

PAROISSE DE GROUVILLE
ECCLESIASTICAL ASSEMBLY

An Ecclesiastical Assembly of the Principals, Officers and Electors of the Parish of Grouville was held at Grouville Parish Hall on Thursday the 12th May 2016 at 7.30pm for the following business:

- 1) Adopt the Minutes of the Ecclesiastical Assembly held on the 20th May 2015.
- 2) To receive, and if approved, adopt the Tresor account for the financial year 2015/2016.
- 3) Elect Church Officers for the year 2016/2017.
- 4) Elect a Committee to examine the Tresor account for the financial year 2016/2017.
- 5) To consider a proposal to permanently remove from the Church three pews already removed on a temporary basis under a Dean's Licence to create space for wheelchair users and parents with toddlers, and to decide thereon.
- 6) To consider a proposal to permanently remove the wooden partition (already the subject of a Dean's Licence) between the organ and the North chapel, and to decide thereon.
- 7) To consider a proposal to permanently remove the wooden partition that currently divides the North chapel into two parts, and to decide thereon.

Reverend Mike Lange-Smith presided over an attendance of 19 persons.

Apologies were received from Deputy Carolyn Labey, Jane Luce, Jan Romeril, Roger and Maureen Burton, Yve and Roy Bullen, Peter Holliday, Peter and Gillian Woodall, Philip Bailhache, Jenny Gruchy, Katrina Williams and Anne Dupre.

The Recteur opened the Meeting with a suitable prayer, after which the Convening Notice was read.

1) **Adopt the Minutes of the Ecclesiastical Assembly held on the 20th May 2015.**

The Minutes of the Meeting dated the 15th May 2014 were adopted on a proposition by Nick Williams, seconded by Bob Hambly, following the request for a spelling correction by Simon Vivian. The Recteur requested that his thanks to the Secretary be recorded for her attendance the previous year to take the Minutes.

2) **To receive, and if approved, adopt the Tresor account for the financial year 2015/2016.**

Simon Vivian confirmed to the Assembly that the financial situation was very similar to the previous year. It was thought that there was little point in carrying out minor works in the Church when there was a major project being undertaken. There would be one large invoice yet to pay, then the surplus for the year would be returned to the Parish, following an agreement with the Connetable. Simon then asked whether there were any questions. Simon confirmed that the Accounts had been examined once more by Julia Quenault. As there were no questions, the accounts were formally proposed by Peter Falle, seconded by Gillian Bravery, and unanimously supported by the Assembly.

3) **Elect Church Officers for the year 2016/2017.**

Surveillants.

Myfanwy Halsey had indicated that she wished to stand down as Surveillant, so as to concentrate on her role with Messy Church. The Recteur thanked Myfanwy for all of her hard work as a Surveillant since 2012.

Linda Bois would therefore be standing as a Surveillant.

Simon Vivian would be continuing in this role.

Almoners.

Jane Luce and Nick Williams would be continuing as Almoners.

The four Officers were proposed en bloc by Jean Le Tourneur, seconded by Bob Hambly.

As there were no further nominations, the Recteur thanked the Officers for putting themselves forward and warned them to appear before the Royal Court at 10am on Saturday the 11th June 2016 to be sworn in.

4) **Elect a Committee to examine the Tresor account for the financial year 2015/2016.**

The Recteur reminded the Assembly that there had been an individual examining the Tresor Account for several years now and this had worked well. Simon Vivian therefore proposed that Julia Quenault be re-elected and Wendy Lange-Smith seconded the nomination. As there were no further nominations, the Assembly unanimously approved the re-election of Julia Quenault. The Recteur thanked Julia for all of her hard work examining the accounts.

5) **To consider a proposal to permanently remove from the Church three pews already removed on a temporary basis under a Dean's Licence to create space for wheelchair users and parents with toddlers, and to decide thereon.**

The Recteur opened this matter up for discussion, being fully aware that there were opposing views.

Nick Williams formally proposed the removal of the pews, which was seconded by Linda Bois.

Nick stated that he had two small children and that he felt that the removal of the pews had allowed for extra space and made a massive difference to his enjoyment attending Church. The removal had been an experiment which had worked very well and it was now hoped to gain permission for it to be permanent.

Bob Hambly stated that he thought that this was the thin end of the wedge and that the removal of the pews was to cater for a minority. He also felt that the pews were beautiful pieces of wood and that the continuity of the Church had been lost and thought that the gap made the next pew look like a park bench. Bob felt that future users would consider that the Church had been ruined. He went on to say that wheelchair users had always been accommodated in the Church before these changes. Children could sit anywhere to play, but it was important to remember that the Church was a house of God. Bob felt very strongly that the pews should be replaced.

Wendy Lange-Smith stated that she had seen the spaces used during Weddings and Funerals and they had been received very positively. A disabled mother had used one of them during the Grouville School Christmas service and she was also very positive.

Linda Bois stated that someone had recently mentioned that they had been against the removal, but they had changed their mind after seeing someone with a walking frame using one of the pews with extra space. Linda went on to say that it was important to consider

the future of the Church, making it more accessible for families. Over the years there had been many changes to the Church to suit the times. This was another.

The Recteur confirmed that he had received a letter from Roger Burton, who had initially opposed the removal of pews, but he had changed his view and was now in favour of their removal.

Simon Vivian confirmed that the Committee had no intention to remove any more pews. They had hoped to make the Church more accessible, which had been achieved. It was important to accept that the Church was struggling to attract new people.

Nick Williams asked where the pews had been kept. The Recteur replied that they were in the Bakehouse at the Rectory, and if the removal was to be made permanent it would be discussed whether it would be possible to sell them.

Robin Dupre said that he was aware of the date that the pews were due to be removed, but when he had walked into the Church, he did not notice that they had gone. Robin felt that it was important to ensure that the Church was suitable for worship in the future.

Bobby Labey asked whether the pews could be put at the back of the Church. They belonged to the Church and had been paid for by Church members, so she felt that they should not be sold off.

Ian Bravery confessed to not supporting this matter initially, but he was now in favour.

The Recteur informed the meeting that the question of selling the pews was not on the agenda and it would not need a Faculty.

Connetable Le Maistre asked whether a Faculty would be required to put the pews at the back of the Church.

The Recteur replied that it would not be necessary if they were not fixtures, however he would like to speak to the Dean about it.

Bernard Le Tourner stated that a certain plaque at the back of the Church could be obscured if the pews were placed there.

Bob still felt that this would be pulling out the fabric of the Church.

Nick asked whether there were any suggestions for a way forward.

Bob replied that children could sit at the back. They need to be disciplined to attend Church and felt that it should not be used as a playgroup. He had brought his children to Church when they were small.

Eira Wykes reminded the Assembly that this matter had first been discussed as a measure to allow wheelchair space. It now doubles up for children and is very useful.

On a vote 12 were in favour of the permanent removal of the pews. 2 were against the permanent removal of the pews.

The Connetable and the two Procureurs abstained from voting.

6) **To consider a proposal to permanently remove the wooden partition (already the subject of a Dean's Licence) between the organ and the North chapel, and to decide thereon.**

All present agreed that this had been a great improvement.

Bob Hambly stated that he agreed with the removal of this partition and felt that it was good to be able to see the window, which had previously been obscured. He asked whether it was possible to reposition the organ.

The Recteur replied that the organ had already been moved a small distance, but it could be considered in the future.

The proposal to permanently remove the partition was made by Simon Vivian, seconded by Myfanwy Halsey and was unanimously supported by the Assembly.

7) **To consider a proposal to permanently remove the wooden partition that currently divides the North chapel into two parts, and to decide thereon.**

Nick Williams stated that this partition was no longer of any use since the other partition had been removed. Its removal would further open up the Church. This matter was subject to a Faculty as it required the removal of certain light fittings.

It was agreed that consideration could be given to purchasing moveable screens, so as to maintain the cosy intimacy of the Lady Chapel when required, or moved to the side on other occasions.

Simon Vivian stated that the carpet would need to be replaced, but the view so far was that due to the major work still to come, it was thought that replacing the carpet was not a priority at present.

It was also agreed that the position of a certain radiator needed to be discussed.

On a proposition by Simon Vivian, which was seconded by Myfanwy Halsey, the Assembly unanimously supported the permanent removal of this partition. The Recteur confirmed that there was a commemorative plaque on the partition and it was the Church Committee's intention to find a suitable location for it.

Before the meeting closed the Connetable provided a brief update on the proposed further work in the Church. A meeting had taken place earlier in the day and it was hoped to start work in the South Chapel this Autumn, with the Nave pencilled in for early 2017.

The Recteur asked that thanks be recorded to the Connetable, the Procureurs and the Parish for all the work being undertaken.

As there was no other business, the Recteur closed the meeting at 8.20pm.