

Meeting of Parish Core Team 25th February 2026 7.30pm

Present:	Sarah Cooper (SC), Claire Fecher (CF), Diane Fievez (DF), Canon Tim Madeley (CTM), Claudine Maude (CM), Kevin Rourke (KR) Minutes Secretary: Diane Fievez (DF)
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1. Opening Prayer

2. Apologies: Denise Bass (DB) Simon Matthews (SM)

3. Minutes of last meeting: Agreed

4. Matters arising: None

5. Finance Update:

SC provided a finance update.

Regarding the amalgamation of both churches - Neville has completed 2025 YE and has handed it over to Anne-Marie and Mark Woodhouse. Dave Newman from the diocese did West Grinstead accounts for 2025 with detailed records from Kate so this is also now completed. For West Grinstead there was a discrepancy with funds still sitting under the charity heading, however funds were paid to the charity but from a different fund, this has now been resolved. Anne-Marie to work on the accounts going forward. It was requested that a new e-mail address account be set up for Mark & Anne-Marie however diocese did not want to do this so Neville has passed on his diocesan e-mail address. (This means he can no longer be contacted on this.) SC confirmed training days have now taken place. A formal thank you needs to be made to Neville. The two bank accounts have not yet been merged but this should be done soon, CTM will then seek the required approval from diocese.

KR asked if the pt.westgrinstead@abdiocese.org.uk e-mail address will be disconnected. SC confirmed yes it will and that she will send a message out to confirm who the correct contacts/e-mail addresses are going forward.

CTM advised that Kate has will still need a credit card to continue buying oil for OLOC.

SC advised that Billingshurst year end 2025 figures are not looking great, looking like a loss of a few thousand for Billingshurst. West Grinstead sits at about £19k. We are owed money from the Deanery for the work that Denise has been doing which has not been billed yet, although this will now be billed in 2026 it should make the numbers look slightly better than they do currently.

St Gabriel's update

Brian is working on obtaining prices for the works to St Gabriel's Hall. Some quotes have been received, ideally work should sit with one contractor or a managing contractor (project manager) to help coordinate all the work and this is something we should pay for. For disability enhancements such as the front door ramp VAT is not applicable and so we need to ensure the contractor takes this into account when producing itemised costings. Likely that the costs will be higher than funds available and so some fine tuning will be needed when all costs are in.

Work for the interior of the church is on the list, however we will need to work through what we can achieve with the funds and/or consider potential fundraising events.

Brian has contacted the council regarding a grant for environmental changes we can implement such as the lighting.

Insurance for both buildings. All Catholic churches and associated buildings in the country have been reassessed with the result that the bill is significantly higher than previous years. SC to check on how much of the OLOC bill is for the house, which will be paid for by the diocese. SC thinks this has already been taken off. Insurance bills are paid by the diocese and billed to each church.

Our Lady of Consolation update

CTM provided the update that the house is very problematic with several issues including leaks from the sewers under the house which could be the cause of the severe damp. CTM mentioned that Simon Clare deals with drainage and has taken a look but this needs to be dealt with by

	diocese. Diocese is finalising with Horsham District Council on work that can be done as it is a listed building, but works should be approved by this Friday. Church and parish room – there is a bit of damp still coming through, despite the work that was done on the roof. This is to be expected as part of the drying out process. CTM to ask Carl to monitor the situation.
6.	Events: <u>Lent/Easter</u> - Likely to replicate what we did last year, subject to full choir availability. CTM is finalising the application details for people being received into the church, either over Easter or around Pentecost. <u>Shrines 150th - 27th June 2026</u> Linda from OLOC has asked <i>Can we have some information and greater clarity on what is happening re planning for this event? Can we have a one-off event group to focus on this occasion?</i> • Programme for the day. 12pm Mass. Lunch at 2pm. • CTM is starting to think about the liturgy. Choir from St Gabriels to be involved. We don't yet have anyone to preside over it due to the bishop's move to Westminster. CTM is currently working on this. • Advertising the event – to be promoted in the diocese, the deanery and in the parish newsletter, and by invitation. • Invites – This is a parish event; invitations will be extended to the deanery. Susan & Kate to consider past parishioners to invite. • Catering - CF is working on the catering plan along with help from Jasmin. • Preparing the grounds – Chris Dobbe • Preparing Pilgrims way. Co-ordinated by Pilgrim helpers' team plus Carl Conroy, Chris Dobbe and Simon Clare. • Preparation for Mass. Kate to set up for Mass on the day, preparing service sheets etc. • Info & history display - Linda is working on a plan to have an exhibition set up in the run up to the celebrations. There is also the possibility of a walking pilgrimage from Arundel to WG (in the run-up) by Simon Clare or a walking mile on the day prior to Mass. • Gazebo and bunting. CF to check about gazebos. Also to check about bunting. DF has some possibly, will check. • Photography on the day. KR may be able to recommend a photographer but there would be a cost. CTM to speak to Laura at the Diocese as maybe there is a way to link our photography requirements to the work already being done for the new website. • Car parking arrangements – We should be able to use the car park that we did last time. CTM to confirm with Jenny Marsden. • KR asked if a committee needs to be set up. CTM advised that the individuals involved are best to just get on with their individual tasks and liaise with each other.
7.	Suggestion Box Submissions: <i>Can CFG please use the village hall and could funds come from the Parish?</i> CFG is growing, 21 members to date. Members pay a fee to be part of CFG however Tessa has advised that they are having to eat into their funds with the increase in banking charges. Additionally, venues available to meet has diminished and members individual houses are too small as the group has grown. Core Team suggest use of the Blessed Francis Bell Room at West Grinstead which would be free, fits approx. 16/17 people. Alternative suggestion from CTM to move their meetings currently held on Wednesdays to a Saturday when St Gabriel's Hall is available for booking. (SC added this may mean more people could attend who are unable to during the week) or split the group into two. Alternatively consider alternating between West Grinstead during the week and St Gabriels Hall during the school holidays when the playgroup is not using the hall (Half terms fall every 5 or 6 weeks) or maybe consider meeting less frequently. Unfortunately, the parish does not have funds to support this but has made some suggestions which we hope are helpful.

	<i>The taxi is taking up a valuable car parking space at the front of church, when will this be moved?</i> Around about 2010, the manufacturer of taxis, LTI, was taken over by Chinese interests. They replaced various parts with cheaper Chinese parts. These were of substandard quality and so after about two years, the vehicles went back to English parts. Canon Tim's current taxi is one of those with Chinese parts. For the last two years it has suffered with a gradually deteriorating steering column which has been monitored by the taxi garage in Bexhill. They have puzzled over how to replace it (the English and Chinese parts are not interchangeable) and came to the conclusion that an existing steering column would need to be professionally extended. The old taxi was mooted as a source of the replacement steering column hence the vehicle has been held on to until the problem was sorted. In the event, a new column has been produced by a metal manufacturer but this has taken time. Canon Tim has been using trains and receiving lifts from parishioners for three weeks while this work was carried out. Thank you to all who helped. Suggestion from the core team to place a note in the newsletter to ask for a mechanics help to strip parts, then CTM can arrange for the vehicle to be collected. This is in hand. <i>KR asked what is happening with the building work at the bottom of the car park as this is also taking up car parking spaces?</i> CTM advised that the playgroup is adding a hard standing at the back by the shed, the spaces will then be available again once this work is complete. <i>SC advised that the playgroup has asked for trustee volunteers in order that they meet their governance and regulatory and compliance requirements.</i> CTM approved placement of an ad in the parish newsletter. SC has asked the playgroup manager for an advert with the specific role requirements and responsibilities, not yet received. <i>SC asked if there is anyone going to Lourdes this year that has asked for support from the parish?</i> There is a small amount of funds allocated, but we may need to plan events to fundraise. CTM advised that we currently have two people planning to go, likely that both will be self-funded. CTM did advise however that it is always worth us planning fundraising events anyway to continue to add to funds such as this.
8.	AOB CTM provided a quick pastoral plan update. The Pastoral plan is still being discussed in the hope that a new bishop will support the plan, but this is not guaranteed. We carry on as we are for the moment. Confirmations – CTM advised that with the bishop's move to Westminster the faculty to do Confirmations would be given to all diocesan priests, not deans or moderators. Confirmations are likely to take place at Horsham, CTM to check with Horsham if their date is still in place. DF asked about EM training. We have 3 people at St Gabriels and 1 at OLOC available to be trained which would relieve the rota at both churches. CTM to ask Horsham about training. Dates and invitations have now been communicated to existing and new EMs. Monday 9th March at 7pm and Friday 27th March at 7.30pm both at St John's, Horsham with Fr. Tristan. Following which the recommissioning will take place with CTM at the Mass of the Lord's Supper at 8pm on Maundy Thursday Mass.
9.	Date of next meeting: Wednesday 15th April - 7.30pm@ the Priest's House, Billingshurst