

**ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY**  
**Pastoral Parish Council**  
**Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025**  
**Minutes**

**Attendees:** Bernard Hunter, Fr Michael Copps, Patricia Jolly, Lorna Spears, Robin Shearmur, Peter Robson, Damian Atkinson, Martin Sharkey, Cynthia Oji & Donna Patros

**In attendance for the first item:** David Underwood (Parish CAFOD representative), and Chris Driscoll (CAFOD Brentwood)

**Apologies.** Matthew Ives, Geraldine Mansbridge

Bernard opened the meeting with a prayer.

**Minutes** The minutes of the two March meetings were approved.

**Matters arising: none**

**Live Simply**

David and Chris described the LiveSimply programme and accreditation, and encouraged us to adopt it by forming a parish group to take this forward.

The purpose would be to bring people together around the objective of encouraging us all (and as a parish) to find ways to Live more Simply, sustainably and in solidarity with the poor, attaining the award providing an initial focus.

Support is available from other LiveSimply parishes in the Diocese, from CAFOD (who administer the award), and from Caritas Brentwood. The possibility of engaging with our young parishioners and with local schools was also identified.

They also mentioned the similar, broadly Anglican initiative of EcoChurch, of which St Mary's in South Woodford is an example.

Action agreed was for PPC members to digest this discussion and consider if we wish to move forward with LiveSimply, and how best to do that.

David and Chris were thanked for attending.

**Small Grants scheme**

The proposed policy had been circulated and were discussed.

Changes agreed were:

- a) reporting by the subcommittee to the PPC every quarter rather than annually (clause 9);
  - b) emphasise the need to achieve turnover of committee membership (clause 1) by adding "with a view to refreshing the membership regularly" to the clause.
- There was talk of having maximum of 3 years service by committee members, but the vaguer wording was agreed.

All agreed with the above, save one member who felt the membership term should be made more specific.

### **Begging policy**

The discussion document previously circulated had been prepared in response to a suggestion arising from the PPC Surgery weekend, and was discussed in detail. All members had reservations, but all agreed that we should tell anyone begging on church property that they must not do so. This conclusion arose partly because Vittorio cause offense to a few people and regularly pushed the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. It was also because giving to those begging is widely accepted as not being an effective way of supporting the poor – those begging often have links with crime, and/or use the proceeds in ways that are damaging to themselves.

Action: Bernard to communicate this to Vittorio in writing (in Italian) and verbally, and inform parishioners by placing a small item in the newsletter pointing to a fuller explanation on the website.

### **PPC Surgery**

The account of feedback and proposed responses previously circulated were accepted for publication on the website.

Action: Bernard to add the conclusion about begging and arrange for the document to be published on the website, with a pointer in a newsletter.

### **Henrietta Suite Project**

Bernard described his work to confirm how much storage space is actually achieved, and whether the new bar area is large enough in the proposed plan.

He opined that after dimensions had been corrected by Barkers, we can achieve more storage space for users, AND space for some but not all chairs and tables in place of the old bar area; also, that new new bar was well-designed and large enough.

He also described a dialogue with Barkers' Quantity Surveyor from which we can soon expect a more tailored estimate of costs, and a discussion about the tendering process from which we expect to be able to demonstrate to the parish that we have taken all reasonable steps to assure a critical review of the proposals and their costs.

The PPC expects to confirm that tendering can proceed once the relevant documentation is available.

### **Updates**

Damian described plans for the Triduum in outline, and progress on our developing a lay-led Service of The Word and Holy Communion.

Two couple have volunteered to be involved in Marriage Preparation, and that will be developed after Easter.

Patricia told us of the first meeting of the new Becket Centre Committee. Its constitution is being revised and will be brought to the PPC for confirmation.

Fr Michael closed the meeting with a prayer at 9:30pm, it having started at 8pm to allow attendance at the Service of Reconciliation.