



St Michael and All Angels, Ledbury

Minutes of Parochial Church Council – 22 July 2026

Present: David Houghton (Chair)(Churchwarden)
Cath Beech (Churchwarden)
Andrew Beech
Sonia Bowen
Sue Cooper
Maria Dineen
Kevin Hewison
Georgina Hicks
William Hopkinson
Richard Nightingale
Anne Scull
Peter Veasey
Will Wake

Apologies: Stephen Cheetham, Ian James

1587. David Houghton welcomed members to the new PCC and thanked Sue Simpson and Christine Walters for their service. He opened the meeting with Psalm 63 and prayer.

Minutes of meetings held on 18 and 27 May

1588. These were agreed unanimously and signed.

1589. Cath Beech had circulated a zip file containing the PCC Code of Conduct, current church policies and the resilience document. It was noted that some of these needed updating. Members each signed the Code of Conduct.

Minutes of Standing Committee meeting on 6 July

1590. These were noted.

Safeguarding

1591. There had been no safeguarding incidents to report. With her agreement, Cath Beech proposed that Maria Dineen be appointed Parish Safeguarding Officer. This was seconded by Sue Cooper and agreed unanimously.

1592. Members of the PCC were informed that they are obliged to complete the Basic Awareness and Foundation safeguarding training every three years.

Action: All PCC members

Installation of Rev. Sarah Hillman

1593. The provisional date for Sarah's installation is 3 November¹. The format for the installation service is already to hand. The churchwardens are to hold a Zoom meeting with Sarah shortly to discuss the details of her arrival in Ledbury.

1594. It was acknowledged that a few members will not accept communion from a woman priest. The churchwardens are hoping to speak to each of those known to be concerned about this.

Action: Churchwardens

Volunteers

1595. Sonia Bowen reported good progress with recruiting for the various posts in the church. Julian l'Anson has volunteered to take on the photocopying. Sonia asked for church cleaning to be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

Action: Andrew Beech

Finance

1596. In the absence of the treasurer, the PCC noted the finance report. Stephen Cheetham and Ayo Adewale are taking forward the need to persuade people to give more, and maybe revive the annual Stewardship Sunday. Kevin Hewison pointed out that the diocese offers fundraising advice. Andrew Beech reported that the Leprosy Mission had written to thank the church for its donation.

Action: Stephen Cheetham

Net Zero

1597. Will Wake reported on the difficulty he has experienced pinning down the CofE's technical advisory team to attend a meeting with Ian Mather. The separate meeting with Sir Robert Buckland (Third Church Estates Commissioner) and Julian Atkins (Head of the CofE Net Zero Initiative) will be on 6 August; the meeting with the technical team needs to precede that.

1598. Maria Dineen proposed, seconded by Sue Cooper, that the church investigate central purchasing of cleaning products, to ensure that all are environmentally friendly. This was agreed unanimously. It was suggested that using the Parish Buying Scheme² should be investigated. Maria Dineen will take forward the work on this.

Action: Maria Dineen

¹ This date has since been confirmed. The installation will take place at 7p.m. in St Michael's.

² The Parish Buying Scheme is a free procurement service set up by the Church of England and Church in Wales to help local churches buy everyday goods and services through collective bulk-buying.

Food safety

1599. Maria Dineen was concerned that the arrangements for offering food in church did not comply with food safety legislation. It was agreed that she and Will Wake will review compliance, and bring the church into line with the legislation, starting by providing lists of ingredients for food on offer.

Action: Maria Dineen/Will Wake

Fabric

1600. Andrew Beech reported that work on the floor of the western upper room was underway. He would discuss with the church architect when the work on the roof gutters might commence, and also on the provision of an Equality Act compliant ramp into St Anne's chapel. There had been no progress on the catering issue.³

Action: Andrew Beech

Sound/projection

1601. It was agreed that APi had succeeded in improving both sound and projection significantly. The company had recommended the installation of a sound desk and confidence monitor. The sound desk was covered by the existing faculty, but the monitor wasn't. Both would be located at the second pillar in the north arcade. A detailed specification was awaited. The PCC unanimously agreed to allocate provisionally £5,500 to this project.

Churchyard

1602. Maria Dineen and Will Wake will set up a group to liaise with interested parties to make the churchyard more environmentally friendly. They will report to the September meeting. Andrew Beech reminded the council that the PCC should not do anything which might give the town council the idea that the church wished to take responsibility for maintenance of the churchyard.

Action: Maria Dineen/Will Wake

1603. Andrew Beech will remind the town council of his request some time ago that they carry out a condition survey of the gravestones.

Action: Andrew Beech

Other business

1604. The PCC thanked Bromyard Wind Band for their proposed donation to the church of the proceeds from a forthcoming concert (on 20 November) at Ledbury Rugby Club. It was agreed that the PCC would not accept any liability arising from this concert, financial or otherwise.

³ Maggie MacKenzie has since agreed to join the catering group.

1605. Maria Dineen proposed that the church toilets each be made unisex. It was reported that Ledbury Methodist Church had already adopted this practice. Maria Dineen will investigate and report to the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.32 pm with the Grace.