THE UNITED BENEFICE OF
HENLEY-ON-THAMES WITH REMENHAM

PARISH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, HENLEY-ON-THAMES

Minutes of a Meeting of the Parochial Church Council
held on
Tuesday 22nd January 2008
at 8.00 pm
in the Chantry House

PRESENT

The Rector, Carol Brook-Partridge (Churchwarden), Andy Butler, George Constantinidi, Ceridwen Cranford, Stuart Crippen (Treasurer), David Dew, Anne Forrest, Peter Hopkins (Secretary), Stephen Nichols, Liz Preston, Alan Tang, Geoffrey Taylor (Churchwarden) and Martin Whittaker .

The meeting was preceded by a celebration of the Eucharist in St Leonard's Chapel.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Val Barter and Andy Hurst.

2 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the last PCC meeting on the 13th of November 2007 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3 MATTERS ARISING

Stephen Nichols gave a report on the website, which was now up and running, and the general feeling was that it looks very good. It was confirmed in response to a question that information about the choir would come on to the website soon as well. It was hoped to keep the existing design, but it was recognised that we may have to pay something to the designer. There was also an idea that we might try to have a link to a discussion group, and it was confirmed that this would be considered. It was also noted that there might be a separate section about the junior church.

4 MATTERS FOR DECISION AND REPORT

Diary

The Rector reported that he was aiming to keep the Chantry House diary and the Church diary available and up to date, perhaps on display in the Chantry House.

Car parking in the Churchyard

The Rector said he was looking at costings for bollards outside the Church west door in order to curb the growth of "fly parking". One broken down car had even been dumped on the land and he had had to try to locate the owner to get it removed, which it eventually was.

Removal of radiator

The Rector reported that the electrician and Henley Heating have been asked to look at the removal of the stand-alone radiator in the Church.

Organ Fund

The Rector reported that a list of donors could be provided, so that people who had already given would not be chased for further donations.

South floor

The Rector reported that workmen had offered to take up the flooring behind the font, which was the entrance to the crypt, but it had been filled in in the 1950s. The Rector reported that he had asked the Archdeacon if we needed a faculty to go into the crypt and unblock the entrance, or whether we could perhaps only need an Archdeacon's certificate instead of a faculty. There were no documents about the crypt and the blocking up of the entrance, but the Rector said he would look in the PCC Minutes dating from the 1950s to see what they said about it.

5 STATUE OF OUR LADY

The Rector reported that he had had a promise of a sum of money sufficient to buy a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary for installation in the Church, and, after looking for a suitable statue, he had identified one in France, which was a copy of the famous original by Andrea Della Robbia.

6 TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer gave a verbal report to the PCC, the contents of the report being as follows: -

"PCC Finances to 31st December 2007

PCC finances have been scrutinised by the Standing Committee. Our overall assets are similar to this point last year. (£195,429 2007) – (£199,404 2006). A reduction of just under £4,000.

Expenditure is looking as though it will exceed income by approx £6,000 at the year end in our general account.

Planned Giving which had decreased substantially last year has not decreased further which is encouraging, but on the other hand we are suffering the same loss for a second year.

Our finances are generally in a healthy position although there are always concerns when considering expenditure items likely to arise in the fairly near future.
Books/papers about to go to the accountant's for annual audit.

Salaries

We are at present reviewing the terms of employment for Julie Griffin and Elspeth Villet as mentioned at the last PCC meeting.
These matters have progressed some way but are not yet finalised.
It is hoped that salary payments can be made on a gross basis without deduction but it is felt that we must obtain agreement from the Inland Revenue before going ahead since the penalties for incorrect procedures can be severe. We hope to resolve matters very shortly and will report at the next meeting.

The Organ Fund

We have received donations of around £31,000.
We have paid out from the above funds a total of £15,472
The payments include the repaired bellow at approx £7,000
The remainder of the payments are deposit and stage payments towards the new console costing approx £15,000.
Installation is hoped to be in the summer of 2008.

Charitable Giving for 2007

The Charitable donations agreed at the last PCC meeting have been paid."

It had been agreed that there should be an extra PCC meeting on Tuesday the 25th of March in order to approve the audited accounts, although it would be a short meeting with only this on the Agenda. It would be at 8pm in the Chantry House as usual.

The Rector left the meeting temporarily while there was a discussion of the method of paying the parish expenses for the Rector, in comparison with the previous system used for Alan Pyburn and David Pritchard. It was agreed that the Treasurer would consider the matter further and consult again with the Standing Committee (excluding the Rector) and the Standing Committee would then bring a proposal to the PCC in due course.

7 PIANO AND PETRUS VAN SCHENDEL PICTURE

7.1 The Rector reported that the valuation of the Victorian piano from Bonhams had been precisely nil. The Council could still nevertheless consider selling it on ebay because of its historical interest and its royal connection, and it was noted that consideration should be given to the idea of offering the piano for sale to the parish first.

7.2 The Petrus Van Schendel had now been value by Sothebys with an up to date valuation which placed it anywhere between £30,000 and £70,000. The Rector confirmed that the Council were going to have another go at trying to sell it and getting permission from the Council for the Care of Churches to do so.

8 HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Rector asked if there were any health and safety matters to report, and no issues were brought to his attention.

9 CHANTRY HOUSE

The Rector reported that a certificate for safety regarding the leak in the pipes was still awaited.

10 PASTORAL MATTERS

No pastoral matters were brought to the Rector's attention.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was a discussion about the need to encourage new members of the congregation to stand for the PCC, and the Rector reminded the PCC of his stance about any involvement with PCC elections, namely that he left it to the laity in the Church to elect their own representatives without any interference by the clergy, and therefore it must be up to existing members of the PCC to organise new members to stand if necessary.

STANDING COMMITTEE (6pm, not 7.30, Parish Office)	**PCC (8pm Chantry House)**	**APCM**
		27th April 2008 after evensong
Tues 25th March 2008	Tues 25th March 2008	
Tues 3rd June 2008	Tues 10th June 2008	
Tues 9th September 2008	Tues 16th September 2008	
Tues 4th November 2008	Tues 11th November 2008	

The meeting ended at 9.15pm.

Signed by the Chairman ……

Dated ……