



St Thomas of Canterbury, Woodford Green

PPC Annual Report

July 2025 – June 2026

The Parish Council met nine times through the year. We coopted Cynthia, Damian, Peter and Donna onto the committee as signalled at the last AGM – they are standing formally to be elected this year. Minutes of our meetings and other documents are posted on the website. There was no PPC surgery after all masses this year because the response was so limited in 2024/25; we will solicit more feedback and suggestions from parishioners in the future.

We have failed to reconstruct a Liturgy committee to plan and advise on our services, so Damian has shouldered much coordinating work alone. We did, however, reconstitute a Becket Centre Management committee, though that too now needs a new leader. As reported last year, this highlights our general shortage of volunteers, which we are starting to try to address by better advertising what is needed and why. But the bottom line is that more parishioners will need to step forward if we are to be the parish we should be.

The Alpha course was a great success for the parish and for the 17 who attended it and the 5 facilitators. They continue to meet! We are very grateful to Peter and his team for this important initiative, which will be repeated in January and open to parishioners and non-parishioners alike.

We did not gain permission from the Friars to start having monthly lay-led services of the Word and Holy Communion, and we made no progress in promoting the diaconate or lay involvement in marriage preparation. These and similar matters must be given more focus in future, especially given that the Franciscans' ability to continue to serve the parish reduces as their age increases!

They have a Chapter (a 3-yearly meeting of the Province) this July which could lead to profound changes.

The Young Vinnies continued to thrive and to serve, and put a smile on all our faces. A meeting of our recent confirmands is about to be convened at which we hope they will decide to continue to get together under parish auspices and with our support and encouragement.

We are very pleased by the wish expressed by the new head of Trinity, Declan Linnane, to foster closer links for the benefit of our young people, and will work on that.

As last year, much PPC attention has been focussed on the Henrietta Suite refurbishment. Of course, we would do some things differently with hindsight, and the job took far too long, but the result has been almost universally well received. Special thanks must go to Geraldine, to Martin who led the project for much of the year, and to Rob who has been dogged in his and our pursuit of getting what we paid for. We should also mention the contractors who, with few caveats, did us proud: Clark's, the builders and prime contractors,

Catering Equipment Services for the kitchen, DSAV for the AV system, and Barkers, our advisors.

This year we lost both Geraldine and Tania from the parish office, though not thankfully from the parish. You all know their massive contribution over recent years, and they are very much missed. But that is mitigated by the very welcome arrival of Suzie as our new Parish Office and Site Manager.

There are negative notes in this report, but they should be seen as a wish to do better, and not distract from the terrific work being done by so many people in the parish.

Special mention should go to our H&S team, our safeguarding lead, the fabric team and our choir and music group, and those who make our key events happen: the summer fete, the Christmas Fair and the mass on the grass (fantastic this year!)

And, last but not least, the Parish Council would like to thank all parishioners for their continued faith, generosity and support throughout the year. The life of our parish depends upon the countless acts of service, kindness and commitment that often happen quietly behind the scenes.