SOUTHWOLD AND HALESWORTH PARISH FORUM

10.45am 26th September 2026 Cardinal Newman Hall, Southwold

MINUTES

1. **Welcome and Opening Prayer:** Father Christopher welcomed parishioners and opened the meeting in prayer for wisdom and guidance. He also thanked Laurette for her service as Chair.
2. **Present:** Father Christopher Smith (PP) Maggie Wisniewski (Chair) Angela Howard (Secretary) Anne Fleming, Cathy Driscoll, Sally Cockerell, Laurette Burton, Pat Hollingsworth, John Holt, Helen Kennedy, Patrick Kennedy

   Apologies: Angela Yates, Tony and Angie McEvoy, Mike Fleming, Beryl Budd, Carolyn Sharrock, Maureen White, Rosemary Lewis, Cedric Burton, Mark Howard

3. **Minutes of the last meeting:** Read and agreed.

4. **Change of Chair:** Maggie was welcomed.

5. **New Constitution for the Forum:** Father advised us of the Bishop's new policy which asks for the Parish in Council to be made up of up to 10 appointed members, 5 from each church, and although the meetings will be open, only these members will have voting rights. When possible, the Parish Priest will always be present. Father firmly believes that Parish life is shared among us all. However, one parishioner raised the concern that people could be put off from attending the meetings if only the named councillors are able to vote. The Constitution would demand an AGM and quarterly meetings.The minutes would be archived after 6 years. The Bishop has pledged to visit each parish every 5 years and minutes are now available on the Parish Website.

6. **Finance:** Our financial position is currently stable and Father thanked the Finance Committee for all their work and their transparency.

7. **Music at St. Edmund's:** It was requested that the organ is used more often, for example, on special days, dedicated Masses etc.

Father has approached someone who he hopes may be able to play once a month.

8. **Church Grounds Sacred Heart:** There have been several requests for changes. Ray will clear the ground in front of the presbytery and Father would like to contract him monthly. The trees are to be trimmed. Thank you to Maggie for her work at St. Edmund's and to Mark Howard for his regular grass cutting and weeding.

9. **Cardinal Newman Hall:** Refurbishment. There has been an anonymous listing of assets and requests for repairs/improvements. PH will contact some recommended tradespeople to start the necessary jobs. The Finance Committee and Father suggest that plumbing and heating are tackled first and that rents for the hall should be increased.

   Central heating Sacred Heart Church. Update: The heating is fully working in good time for winter and Father has the control information on his Ipad.

10. **AOB:** Father proposes that for practical reasons, future Good Friday services should now be held at Halesworth. He also thanks everyone for their ongoing kindness and support and for the welcome we offer to newcomers.
11. **Date of next meeting:** Saturday 23rd January 2027. 1045am. St. Edmund's, Halesworth. The meeting finished with a prayer at 11.50am.