

THE PARISH OF ST. BRIDGET WEST KIRBY WITH CALDY

Minutes of the Election of Churchwardens and Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Held on Sunday 18th May 2025 at 11.30am in St Bridget's Centre

WELCOME

ANNUAL MEETING FOR THE ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS

Alex declared the meeting open and led prayers

1. **Minutes of the 2024 meeting of parishioners.** The minutes have been available to read on the website and copies were made available at the meeting.
They were approved by those present without amendment.
2. **Appointment of Parish Churchwardens**
Greg Buckridge, having completed six years as churchwarden has retired.
Nominations had been received at the Vestry Meeting for Parish churchwardens for:
Ann Holden Proposed by Joy Alcock Seconded by Rosemalin Willson
Anna Gibson Proposed by Joy Alcock Seconded by Annette Payne
And for Deputy Churchwarden for Caldly church
Joy Alcock Proposed by John Smith Seconded by Sue Shaw
There being no other nominations. They were duly (unanimously) elected

The meeting closed

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Alex declared this meeting open. 46 people in attendance

1. **Apologies for absence**
Duncan Nichol, Madge Aitken, Joy Alcock, Angela Douglas, Edward Edwards, Sue Edwards, Dave Cashen, Sally Cashen
2. **Minutes of the last meeting held on 21st April 2024**
The minutes have been available to read on the website and copies were made available at the meeting.
Proposed by Greg Buckridge. Seconded by Priscilla Bench-Capon These were approved
3. **Matters arising not on the agenda** – None
4. **Reports:**
Churchwardens report: See "Parish Life 2024-2025"
Buildings – Greg Buckridge: Greg outlined the scope of the churchwarden's responsibility in monitoring the condition of the two churches, Caldly Hall and the church house in Covertside. He was pleased to report that they are all in good condition.
Ann Holden – Ann emphasized the importance of ensuring that visitors to the churches feel welcome and the importance of the Sidespeople and Welcomers.
She thanked Andrew Gibb for suggesting the use of name badges at services and social events, which has been successfully adopted.

She thanked Chris Tann for his expertise with Live Streaming at services and finished by saying that, although sometimes burdensome, she felt it a privilege to serve as Churchwarden and thanked Alex for her support

Deanery Synod Report

See "Parish Life" for full report

Electoral Roll Report - Paula Cobby, Electoral Roll Officer

Every six years a new Electoral Roll is created

There are 173 people on the Electoral Roll, this is down from 200 last year.

138 at St Bridget's and 35 at Caldby. 88 people on the Roll live outside the Parish boundary

Paula expressed the wish to step down from this role after many years of service.

PCC Report Like any Parochial Church Council, the PCC of St Bridget's West Kirby and Caldby churches is responsible for cooperating with the incumbent, the Reverend Alexandra Williams, in promoting the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

In addition to the post-APCM meeting that took place on 21st April 2024, PCC members met five times during the year with an average attendance of 13. Each meeting focused on an aspect of mission and ministry: there were presentations about encouraging giving, nurture and study, social and outreach, communication, children and young people, and worship and prayer.

Finance and Safeguarding are standing items at every meeting. We are most grateful to our Treasurer, John Smith, for his continuing careful husbandry of our funds, his planning and his wise guidance.

Rosemary Morgan, our Safeguarding Officer, and Sue Shaw, Safeguarding Administrator, work hard to ensure we fulfil safeguarding requirements under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure. All PCC members have a DBS and have completed the required training. There have been no reported safeguarding concerns during 2024.

The PCC is grateful to Angela Douglas for her work as PCC Secretary and to Sue Shaw for supporting her.

During the year, the PCC has discussed a wide variety of matters and made significant decisions including - funding repairs and improvements to both churches. updating the Parish website- appointing a publicity and outreach coordinator. agreeing refurbishment of St Bridget's organ and supporting the fundraising. supporting a trainee ordinand on placement in the Parish- continuing support for achieving the Eco Church Gold Award.

PCC meetings continue to be efficient, with much preparation being completed in advance by the Standing Committee who agree a structured agenda, and by the members to focus on the key issues. Members thank the Rector for her excellent chairing of these meetings.

Financial Report – John Smith

John provided the meeting with a comprehensive explanation of the annual accounts with the aid of a power Point presentation. Detailed accounts were published in the 'Report of the Trustees and Financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2024', together with additional information circulated at the meeting.

Most of the parish expenditure is unavoidable and although it appears that there is a £10k 'profit', £25k will soon be spent on the refurbishment of St Bridget's organ, the tenancy of Covertside provided £12k, but cannot be relied on should a future curate need accommodation, the Centre made a small surplus and investment interest could vary.

John went on to summarise certain pages of the financial report and finished by saying that although we are running at a deficit, we need to be mindful.

In the past year all the main bank accounts have been transferred to the Co-Op bank from Barclays, for ethical reasons

There was one question asking why the cleaning costs at Caldy are higher than those at St Bridget's. This is because St Bridget's cleaning is in house whereas Caldy is contracted out.

The meeting was invited to accept the **Trustees and Financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2024**

Proposed by Rosemary Morgan. Seconded by Anna Gibson. Accepted unanimously

John finished by saying that he anticipates a deficit in 2025 as regular giving does not meet essential expenditure. The Parish Share for 2025 has increased to £99,778, (£1919/week before any local expenditure) most of this goes on clergy stipends, pensions, housing and diocesan staff.

Wages have increased (the parish pays staff in accordance with the Living Wage Foundation recommendations) as well as an increase in general costs, utilities and insurance etc. The Parish Giving Scheme could help balance the books.

Parish Giving Scheme: John outlined details of this scheme, information having previously appeared in the Parish magazine and on the 'a church near you' website. The parish is already signed up to the scheme.

John thanked the Finance team and everyone else who supports him financially. Alex thanked John and his team

5. Elections and Appointments

Members of the Deanery Synod

Nominated: Greg Buckridge Proposed by Paula Cobby Seconded by Carolyn Tallents Elected

Sue Shaw and Angela Douglas are current Deanery Synod representatives

Members of the PCC (4 vacancies)

Nominations:

David Wright Proposed by Greg Buckridge Seconded by Paula Cobby Elected

Izaak Perkins Proposed by Greg Buckridge Seconded by David Wright Elected

Graham Crowder Proposed by Rod Tann Seconded by Jane Tann Elected

Mevalyn Bowman Proposed by Margaret Ellis Seconded by Priscilla Bench-Capon Elected

Appointment of Independent Examiner

Stephen Leonard Proposed by John Smith Unanimously appointed

6. Rector's report

It is obviously encouraging to look at the many things we have and are doing as a church community, but it is always important to remember why

we are doing them. My understanding is that it is because we want people to join us on that journey, we want people to encounter God in a way which enables them to flourish, we want them to find a place where they belong and are of value for who they are and can play their part in a caring and nurturing family.

One of our strap lines is open hearts, open hands, open minds and it is a good guide to what it is we are trying to do

There is much to celebrate and much to give thanks for, I hope that both the trustees report and the parish life report reflect that- I'd like to draw attention to some of the things in all the growth of this tree about which we can rejoice.

In our pastoral care - Our desire to be a church community which notices and responds to those in need, our pastoral team make a significant difference to people when they are going through difficult times and I also know that many other people through small acts of kindness and care also contribute in that way, we receive many notes of thanks and gratitude so thank you to all of you who offer such care.

In our worship and prayer, we are not doing it in order to pat ourselves on the back because numbers look good or feel despondent when they don't but must ask - how are we helping people encounter God, not only on Sundays but throughout the week. We are blessed to have both in our **ministry team** a variety of styles and offerings and in our church family people who are increasingly willing to take part in planning and leading worship. Worship is at the heart of who we are and if we are to follow and journey with Jesus then **study and nurture** of our faith matters. Again, we give thanks for those who help us find resources and give us opportunities to deepen our understanding and our faith.

It is often said that children are the future of the church and in some ways that makes sense but actually children are the now or should be the now of our church so our work with **children and families** is one of our priorities. The PCC took a financial risk in deciding to invest in children and families work but I think we would all agree that it was definitely a risk which has born much fruit. My huge thanks to both Carolyn and Andrew but also the many many volunteers who support the activities which they plan and offer. Of course, we need **buildings** and spaces in which to be the church, and we have a brilliant team who looks after all our buildings. They help guide our decisions and also on many occasions do the work themselves when appropriate. We also are forward thinking and look to improve what we offer, and the enhancement team is the place where ideas start and often come to fulfilment and of course we have grounds to maintain. We have reduced the amount we spend on the gardeners – one of those tricky decisions and are trying to plug the gaps with volunteer gardening. Thank you to all who volunteer in that way and to Bill and Doreen who give so much time and more to ensure the grounds at St Bridget's always look good, also to those at Caldby who have helped in a similar way.

When we look at where our **money** is spent, we should be able to see that it has been spent on helping people worship and encounter God and in receiving support and care. money is always a significant part of this meeting and PCC meetings and the cause sometimes of less than Christian behaviour! Sometimes we have to make unpopular decisions or take risks or spend some of our money that we are holding in reserve, but the church is not an organisation to make money but to transform lives. If what we are doing is God's will then our faith is that we will have the resources to do it

so my huge thanks to all who both give money and help us manage the money since I arrived John Smith has been hoping to be able to stand down as treasurer we continue to look for and pray that someone will enable him to do so but the gift that John is is that not only is that he helps us take care of where our money goes but also has that faith which says we can't afford this but we can't afford not to either - quite a unique combination in a treasurer.

It is important to recognize that our income only just pays our bills and doesn't leave us very much for doing that work which is at the heart of our community so we do need to increase giving and we will be approaching people in different ways to try and make that happen.

In a parish, nothing happens without a huge team of people sometimes in the background sometimes out front -so my thanks to everyone who helps in the world of administration of the parish. We celebrate that we have a parish administrator that keeps her eye on many things, including me.

that we have a safeguarding team which has those difficult conversations with people usually about Training requirements - we do training not because we think we or you are a risk to people but because we think that is important we know how to respond if we or you are the person in whom someone confides or you see something that doesn't feel quite right.

Thank you to our PSO Rosemary and her team Sue Shaw and Veronica Sherlock for all they have done over the last year. Much of what we do has a social element, but part of our social life gives an opportunity to reach out into the wider community. Thank you to everyone who supports our many social activities -there are too many to mention, and I am indebted to your commitment and tireless work.

I do want to take the opportunity today of thanking **Chris Andrew** for the years of work she has given to one of the hugest blessings of our parish life – the Link café.

Part of our outreach involves us publicising what we do – how will people know who we are and what we are doing if we don't tell them?

that's why the PCC took the decision to invest some of our money in our **outreach** and **publicity** work so Andrew Gibb has three hours a week to develop the social side of our community to reach and to publicize what we are doing. It's a very varied role which overlaps with many aspects of our parish life and always changing and we keep it under review, but it has taken work off me and to some extent off Paula too. My thanks to all who work on communication, the website, the parish magazine, the newsletter, a church near you – Priscilla deserves a special mention and of course acknowledging our gratitude for all that her husband Trevor did over many years before his death.

I simply cannot mention everyone by name – far too risky -but my thanks for each and every one of you who show your support in a myriad of ways. Thanks to those agreeing to serving on the PCC, thanks especially to our churchwardens and deputy warden – to Ann and Joy as they continue.

Greg has completed his 6 years and has been tireless in his support and hard work – when we talk of things going on behind the scenes – that's where you will find Greg much of the time – and I am delighted that he has agreed to continue much of that work which he has undertaken as churchwarden - which is not the specific remit of that role – but his attention to and care of our church buildings is excellent – a token of our thanks – and to Ann as well for her wisdom and support, her encouragement and care and Joy who has stepped forward again to represent Caldý.

Finally, to each and every one of you – there is much I have not said – but now it's your turn to ask any questions of me about the last 12 months of parish life.

7. Vote of thanks – Ann Holden

On behalf of all of us, present and absent, I would like to thank Alex for leading this year's APCM.

However, the meeting and the considerable preparation required for it are only a tiny fraction of Alex's work in the Parish over the last year. She has given of herself unstintingly in every aspect of our Parish life, including the connection with St Bridget's School.

She has led us in many forms of thoughtful worship, and with kindness and good humour has encouraged and inspired us and others who may be new to church life. She has had endless ideas and an inexhaustible enthusiasm and the skills for realising them. In fact, for some of us, it is a truth universally acknowledged that a holiday for Alex and Richard is a holiday for us

Thank you for being here Alex

8. Commitment and Prayer

We commit to God the decisions which have been made. Asking God to guide the members of the PCC in their work over the coming year

Prayers were said

The meeting closed