

St John the Baptist Ermine

Notes of a meeting with the Archdeacon of Lincoln

4 July 2018

PRESENT: Phil Betts, Philip Howell, Fr Stephen, Ven Gavin Kirk

We had been invited to meet the Archdeacon to discuss how the diocese could best support St John's in meeting the parish share.

We noted that we were on track at the moment to pay the share this year, but could not guarantee reaching the full amount by the end of the year. The PCC are fully committed to paying the parish share in full.

Last year's share had been negatively affected by the electrical work that needed to be done and we are constantly struggling with large utility bills which then affect our ability to pay the share.

We noted that although we had had a good scheme for the secondary glazing of the church, and had the finance in place, the request was turned down by English Heritage and the DAC. The Archdeacon thought it would be worth us pursuing this again as some personalities had changed on the DAC and the scheme, in the context of saving us money on heating, might be viewed more favourably now.

We explained that our gift aid had gone down and that the ability of local people to dig further to financially support the church was very limited. None of us felt that a stewardship scheme worth pursuing, although we did note the large amount of building work going on on the estate and the possibility of getting information about the church to new residents.

The Archdeacon was keen to explore ways in which we might be further supported and suggested:

Diocesan finance staff to look through our finances, investments, assets, insurance, etc, to see if we were making the best use of our resources. We felt that it would be helpful to have an objective view of what we have and do.

Diocese are considering a deal with a firm of architects to do all the church quinquennial inspections in the diocese. This would make the inspections free for churches and give the diocese a clearer idea of the state of the churches in the area and what might be needed. We thought this was helpful and would support this. Fr Stephen noted that a joint training day for incumbents and architects to develop mutual understandings and ideas would be helpful.

The Archdeacon floated the idea of the Diocese holding a "Bond" which all parishes would contribute towards, in order to negate the needs for each parish to purchase individual insurances. This seemed like a good idea if it provides suitable cover and costs less.

Deaneries will be getting a half time administrator who would be fully trained in church repairs, grants possibilities, faculty process, etc, as a first line of contact for churches. We thought this would be helpful.

The Archdeacon is due to write to PCCs to remind them that a full financial report needs to be presented at each meeting of the PCC and that in his visitation, he would be looking for evidence of this in PCC minutes.