St Michael and All Angels, Ledbury

Minutes of Standing Committee – 7 September 2026

Present: Catherine Beech (Churchwarden)(Chair)
David Houghton (Churchwarden
Andrew Beech
Will Wake

Apologies: Stephen Cheetham

1062. As David Houghton was awaiting an eye operation, it was agreed that Cath Beech should chair the meeting. The meeting opened with prayer.

Minutes of the meeting on 6 July

1063. These were agreed unanimously and signed.

Installation of Sarah Hillman

1064. The PCC needs to agree the list of invitees to the installation at its September meeting. Invitations should be sent out by 6 October. The Order of Service needs to be agreed with Sarah and then Bishop Richard before printing. St Katherine's Hall has been booked for the post-service refreshments. Helen I'Anson will co-ordinate the refreshments. Sonia Bowen will act as front of house.

Action: Andrew Beech/Cath Beech

Finance

1065. In the absence of the treasurer, the finance report was noted. David Houghton will speak to Ayo Adewale about persuading people to be more generous in their giving. Julian Cooke had asked about the level of his sexton's fee. It was agreed that discretionary fees should be reviewed together, and not individually. It was also agreed that the PCC should be asked to give Michael Gallagher and Bill MacKenzie each a gift of £500 as a small thank you for the work they have done during the vacancy.

Action: David Houghton

Catering

1066. The catering team advising the PCC on the preferred location of catering facilities consists of: Helen I'Anson, Margaret Chapman, Maggie MacKenzie and Ian Stainburn. Helen has asked for a single cupboard to be set-aside for catering supplies.

Fabric

1067. Andrew Beech had interviewed Ann Gates, Georgina Hicks and Lucy Huxley about how people with restricted mobility use the church, and how they might like to use the church if they were able to do so. It has been established that none of the existing ramps in the church comply with the Equality Act 2010. A quote of £4,247.60 + VAT for replacing them (with handrails) has been received from TPG Disable Aids Ltd of Hereford. TPG have a good local reputation, are used by Herefordshire Council, and offer a full after-sales service. It was agreed that the quote should be submitted to the PCC.

Action: Andrew Beech

1068. Andrew Beech, Will Wake and Ian Mather had had a very useful meeting with Neil Harrison of Reheat Ltd, who are the technical advisers to the CofE Net Zero Programme. Neil had recommended that a detailed heat loss/airflow survey be carried out, with recommendations as to measures to mitigate the losses. If successful, this should reduce the amount of heating needed when the gas boiler is replaced. Andrew will ask Matt Vaughan to commission such a study.

Action: Andrew Beech

1069. One other point to emerge from the meeting with Reheat was that increasing the number of PV cells on the church roof might not be economic, unless accompanied by a battery storage facility. Andrew Beech will investigate this with Matt Vaughan.

Action: Andrew Beech

1070. Andrew Beech and Will Wake had also met Sir Robert Buckland (Third Church Estates Commissioner) and Julian Atkins (Head, CofE Net Zero Programme) in the church. The implications of the Mather report were discussed. It was clear that the church overall was not going to meet its target of achieving Net Zero by 2030, or even come close. It was now accepted that, for large churches such as Ledbury, and cathedrals, a more incremental approach to achieving Net Zero was required, but that it remained essential for each church to be moving towards Net Zero. This might mean, in due course, an extension having to be sought to the date by when the gas boiler has to be replaced.

1071. Work on the upper room floor was complete. Matt Vaughan will be asked to draw up plans for the refurbishment of both upper rooms, this being a quinquennial report recommendation.

Action: Andrew Beech

1072. The preliminary work on the roof gutters had revealed that the underlying wood and lead were both in good condition. Work was underway to replace the flashbanding.

1073. Matt had drawn up plans for the repair of the churchyard gates. It was agreed that this repair was of lower priority than the various issues above. However, the condition of the gates would be kept under review, and the repair might be given higher priority should this become necessary.

Action: Fabric Sub-Committee

1074. It was agreed that improving the lighting in St Anne's chapel, though highly desirable, would have to be given a low priority status. It was accepted that this may change should Sarah Hillman wish to use St Anne's more and more regularly than it is now.

Succession planning

1075. Cath Beech pointed out that David Houghton will have completed six years as churchwarden at the APCM 2027, and has to stand down. Thought needs to be given as to who might replace him, allowing for the fact that anyone can get themselves nominated for election should they feel that God is leading them to do so.

Concert bookings

1076. It was agreed that those organizing concerts will henceforth be required to state at the time of booking what arrangements they have put in place to ensure that the church is opened beforehand and closed afterwards. If no such arrangements have been put in place, the concert will not be allowed to take place. Casually assuming that opening and closing would be done by the churchwardens is not acceptable.

Action: Churchwardens

Food safety

1077. Will Wake will send Andrew a paper on food safety to be forwarded (a) to PCC members, and (b) to Helen I'Anson for onward distribution to the caterers.

Action: Will Wake

Safeguarding

1078. PCC members will be reminded to complete the necessary safeguarding training. Maria Dineen will give a presentation on safeguarding at the Second Sunday service on 13 September.

Action: Maria Dineen

Churchyard

1079. The planters have been completed and installed. The Town Council are considering how to fix the proposed bench down. Andrew Beech will write to the town council about the condition of some of the tombstones in the churchyard.

Action: Andrew Beech

Other business

1080. It was agreed that rotas should not appear on iKnow Church.

Dates for 2027

1081. It was agreed that the Standing Committee will meet on the following dates in 2027:

4 January, 8 March, 3 May, 5 July, 6 September and 1 November. The churchwardens will let Sarah Hillman have these dates.

Action: Churchwardens

Date of next meeting

1082. The next meeting will be at 8.00pm on 8 November at The Croft, Woodleigh Road. **Please note that this is a change to the agreed date, to avoid a clash with the rehearsal of Sarah's installation the following day.**

The meeting closed with prayer.