

St Werburgh's Parish Council Meeting

Thurs 6th November at 7.15pm

Minutes

Present: Fr David, Lyn Williams, Lal Cook, Tina Bainbridge, Stephen Tierney, Bernice Meredith, Pat Floate, Marian McCarthy (chair)

Welcome and opening prayer: Marian welcomed everyone and asked Fr David to lead us in a prayer.

Minutes of last meeting and actions: No amendments to the last minutes were flagged.

Actions from October meeting:

- Cath Soc start needs to be organised. Lal to contact Wilma, who is now Cath Soc chair. DONE
- Events checklist to be updated by Marian DONE

Ongoing actions from previous meetings:

- Group updates for website in process (Lyn and Pete Penson)
- Parish census timescale to be agreed with Fr David.

Fr David – First weeks: Fr David ran through a long list of contacts made and meetings held in his first four weeks, with positive reactions throughout. A lot covered in a short time!

He stressed that his first focus is the Parish, and has already carried out his first baptism in the parish and a funeral at the crematorium.

A couple of areas where some change may be needed going forward included University Mass time, Live streaming schedules. In the longer term, some focus on addressing the low %age of catholic pupils at the High School and also the number of children being presented for FHC who have not actually been baptised.

He also stated that help in both the office, and in the house are needed as soon as this can be arranged.

Round Robin responsibilities

Stephen Tierney (voted onto PC by parish) looks after Parish Talks. He itemised the talks held in 2024 and 2025 and mentioned proposals for a couple of talks in 2026. He has approached Steve McCarthy about a talk based around his latest book 'The Slow Work of God', possibly including a tie in with Teilhard de Chardin. Stephen would also like to approach Jeremy Black about a possible talk on Rerum Novarum.

Lal Cook has five areas of responsibility within Outreach portfolio; Bereavement and Loss group, which Lal would like Fr David to flag; Churches Together, across Chester; World Day of Prayer rep for St Werburgh's; CathSoc; Week of Christian Unity

Bernice is joint lead with Pat on social events and takes a particular lead in identifying and welcoming new parishioners to the parish. She also looks after the Repository, since 2012!

Marian looks after building and maintenance matters, of which H&S is a large part. This remit also covers general maintenance issues, the sound system and development projects such as the Day Chapel conversion. She also represents Finance Committee on the Parish Council, and organises the Readers.

Tina (voted onto PC by parish) is the Theatre Trips and Outings supremo, and has also during this year been the lead of the 150th Anniversary Working Group, involving a large variety of initiatives and brought many people to get newly involved with parish activities.

Pat is joint leads with Bernice on social events, with an overarching theme of Welcome; Welcomers Team for Mass, Welcome Wednesday, Social Drop-in for new parishioners, Married couple returns, Dementia Group, and more.

Lyn leads on Liturgy matters and provides a coordinating function across this space, which is a very wide-ranging, working closely with the PP. Lyn has been very involved with the 150th Anniversary activities, and specifically has been the liaison person with the Hospice. She also provides general support to other initiatives such as Welcome Wednesday, the Dementia Group, and she is a hospital chaplain and liaises with SVP.

Continuing Anne Proctor's Synod Work: Stephen T was approached to pick up and look to continuing the very valuable work that Ann Proctor had done on the Synod. Stephen explained that he has been trying to obtain the material that Ann had produced, and Lyn said that she has now got that and will pass it over to Stephen. He said that he would be very willing to pick up a 'Synod' initiative and has been doing some background reading, which, if the PC approves, he will continue during his forthcoming Camino Ingles walk. The PC approved! Fr David and Stephen will pick up this initiative on his return.

Children's Christmas Masses: There was some detailed discussion about the need or otherwise to issue tickets for the two Children's Christmas Eve Masses. Capacity management is the issue. Fr David had concerns about not wanting actually to turn people away. This has not been an issue in previous years. Lyn explained that Peter Penson had the system all set up and it is simple to manage. It was agreed, from an H&S perspective that the two Masses should be ticketed.

Music representation on the PC: There was some discussion about this. Fr David offered some thoughts about the structure, membership and size of the PC going forward, when music representation can be addressed. For now the PC will remain as is.

St Werburgh Feast Celebrations: Fr David offered some ideas for a triduum celebration (Annual Social at The Club plus plus!) to mark the Feast of St Werburgh, on 3rd February.

ACTION: Carry forward for discussion and decision making at next PC meeting

Fr Paul Collection: Lyn said that the collection for Fr Paul is almost at £3000. It was agreed that this should be converted into a pre-paid debit card and sent to Fr Paul. At the start of Advent, Fr David will invite Fr Paul to come for a meal with the PC.

Other business

Readers: Following discussion, Marian would like to arrange a separate session with Fr David to review various aspects of the Readers Ministry

Next meetings: Thursday 4th December at 7.15pm

Thursday 12th February at 7.15pm

Marian McCarthy

9th November 2025