

## St Thomas' Church, Woolton Hill – Annual Church Meeting – Minutes

7.30 pm on Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at St Thomas' Church

**Present at the meeting:** Rev'd Lisa Rodrigues (Chair), Ian Roch (Chair of St Thomas' LCC), Fiona Ashworth (Minutes), Christine Vane (Church Warden), Richard Willis (Church Warden), Steve Waite (Treasurer), Nick and Mary Harcourt, Audrey Willis, Carol Currey, Jayne Roch, Angie Maxwell, Graham and Margaret Falconer, Paul Ashworth, Madeleine Jenkins, Brian Burgham, Jenny Graham, Peter and Rachael Charles, Stella (Netty) Shea, Nichole Bentham, Jim and Valerie Burfield, Alan Johnson, Cedric Cottrell, Ann Flemming, Genie Stapleton, Bertha Bates.

1.	<p><b>Prayer and welcome</b></p> <p>Rev'd Lisa welcomed everyone to the meeting, opening the meeting with prayer and lighting a candle to remind us of the message of hope that we have to take out into our community. This is especially important at a time when there are many concerns about what is happening in the wider world.</p>
2.	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b> were given by Rosemary Cahill, Olivia and Mark Harris, Terry Hadden.</p>
3.	<p><b>Approval of Minutes from the Previous APCM</b></p> <p><b>The Minutes from last year's APCM</b> were reviewed, there was a correction made to the date of the previous APCM Minutes which should have been 2023 not 2024. The Minutes then approved and signed by Christine Vane, Church Warden, who chaired the APCM in April 2024.</p> <p><b>Matters arising from the minutes</b> – there were no matters arising. However it was noted that Rev'd Lisa Rodrigues was appointed as Rector in April 2024 and took up her post in July 2024.</p>
4.	<p><b>Annual Reports</b></p> <p><b>Churchwarden's Report</b> – a written report was circulated prior to the meeting. In addition, RW thanked Christine Vane and Bertha Bates for all their help and support during his first year as a Church Warden.</p> <p><b>Treasurer's Report</b> – A written presentation of the annual accounts for St Thomas' Church PCC - Woolton Hill (full year Jan - Dec 2024) together with the Independent Examiner (IE) declaration for approval and subsequent inclusion in the submission of the Charity Commission Annual Return 2024. Copies of the Year End Accounts were circulated prior to the meeting, together with the Treasurer's Annual Report.</p> <p>SW went through the Treasurer's report highlighting the income received and the breakdown of the main items of expenditure. He noted that St Thomas' had paid £29,000 towards the CMF, which was a shortfall of £3,000. This was an improvement on the previous year when there had been a shortfall of £5,000.</p>

With respect to WHCH, there were some one-off costs incurred last year related to the hall reopening and specifically to do with upgrading the outdoor play area.

### **Funds**

SW explained that some of the Funds that St Thomas' holds are for 'restricted use' and set aside for specific projects, for example, the Churchyard Fund, for maintenance of the churchyard and Living Stones funds for the maintenance of the fabric of the church.

The Lock Trust Fund generates interest which is used by St Thomas' Church to fund its obligations. To date this income has been used to support the payment of the Common Mission Fund (CMF) quota for the year.

### **New Accounting System**

Additional expenditure has been incurred in 2024 as a result of the ongoing implementation of the 'Expenses Plus Accounting System (EPAS)'. This system will replace the individual spreadsheets / systems previously used by the four churches that form the NWH PCC.

### **General Comments**

SW concluded that overall St Thomas' Church have had a positive year and thanked everyone who has been involved in generating income for the church. Hopefully we can look forward to more success in 2025.

LR asked SW to give the meeting a summary of how well St Thomas' has done over the past year? SW responded that St Thomas' Church had achieved a lot during the year to cover the running costs of the church and pay 91% of its CMF quota. This has been achieved despite an environment of every increasing costs. In 2024 this was achieved through the hard work and dedication of our fantastic resource of volunteers who continues to do an outstanding job of fundraising, enabling us to continue to run a sustainable church. Through these resources we constantly look for new ideas and ways of attracting income into the church. Achieving this St Thomas' can look forward to a positive future.

In 2024 we made a small surplus. In 2023 there was bigger surplus as there was a full years Church Hall income prior to the water damage effecting the use of the Hall. Full use of the Hall was re-established during 2024.

The 2024 St Thomas' Church Accounts, prepared by Tim Nutt, Church Accounts Ltd and independently examined, were approved by the St Thomas' Church PCC.

### **Presentation of proposed budget for 2025.**

Copies of the proposed budget for 2025 were distributed before the meeting. SRW explained that the proposed budget for 2025 had been prepared based on the 2024 actuals, any known changes and applying an inflation factor. This formed the basis for the 2025 budget. Ongoing there will clearly be changes in costs and additional costs not known at the time of preparing the proposed budget. During the year the budget will continue to be updated by a forecast based on any ongoing changes.

SRW highlighted two areas of known changes reflected in the proposed budget:

- 1) The St Thomas' CMF quota request has been increased from £32,000 to £34,396, increase £2,396.
- 2) Costs of running the new Expenses Plus Accounting system £1,100.

### **Threats**

Main area of threat to the proposed budget are from increased utility costs together with unplanned maintenance / repairs, both very difficult to predict.

Jenny Graham thanked SW for all his hard work. She asked what the Music costs were for? SW advised that this is for paying organists and for repairing and tuning the organ. During 2024 there were additional costs due to protecting and cleaning the organ during major plaster works.

Jayne Roch again thanked Steve, particularly for the way in which information was presented which made it easy to understand and follow.

LR thanked SW on behalf of St Thomas' Church for the huge amount of work he has already done behind the scenes on the new accounting system and working with the current NWH PCC and Tim Nutt, Church Accounts Ltd. The new system will make it easier for the NWH PCC to see, in a comparative way, the finances of the churches in the benefice and how we might work together to support and adopt best practice together.

All those present supported the proposed budget.

### **Fabric & Churchyard Report**

A written report for 2024 was circulated prior to the meeting. In addition, IR, wished to update those at the meeting on the progress with mechanising the clock. The automatic winding mechanism was installed at the beginning of February 2025 and the automative regulation system was installed at the beginning of March 2025 and all appears to be working well. IR thanked everyone involved in fundraising efforts for this project.

### **Safeguarding Report**

There have been no safeguarding issues to report during 2024. All those who are required to have DBS checks have these in place. LR reminded anyone who needs to undertake Safeguarding training to do so asap and let Kay Fullick know once this is complete.

### **EcoChurch Report**

LR said St Thomas' should be very proud that we have our Bronze level award and are working towards Silver. She invited everyone to continue to support our church in becoming more ecologically friendly.

### **Rector's Report**

LR explained that since the formation of the NWH PCC she is no longer an official member for St Thomas' LCC and has therefore not written a report for this meeting, but will be contributing to the APCM Report for the NWH PCC Annual Meeting on 6 May 2025.

However, LR did want to thank everyone at St Thomas' for the warm welcome that they gave her when she took up the post of Rector at the end of July 2024 and said that it has been really wonderful to get to know people and to see what has been

	<p>happening throughout the church year. By the time we get through Easter, LR will have done a complete liturgical year and now knows how things work here.</p> <p>LR thanked everyone who provided summary reports to this meeting and for all the hard work of the volunteers who help to make St Thomas' a living church. Going forward, with the help of the Benefice Co-Ordinator, Ellie, LR plans to produce an A4 page 'What's Going On in the Benefice'. This will come out on a monthly basis and be circulated with the weekly newsletter.</p> <p>LR gave a particular, big 'thank you' to Christine Vane and Richard Willis, Church Wardens, for all their hard work which helps to keep this church running.</p> <p>Looking to the year ahead, there are plans to hold a Vision Morning on Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> June at which PCC members and other church representatives will be asked to share their vision for the Benefice going forward.</p>
5.	<p><b>Confirmation of Church Wardens participation in NWH PCC</b></p> <p>CV and RW were elected last April 2024 to act as Church Wardens for three years. They have confirmed that they are both willing to carry on in these roles. Both said that they enjoy NWH PCC meetings and it is interesting to work with the other church wardens and to see how they do things and they are able to learn from each other.</p> <p><b>Motion to support CV and RW in their continued roles was proposed by Fiona Ashworth and seconded by Peter Charles.</b></p>
6.	<p><b>Formal nomination and acceptance of LCC Members</b></p> <p>The following people have put themselves forward to sit on the Local Church Committee: Christine Vane, Richard Willis, Steve Waite, Ian Roch, Fiona Ashworth, Bertha Bates, Stella (Netty) Shea, Angie Maxwell, Mary Harcourt, Alan Johnson, Peter Charles.</p> <p>IR said that we are very pleased to welcome Bertha Bates to the LCC as well.</p> <p><b>Motion to support this was proposed Nicole Bentham and seconded by Madeleine Jenkins.</b></p> <p>IR explained that Valerie Burfield has decided to step down from the LCC and he wanted to take this opportunity to formally record our appreciation for all that VB has contributed in the past.</p>
7.	<p><b>Election of Sides People</b></p> <p>Nick Harcourt advised that the following people are proposed for the role of Sides People next year:</p> <p>Fiona Ashworth, Paul Ashworth, Peter Charles, Rachael Charles, Carol Currey, Margaret Falconer, Mary Harcourt, Nick Harcourt, Moyra Harkness, Steve Harris, Madeleine Jenkins, Jayne Roch, Netty Shea, Chris Vane, Pat Woodage,.</p> <p><b>They were Proposed by Alan Johnson and seconded Angie Maxwell.</b></p>

	<p>NH explained that Nikki Fisher is stepping down from the roll of Sides Person this year due to health reasons.</p> <p>NH thanked all those who have acted as Sides People over the past year, as well as those who have helped with Sacristan, Intercessions, Chalice and Linen preparation.</p>
8.	<p><b>Nomination of LCC members to sit on the NWH PCC.</b></p> <p>IR thanked Netty Shea who has expressed her willingness to continue to represent St Thomas' on the NWH PCC, alongside CW and RW.</p> <p>He advised that Fiona Ashworth has decided to take a break from this role this. Therefore we are looking for an additional LCC member to act in this roll and invited LCC members to consider this and this will be discussed at the next LCC meeting.</p> <p>For information, the NWH APCM will be held on 6<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30 pm at Ashmansworth Village Hall.</p>
9.	<p><b>Questions and open discussion</b></p> <p>Jenny Graham – In respect of the planned Vision Day, JR asked whether this will this include Highclere Church? LR confirmed that it would.</p> <p>JG then asked who is it for and who can attend? JG said that she felt strongly that everyone should to be invited to attend.</p> <p>LR explained that the Vision Day is a matter for everyone. However, it would not be possible to consult with over 100 people on the same day. Therefore it is suggested that each LCC gather the views of their congregation and PCC members will represent them on the day.</p> <p><b>Action: This will be taken forward by the LCC to enable all those at St Thomas to express their views.</b></p> <p>Alan Johnson asked whether there were any plans to hold confirmation classes? He explained that he had come to be confirmed in his 80s after attended a group of about 10 people who were similarly interested and most of them had gone on to be confirmed. LR advised that she has written a letter to go in the May edition of Spectrum and Highclere Parish Magazine, inviting anyone to contact her if they are interested in baptism. LR said there was a wonderful baptism service yesterday of a 16 year old girl and LR felt this was an answer to prayer.</p>
10.	<p><b>Closing prayer</b></p> <p>The meeting was closed by sharing the Grace.</p>

**Woolton Hill Parochial Church Council**

**Registered Charity Number 1173894**

**Annual Report and Financial Statements**

**Year Ended  
31<sup>st</sup> December 2024**

**Woolton Hill Parochial Church Council**  
**Statement of Assets and Liabilities**  
**01 January 2024 to 31 December 2024**

	As at 31/12/2024		As at 31/12/2023
	£	notes	£
<b>Current assets</b>			
<b>Investments</b>			
CCLA CBF Churchyard	16,878.35		20,913.85
Woolton Hill Lock Trust (7220)	177,661.65		173,686.24
James Henry Lock Trust (7147)	88,642.07		86,044.39
War Bonds	91.00		91.00
<b>Total</b>	283,273.07		280,735.48
<b>Cash and Bank Balances</b>			
Nat West - General account	13,719.39		7,329.85
Newbury Building Soc LSP & Church Hall	32,026.87	a	30,812.27
Nat West - LSP	7,167.98		2,027.94
Church Hall Santander Bank & cash	12,287.11		11,347.06
Lloyds - Lock Trust	5,227.32	f	2,182.79
Debtors	-		12,985.63
Deduct Creditors	-		2,359.86
<b>Net current assets less current liabilities</b>	£353,701.74		£345,061.16
	Check	£0.00	
<b>Represented by</b>			
<b>Unrestricted</b>			
General Fund	11,142.95		7,196.96
Church Hall	17,779.76		28,455.29
Total Unrestricted	28,922.71		35,652.25
<b>Restricted</b>			
Special collections	-		253.65
Living Stones Project	39,389.64		31,322.89
Churchyard	13,858.35		15,918.95
Total Restricted	53,247.99		47,495.49
<b>Endowment</b>			
Investments	266,303.72		259,730.63
Lloyds - Lock Trust account	5,227.32		2,182.79
	271,531.04		261,913.42
<b>Total Funds of church</b>	£353,701.74		£345,061.16

**Woolton Hill Parochial Church Council**  
**Receipts and payments**  
**Selected period: 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2024**

	From To	01-Jan-24 31-Dec-24	01-Jan-23 31-Dec-23
Notes			
<b>General fund (Unrestricted)</b>			
<b>Income</b>			
Church Collections		4,810	2,408
Benefice Income		4,610	
Gift Aid Giving		17,911	17,702
Gift Aid Tax Repayment		1,405	5,266
Donations		3,544	2,054
Fees		6,386	5737.5
Fete Income		3,292	
Fundraising		5,258	3888.32
Miscellaneous	<u>c</u>	9411.63	15.91
<b>Total income</b>		<b>56,629</b>	<b>37,071</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Benefice costs		3,605	-
Donations to charities	<u>e</u>	663	
Heating & Lighting		7,563	5,420
Insurance		4,486	4,294
Fees		1,117	2,952
Repairs		1,796	1,759
Fundraising costs		1,108	1,658
Music		3,118	2,656
Altar Expenses		211	151
CMF Quota		29,000	32,000
Office Expenses		3,779	2,863
Miscellaneous		590	227
Recruitment		850	-
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>57,886</b>	<b>53,981</b>
Excess of Income over Expenditure		-1,257	-16,910
Brought forward balance		7,197	2,886
Transfers to/(from)	<u>g</u>	4,000	21,221
Debtors & accrued income	<u>h</u>	1,203	
<b>Total carried forward balance</b>		<b>11,143</b>	<b>7,196</b>
<b>Church Hall (Unrestricted) Fund</b>			
<b>Income</b>			
Hire of hall		33,645	4883
Insurance Claim		11,819	9817
Interest	<u>d</u>	208	150
Donations		-	10
Refunds		-118	-
<b>Total income</b>		<b>45,555</b>	<b>14,860</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Heating and Lighting		7285	5018
Insurance		4529	1074
Repairs (inc Playground)		22688	-
Hall Fixture & Fittings		5679	10307
Music Licences		-	564



Hall Cleaning	5975	2708
Telephone and broadband	349	319
Miscellaneous/Sundries	872	339
Provision for uninsured Church Hall floor repairs		-10000
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>47,378</b>	<b>10328</b>
Excess of Income over Expenditure	-1823	4532
Brought forward balance	28455	13342
Unclear Cheque	<u>i</u> 2982	-
Transfers to/(from)	-	-3221
Church Hall Debtors & accrued income	<u>b</u> -11834	13801
<b>Total carried forward balance</b>	<b>17780</b>	<b>28455</b>

### Special Collections (Restricted) Fund

<b>Income</b>		
Donations	-	254
<b>Total income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>254</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Donations to charities	254	-
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>0</b>
Excess of Income over Expenditure	-254	254
Brought forward balance	254	0
Unclear Cheques	-	-
Transfers to/(from)		-
<b>Total carried forward balance</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>254</b>

### Living Stone Project (Restricted) Fund

<b>Income</b>		
Donations	4,268	14940
Fundraising	4,202	-
Interest	<u>d</u> 1,007	1225.05
Miscellaneous	639	-
<b>Total income</b>	<b>10,116</b>	<b>16,165</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Repairs	2050	-
LSP - Church development	-	48921
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>2,050</b>	<b>48921</b>
Excess of Income over Expenditure	8067	-32756
Brought forward balance	31323	74079
Transfers to/(from)	-	-10000
<b>Total carried forward balance</b>	<b>39390</b>	<b>31323</b>

### Churchyard (Restricted) Fund

<b>Income</b>		
	-	
<b>Total income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Expenditure**

Churchyard costs

3020

4044

**Total expenditure****3,020****4,044**

Excess of Income over Expenditure

-3020

-4044

Brought forward balance

15919

17614

Gain/loss investment value

959.4

562

Transfers to/(from)

1787

**Total carried forward balance****13858****15919****LockTrust (Restricted) Fund****Income**

Dividends from CCLA x1

f

4821

6602

Dividends from CCLA x2

2223

**Total income****7045****6602****Expenditure**

-

**Total expenditure****0****0**

Excess of Income over Expenditure

7045

6602

Brought forward balance

2183

3581

Transfers to/(from)

g

-4000

-8000

**Total carried forward balance****5227****2183***There may be minor discrepancies in the totals as the pence are not being shown*

## Notes

a. The Newbury Building Society Account contains £5273.76 of Church Hall funds. The remaining is for the Living Stones Project (LSP)

b. Balances re-instated to move from Accruals to Receipts & Payments = Ecclesiastical insurance payment  
Paid 29/01/2024 £11819.47 + £225 outstanding hall hire invoices paid in Jan 2024 = £12044.47  
minus £210 for Electricity payment

c. Miscellaneous Category (£15050.88) minus the  
- £5000 transfer from ChurchYard CCLA account to Nat West Account - This resets the CCLA ChurchYard account to contain only ChurchYard funds, as it previously contained £4994.90 of General funds  
- £639.25 LSP VAT refund  
- £4000 bridging loan to cover CMF

d. Newbury Building Society interest (£1214.60 ), split pro rata between Churchhall and LSP Funds --->

e. St Thomas' Contribution to the Diocese for the service held for the arrival of Bishop Philip Mounstephen

f. Lloyds account for Lock Trust (Acc 0269). Money in comes solely from the 2 CCLA Lock Trust Endowment funds dividends. This dividend income can be used by the PCC for church at their discretion

g. £4000 transfer from Lock trust to General fund (Nat West bank June 2024)

h. Balances re-instated to move from Accruals to Receipts & Payments = Accrued church expenses  
£2149.86 minus 2023 Debtors £941.16

j. £2982 uncleared Cheque from 2023

## **Independent Examiner's report to the PCC of St Thomas' , Woolton Hill Hampshire**

This report on the financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2024, in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and s.43 of the Charities Act 1993 ('the Act').

### **Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner**

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements; you consider that the audit requirement of the Regulations and s.43(2) of the Act does not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

### **Basis of this report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under s.43(7)(b) of the Act and also to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
    - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and
    - to prepare financial statements, which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations have not been met; or
  - (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.
- (Signed)



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