

St James the Great, Cradley

Minutes of PCC meeting – 12th May 2025 at 19.30
Held at Reafields, courtesy of Chris and Di Roberts

Present: Mike Hames [in the chair], Jane MacFarlane, Peter and Sue Warner, Ian and Sue Bailey, Chris and Di Roberts, Margaret Edgar, Sue Ronan, Eryl Copp, John Parsons

1. The meeting opened with a prayer at 19.30
2. There were no apologies.
3. There were no declarations of interest.
4. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.
5. Matters arising

Ian reported the following:

New vestry key. This has been made and received.

Roof work. No quotes are forthcoming as yet.

Phone-listeners. Ian was not able, on Palm Sunday, to make the announcement appealing to phone-listeners to get in touch, so as the church can ascertain whether it is worth pursuing this service.

Website. Gratitude was expressed to Kevin for his excellent work with the website. It was felt that he might find it helpful if some assistance, or a deputy, could be found from within the church.

Benefice account. Chris said he intends to discuss with Robert the handover of his benefice expense account.

Prayers for the sick. Jane said she would contact all the people on the list and ask them whether they wish to remain on it.

Handover meeting with Robert. It was thought that the wardens, plus Jane, Chris and Mike should attend the meeting, and Mike will contact Robert to arrange a date.

AV evening. Peter said that the AV evening will take place in the school hall on 17th January.

Violin & piano concert. John said his concert with Carl Attwood will be on 12th October at 3pm, and will be followed by cream tea.

6. Reports

6a Fabric. See report. Concern has been raised about the amount of builder's materials being stored in the car park. Peter suggested that these materials could be stored on the drive of the Rectory once it's vacated at the end of June. All were agreed this is a good idea.

6b Wardens. See separate report

6c Treasurer. See report. Chris drew our attention to the question over the parish grant for

maintenance of the churchyard. Grants are now limited to £2,000, so Chris will reapply for this revised amount.

6d Worship. Ian said that clergy for major services for Christmas and Easter etc will need to be booked soon.

6e Churchyard. See report. Mike suggested that, in view of Tony's reduced role next year, we should consider encouraging people from the local community to increase their involvement. This will be discussed in greater detail at the next PCC meeting.

6f Outreach and events.

Mike has a list, from Julia, of dates of cream teas, which will be between 20th July and 31st August.

Saturday coffee mornings will be held in church from 10.30 to 12.00 on 31st May, 28th June and 26th July.

Maggie will liaise with a choir [*Mumbles a Capella*] who wish to do a concert in church at some stage.

Mike mentioned the village hall open day on May 14th, and that John will be available in church during the afternoon to welcome any visitors.

6h Eco Church.

John reported that the church has, this month, received a Silver Eco Church Award. He thanked the PCC for its support, and also Robert Ward, Mike Hames, Tony Copp and Sue Warner for their help.

John has been in touch with various diocesan officers connected with the net-zero ambitions of the diocese, to enquire if they have plans to make the Rectory carbon neutral. Unfortunately, they have no plans for major work to our Rectory, other than minor upgrades to insulation and lighting.

He also mentioned that a sign is needed in the kitchen to remind people to take home and recycle 'rubbish', rather than throwing in the church's bin. He will make a sign and display it on one of the cupboards. He also said he would get a frame for the Eco Church certificate, pending a decision about where it might be displayed.

6i Health & Safety. There were no entries in the Accident Book.

7. Parish profile

Peter handed round a picture of the front cover, and talked us through the document. All were agreed that it is excellent.

8. Parish offer

Chris proposed that we increase the parish offer for 2026 to £34k. All were in favour.

9. Newsletter

Recent discussions between members of the PCC were revisited and debated. The feeling was that the church's contribution to the running of the Newsletter [essentially a parish magazine] is presently rather limited. We agreed that we need to ensure that some church events are better advertised and reported, and that we need to be more proactive.

Chris noted that the Newsletter committee is a sub-committee of the PCC, and he will ask Robert

Colledge for the accounts [which Chris has not seen in recent years], and also discuss the above concerns with him.

Peter suggested that the new rector, in his/her role as chair of the Newsletter committee, be encouraged to be proactive regarding the church's interests in the magazine.

John and Jane were enthusiastic about the idea of the Newsletter being free to those who wish to receive it, and noted that this is often the case in many parishes, with the advertising paying all the costs.

10. Publishing of APCM results

There has been a request that APCM results [regarding officers] be published in the Newsletter. However, the meeting felt that it will suffice for results published on the church noticeboard and on the website, as they are at present.

11. Member trustee eligibility declarations. These were duly signed and returned to Sue Warner.

12. Sub-committee allocation.

Worship Committee. Julia Maclagan will continue, Suzi Smith has resigned, Sue Ronan will join, and the wardens continue, ex-officio.

Standing Committee. Mike Hames will replace Robert Ward.

Sidespeople. The list was adjusted slightly and approved.

13. Safeguarding.

Sue Warner confirmed that a resume of the policy will be displayed in the church porch, along with the names of the parish safeguarding officer [Eryl] and of the Benefice safeguarding officer [Wendy Long].

Wendy Long spoke to us about safeguarding, and pointed out that the responsibility for this rests with the PCC. She recommended that PCC members undertake the DBS check, even if not working with children or vulnerable adults. Wendy offered to run a safeguarding training workshop for the PCC. This will take place on 25th June 2025, 7pm, at Reafields, followed by the PCC meeting.

The Hereford diocese Safeguarding Action Plan will be completed by Sue Warner and Eryl, and returned to Wendy.

14. AV system and projector

Peter summed up his report [see report], and said that our projector is on its last legs. He said that we will have to get a replacement to cover us between now and such time as we get a completely new system. A basic new projector is about £500, and second-hand projectors can be obtained on ebay for £200-400.

He mentioned an organisation which bids for grants on behalf of churches, and operates on a 'no success, no fee' basis. Peter will attempt to get in touch with churches that have been successful

using this service, and get their feedback.

15. AOB

Peter said that he'll attend the Intergenerational Learning Community meeting, hosted by Lizzie Hackney on 28th May.

Eryl mentioned the Year 6 leavers' service in church. She will lead this in Robert's absence.

Sue Bailey said we need to update our health and safety policy, and also write an emergency plan. The churchwardens will meet to do this.

Mike updated us about the remainder of the Rectory Lane resurfacing.

16. Future meetings

26th June 2025, at Reafields, following on from the safeguarding training [which starts at 7pm].

The meeting finished with the Grace at 21.57

Signed.....

Date.....