

St Thomas, Wells with The Horringtons
Minutes of the meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on
Wednesday 26th March 2025 in the Community Room

Present: Revd. Claire Towns (Chair), Ian Ames-White, Iona Baker, Debbie Cochrane, Ann Edmonds, Chris Jenkins, Judy Penhaligon, Charlie Sutton, Mike Tolley, Gill Tucker, John Simarpi

Apologies: Christina Baron, Barbara Calverley, Linda Lapington

1. Opening Prayer

John opened the meeting with prayer.

2. Apologies for absence

As above.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 29th January 2025

It was **unanimously agreed** that the minutes be signed as a correct record with further clarification of item 4.4 – For the record, the role of website and social media manager had been advertised in the pew sheets for three weeks running. No-one came forward so Katie Steadman-Towns was appointed with a remuneration of £25 an hour for an hour's work a week.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Legacy spend projects – taken under item 8.

5. Prayers for next meeting

Claire volunteered as it would be the first meeting of the new PCC.

6. Additional item – Claire informed the PCC that there was a situation with a roughsleeper (DW) in the churchyard but the police and Somerset Council Homeless Unit were aware and dealing.

7. APCM matters

Claire was preparing the report and Ian reported the annual accounts and auditor's report were due out next week and would be e-mailed to the PCC prior to the APCM. Chris and Judy had indicated that they would be happy to stand again as churchwardens. The PCC thanked them for all the work they do on our behalf for the church. Claire reported that there had been very little interest from the church user groups in the Open Day planned for March 22nd so it had been postponed and it was agreed that combining it with the July Garden Party would work better. It was agreed that the list of legacy spend projects should be highlighted at the APCM.

8. Finance matters

8.1 Annual accounts – as reported in item 7, the annual accounts should be available next week.

8.2 Current monthly update – The February figures were not available to view at this meeting as Fiona had been away. Ian reported the January figures were down as the money due back from the Government from the planned giving scheme had not yet been received. The January income was £4600 and outgoings were £10,000 but once monies received they should normalise in the February accounts. The telephone bill was still high at £600 and was being looked into. Another

CCLA account would need to be opened for the Pye legacy. Access to the bank accounts had been arranged for Caroline, Judy, Chris and Ian. Claire also had access. Ian reported that Fiona was considering the paid position of treasurer (see November 2024 minutes).

9. Churchwardens' feedback

Chris reported that for various reasons the bill from the contractors who had dealt with the leaking water pipe between St Thomas Street and the church hall had finally come in and was in the region of £2,000 (reduced from expected £4000). Chris was also looking at purchasing a new shed for about £940 which the PCC approved. This included supply and erection. The work to repair the office roof with a new membrane was due to take place in mid April. A damp patch below the soil pipe in the roof of the ladies toilet in the hall had appeared. The roof contractors would inspect when they visited in April. Ann had offered two bookcases for the church and John offered his trailer to pick up. John and Chris to liaise. Judy reported that she had attended a zoom meeting on wild planting in churchyards and was due to receive some plug plants for outdoor planting. It was agreed a sign to explain to the public what the wild flower area was about would be needed.

10. Worship and community team meetings

These minutes had been circulated previously. It was noted that the Garden Party would be held on 19th July and Steve Abbott and his band would play. Claire had publicised Bishop Michael's upcoming talks during Holy Week via Church Together in Wells group and encouraged the PCC to support.

11. Safeguarding

Mike reported that he was continuing to work through the priority items on the dashboard. The PCC agreed a list of church sponsored activities: ABC2, Coffee Stop, Sunday Youth, Crafty Church and it was agreed that PCC members would need Enhanced DBS checks. Some members already had this certificate but others need to complete the online form and a link would be sent. Safeguarding training on Saturday morning for those who were outstanding had been well received. Claire and Mike would liaise to finalise the role descriptions for ABC2 helpers and Crafty Church.

12. Correspondence from Rosemary E and Jean B

Claire reported that a letter had been sent from Rosemary E regarding her concerns over the lack of a pedestrian crossing on St Thomas Street. This made crossing particularly difficult for the elderly, those with mobility issues and the children crossing to get to Stoberry School. After some discussion, it was agreed that this would be best pursued via the local Councillor and Claire agreed to e-mail him to offer support as a church to her request. Claire would let Rosemary know. Another letter had been received from Jean B regarding the Horrington Burial Ground. It was noted there was work to be completed there, in particular the chain link fence had deteriorated and a gate was due to be fitted between the Burial Ground and Cricket Club. The PCC agreed that this would be added to the list of legacy spend projects. The churchwardens would advise Jean.

13. Facilities manager

Claire reported that a job description for this role had been prepared and agreed with the HR manager at Diocesan office. There had been interest from the candidate who had supplied the draft description for his role at the church in Bristol. The PCC agreed that this person should be invited to apply and interviewed. If this applicant was not suitable, the post would be advertised more widely.

14. Mission to Wells

Claire reported this had been deferred to June 2026.

15. For information and suggestions for next PCC meeting

Claire reported a voucher and card would be presented to Margaret on 6th April to thank her for her contribution to St Thomas. Judy reported the Covid vaccination booster programme would soon be starting in hall. Chris had agreed to make a replacement wooden cross for the Easter and the old one had become unusable. Rather than imitation flowers, it was suggested that parishioners might like to leave small posies around the cross.

16. Dates of future meeting:

APCM - Wednesday 9th April 2025

The meeting closed at 8.45pm with the Grace.