

# MUCH WENLOCK WITH BOURTON PCC

## MINUTES OF MEETING

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2025, 7.00 pm



in Holy Trinity Much Wenlock

### PRESENT:

Revd Preb Matthew Stafford (RevdM)  
 Mrs Francine Coulson-Joy (FCJ)  
 Mrs Ann Craig (AC) (Bourton)  
 Mrs Susan Crooke-Williams (SCW)  
 Mrs Gill Davis (GD)  
 Mrs Alison Dixon (AD)

Mrs Sue Gilling (SGi)  
 Mrs Sally Grant (SG)  
 Revd Lisa Harper (LH)  
 Mr Mark Laws (ML) – Vice Chair  
 Mr Andrew Ramsay (AR)  
 Revd Sam Rigby (SR)

### APOLOGIES:

Mrs Carallyn Benbow (CB)  
 In attendance:  
 Mr Brendon Quinn (BQ)

ITEM	ACTION BY
<p>The meeting was opened in prayer by RevdM with words of St. Hildegard of Bingen.</p>	
<p>1. <b>Apologies</b> – received as noted above.</p>	
<p>2. <b>Approval of minutes</b>                      The minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting – proposed by SCW seconded by SG; and the minutes of the meeting held of 17<sup>th</sup> August were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting – proposed by SCW seconded by AR. Both sets of minutes were unanimously agreed and duly signed by the Chair.</p>	
<p>3. <b>Matters arising from the previous minutes</b>                      All are covered on the agenda</p>	
<p>4. <b>Termly update from the Director of Music</b>  <b>Organ</b> – all major work is now complete with just a few minor snagging issues to be resolved.</p>	
<p><b>Choir</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The choir sang for services at Bangor Cathedral and took part in Conwy Music Festival at the end of last term.</li> <li>• Five of our young choristers took part in the RSCM Bath Summer School again this year.</li> <li>• There are two new choir members: Karen in the seniors and India in the juniors.</li> <li>• Work is well underway for the Carol Service with several new pieces by contemporary composers.</li> <li>• Additional new robes are being purchased from choir funds.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>School Links</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is still proving very difficult to make progress with Much Wenlock Primary. One of our choir parents has just made contact with a member of staff there which hopefully will help. The music lead at school is going to publicise Church Choir next week.</li> </ul>	

- The WOOFYT project is ready to go and, subject to the primary school agreeing a date, will happen this term. The cost will be £500. The PCC suggested an application form be submitted to the Much Wenlock Ecclesiastical Society (MWEC) prior to the October MWEC meeting for help with funding.

BQ

#### Gift Day

- Choir members will man the display on Saturday
- The majority of choristers will be taking part in Joseph
- There will be a colouring competition with a prize for the winner from Croft Design
- Organ demonstrations will take place throughout the day inviting visitors to have a play.

#### Websites and Social Media

- Church events and the Wenlock Herald are now listed on the new Visit Much Wenlock website
- The church diary needs to be kept updated to help in arranging activity.

#### Come and Sing

- A set of Come and Sing Evensong books has been purchased from Choir funds to encourage new members and smaller singing groups to take part in occasional services – the first one will be in November.

The church Facebook page has not been updated much since pre-Covid, with the last entry in February. It was agreed Facebook should be maintained. RevdM will review Social Media requirements with LH.

REVDM/LH

#### 5. Holy Trinity Bourton

- Repair of wall cracks and painting has been completed successfully including by the East window.
- The Gallery Singers have indicated they would still like to sing at Bourton Church. Bourton Manor has offered use of their toilet facility, although the singers have said their only requirement is for a Portaloo, which will be looked into.
- A Harvest Festival service with Much Wenlock will be held at 9.30am on 5<sup>th</sup> October.

#### 6. Diocesan Year of Engagement

Break out discussion took place in twos considering William Temple's statement about the church being the only organisation that exists for the benefit of non-members and reflecting on the church now and our vision for the future. Thoughts were then shared.

LH and SR had met with the Head of Cressage School and planned worship activities throughout the year, also supporting their weekly worship. 'Experience' activities are being arranged for key events through the year such as Easter, etc. LH is hoping to go into Cressage school to do confirmation preparation.

SR has been in touch with the new Head at Brockton to discuss their worship planning.

There is considerable interest in the Christmas Tree event.

A date has been arranged for the William Brookes Christmas event.

We have been in touch with Heather from the Diocese about setting up a youth drop in at Holy Trinity on Thursdays offering e.g. pizza and hot chocolate, with games/activities (digital detox) for about an hour then the opportunity to stay on for discussion/bible study/quiet time. LH is looking at a course called Explore too. Volunteers will be needed to prepare drinks and be around to be a listening ear for the young people. It is hoped to start in October. Heather suggested we then ask the young people what they would like to do in the sessions. There is funding that may be available from the Diocese for youth clubs. A hub is planned for Bridgnorth so we may be able to tap into this as a satellite.

Any volunteers would need an enhanced DBS check, which can be provided by the Diocese.

RevdM advised there is a Diocesan Finance roadshow at Leebotwood on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 7 pm which he will be attending.

REVDM

### 7. Social Media Policy

The password for the guest Wifi will be displayed in church: Milburga680.

We need accountability and process for the website, to be owned and managed by the church, important for our safeguarding responsibility. The church will get its own website domain for about £80 and the hosting can be outsourced - proposed by SCW seconded SGi, all in favour. Tom Quinn will be asked to help with transferring over.

### 8. Heritage Day 20<sup>th</sup> September

Arrangements are in place for a collection table in the square and involvement from a lot of church members with various stands in church. The Priest's Room and bell tower will be open for visitors. Thanks to the work of the Churchwardens, 1000 leaflets and envelopes were prepared for delivery door-to-door in Much Wenlock by volunteers. Thanks are extended to all those involved in the event.

### 9. Confirmation 23<sup>rd</sup> November

LH is hoping to go into Cressage school to do confirmation preparation.

### 10. Finance

Our income year to date would be behind budget but is currently ahead thanks to two exceptional items: the recovery of £17,252 in VAT on the new organ and a donation of £7,634 from the closure of the Friends charity. The Herald will contribute about £2,000 in profit this year.

There is a continuing move away from cash and yellow envelope collections to online giving, especially via Parish Giving. Considerable donations are being made via the contactless machine including donations with Gift Aid attached.

Expenditure on churchyard maintenance to date is only one-third of 2024 thanks to the dry weather reducing the grass cutting required, which will resume following the recent rains. However, the trees have had significant work done on them and there has been considerable expenditure on maintenance and the fabric, including repairs to windows, disabled doors, flooring, plumbing, the roof alarm, fire extinguishers, etc.

We have also added new cameras for streaming and provided new electrics and scaffolding for the organ. New microphones are on order for the priests.

Pew cushions have been paid for at £3,349 and we await delivery next month. It was suggested members of the congregation could be asked to sponsor a cushion.

**11. Fabric**

- **Modification and re-ordering of pews in the North Aisle and update on the removal of pew doors**

SCW put in a basic faculty for removal of the pew doors. However, Stephen Challenger has requested a full faculty explaining why they need to be improved, photos of all doors and what will happen to them, as well as confirmation of who will carry out the work. It was agreed we should proceed with the faculty and SCW will invite Stephen Challenger to come for a site visit.

SCW

- **Church boundaries and access**

A planning application has been placed by the occupants to erect metal fencing around the pebbled area in front of their cottage by Church Walk.

A right of way from the church to Church Walk is indicated on the church plans and it is felt that railings could also be problematic for emergency access to the flats on Church Walk. The PCC agreed we should object to the planning application. Wenlock Estates have indicated they will also be objecting as they should have right of way, and it will also be reviewed by the Town Council.

RevdM will follow up for the PCC to prepare its objection. The deadline is 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

- **Trees, churchyard, prayer area**

Cleaning up around the redwood is required. ML will arrange a mini skip and RevdM will contact Andy/scouts for assistance.

ML  
REVDM

- **Quinquennial**

Road closure is required for the tower cleaning. ML will contact the highways agency officer.

ML

Tim Ratcliffe is measuring up the entry doors into the church. An application by GD for a small grant for adapting the doors was unfortunately unsuccessful.

- **Heating/Green agenda**

The pipes have all been cleaned. GD had received some quotes from energy suppliers. Octopus looks like the best option and it was agreed to go with Octopus: proposed by FCJ, seconded by LH and unanimously agreed. We may or may not be able to continue getting economy 7.

GD and Simon Ross will do a short presentation on Heritage Day about animal extinction.

**12. Parish safeguarding**

The contractor for the DBS system for the Diocese has been breached. Anyone affected should have been contacted.

An individual in significant need has been supported and is now in hospital.

The church cares pastorally in the community but continues to emphasise that the church is not responsible for safeguarding issues in the town and is careful about signposting to relevant bodies.

**Any other business**

- Protocol for the flag raising: A review is taking place on health and safety and logistics of managing the flagpole in view of Nick Matthews' impending retirement.
- Memorial book: The churchwardens were approached by someone requesting his wife be entered into the memorial book. The current book has very large script. RevdM proposed we have a new memorial book and will discuss further with the churchwardens and come back to the PCC.
- The Flower Guild is very low on funds and asking for financial support. Volunteers are withdrawing because of having to fund flowers themselves. They have been asked to do a display in the foyer for Gift Day and are considering ways to fund this. As a gesture of goodwill it was suggested the PCC will contribute to the harvest festival flowers and give a monthly allowance to the Flower Guild. This will be discussed by the finance committee and brought back to the PCC to agree.
- A letter had been received from some members of the congregation expressing a wish for more services similar to the Easter Praise. This will be discussed outside the meeting.
- A letter had been received from Mrs Lees regarding Stations of the Cross which she gave to the church some years ago. A response has previously been given.
- RevdM advised he has been called for jury service from 13/10/25 for 2 weeks.

REVDM/  
SCW / FCJ

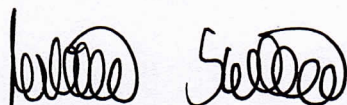
FINANCE  
COMMITTEE

**13. Date of next meetings:**

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November, 7 pm  
Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2026, 7 pm

The meeting closed at 21.25 pm in prayer.

Signature:



Date:

13.11.2025