



## WOODBRIIDGE COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2025 held at Garson Church at 10.00 am.

Present: Rev Christian Saguyan, Chair; Rev Steve Wilkinson; Roger Sherhod, Brinkworth; Gill Smith and Bridget Beardshall, Lea; Anna Kent, Great Somerford; Robert Beverley, Little Somerford; Liz Walker and David Briggs, Garsdon.

1. **Prayers** – Christian opened the meeting with a prayer.
2. **Apologies**, Rev Mike Graham. Michael Bromley Gardner. Cec Smith, Dauntsey, Richard Wood, Great Somerford.
3. **Minutes of last meeting** – held on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025 were approved and signed.
4. **Matters arising** – None.
5. **Rector's Items** –
  - a. **Woodbridge Group of Churches – Governance** – Steve reported that suggested amendments had been incorporated into the new partial scheme with the support of Emma Bakewell. Further suggestions had been received from Richard Wood, some of which were accepted by the meeting. Gill Smith kindly offered to carry out a further review to try and eliminate footnotes etc. Steve will circulate updated scheme wording to WGC members shortly for their approval. As a side issue, it was thought that a 5 yearly review of the apportionment of the Woodbridge Parish Office costs between the six parishes would be appropriate. It was agreed that no revision was necessary at this time as the last revision was carried out less than three years ago.
  - b. **Carbon Net Zero** – updates on heating projects in hand at Garsdon, Brinkworth, Dauntsey and Lea were given. Steve also reported that a Heat Source pump would soon be fitted at the Rectory.
  - c. **Athelstan Way** – feedback from parishes suggested that the route was being well used.
6.
  - a. **Pastoral** –
    - i. Autumn Rota – Christian reported that the Deanery Service would now take place on 30<sup>th</sup> November not 23<sup>rd</sup>.
    - ii. Rev'd Christopher Bryan, our Archdeacon, has kindly offered to preside at a Holy Communion service at Little Somerford on Christmas Day.
    - iii. Christian said that he would speak to those leading the services on 16 November, Safeguarding Sunday, with a view to raising awareness about safeguarding.

- iv. All Saints Day – 1<sup>st</sup> November – Christian is hoping to arrange a worship event at Walter Powell School with the emphasis on children. He will be producing suitable promotional material for parishes.
- b. **Safeguarding** –
- i. Not all parishes have yet held meetings to discuss the revised policies. Great Somerford PCC has suggested amendments to the Role Description and Person Specification as it was thought to be too lengthy and might put off volunteers for applying to join PCCs. This document will be reviewed by the clergy and the PSOs.
  - ii. Bell Ringers Policy – The meeting approved the circulated policy, subject confirmation from Brinkworth PCC, who had raised the issue in the first place.
  - iii. Social Media Policy – this is due for review and Steve kindly offered to undertake this and report back.
- c. Reports from parishes on items of interest –
- Garsdon** – Liz reported that the Group Holy Communion service was much appreciated by the visitors from Scrutopia. Mary Murchison’s recent special birthday was marked by cake and prosecco. Liz also reported that the PCC will be exploring the possibility of extending the successful hospitality area by removing pews in the north west corner of the nave. The PCC hoped to introduce a small ramp to ease access to the church porch and to complete the purchase of land for a car park quite soon.
- Great Somerford** – Anna was pleased to report that the church fete was very well supported, and despite the hot weather, had raised £4,600. There will also be a Harvest Supper at the end of October. The PCC was also looking to replace the coping slabs on top of the footpath entrance wall as, unfortunately, the present ones are degrading.
- Little Somerford** - Robert was pleased to say that their Fete had raised £3,000 and that a full house was seen at a recent concert. The Vestry wall preliminary work was progressing well, but that time was being taken to ensure that the remedial work would solve the problem entirely satisfactorily.
- d. **Woodbridge Outreach** – Christian reported on the recent very successful Men’s Mental Wellbeing event at the Three Crowns at Brinkworth attended by 16 people. He read the report from Tom Russell which highlighted the great appreciation of those attending for being able to share, in confidence, their concerns and worries. Given the most positive outcomes, the Woodbridge Group Council agreed that it would cover the balance of the costs of the event, amounting to £125, in addition to the £100 already committed. Christian was thanked most warmly for his initiative in arranging the meeting.
- e. **Away Day** – Christian sought views of the parishes as to the type of event they thought might best suit everyone. The general consensus was that it should be PCC focussed but held

in the context of a group event on a Saturday, 10 am – lunch, bring and share, combining worship followed by separate PCC discussions. Christian asked PCCs to consider this and report back. Event to be held in spring/early summer 2026 at Rawlings Farm or indoors at Lea church. Timings, shared lunch and venue all to be confirmed.

**ACTION – PCCs TO DISCUSS**

**7. Administration –**

- a. **Appointment of Group Safeguarding Officer** – carried forward to next meeting
- b. **Parish Office Update** – David reported that Maggie Topp was now working Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.  
**Printer** – David said that a meeting had been held with our suppliers attended by Christian, Maggie, Christina and himself.. Discussions were continuing in order to reduce the time taken to print the Lea & Garsdon Parish News as well as booklets for Christian. It was appreciated that we might need to upgrade the printing speed capacity in order to achieve our objectives.
- c. **Annual PAT & Fire Extinguisher Service** – David reported that the person who has carried out our PAT tests for very many years had now retired. A quotation has been obtained from the person who carried out our Fire Extinguisher service last year, to carry out both tests simultaneously. The cost will be £418.50, including VAT. This quotation was accepted. David will advise date for this work shortly. (Note - Brinkworth have own preferential arrangements for Fire Extinguisher service.)
- d. **Occasional Service Fee – Administration** – David reported that he and Christian has met Maggie and Christina and were exploring whether there were more efficient ways of dealing with these. Helpful suggestions were made by WGC members as to how this might be achieved, and these will be followed up with interested parties.
- e. **Electricity supplier** – in addition to the offer circulated with the agenda, David said that the C of E Parish Buying were now inviting parishes to join their energy basket. It was left to parishes to decide on their options. It was recognised that parishes might already be on contract to their existing supplier.
- f. **Reserves Policy** – Gill asked if any parishes had adopted any form of policy regarding the level of reserves held in their accounts. None of the parishes were aware of any such policy. Following a general discussion, it was decided that each parish should be left to decide whether it wished to create such a policy.

**8. Treasurers Report** – no report due.

**9. Any other business:**

- a. **Lammas** – Roger thanked Christian for highlighting this longstanding rural tradition which was celebrated appropriately at Brinkworth.

**10. The Grace - The meeting closed with the saying of The Grace at 12.25 pm.**

**11. Dates of future meetings** - Wednesday mornings at 10.00am –8/10 at Great Somerford; 10/12 at Lea and 11/2/26 at Lea.