

St James the Great, Cradley

Minutes of PCC meeting – 12th November 2025 at 19.30

Held at Reafields, courtesy of Chris and Di Roberts

Items for action are marked in **bold**.

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

1. Mike opened the meeting at 19.30 with a prayer.
2. Apologies were received from Eryl Copp.
3. There were no declarations of interest.
4. The minutes of the previous meeting were signed as a true record.
5. Matters arising

Some clearance of the tower storage area has been done, but **there is more to do**.

John has not yet completed the report on the organ as he has only just received the third survey requested by the PCC, but **he will do this in time for the next meeting**.

6. Please see individual reports. Addition comments as follows:

A Fabric

Ian spoke about the toppling of the 'niftylift' in Rectory Lane, which was on hire for work in the church and village hall, and he thanked Andrew and Tom Green for their help in righting it. Some damage resulted to the machine. It was thought that it toppled because of the uneven surface of the lane, and it was suggested that **Herefordshire council is contacted and photographs sent**, to ascertain whether their insurance might pay for the lift's repair.

Ian was thanked for his ongoing work for the church, conducted pro bono.

The updated Fire Risk Assessment was signed by all PCC members. Sue is still working on a general Church Risk Assessment and the Emergency Plan.

B Treasurer

Chris reported that Sheila's 'marathon' has now raised over £500, and she hopes others might feel inspired to undertake similar challenges.

C Wardens

Di thanked everybody for the enormous of work going on, and particularly for those involved in the run up to interviews for the new rector.

D Churchyard

The issue of the proposed felling of the Snake Bark maple was discussed, and it was decided to retain the tree, but to **prune the offending branch.**

E O&E

Details of the Christmas tree festival were detailed [having been accidentally omitted from the minutes of the recent O&E meeting]. The festival will be on the theme of Bible stories, and will commence on 14th December, with trees installed on 13th, between 10.00 and 14.00. Trees will be collected on 6th Jan.

Volunteers are required for doing teas at the Christmas Fair.

Peter spoke about the AV evening in January, and reported that advertising and ticket printing is in hand.

F Eco church

John said that the RSPB is willing to instal swift attractors in the tower, but Ian pointed out that, since there is no power in the tower, this will not be possible.

He also said that he had some literature regarding Caring for God's Acre; the PCC agreed that it would be good to make this available in church, pending **somewhere to put it.**

G H&S

Chris hurt his arm trying to right the nifty-lift, and he was asked to **report this in the accident book.**

Sue Ronan has upgraded the first aid box.

7. Update on new Rector

There was a high degree of unanimity across the benefice, and among the interviewers, about what we are looking for in our new Rector. On the interviewing day, the different strengths of the applicants were clear, and in the ensuing discussions the interviewers were all of the same mind.

The four clergy members, including Bishop Richard questioned the benefice interviewers afterwards at length so as to assure themselves of their views.

The Bishop has made a formal offer, and we anticipate that the announcement will be made by the churchwardens on Sunday 16th November.

It is likely that the new rector, if coming from a curacy, will not be able to start until June.

The diocese has arrangements in place for mentoring and induction, and Mike is drawing up a list of useful points for the new incumbent, based on information gathered in the application process.

8. Car Park

John gave a resume of his recent correspondence with the diocese, but asked that Mike and/or Sue take over the task of liaising with the diocese over this issue, which they agreed to do.

Much discussion ensued on this matter. Points made included: the feeling that the PCC should take over the land, if possible; that major work [e.g. to the wall] should be carried out before the PCC takes it over; that strong liaison should take place between the PCC and the Village Hall; that a separate meeting be held to discuss the issue. With regard to the latter, it was decided that the Glebe Land Committee be resurrected. The committee could then meet with the diocesan representative, and after that, with the village hall committee. **Sue W will write to Sam Pratley to inform him of discussions so far.**

Peter will join the glebe land committee, in his role as a link between the village hall and the PCC.

9. Organ

John apologised that he hasn't completed the organ report, due to the fact that he had only just received the third requested survey and quote. He said that this final quote is impressively detailed, and very competitive. He will discuss the three surveys with the diocesan organ advisor and **complete the report for the next meeting.**

10.Chest

The conservation work is scheduled for next spring, and Tim Phelps has agreed to extend his quotation and do the work for the same price. With the grant from ChurchCare, the cost, £1788, is fully covered. Rachel Sycamore, diocesan furniture advisor, will observe the work, and Mike has asked her to look at the old pew in the Ringing Chamber, to assess its age and significance.

Mike had noted that the last Quinquennial Inspection had not included the church chest. He had therefore sent the architect a copy of Tim Phelps' report and proposed conservation work, as required by ChurchCare.

The diocesan grant acceptance letter was signed by Mike and the churchwardens.

11.Safeguarding

Sue W referred to the list of church activities which need PCC approval, and amongst a little confusion, a further discussion took place as to what ought to be on the list. Further information is required from the relevant people responsible, and **Sue appealed for prompt responses on the matter.**

12.AOB

Church wi fi. See Tony Copp's report. The church does now have wi fi, and Tony was thanked for his work on this matter.

The proposed AV system was discussed in view of the diocese's requirement, before it grants a faculty, that it receives the quote with the full specification, and a minute from the meeting indicating the PCC's approval. The point was made that the detail of the specification has not

yet been fully discussed and agreed by the PCC, but that tweaks can be made, if necessary, at a later stage. The PCC approved the faculty application, proposed by Peter and seconded by Jane, for the installation of a new Audio-Visual system as per the quotation from Hilltop Audio-Visual Ltd.

Peter talked about the possibility of the village hall as a wedding venue, in conjunction with the church. The village hall committee wants to know if they might be able to put a marquee on the church lawn for weddings, and it was thought this would be permitted if the wedding ceremony is in the church, but that there might be a rental charge if the wedding was a civil ceremony in the hall. All were in favour of these propositions.

The village hall committee is taking part in the Historic Herefordshire festival in May 2026, and wonders whether the church would like to be involved.

It was suggested the PCC hold a festive social event at Christmas. John suggested Twelfth Night at Russet House, and this was agreed.

13. Next meeting: 21st January, 7.30, Reafields.

The meeting ended with the Grace at 21.55

Signed.....

Date.....