

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

**Minutes
Monday 13th October 2025**

Attendees : Bernard Hunter, Fr Michael Copps, Robin Shearmur, Lorna Spears, Martin Sharkey, Donna Patros, Damian Atkinson, Patricia Jolly.
Also present for the Henrietta Suite item: Rob Fernandes

Apologies for Absence: Matthew Ives, Peter Robson, Geraldine Mansbridge & Cynthia Oji

Minutes

The minutes of the September meeting were approved subject to adding Robin as an attendee.

Matters arising

1. Bernard tabled Mass and streaming data which were discussed to inform our parish strategy. Conclusions proved difficult to draw, but it was noted that numbers had been falling before the Covid lockdowns, and had stabilised since, with modest increases.

The value of the streaming service was acknowledged.

Bernard will distribute the spreadsheets he produced to council members.

2. The PPC was pleased to learn that a lower, more affordable bid for toilet refurbishment of about £23,000 had been received from Clarks, and that an order was now being placed with them. If Geraldine confirms she has the capacity to cope, the work will be done with the Henrietta Suite refurbishment.

Bernard will contact Geraldine to see if the work can be done in parallel with the HS refurbishment.

3. A parishioner has volunteered, and generated a new rota for teas after the 10am and 1130am masses on Sundays. During Henrietta Suite works, they take place in the William Scott room. The PPC asked that teas be better advertised and signposted (action: Bernard)

4. Gemma has agreed to organise the Adoration on 14/15 November.

Henrietta Suite

Rob delivered a very encouraging progress report: the work is on schedule, and various issues have been dealt with: confirming Audio-Visual provision, uneven flooring, previously hidden door to be blocked up, extra plaster skim of whole suite for a perfect finish. These involve extra costs which have been agreed with the project board.

Bernard promised to prepare an updated estimate of total project costs.

Rob reported how well all parties were working together.

He will ensure that the parish is kept up-to-date through newsletter and web site.

Tables and chairs: after discussion of the paper circulated previously, the PPC agreed to wait and see what could be stored effectively when the huts clearance had taken place and the new Henrietta Suite storerooms occupied.

They confirmed that we would dispose of anything that could not be stored properly rather than allowing untidiness and clutter.

Patricia reported that the BCC intends to conduct an annual review and stocktake of all stored items, and that they will be boxed where possible, and labelled.

Plans for the Year

Members noted the very many the existing initiatives, and no suggestions were forthcoming about how we could improve as a parish.

Small grants report

The PPC was pleased to receive the reports from recipients of funding, Young Vinnies and Ruby, and tasked Bernard with thanking them.

The PPC would also like to see a regular financial summary report from the small grants committee (action: Robin for review at the next PPC).

Film request

Young Vinnies have asked for funds of about £1,000 to put on a free nativity film for families in church on 23rd December, with donations given to a local hospice.

Putting this on was enthusiastically endorsed by the PPC.

The alternative of half of donations going towards costs was discussed, as was the potential precedent of supporting external charities. However, the PPC confirmed that the parish would pay for the event, allowing all donations to go to the hospice. It affirmed that any such future requests would be judged on a case by case basis.

Any Other business

Peter's note of spiritual programmes was shared (Advent reflection, Alpha course from 9th Jan to 23rd Mar, week of accompanied prayer after Easter).

Subject to clarification about the proposed Advent event (Damian to follow up and report back at the next PPC meeting if Peter cannot make it), the programmes were very well received.

Next Meeting

This will be held on Monday 10th November at 7.30pm