

**Netherexe Joint Council
Minutes of Meeting
held on June 30th 2026
at Thorverton Church**

Opened with prayers

Present: Rev Tim Collins, Peter Colebrook, Lisa Clapp, Veronica Clarke, Sue Browne, Steve Rendle, Ed Greed, Stephen Toogood, Royston Kershaw, Pita Burt

Apologies: Linda Smith, Janet Boustred, Simon Harrison, Rev Deborah Leighton-Plomb, Rev Julia Dallen, Guy Shepherd, Rev Laura Ford, Gail Walley, Gaby Joiner, Catriona Fursdon

Minutes of last meeting: Minutes of April 28th, 2026, were accepted as correct.

Matters arising/updates: None

Items for discussion:

Parish catchup:

Upton Pyne: LC Things steady, doing a lot to fabric and keeping up with the rest. Services have been lovely with good attendance especially from other villages in the Benefice, for which grateful. Not so many come from Upton Pyne, and it is hoped to address this issue. Would like to increase services to two a month in the autumn. Good fundraising.

Newton St Cyres: SB Services are well attended, with a few coming from other parishes. Have had an exhibition of paintings by Alfred Wallis in the exhibition space. Now trying to get permission etc to redecorate. No child-friendly service or event yet, will rethink in winter months.

Brampford Speke: Electrics checked and updated. The heaters consist of pipes attached to pews, which is now not considered good and the advice is that the pipes should be on floor. Decision taken not to follow.

Stoke Canon: Churchyard wall repairs completed. Have had a grant from the Historic Churches Trust. Quote for repairing tower crenellations large, but will probably go ahead. The Spring event raised £1200.

Thorverton: RK The Common Fund has not yet been paid, but the General Fund is not now in deficit. There will be some cash available to pay a portion of it. Money is currently available for running expenses. Services have been a success, with three a month so far this year. Apart from HC, hold a lay led BCP and Bubble Church, which is successful with 12 kids and 18 adults at the last. Having problems with plaster. Having flashings repointed to stop damp in church. Hoping to get doors redone.

Rewe: Guy Shepherd now Churchwarden. The Summer fête was well attended.

Glebeland, Thorverton: PC The JC-supported letter of complaint was sent to the Diocese, protesting about the way they approached the sale of Glebeland for the development of about 30 houses. It set out the lack of consultation with the village; the promises made but not kept; the village response which was ignored. The sale was driven by people who wanted to make enough money to pay for one new stipendiary post for another village out of the interest gained on the sum invested, but to the detriment of Thorverton. Reply inadequate and did not address the question. Their legal right is to push this through without consultation. Village can object at planning stage but spurious. Matters will proceed. PC disagrees and would like to be a problem to them. They have exploited Thorverton community and shouldn't just shake it off and hope it will go ahead. People in the village should be made aware of what has been said and written. Can circulate. It should also be made public further afield. ST will raise the issue with Deanery Synod. Deborah and Laura will raise it on Bishops' Council. Everyone can email Bishop and Archdeacon, commenting on what has been done to Thorverton. PC will write to Archbishop of Canterbury's office and also to the Church Times. Until the Diocese addresses what it has done to this village it is important to continue to fight and spread the news. Also working with the Parish Council. A group has formed itself to make all in the village aware and is very active. Meeting with district and county councillors to find out how to object efficiently and advise. Setting up a Community Interest Company (CIC) enabling the setting up of a bank account.

Bishop Moira copied in but not replied

ST: this matter is on Deanery Synod agenda for July 8th. Drafted motion to take it forward to Diocesan Synod, in order to make sure they don't do the same with glebeland in other villages. ST had a look at published rules on the Church of England website (under governance) on how the Diocese deals with glebeland. It is inherently a matter for the Commissioners and the diocesan ability to sell glebeland is a delegation of that responsibility. The Diocese can act as they have done here, unless there is an objection. If there is then the Commissioners should be called in. The Diocesan ability to deal with glebeland is recent and dates from this millenium. Rules constrain it: they may only sell it for the benefit of stipendiary funds but must refer it back to the commissioners if there is an objection.

PC asked if everyone was in agreement with the course he is steering. All agree and support.

Statement of Inclusivity:

TC had sent round a draft and asked for views. Everyone thought it was good but could, nevertheless, benefit from being shorter.

Safeguarding: TC Jenny Deeks has kindly taken on the role as Joint Council Safeguarding Officer.

TC has contacted the Diocesan safeguarding team for information and it has been agreed that - Netherexe Benefice can have one dashboard rather than six separate dashboards.

RK: Can you clarify which of the three different levels of DBS checks apply to which roles.

TC: For TC it is the Enhanced Level for everyone else it is the Standard Level. Not clear to whom the enhanced level with barred risk applies; will check.

Participant Numbers: All either in progress or done.

Sub Groups

Worship: When TC and the newly expanded ministry team next meet, they will be looking at delivering more services across the community.

Rev Julia Dallen's first Wednesday of the month Holy Communion at Exe Valley Farm Shop is expanding and going well.

Mission service on August 30th will be held in Rectory Garden.

Finance: RK asked if there were any questions relating to the two documents sent round: Charity Commission Annual Return and Netherexe Joint Council Financial Controls and Policies. No questions.

All approved RK submit the Annual Return to the Charity Commission.

JC has approved NJC Financial Controls and Policies.

Volunteers: TC how do we thank our volunteers especially the Treasurers? RK estimated 60 volunteers across the Mission, when filling in the CC's Annual Report.

Sharing the Joy: A Mission Community Away Day to be held on 24th October at the Boniface Centre, Crediton. Everyone welcome to attend to feel their contribution valued. Think about services. Food will be provided.

Wondrous Women Celebration: TC Have pulled in some grants and looking for donations. There have been discussions about which charity to support and suggest North Devon Against Domestic Abuse. Everyone happy they should benefit.

AOB: TC The Seven Parish Pilgrimage - Walking with the unnamed women of the Bible - went extremely well. Lad aged ten did the whole walk and was impressive. There was very generous hospitality across the community. Everyone happy throughout the day and the welcome from each village was great.

Next Meeting: October 6th at 2.00 in Thorverton Church.

Ended with The Grace