

Building Committee Meeting at OLP 12 March 2025 7pm

Present: Con Mc, Theresa F, Caroline W, Chris D, Andreas W, Mandy B, Marina S.
Donna G, Theresa P, Fr Oliver Holt.

Apologies: Damien O'B, Cecelia D.

Documents provided prior to the meeting: All members were provided with the recent quinquennial report for OLP, recommendations and budget outlines

NB: Fr Oliver provided an A4 sheet with some starting points for discussion. As the meeting followed this outline they have been integrated into the minutes

Agreed to finish the meeting at 8pm

Starting point document:

Welcome to everyone from all parts of the parish. Can we please remember throughout this discussion that we are one parish and that our discussion this evening is about finding the best way in which the whole parish can look after just one of its churches.

Priorities

	Starting point doc	Minutes
Structural:	I have asked a structural engineer, recommended by the architect, to follow up the issues mentioned in the report. I am waiting to hear back from him.	Some things need further professional advice such as structural issues identified. All agreed we do not discuss this evening.
Water tight:	Windows, doors and leaks and replacement (like for like) of burnt out window	Leaks – Sanctuary in front of the tabernacle. In very bad weather it will leak dipping off the 'sky light/ roof light'. May be going towards the end of its life? Ground problems with drains / drain pipes and soak aways No annual cycle of cleaning drains Priority to get drains fixed Replacement of the window – like for like replacement. Agreed. <i>(Later in meeting agreed to looking at the possibility of making it a fire door)</i>

Legislation:	<p>I have asked Gavin Leatherbarrow, the head of compliance at PIB, Health & Safety advisers to the Trust, to give advice on DDA (Equality Act) and Fire Safety matters. I am waiting to hear back from him.</p> <p>This section would include fire exits, servery hatch, upgrading of fire doors and accessible toilet and possibly widening of entrance from road.</p>	<p>DDA Door to toilet needs to be 800mm</p> <p>Fire door – not all doors have to be fire safe. Is there a proper exit? Agreed that this need to be addressed.</p> <p>Widening entrance – Important to keep hedges trimmed. Can ask gardener.</p> <p><i>(Later in the meeting it was agreed to put this on work to be completed by volunteer group)</i></p>
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Setting a budget:

	Starting point doc	Minutes
Budgets	<p>To be discussed by Parish Finance Committee and by Douai Abbey Parishes Trust</p>	<p>We need to separate out the regular maintenance budget from the refurbishment budget and have clarity on both.</p> <p>Volunteer work – clearing gutters / hedge – working party in order to save money and build community.</p> <p>Recognition of past volunteer maintenance work that was regularly undertaken by Don Payne and Jim Connor. Also, the post COVID deep clean of OLP by a group of Parish volunteers.</p> <p>Reference was made to the need for risk assessments, prepared by a qualified Health & Safety organisation/individual and the need to check if volunteers are insured.</p>

Other issues

	Starting point doc	Minutes
Insulation	I suggest that we separate roof and walls insulation. We may need more detailed advice on this beyond what the architect says.	Various solutions to insulation were suggested including outside roof insulation. This would be a major investment and given the limited current use of the building there is a question of cost effectiveness? Further discernment as to how this fits into the parish long term plans is needed.
Heating	My understanding is that there is nothing wrong with the boiler and that it has some years of life in it, but its effectiveness is obviously linked to the insulation	Get out a heating engineer and get heating looked at now to see if there is any quick solution. Longer term solutions need to be part of the consideration as part of the refurbishment
Brickwork	Repair loose mortar and replace loose and missing bricks	
Decoration	Could some of this be done by direct labour/volunteers?	
Clearing of gutters and drains	To be done by volunteers?	It was agreed that parishioners would be asked to volunteer their skills to address the issues of gutters, drains and hedges. Mandy Bennett has agreed to co-ordinate this activity ready for action post Easter. It was suggested that a window cleaner could clear the gutters whilst cleaning the windows, which should be carried out on a regular basis both inside and outside.
Grounds	To be done by volunteers?	
OTHER ISSUES		Washer in the flower room still not fixed. Peter has been asked to change washer on the tap – Fr Oliver to ask Ashley to follow up.

Wider general discussion

	Starting point doc	Minutes
	The Future: Where do we see the parish in ten years' time. Where do we see the church in the diocese/England & Wales in ten years' time	It was pointed out that despite the ongoing house building and increased population of Stratford, there is no evidence of an increase in Mass attendance – quite the opposite. <i>(Marina suggested that the population of Stratford has doubled in 20 Years – Con Mc has provided some helpful census data that clearly shows this to be only about a 35% increase. (approx. 8,000 people) This data is given as an appendix)</i>

Next steps???

It was noted that the operating cost is different than the capital spend and a regular maintenance budget needs to be agreed going forward.

It was suggested that there needs to be wider discernment for the parish with Option proposals looking at a range of actions from doing nothing the a gold plated refurbishment and all levels in between. Prudent to be thinking long term through prayer and discernment as we (the parish community) try to navigate the way God is calling us to respond to the needs of the Kingdom here in Stratford.

It was agreed that a small group (Fr Oliver, Con McH and Chris D) would look at the quinquennial report and draw up a list of works separating maintenance jobs from refurbishment looking at what needs to be done now / 2 yrs / 5 yrs. They will report back to the next meeting.

Mandy B will appeal for and coordinate volunteers setting a date in May to work on gutters and hedges.

It was suggested that a window cleaner could clear the gutters whilst cleaning the windows, which should be carried out on a regular basis both inside and outside.

Another meeting in a months' time:

Chris / Con and Fr Oliver – to meet before **Tuesday 8th April 7pm**

Appendix

Data provided by Con

Stratford on Avon Census data

- **2001: 22,338**
- **2011: 27,894**
- **2021: 30,495**