

**Minutes of Meeting of St John the Evangelist, Islington, Parish Council, at 7.00 p.m on
Monday 12 January 2015**

<p>1. Present</p>	<p>Mike Fletcher (Chairman), Guido Waldman (Secretary), Mgr Séamus, Tosin Akinboboye,, Ilaria Nisoli, Henry Okereafor, Justin Portess, Louie Salvoni, Sister Kathleen</p> <p>Apologies from Amos Curtis, Samantha Kelly, sand Fr Martin</p>
<p>2. Parish Outreach Projects: Sunday Club</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council agreed that this project was of value to the local community, especially for the homeless and housebound, giving them a weekly chance to socialise and feel welcomed. • The AGM was well attended and forward planning was discussed. The club is self-funding and well supported by parish volunteers. However it uses the parish charity registration when applying for funds, rather than having its own charity identity. This could cause a problem for the parish. • It was agreed that the amenities in the Fr George Haines Centre are very basic, particularly in the kitchen and the toilets, but upgrading this area is not yet a priority for the parish. Ideally the parish should have a paid member of staff with the task of supervising this area. • One major concern is that alcoholics tend to congregate outside the church while the club is in session, and there is no one available to police the area and keep undesirables out of the way. <p>The following suggestions were made by the Parish Council for the Sunday Club Management team to consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That each group should increase its number of volunteers so that more of them can mix with the visitors in the crypt ; supervise the entrances to the crypt and the church, monitor behaviour in Duncan Terrace and prevent alcohol being used on church property. 2. Where possible each group should have one or two male volunteers. 3. That the volunteers have suitable and regular training to deal with contingencies while the club is in session and that this training is set within a spiritual setting. <p>It was agreed Fr Seamus would discuss these suggestion with Management Team.</p> <p>Once decisions have been taken a review of the Sunday Club project might be addressed in another six months.</p>
<p>3. Parish Outreach Projects: St John's Youth Centre</p>	<p>Guido took up from John Amartey's presentation at the last meeting and made the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In practical terms it is important to keep the club in existence because the fund-raising effort has already accrued one third of the 2014/15 budget to run two sessions a week. This includes a promise from a major trust of funding over the next three years. • Josh Amartey the Youth Leader is always meticulous in checking the premises before and after each club session to establish whether there are depredations and if so whether the

	<p>youth club itself is responsible for them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The club is self-funding and not a burden on parish finances; it has its own Charity Commission registration. • In more general terms, the club was founded by the parish and in earlier years attracted parish children and received support from parish parents. Lately the parish has been markedly less involved and the vitality of the club has been assured by a dedicated youth team and volunteer managers who are not parishioners but nonetheless totally dedicated to ensuring that the club continues to serve the young in our area. Guido noted a recent observation of Archbishop Longley to the effect that “faith communities know that they cannot flourish if they seek only to serve the needs of their own members.” On this basis Guido makes no apology if the majority of the children, and all the youth workers, are from outside the parish: the fact is that it is the club ethos, based on Gospel values, that draws the children in. • The club, whose founding was occasioned by a youth-on-youth murder in our streets, is a force for good in a community comprising a large number of immigrants seeking to find their place in our society; it also serves to steer youngsters away from the prevalent drug and gang culture that surrounds them, and to help them discover their own strengths. • The pressing issue for the parish is how to “regain possession” of its youth club when appeals to Mass congregations have lately failed to stir parishioners either to help with the club’s management or to encourage their children to attend, even though the club is free. Towards a resolution of this problem John has offered himself and his brother Joshua to open the club one evening a week for four weeks strictly for parish families, to see if they might subsequently wish to be involved in the club. They would make no charge to the club for their time thus spent: they are dedicated to seeing the club survive and thrive. • It was agreed that Guido would prepare a short position paper on the club to go into a Newsletter as soon as possible. • Henry suggested that the Confirmation candidates might be drawn into the work of the youth club, which caters for boys and girls in the 11 to 16 age group. <p>It was agreed that the next Parish Council Meeting would address the following questions regarding both outreach projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do we feel we are providing at the moment and how are parishioners involved? 2. How does the parish continue in its commitment to local outreach projects? 3. What are our priorities for outreach, and should the parish focus on one or more local problems: homelessness, youth, the elderly, etc.? 4. Is the parish committed to adapting the church crypt to this work indefinitely?
4. Time and Talents	Given the broad range of activities in which parishioners may helpfully volunteer, it was agreed to approach the question a little at a time,

	<p>starting with recruiting a wider pool of Readers, Eucharistic Ministers, Acolytes and others connected with church liturgies. (Eucharistic Ministers would include parishioners who would like to visit and bring Communion to the sick and housebound.)</p> <p>Fr Séamus will put in hand a reduced tick- box form for distribution as soon as possible, and put something in the Newsletter.</p>
<p>5 Any Other Business</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Church access. To guard against further damage inside the church occasioned by visitors with serious mental health issues, the church will have to be locked outside of service times; however the lobby will remain accessible for prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. 2. This year's open Christmas went fairly smoothly and attracted a large number of people who would otherwise have had to celebrate without any company. However more help would have been appreciated in preparing beforehand and dismantling afterwards.
<p>4. Date of next Council Meeting</p>	<p>Monday February 9th 2015, at 7.00 in the Presbytery.</p>