

Parish of St. Thomas of Hereford and St. Bede the Venerable

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL – Annual Parish Meeting

St Thomas' Church, Weobley on Monday 15th June 2026 at 7pm

Attendees:

Parish Council Members:

Fr. Simon McGurk – President
Tricia Carter – Chair
Frank McNally – Vice Chair
Julie Gander -Secretary
Sarah Nichols
Pat Roberts
Patricia Stuart

Parishioner Attendance:

Joanna Helme
Joan McNally
Helen Quinlan
Andy Palfreman
Pat Baggott
Pam Sheers
Mary Gilbert
Anne Allen

- **Opening Prayer** (Fr. Simon McGurk)
Fr. Simon opened the meeting with a reading from the Acts of the Apostles.
- **Welcome & Apologies** - Charles de Rohan, Karen Lampitt, Sophie & Peter Hereford, Virginia Bird, Arthur Denaro.
- **Actions Arising from the PPC APM held on 23/06/2025** (Tricia Carter)
 - Current members of the committee are continuing with their roles within the Parish Pastoral Council, no one is up for any renewals this year.
 - All Building & Maintenance Files are in our filing system and copies held in the Belmont archives.
 - Fr. Simon has commissioned 2 additional Eucharistic Ministers. All the Eucharistic Ministers were recommissioned at Advent.
 - Mill Hill Missionary talk declined for now. Andy Palfreman contacted them.
 - The new St. John Kemble Deanery newsletter is now being produced by Tricia Carter. Copies have been emailed to parishioners and are on the website.
 - The Constitution of the Pastoral Council was completed by Tricia Carter with input from the PPC. This has now been signed off by Fr. Simon & Abbot Brendan.
 - There is now a dedicated space in St. Bede's to teach the Liturgy to the young people in our parish. It is well worth a visit to see the improvements made.
 - The old armchairs in the Parish Room have been removed and disposed of, but they have not been replaced.

PARISH ANNUAL REPORTS

Links to all the reports can be found on the Parish Website by clicking on the web addresses listed under each report.

- **Parish Priest's Report** (Fr. Simon McGurk)
 - **Mass attendance averages:** Weobley – 45 regular & 5 irregular. Kington – 24 regular & 5 irregular.
 - **Sacraments & other Liturgies:** 2 Baptisms and 1 anointing, 3 Holy Communions, 1 Marriage, 1 Marriage Blessing, 5 Funerals.
 - **Easter Vigil:** attended by 12. Fr. Simon would like to see a larger attendance at this most important service in our calendar.

- **Extra Curricula teachings:** Bible readings led by Andy Palfreman at St. Thomas'. Also Faith Alive courses for new Catholic's and others interested in further teachings led by Fr. Simon.
- **Deanery Masses:** at SFX in September 2025 with Archbishop Mark and a Lent Deanery Mass in March with Abbot Brendan.
- **House Masses:** 4 this year.
- **Daily Prayer of the Church:** Recommended by Vatican II every morning at St Thomas' at 9:40am either in person or by Zoom.
- **Heart speaks to Heart:** initiated by Archbishop Mark, led by Tricia and Joanna in our Parish.
- **Ecumenical Activities:** in Kington and Weobley – thanks to Patricia Stuart & Pat Roberts for their input and feedback.
- **Prayers for the sick:** Several members of the parish community mentioned.
- **Thanks:** Fr. Simon thanked all involved in supporting the running of the parishes in Kington & Weobley.
<https://thomasandbede.com/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/PPC-Reports/PPC-APM-2026-PP-Report.pdf>

Finance Report (Read by Joanna Helme for Charles de Rohan)

- The Finance Committee have met three times since the last AGM in June 25. The Parish accounts are linked with those of the Belmont Abbey Mission CIO which includes 5 parishes belonging to the Abbey.
- Charles has been Chair since late 2025. He thanked Joanna for all her hard work and dedication as Chair and her continued work with administrating all direct incomes and expenditures.
- It is hoped that Belmont Abbey will be automating the accounting systems for all parishes in the diocese in the not too distant future. This is being led by the new bursar Graham Neal.
- Charles will be meeting with Graham in July. The 2025 accounts are currently with the auditors.
- Everything is increasing in price partly due to the current climate. The latest delivery of oil was over £1000.00.
- Our Parish income does not cover our expenditure and we would not break even without the recent legacy from a parishioner.
<https://thomasandbede.com/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/PPC-Reports/PPC-APM-2026-Finance-Committee-Report-.pdf>

• **Churches Together in Kington & Weobley** (Pat Roberts & Patricia Stuart)

- **Churches Together in Kington Report** – Pat Roberts
 - ❖ Kington Churches together has been going through major changes – now only 2 churches involved. St. Bede's and the Anglican Church. The AGM is on 17.06.2026 at St. Bede's.
Action: Pat will report back on this meeting at the next PPC meeting.
 - ❖ The Food Bank needs to find a new home as the current location at the Baptist Church is being sold. Pat thanked all for the support and donations given.
 - ❖ The Baptist Congregation are currently using Lyonshall Village Hall.
 - ❖ The treasurer for Kington Churches together – Stephen Gilling has sadly passed away. He held the post for 25 years and will be missed. A new treasurer will need to be appointed.
 - ❖ Pat expressed sadness at the changes in recent years. Tricia stated that this is sadly the case across the Deanery.
<https://thomasandbede.com/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/PPC-Reports/PPC-APM-2026-CTiK-Report.pdf>
- **Churches Together in Weobley Report** – Patricia Stuart
 - ❖ Weobley has a very active group with St Thomas', St Peter & St Paul Church and The Methodist Chapel.
 - ❖ There have been many ecumenical events including – Lent courses, Walk of Witness, Pentecost Walk, Bible Studies, Harvest Festival lunch, and many more. All well attended and supported.

- ❖ Main Fundraisers have been the Harvest Festival and Christmas lunch and the Carols in Rose Garden. Monies raised have gone to local charities and international ones. £340 to Disaster Emergency Committee in support of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and £480 to Tearfund Afgan Appeal following an earthquake.
- ❖ Financial support is also given to other initiatives – youth workers to run holiday clubs, and other activities and events to support the younger population of Weobley.
- ❖ Rev. Philip Harvey is retiring at the end of the month. He will be missed. Hopefully his replacement will be willing to carry on the good work. In the interim three retired Vicars will be helping out.
<https://thomasandbede.com/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/PPC-Reports/PPC-APM-2026-CTiW-Report.pdf>

- **Church Maintenance, Building and Equipment Inspections** (Andy Palfreman)

- Andy uses a computer programme Safety Tool Box to manage all the various requirements we as a parish need to adhere to, in order to maintain our two Churches and their communal areas.
- There are many Inspections, Surveys, Reports, Assessments etc., that are required in the safety and legal obligations that we as a Parish are obliged and legally have to do.
- These need to be carried out over various time spans - all are explained in the full report, see below.
- All costings are also listed. Basically over a 5 year period the Parish has to spend approx. £6000.00. It should be noted that these costs are estimated from past invoices and these costs will only increase in the future.
- St. Bede's has some issues internally with damp which will require work in the coming year.
<https://thomasandbede.com/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/PPC-Reports/PPC-APM-2026-Building-Equipment-Inspections.pdf>

- **Safeguarding** (Joanna Helme)

- Busy year with 5 parishioners requiring DBS processing. Although some of this is now done online there is still a lot of paperwork and checking. All altar servers over 18 years old now require a DBS.
- Joanna has completed additional Prevent training – to become aware of ways people become radicalised.
- After being our Safeguarding representative for many years Joanna is stepping down and being replaced by Camilla Benough, who has experience in this role as a School Governor.
- Tricia and the committee thanked Joanna for all her hard work as our Safeguarding Representative over many years.
- Ongoing issues with the diocese's Safeguarding services, which for now, have been temporarily resolved.
<https://thomasandbede.com/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/PPC-Reports/PPC-APM-2026-Safeguarding-Report.pdf>

- **CAFOD** (Joanna Helme)

- The parish continues to generously support CAFOD throughout the year – with Fast Days and also when required, Emergency Aid.
- The need is still great as was discussed last weekend by our guest speakers from CAFOD.
- The forms for the CAFOD petition to 'Tackle the Global Debt Crisis', will remain in both churches over the coming weekend for anyone else to sign. Fr. Simon was asked to remind parishioners about this.
- It is worth looking at the CAFOD website to see more about the valuable work they do.
(<https://action.cafod.org>)
<https://thomasandbede.com/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/PPC-Reports/PPC-APM-2026-CAFOD-Report.pdf>

- **Social Events Report** (Joan McNally)

- 4 annual social events – all well supported and successful fundraising opportunities.

- Bring & Share Lunches**

- Two bring and share lunches in December and March were held in the Parish Room at St Thomas' – delicious food alongside great socialising. A memorable highlight with much laughter and competitiveness for Frank's Christmas quiz.
- Monies made from the raffles were donated to: The Kington Food Bank - £130.00 and Hereford Homeless - £120.00.

- Strawberry Tea**

- We had a great turnout with lots of donations of cakes, bottles for the bottle stall and raffle prizes. We made £587.00

- Parish BBQ**

- This was held at Broxwood Court due to bad weather, our thanks to Anne, Mike & Richard for hosting.

- Sunday Tea & Coffee at St Thomas'**

- These are very well attended. We have started sending donations (after taking out monies for tea and coffee) to the Hereford Homeless. We were able to send them £150.00 in March and will be sending another cheque for £150.00 this month.

Action: Fr. Simon to add this information about fundraising to the weekly bulletin.

- Joan also wanted to thank all the volunteers who have signed up to help at this years Strawberry Tea on Sunday 28th June.
- Joan also informed the meeting that the marquee will be going up in the Church grounds this week.
- Action: Fr. Simon to inform parishioners that it is being used for a private event this weekend.**
- Tricia thanked Joan & Frank for all their hard work and organisation at the various events.

<https://thomasandbede.com/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/PPC-Reports/PPC-APM-2026-Social-Report.pdf>

- **Misso Red Boxes** (Andy Palfreman)

- The number of boxes continues to be on a decline with only 12 active boxes.
- However, even with this decline, there has been a steady increase in donations. Thanks to the generosity of our parishioners.
- Donations in 2023 - £375, in 2024 -£359 and in 2025 - £652.
- The Red Boxes are a great way to support missionary activities of our church throughout the world. Red boxes are available please let Fr. Simon or Andy know if you are interested in supporting this.

<https://thomasandbede.com/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/PPC-Reports/PPC-APM-2026-Missio-Report.pdf>

TOPICS FOR PARISH DISCUSSION

- **St John Kemble Deanery** (Tricia Carter)

- Abbott Brendan has really brought the Deanery Parishes together.
- Tricia is working alongside Louise Wright (Chair, St. John Kemble Deanery Pastoral Advisory Council) as the Deanery Pastoral Secretary.
- A Deanery directory is being produced with contact details of all Parishes with additional information so that we know what other Parishes are doing to enable the sharing of resources in order that we become a cohesive community.
- Tricia is now editor for the Deanery Newsletter which can be found on our Church website at <https://thomasandbede.com/organisations-activities/deanery-matters/>

Action: Joanna asked if Tricia could also email the newsletter to the parishioners.

- This year in the diocese there will be 35-40 Holy Communions amongst the churches in the diocese. this year.

- Emma Wright – Churches Together in Hereford will be invited to give a presentation at the next Deanery meeting about the importance of Churches Together in Herefordshire.
- **Heart Speaks to Heart** (Tricia Carter & Joanna Helme)
 - Tricia thanked Joanna for presenting the results of our Parish involvement in Heart Speaks to Heart at the meeting in Belmont Abbey on 23rd May.
 - Our Parish used the document produced by the team at Belmont Abbey and Archbishop Mark's video recordings at the Parish sessions.
 - Sessions were held in the parish rooms at Weobley during Eastertide, leading up to Pentecost. Each session lasting between 60-90 minutes.
 - A report will be produced shortly on the outcome of the sessions and potential proposals to take forward in the Parish.
- **Garden of Remembrance** (Tricia Carter for Charles de Rohan)
 - We are at the very start of planning for this project.
 - Before any work can commence we will need to get various permissions to go ahead with the work. The consent of the Belmont Abbey Trustees, who own the Church - this is likely to be a formality, but it is a necessary first step. There will be no cost to this stage.
 - A faculty from the Diocesan HCC, who are responsible for listed Churches in the Diocese.
 - Planning permission from County Council may be required. However, the only way to find out will be to pay for an opinion from a County Council planning consultant.
 - We have one specification for our Garden of Remembrance from local Garden Designer, Cary Goode.
 - We have been given a legacy for the Garden of Remembrance and Fr. Simon stated that this along with some other generous donations will go a long way with paying for this project.
 - The specification and list of plants are in the Parish Rooms for all to see and make comments on.
 - Tricia expressed concern about how much all the plants will cost. Anne stated that Cary had plans to buy plants from a nursery that is closing down.
- **Any other Business** (All)
 - Report of guttering overflowing with water at St. Thomas' Church – occurred during the last episodes of rain. Andy Palfreman stated the fault was probably leaves needing to be removed.
 - Frank expressed concern about the Balcony Window in St. Thomas' – it has been painted so many times, that it has distorted the window. Need to take the window out and rebuild it. This will be an expensive job. The window can be removed to be worked on, but the window will then need to be blocked off.
Action: Andy will get a quote for how much it will cost.
 - Fr. Simon would like to remind all parishioners about the Pilgrimage to the Grave of St. John Kemble on Sunday 24th August. It would be nice if we could have a group from our two parishes to attend. The possibility of hiring a minibus was made, but no decisions were made in regard of transport.
 - Rosemary Williams has suggested arranged times of contemplative/silent prayer.
 - Helen Quinlan said that both Churches need new purificators. Ideally three for each Church. These are expensive. They have been made by parishioners in the past.
Action: Joanna offered to see if she had any appropriate fabric to make some purificators.
 - Concerns raised by several parishioners about the votive candle holder looking tired and in need of some tender loving care or to be replaced. A suggestion was made for something new where tea lights could be used which would be safer. The votive candles are often left still burning at the end of Sunday Mass. In recent weeks all candle holders have been in use.
Action: This issue will be discussed at the next PPC meeting.

- The grass by The Presbytery is overgrown and needs a good weed. Who is responsible for this.
- Concerns raised about what the duties were of the Church cleaner as bins in the kitchen area have been overflowing, kitchen sink dirty and the toilet not always cleaned. Joanna confirmed the kitchen and toilet are areas that should be cleaned. May need to do a new list of requirements and increase hours from two to three a week, as the cleaner is also responsible for cleaning Fr Simon's flat.
Action: Fr. Simon to speak with the cleaner to clarify areas that should be dealt with.
- The Allotments Open Day is on Sunday 21st June. Parishioners are invited to visit following Sunday Mass.
- Andy Palfremen advised the five year allotment lease is due for renewal this year. There was an agreement that the annual payment for the Weobley Allotment Society which is currently £500.00 would be increased this year. It is not clear whether the payment goes direct to Belmont.
Action: Andy will talk to the Treasurer of the Allotment Society about who they deal with.
- **Date of Next Meeting** (Tricia Carter)
 - Monday 21st September 2026 at 7pm at St Thomas' Church, Weobley.
 - Tricia thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.
- **Closing Prayer** – Fr. Simon McGurk