

Fabric

In 2024, the PCC Fabric committee comprised Nick Brown (Chair), Gareth Roberts-Davies (Facilities and Systems Manager), Liz Welton, Ian Kay and Ian Best. The Committee meets broadly monthly, discussing maintenance as well as reordering, to review progress and to plan future works subject to approval by PCC. Gareth reports to Helen Allen (Operations Manager), who receives all papers.

The fabric of the church buildings continues to remain in satisfactory condition. The Quinquennial architect is James Phillips of APEC architects.

Status of works on KPC buildings**i. Church**

There is some water ingress in the choir vestry due to the poor condition of the pointing to the flashing, currently being planned. There are no significant issues with the main Church building or the tower. Following the installation of a new boiler and heat exchanger between that and the old pipework, an interim inspection and filter clean has been organised between annual service visits, to minimise the likelihood of down time.

ii. Churchyard & Grounds

A full tree survey was completed in 2021, repeated in 2024. The most significant change was the condition of the Cedar, adjacent to Kenilworth Road, which unexpectedly declined requiring urgent removal. In spring 2025 various dead and dying Ash trees were removed and other trees reduced in size. Knowle Eco Group have taken on care of the land outside the kitchen in St John's Hall.

iii. Guild House

The floor, made up of solid pine blocks, has been repaired and resurfaced recently. The ground floor, around the toilet block, is increasingly suffering from damp. The origin has been located and remedied, and remedial work will be scheduled in 2025, including refreshing the badly discoloured decoration of the toilet walls, hall and stairs.

iv. St. John's Hall

a. The new Hall boiler is working well, but there are issues with other ageing components. Whilst each of the three circuits is designed to have a spare pump, each is now running with a single pump and they cannot be replaced like for like. The committee is considering options aligned with emerging thinking on floor replacement.

b. The hall floor has been trimmed and repaired again, and a section lifted for inspection due to a suspected leak and to allow access to the architect in order to help us develop a tender for floor replacement. This is still under discussion.

c. The main lights and uplighters are now LED, and the ageing and faulty dimmer control for the uplighters has been replaced with compatible new dimmer switches.

v. Insurance

Insurance of the Church, Guild House, St John's Hall and St Lawrence House has been switched from Ecclesiastical to Trinitas, and at renewal, St Anne's was also added to the same policy.

The council has complied with its duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The PCC has appointed a Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator. Safeguarding is a standing item on the agenda at every PCC business meeting. Regular safeguarding reviews are held and updating of course attendance throughout the year.

The required notice having been given, a completely new church electoral roll was compiled on 22 April 2025, in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

Details of the new electoral roll have been available from 22 April 2025 until this evening.

The number on the new roll is 481. This is 50 less than as at the time of the APCM in April 2024. The new roll includes 86 people who were not on the previous roll. Of the 136 on the previous roll who are not now on the new roll, I am aware that 22 have moved away and 6 have died, with the remaining 108 not having re-enrolled. 282 people on the new electoral roll (59%) live in the parish and 199 people (41%) live outside the parish. 2% more of the new roll live in the parish than on the 2024 church electoral roll.

Lynn Brown
KPC Electoral Roll Officer

Introduction

Knowle Parish Church is in the Yardley and Solihull Deanery of Birmingham Diocese. There are nearly 30 churches in the Deanery, which stretches from Ward End in the north to Knowle in the south. In general the Deaneries spread out from Birmingham centre like spokes on a wheel, to ensure a good demographic mix of churches in each Deanery. Therefore, although we are physically close to St Phillip's, Dorridge, that church is in a different Deanery (Shirley). Other churches in the Deanery with which we have links are St John's Sparkhill (home of the Narthex Project), and St Christopher's Springfield.

Deanery Synod meetings

February: The main item was a presentation and discussion on Transform – the 4th mark of mission. Fred Rattley, described the work of his department, Community Regeneration, which sought to stimulate social action by churches to help the poor, oppressed and marginalised. He highlighted the 'Warm Welcome Campaign' in which churches and secular buildings formed a network of venues to support refugees and the homeless.

June: The focus was largely on the environment, and what churches can do in response to the climate crisis. The speakers were Caroline Egan, Assistant Diocesan Environmental Officer (from St Phillip's, Dorridge), Ben Smith, Diocesan Net Zero Carbon Manager, and Heather Holmes, Lead Environmental Champion.

October: The new Area Dean, Rev Tony Rindl was introduced to the Synod. Tony is combining his role as Area Dean with being Vicar of Marston Green. Finance took centre stage at this meeting, with representatives from the Diocesan Finance team speaking about Birmingham Diocese's finances. They reported a deficit of £1.5m in 2024, met by transfers from (vanishing) reserves. Clearly this is unsustainable into the future, and apart from seeking to cut its costs, Birmingham would be seeking further sources of funding including grants for mission activities from the National church. The finance team also gave some insights into how the Common Fund is used to support cross-Diocese activities.

David Pickering