

St Werburgh's Parish Council Meeting 13th March. 2025 v3

Present:

Parish Priest:	Fr Paul Shaw
Finance:	Denise Jones
Housekeeping and Hospitality:	
Liturgy:	Lyn Williams
Outreach:	Lal Cook
150 th Anniversary Celebration:	Tina Bainbridge
Social:	Pat Floate
Altar Servers:	Gerry Tighe
Buildings and Maintenance	Marian McCarthy
Admin Assistant to PP	Stephen Hutchinson

Apologies for Absence:

Cristina Jones, Stephen Tierney

Meeting Chair:

Lyn Williams

1 – Welcome and Opening Prayer

Fr Paul opened the meeting by asking Bernice if she could lead the group in prayer.

Apologies for absence were received from Cristina and Stephen Tierney.

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed by Marian, and seconded by Fr Paul.

2 – Updates on ongoing actions from 13th February 2025 meeting

2025_02_13:1 - Highlight the wall box locations in the church to make them more visible to visitors [Action: [Denise](#)] - Ongoing.

2025_02_13:2 - Organise the cleaning of the carpet in the new Porch.
[Action: [Marian](#)] - Marian is obtaining a quote for this on Monday 17th March.

2025_02_13:3 - Construct a new console table for the back of the church using the available wood. [Action: [Lyn](#)] - Wood has been agreed. Waiting for carpenter to take it away and provide a quote.

2025_02_13:4 - Proceed with the lighting replacement project, which will require faculty approval from the Historic Churches Commission. [Action: [Fr Paul & Marian](#)] - [Ongoing](#).

2025_02_13:5 - Investigate alternative heating solutions, such as electric or solar-powered systems, for the church and Parish House. [Action: [Sustainability Group](#)]

2025_02_13:6 - Contact Gillian an expert in Green Energy, to get advice on the feasibility of installing solar panels. [Action: [Marian & Sustainability Group](#)]

2025_02_13:7 - Recruit two additional volunteers to help with the health and safety tasks, including Risk Assessments, fire safety, and other areas. In Progress 3 potential volunteers with 2 definite and 1 considering. [Action: [Marian](#)]

2025_02_13:8 - Coordinate with the bereavement group to ensure proper risk assessment and safeguarding measures are in place for their activities. [Action: [Lal](#)] - Lal to follow up with Liz About this.

Marian has sent information on bereavement group, risk assessment and safeguarding to Liz.

2025_02_13:9 - Discuss the proposed fundraising target of £15,000 for an external charity (potentially the hospice) with the Parish Council and the 150th anniversary committee. This was passed at the 150th Meeting. [Action: [Fr Paul & Tina](#)]

2025_02_13:10 - Introduce & Implement room booking system for Parish House, Church and Day Chapel. [Lyn and Steve H] - Calendar and A5 Week to view diary purchased for room booking to use until we find a better way. These bookings need to be approved by Fr Paul. An item in the newsletter will explain how to book a room. Notification will be in next week's newsletter. [Action: [Steve H. & Lyn](#)]

2025_02_13:11 - Contact Dominique to discuss next steps with the library and put into action. [[Lyn](#)] - Dominique contacted, and has been removing books from the library - well under control. [Action Completed]

2025_02_13:12 - Advertise the remaining bookcases for sale or donation when books have all been re-homed [Action: [Lyn](#)]

2025_02_13:13 -Ensure parents and guardians are aware that children must be supervised while in the library space.

2025_02_13:14 - Find a space for the wheelie boards that are not used currently residing at the back of the Church (possibly the Garage?) [Action Completed.]

2025_02_13:15 - Agree a method of hanging banners with Rob Harrington and banner group [Action: [Marian](#)] - Marian plans to submit a faculty application for the next banner group meeting.

2025_02_13:16 - Each Renewal Steering Committee Group Lead to remind their group that their webpage needs to be completed. [[Lyn](#)] Some web pages have been updated. We need the approval of the web team to put the updated pages on the website. Some pages are still under development. [Ongoing]

2025_02_13:17 - Raise awareness of problem of bin not being emptied in Porch. [[Fr Paul](#) - Action Completed]

3 – Actions from 13th March 2025 PCC Meeting

2025_03_13:1 - Obtain risk assessment for pilgrimage to St Winifred's and get parish council approval. Action [[Tina/Fr Paul](#)]

2025_03_13:2 - Co-ordinate the dates for the history groups' open Church event and Claire's "Week of Faith" to avoid conflicts. Action [[Tina/Fr Paul](#)]

2025_03_13:4 - Explore the possibility of scaling down the format and cost of the history group's book project. Action [[Fr Paul/Tina](#)]

2025_03_13:5 - Provide an update on the progress of the recipe book and the Easter Egg sales: Action [[Lyn](#)]

- 2025_03_13:6 - Follow up with Liz on the status of the bereavement group's risk assessment and safeguarding measures. [Action Lal]
- 2025_03_13:7 - Follow up with Daniella on the celebration of culture event. [Action Lyn]
- 2025_03_13:8 - Provide an update on the appointment of a new diocesan architect.
- 2025_03_13:9 - Schedule a practice fire drill before Easter: [Action Marian/Fr Paul]
- 2025_03_13:10 - Apply for approval to install fixings on the walls for the banners. [Action Marian]
- 2025_03_13:11 - Address the safety issue with the paving to the Presbytery [Action Marian]
- 2025_03_13:12 - Establish a room booking system for the Day Chapel (and Parish House Dining Room) [Action Lyn/Steve H]
- 2025_03_13:13 - Explore options for an online system too to give visibility of available slots for booking rooms. [Action: Steve H]
- 2025_03_13:14 - Source and purchase booklets for the Easter Triduum services. [Action: Tina/Fr Paul]
- 2025_03_13:15 - Invite young adults (over 18) to the new social group. [Action: Nithin/Lyn]
- 2025_03_13:16 - Ensure fire marshals are scheduled for the Easter Service. [Action: Marian]
- 2025_03_13:17 - Investigate if Wi-Fi over the main can extend Wi-Fi to the Day Chapel. (will extend signal for 300m from source) [Action: Steve H]
- 2025_03_13:18 - Find a replacement to take charge of Readers Rota from Marian. [Action: Marian]

3 – 150th Working Group Update (Tina)

Tina provided an update on the 150th Working Group. Fr Paul thanked Tina for her amazing work leading the 150th Working Group meetings which are being held monthly. Brief updates on each project idea were mentioned. The plan is to not to have a cutoff date for ideas, and let ideas come in from all members of the congregation throughout 2025, which can be discussed for feasibility at the working group meetings.

- The commemorative bookmarks are ready for sale. £1 each, proceeds to the Hospice. Bookmarks to be advertised in the newsletter.
- Anna Gasparini will be coordinating the social event. Three dates have been suggested for this event. Dates suggested when the School is free (12/9, 10/10, 22/11)
- The Lego house kit is ready and available to order for those wishing to build a model of St Werburgh's Church. It was suggested to market this as a kit for adults due to the complexity of the kit and number of pieces. If a parent wanted to then build this with their child that is the parent's responsibility.
- The Recipe book is well underway with 62 recipes collected so far. The intention is to set a deadline soon for submissions, so the book can be published.
- Easter Egg sale: people will be invited to donate a minimum of £2 per egg.
- Prayer book is well underway and should be ready in September
- Dominoe event will have sponsor.

- Refurbishment of Canon Welsh and Canon Chambers' graves with a request for £7,000 from the diocese. (Another grave discovered Fr 'McGeever'). Board of Finance does not meet till May, so there will be no decision till then.
- We have a volunteer wishing to join the Finance Group.
- Music event and Pilgrimage being run by a team of 4. Tom, John, Claire and Steve T. The plan will be to walk to St Winifrede's as well as Holywell. Team will be doing recces. Risk assessment will be essential for this, as the walk is 25km.
- History group will try and co-ordinate with the English Heritage Event however one is in October, the other in July. Heritage Festival is 1st of June to 8th June. History group want the Church open for these dates. The history group also want the blue boards all around the Church till September. This needs further discussion.
- Open week of faith and Sycamore Course. Displays of faith and reflections around themes in the Creed will also fit in with another anniversary, the 1500 anniversary of the Creed. Claire wants a banner outside the Church to advertise this event. This will be the only expense Claire needs to run this event. (£50 for the banner). Claire has also mentioned Sycamore Course. This is a sort of RCIA course devised by Fr Stephen Wang (Catholic Chaplain at London University). Like a Catholic Alpha Course. (See [The Sycamore Book - Sycamore](#)) If Claire wants to run such a course, she will need a team of volunteers.
- History Book. The History group are putting together a commemorative book with articles written by parishioners. Quote for publishing this is £5,000. Anne Marie Curtis
- Daniela's Celebration of Cultures event - need an update from Daniela to find out how this is going.
- £150 have been raised for a new Hoover for Rowton Methodist Church.

4 – Relevant Parish Updates from Council of Priests Meeting (Fr Paul)

Fr Paul provided a report of the Council of Priests meeting. It was a challenging time for the diocese. A big concern was the heating and energy bills. Another issue was contactless giving. Diocese already working with a company called 'MyDona'. Contactless giving for the diocese was approx. £62k in total for year ending 2023. Year ending 2024 it went up to approx. £130k. For year ending 2025 it has already reached £130k so will be even more. These figures are just for electronic giving. This is for only 29 sites across a potential 120 Churches (100 parishes). Average donation per site of £465 each month. Average donation £15. Fr Paul will consider introducing contactless giving at St Werburgh's and discuss at next Parish Finance Meeting.

5 – Leads (Any new Activities or updates).

5.1 Buildings and Maintenance (Marian)

Marian provided an update on the lighting project. Mike Rooney is the new diocesan property manager. Rob Harrington (existing architect) is retiring. The work will be passed to the new architect. The responsibility for the upkeep of the Parish House (and the repair work and renovation work) will be passed to someone appointed by Mike Rooney, so St Werburgh's buildings and maintenance team and Fr Paul will not have to worry about this.

Parish House is a listed building. Will be uninhabitable for 2 months while new heating system installed, electrical system is rewired, new kitchen, new bathroom. Work likely to start in summer 2026.

Marian reported Fire Safety Marshall training on Sat 15th March, and 5th April.

Fr Paul thanked the Gasparini family for painting the garage door. The floorboards, dining room door and benches in the Church have all now been repaired.

A new microphone is on the way too.

Some gutter work ongoing.

Banners - very good report from Vera. Marion going to submit a faculty application to put shelves up for books, (that can also be used for banners).

5.2 Finance (Denise)

Denise reported making progress with facilitating online donations. Chris Proudfoot will be helping facilitate this. Denise also mentioned the contactless card reader donations now being part of this discussion.

5.3 Outreach (Lal)

The Women's World Day of Prayer Service went very well. Lal helped with the props (Boat, Kayak, canoe). Also helped with the cakes. People had remembered how delicious the cakes were from last year.

Thanks to the Salvation Army for hosting.

Justice and Peace group have had their first planning meeting which went well. Ann Proctor is their lead. (Ann is studying for a course in Catholic Social Teaching).

Bereavement Group is going well from small beginnings. It is growing. Maureen McCabe reported to be pleased with first Open Meeting (of eight).

5.4 House Garden and Hospitality (Cristina)

Cristina reported the plan to plant 150 bulbs in the garden is well underway. The gardening team have new members.

Fr Paul mentioned Sue Rankin (who has been leading the housekeeping). She has sadly lost her mum who was 102 and also her husband Colin in the same week. She will be very much in our prayers.

5.5 Social and Networks (Pat and Bernice)

Pat mentioned the link with the Liturgy group.

Nithin plans to lead a Young Adults get together with a view to starting a prayer group.

Pat wished to thank FP for leading the excellent Parish Walk.

The Trip to see the Tempest play was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

5.6 Liturgy (Lyn)

Already knitted 86 chicks/bunnies. Target of 150. Extra knitting session on Thursday.

6 AOB

6.1 Day Chapel Bookings (Steve H)

We now have a day chapel booking diary and calendar that will be used to record room bookings after first checking availability with Fr Paul (and his main diary).

Requests should be made via the admin@stwerburghschester.co.uk email address in advance and confirmed via email on the following Tue / Thursday.

There was a lively discussion about enabling Wi-Fi in the day chapel via Wi-Fi over the mains and using a Wi-Fi extender. This will be investigated.

6.2 Notice Board Reminder (Lyn)

Lyn reminded everyone that if something is out of date, please remove it from the noticeboard.

6.3 The Creed missing from the Redemptorist Newsletters.

Pat raised an important point that since the Creed has been left out of the Redemptorist newsletters, people are no longer saying this. Lyn suggested we print copies of the Creed (50p each) for the congregation.

6.4 Marian stepping down from being in charge of Readers Rota

Marian would like to find someone else to take charge of the Readers Rota.

7 Closing and Prayers

Lyn thanked everyone for their input.

Fr Paul then concluded the meeting with a final prayer for Sue Rankin, the good will in our Parish, people's love and willingness to serve.

The meeting adjourned with a reminder of the next meeting date and time:

Thursday May 8th at 7.30 pm.