CATHOLIC PARISH OF KIDLINGTON AND WOODSTOCK

Including St Thomas More Catholic Church and Primary School

And St Hugh of Lincoln

Part of the Arch Diocese of Birmingham, Registered Charity Number 234216

Parish Assembly Support Group

Minutes of the meeting held at St Thomas More church hall
On Monday 16th November 2026

In attendance:	Fr Damian Nwankwo	Cathy Morrison	Denise Upton
	Margaret King (Chair)	Julie Murphy	Tim Selwood
	John Bellasis (Secretary)	Louis Borucki	Maggie Borucki
	Sandra Lenagan	Ian Drury	Marika Dimech
	Rania Naser	Mary Laina	Ann Wilkins
	Mary Gilgunn-Jones	Chris Brennan	Anne Garrett

Apologies: Julieann Exley, Mary Joseph, Kathleen Kelly, Jean Clark, Charles King

1. Margaret King opened the meeting at 5pm and invited Fr Damian to lead the meeting in prayer.
2. Minutes of last meetings:

2.1 It was agreed to sign off the minutes of the meetings 30/09/25, 08/12/25, 19/01/26, 20/04/26 and those of the Parish Assembly 14/06/26 (many matters arising would be covered in this meeting).

2.2 Fr Damian (FrD) drew attention to a meeting in St Hugh's church on 11//10/26 to achieve a balance of volunteers. (A revised list for the parish is being prepared.) The Archdiocese is developing its plan for its parishes on clergy clusters that allow neighbouring parishes to share resources. This parish had been looking westward but is now focusing on Oxford; all to be confirmed.

3. **Visitation Report** (following the pastoral visit by Rt Rev Bishop Richard Walker): Having circulated the report by email, FrD now summarised it as identifying a lot of potential in the parish due to the good community spirit. There is a sign of growth in financial strength but no sign of paying off the huge debt.

3.1 Christian Fitzgerald from the Kenelm Youth Trust came to speak in our churches. (He is a parish youth ministry development worker). A meeting in the St Thomas More Hall is planned for Saturday 12th December to discuss the administration of a North Oxford youth group that might include Eynsham and Charlbury. RN confirmed that Pablo Callejo still leads the group. FrD advised that the Youth Group must follow the Archdiocesan Launch Pad programme, which is organised by Rt Rev Bishop Timothy Menezes and operated from Don Bosco House, Coleshill; and FrD is nominated as a befriender. SL proposed that young seminarians take part in a rotating leadership but FrD stressed the safeguarding issues. FrD said that four volunteers will be introduced to the diocese and the parish will create their DBS certificates online.

3.2 RN confirmed that school and parish were working together guiding the children through the sacraments and following the diocesan website. School pupils in Years 3 & 6 learn in-class. MG-J, supported by parents and promoted by the diocese, takes extracurricular classes on the school premises for other children of the parish. Elsewhere there was a joint fundraising event for the parish retreat day.

3.3 Liturgical developments are proceeding well: Adoration, the Angeles, rosary, Healing Mass and others. Those in the care homes can participate (interactively) over Zoom. School Masses are going well but there is a shortage of servers; young ones are needed and FrD suggested greater use of the thurible and any other accoutrements to add earthly interest and enthusiasm. In communication with parents, rotas should be organised for respective roles. More servers and organisers are required.

Approved: Date:

3.4 FrD, MK and SL confirm that there are many opportunities to engage in and support charitable work and social outreach: Friends of the Holy Land, CAFOD, (St Vincent de Paul, the Catenians), Care Homes, and Churches Together. Crib donations go to Friends of the Holy Land. FrD called for presents under the trees for children in the 5-11 age range. We are encouraged to join in with Ecumenical Week in January in Kidlington, and Walk of Witness to the five churches in Woodstock on Good Friday; the Kidlington News and the Bladon & Woodstock News are important sources of information and welcome contributors such as FrD. MG-J said that social events were well attended. FrD said there was a need to reach out to individuals. MD said she would welcome a rota for Greeters at the Masses.

4. Church Maintenance & Finance:

4.1 The boilers are up-to-date and legionella tests have been actioned and signed off. The boilers are due to be serviced in Jan/Feb. St Hugh's had a blocked drain in the car park that exposed a hidden issue with the old system and the system has been upgraded. (JB has made some repairs to the railings of the access ramp at St Hugh's and repaired a loose flagstone.) The underfloor heating in the hall at St Hugh's requires its own control panel. There are a number of issues at St Thomas More:

4.1.1. Upper gutters and spire verges are crumbling, causing overflow and leaks. LB & FrD have cleared the gutters and hoppers but a permanent solution is required urgently. (JB recommends a bespoke glass-reinforced plastic lining solution. LB is keen to get the diocesan architect to advise.)

4.1.2. The hall's electrical system trips out frequently and unexpectedly both at the hall panel and the church panel and must be fixed urgently. The hall cannot be hired out whilst this problem persists.

4.1.3. The light in the car park is switched on in the sacristy and requires an outside sensor switch instead.

4.2 **Finances**:

4.2.1. FrD said that we need to be pro-active and get the diocese involved in assessing costs.

4.2.2. Fundraising is a necessity and LB proposed setting specific targets for known projects. FrD proposed forming a committee with professionals who know how to do it. SL said she knew someone at St Hugh's.

4.2.3. TS reported that the 25-year plan to pay off the parish debt had been deferred by 10 years at 4% a year. SL said that the payments on the St Hugh's hall will be with us forever. (Prayers are needed.)

5. Other business:

5.1 LB has made a contribution towards the leaving party for the outgoing parish secretary on Sunday 29th Nov at St Thomas More. SL offered to say a few words at the start and end of Mass. MG-J will organise the social side. There will be no second collection on that day.

5.2 The next Parish Assembly will take place after Mass on 25th April in the St Thomas More Hall.

5.3 MK advised that Christmas decorations will go up a week before Christmas starting 18th Dec. There will be presents for the children under the trees (as previously noted); money for Friends of the Holy Land collected at the cribs and money on the trees for Fr Hodgson's Caritas (that provides social care throughout the Archdiocese of Birmingham).

5.4 FrD said he would be visiting his family in January and was arranging cover. Rt Rev Bishop William Kenny will cover for some Masses and will need assistance with transport from Woodstock to Kidlington and back as required.

6. The meeting closed at 19:45 with a blessing from FrD and prayers.

Approved: Date: