

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

**Minutes
Monday 11th August 2025**

Attendees : Bernard Hunter, Fr Michael Copps, Patricia Jolly, Lorna Spears, Martin Sharkey, Donna Patros, Matthew Ives, Damian Atkinson, Peter Robson, Geraldine Mansbridge & Fr Michael O’Kane.

Apologies for Absence: Cynthia Oji

Fr Michael Copps welcomed members to the new Council year.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Following a secret ballot

- Bernard Hunter: Chair
- Damian Atkinson: Vice-Chair.

In addition Geraldine Mansbridge was appointed Parish secretary

Minutes

The minutes of the June meeting were approved.

Matters arising

An update on the plans for after Sunday mass refreshments during the Henrietta Suite building works was requested. It was noted that the options currently been considered included using the William Scott Room or the Scout Meeting Hut. It was recognised that it was important to keep this activity available as much as possible during the period.

AGM

Subject to minor amendments it was agreed that the draft minutes of the AGM be published on the website.

Matters raised at the AGM

- Mass intentions
The request for mass intention names to be announced was noted and was now being actioned by the Friars with the help of input from the Parish office.
- Newsletter
It was agreed to put a note in the newsletter box in the event that all the newsletters had been taken to advise parishioners/visitors to ask the office to print some more as required.

- **Mass attendance**
Bernard to produce a report on numbers attending mass and logging on to watch live stream and recordings over a 5 year period to enable the PPC to look at the changing attendance pattern. That may help us to plan how best to reach people: former attendees, those interested in the catholic faith, and to engage with parents and young people in particular.
- **AGM timing**
It was agreed that the AGM would be moved from a Sunday in future and in 2026 would be held on a Wednesday at 7.30pm in June. Dates would be publicised in due course.

PPC Meetings

It was agreed to continue with the arrangements to meet on the second Monday of each month, subject to there being business to conduct.

Alpha Course

Peter outlined the plans to introduce a catholic based Alpha Course to St Thomas' parishioners. He doing this he recognised that greater preparation was needed and that he would need to build a team to support this project. Those currently involved included Gloria, Damian, Elizabeth, Daniel and himself. He referenced the current Journey of Faith programme and thought there could be links, However after discussion he acknowledged that the journey of faith had different dynamics than the Alpha Course. His initial budget assessment for the first course was £250. He would update members in due course about the timing, structure, costs and planned promotion of the programme.

Henrietta Suite

Bernard reported that we were currently in the tender process with tenders expected by the end of this week. The plan is for Barkers to review the tenders and present them to the Project Board at the beginning of September. The board would then make a recommendation following their review by the PPC. It was anticipated that this could be at the September meeting or at a special meeting in order that decisions are not delayed.

Toilets

Following the AGM a briefing was held about the Henrietta Suite project. During this a number of parishioners raised concerns that the toilets refurbishment was not included and they thought that this was not acceptable. As a result a specification was drawn up and circulated to members for review. It was agreed that tenders

should be sought by the Parish Office and presented to members via email for approval in due course.

Plans for the Year

The areas to be developed this year included

- Seeking more volunteers
- Alpha Course
- Young Vinnies
- Children's Liturgy
- Spiritual support (along the lines of the previous bereavement group but with a wider remit)

Becket Centre Committee

Patricia was invited to provide an update on the Committees recent site inspection.

- Scout Meeting Hut – The floor covering will need renewing at some time in the future
- Guide storage Hut – One side contains an area for parish storage. Lots of the items should be disposed of and this will be arranged.
- Parish Shed – is a mess and appears to be a dumping ground. Needs reviewing and clearing out.
- Internal – Users items need to be better stored and labelled rather than the current ad hoc arrangements. This includes the Clare Store room as well as the downstairs area. It was recognised that support should be given to parish and vulnerable groups when storage is needed. The issue of whether the cost of hire, where applied should include storage space was discussed and the Committee were asked to review the current rates and look at what other similar sites would charge for premises and storage, if applicable.
- New Tables – having looked at the option the Committee decided to opt for new white tables.

Next Meeting

This will be held on 8th September at 7.30pm (unless deferred to fit with Henrietta suite decision-making)