

Minutes of the Upper Itchen Benefice Council Annual Meeting

held on Monday 12th March 2018 at 7.30 p.m. in St. Michael's Church, Cheriton

Present: Graham Bowkett (in the Chair), Caroline Strudwick, Lenore Prideaux, (Beauworth), Alex Hardie (Bramdean), Phil Brett (Cheriton), David Elton (Hinton Ampner), Elizabeth Craig-Cooper, Angus Macpherson (Tichborne), together with members of the congregations.

In attendance: Gillian Gray Knight (Secretary), Julian Hartwell (Treasurer), and Steve Peters (Accounts Examiner)

1.	<u>Welcome and Prayers</u> led by GB.
2.	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> were received from Jan Brookshaw, Alan Whetman (Beauworth), Richard Cotton (Bramdean), Paul Raworth (Cheriton), Rosebie Morton (Hinton Ampner) and James Stanley (Church in the Wood).
3.	<u>Minutes of the Previous Annual Meeting</u> The minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2017 had been circulated. The minutes were approved and signed as a true and correct record of that meeting.
4.	<u>Matters Arising</u> None
5.	<u>Rector's Annual Report</u> GB's annual report was presented (attached). The archaeological dig at Kilmeston was now moving forward as some of the required funding had been sourced to enable the work to progress. The report was unanimously approved.
6.	<u>Treasurer's Report</u> JH presented the accounts for the year to December 2017 (attached), which had been previously circulated. They showed a surplus for the year of £533.01. Voluntary income had fallen, mostly as a result of a fall in benefice service collections. The income from C & V is an important element of the benefice income. The new printer is now printing the magazine; the subscription had increased from £6.50 – £7.00 in the current year. The benefice needs to break even and, over 2016 & 2017 combined, this has been achieved. The account examiner's report for the year to 31.12.17, dated 3rd March 2018 had been received. JH was thanked for his work during the year.

7.

Parish Reports

Cheriton : 'Our average attendance at usual Sunday services was 39 with the "All Age" first Sunday in the month service continuing to be well attended. In total St. Michael's had hosted 72 services during the year, excluding the Wednesday morning prayer sessions. We were again delighted to host four Cheriton Primary School Services during the year. The summer is invariably slightly quieter in congregation numbers, particularly in August. So in 2017 the August services were combined into a single Benefice Sunday service moving around the Benefice churches. Numerous weddings, funeral and baptisms were held during the year.

The Cheriton Talks broke all records for attendance and financially we are in reasonable shape.

St. Michael's participated in the "Who Cares?" initiative in late spring by asking members of the village to complete an anonymous survey, the results of which have been used as input to the design of the Deanery Mission Action Plan which will address some of the key themes which emerged. You can find out more information on the *whocareshamshire.org* website.

We completed on the extension of the churchyard and exchanged contracts on the sale of the Village Hall, for which the deposit has already been paid into a Diocese account for our eventual benefit. Completion is due by the end of /2018. The Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) approved our proposed new audio visual system.'

Beauworth : 'We continue to have the 8.30 a.m. HC on 3rd Sundays and are delighted people from other parishes are attending. Variety of special services have been held, one highlight being the Dawn Service. The next Dawn Service is on 1st April at 6.00 a.m. at Millbarrow Farm.

We hold Lent Lunches, the next one being on 14th March in Beauworth Village Hall from 12.30 – 2.00 p.m.; continue the first Monday Coffee Mornings, to which we would welcome more people as numbers are declining slightly, but they appreciated by those attending. We also participated in "Who Cares?"

Our finances are satisfactory.'

Bramdean : 'The main focus this year has been the building works.

We were awarded a substantial Heritage Lottery Fund grant and together with da grant from Hampshire and Islands Historic Trust and a £25,000 contribution from the PCC we have the funding in place to meet the budgeted cost of works at £195,000 (inc. VAT).

We are now undertaking the preliminary works in terms of planning/faculty applications and the HLF procurement policies.

We are well aware there is a risk of cost overruns, but we shall cross that bridge when we come to it. We are hoping to start the works in July and will close the church until completion, which we anticipate being the beginning of September. We are being advised by Simon Goddard.'

Tichborne : Firstly a comment on the loss of Antony Loudon, of Roger Page, a regular organist, and missing Rosemary Foot in the congregation, for she is now in a nursing home. We hold 2 services monthly but are too dependent on regulars, whose numbers are falling, and have not attracted new families. We have had some successful services, especially the Taizé Service, which is being held again on Good Friday. Financially in we are in reasonable shape and the fabric not too bad, except for a rotten beam in chapel.

	<p>Hinton Ampner : We hold 1 regular service called 'Prayer & Praise' which is going well, with about 60 attending from within and outside the benefice. The response to our Christmas outreach was overwhelming: hundreds of angels were placed on the prayer tree. So much so that Bruce has made a permanent tree for the church which is being well used, some of the prayers being incorporated into each service. Bishop David & Bishop Desire Mukaniirwa from the Diocese of Goma joined us for a service in January. Greater awareness is needed for the All Souls' service as attendance had dropped a little.</p> <p>Some work is required for the church building and the lighting project is progressing.</p> <p>GB commented that all those who have lost someone in recent years are written to with information about the All Souls' service and inviting them to attend. Given the new data protection regulations we will not be able to do this for the 2018 service as, prior to the announcement of the regulations, no-one had been asked for their permission for the church to contact them.</p> <p>CitW : All is going well and they are looking forward to their first open air service in May.</p> <p>GB reported that Bishop David is coming to take a Confirmation Service on 11th May in Cheriton and will lead a service on 23rd June in Bramdean.</p>
8.	<p><u>Appointment of UIB Treasurer</u> Julian Hartwell was appointed unanimously (1. GB, 2. DE).</p>
9.	<p><u>Appointment of UIB Accounts Examiner</u> Steve Peters was appointed unanimously (1. JH, 2. GB). He was thanked for his work as independent examiner during the previous year.</p>
10.	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Benefice Website is not up to date – please could this be addressed. Need to identify someone in the benefice who will proactively submit material. b) Confirm that the number of Benefice Representatives to Forum to be appointed at APCMs remains as before.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.05 p.m. with The Grace