

**ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CHURCH  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**Minutes  
Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

**Attendees :** Bernard Hunter, Fr Michael Copps, Lorna Spears, Martin Sharkey, Donna Patros, Matthew Ives, Peter Robson, & Geraldine Mansbridge  
Also present Brian Martin & Martin Mansbridge

**Apologies for Absence:** Damian Atkinson, Patricia Jolly & Cynthia Oji

**Minutes**

The minutes of the August meeting were approved.

**Matters arising**

- Bernard apologised for not having produced the mass and streaming stats and will do so for the next meeting.
- The AGM will take place on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2026
- It was noted that a budget of £1k would be more realistic for the Alpha course than that suggested at the last meeting. This was noted.
- Responsibility for clearing the small storage shed needs to be confirmed in liaison with the Becket Centre committee.

**Henrietta Suite**

The PPC received a report from Martin Mansbridge, and a checklist of issues and risks to consider.

After a serious debate which examined in detail the need and morality of spending so much money, and the possible alternatives, the PPC agreed to proceed with the tender from Clarks, subject to detail to be resolved in a pre-contract review. They accepted that the scope for reducing the functionality or quality of the offering was very limited, and considered that it would be very unwise to do so, given that this is a once in 30 years exercise.

Martin reminded the PPC that various elements of the original plan had been pared back once the high cost became apparent, but that those did not threaten the overall objectives and quality of the plan we now have.

The only possible further saving might be to do without a false ceiling. That was discussed, but its advantages and positive visual impact persuaded the PPC to retain it - the saving would in any case have been relatively small.

It was agreed that the next stage of the project will be managed by Rob Fernandes, supported and overseen by Brian Martin (Finance) and Bernard Hunter (PPC).

It was further agreed to delegate a contingency budget to the project, as is normal on any project this size, to cover unavoidable extra costs that emerge, and to allow the

project oversight team to authorise use of the contingency so long as it did not materially change the agreed plans. Any significant change must be referred back to the PPC.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Martin for his efforts in bringing us this far, and to Geraldine who has been quietly very effective in so many ways.

### **Toilets**

It was reported that tenders had been sought on the basis of the specification agreed at the last meeting. However these appeared higher than anticipated and it was agreed to remove the replacement of all toilets and sanitary units.

That might bring the total cost to £35,000.

Brian on behalf of the Finance Committee recommended not proceeding at this stage until the full costs of the Henrietta Suite were known.

In acknowledging this the PPC still felt in principle that this work should be progressed at a future date, hopefully January 2026.

Ideally, an order would be placed based on the tenders received before they expired. The PPC agreed to review costs at their next meeting.

### **Plans for the Year**

This item was referred to the next meeting when PPC members would be asked to identify how their ideas can be progressed.

### **Any Other business**

Fr Quentin has suggested that the Adoration Service should take place in the autumn as had previously been the case. It was agreed that Gemma Miller be approached to see if she is happy and able to make the arrangements again, potentially 14/15 November.

Bernard reported that efforts were being made to re-institute the provision of after-mass teas, very important to many mass attendees and a key way of welcoming visitors and newcomers to the parish.

### **Next Meeting**

This will be held on 13<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30pm