

THIRD ORDER OF THE SOCIETY OF ST. FRANCIS
European Province

CHAPTER MINUTES
11th – 13th October, 2013

Present:

Trustees:

Averil Swanton (Minister Provincial) **(AS)**
John Reynolds (Provincial Treasurer) **(JR)**
Jackie Alexander (Link Tertiary, Central & Eastern England) **(JA)**
Hazel Sharp (Link Tertiary, South West England) **(HS)**
Tim Higgins (Link Tertiary, Wales, Severn, W. Midlands & Marches) **(TH)**
Jan Davies (Link Tertiary, Yorkshire and East Midlands) **(JD)**
Carol Robertson (Link Tertiary, Scotland and Ireland) **(CR)**
Roger Healey (Link Tertiary, Central Southern England & Channel Islands) **(RH)**
John Wiltshire (Link Tertiary, London and South East England) **(JW)**
Paul Bodenham (Provincial Formation Guardian) **(PaB)**
Chris Petrie (Provincial Communications Co-ordinator) **(CP)**

Non-Trustees present:

Sister Sue, CSF
Bro. Benedict, SSF
Sister Paula OSC (representing Sister Damien, OSC)
Jennifer Robinson (Minutes Secretary) **(JRob)**

1. Minister Provincial's Introduction and Preliminary Matters:

1.1 AS welcomed TH to his first Chapter Meeting

1.2 Apologies for absence were received from:

Philippa Bird (Provincial Novice Guardian) **(PhB)**
Howard McFadyen (Provincial Secretary) **(HM)**
Martin Gillham (outgoing Link Tertiary, North East and North-West England)
Jeremy Plummer (newly elected Link Tertiary, North East and North-West England)
Christer Sall (Area Minister, Sweden)
Sister Damien, OSC

There was a time of silent prayer, particularly to remember those of the absentees who were unwell.

1.3 Approval of the Minutes of June 2013 Chapter meeting:

AS reported that there were two corrections to be made to the Minutes:-

On page 8 under Item 5.2 c. **JA** should be **JD**.

On page 11 Item 19 the dates of the October Chapter meeting 2014 had been omitted and these should be added as: 17-19 October Full Chapter with SSF, CSF and OSC representation.

1.4 Matters arising from the June Minutes:

AS reported that there had been correspondence with the Bishop Protector about LTs notifying him of Tertiaries ordained to the permanent diaconate.

LTs had also reminded Areas of the necessity of keeping accurate records with regard to the progression from aspirant to profession

CP had been informed of forthcoming Cluster Days.

JW had been contacted by young enquirers; Chapter agreed that to the upper age limit for “young” enquirers is 40; the lower age limit is normally 18. There continues to be no upper age limit for other enquirers (Statute 4.3.1).

AS reported that Robert Dimmick had now taken on the role of Treasurer/Secretary of the Central Fund.

The PNG had sent a draft of the new TANG to CP.

CP had circulated Chapter members with his proposals for filling the roles of Disability Adviser and Webmaster. Members of the two teams had now been selected. HM had sent letters of thanks to the two retiring officers.

CP reported that the new format for the Intercessions Leaflet had been well received. JD queried why the SW of England had been divided into two. The explanation that all Provinces are asked to pray for certain Provinces and certain countries on particular days will be published in TON.

Minute 3.4: The use of a courier to take a stock of Profession Cards to AS is not required – no further action. The giving of the Manual should mark a person’s novicing.

Item 5.1 a. AS reported that the Bishop Protector had asked Tertiaries to pray about the appointment of his successor, and said that six new bishops are due to be appointed in the near future.

Item 5.1.b AS reported that the discernment process now seemed to be working better. LTs have warned the Areas that reports on the spiritual health of the Areas will be sought. PaB has asked to see them.

Item 3.2 – concerning the “contemplatives” group, JD alone (not PaB) will be doing more work to establish the needs of Tertiaries still called to a more solitary life.

Item 8 – AS has written to the Areas concerned about granting leave of absence for Robert Bailey and Ann Mitchell.

Item 15 – HM had pointed out to AS that it is necessary for the discernment process to be put in hand at least 6 months before the person’s 3-year term of office is completed.

Item 16 – new Treasurers have been appointed for both Franciscan Aid and the Central Fund.

With regard to Item 18.1, AS felt that the agendas for Chapter meetings lack forward planning, which is necessary to avoid putting too much pressure on the agenda. It was agreed that the annual report of the Contemplatives’ Steering Group should be included in the March agenda and HM will be asked to do this. A forward planning agenda is to be drawn up and the current meeting will decide on some items for this. Action AS/HM

2 Key Items from Link Tertiaries and Office holders

2.1. London and S.E. England JW raised the question of enquiries from older people about becoming Tertiaries, and asked that this should go on a future agenda. He sought support from Chapter for the promotion of Denise Mumford’s recent booklet on the life of Dorothy Swayne, and wondered whether it should be made into an Assisi Booklet. It was agreed that there should be further discussion on this later in the agenda when Chapter members had had a chance to look at the booklet. Members were also asked to look at the script of the Paul Alexander film, with a view to discussing it later.

2.2 South West England HS reported on the query she had received from Somerset Area “How can the Third Order bring about a change in the Church of our day?” It was agreed that the Area itself should be asked to look into this question and perhaps produce something which could be published in “Little Portion” so that all members of the Order would have a chance to consider it.

Wessex Area had expressed real concern about poor attendance at meetings and the general lack of commitment of some Tertiaries. It was agreed that the necessity for members of an Order to meet together should be emphasised. PaB felt that this is the kind of issue which could be discussed at Cluster days and also addressed by a General Chapter.

2.3 Sweden CS had raised issues in an e.mail . It was agreed that the election of local group convenors was normally by consensus. The 3 year rule for tenure of office (+ 3 years after discernment) applies to all roles. AS undertook to reply to CS, and she also raised the question of whether it is necessary for a representative from Sweden to attend every meeting of Chapter and she said that further discussion should take place. Action AS

3.1. Minister Provincial’s Report

AS reported on her attendance at the Ministers’ Meeting in South Africa. She emphasised the importance placed on the requirement to keep the Community Obedience and said that this is a vital requirement. The other things which are the marks of professed members are the making of an annual Report, the Renewal of the Pledge and the making of a financial contribution (Remuneration). The Minister General had emphasised the distinction between the terms vow and pledge. “In the Third Order, the vow is made with a lifelong intention, whereas the pledge is made and renewed for a year at a time. The effect of this is two-fold. First, it allows the Order to respect the lifelong intention and to permit the vow, but to give it effect only one year at a time, so that it is possible for a Tertiary to take on and fulfil a lifelong dedication, provided he or she renews regularly.” It had been agreed that if it is not possible for a Tertiary to renew in person with the rest of the Area/Group, renewal should take place with a named person on another occasion, and not in a generalised way or in absentia. AS said that Ken Norian is to send out a Pastoral Letter to all Provinces. The Secretary/Treasurer of the Central Fund is to be the third representative from our Province to attend IPTOC, and AS suggested that he could occasionally be invited to attend Provincial Chapter meetings.

With regard to the arranging of Cluster Days, AS asked that planning notes and post-event assessments should be kept, together with the text of keynote addresses or sermons. AS reported that there is now on the SSF website a 15 minute video on the Order, and a smaller, 5 minute version is also available on Facebook and YouTube. She hoped that it would be possible for each Cluster to have a copy of the longer video and Sr. Sue agreed to look into this.

3.2 Provincial Formation Guardian’s Report

It was agreed that Jeremy Plummer (currently ANG representative on the Team) should succeed JA as representative LT on the Formation Team. This means that another ANG is now needed for the Team, which meets 3 times a year. An Area Minister will also be needed to replace Carole Selby who is nearing the end of her term of office. LTs were asked to consider possible names for ANG and AM representatives.

3.3 Provincial Communications Co-ordinator's Report

Chapter had approved the appointment of teams in the place of individuals as Provincial Disability Adviser and Webmaster, and also then approved the names of the members of these teams, as announced by CP.

Chapter agreed with the proposal that obituaries should only be published in Areas, and should not appear in "Little Portion". Names of deceased Tertiaries should continue to be published in TON. It was suggested that there should be a Book of Remembrance, both actual and on the website. AS requested the Communications Team to look into the possibilities for this and to consider how it could be accessed. Action CP

Chapter approved the new wording of the disclaimer and asked that it should also appear in future Assisi booklets.

It was agreed that Tertiaries should be consulted about whether we should continue the bulk subscription to "The Franciscan". Sr. Sue agreed to look up the agreement made between SSF and TSSF regarding this. The matter will be put on the agenda for the next meeting. Action AS/HM

3.4 Provincial Secretary's Report

Chapter approved the wording as proposed for "Governing Instruments" and "Objects". With regard to the Trustees Report, and the section entitled "Objectives, Activities and Public Benefit", Chapter wished to amend the second paragraph to read as follows:

"The Order, which is not a church in its own right, looks to create a sense of Franciscan Community throughout the European Province while encouraging individual members to remain faithful to their local churches. Entry to the organisation is by mutual agreement and at least two years' preparation under the oversight of a more experienced member in Franciscan history and spirituality. On profession the individual pledges annually to maintain a vow of lifelong intention. The Order publishes Franciscan scholarship and Franciscan perspectives on the issues of the day while firmly keeping the doors open to all opinions and theological ideas. This creative tension is realised through Chapters elected and general, Cluster groups, Area meetings and local groups meeting regularly."

AS agreed to inform HM of these amendments. Action AS

AS expressed her thanks to Chapter for the quick response of members to her request for comments with regard to HM's discernment process. She reported that HM had agreed to continue to serve for a further three years, on two conditions: that his health would permit him to do so and that he had some assistance in covering all his duties. In particular, he found the work of Returning Officer for elections onerous. It was agreed that this could easily be a separate role from the duties of Provincial Secretary.

The Minister Provincial expressed her personal thanks and the thanks of Chapter to HM for all the work he had done.

4. Reports from the Provincial Ministers of the First and Second Orders

Sr. Sue, CSF, reported that she had attended the Northern Cluster meeting and was going to attend the forthcoming Cluster meeting in Ely. The contact with members of the Third Order was much valued. As with members of the First Order, there is a need to encourage and support one another, particularly with regard to the question of vows. Some took decisions without sufficient consultation beforehand. She felt that there is a present-day climate of unwillingness to enter into long-term commitment.

She had recently visited Korea, both for a Ministers' meeting and to visit the Sisters there. The Sisters are building another convent. In the U.K. there is a need for new vocations, as there are at present no novices. They are looking at various ways to proceed in this situation. She said that her Sisters were always willing to help if members of the Third Order asked them to do something.

Sister Paula, OSC, was representing her Order in place of Sister Damien, who had accepted an invitation to visit Assisi. Sister Paula said that she seems to be happy in her role as Superior. The Sisters are grateful for the financial contribution which the Third Order makes to enable them to employ a cleaner. She reported that Carolin Clapperton is seeking admission to the Order and there is also another postulant. Including the two just mentioned, they have a total membership of nine. The Order has a website.

Brother Benedict, SSF, said that many Anglicans are ignorant that there are religious in the Anglican Church. The Brothers do not receive many requests for missions in parishes. He had also visited Assisi. They have some novices elected to First Vows, and they have a total of 39 Brothers in all, but that represents a large reduction in numbers for them. 24 of them are aged 65 or over. There are financial implications when a Brother dies, as they rely on their pensions for income. There are nine or ten centres of work for the Brothers. They are going to hold a Provincial Review in order to take stock of the situation and this involves a fact-finding mission for the Brothers' meeting next year, at which decisions will have to be taken. One Brother is due to be professed in November. The Brothers act as spiritual director to many Tertiaries.

The Brothers still have the apartment in Assisi and they are well supported by the congregation. The Third Order priests who have been helping out for the past two years, have been a great success and much appreciated by the congregation. There is a waiting list of Third Order priests to go to help in Assisi. It is hoped that the present arrangement can be extended and possibly that a larger apartment can be found. Bro. Benedict asked for prayers for the congregation at St. Leonard's in Assisi. He hopes to visit Assisi again in December.

5. Report from Study and Prayer Enabling Group

HS reported that the group was going very well. Two of the papers presented at Freeland in May are to be published on the website.

6. Contemplatives' Steering Group

JD reported on this group. Members communicate with each other by means of a newsletter, the next issue of which will have questions on whether members feel called to a different way of life – the single, solitary life. Chapter agreed that the Order should support and encourage any who felt they had such a vocation, and agreed to return to the question at the next Chapter meeting.

Action AS/HM

7. Treasurer's Report

Changes to the wording of the Governing Instruments and the Objects (see page 2 of the report) had already been agreed (Item 3.5).

The Treasurer reported the difficulties he had experienced with Lloyds Bank over the change in signatures and with the transfer to the Co-operative Bank.

Somerset Area had experienced a serious shortfall (£409) as a result of a retreat they had held. It was agreed that JR should see whether this could be met by the Knox-Dick Fund. He

would also investigate the possibility of an Area taking out an insurance policy to cover such losses. Chapter agreed that, when arranging retreats, Areas should warn Tertiaries that, if a shortfall arose through insufficient attendance, then those who did attend it must be prepared to pay more for the retreat.

The Treasurer explained some of the figures set out in his accounts and explained that a legacy concealed the fact that expenditure had exceeded income during the past year. Chapter agreed that when bequests are received, it should be carefully considered whether they should be set aside for a particular purpose and, if so, put in a separate account. Chapter thanked JR for all his work on the accounts and felt that these should be open for all Tertiaries to see. JR agreed to produce a version which would be available on the website and that this would include a piechart, which could also appear in TON.

JR requested that LTs should inform him of any Cluster Days which were being planned and that the cost of organizing them should be borne in mind.

Reminders about the need for Tertiaries to sign new standing orders, and also to give consideration to increasing their contributions to the Order should appear in TON.

Action JR/CP

8. Governance Working Group Report

AS thanked Sr. Sue for her help in compiling the Safeguarding section. She would write to Martin Gillham and Nancy Adams to thank them for all the work they had put into producing the Report.

Action AS

Chapter then went through the Handbook section by section. There was some uncertainty as to whether the Objectives were reaffirmed in 2012. It was agreed that Chapter should look at the Objectives, as set out in the Chapter Review

For future Agenda

It was also agreed that in paragraph 2.3. of the paper accompanying the Report, the date for the deadline should be January 2014 not 2013.

With regard to section **ii Responsibilities of Trustees** on page 7 of the Report, it was agreed that this matter should be referred to HM.

Action AS/HM

Page 22 – it was agreed that the person having the “lead advisory role” should present a report annually to Chapter and this must go on the agenda each year

Action AS/HM

A note should be put in TON about the Safeguarding procedure

Action JW/ CP

Page 27 Complaints and Appeals paragraph 4 – It is believed that there are trained mediators who are members of the Order. JW will ask for people who are thus qualified to agree to be available if needed.

Action JW

Page 28 Chapter agreed to review complaints activity annually

Action AS/HM

Page 29 It was felt that in the case of a Tertiary making a complaint about another Tertiary within an Area, the investigation should be by the AM with another member of the Area Team.

Page 31 Elections – the election procedures were to be discussed as a separate item.

Page 32 Manual revisions – all revisions to the Manual are to be dated.

Page 34 Conditions of Election – Chapter agreed that there should be no automatic assumption that the period of office will be six years; as for all other posts the office is held for three years but can be extended to six years if there is a satisfactory review after three years.

Page 40 – It was agreed that under “Responsibilities” the first paragraph (“to pray regularly.....”) should be omitted, since it is not included in the responsibilities of any other elected officer.

Page 41 under “Responsibilities” the paragraph referring to the “Paxton Accounting System” should be omitted. With regard to the two final points on page 41, it was pointed out that JR is not at the present time a signatory for the Central Fund, nor for the Knox Dick Fund account. AS will check whether JR should attend Central Fund meetings and/or act as signatory for that. Action AS

JR requested that the final sentence regarding the Knox Dick Fund account should be deleted, as he did not feel it was necessary to have another signature on cheques issued from that account.

Page 42 The amount of the honorarium for the PMS should be omitted.

Page 43 paragraphs 8 and 9 – The Bishop Protector has seen previous Chapter minutes on this subject. AS will check the present position with HM and/or the Bishop’s secretary Action AS

Pages 46 and 47 - Chapter agreed that it was unnecessary for these guidelines to be included in the Chapter Handbook and that the paragraphs from “What formats do I need to produce?” onwards should be omitted.

Page 52 under the paragraph headed Chapter, it was pointed out that there is no longer a Mission Officer. This should be deleted.

On page 52 also – under Community of St. Francis, Sr. Sue pointed out that the mother house of CSF is not at Compton Durville.

Page 55 - The paragraph about the Mission Officer should be deleted.

Page 56 Obedience – this should incorporate the latest definitions shortly to be promulgated by the Minister General and recently agreed at the meeting of Ministers Provincial. Action AS

Page 56 - under “Order of St. Clare” Sr. Paula pointed out that her Order is the Community of St. Clare, not the Order of St. Clare. This should also be changed in the paragraph entitled “Poor Clares”.

Page 58 – Society of St. Francis: “whose mother house is at Hilfield” should be deleted, as should also the word “umbrella”. The paragraph markings “c)” and “d)” should also be deleted.

Page 59 – “Younger People” – JW will check with PhB about the upper age limit for young people. Action JW

In accordance with the previously agreed policy of new members of Chapter having “buddies” to mentor them, it was agreed that RH should be the “buddy” for TH and HS for JP.

The “Code of Conduct for Elections in TSSF” which the GWG had prepared as a separate document was agreed by Chapter and would be incorporated in the Chapter Handbook. Action CP/JW

8a. Review of Election Procedures

Following HM’s request for assistance in the conduct of elections, CP offered to take on the role of Returning Officer and his offer was unanimously accepted by Chapter. In the light of the low number of votes cast in recent elections for Provincial Officers, HM had already begun work on reviewing the election procedures. To assist HM in this, JR and PaB agreed to review HM’s work thus far and report back to Chapter. AS would pass on to them the papers which HM had already produced in this matter. Action CP/PaB/AS

8b. Election of new PNG

The next meeting of Chapter will be PhB’s last one. CP will therefore call for nominations soon.

9. Lifelong Formation Issues

9a. Spiritual Direction

JP was making preparations for a weekend of networking at Freeland on spiritual direction from 20 to 22 June 2014.

9b. Discernment

LTs are asked to request Area Teams to provide the number of people in their Area who have not renewed or sent in an annual report, or done either of these. This should be included in the AM's annual report on the Area in March. In addition the report should include a consideration of the spiritual health of the Area, and some indication of the "remuneration" it is felt that members of the Area are giving to the Order. They should refer to the recommendations for the observation of daily obedience to the Order which Chapter had previously discussed and also the distinction between vows and pledges. All this is a response to a request from the AFGs at their meeting earlier in the year. It should be pointed out to absentee Tertiaries that if they have failed in these points of obedience, then they have actively removed themselves from membership of the Order. It is important that there should be face-to-face meetings with Tertiaries who persistently absent themselves.

With regard to requests for leave of absence, it is considered that these should not be for more than three successive years. If leave of absence for more than three years is requested, then the Tertiary should consider whether they wish to be released from profession. Each person on leave of absence should be given pastoral care by a person chosen by the Area Team and not by the individual seeking leave. A form of request (a copy of which will eventually be in the Area Team Handbook) should be brought to Chapter by the relevant LT. For those on leave of absence, it is not expected that they should attend meetings.

AS commended this proposed procedure and PaB will notify Areas about it as soon as possible.

9c. Training for Local Group Convenors

PaB is thinking of putting an article about this in TON, and will seek assistance from those who have relevant ability in training. JD suggested that a way forward might be to start with meetings of group convenors and to "plant" the idea there.

9d. Fostering Practical Initiatives at Provincial Level

Chapter agreed that this would be better considered after a General Chapter discussion.

9e. General Chapter

PaB led the discussion on this. He had investigated various possibilities by means of the Internet and produced a paper giving the results of his findings. He felt that the only way forward is to have a representative gathering, in the place of one open to the whole membership of the Order. He felt that we need to consider whether it is to be a celebratory or a deliberative gathering. If we do hold a representative gathering, another matter to be considered is whether the Order should pay for each person's attendance. He suggested that there should be local discussion of the topics to be aired both before and after the General Chapter meeting.

On the practical side it was pointed out that planning the event will take time and he wondered whether he should invite expressions of interest from those willing to set up a large event and able to commit a serious amount of time to doing the organizing of it.

JR offered to approach the Woodward Corporation to see if they would allow the use of one of their schools during the summer holidays. He also raised the possibility of holding a Skypeing conference at some point in the future.

If General Chapter is to be a representative gathering, will those attending be representatives (i.e. able to voice their own opinions) or delegates (i.e. obliged to follow policies laid down by those they represent)?

TH felt that we need to give consideration to the purpose, content and legacy of a large event. PaB recommended that it should deal with formation issues such as:

- Sustaining formation and growth after the novitiate
- Enabling people to share each other's journey and grow in kinship
- The annual cycle of renewal, review and report
- Rules and structures which "guard" our formation
- The need for closer relationships

PaB felt that two groups of people are needed to set up the gathering, one to organize and the other to consider its content. These groups would advise Chapter.

Chapter agreed unanimously that a representative General Chapter should be held and that there should be a run-up of three years before the event. PaB felt that the membership of the group(s) might change during the 3 years.

Meanwhile it is necessary to explain to all Tertiaries the reason for changing the format of General Chapter, and that the wish to hold such a gathering has come from the grassroots of the Order. Volunteers are to be sought and the timescale explained. If no volunteers come forward, then there will be no General Chapter.

The objectives of the gathering will be:- to set Tertiaries on fire with enthusiasm; part of lifelong formation; a challenge to grow; reorientation. It must be made clear that it's part of a process of engagement over years and is to help the Order move forward collectively. Members of Chapter will attend the General Chapter ex officio.

PaB will draw up the objectives, with end dates and seek comments. He will also draft an article for "Little Portion" and circulate it.

AS expressed Chapter's thanks to PaB for his initiative and the work he had put into it.

10. Elections to Profession

The following were elected to profession, with prayer, following recommendation from their Areas:

Jo Goodall	Blackmore Vale
Beverley Herve	Channel Islands
Rosemary Cordan	Sussex
David Nowicki-Stephen	Sussex
Susan Charles	London South
Karen Crussell	Chiltern
Ian Orr-Ewing	Chiltern
Irene Spoor	Chiltern
Nigel Spoor	Chiltern
Constantina Wood	Chiltern
Carlos Tome da Silva	Northampton
Beth Knowles	Oxford
Margaret Dew	Lincoln
Mark Burns	Yorks. South and North Derbyshire

Jo Bradley	Wales
Sian Dawson	Wales
Jim Harwood	Wales
Zoe King	Wales
Heidi-Maria de Gruchy	Wales
Sara Thomsen	Sweden

11. Release from Profession

AS asked all present to remember the Second Order particularly in their prayers. She reminded LTs to write to those being released from their vows and saying that they go with good wishes and prayers of the Order. They should be asked whether they wish to return their profession cross and their Manual.

Five Tertiaries were released, with regret, from their profession vows, and prayer was offered for them [names in Minutes for Chapter only].

AS spoke about the best practice in dealing with farewells – it should be done with compassion and enquiry should be made whether the person concerned wished to hand back their profession cross and their Manual. If a person wishes to return to the Order during the year following their release, then they must participate in the renewal of vows. The responsibility for those being released from their vows lies with the Area and the LT.

12. Leave of Absence

Leave of absence was granted (with prayer) for one year to two Tertiaries [names in Minutes for Chapter only].

13. “In Memoriam” (2012-2013)

The following Tertiaries, who had died during the past year, were remembered in prayer at the Eucharist:

Mervyn Anglesea	Shrewsbury
David Anthony	Notts. & South Derbyshire
David Balding	Guildford
Olga Bell	Durham
Michael Benton	Scotland
Peggy Berryman	East Anglia
Anne Bevan	Somerset
Giles Blomfield	Cornwall
Trevor Boycott	Newcastle
Barrie Briggs	Yorks South & North Derbyshire
Frances Butler	Cornwall
David Chamberlain	Cornwall
Tony Coxon	Wales
Lloyd Davies	Sussex
Guy Denham	Wessex
Margaret Edington	London West
Hannah Elizabeth	Wessex
Molly Finch	Berkshire
Cathie Hall	Newcastle
Marjorie Hodson	Shrewsbury

Graham Hullett	Lincoln
Kenneth Johnson	Mercia
Marion Kettle	Severn
Maurice Lakeman	Channel Islands
Fianach Lawry	Scotland
Morwenna Lea-Wilson	Chiltern
Bob Leigh	Wessex
Christopher Martineau	Wyevearn
Pamela Mitchell	Beds. & Herts.
Dorothy Patrick	London West
Tony Riley	Mercia
Ann Rust	Yorks. North
Margaret Scott	Cambridge
Ken Seagers	London South
Rosalind Seddon	Mersey Valley
Kathleen Taylor	Lincoln
Judy Walker	Winchester
Violet Webdale	London East & Essex South
Hilda Wiltshire	Somerset

14. Feedback from SSF, CSF and OSC

Sr. Sue said she had been impressed by the way in which Chapter had worked, and felt that members had done so in a relaxed atmosphere. She wondered whether it was necessary to have a different format for the Friday evening meeting and whether anything was gained by that. Sr. Paula found it difficult to come to terms with so much business in such a short time – it was too “full on” for her. However, she appreciated having a different chairman on the Friday evening. Bro. Benedict was impressed by the way in which the issues affecting a widespread, dispersed community were handled.

15. Minister Provincial’s Brief Summary

AS said she had enjoyed the Chapter meeting. She spoke briefly about Franciscans International and her work with that organisation. The current situation is very different from the one she reported a year ago, although they have had to let 8 or 9 members of staff go. It now looks as though they will finish the year solvent, having repaid their debt(s), but this has been done at a very high cost. Clark Berge is willing to take over from AS as representative of TSSF, as it is an office to be shared throughout the Order and not confined to one Province, or even one Order.

16. Bullet Points

The following were agreed as bullet points, to be published in TON:

- Somerset Area has posed the question “How can TSSF bring about a change in the life of the church?” Chapter’s response had been to ask the Area to go back and find out for themselves and then bring their response to Chapter.
- The Minister Provincial had reported on the Ministers’ discussion at the meeting of Ministers Provincial which she had attended in the summer which considered the four marks of the professed Tertiary: the keeping of the Community Obedience,

making an annual report, the renewal of the Pledge, and “remuneration” to the Order (not purely financial)

- Chapter approved the appointment of two teams instead of individuals to fulfil the roles of Provincial Disability Adviser and Provincial Webmaster.
- Chapter agreed that Area Teams should report once a year to Chapter, through the LTs, on the spiritual health of their Area.
- Outgoing officers to be encouraged to provide mentoring for their successors.

17. Matters for ongoing discussion

There was discussion on the granting of leave of absence to Tertiaries and the need for guidance in this.

Chapter agreed that newly elected officers serving on Chapter should have mentors.

Outgoing officers are encouraged to assist in such mentoring.

Chapter discussed the request for another General Chapter. Several models for this were discussed and, as a result, a fuller article about this is to appear in “Little Portion”.

It had been agreed that the booklet about Dorothy Swayne, by Denise Mumford, should be published and it was left to the Communications Team to decide the most effective way of doing this and also the most financially viable.

AS wishes to receive copies of Cluster Day sermons and the addresses by keynote speakers.

They should be made available on the web. LTs were asked to remind Areas about this.

AS also asked that LTs should let her have an evaluation of their Cluster Days.

The procedure for the bulk TO subscription to “The Franciscan” expires in September 2014.

Six months before this date there needs to be a consultation to decide whether it is to continue. Projections regarding the costing are to be available by then. The matter should be on the agenda for the June Chapter meeting. Action CP/JR/HM

The subject of the use to which bequests are put should be on the agenda for the March meeting Action AS/HM

Contemplatives and their role should also be on the March agenda Action AS/HM

Safeguarding and the complaints procedure should be on the October agenda Action AS/HM

Non-urgent matters: the size of Areas and Clusters; Sweden – is it necessary for a representative to attend every Chapter meeting? Action AS/HM

18. Feedback from Chapter Members

It was generally agreed that the Chapter meeting had been held in a calmer atmosphere than some previous ones and the different format, including the change in chairmanship, on Friday evening had been appreciated. Some members felt that there still needs to be more planning of the business of the meeting and that Chapter needs to be clear about its aims and objectives. AS reminded members that Ken Norian will be present at the next meeting.

19. Dates of future Meetings (previously agreed)

2014	13 th – 14 th March	MP and Link Tertiaries’ meeting
	14 th – 15 th March	Full Chapter
	13 th – 14 th June	Full Chapter
	17 th – 19 th October	Full Chapter, with SSF, CSF and OSC representation
2015	19 th – 20 th February	MP and Link Tertiaries’ meeting
	20 th – 21 st February	Full Chapter
	12 th – 13 th June	Full Chapter

MATTERS FOR A FORWARD ROLLING AGENDA

Leave of absence

Age limits for both younger and older enquirers (and Tertiaries)

General Chapter

Complaints

Bequests

Size and geography of areas and clusters

Contemplatives/Solitaries

Cluster Day expenses

NOTES ON THE FRIDAY EVENING'S DISCUSSION

Fostering a Culture for Service

At their meeting in April 2013, AFGs had expressed serious concern about the reluctance of people to serve the Order in office. They had recommended giving more thought to harnessing energy, skills and gifts of Tertiaries, in office or not. This was taken up as the topic for an informal Chapter discussion on Friday evening.

From personal experience we agreed that there was indeed a problem, and that it was getting worse. Many people resist nomination on the grounds that they are already too busy or had 'done their turn'. Of course we are not the only organisation these days to experience such a problem. However, when posts are restricted to the same few individuals there has been a perception that the Order is run by an 'inner circle'.

We were reminded of a suggestion that, rather than being the 'intentional' community to which TSSF aspired, we were in many ways an 'associative; one with a weaker sense of responsibility than we need. This is not helped by a limited sense of cohesion between the Order at local level and Provincial Chapter.

When people stand down, too often what they have learnt from their time in office is lost, leaving their successor ill-equipped, intimidated and 'all at sea'. New office holders often need a 'role friend'; the person best qualified is often the previous office holder.

We concluded by identifying the following recommendations:

- Opportunities be created for Tertiaries with experience of leadership to share their experience (Action: LTs)
- Area Teams and local groups take an active approach to discerning potential office holders among their membership (Action: PFG)
- Novice Guardians to be more explicit with novices about the expectation that they accept responsibilities (Action: PNG)
- Convenors and other office holders be invited to gather for training and mutual encouragement (Action: LTs)
- Outgoing office holders be available, if required, to 'mentor' their successor for their first six months (Action: LTs)
- Consider further how to strengthen the bonds between the Areas and Chapter (Action: Chapter rolling agenda)
- Consider further potential action (Action: PFG and Formation Team, JW)