

## **Hertingfordbury St Mary with St John Parochial Church Council.**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 March 2026 at 7.30 pm in the Brace Room and via Zoom.**

### **Present:**

Rev Alan Stewart (Alan), Robin Bishop (Robin B) (Chair), David Gorton (David), Alastair Curry (Alastair), Robin Densem (Robin D), Philip Juniper (Philip), Stephane McCarthy (Stephane), Kath Oates (Kath), Barry Wade Simkins (Barry), Rachel Carter (Rachel) (Secretary)

Rev Alan opened the meeting with a prayer.

### **Apologies**

Marina Scoffone

### **2. Minutes of last meeting**

These were approved subject to the correction of the spelling of Barry's surname.

### **3. Matters arising**

Item 3 It had been confirmed by the Diocese that there was no need for a relicensing service.

Prayer ministry: Stephane and Juliet had begun. There had been very good feedback.

Item 5 Jack Hollis was the proposed Foundation Governor.

The White Horse Wedding Fayre had been very successful

The Exploring Faith course had gone well, with three of the attendees not having tried church before.

It had been agreed that St Mary's would contribute a third of Youth Worker's expenses.

Item 17.1 It was hoped that a new PCC Secretary would be on board shortly.

### **4. Correspondence**

A letter had been received about the new Bishop of St Alban's, the Right Rev Paul Rumsey.

### **5. Priests' report**

Alan reported as follows:

5.1 The Big Questions club at Hertingfordbury Cowper had run very successfully and would come to an end next week.

5.2 The Good Friday Walk of Witness would begin in three places in Hertford.

5.3 70 people had already signed up for the Awayday, though very few from St Mary's. There would be four workshops – Kath Oates and Alastair were involved in running two of these. There would need to be a new venue next year.

5.4 There would be a new Prayer Course in the summer on 3 Monday evenings in June.

5.5 The Bishop of Hertford had said that she wished to visit all parishes in the Hertford and Ware Deanery, focussing on mission.

### **6. Mission Action Plan update**

6.1 A prayer ministry group had been set up.

6.2 A prayer course was being organised.

6.3 A working group on worshipping outdoors would be set up and volunteers were requested.

## **7. Reaching New People**

Kath reported that she had been doing some mapping of possible areas.

## **8. Friends of St Mary's**

Helen sent a report as follows:

Since the last meeting The Friends has held the Race Night which raised c£1200. I am grateful to the work done by David and others to make the evening the success it was.

The next event is a concert by the Welwyn Garden City Male Voice Choir, who celebrating their 90th anniversary.

Forthcoming events;

Saturday 21 Mar Welwyn Garden City Male Voice Choir

Saturday 02 May Village Breakfast

Saturday 12 Sep Bike 'n Hike

Saturday 26 Sep Le Café Français

Saturday 21 Nov The Christmas Market

I remain very grateful to all those showing interest in, and giving support to, the FoHSM.

## **9. Churchwardens' Report**

David reported as follows:

9.1 More research had been carried out into options for replacing the boilers and a comprehensive report had been received from agents. He was still waiting for a further report from a local company. The cost of upgrading the electrical supply for electric boilers would be in the region of £150,000. Any decision would need to be put to the Diocese.

9.2 New bell ropes had been delivered the previous week and fitted yesterday.

9.3 There were plans to redecorate the ringing chamber.

## **10. Churchyard Manager's Report**

David reported

10.1 The mowers had been serviced

10.2 The Churchyard team would be cutting the grass on Saturday week.

10.3 The solar lighting had worked well.

## **11. Treasurer's Report**

Robin reported as follows:

### **11.1 Bank Account**

Jan-Feb 26	6 months	Year TD
Credit	13,316	32,715 13,316
Debit	9,047	34,635 9,047

Jan-Feb credit includes Gift Aid reclaim 2025.

## 11.2 Accounts 2025

Overall Income exceeded Expenditure by c£10k

## 11.3 Income had increased by £10k as below:

### Donations & Grants

- Card reader Whilst the rental moved to the Friends in June, the revenue did not move until December. Up £2k
- Sundry donations Up £3k
- Covenanted Income Income & GA up £4k

## 11.4 Expenditure was down £3k

### Ministry

- Expenses up £2k

### Church

- Repairs Down £6k

11.5 Philip proposed that the Accounts for 2025 be accepted. Barry seconded. The PCC agreed nem con.

11.6 Robin was thanked for all his work as Treasurer.

## 12. Safeguarding

Robin reported as follows:

- 12.1 DBS – All members are in date. A number are due for renewal in the next few months, the process for the first has begun.
- 12.2 Courses – All up to date.
- 12.3 Trustee Declarations - All up to date.

## 13. Deanery Synod

Robin reported that the Deanery Synod had not met since the last meeting.

Its next meeting 23 March.

## 14. Eco Church

- 14.1 Rachel reported that St Mary's was close to getting its Eco Church Bronze Award.
- 14.2 The group had received an update from David about the boiler replacement.
- 14.3 There had been discussions with Jim Eustance and the Painting for Pleasure Art Group around an Art Exhibition for Environment Sunday.
- 14.4 The members of the Churches Together Eco Church group were in regular touch and sharing information about Eco Church events.
- 14.5 There were plans to have a refugium for slow worms somewhere in the churchyard.

## 15. Parish Magazine

15.1 Philip reported that an advert for Hertingfordbury Cricket Club had been included and a

wedding photographer had also put in an advert.

15.2 Subscribers had paid.

15.3 Laura had set up an Instagram page and there was a QR code for this at the back of the church.

## **16. Churches Together**

16.1 Kath reported that charities such as Future Hope and Street Pastors were in need of volunteers.

16.2 There were plans for a 24/7 prayer space next year at St Andrew's.

16.3 50 people had attended a service at the United Reform Church during the week of Christian Unity.

16.4 Hertford Baptists were organising the Good Friday Walk of Witness.

16.5 All Saints had put on a Festival of Faith. Josh Dean MP and Mark Russell, Director of the Children's Society had been among the speakers.

## **17. New PCC Secretary**

17.1 No one definite as yet, but conversations were ongoing.

## **18. Any other business**

18.1 It had been decided not to put on the Summer Fun Day this year, but rather to look at a new community event, possibly on the original Patronal festival.

18.2 It was noted that Mothering Sunday had been a lovely service and well attended. It had been good to thank Jean Skinner properly for all she had done for St Mary's over the years.

18.3 Race Night had been very successful.

## **19. Date of next meeting**

This was confirmed as 21 May 2026.

Rev Alan closed the meeting with a prayer.