

150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St. Werburgh's Open Meeting Working Group  
Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> February 7.30pm

Attendees

Fr Paul Shaw, Parish Priest  
Tina Bainbridge-Chair  
Lyn Williams  
Ana Gasparini  
Claire Egan  
Gerry Tighe  
Pat Floate  
Tom Rozario  
Marie Cunliff  
Jane Hallas  
Paula Wszolek  
Bernice Meredith  
Judith Done  
Jeremy Black  
Steven Hutchinson  
Ann-Marie Curtis  
Daniela Perreira  
Vincent Hatton  
Pat Hatton  
Tony Baxter  
Cristina Jones

Apologies-Steve Tierney, Stuart Murray, John Egan

Following a short welcome and a prayer, the meeting went straight into the discussion of events proposed so far for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

1. Commemorative bookmark (Bernice and Paula)

Bernice and Paula shared a prototype of the bookmark that would be produced. 150 bookmarks would be printed at a total cost of £6.60 initially, with potential to quickly and easily add more. The intention is to sell the bookmarks from the repository at £1 each- a donation to the Hospice of the Good Shepherd. It was agreed by the group that the project will go ahead. Thanks given to both Bernice and Paula for their work so far on this.

2. 50<sup>th</sup> Social Celebration Event (Jane)

The discussion of a potential social event is still in its initial stages. Jane suggested that it should be a shared table event, with parishioners committing in advance as to what they would bring. It was pointed out that not everybody would need to bring food- some may find this more difficult, but they would still be very welcome to attend and partake. Concerns expressed about health and safety of reheating food, and food allergies. Ana conveyed that Chester Catholic High school were happy for the school to be used for the event, and that if needed the school could provide catering at a cost, and has a bar licence. Working group to be formed to continue work on this initiative.

3. Lego House (Stephen H)

Stephen has created a Lego model of St. Werburgh's Church and demonstrated a sample Lego kit he had put together along with a commemorative book of instructions. Costings for each

model would be £75 for the bricks and £30 for the commemorative book of instructions. Total outlay for each model at £105, the suggestion is that each model would be sold for £150, with approximately £50 being made per model for The Hospice of the Good Shepherd appeal. It was also suggested that a model would be available to make at the back of church- where for a donation a brick could be added. The potential of “sizing up” the model was discussed, though this would lead to a larger outlay for bricks. It was agreed by the group that this was a superb idea and should go ahead.

#### 4. Welcome Wednesday (Pat)

##### a) The 150-recipe book

Recipes have started to come in (a recipe from Sardines from a parishioner was shared with the group)- however, marketing is yet to be done to the whole parish to ensure that enough recipes are collected. Pat was keen to point out that due to copyright recipes must not just be copied from a cookery book- but they can be adapted. Cost to make each book-£2.20. Like with the bookmark, a smaller order could be made initially and could easily be added to if demand suggested it was needed.

##### b) Easter Eggs

Welcome Wednesday is knitting decorative Easter “hats” for small Easter eggs. The biggest outlay for this is the small chocolate egg (Cadbury’s 60p per egg). These would then be sold and profits to The Hospice.

c) Sponsored Dominoes (Tony B)- this would take place over 8 hours, and parishioners (including children with parents) could take part, having gained sponsorship- again, donations to The Hospice.

#### 5. Canon Welch and Canon Chambers graves (Gerry/John)

Gerry shared photographs of the two previous Parish Priests’ graves based in Overleigh Cemetery that he had taken on a visit there with John. He described how both Canon Welch and Canon Chambers had made enormous contributions in the development of the parish of St. Werburgh’s. Both graves are in urgent need to renovation. John and Gerry have been doing investigative work with Blackwells- who have made an offer to restore one of the graves free of charge as part of their contribution towards our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. The charge therefore for the work would be around £3K. It was discussed that the Mission Together money collated by the parish could be potentially used for such a project and FP will pursue this with the diocese. It was agreed by the group that the project of grave restoration should go ahead.

#### 6. Fundraising for the Hospice of the Good Shepherd (Lyn)

Already referred to in various projects, Lyn presented the suggestion that as a parish we should fundraise for the Hospice during this, the 150<sup>th</sup> year. Reasoning behind this was our support of Hospices in the wake of the Assisted Dying Bill. Furthermore, the Hospice had given a talk late last year on their work at Welcome Wednesday, and due to a lack of funds not all their available beds are able to be used.

Given that it’s the 150<sup>th</sup> year, a target of £15K was suggested (£100 for each year), with updates on amounts raised pictorially given in the newsletter. Those present agreed that the fundraising should go ahead.

#### 7. Talks (Steve)

In Steve’s absence, two potential talks were mentioned- One is academic historian, Dr Anna French of the University of Liverpool. The other is the director of education for the diocese of Lancaster, Michael Merrick.

#### 8. Music events and pilgrimage (Tom)

Tom introduced the idea of a parish pilgrimage to St. Winifred's Well in Holywell. Working group has been formed (Tom, Claire, John and Steve). Potential dates- Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2025, leaving from St. Werburgh's. Discussion followed on including health and safety assessments that would need to be completed. Working group to continue to meet.

#### 9. History group (Ann-Marie)

Ann-Marie presented the large amount of work the history group have put towards the anniversary. This includes a display of parish history, display of information sheets, display of artefacts, talk about the history of St. Werburgh's Church, the old parish streets near the Lead Shot Tower, other talks during Heritage weeks. The history group are trying to put together a commemorative book with articles written by parishioners, but this is in its initial stages. Concern was expressed that this would involve a commitment of £5K to have the books made- and income would come in over several years. It was decided that this would require further discussion. Additionally, dates for open weeks needed to be discussed with FP.

#### 10. Easter Wreath making event (Marie)

Marie has now organised the event- Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 6.30pm at the high school, tickets £30. Marie has made a poster, and the event will go in the newsletter.

#### 11. Creation event (Claire)

Claire introduced her suggestion of different events- an open week of faith, with the theme "Catholic Faith, Mystery and Beauty". A week of welcome when the church could be open during each day with special displays (stations -tables and boards) based around themes in the Creed, a reflective evening of prayer and Taizé and a celebration mass. Estimated costs would be minimal- potentially an advertising banner for outside church and a small booklet. This was agreed to be an excellent idea, and plans will go forward. Also discussed was a potential Sycamore course and ongoing learning and formation.

#### 12. Prayer book (Lyn)

The liturgy group are putting together a prayer book for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary which is underway, with contributions from Daniela and Steve H.

#### 13. Gardening event (Cristina)

Cristina suggested that parishioners could donate 150 bulbs/plants for the garden- any collected in addition to this could be sold for Hospice donations. Cristina also suggested the Welcome Wednesday Easter Eggs could be sold in the garden.

#### 14. Celebration of cultures (Daniela)

Daniela suggested that different cultures should be celebrated during the anniversary year- as a Brazilian she would like to share Brazilian devotions to Our Lady with the parish. This could involve a statue being on display in the church/garden.

#### 15. Gift for Rowton Methodist Church (Vincent)

In recognition of the hospitality of the Methodist Church enabling a 6pm Saturday evening mass to take place there weekly, the parishioners who attend that mass would like to contribute to a gift of a needed new Hoover (£140). This would be funded by the parishioners and was agreed.

#### 16. Week of prayer (Jeremy)

Jeremy explored the idea of a week of guided prayer- led by the Jesuit Institute. Costs and practicalities are still being explored for this.

Given the time (8.55pm), it was decided that items on the agenda – the tapestry banner and witness recordings (Stuart was unable to attend this meeting) would be placed onto the agenda for the next meeting. Additionally, the parish mug fundraiser would be put on the next agenda.

Gerry closed the meeting with a prayer. The meeting finished at 9pm.

Date for next meeting- Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March 7.30pm