space for the Office team, for the many groups using it as a community area, and a domestic area for Fr Peter and visiting priests. We are lucky to have such a clean and safe environment available for the Parish use. Diocese architects have been asked to cost the installation of a downstairs toilet extension and a door in the hall separating the domestic area from the community area. This ensures that the Presbytery remains fit for the future.

**Parish finances:** The state of the Parish finances confirms the viability of the parish. Two key points:

- (1) cash flow, in that year on year there has been a decline in the Offertory collection income, which is contrasted with increasing and variable expenses and costs (for example, the visiting priests' expenses depends on the mileage they are travelling). We are grateful to parishioners who review and increase their offerings (both by increasing the amount, and by using Gift aid), and Fr Peter for waving his stipend again this year.
- (2) the parish reserves are satisfactory but they are eroded by necessary building repairs and other capital expenditure.

**Building works:** we are discussing with Diocesan architects:

- (1) Demolishing the ToyBox, which can no longer be used for activities; the space could provide more car parking and better access to the presbytery community areas and the patio
- (2) Repairing the church front steps
- (3) Repairing a cracked window lintel in the church
- (4) Repairing the path next to the church to provide safe access for those needing a level route into the church.

Our Mission Together (funded by donations from our parishioners) does include a capital fund that can contribute to these works.

**Parish Building and Maintenance team:** Pieter Groot was thanked for his work on general upkeep and repairs at the Presbytery and Church. However, there is a need for more help to coordinate and do a variety of repairs and small jobs on the Parish buildings. Caroline Robinson is developing a repairs book which will be kept in the Parish office; this will allow anyone to raise issues, and provide a way for more people to get involved in the odd jobs that arise.

Many thanks to Peter Milham and Stephen Robinson for these notes, and Katherine Doyle and Julie Johnson for organising the refreshments (and for their kindness in making sure all the parishioners were well fed and watered).

## **St Pauls Church: Parish Meeting** **13<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at 11:30am**

*As in previous years we have chosen to hold the parish meeting after the Sunday Mass and its following baptism, for an hour or so, on a weekend when Father Peter does not need to rush back to St Albans.*



Our parish meeting this year will celebrate the year of activities and events undertaken, the plans for the next year, and anything that is currently affecting us in our parish affairs. Time permitting, we will include in the agenda anything that you tell us you would like to be included.

The agenda is not finalised, but we hope for reports and discussion on:

- Parish and relevant Diocese matters.
- Parish financial position.
- Parish teams, especially identifying those which need extra parishioner support
- Progress on building maintenance and improvements.
- Our parish primary school; also the preschool and its recovery from the arson in the community rooms in Dec 2018.
- The sacramental programme plans for 2019-20, relevant to parents and their children.
- For Christmas the travelling crib and a parish Christmas event, perhaps carols in the church.

This is an important annual event in the life of our parish and as many parishioners as possible are encouraged to attend. If you have any questions, topics for discussion, or reports on activities to be presented, please let the parish office know or fill in the form at [www.stpaulspoynton.org.uk/our-parish/parish-meeting/](http://www.stpaulspoynton.org.uk/our-parish/parish-meeting/)

*Overleaf are some notes from the 2018 parish meeting.*