



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

held on **Tuesday 21st July 2026**
at 7.00pm in Walford Church

Present: Kelvin Price (Chairman), Jean Brown, Paul Cummings, Mike Donovan, Julian Hallett, Hugh James, Catherine Lewis, Rachel Lewis, Roy Milnes, Anne Morris, Peter Reynolds, Jane Rothery, Mark Sanderson and Alun Thomas

In attendance: Judith Wiggins (safeguarding), Malcolm Jones (churchyard).

1 Opening prayers and introduction

Kelvin opened the meeting with the collect for the day.

2 Apologies

to receive and accept apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Freda Davies, Bryan Jones, Caroline Pascoe, Saul Robertson and Owen Pembury.

3 Safeguarding

to receive an update and take any necessary action on any safeguarding matter

Judith reported that everything was up to date and no concerns had been reported to her.

Proposed: Kelvin Price Seconded: Anne Morris unanimous

It was resolved to approve the Safeguarding Action Plan as presented to the meeting

At 7.02pm Judith Wiggins left the meeting

4 Closed Churchyard

i. to receive a report of any issues from Cllr Utting

Cllr Utting was not in attendance and had not sent a report.

ii. to receive a report from the churchwardens on the newly closed churchyard concerning:

- progress with the handover of the newly closed churchyard and agree to adopt the position that, having given Herefordshire Council notice almost 2 years ago (August 2024) we have now assumed that they took over responsibility as from 1st April 2026. Following an explanation from Mark on the current situation, the following was agreed:

Proposed: Peter Reynolds Seconded: Roy Milnes 13 for, 1 abstention

It was resolved to reiterate the PCC's position that handover was on 1st April 2026 and write again to Herefordshire Council to confirm the PCC's position. It was further resolved to put an article in the Ross Gazette explaining that the former open churchyard is no longer the responsibility of the PCC.

- to consider the wall collapse and agree a way forward (see report and pictures)
The wall (in the southwest corner of the churchyard) is in a very poor state and forms a boundary with private land, currently a building site. Permission needs to be granted by the diocese to repair or replace it with a fence. However, should it prove to be a listed

wall, this may not be possible. It was agreed that Mark would seek advice from the DAC and check if it is listed before any further action is taken. He would also keep the owner of the adjacent land informed of progress.

- to consider the broken bough on a wellingtonia and agree what action should be taken Nothing was agreed. However, a large lower branch of a silver birch tree by the Old Maids Walk gate broke on Monday. There was concern expressed from RTC to both the Churchwarden and Herefordshire Council that it should be urgently dealt with. As a result, Paul Clayton (Herefordshire Council), has informed the public realm team and requested they action this raised concern. In the meantime, Mark had put up signs at either end of the path asking people to find another route.
- to consider the state of the compost bin and agree on what should be done Rubbish, both general and compostable is now overflowing and needs urgent attention. Because of the general rubbish mixed up, it is not suitable for composting and an alternative way of disposing of it is needed.

Proposed: Catherine Lewis Seconded: Roy Milnes unanimous

It was resolved to request Enviroability to clear the bin at a cost of no more than £1,000 and then to remove the compound. Further notices will be displayed requesting all rubbish to be taken away.

At 7.30pm Malcolm Jones left the meeting

5 Minutes of the last meeting

to approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 19th May 2026.

Paul Cummings expressed thanks to Rachel for the consistent quality of the minutes. All were in agreement.

Proposed: Roy Milnes Seconded: Paul Cummings unanimous

It was resolved to approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 19th May 2026

6 Rector's Report

to receive information on the following and take any necessary actions

- Benefice Strategy Day update
Visitor experience - supporting spiritual encounter

A diagram produced by Hugh had been circulated. It clearly showed areas where we could improve the visitor experience by providing and signposting areas for prayer, offering more information on the Christian faith, making candles for lighting more visible and enhancing visitor information boards to show the significance to us as Christians of various features in the church. It was agreed to form a working group to look at this to include Kelvin, Mark, Hugh and Rachel. Anne asked that the children's room be included and Paul suggested that we also talk to Meryl who has a wealth of experience and ideas.

- Welcome to the curate
Owen has arrived though now on holiday, and with his wife, felt very welcomed by the parish. We look forward to working with him.
- Parish Boundary – Brampton Abbots
A draft proposal providing for the union of the parish of Ross and the parish of Brampton Abbots in the area of the benefice of Ross with Walford and Brampton Abbots where the parish church of the parish of Ross to be the parish church of the new parish had been circulated. The relevant Diocesan members of staff have now agreed to this proposal which will go out to consultation again before taking effect.

Kelvin explained that the church would remain “closed” with the opportunity for up to six services and six community events each year. The Diocese would be responsible for all maintenance. The churchyard, which is still open for burials, will belong to the new parish and there is sufficient in the present Brampton Abbotts churchyard account to pay for maintenance of the churchyard for the next ten years.

Freda wrote *I wish to thank the Rector for all he has done to bring us so close to finalising arrangements to unite the parish of Brampton Abbotts with Ross. This issue has rumbled on in the background for over 20 years, and the worshiping community there deserve better. At last, thanks to Kelvin’s efforts this looks as though a solution has been found.*

Proposed: Roy Milnes Seconded: Paul Cummings 13 for, 1 abstention
It was resolved to accept the draft proposal as circulated.

- BBQ/lunch and Evensong – 26th July
 There have been 80 acceptances for the hog roast. Jane and Jean have organised the serving of the food, and drinks are being provided. Kelvin will thank everyone during the proceedings which will include a presentation to John Setchfield and Simon Cutter for all their work in the churchyard.
- Special Guest Evenings
 Kelvin explained that he would like to give an opportunity for us to hear people talk about how their faith has influenced them, by giving a talk followed by a question and answer session. Please give Kelvin any suggestions of names of people who might be appropriate.
- Eco Church – Gold Award
 David Blackham has agreed to take over from Rosie in helping the church to achieve the Arocha Gold award. David is a relative newcomer who has found St Mary’s and made it his church. He is also involved in the Ross Spire in Peril group and has much experience in the media and environmental issues.
- Remembrance Day Holy Communion service time
 Kelvin announced that from this year on Remembrance Sunday, there would be one Holy Communion Service at 9am (Order 1 with two hymns). The church would then welcome the community to its main service of the day which will follow on from the commemorations at the Prospect at 11am.
- People’s Emergency Briefing on **12th August, 7pm**
 Following a showing of this film to an invited audience, it was agreed to show it again to the general public. All are invited, it is free and there is no need to book.

7 Finance Report

- i. to note a report from the treasurer and take any necessary actions
 The report was noted. There were no actions required.
- ii. to consider the search for a new treasurer
 As agreed at the last meeting, an advert, initially in the newsletter would go out at the beginning of September. It was also suggested that HVOSS and the CDT may be able to help promote the advert. Rachel and Roy would word an advert and information leaflet.

8 Ross Spire in Peril (RSIP)

- i. to note minutes of previous meetings and receive and accept a report on all actions to date and to accept the resignation of Keith Ray (RSIP minutes, 30th June) and appoint another person to replace him.
 The minutes were noted and accepted. No-one had been nominated to replace Keith Ray.

- ii. to appoint a PCC member to stand in as a substitute at RSIP Group meetings if one of the PCC members of the group is unavailable.

Proposed: Jane Rothery Seconded: Kelvin Price unanimous

It was resolved to appoint Anne Morris and Peter Reynolds as substitutes to the Ross Spire in Peril Fundraising Group when other PCC representatives are unavailable.

- iii. to authorise a letter to the RSIP Group requesting (in retrospect) an application to the NHLF for the sum of £120,455 for the derisking, exploratory work on the pinnacles and the assessment and design of a new heating system

The grant application had been sent, and it was anticipated that the result would be known by the end of July. The group would notify the PCC of the outcome.

Proposed: Mark Sanderson Seconded: Jane Rothery unanimous

It was resolved to authorise a letter to the RSIP Group requesting (in retrospect) an application to the NHLF for the sum of £120,455 for the derisking, exploratory work on the pinnacles and the assessment and design of a new heating system.

9 Churchwardens' Report

to receive and note a report concerning:

- special thanks to John Setchfield and Simon Cutter for work in the churchyard
This would be done at the thank you barbecue.
- Sanctuary floor
The work would now be done next January.
- Quinquennial Inspection
This is due and the architect is planning to carry it out in October.
- South Aisle/Markye Chapel gulley
The architect is drawing up plans to prevent water coming in in heavy rain. It is hoped that we can fund the work through an eco grant (up to £10,000).
- Collapsed Rudhall wall monument
Ursells Stone Masons have provided a full and thorough report on the monument and described the best way to conserve it. They have quoted a maximum cost of £1,998 + VAT which includes £450 + VAT as a contingency should any additional work found to be necessary.

Proposed: Roy Milnes Seconded: Paul Cummings unanimous

It was resolved to accept a quote from Ursells to repair the Rudall wall monument at cost of no more than £1,998 + VAT.

10 Standing Committee

to appoint Jane Rothery to the Standing Committee

Proposed: Kelvin Price Seconded: Mark Sanderson unanimous

It was resolved to appoint Jane Rothery to the Standing Committee.

11 Fundraising Group

to note the forthcoming Flower Festival and Fete on the weekend 28th to 31st August and the h.Art exhibition from 5th to 13th September when help will be required, particularly stewarding and welcoming visitors

This was noted.

12 Deanery Synod

- i. to note that Emily gave a presentation about her first year as LifeLink Chaplain to the synod
This was noted.

- ii. to note that the Deanery Synod is still without a Lay Co-chair
This was noted. Kelvin added that this is an important post and hoped someone would soon come forward.
- iii. to note that the Diocese is considering creating six new Area Deans which will be full-time posts
The Bishop's Council has now voted this through. Each Area Dean would cover two current deaneries and Ross & Archenfield Deanery would be linked to Abbeydore Deanery. The Area Deans would be responsible for parishes in vacancy and expected to take their share of regular Sunday services. The question of funding was raised. Kelvin explained that the diocese does not have its required number of clergy due to a lack of clergy rather than a lack of money and so the clergy budget will easily cover these six posts.

13 St Mary's Hall

to receive a verbal report from the Hall Committee
There was nothing to report.

14 Health & Safety

to receive a verbal report and take any necessary actions
There was nothing to report.

15 Date of next Meeting

to note the next PCC meeting will be on Tuesday 15th September 2026 at 7pm in church.
This was noted and apologies were received from Alun Thomas and Rachel Lewis.

The meeting closed with a prayer and the Grace at 8.30pm.



Rev. K. Price
15/9/2026