



# Annual General Meeting MEETING MINUTES

1 October 2017

## Meeting Details

Meeting Name:	Annual General Meeting
Chairman:	John Bates
Date:	Sunday, 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2017
Time:	3pm until 4pm
Location:	Parish Centre

## Invitees/Attendees

**The Annual General Meeting (AGM) was an open meeting for all parishioners.**

*They were invited to hear the Council report on the state of the Parish, including highlights from the past year and an outlook for the next 12 months.*

**35** parishioners were present at the meeting, including the following members of the Parish Council:

Name	Role	Present
John Bates	Chairman Health & Safety and Safeguarding	Yes
Fr Michael Spain	Parish Priest	Yes
Fr Bob Davies	Carmelite Community	No
John Forte	Finance Committee	Yes
Sally Taylor	Evangelisation Activity Group	Apologies
Ros Burton	Liturgy & Church Activity Group	Yes
Stephen Forster	Outreach Activity Group	Yes
Kasia Misiewicz	Pastoral Activity Group	No
Nan Jacobson	Social Activity Group	Yes
Paul Rayner	Youth Activity Group	Yes
Doreen Pooley	Mass Representatives	No
Joan Barham	Secretary	Yes

# Agenda Items

Item	Subject	Presenter
1.	Opening Remarks	John Bates
2.	Parish Priest's Report	Fr Michael Spain
3.	Finance Committee Report	John Forte
4.	Any Other Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions Tabled in Advance</li><li>• Questions &amp; Comments from the Floor</li></ul>	John Bates
5.	Closing Remarks	John Bates

## Meeting Notes

### 1. Opening Remarks - John Bates

- Apologies were received in advance of the meeting from Sally Taylor.
- John Bates welcomed everyone to the meeting. Those present then recited the Parish Prayer (see *inside cover of Annual Report*). Fr Michael said an opening prayer.
- John thanked everyone for giving up their time to attend the meeting. It demonstrates their interest and commitment to the parish and that is much appreciated.
- A tremendous amount of work goes on in this parish as can be seen from the information contained in the Annual Report. Very many thanks to all the people involved not only in producing the report, but the many volunteers who take part in the activity/working groups. Their time and effort is what makes this parish as good as it is. Not many other parishes can produce a report such as this on an annual basis and all parishioners are invited to read it. Thanks to Joan Barham for compiling and creating the report.

### 2. Parish Priest's Report - Fr Michael Spain

- Fr Michael's update was as per the Carmelite Community section of the Annual Report, which he said included some pretty comprehensive statistics.
- He reiterated thanks to Joan Barham for her work on the report. He thanked John Bates and John Forte for their support and service to both himself and the parish.
- He concluded by saying that he felt grateful for everyone and hoped that we all would be a little bit closer to God at the end of the forthcoming year.

### 3. Finance Committee Report - John Forte

- Refer to the "*Finance Chairman Report to Parish AGM 2017*" for full details of John Forte's report.
- Refer to the "*Finance Committee Report*" and accompanying "*Financial Statement*" made available prior to the AGM in the Annual Report for information about parish finances.
- John Bates thanked John Forte for his seven years of hard work, during which time he supported John Bates, Christ North (the current Treasurer) as well as past Treasurers during his tenure. We are very grateful for his commitment. If anyone knows of a suitable candidate for John's successor, then Fr Michael would be pleased to receive suggestions for his consideration.
- We are also in desperate need for Counters as we have lost the equivalent of one whole team. Please contact Peter Freeman if you know of anyone suitable who is prepared and willing to offer their time.

#### 4. Any Other Business - John Bates

##### **Questions Tabled in Advance**

- **Maggie Green** – *The Catholic Directory and Discalced Carmelite Friars websites have published incorrect details about the parish; particularly with reference to people, Mass times and catholic schools.* Thanks to Maggie for bringing this to our attention. We do not own either of these websites nor do we author the content. However, we do want the information to be accurate. We will contact the web administrators for each website and provide the relevant updates so the details can be corrected.

**ACTION: Joan Barham to contact web administrators and get the information updated.**

##### **Questions & Comments from the Floor**

- **Sister Mary Christa** – *Would like to acknowledge the people who do the London Run. They do their work, week in and week out, in a quiet and unassuming manner.*

This was acknowledged by John Bates who added that this important outreach work had been going on for well over twenty years. This was wholeheartedly endorsed by all those present.

- **Charles DesForges** – *Asked about the content and format of our accounts; observing that it is difficult to reconcile the comments in the report with the financial statement presented. The convention in most organisations is to produce a statement showing performance against budget – do we have a budget for the coming year? As regards the proposals for expenditure on further projects, it is incumbent upon the parish to understand what the implications of the commitments are. Would like to see a budget of some description if possible.*

*The figures given for the refurbishment don't seem to add up – this may be to do with the accounting practices of the Diocese but looking at the figures there seems to be a discrepancy.*

In response, John Forte said he suggested having a budget when he took over chairmanship of the Finance Committee, however, it proved quite difficult. We are completely tied down by the diocese on the headings to be used for accounting purposes and each one has a lot of sub-headings. He agreed that it is not easy to reconcile them looking at the accounts. As far as differentials in our accounts, the auditors went through them thoroughly last July and found them to be satisfactory. We have been independently audited three times during John's tenure and the auditors have commented each time on how good we are compared to other parishes in the diocese.

Ideally we would like to use a budget but it is almost impossible given that most of the details come from the diocese and unfortunately we don't get the necessary information in a timely manner; for example Gift Aid figures take 3-4 months after year end which delays us in producing our own accounts.

The Church doesn't operate in the way a normal business does. We can suggest to the diocese that this is not satisfactory and see if improvements can be made.

John Bates reminded us that the figures in our Financial Statement are to 31 March 17 and we are now in October. It is usually late August/early September when we receive the information we need to produce of end of year accounts. He went on to say that we could budget for some items such as heating and lighting but not sufficient items to be meaningful. However, it will be noted from John Forte's report that prior to embarking on any large expenditure on improvements at St Joseph's the parish will be consulted and the proposed improvement costed.

- **Catherine Woodgates** – *Can we do something about the car park? When arriving for 11am Mass it is impossible to park because families are still around from 9am and it is terrifying for those driving in, especially with young children in the car park.*

The new side entrance will have allocated parking for those less able, the number of spaces will be determined in due course. If we need to increase how many we allocate then we will do so. Quite a few people have to find alternative parking for 11am Mass as the car park is so full, many spilling out on to the nearby roads so at risk of upsetting our neighbours. Perhaps we can remind the 9am congregation to vacate the car park by 10:45am and/or consider having Mass at 11:15am to alleviate the congestion.

**ACTION: Fr Michael to look into this and, if necessary, adjust the 11am Mass time.**

- **John Bates** – Reminded everyone about two events this week. First “*Romero – Heartbeat of El Salvador*” a play about Blessed Oscar Romero which will be performed by RISE Theatre in the Hall on Wednesday at 7:30pm. Tickets available from the Parish Office. Second, the Soup Lunch which will take place on Friday in the Parish Centre from 12 noon until 2pm. Enjoy a selection of delicious home-made soups with all the proceeds going to CAFOD. Finally, he invited those present to try a sample of our St Joseph’s Christmas Puddings after the meeting.

## 5. Closing Remarks - John Bates

- The chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and expressed his gratitude for their time and commitment to the parish and the many jobs that have to be done.
- The meeting was closed with a prayer and a blessing by Fr Michael.