

## Minutes

### St Mary's Project Rutherford Meeting for Volunteers 7.30pm. Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at St. Leonard's Hall, St Mary's Church, Broomfield, Chelmsford.

**Present:** Ian Mercer, Karen Paxton, Ros Mercer, Trudy Stevens, Val Pattenden, Alun Powell, Jill Readings, Jim Tibbott, Margaret Pinkerton, Dawn Butcher, Christine Bailey, David Marcus, Neil Wiffen, Carolyn Tibbott, Kathy Rouse, Alan Coday, Lis Hardy, Cathy Pearson, Margaret Clarke.

**Apologies:** Sheila Hasler, Malcolm Taylor, Naomi Courteney-Luck, Rachel Butterworth

1. **Welcome** from Trudy Stevens in which she indicated that we are now moving into the "ongoing phase" of the Rutherford Project; so this meeting is part celebration for the completion of the building elements and part looking forward to, and planning for, the continuing community involvement.

#### 2. Updates

##### Tower & Spire

The circulated report was taken as read.

**External Works:** now complete and `Bakers are moving off site. Temporary guttering has been set up to catch tannin residues from the shakes. This will be removed after about a year. The rotten timbers found beneath the weathervane have now been replaced. A new lightening conductor to the latest standards has been installed by Bakers at their expense. The scaffolding has been removed and the car park should be emptied of the site hut etc. by the end of the week.

Work on the lychgate – not part of the Rutherford Project – will commence on 16<sup>th</sup> October, taking 6 weeks. Scaffolding will be required and so the entrance to the church will be via the car park or the footpath entrance on the other side. Bakers workers will use the hall facilities rather than a separate hut.

**Internal Works:** Three quotes have been received for the redecoration of the interior of the tower. The PCC have agreed the quote from Peter Loe, to commence on 16<sup>th</sup> October. This should take 2 weeks and then be followed by the restoration of the fresco by Tobit Curteis in early November. The fresco will be protected during the redecoration. Quotes for a new carpet in a deep mottled red are being obtained; separate whipped mats for the bellringers are incorporated. The bells would need to be rung down during the works; DM will talk with Chris Marcus, the Tower Captain. No changes to the heating or lighting are envisaged at this stage. The spotlight could be re directed to better light the fresco (JT). The conditions made by the Archdeacon for the works (a full faculty not being required), were drawn to the attention of the meeting, and deemed to be adhered to. The long ladder could be removed and stored in the vicarage garage. Malcolm Deacon has made a moveable table from part of a pew, and Joan Vine is working on designs for a textile drape for it.

During previous contact with Tobit Curteis about the fresco, they had suggested running a workshop during the conservation works as to give a full talk would require professional fees. RM/IM agreed to contact them to arrange this for a mid-week afternoon and seek to invite interested art groups etc.

**Finance:** It is a great relief that HLF have agreed to cover the extra costs, whether or not the VAT is recovered from charitable sources. The church has, in the meantime, to cover the £46K from reserves for 1 year post completion when the retentions expire. HLF have also agreed to administer the project cost as a whole, not split between original and new work, which has made accounting much easier.

## 2. Exhibition Area:

General update – the provision of glazing and lighting for the panel section beneath the west window is underway with Leez Construction. JT will fit tops to the units to prevent debris accumulation beneath. Malcolm Deacon will make a wider ‘sales shelf’ from spare pew timber and a donations box will be obtained.

The log of visitors when the church is open on Tuesday & Thursday mornings shows that 122 people visited during the three months April- July. It was noted that some had come especially to see the fresco and the exhibition having seen the information on the church website. This is clearly an important activity for the church so further volunteer stewards would be warmly welcomed (contact DB, TS or Anna).

## 3. Community Involvement:

- i. **Activities Team:** DB tabled a report of activities at both Primary and Secondary level. JR reported on liaison with CVHS with respect to the secondary curriculum and other outreach events over the summer. RR will be the focus for the History Club and RE lesson links have been reinforced by visits to the church by year 7 pupils. Community links with the Great Waltham Twinning Group and St Andrew’s church were made during visits and there was much complimentary feedback.

DB has led liaison with Broomfield Primary School, but TS reminded the meeting that DB would be moving on and a lead for this activity is essential. The report contained many photos of various activities as evidence of engagement. VP has done an audit of possible curriculum links to help target work with the school. CB & DB have arranged activities. It was suggested that Debbie Williams who is on the PCC and works at the school might be involved. Other help with visits was requested.

KR suggested that other local secondary schools and the University could be approached.

**Publicity Material:** JR & RM would liaise re publicity:

**A press release / flier** to advertise the availability of talks and bespoke visits to the church, as had occurred with the 2 AGMs held over the summer.

Suggestions re groups that might be interested in talks and visits were requested. Please liaise with RM.

**Articles** in Bromfield Times, The View (Diocesan newsletter), Essex Life magazine, Visit Essex etc. to be explored.

- ii. **People & Stone Talks and Booklets:** The Eco related talks held over the summer had been most successful and enjoyable, and also raised funds. It is envisaged that 2 talks will be held each term, one directly related to Rosemary Rutherford and the other of more general village interest. The organising group would meet to plan the 2024 programme.

The next talk is arranged for Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September, “The Location of Broomfield Church in the Landscape” by Simon Coxall. This will be an expanded version of the talk given at the Friends of Historic Essex AGM in July. RM will take the lead in organising the event together with NW as TS and AP are unavailable.

The October talk was originally planned for 28<sup>th</sup> October, but Naomi is not available, it being school half term, so, after the meeting, it was agreed to plan the talk on RR’s War Art for 11<sup>th</sup> November in conjunction with the unveiling of the Blue Plaque, subject to availability of the Mayor etc.

IM has updated the Church Walls booklet to include information on the cobbles in the tower. Copy for the new edition is with NW. Stock of the original is almost sold out – it is especially popular with geology groups looking at church walls.

RM is working on a booklet on Rosemary Rutherford’s Stained Glass in conjunction with Chris Parkinson. It will include much more detail of St Mary’s windows and all RR’s other windows with a brief catalogue that will be expanded for the church website to be linked to the exhibition by a QR code.

As noted above, members of the group can offer to do talks on Rosemary Rutherford either at church or at the groups’ meetings eg U3A groups.

CP is presenting talks on the Life and Works of Rosemary Rutherford to the Friends of Chelmsford Museum AGM on 15<sup>th</sup> September and to a Tuesday Talk at the ER on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October. She took some booklets for the Chelmsford Museum talk and IM & RM will run a church booklet stall at the ERO meeting.

- iii. **Stalls at Village events:** Information / sales table could be set up at forthcoming church Christmas events as well as other events at the Village Hall, Great Waltham Christmas Tree festival, Madelaine Court. It was suggested that a Christmas tree could be prepared to take to these events. Sheila Hasler might help with designing suitable baubles etc.

On Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September Michael Dodsworth is performing a Story Telling Anglo Saxon event starting at the church as part of the Heritage Days organised by the City Council. RM contacted him about the Broomfield Princely burial and the church Gold & Garnets booklet. It is suggested that a sales table could be set up by the lychgate to make the information available to participants. The booking is closed as places were quickly filled (as last year). RM, LH & NW to undertake if acceptable.

Coach Trip: The second coach trip to see Rosemary Rutherford's windows in Suffolk combined with a visit to the Stained Glass museum at Ely will take place on Thursday 19th October, organised by Ray Spiller of Broomfield Coach Trips. Sufficient places have been booked for it to go ahead, but places are still available to book directly with Ray. RM/IM will liaise with Hinderclay church re parking for the coach.

The Library had a 'Love your Library' day in May with a display of village history. We could offer a Rosemary Rutherford display for the future.

- iv. **Website:** CT has now trained a team who have permission to work on the website. IM will deal with Rutherford project information. Anna Duke will keep the front page updated with the latest church event.

#### 4. Other Issues:

**Church Opening Rota:** CT held a Thank You lunch to show appreciation of volunteers who open the church on a Tuesday and Thursday morning. A presentation about the exhibition was given to help inform visitors. RM will investigate how the A-board could be set up on the Green more easily to catch the attention of people on Main Road. More volunteers would help to extend the rota.

**Blue Plaque:** NW brought the Blue Plaque to the meeting and it was passed round and photographed. It was suggested that it could be unveiled at the War Art talk, now planned for 11th November. The Mayor would be invited (RM). It will be fixed to the north gable of St Leonard's Hall in a position already agreed with the City Council and the Archdeacon. It would be an appropriate topic for an article in Essex Life magazine.

**Church Music Concert:** NW has contact with a group of musicians, Gaudeamus, a chamber choir of about 28 voices, based in Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, who have offered to put on a concert of 'Church Music Through the Ages' at a cost of £120. A summer Sunday in 2024 is suggested. NW will pass contact information to CT to discuss with Jill Parkin.

- 5. **AOB:** Alan Coday suggested the The Arts Society based in Little Baddow might be interest in a talk on Rosemary Rutherford. RM could do this, based on a

version of Naomi's talk that she gave to the Friends of Historic Essex AGM. He would pass on contact information.

Carolyn thanked everyone for coming and for putting so much energy into this exciting mission and outreach for the church in Broomfield.

The meeting closed at 9pm.