



# St Michael and All Angels, Ledbury

## Minutes of Parochial Church Council – 23 September 2024

**Present:** David Houghton (Chair)  
Andrew Beech  
Maria Dineen  
Ian James  
Richard Nightingale  
Anne Scull  
Peter Scull  
Will Wake

**Apologies:** Keith Hilton-Turvey (Rector), Cath Beech, Stephen Cheetham, Sue Cooper, William Hopkinson, Sue Simpson

**1329.** In the absence of Keith Hilton-Turvey, who had sent his apologies, David Houghton (Vice-Chair) chaired the meeting. David opened with Psalm 121 and prayer.

### Minutes of meeting held on 23 September

**1330.** These were agreed unanimously.

### Minutes of the Standing Committee on 4 November

**1331.** These minutes were noted.

### Safeguarding

**1332.** This was deferred to the meeting in February 2025.

### Winter services

**1333.** It was agreed that a mock-up of the proposed arrangement in the Chapter House should be created to ease any concerns about the move in the congregation. This will be set out on Saturday 7 December, to enable the congregation to inspect it the following day. A number of members volunteered to help, but more may be needed. A date in January for the move itself needs to be decided.

**Action:** *David Houghton*

## **Follow-up to 4 September meeting**

**1334.** Maria Dineen was commended for her paper, which was well researched and produced positive recommendations. Members were requested to submit comments and suggestions to Maria, copied to the churchwardens.

**Action: PCC members**

## **Communion administrators**

**1335.** David Houghton proposed that Richard Nightingale be nominated as a communion administrator. This was agreed unanimously. Keith Hilton-Turvey will put his name forward for approval.

**Action: Keith Hilton-Turvey**

## **Communications**

**1336.** Andrew Beech will circulate Keith Hilton-Turvey's note of his meeting with Sarah Whitelock (Diocesan Communications Officer), which contained some useful suggestions. Maria Dineen suggested sharpening up the SMAA website, which she found rather stolid.

## **Policies and procedures**

**1337.** It was agreed unanimously that the existing food safety policy should continue in force. The church is currently registered as a food business. It was doubted whether the existing level of catering within the church required this. Maria Dineen volunteered to check the fridge from time to time to ensure that it and its contents complied with food hygiene rules.

**Action: Maria Dineen**

**1338.** A revised health and safety policy was agreed with one abstention, and a new lone working policy (Annex A) was agreed unanimously. The church risk assessment is still ongoing.

**Action: Cath Beech**

## **Worship strategy**

**1339.** This item was deferred to the meeting in February 2025.

## **Finance**

**1340.** A finance report from the treasurer was noted. It was agreed that, in future presentations about levels of giving, it would be useful to have explained whether falls in giving were due to fewer people giving, or whether individuals were giving less.

**Action: Stephen Cheetham**

## **Charitable giving**

**1341.** Ian James presented a schedule of proposed charitable giving for 2024. David Houghton proposed, seconded by Andrew Beech, that, in the light of the current unknown situation there, the donation to Mtwara should be given to Farm Crisis Network instead. This was agreed unanimously.

## **Wheel of Prayer**

**1342.** David Houghton proposed, seconded by Will Wake, that the wheel of prayer should be funded at a cost of £525 + VAT. This was agreed with one abstention.

## **Parish fees and expenses**

**1343.** Parish fees and expenses had not been reviewed since 2022 and their value had been eaten away by inflation. A revised table was proposed (Annex B). This was proposed by Will Wake and seconded by Anne Scull. It was agreed with one vote against.

## **Fabric**

**1344.** The report from Ingleton Wood (heating consultants) had been received, but was disappointing. A number of comments had been made in response, and a further meeting sought.

**1345.** The roof valley work had been postponed to 2025.

**1346.** The ramp up to St Anne's was steep and had caused difficulties to buggy users attempting to use it. It had been removed *pro tem*. The church architect was working on a design for a new one.

**1347.** The pew faculty had been granted. The joiner has a full workload, but will start work on the SMAA pews in February 2025. Peter Scull asked for the front pews to be moved in time for a Choral Society pre-Christmas performance of Handel's *Messiah*. This is permitted by faculty, and Peter will organize both the move and the reinstatement of the pews afterwards.

## **Action: Peter Scull**

**1348.** There had been no further developments on repairing the floor to the western upper room.

## **Action: Ian James**

## **Net Carbon Zero Demonstrator Church**

**1349.** The church had now formally been invited to apply for Demonstrator Church status. Will Wake had submitted an Environmental Return for the church as part of this process. Achieving Demonstrator Church status could make available grants for development work. Andrew Beech mentioned that the declaration of a Climate Emergency by Herefordshire Council might open up the possibility of adding more PV cells to the church roof. This had not previously been allowed by planning regulations due to the visual impact of such cells.

***Action: Will Wake***

**Church silver**

**1350.** This work had been completed.

**Other Business**

**1351.** Richard Nightingale mentioned that the prayer development group were to meet the following Monday to consider improving the presentation of prayer needs within the church, and how to take prayer into the wider community.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Monday 17 February 2025 in Ledbury Methodist Church.

The meeting ended at 21.10 with prayer.

### Lone Working Policy

#### Summary

Working alone is an essential practice for many in our church, either within the church buildings, in their own homes or other people's homes. Lone working cannot always be avoided.

The purpose of this lone working policy is to ensure that all church members are aware of the specific risk in working alone and to set out the respective responsibilities of the PCC and each individual to minimise such risks. The PCC commit to carrying out their responsibilities in a thorough and disciplined way. It is expected that all church members will abide by this policy.

This policy is not intended to be restrictive or provide definitive guidance for every individual situation or set of circumstances.

This procedure is effective from xxxxxx as approved by the SMAA PCC.

#### Applicability

The policy applies to all volunteers working both on church premises and elsewhere on church business (for example delivering home communion). Separate Diocesan guidance applies to clergy

#### The Risks

**This list is not exhaustive but identifies some of the risks faced.**

- Physical accident (from injury, fire, etc such as when there is no one available to fetch help if necessary)
- Sudden illness, again when there is no one to raise the alarm
- Physical violence or threat of abuse in any form from a visitor
- Sexual behaviour or advances deemed to be inappropriate or threatening
- Accusations by a visitor of inappropriate behaviour by staff / volunteers when there are no witnesses
- Stress caused by working in isolation or from abusive calls or digital media

#### Roles and responsibilities

The PCC is responsible for

- showing that "reasonably foreseeable risks" have been identified and updated regularly with appropriate action taken to minimise them.
- Introducing safe systems/procedures which ensure reasonable precautions are taken to maintain their safety.

To ensure that every member of the church feels that the PCC has taken all reasonable steps to ensure their safety. .

Volunteers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they don't put themselves in unnecessary danger.
- Being alert to possible dangers and minimising them .
- Informing the Wardens or Rector of any suspicious behaviour noted or threats made to them

#### Principles

A lone worker can be anyone who works by themselves.

The PCC, church wardens and individuals must work closely together to share the responsibility of identifying concerns and issues of risk and taking steps to minimise these risks.

At all times individuals should remain alert to their own security and should not take unnecessary risks. Where a volunteer believes that they are in serious or imminent danger they should where possible, cease or postpone the work activity and should remove themselves to a place of safety. The individual should inform a church warden of any such situation and the reasons for their actions at the earliest opportunity.

Under no circumstances will an individual be required to attend an event/travel where there are known high risks to personal safety and security.

**6. Summary of Advice for Lone workers**

When working in the church alone (or visiting someone in their home) make sure someone else knows where you are, and what time you are due home. Get them to check on you if you are not home when expected and if they can't contact you, to raise the alarm.

Carry a charged mobile phone or alarm with you, to use in case of emergency.

Do not work at heights when alone; do not use power tools when alone.

Cash to be banked should always be taken by two people

November 2024

## PAROCHIAL FEES AND CHARGES

We have not reviewed the fees and charges that we are able to decide since 2022, coming into effect in 2023.

Most fees for services, licences and approvals are determined nationally by the CofE and are issued in October or November each year to start in January the following year.

Our current fees and rates are:

Verger	£70	
Ashes Digging	£40	
Expenses (near)	£12	
Expenses (far)	£28	(eg: Malvern, Hereford, Pershore)

Fees for bell ringing are set by the bell ringers

Fees for organists are set by the organists guild and vary depending on the service.

Fees for choirs are set by Kate as Musical Director.

The matter was discussed at the November standing committee meeting with the recommendation to increase them by 20% giving:

Verger	£70	to	£84
Ashes Digging	£40	to	£48
Expenses (near)	£12	to	£14.40
Expenses (far)	£28	to	£33.60

The PCC is asked to agree the following (mainly smaller) increases:

Verger	£70	to	£75
Ashes Digging	£40	to	£45
Expenses (near)	£12	to	£15
Expenses (far)	£28	to	£30

The charge for people's names calligraphically added to the book of remembrance is £25. It is recommended that this remain the same.

Keith Hilton-Turvey