

READING DEANERY SYNOD

**Minutes of the 2nd meeting of the 2017 - 2020 Synod.
Held at St Bartholomew's Church, Reading, RG1 3QA
on Wednesday 5th July 2017 at 20.00 hours**

Present

Clergy

The Revd Dr Graeme Fancourt
(chair)
The Revd Sue Cady
The Revd Richard Christopher
The Revd Gary Collins
The Revd Penny Cuthbert
The Revd Dr Peter Day
The Revd Vincent Gardner
The Revd Hannah Hobday
The Revd Dr Ben Kautzer
The Revd Chris Leslie
The Revd Sam McNally-Cross
The Revd Libby Newman
The Revd Stephen Pullin
The Revd Elizabeth Ratcliffe
The Revd Sean Riordan
The Revd Judith Ryder
The Revd Jonathan Salmon
The Revd Judith Sumner
The Revd Serena Tajima
The Revd Jo Williams

Lay Members

Mr Mark Hinckley (lay chair)
Mr Eric Anderson
Mr Ian C Bate
Mr Ron Best
Ms Jane Borgeaud
Mrs Jenny Bryce
Mr Robert Bryce
Mr Mark Burton
Mrs Rosemary Cooper
Mr Alan Cross
Mr Simon Cuthbert
Mrs Jane Fulford
Mrs Sue Gash
Mr John Goddard
Dr Lee Hawkness-Smith
Mrs Hilary Jakeman
Mr Peter Jeal
Mr Steve Jenkins
Mrs Joan Jenks
Dr Alison Johnston
Mr A Kolawole
Dr John D Ledger

Mrs Margaret Lowe
Mrs Jane Masson
Mrs Margaret Mayer
Dr S A McDowell
Mrs Lydia Messling
Prof John F Missenden
Mr Roger Moore
Mrs Samantha Moore
Dr Christopher J B Mott
Mrs Sue Mott
Miss Alison Peyton
Ms M R Pitman
Mrs Elaine Spratling
Mr Peter Stratton
Mr Clive Tillin
Mr Simon Walker
Mr Bill Watts
Dr Elaine Watts
Mr Nicholas White
Mr Tony White
Mr Anthony Wilson
Mr Adam Wingrove

Apologies

Clergy

The Revd Dr Adam Carlill
The Revd Derek Chandler
The Revd Pads Dolphin
The Revd Philip Hobday
The Revd David Little
The Revd Eddie Marquez
The Revd Vernon Orr
The Revd John Rogers
The Revd Mike Smith
The Revd Cath Spence
The Revd Neil Warwick
The Revd Paul Willis

Clergy with PTO

The Revd Tony Coulson
The Revd Margaret Dimmick
The Revd Francis Jakeman
The Revd Bernard Metcalfe

Lay Members

Mr Tony Bartlett
Mr Brian Day
Mrs Mary Day
Mr Robert Dimmick
Mr Trevor Greaves
Mr Leslie Green

Mrs Elizabeth Hawkness-Smith
Mrs Jean Leslie
Mr David Potter
Mr Arfon Rees
Mr Gordon Summers
Mr Ralph Taylor
Mrs Lisa Telling
Miss Joan Walker

1. Welcome

The Revd Graeme Fancourt welcomed everyone to the meeting, and gave a particular welcome to those who were attending for the first time. He also expressed thanks and good wishes on behalf of Synod to the Revd Sam McNally-Cross who is soon to leave the Deanery for a new post.

2. Opening Worship

The Revd Graeme Fancourt led the Synod in a service of Evening Prayer. The reading was Luke 16.1-13.

3. Good News Story

Jane Borgeaud, from St Andrew's Caversham, shared with Synod about the Churches Together in Caversham Holiday Club, which has run each summer since 2012. She showed a display of photos, giving Synod a taste of the different sorts of activities which the children had the chance to be involved with. The holiday club has grown and grown, and last year around 150 children took part, with 13 different churches represented amongst the volunteers. The club gives great benefits to the children, mainly from families which are not regular churchgoers, who have a chance to hear Bible stories and learn about the Christian faith. They learn that Christians and churches are not scary, and this gives them a much more positive picture to build on in the future. The volunteers also have a great time, and benefit from the ecumenical fellowship as well as the encounters and conversations with the children. This year's club runs from 31st July and Jane asked for Synod's prayers.

The Revd Graeme Fancourt thanked Jane for her report, and Prof John Missenden prayed for the holiday club.

4. Quinquennial Inspections

Synod welcomed Mr John Stevenson, the Deanery Quinquennial Inspections Officer, to speak about these five-yearly inspections of church buildings.

Quinquennial inspections are carried out according to rules set down by the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC), and are undertaken by an architect or a chartered building surveyor. The inspection consists of a thorough survey of the church building. A report is then produced, setting out the work which is required, in different categories reflecting the priority of the work. Further information, including a template for a report,

can be found on the diocesan website and the Church Care website (www.churchcare.co.uk). The PCC received the report, and a copy is also sent to the Area Dean and the Archdeacon.

The system benefits the parish by enabling the PCC to plan for the work which needs to be undertaken. The report may also assist the PCC in identifying and assessing risks.

Each parish needs an appointed architect to undertake the inspection, who must be approved by the DAC. A list of approved architects can be obtained from the DAC, along with a guide about appointing a new architect. When a parish requires a new architect, 3 or 4 should be interviewed. It is important to find someone you feel you can work with. John Stevenson recommended looking beyond local firms – architects were often willing to travel for inspections.

The Deanery role has been to manage the process: where necessary raising awareness of the system and giving some assistance to parishes in need of help. John Stevenson asked Synod to consider ways in which the role could be made more visible.

The Revd Graeme Fancourt invited questions from Synod.

Mr Peter Jeal asked about the fees for quinquennial inspections.

John Stevenson referred the question to Mr Mark Burton, Deanery Treasurer, who explained that in order to help parishes spread the cost of the inspection over five years, the Deanery paid the cost, and then charged the parish in question with one fifth of the amount each year over the five year period.

Mrs Sue Mott made a request for better communication. Her parish had recently had difficulty in identifying and contacting John Stevenson.

John Stevenson, in reply, referred to his earlier comments about a need to consider ways to increase the visibility of the role.

Mr Tony Wilson asked if it was possible to have a list of architects used by other local churches.

John Stevenson replied that it was important churches went through their own recruitment process, as outlined in the DAC guide, rather than attempting to find a shortcut.

Mr Peter Stratton asked if it was possible for churches to group together and use the same architect, which might then enable financial savings.

John Stevenson tentatively said that this might be possible, but there would be a danger of a one-size-fits all approach, rather than each church being able to find the architect which suited them and their circumstances, and with whom they felt they could build a good relationship. He also pointed out that a local group of churches would not have all their quinquennials falling at the same time.

5. Mission Action Plan – Update

The Revd Graeme Fancourt summarized the Mission Action Plan which had been agreed by the last triennium. The focus was on three particular areas: leadership, participation, and sharing resources. The next step in implementing the plan was to form teams to look at each of these areas in more details. Graeme appealed for people with relevant experience to volunteer to serve on these teams – or for Synod members to talk to others in their churches who might have appropriate experience. People should speak to Graeme for more information and/or to put names forward.

6. Parish Share

Mr Mark Burton, Deanery Treasurer, gave a very clear and helpful presentation about diocesan finances. He gave information about sources of funding for the diocese, and the different areas where money was spent. Parish share accounts for 79% of diocesan income, and 80% of funding goes to parishes (including funding for curates).

An explanation of deprivation allowances was given. This is money allocated on the basis of parishes in the deanery whose deprivation measurements are above a certain level (set by the diocese). This money means a lower level of Parish Share is paid by the Deanery, and in this deanery the deprivation allowance is assigned directly to the parish concerned.

Mr Mark Hinckley, Deanery Lay Chair, took over the presentation. He reminded Synod that the figures which had been circulated were draft figures. The diocese were still to finalise their budget, and the deanery figures cannot be finalized until final figures are received from the diocese. The final figures should not show large differences, but for this evening's meeting, the important things to consider were the formula used for calculating parish share and the principles behind it. The formula has not been changed by the Parish Share Committee. Mindful of possible diocesan changes in the way share is calculated, for the time being, it had been decided to stay with the existing deanery system.

Synod members were given a chance to discuss together in groups, and think about questions which they would like to ask. Members were then given an opportunity to ask questions.

Dr John Ledger asked whether the figure for size of congregation was still calculated by taking an average of the electoral roll and the usual Sunday attendance. Mark Hinckley confirmed that this was the case, and that there had been no recent discussion of adjusting this.

The Revd Sean Riordan thanked Mark Burton for the clear presentation. He asked whether the Parish Share Rebate was still in place. Mark Burton confirmed this. The rebate was given when parishes paid on time (with specific targets in the year which needed to be hit). The rebate was given to the deanery, who returned it to parishes.

Mr Ian Bate asked about fees paid to the diocese for weddings and funerals. Mark Burton explained that the diocesan part of the fee is returned to the deanery – meaning that the deanery share which has to be paid is lower.

Mrs Sue Mott asked if it was possible to give information about when a recovery plan for a particular church was meant to end. It would be helpful to have an idea of how long recovery was expected to take in each case. Mark Hinckley explained that he and Graeme Fancourt were arranging meetings with individual churches to look at recovery plans, with the aim to have this information to hand for the future.

The Revd Sean Riordhan asked whether it was possible for those churches whose shares had been capped (a 5% cap is applied in the formula, so that churches do not face an increase of more than 5% of share) to know what their share would have been if they had not been capped. Mark Hinckley said this was possible, and he would send the figures to the relevant churches.

The Revd Ben Kautzer asked whether additional funds would be needed to enable the deanery to implement the Mission Action Plan. Graeme Fancourt answered that there were some deanery funds available which would be used for this purpose. Parish share would not need to increase to fund the Mission Action Plan.

Mr Bill Watts asked if it was possible for Mark Burton to send the slides which accompanied his presentation to churches so that they would be able to make use of it. Mark Burton agreed that he would do this.

There being no further questions, Mark Hinckley proposed that the Synod accept the Parish Share Proposal, as outlined in the paperwork circulated prior to the meeting. Peter Jeal seconded the proposal, and Synod voted unanimously to accept it.

Graeme Fancourt took the opportunity, on behalf of Synod, to thank Mark Hinckley and Mark Burton for all their hard work on Parish Share, and for the clear presentation. It was much appreciated that the Parish Share formula seeks to be generous, fair and transparent. Synod responded with an enthusiastic round of applause.

Graeme Fancourt urged Synod members to take information about the Parish share back to their parishes and to communicate with their PCCs.

Mark Hinckley next explained the make-up and role of the Parish Share Committee, which exists to consider the way in which the Deanery apportions Parish share to individual parishes, and to make recommendations to the Deanery Synod. The committee consists of one clergy member and one lay member from each of the three groups of church (small, medium and large) as well as the Area Dean, the Lay Chair and the Secretary who are ex-officio.

Synod members split into three groups according to size of church, in order to elect members to this committee.

The elected members were:

Small churches: The Revd Chris Leslie (Loddon Reach), Mr Ron Best (St Mary Magdalene)

Medium churches: The Revd Elizabeth Ratcliffe (Christ Church), Roger Moore (Emmer Green St Barnabas)

Large churches: Mr Alan Cross (Greyfriars). No clergy stood for the clergy place.

7. Elections

i) Standing Committee

The Revd Judith Sumner (St Mary Minster) was elected to the vacant clergy space on this committee. There were no nominations for the vacant lay space.

ii) Mission and Pastoral Committee

The Revd Bernard Metcalfe stood for the PTO vacancy on this committee (having notified the Assistant Secretary in advance).

The Revd Adam Carlill (Tilehurst St George and St Mary Magdalen) stood for the West Reading Clergy vacancy on this committee (having notified the Assistant Secretary in advance).

There being no other nominations, these places were filled.

There were no nominations for the South Reading Clergy vacancy, which remains unfilled.

iii) Parish Share Committee

Members of this committee had already been elected under item 6. It was proposed that the terms of reference for this committee should be altered so that the Deanery Treasurer is an ex-officio member of this committee. This was unanimously agreed.

8. Administration

a) Minutes of last synod meeting.

The minutes of the last meeting were unanimously agreed with no corrections.

b) Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

c) Deanery notices

There were no notices.

d) Meeting venues for 2017.

A request was made for volunteers to host future Synod meetings. Venues were needed where furniture can be rearranged to facilitate sitting in small groups. Members should be in touch with the Secretary or Assistant Secretary.

e) AOB

There was no other business.

9. Closing prayer and depart

The Revd Graeme Fancourt led the Synod in praying together and the meeting finished at 21.35 hours.

Signed
(chair)

Date