

FRIENDS OF ST JOHNS CHURCH DENBY

FINAL MINUTES OF MEETING

Wednesday 22 September 2021 at 8pm

In attendance: Peter Swithenbank (chair), Angela Marwood, Martin Whitbread, Martin Conlon, Barbara Conlon, Diane Brown, Ailsa Gardner, Sue Swithenbank, Stephanie Hunter, Andrew Marwood, Sue Clarke, Gill Tinsdeall and Vera Bell.

1. Apologies

Paul Jaworski, Dean Wyatt and Helen Stothard

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

None.

4. Events (GT)

The New Mill Male Voice Choir evening raised £500. The Yorkshire Vet evening is going ahead on the 2nd October. Steph confirmed that the Bolsterstone Male voice choir would like to do a memorial concert.

Christmas markets are planned for the 21 & 22 November 2021. Santa is needed for the grotto and the Christmas tree would need to go up. Tables were discussed and it was agreed that they were a must for both catering and future events. Andrew suggested making circular tabletops that will store easily. Andrew is happy to look at a solution, but we may need to borrow some tables in the meantime. Storage space is needed, and the entrance was suggested as a possibility. Gill, Emma, Helen, and Ailsa are to plan the event in a separate meeting and then feedback and ask for help where and when needed.

5. Financial Report (PJ)

We have over £15K for the next phase and Diane confirmed that one grant is ready to draw down.

6. Works etc. (MC & PLS)

Ailsa suggested having the sound system installed first and then to carry out the entrance works to spend the grant.

It was suggested that we split phase 3 into 2 parts. A quote is needed for the entrance. We only have a ballpark figure, but the cost may be more in the current climate. Need to keep Diane updated since the grants we apply for need to match the work. It was confirmed that it will be New Year now before we start. Steph to contact the architect to ensure plans and specification are up to date. Need to know materials etc to ensure it meets the approval of the diocese.

The quote has been accepted for the roof repairs. Work was due to commence in August 2021, but we have no further confirmation yet as to when the works can be carried out. It was agreed that the sooner the better given that winter is approaching. Stephanie to chase

The notice board was discussed with a request for a new which has two halves – one for the church and one half for the hall. It was suggested that we have a magnetic board. Need to have some plans before 31 October 2021 to obtain approval. There was discussion around a having a new one or refurbishing the existing one. Ailsa is to ask for advice from a local tradesman. The Mans Shed in Denby Dale also to be approached to see if they can refurbish the old one or would we need a new one. Approval is not needed for a refurbished board.

Lights need looking at since some are not working. Andrew offered to look at the lights and replace bulbs etc. Peter confirmed that the microwave has been replaced and the disabled toilet needs looking at as the water level has been rising in the bowl. Induction pans are also needed of which Sue agreed to purchase.

7. Grants (DB & JJ)

Diane confirmed that we had missed the deadline for the South Yorkshire windfall grant, but there is a £5k grant ready to draw down. A bid has gone in for the Bishops Development Fund for £5k and £7.5k has been applied for via a competition. £1k received from the council is 6 months old and need to spend that within 12 months. We are also nearing the 12th month deadline for the Garfield Weston fund so we can make another bid soon.

Steph is having a meeting with the diocese to see what we can do in terms of the sound, system, audio etc.

8. Bookings (GT)

Bookings are increasing nicely with weekends being particularly busy. During October, most weekends are booked with parties. We have regular bookings, including keep fit and a taekwondo teacher is looking around tomorrow. We have had some good feedback to date, and it was agreed that Gill would request feedback following a booking to see if anything could be improved.

We need to keep an eye on the cleaning as we get more bookings, but it was agreed that weekly cleaning seems to be sufficient now.

9. Sue Clarke Items

Sue will be working 2 days a week and Sundays and is to concentrate on Upper Denby.

Sue would like to have a quiet space for prayer for every 2nd Sunday of the month.

Sue is keen to re-cycle as much as possible. It was noted that the external refuse bins are often filled with the wrong items hence the dustbin men won't take them away. It was agreed to have some laminated notices on the bins. Bottles need to be disposed of appropriately. Volunteers would be needed to take items to the re-cycling centres.

It was agreed that the bins need to be re-sited since the current storage area is very slippery when wet and in winter.

It was suggested that we have internal notice board that would also hide the chairs.

Steph asked if a mezzanine could be put in the vestry to provide extra storage. It was agreed that a quote would be obtained when the entrance is done.

10. FDC Organisation

The group is looking at becoming independent from the PCC and becoming a charity. It was felt that we would be more flexible in raising funds moving forward. Steph is to speak to the diocese for approval. 4 Trustees will be needed and someone will be needed to liaise with HMRC.

The constitution was distributed for discussion and was approved in principle. There was discussion around the advantages of becoming a charity, that it may attract more donations, there would be benefits for increasing donations for the 'Friends of Denby' and claiming VAT, proving overall to be more financially beneficial. Since the meeting Diane has advised that there is no advantage for VAT.

Steph to check that the PCC, diocese, and registrar (lawyer) would approve the move to charitable status.

It was agreed that more discussion was required between the church and the friends group.

11. Any Other Business

It was agreed that once a booking is made, we need an automation process for payment, reminders etc. Helen is looking into this.

It was asked if we had a card reader for donations. The Church has one but are not able to use it, it needs WiFi etc.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 20 October 2021 – 8pm

The meeting closed at 9.25pm

FRIENDS