

# St James the Great, Cradley

Minutes of PCC meeting – 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026 at 19.30

Held at the home of Peter and Sue Warner

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

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

1. Mike opened the meeting with a prayer and some comments about St Wulfstan of Worcester, who said, upon being congratulated on the building of Worcester cathedral;  
*"We should not strive to pile up stones while neglecting souls."*
2. Apologies were received from Jane MacFarlane, Eryl Copp, Chris and Di Roberts
3. There were no declarations of interest.
4. The minutes of the previous meeting were amended to replace the reference to the Fire Report, with General Risk Assessment, and then signed as a true record.
5. Matters arising
  - Clearance of tower. **Ian said there is still more to do.**
  - Damage to the Nifty Lift. Ian reported that discussions are ongoing, and that collation of the necessary information, including the terms and conditions for the hire company, is proving difficult to obtain.
  - Church car park. Mike reported on the meeting held with Sam Pratley on January 8th. Chris, as Chair of the Glebe Committee, is now awaiting a reply and proposal from the Diocese
  - Safeguarding. Sue Warner said that since she's had so few updates from people, she will pause further efforts on this.

6a Worship Committee

Sue Bailey talked about congregation numbers, and gave us a breakdown of attendance at the different services. She said **she will make this information known to Rosie.**

6b Fabric Committee

Sue Ronan thanked Sue Bailey for her work on this report.

Sue Bailey said that use of the new WC will have to be controlled during large events, and a maintenance plan and log are required under the terms of the permit.

Regarding the Emergency Plan, **members were asked to report any other items or issues they think should be included in it.**

6c Treasurer

See report. Chris noted falling income, and Ian said that the congregation should be reminded to increase their giving in line with inflation.

6d Wardens

See report

6e Churchyard

See report. It is hoped that a new chairman of the churchyard committee will emerge [hopefully in time for the APCM] after Tony's retirement from the role in January. It is also hoped that volunteers will come forward following his appeal in the Newsletter.

Dave Roys has taken charge of the mowing rota.

The PCC reaffirmed its desire that the Snake Bark Maple be retained, but that offending branches should be removed.

It was decided that further decisions regarding the Garden of Remembrance should be taken once Rosie arrives.

Soil from the trench arch hole will have to be found a home, or purpose.

Tony was thanked for his wonderful work over so many years. Sue Warner will write to him, and a collection will be made to buy a plant, which John will obtain, to be presented to him at church on Sunday.

6f O&E

The recent AV evening was a great success, with a good turnout. The profit has not yet been calculated. Peter, Sue and Ian were thanked for their efforts.

6g Eco Church Nothing to report; but see item 7.

6h Accident Book

Not checked recently. It was decided that the Accident Book will now be kept in the Vestry to ensure confidentiality. **Individual accident forms will be placed with the 1<sup>st</sup> aid kit**, to be completed in the event of an accident and left in the folder, which will be emptied of completed forms on a regular basis.

7. Reorganisation of the west end.

The PCC discussed the use of the west end; its displays, welcome table, leaflet displays and children's area. Opinions varied as to whether the geology display should be 'retired' and the display boards repurposed to display the churches' efforts in the eco/environment/churchyard spheres. It was noted that there was an agreement with the AONB Partnership regarding the geology display.

It was suggested that a box of toys should be made available, in addition to the bags of toys in the bell tower.

The point was made that the west end, the porch, and noticeboards are in something of a mess, but that the reordering should be delayed until Rosie's arrival.

8. Chest

Tim Phelps has suggested a start date of 27<sup>th</sup> April, and all were agreed that this would be fine, subject to there being no objections to the faculty.

9. Car park

See above [item 5]

Sam Pratley has suggested a 99-yr lease for a peppercorn rent.

10. Church Organ

Mike and John [see his report] spoke about the proposal for work to the organ, first flagged up four years ago, which has become more pressing, and includes the discovery of woodworm. The PCC was in favour of the work being done, and of the acceptance of Gary Owen's competitive quote. The diocesan organ advisor recommends that Gary takes over the tuning, pending his work on the organ. Sue Bailey raised the concern that he might be more expensive than our present tuner, and **John said he would find out how much Gary charges for tuning.**

Concern was expressed about the timing of the work, and how it will fit in with other projects, particularly the improvements to the church's audio-visual system. John suggested that funding could be found without recourse to the general fund, through concerts and grants. He recommended that it be administered through the restricted organ fund, which should be ring-fenced for this project.

Ian and Peter suggested that the O&E committee discuss funding strategy at its next meeting.

11. Herefordshire Histories Festival, 2026

Although the main event is 19-25 May, events can also take place at other times of the year. It was agreed that the church would not be involved over the bank holiday weekend [23-25], but find an alternative time to run tours for visitors, for which donations, not a charge, would be welcomed.

12. Safeguarding.

Nothing to report.

13. AOB

All were agreed that Sue Ronan's 17-yr-old neighbour could sell cakes after a service to raise money for a British Exploring Society course she wishes to attend.

Mike suggested that an **article is put in the March Newsletter** to say that the church is always open during the day for private prayer.

Peter reported that the village hall is getting a new website. The PCC will review this with interest.

Sue Warner will attend the forthcoming Newsletter meeting, and **she asked members for comments and suggestions.**

Ian mentioned that his 6-year tenure as Church Warden comes to an end at the APCM. It was suggested that it might be a good idea if he continues for another year in order to dovetail with Rosie. If this is decided, parishioners would have to waive the 6-year rule at the Parish (Vestry) meeting preceding the APCM.

14. APCM – 19<sup>th</sup> April, immediately after the morning service.

PCC meeting – 4/3/26, time tbc

Further PCC meeting – towards the end of March, date and time tbc, to confirm accounts before the APCM.

The meeting ended with the Grace at approximately 22.30.

Signed.....

Date.....