

RICKMANSWORTH DEANERY SYNOD: 'We are the body of Christ'

SYNOD OFFICERS

Rural Dean:	The Revd Deborah Snowball, The Vicarage, Bury Lane, Rickmansworth WD3 1ED	01923 772627
Lay Chairman:	Duncan Kerr, Lavender Lodge, Nightingales Lane, Chalfont St Giles HP8 4SR	01494 763481
Treasurer:	Rupert Barnes 4 Rugby Way, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth WD3 3PH	01923 897875
Secretary:	Alex Twells, 12 Greenbury Close, Chorleywood, Rickmansworth WD3 5QT	01923 448167

Minutes of the Synod in St Andrew's Chorleywood, 8pm, Thursday 30th October 2014

Members of the House of Clergy (15 current members)

Present (8): Deborah Snowball (Rural Dean), Charles Burch, Rachel Gibson, Miriam Mугan., David White, David Hall, Robert Riley-Braley, Charles Parry

Apologies (5): Charles Burch, David Short, Michel du Saire, Simon Cutmore, Jairo Nyaongo Others absent (2)

Members of the House of Laity (31 current members)

Present (25): Duncan Kerr (Lay Chair), Allan Brown, Pauline Brown, Ivan Carter, Maggie Goldthorpe, Michael Lench, Anne Oke, Rupert Barnes, Jane Brading, Fran Bennett, Jo Gardner, Gill Gowing, Clare Endicott-Johnson, Andrew Farr, Geoffrey Roberts, Janet Anders, Judith Palfreman, Terence Russoff, John Marsh, Julie Shepherd, Bill Seddon, David Cansdale, Alan Wills, John Rhodes, Alex Twells (Secretary).

Apologies (4): Judy Olney, Tony Barton, Sam Devadoss, Les Palmer. Others absent (2)

Observers None present

1. Opening Worship The Vicar of St Andrew's, Canon David White, began with prayer, followed by a short talk on Ezekiel 34:15. The worship ended with another prayer and the Lord's Prayer said together.

2. Welcome The Rural Dean welcomed everybody and read out apologies already received.

3. Minutes of the Deanery Synod on 26th June 2014 These were accepted and signed as a true record.

4. Matters Arising (other than items below)

a. (Item 11a) Clergy Pensions. Bill Seddon had enquired of the Bishop of Manchester (the General Synod pensions specialist). As there was general assent that this matter be pursued Deborah proposed that Bill Seddon and Rachel Gibson draw up a paper as the basis for a motion at the next Deanery Synod. The proposal was approved by a large majority.

[Agenda Item 11 was taken next]

11. Deanery Mission Action Plan (DMAP)

Miriam Mугan gave a progress report. The Working Group comprised four members: Clare Endicott-Johnson (Christ Church), Gill Gowing (St Mary's), Judith Palfreman (St Andrew's) and herself. The work comprised Phase 1 (Look), 2 (Discern), 3 (Plan).

Work in Phase 1 (Look) is using four sources: ONS, Diocesan Data, Parish MAPs and Specific Questionnaires for completion by parishes. Among the facts obtained about the Deanery are: that its population is approx 48,700; it has pockets of poverty; it is predominantly white middle-class, with a small but growing number of residents from other ethnic groups; it has no dedicated places of worship for people of other faiths.

Analysis of the 2011 Census reveals that, of the parishes, Christ Church has the highest proportion of owner-occupied housing (92%) and the lowest proportion of rented accommodation (8%); St Mary's has the highest proportion of privately-rented accommodation (24%); Mill End has the highest proportion of socially-rented housing (21%) as well as the highest proportion of people over 60 receiving Pension Credit (14%). Sarratt has the highest proportion of people aged 16-74 with no formal qualifications (24%).

In the Deanery as a whole only 1% suffer from 'very bad health', while no parish has more than 3% with 'bad health'. The age profile of people attending church is the same as in 2001, while there has been a gradual decline in attendance at all churches since 2001; the number of baptisms has also declined.

The scope for sharing good practice seems to lie in joint training in the areas of Safeguarding, Parenting, Marriage Course, and Stewardship / Giving in Grace.

Turning to Phase 2 (Discern), Miriam invited those present to form into small groups to consider four issues: In what way do you think the Deanery can engage more pro-actively across member churches?; What areas of work/ministry do you think we could undertake collaboratively, listing in order of priority?; What specifically are the key areas of mission and ministry that should be included in the DMAP, listing in order of priority?; What mission partnerships are there in the Deanery - between Anglican churches and churches of other denominations - and how do they contribute to mission in the Deanery's area?

As feedback, a general discussion ensued. Miriam asked each small group leader to keep the group's notes. She also asked that if any Synod member had ideas for consideration by the Working Group, would he/she please send them to Alex.

5. Financial Matters

- a. Parish Share Factor (PSF) Review. Deborah explained the background to the Review and advised that the DSPC recommended that no change be made in PSFs for the three years 2016-2018. This was agreed by the Synod. (For information: the PSFs add up to 15.7 for the Deanery.)
- b. Temporary (Pastoral Aid) Support Grants for 2015. No application had been received from parishes.

6. Deanery Synod Matters

Deborah announced that the DSPC had agreed that from the start of 2015 Deanery Synods would be held, unless exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise, on the 4th Thursday of January, May and September, and DSPC meetings on the 4th Thursday of February, June and October. **NOTE:** See *Item 13a below*.

7. Deanery-wide Events

- a. Deanery Quiz Evening. A Deanery Quiz Evening will be held in St Oswald's Church Hall, Croxley Green on Saturday 24th January. Further details will be sent to parishes soon.
- b. Deanery Ascension Day Service. This will be on Thursday 14th May, and the venue will be notified shortly.
- c. Retreat in Daily Life. This will be held from 21st to 28th June, with the same format as last time. Rachel Gibson will send details soon.
- d. Evening of Spiritual Refreshment. This event, scheduled for 17th July, was cancelled due to lack of numbers. Deborah asked for a show of hands to endorse a second attempt in 2015, and approval was granted. She will send out details.

8. Diocese-wide Events

- a. Diocesan Synod 18th October. A report had been distributed on 22nd October. The only comment was a question by Maggie Goldthorpe, who, referring to the continuing increases in Parish Shares each year, asked why the Church of England was not cutting its costs. Deborah advised that Parish Treasurers have facts relating to this matter as they are sent this information, as well as in attendance at a Diocesan Budget presentation.
- b. Diocesan Group for the Ministry of Healing. Rachel Gibson drew attention to the day event on 8th November in St Stephen's Church, St Albans, starting at 9.30am, with teaching in the morning and a Service in the afternoon.

9. Visit of Archbishop Justin Welby

It was announced that the Archbishop will spend three days in the diocese from 18th to 20th June 2015.

10. National Church Events

- a. General Synod July 2014. A report had been distributed on 11th August. There were no questions but Bill Seddon announced that both Houses of Parliament had approved the admission of women to the episcopate and the only remaining step was promulgation by General Synod on 17-18 November.
- b. A Season of Invitation. Deborah reminded parishes of this C of E initiative to invite newcomers to a series of services during the autumn based on Back-to-Church Sunday, Harvest, Remembrance Sunday, a Carol Service and a Christmas Service. Bovingdon devised a programme for this autumn. Parishes taking part should register via the Diocesan website.

12. Pastoral Matters Deborah advised she would be taking a period of Extended Study Leave from 11th January to 10th April and that Miriam Mugan had been appointed by the Bishop as acting as Rural Dean for this period.

13. Any other business

- a. Date of next Synod. Because of the *Deanery Review* timetable the next Synod will be on 19th February. As well as a Deanery Review presentation, David Nye, chairman of the DBF, will speak on the Diocesan Budget.
- b. Deborah thanked Janet Anders and helpers for the refreshments provided.

14. Closing Prayer

Duncan led with the General Synod prayer (adapted):

Almighty God, You have given your Holy Spirit to the Church to lead us into all truth: bless with the Spirit's grace and presence the members of the Deanery Synod; keep them steadfast in faith and united in love, that they may manifest your glory and prepare the way of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen.

Deborah followed with the Rickmansworth Deanery Synod prayer (words as in the minutes of 26th June Synod) and then closed the meeting with the Grace at 9.50pm.

Distribution: All Synod members, others present, Richard Lyne (DMPC link), The Revd Linda Woollacott (Methodist link), The Ven Jonathan Smith, Emma Critchley (P&A Sec).

(sgd) Rural Dean