

MEETING MINUTES: WITNEY DEANERY SYNOD

Monday 19th October 2015

St. John the Baptist, Burford

Welcome and Introduction – Kevin Rillie

Thanks to Richard, Lucy and team for hosting and for all the work and refreshments

Apologies listed on last page.

Please ensure that new members are communicated to the Deanery Administrator and a contacts sheet completed.

Acceptance of last minutes (Meeting 4th June 2015). No matters arising.

Proposed: Ann Boutflower; Seconded: Charles Mathew Motion passed.

General Synod Update

The Rev'd Hugh Lee sent his apologies for not being able to attend his last Deanery Synod with us – he did not stand for re-election. He sent his report which was sent round with the agenda and is available online on the Witney Deanery website.

Election results were not discussed as not yet published.

Inspiration

Rev'd Philip Sutton - Head of Chaplaincy & Bereavement Services, Oxford Hospitals Trust

Thoughts on the value of the church buildings and the congregation at a time of loss and bereavement.

How do you value your churches, contents and congregations? How significant are they and who do you ask to assess? Thames Valley Police, Bereavement services, Coroners services and Social Services would all say they have massive value and great resource. Bereavement and loss part of every day life.

How to find quiet and contemplation in the stress of life and loss - chancels and chapels are very important in this. At JR 250 people every day come to use the chapel.

45 children die unexpectedly every year in Oxfordshire.

3000 babies die in first year of life (not to include miscarried or still born) every year.

Suicide in children is increasing especially in those aged between 15 – 19 years 5 children last year committed suicide.

This deanery is at high risk of tragedies due to the A40.

Kingston Bagpuize and Witney have had recent tragedies. People gathered at these local churches for comfort, rituals, build memories, find peace. Separation of communities occurs when victim and perceived perpetrator live in same area. Support services come to speak to local communities at churches. What do we offer when no words to be said, no place to gather?

How can we be salt and light in our communities?

- **Calling and purpose**

Bringing prayer into the business rather than separate bible study.

Need Deanery MAP, and this is going to be the theme of this and the next two Synods.

Who are we and what we are for?

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Teaching people to obey: Disciple follows a teacher, emulates them. Make disciples not believers (James: even the devil believes and trembles).

“We live in difficult times”... it is always difficult times. Challenges we get are different in different areas. The Church is not in decline on a world wide basis, despite what is happening in UK.

What is the church for?

Purpose of church is to be hands and feet of Jesus in fulfilling what he came to do.

Please send in your MAP if you have not – the documents have been resent.

- **MAP** - structuring, equipping and enabling across the Deanery for the next ten years.

Look at how resources going to be deployed within the Deanery. Lay Chairs meeting shows that a lot of house building going on 25000 houses in Oxon over next 15 years. How does church continue to serve the people across this area and efficiently and effectively? Active churches need to go into new housing estates. Where is the need? Where are the people? How are we going to do it?

We are the body of Christ, not the building of Christ. Challenge of where churches are located and no longer center of communities.

The Witney Deanery MAP has started to be worked on using the information we have from parishes so far. It is aiming to be a document that would be useful to everyone from Bishop Colin to PCC. Used Diocesan guide and information so far from submitted MAPs. Trying to build from bottom up.

What do you need us to do? What are you doing? How can Deanery synod support, assist, coordinate? What common vision is there?

Please raise the Deanery MAP at your next PCC, to ensure we get feedback and information.

Skeleton document containing the background information and feedback from MAPs from parishes received to date had been considered by Standing Committee. It will be released after introducing it at this meeting. The work on this document will then continue as we receive more MAPs and we will discuss and finalise it over the next couple of synods.

Ducklington is currently interregnum. In the process of trying to fill the vacancy there has been about future and fulfilling requirement – do they need to go for a full time vicar instead of house for duty. The church is active, thriving and very busy despite difficult

geographic location on edge of Witney. It is an example of considering resources, what is needed for the future etc.

Ann Boutflower pointed out that increased housing and pressure on surgeries, schools etc has been raised, but the accelerated movement of migrants not been mentioned. The Lay chair pointed out that compassion, awareness and different issues are raised by migration. Some people coming to the new estates will be displaced whether from UK or other countries. The deanery could join with Bishops to pressure on the Councils to help with immigration.

In the Men's ministry group there has been discussion about how Chaplaincy gives people the opportunity to speak. This is still a Deanery priority and needs to be drawn into the MAP agenda.

Elizabeth Knowles said that while she respected the decision not to deliver a document from the top down, as there are references to outline draft plan, there must be something in place.

The Lay chair agreed there is a skeleton document that needs to be fleshed out by the MAPs received from the parishes. We are reliant on getting the MAP from parishes back as soon as possible to get this sent round. It is hoped that everyone will send in their MAP so that there is a document to be distributed and then discussed at January Synod and to be finalized at the Synod in May.

Philip Rogers- Yelford raised the issue that we need to find places to meet to support new communities – can we talk to developers to include church buildings? Also in the MAP how are the needs of little parishes going to be included alongside needs of the big parishes?

Neil Traynor attended a Diocesan meeting on building new communities. He reported that if a developer builds over 1000 homes they have to include infrastructure such as schools, roads, shops, community and church. If however they build less than this number of homes, it is thought that existing infrastructure can support them.

The Lay Chair also pointed out that the MAPs is not about buildings and no one is trying to close churches. The MAP is meant to be a sustainable plan for the next 10 years, it needs to be viable, sustainable and aid growth. The difficulties of rural churches are very much acknowledged.

- **Business Resourcing the Vision – Finance**

Making the MAP work does not fall to the ministers in the deanery. The plan needs to include where are resources to be deployed and how to make them work and cost-effective.

Sue Campbell, the deanery treasurer said that in her post over past 8 years, she has been trying to look at how we help each other and find schemes to provide mutual support and generosity. This is the only way to make the Deanery MAP sustainable..

The full finance report was circulated prior to the meeting.

Sue raised the point that there has been no feedback, despite requests, on what stewardship has been done. The aim is to be build a website of ideas and resources, but we need input to provide support.

Paying the Parish share by Direct debit is to be encouraged as gives good planning and greater discount to parishes.

More help is required urgently on the finance committee please.

There has been a maximum increase in the parish share for next year. Partly because we have 4 house for duty posts and partly due to increase in relative incomes. Our share should have increased by 15 – 20%, but we have transitional capped increase.

Neil Traynor raised the point that last year the diocese had surplus, reserves of over 3 months. Sue Campbell reported that the reserves have been capped at 3 months and the diocese has given cash back to the deaneries.

Philip Rogers Yelford – it is important not to push anything through about unrestricted shares as needs to be through PCCs.

The Lay chair stood in to first thank Sue. We hit target last year led through Sue's work, but we still have to get 100% by end of November.

Mark Albert raised that the first resolution raised in the finance report is a series of proposals that agreed before. Sue elaborated that the only area to change is the Deanery allowance, we can't do it same way as before as the Diocese has changed policy for house for duty posts. The only thing about reserves is that where parishes have no reserves, they may need more help, there is no talk of raiding reserves.

Sue said that resolution 2 will be dropped for now but people must be aware that we need to discuss it again, so please feedback to PCCs. The consequence of dropping resolution 2 is that Parish Share targets are not SMART targets, so some parishes will struggle to meet them. Therefore a new proposal is needed that the additional rebate we have received from the Diocese in 2015 is used to help those parishes. This will be at January synod.

Motion 1: The balance of the Glebe Rebate and the transitional adjustment should be used as the Deanery allowances and allocated to parishes so that their increase in parish share reflects their ability to pay as measured by the ratio of parish share to unrestricted income and the size of unrestricted reserves.

Accept finance report with Motion 1 included, but 2 removed.

Proposed: Mark Albert Seconded: Rod Craig

23 for, 1 against, 9 abstentions - Motion carried

We need to involve PCCs in future for an alternative to motion 2. 80% of share covers cost of minister, rest is Deanery admin, diocesan costs, projects etc (leaflet on Parish Share is available).

Richard Coombs stood up to say that he was most opposed to motion 2 as probably affects Burford more. It feels like a tax. He proposed that change discussion so that partnership between parishes. Clergy have never spoken about it in this terms. Burford's principle is that they don't give mission they support mission.

Sue Campbell has been working trying to set up such partnerships and hopes now that this will happen.

Business

Area Dean's Notices – The Rev'd Toby Wright

Thanks to Ron Curtis for covering for the sabbatical period and to Kevin, Sue and others for their work in that time.

- The Episcopal vacancy continues. The CNC meetings are 4th February 2016 and 7-8th March 2016
- Deanery Treasurers – 3rd November from 6.30pm. This is open to anyone who is interested in finance or joining finance committee as well as treasurers. Let Mandy (admin@witneydeanery.org) know if not treasurer and want to come.
- Schools ministry continues to develop. Plan to hold an evening to support foundation governors next year
- Also next year aim to hold an event for charities across deanery

Other important matters

- Next meeting:
Wednesday 27th January 2016 – St John's, Carterton
Wednesday 25th May 2016 – Venue tbc. May change once Visitation date received
Monday 10th October 2016 – venue needed please - any offers to host please contact Mandy, admin@witneydeanery.org
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Attendees:

Rev'd Toby Wright (Area Dean), Kevin Rillie (Lay Chair), Sue Campbell (Treasurer)
Standing Committee: John Glanville, Charles Mathew, Rev'd Drew Tweedy
Mandy Studley (Administrator)

Pamela Barling (Alvescot), Sue Meech (Asthall & Swinbrook with Widford), Mark Albert & Ann Boutflower (Bampton with Clanfield), Eileen Wojciechowska (Black Bourton), Rachel Vander Elst & Gaynor Taylor (Burford), Ian Griffiths (Carterton), Barbara Eaton, Mark Kingston & Elizabeth Knowles (Cogges), Ian Paul (Ducklington), John Eustace (Kencot), Judith Warwick & Judy Balmer (Minster Lovell), Roderick Craig (North Leigh), Donald Chamberlain (Shilton), Susie Miles & Alison Shaw (Standlake), Michael Russell (Taynton), Helen Meyrick & Phil Platt (Witney) Philip Rogers (Yelford)

James Maddern (Brize Norton & Carterton), Rev'd Richard Coombs (Burford), Rev'd Simon Kirby & Rev'd Dr. Nick Pike (Cogges), Rev'd Harry MacInnes & Rev'd David Spence (Shill Valley & Broadshire Benefice), Rev'd Neil Traynor (Witney)

Observers (unable to vote)

Jayne Lewin (Alvescot), Diane Blackett for Gillian Allison (Broughton Poggs cum Filkins)
Andrew McCulloch (Cogges)

Apologies:

Ron Curtis (Assistant Area Dean)

Betty Holmes (Brize Norton), Georgina Lewis (Broadwell), Gillian Allison (Broughton Poggs cum Filkins), John Pearson & Martin Dines (Ducklington), David MacFarlane (Kelmescott), Anne Hichens (Langford), Melanie Poole (Little Faringdon), Sheila Caygill (Northmoor), Judith Poole (South Leigh), Moray Angus (Westwell), Shukrananda Gant (Witney)

Rev'd Cedric Reavley (Finance Committee / Burford Benefice), Rev'd David Lloyd (Bampton), Rev'd Dr. Robert Wainright (Burford), Rev'd Bill Blakey (Carterton & Brize Norton), Rev'd Margaret Dixon (Cogges, South Leigh & North Leigh), Rev'd Karen Young (Shill Valley & Broadshire Benefice), Rev'd Alastair Blaine, Rev'd Joy Hance & Rev'd Sally Wright (Witney)
