

**ST. JOHN FISHER PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL - 2017**

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PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL**

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017

Minutes

**Present:** Mrs J. Brook, Sr. Catherine, Mr S. Deane, Mr. J. Golden (Chairman), Father David, Mr P. Gunn (Secretary), Deacon Tom, Mr. M. Lobo, Mr M. Mannion, Father. Matthias, Dr P. Nash, Mrs U. O'Byrne, Mr E. O'Connell, Mrs J. O'Neill-Ford, Mrs B. Owen, Ms M. Russell.

**1. Opening of the Meeting:** Father David opened the meeting with prayers and reflections on the coming weekend's Gospel. The new Parish Secretary, Melissa Russell & the new Parish Safeguarding representative, Ursula O'Byrne, were welcomed to their first meeting.

**2. Apologies for Absence:** These had been received from: Mr. D. Buttaci; Mr C. D'Aguiar & the *Talkabout* Editorial Team.

**3. Approval of Minutes of the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017 meeting:** With the change of 'Mr' Nash to 'Dr' Nash, the minutes were agreed as written.

**4. Matters Arising from the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017 meeting:**

Mass Timing Change. The move of the 11:00 Mass to 11:30 during June had been well publicised.

Church Fire Doors. Fr. David reported that turning the side door (at the hall side of the church) into a Fire Door with an 'opening push-bar' was still being progressed. **ACTION: Father David**

Hall Keys. There was no problem currently.

Parish Safeguarding Representatives. Posters with details would be displayed soon. **ACTION: Father David**

Deanery Pentecost Service. This had been well attended.

"Love Boxes". The Chairman had written the letter of thanks.

Attendance at the NPVS crowning at Westminster. Fr. David reported that this had been attended by several parishioners, as had the Southwark Diocesan event.

Photos for annual display. The Chairman reported that he had not received any comments to date.

**5. Proposed revision to the Fisherman's Herald:** Fr. David proposed that this be changed from a folder A4 publication to a folded A3 one, thus avoiding the need for weekly supplements. This format was being used by a number of parishes in the Diocese and several examples were circulated; these fell into two types – one filled with parish information throughout, the other with the Mass readings on the outside and parish information on the inside. He strongly favoured the latter, which was produced by the Redemptorist Fathers, at a higher cost than the existing Newsletter. The Wednesday Word would be retained.

Following discussion on the merits of the two options, it was unanimously agreed that the latter format be adopted and be distributed free of charge, subject to explanatory announcements being made to the parish. This would come into effect in September. **ACTION: Father David**

**6. Votive Candle Area:** Fr. David stated that the low siting of the candles constituted a fire risk. There was discussion on various options for reducing the risk, including purchasing a new unit, or using electronic candles to eliminate the risk entirely. Fr. David would make a proposal to a future PAC meeting.

**ACTION: Father David**

**7. Changes to Confessionals:** Discussion on this item was deferred to a future PAC meeting.

**8. Parish Safeguarding:** Mrs O'Byrne informed the meeting that there was a great deal of work to be done to bring the parish records, held by the Diocese, up to date. Although she was aware of the issues involved from her previous job as Head Teacher at St. John Fisher school, she had not been personally involved in the paperwork. She was compiling a list of everyone who needed to be registered with the Diocese; over the coming months, they would all need to be re-checked & the appropriate paperwork would need to be completed. Her initial focus was on the Catechist group. A second representative was being appointed – Mrs Evelyn Chiejina. Details of the two parish representatives would be displayed on church notice boards in the near future.

Three main steps would be involved in this role:

1. Completion of the Diocesan forms, including DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) checks for all relevant parish groups. This would take at least until the end of 2017.
2. Awareness. Talking to parish groups about the issues involved; this might also involve a talk from the Diocesan co-ordinator to the whole parish.
3. Training, where appropriate.

**9. Merton Deanery Mission:** Mrs Brook reported as follows:

Kairos Centre Retreat: 24 parishes were represented. The day focused on the role of the Laity and the pastoral ministry in a parish context, and included discussion groups. The many handouts dealt with what every Parish Pastoral Council should be doing, & included a specimen parish survey. Following the day, the Dean (Fr. Mulligan) compiled a long list of the findings of the discussion groups.

*(All papers are available from Fr. David, Mr Golden or Mrs Brook)*

The Programme of Catechetical Talks: Thus far, between March & May, the Deanery had/would be hosting numerous meetings on topics including: Confirmation, 'Understanding our Faith', 'the Treasures of Sacred Scripture, & CaFE (aimed at First Holy Communion catechists). Meetings had been organised around Speakers' availability.

Bishops Conference of England & Wales: They were planning a Eucharistic & Pilgrimage Congress in Liverpool in September 2018. This would be announced in June and would require some preparation work, once the Southwark Diocese had decided how to support this venture.

Youth Feedback: Members of St Teresa's & Sacred Heart parishes were preparing for a Youth Synod in Rome.

**10. Clergy Support Fund Campaign:** Mr Lobo reported that that the parish organising group were discussing how to organise Stage 4 of the project. They were considering a Parish Fair to raise funds, recognising that the timing would have to fit in with other parish & schools' plans. To date the parish had met its target through commitments by 65 parishioners, amounting to £45,000 over four years. However, the Diocese was still considerably short of its own target.

## 11. *Parish Organisations & Representatives Reports:*

a) *Justice & Peace:* Dr Nash reported the following:

1. Merton Priory Peace Centre and Merton Priory Trust: Phase 1 of the Trust's project was to open the site up to the public and was due to be completed in 2017. Phase 2 included the Infirmary Garden. Details of how, potentially, this could be developed as a Marian Garden had been given to Fr. David.
2. The 'My Raynes Park' Festival was focusing again on refugees. It needed help and the parish support and promotion would be a real bonus. Details could be found at:  
[https://onedrive.live.com/view.aspx?resid=2D343D3401D76A32!240&ithint=file%2cdocx&app=Word&authkey=!AA\\_r6DkgsI1ke9Y](https://onedrive.live.com/view.aspx?resid=2D343D3401D76A32!240&ithint=file%2cdocx&app=Word&authkey=!AA_r6DkgsI1ke9Y).
3. Merton Citizens' Listening Project and Merton Against Trafficking: Teresa Pollard and Peter Nash would be meeting with Major Nick Coke of the Salvation Army, Raynes Park, on 26<sup>th</sup> May to discuss this.
4. Parliamentary Husting for the Wimbledon Constituency: this was being arranged by the Mansell Road URC Church on behalf of all the churches. Tackling poverty and supporting refugees were two, potential, key topics. No date had yet been agreed. There did not appear to be a separate husting for Raynes Park. Fr. Mulligan had been approached about husting(s) for Mitcham and Morden but nothing more was known.
5. Food Collection: parishioners were increasingly supporting the monthly collections. A special thanks to the Beavers for all their support for the last one. Where resources allow, we encouraged each family to bring just one item. A few from many was better than many from a few as we spread God's Word and love further.

b) *Society of St. Vincent de Paul:* Mr Deane reported that the group met once a month, with Deacon Tom as Spiritual Director; there were six members. They visited elderly people in their homes and two members made weekly calls to the Fielday residential home. Two people had been helped recently with utility bills. Two members did gardening for five disabled parishioners. Finances were OK.

c) *Teams of Our Lady:* Mr Buttaci report stated that Teams of our Lady Teams continued to promote catholic values among married couples. As well as monthly meetings, the organisation organised events and recently had conducted a Lenten service in the parish. If you were interested in finding out more about Teams, please contact Davide Buttaci on 07958 232 674.

d) *Uniformed Groups:* Mrs O'Neill-Ford reported that the seven parish groups had 170 members, aged between five and eighteen and met weekly during term time for skills development and fun. There would be some changes in group leadership soon and an accountant was needed to audit the Scout group accounts. Detailed reports on group activities were as follows:

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Morden Rainbow Pack: The Pack was for girls aged five to seven and met in the church hall on Fridays from 4:30 for an hour. There were arts & crafts & other activities and the girls worked towards badges. They mixed with other Rainbow units in the District. This year would be the Rainbows 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, so they would have two special events - on 24<sup>th</sup> June, with all Rainbows units in Greater London and for the second event, with Merton and Mitcham district, they would be going to Drusilla Park on the 9<sup>th</sup> September. They had three leaders and two young leaders helping.

*Sue Green – Rainbow Leader*



*d) Uniformed Groups (continued):*

3rd Morden Brownie Pack No report

2nd West Barnes & 3<sup>rd</sup> Morden Guide Troop: The guides had had a busy start to this term. They had their spring camp, with a bush craft theme, over the May Bank Holiday weekend. The following week they went bowling at Charrington Bowl, using the Jack Petchey award for Tamara Chandler to pay for the evening. Her presentation evening was on 27th April at Chessington Kings Centre. We had a second Jack Petchey award (for Anna Brierly), which had just been announced for this term. They were now thinking ahead to their summer camp at Blacklands.

*Sandy Brown –*

*Leader*

The 5th Morden Beaver Colony: No report.

5th Morden Cub Scout Pack: The Autumn Term had commenced with the cubs working on their Emergency Aid (First Aid) badge. They had learned how to respond to an unconscious casualty, check airways, and put the casualty into the recovery position. They practiced CPR and learned about bandaging. The cubs had spent a sunny October Saturday afternoon kayaking, and the meetings that followed focussed on Problem Solving and Practical Skills (Sewing, Ironing, Folding, Peeling Vegetables). The group participated in the District Swimming Gala, winning the group (Cubs & Scouts) team relay. During the October half-term, 21 cubs had spent four days in Phasel's Wood Camp, enjoying caving, abseiling, pedal car racing, human table football. One of the highlights of the trip had been a visit to the National Space Centre in Leicester. The cubs had taken part in a Karate class, and the remainder of this term would be spent preparing for the Cubs production of 'A Christmas Carol' which was very well received by parents.

During the Spring term, the cubs had celebrated Chinese New Year by trying Chinese food and making ceremonial dragons. At one meeting, the cubs got hands-on with some exotic creatures – snakes, spiders and other reptiles. They had also worked on their Artist badge and enjoyed a visit to Wimbledon Police Station, and they particularly liked arresting one of the cub leaders and putting him in handcuffs. During the Easter Half-Term, twenty cubs went on camp to Downe Scout Camp, near Biggin Hill. They enjoyed two and a half days of archery, air-rifle shooting, climbing, zip-wire, and an activity rather ominously called 'Leap Of Faith'.

During the Summer term, the cubs had been working on their 'Good Deed Diary' – part of their personal challenge to do daily good deeds for others. The longer days and improving weather presented ample opportunity to prepare for District Sports Day – and the Cub Group were pleased to achieve second place overall. With the help of a couple of parents who were professional musicians, the cub singers and musicians combined their talents to form a choir. Within a couple of weeks, they had put together an impressive rendition of 'On top of the World' by the Imagine Dragons, complete with acoustic and electric guitar, and bongo accompaniment. The following activities were planned for the remaining weeks of the term: Getting Knotted – developing our knotting skills; Digital Maker Badge – getting hands on with robotics; Mine-Craft Programming, and some old-style computer games. In the final weeks of the term, the cubs would take part in the District Football competition, another high-light of the year. At the end of the Summer term, the cubs would also take part in an Environmental project to help clean up an area of the Wandle.

*John Line - Cub Scout Leader (Baloo)*

**d) *Uniformed Groups (continued):***

5th Morden Scout Troop: *5th Morden Scouts:* There were 37 scouts at present, rising to 39, when two moved up from cubs. Scouts leaders in training were: Richard Sheehy, Alice Cerilli, William Brierly and Elaine O'Keeffe. All four had completed module 10, with their 'rock', John Bennett, offering guidance throughout the process. They had represented the parish at the St George's Day parade through Wimbledon Village to the Sacred Heart church.

This term they were covering stress in young people & DIY and would be helping to make a box/game case. Next term they would prepare for the Entertainment badge, linking to camping songs & games, plus knots for Rafting and Map & Compass for the Incident Hike. *Assistant Scout Leaders*

Flying Penguins Explorer Unit: The group had had a hectic start to the spring and summer terms. They numbered 20 explorers, three network scouts (explorers who had hit 18 but did not want to leave!) and two warranted leaders - Andy Newman and Tom Carter. They met on Tuesday evenings in the Church hall from 7:45 till 9:30pm.

The spring program focused on supporting and training the explorers for their Duke of Edinburgh and scout award activities. Six of the explorers had now carried out their Bronze D of E expedition in the South Downs, successfully completing their one night, two day hike over 30km of hilly terrain, carrying all their camping and cooking equipment. Well done! The Queen Scout Award/Gold D of E team (two explorers and four network scouts) were now actively training to gain their canoe qualifications, ahead of their qualifying hike on the River Wye in June and their actual hike on the Great Glen canoe trail, coast-to-coast across Scotland, planned for late August.

Their summer program had started with the annual District St George's Day parade through Wimbledon Village to the Sacred Heart Church. Po Penguin (Oliver Redford) carried the FPESU flag and was awarded his Platinum scout award during the ceremony. Oliver also won first prize in the explorer scout category of the District photographic competition and received a Go-Pro camera, to record his scouting adventures. Eoin Ford and Riccardo D'Andrea also received their Platinum scout awards and Emma Drinkwater, her Diamond scout award. In all four of the five scout wards, presented at the District event had come to FPESU members. At the end of April, they had taken part in the District-organised, hill walking trip to the Brecon Beacons in South Wales. They had excellent weather and over the weekend, had managed to walk the three peaks of Corn Du, Pen y Fan and Cribyn, as well as the 12km water fall walk. James Hold had come as a network scout and leader and did a fantastic job of helping out on the camp. One of their explorers, Riccardo D'Andrea, has been nominated for a Jack Petchey award and would receive his award at the next ceremony. He had decided to put his award money towards a trip to the Thorpe Park Fright night in October - something to look forward to! With the summer exams looming large, a number of the explorers were starting to take time out to concentrate on their revision, so slightly less hectic period was expected, the exams were finished.

Finally they the group like to express its thanks for the support of the Parish Council and for the use of the facilities at St John Fisher parish hall. Without this support, they would not be able to provide the young adults of the parish with opportunities for self-development, skills training and fun.

*Tom Carter (Explorer Leader), Andy Newman (Assistant Explorer Leader)*

**e) *Apostolate:*** Deacon Tom stated that there was nothing to report.

**f) Liturgy:** Sister Catherine reported that the Liturgy meeting had agreed the following:

- Sunday June 4<sup>th</sup> (Pentecost) – Confirmation Commitment at all Masses.
- Sundays June 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> – First Holy Communions (1100 Mass at 1130).
- Monday 22nd June – Feast of St. John Fisher – Mass at 7:30 p.m. - parishioners (& especially parish groups) were invited to attend. All extraordinary Eucharistic ministers, readers and catechists would be asked to renew their commitment.
- Saturday July 1<sup>st</sup> – Celebration of the Consecration of our church – Exposition between 0930 and 5 p.m. There was a notice in the narthex for watching with Our Lord.
- Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> July – Corpus Christi Procession – all First Holy Communion children, their families and parishioners were expected to take part, in honouring Jesus and the Blessed Sacrament.

Other dates of importance were the Parish Pilgrimage to Fatima (29<sup>th</sup> June to 4<sup>th</sup> July), plus there would also be a Leavers' Mass on July 7<sup>th</sup>.

**g) Parents & Toddlers:** Sister Catherine stated that unless helpers came forward to run the group from September, it would have to close.

**h) Hall Users:** Fr. David reported that he was still awaiting quotes for the refurbishment of the kitchen.

## 12. Other Reports

**a) Adult Education:** No report

**b) Stewardship/Evangelisation:** Sister Catherine reported that the parish groups were continuing to meet and enjoy sharing the Gospel. However, more people were needed to help with this initiative.

**c) Senior Citizen's Club:** Sister Catherine reported that the group continued to meet every Thursday during term time. Two important birthdays: 102 & 104 had been celebrated recently. They would welcome new members.

**d) Talkabout:** The team reported that Fr. Matthias would be celebrating the annual Magazine Mass on 6<sup>th</sup> July. The next edition would be distributed over weekend of 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> June. Copy for this edition was due this week.

**e) Parish Website:** Mr D'Aguiar's report stated that Website had been updated with the following: latest Talkabout, weekly newsletters & Readers' Rota, the Liturgical diary &, quarterly (from now on), the Counters' Rota. No other requests had been received, so the majority of the website remains the same.

**13. Fire Safety.** Mr O'Connell reported that he had attended a presentation given by Precision Fire training at St Theresa's in March. The had session covered:

- The hazards of fire –how it was caused and how to prevent & identify.
- What to do in the event of a fire.
- The different roles / responsibilities. Difference between a fire officer and fire warden.
- How to handle a fire – training on the use of fire extinguishers.
- How to conduct a Fire Risk Assessment – where were the risk areas in your church, when (which events) were the risks higher, where were extinguishers kept.
- How to go about increasing awareness of church goers, parishioners & church 'authorities'.
- Running evacuation tests.

The parish priest would be contacted about a follow-up session and a Risk Assessment.



**13. Fire Safety (continued).**

It was believed that a Fire Assessment had been carried out some time ago. The parish secretary would try to find the report and pass a copy to Mr O'Connell.

**ACTION: Ms**

**Russell**

Following a discussion on 'safe areas' in the event of a fire, Mr O'Connell would find out how other parishes in the Deanery dealt with this issue e.g. Did they have a Site Manager ?

**ACTION: Mr O'Connell**

On a wider issue, Mr O'Connell pointed out that a space outside the church should be kept clear for an ambulance or Fire Engine and that yellow paint was needed on the tarmac, or cones.

**14. Defibrillators.** Mrs Owen reported that she had appraised Fr. David of some of the issues involved in the church having its own Automatic External Defibrillator (AED). They were very easy to use, but quite expensive to buy & to maintain. In summary, no parishes in the Deanery had these at present and only a small minority of parishes in this country. If AEDs were purchased with public funds, they were required to be 'in a place, accessible at all times', which precluded most 'locked' churches from obtaining them. (Mrs Owen's letter is available from Fr. David if anyone wants to read it).

It was agreed that there was no case at present, for buying an AED, but the situation would be kept in mind.

**15. Any Other Business:**

Use of Technology & Social Media etc. to improve Communications within the parish. Earlier in the meeting, this issue had been raised while discussing the Parish Website. Two actions were agreed:

Mr Lobo would find out from the Diocesan Communications Officer what was happening in the Diocese and whether there were any policies.

**ACTION Mr. Lobo**

Mr Mannion agreed to look at possible uses that might be useful in the parish.

**ACTION: Mr Mannion**

Mr O'Connell enquired whether there was any protocol (genuflecting, bowing) regarding walking in front of the altar in order to demonstrate respect. Fr David agreed to look at Canon Law regarding this & to highlight the "do's & don'ts" in a future Newsletter.

**ACTION: Fr. David**

Mr O'Connell also expressed concern that those distributing Holy Communion had been observed sneezing & blowing their noses beforehand. It was recognised that were there practical difficulties in providing hand-washing facilities in the main body of the church.

Mrs Brook highlighted the disruption caused by having the toilets at the front of the church & she enquired whether there were any plans to move them to the back of the church. There was a brief discussion on possible new sites, but no immediate action was planned.

The Council all signed a 'thank you' card for the retiring parish secretary, Della Deen, who was thanked for her many years of service. The 8 a.m. Mass on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June would be said for her intentions. The Chairman would deliver the 'thank you' card & Mass card.

**ACTION: Chairman**

**16. Date of Next Meeting:** The next meeting would be held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at 7:30 p.m. in the Day Chapel.