

ANDOVER DEANERY SYNODS IN 2019

Three Deanery Synod meetings were held during the year in January, May and September.

A number of courses were run in the deanery – Alpha courses at Wallops, Anna and Downs, and Bible Society courses in Knights Enham and Pastrow. Anna also ran Pete Greig's Prayer Course. A number of parishes had also registered as Eco churches and were working towards the bronze award.

At the start of the year work on the Pioneer Hub based at Knights Enham was moving forward but sadly it was eventually shelved because we had been unable to appoint a Pioneer Minister who would have worked outside the local church using outreach and evangelism to build new churches.

The Diocesan Deployment Plan paper, put together after consideration of all the information gathered at the many meetings, was considered at the Diocesan Synod meeting in October. Conference will make decisions regarding the Deployment Plan and various results will follow with specific plans and actions over the next 5-10 years. While this was happening our own DMPC plan would remain on hold.

Rev Alex Randle-Bissell updated the trial of Benefice of the Future in Pastrow which was moving away from the title of BoF and concentrating on Developing the Family. Seven projects were in progress at present, and re-branding was in progress. The Retreat Centre at Tangley was moving forward with five retreats this year. Future governance was being investigated – how can you manage so many PCC's in one benefice, when it is hard to find churchwardens and church officers. A Chapel of Ease pilot was being looked at where local people looked after churches. Pastrow also found that they were being overwhelmed by funerals.

A Half Night of Prayer was held at St Thomas's Charlton in March but has now been discontinued due to lack of support. The Deanery Confirmation Service was well attended locally but was not well supported across the Deanery.

In September Rev Phil Dykes gave a succinct talk about the Bishop's Commission for Mission Programme, including how the project had been initiated and developed and what streams were available. To date the programme had trained 321 people comprising 97 Pastoral, 152 worship, 5 Evangelism, 6 Growing Faith and 61 Children, Youth and Families.

In his reports Area Dean Rev Trevor Lewis asked members to try and make Deanery Synod meetings more relevant and progressive by offering ideas. 2019 saw a full revision of electoral rolls, and the Diocese reminded us that names only must be displayed but not addresses. It was also now a requirement that all PCC members need to be DBS checked, and all PCC members were encouraged to complete the basic Safeguarding Training Course which can be carried out online.

Lay Chair Andrew Kent reminded Synod of the Four objectives of our Deanery Plan and said that progress was being made but more work needed to be done. The aim of developing more lay ministry was going well but we still needed more candidates for BCM programmes. Chapter were focusing on identifying ways of getting people to consider vocations. Developing a viable structure for rural ministry was temporarily held up as we waited for details of the new Diocesan Deployment plan. At a meeting with bishops Andrew Kent had made the point to Bishop Tim that he will need to trust the laity with significant parts of his responsibilities and the laity need to be involved and used. Encouragingly, Bishop Tim acknowledged that we need to change

significantly in order to bring forward the Kingdom of God. He has said that we need to be brave, creative, do the undoable and break the mould. Decisions will be made at Diocesan Synod which will affect us in Andover Deanery, benefices and parishes. pMAPS and bMAPS were due soon and Trevor advised that we should not attempt too much – do a few things really well!

On Deanery Finance Michael Coleman regularly reported progress on the Common Mission Fund and said it was really good to see where we were compared to a few years ago, and Pamela Woolgrove updated balances on our Deanery Current and Overseas accounts. At a meeting of the Standing Committee because we had a considerable balance on the current account, Pamela had suggested that we should not ask parishes for their annual contribution this year and Deanery Synod approved this motion unanimously.

New to the deanery were Rev Chris Bradish, Rev Simon Robertson and Rev Sam Scott (all St Mary's Andover), and Rev Tom Etherton (Pastrow). Two Time for God youth workers from Cameroon and Uganda were also welcomed at Pastrow and Anna benefices.

Among those leaving us were Rev Peter Gilks and Rev Sandra Williams who would be greatly missed. Trevor said that it might be 9-12 months before appointments could be made to these two clergy vacancies due to possible Diocesan Conference decisions. The sad deaths of Sue Smale and Clive Judd were reported and a minutes silence was observed by Synod.

It was noted that Bishop David did not wish to be held to the following insert added to the May Synod minutes under the Deanery Update section. "In response to a question from Andrew Kent, Bishop David indicated that, following the promise to the Diocese of central funding, he no longer needed to come on a 'raiding party' to rural parishes to transfer ministers to urban parishes."

Good News from the Parishes continued to highlight the wide range of events taking place right across the deanery, including Messy Church, Holiday Clubs, Harvest meals, Advent Challenge, Kid's Club, Open the Book, concerts, a Pilgrim's Walk and a Painting and Drawing Day.

Peter Eastwood
Deanery Secretary
31 April 2020