

STROUD DEANERY SYNOD  
Minutes of the meeting held on  
Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2016, 7.30pm  
at Lakefield School, Frampton-on-Severn

1. **Welcome:** The Lay Chair, Margaret Sheather, warmly welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked Frampton for their kind hospitality.
2. **Present/Apologies:** There were 46 Synod members present, as per the Register, with apologies received from: Revd Malcolm King, who is currently unwell, Revd Simon Howell, Mrs Sandra Tucker, Mr Neil Smith, Mrs Gillian Harris, Mrs Mary Tyler, Mrs Janet Ryan, Prof Jenny Tann, Mr Bernard Twiddy, Mr Mike Campbell, Mrs Margaret Stewart, Mr David Groom, Mrs Corinne Aldis, Mrs Lydia Savage, Miss Iris Trask, Mrs Toni Lambert, Mrs Wendy Hanvey, Mrs Heather Fletcher.
3. **Prayer** – The meeting began with prayer led by Revd Anne Spargo.
4. **Minutes of the last meeting** held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015 at Cainscross Church Hall were accepted as a true & accurate record.

**Matters arising** – +R's visit to the Deanery in early January went extremely well. She really enjoyed meeting everyone and getting to know the Deanery. She has gone away with lots of inspiring ideas, having had a very good experience with us.

5. **Speakers: Revd Helen Bailey & Revd Mike Smith – Spiritual Nurturing & Development**

Helen recited the entertaining story of a 'big fat Greek adult baptism class', from the first enquiry made by one member of a family, to the whole extended family taking part in the classes. The very positive experience culminated in many of the family becoming regular members of the church congregation. Helen highlighted the lack of Christian teaching after leaving school and the need to grasp the opportunities that may arise to continue people's faith journey. Being aware of the needs of our congregations, how we meet these needs and the ways we can help develop faith as well as discipleship. The balance between the 'mutual encounter', something that just pops up, and the planned strategic approach.

The Deanery Mission Action Plan helps us to work through what our priorities are, as well as helping us to discern the sense of direction that we may need to go in.

Helen also mentioned Junior Church, an initiative set up in her previous benefice, where a course was set up particularly for young people, with creative prayer stations, looking at more active ways to engage with the faith story. Also the importance and positive effect of living life through faith in the home.

Mike Smith told the story of an initiative that had completely transformed the life of a church. From a small house group meeting of half a dozen people meeting every week, to inviting the whole congregation to take part in '40 days of purpose' based around 'The Purpose Driven Life' They undertook during that time to read a passage each day for 40 days and also take part in small group discussions. 85% agreed. It became for many a transformational and enjoyable experience, finding a deeper meaning and understanding and also realizing the many gifts and talents of others. 8 of the groups continued to meet and have developed into the groups being linked into Sunday sermon slots. Groups were then tasked to increase to 12 from within their geographical area, at which time they split to create more groups and also to find some kind of function within their county. Each year groups are invited to lead a service, which can be about anything, feeding in ideas for outreach within their communities.

Small groups of Christians meeting can be the catalyst for much bigger things!

Mike mentioned a number of very useful books: Interactive Study Bible, Developing Healthy Christians, The Purpose of Life.

*Break for small group discussions*

Groups were asked to consider three questions (Full responses/ideas as per the attached sheet).

One point from each group was highlighted:

- Grasping opportunities - particularly with changing patterns of services.  
C of E Schools – they are a wealth of talent, including Open the Book
- Dreaming Dreams – (Sevenside) Starting in January, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday each month 'Celebrate Sunday' in the local community Centre, based where the majority of people live who do not come to church.
- Not always focusing on the 'building' but rather the relationship with the people in it.
- The difficulties of being a very small congregation, with limited people resources
- Social occasions bring people together: inviting baptism friends/outings

*Break for Coffee for 15 mins*

**6. Deanery Standing Committee** – The Lay Chair reported that Prof Jenny Tann has now stood down as a member of the Deanery Standing & Pastoral Committee, leaving a vacancy for a lay representative. Nominations were invited from the House of Laity. Mrs Corinne Aldis has expressed an interest in joining the committee, and as no other nominations were forthcoming, Corinne will be invited to join as the new lay representative.

**7. Journeying Together – Deanery Action Plan** – ‘Green Shoots’ connected to our Plan  
Revd Mike Holloway - The Beacon Benefice

1. New LMT and Mission Team for the Benefice
2. Young people – Recognised the need to do something new for Club Pulse (Young secondary school age children) that meets in Painswick. ‘On-Fire’ service started on a Friday evening – very successful, which is also attracting some of the older members of the congregation, helping youngsters to really feel part of the community.

**8. Pastoral Re-Organisation** – Update

The Lay Chair confirmed that the papers circulated for information with the Agenda for this meeting refers to one more post being included in the proposal. The suggestion has come from the Archdeacon and it is a matter for the Diocese to decide whether we can afford it or not. The proposal outlined in the document has now gone out for consultation with the parishes concerned. It was taken to the Diocesan Mission & Pastoral Group on the 28<sup>th</sup> January, where it was discussed and largely given the go-ahead. It has since gone back to the parishes concerned to give them a further opportunity to discuss and feedback. It has also gone to Bishops Council and senior staff. A Draft Scheme will be prepared, hopefully by the end of April, at which time the formal consultation process will begin, before the Scheme is submitted to the Church Commissioners. This legal process will need to be completed before any posts can be filled.

Col Andy Hodson synod member from Frampton expressed his concern at the term ‘appropriate’ in the draft proposal, relating to the time between appointments, as they had already gone through a lengthy gap prior to the current appointment and do not see the need for further delay. Also unhappy with the change in the approach to how Parish Share is calculated, particularly as they are just about to lose their HforD priest and feel they should be able to reduce their commitment accordingly.

The Lay Chair acknowledged his concerns but during any vacancy there is a formal process which we have to follow. Until the proposed pastoral re-organisation and scheme is finalised it would be impossible to advertise particular posts as these may well change - It will be a priority to appoint the Team rector post first. Indeed, in many cases during a vacancy people do step up, rise to the challenges and new talents and skills are often realised.

Funding for 3 or 4 posts, who will make the decision? Once the scheme comes back it will be up to the Diocese to make the decision (Team Rector, 2 Team Vicars and 1 Pioneer Minister). The Archdeacon does not see this Deanery working with less than the proposed numbers. Funding will continue to be an issue.

## **Reports**

**9.1 Update Parish Share Scheme 2016** – Thanks to everyone who accepted the plea sent out in the New Year. We are now in a much better position financially because of the positive responses to the new PS allocations. There are still one or two parishes to confirm their contribution. Some will find it very challenging to meet what they have offered. We all know that Parish Share targets have been a struggle, but we do really need to keep working at meeting these commitment across the whole Deanery.

**9.2 Diocesan Synod Meeting 6<sup>th</sup> February 2016** – The Lay Chair outlined the main topics discussed:  
**Presentation by Ben Preece-Smith** - an overview of the Diocese, using information by Experian – population numbers, distribution of wealth, ministry rural/urban across the whole area. Ben has been invited to come along to our next Deanery Synod meeting in June to run a similar exercise in Benefice Groups to help us build up a clearer Deanery picture.

### **Business points:**

**Helena Arnold**, Diocesan Director of Education, is leaving her full time post – Farewell Evensong in the Cathedral on 24<sup>th</sup> February – everyone welcome. She will continue in an advisory role.

**Annual report of the Safeguarding Board** – A programme of audits will take place over the coming year – PCC’s reminded to keep this in focus.

**Financial update** – The end of year budget is coming up close to balance, so the overall position is looking much better. Everyone was thanked for their continued commitment and support.

**Bishop of Tewkesbury** – Formal agreement was made for the need to re-appoint to the post.

**Report** – Looking at how in this Diocese we can respond to the national programme of ‘shared conversations’ concerning scripture, sexuality etc, with the changing expectations of society – sharing different views and coming to mutual understandings.

**9.3 Deanery Office Funding** – Detailed sheets circulated on behalf of Interim Deanery Treasurer, Mike Lambert, for the Deanery Office Accounts for 2015 and also a financial projection for 2016. Parishes were thanked for their contributions towards supporting the Deanery Office, which continues to make a huge difference in the smooth running of the Deanery and provide support for the Area Dean, with his every increasing duties.

Special thanks to Sally for all her hard work and to Mike for stepping up to help oversee the finances until a permanent Deanery Treasurer can be found.

The funding of the office is based on a % of Parish Share contribution, which in one or two cases is still to be confirmed. We may be short if more shortfall is seen, but this will be clearer once all responses are received. Query over ‘Area Dean’s expenses’ seen in the accounts. Historically, an amount claimed quarterly by the Area Dean as part of his expenses, and made as a contribution to help support the work of the Deanery Office. (Equating to approx. £1000 per year).

10. **Deanery Services**

- **Deanery Ascension Day Service** – Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2016, 7.30pm at St Laurence Church, Stroud
- **Archdeacon’s Visitation** – Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2016 – St George’s Church, Nailsworth

11. **Meeting Dates for 2016**

Standing/Pastoral Committee 10am-12 noon all at The Vicarage, Stroud	Deanery Synod all at 7.30 pm	Speaker/Topic
May 24 <sup>th</sup> <i>Upstairs Lounge St Laurence Church Hall</i>	<b>June 8<sup>th</sup> <u>St Laurence Church, Stroud</u></b>	Strategic Planning Benn Preece-Smith Diocesan Secretary
September 20 <sup>th</sup>	<b>October 5<sup>th</sup> Cainscross Church Hall</b>	TBC

12. **Chair’s Announcements**

- **+Martyn Farewell Service** – Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2016, 4.30pm in The Cathedral – Everyone welcome, followed by refreshments.
- **APCM’s** – If you have any concerns about procedures, particularly if you are without an incumbent, do contact the Area Dean, or visit the Diocesan Website, under information for PCC Secretaries, where detailed guidance notes can be found, plus downloadable copies of all the required forms.  
Safeguarding Officers – The Diocese are currently updating their records. Please be aware each parish is required to have a ‘nominated person’ – lots of help, advice and training is available at the Diocese. *For further information please contact: Diocesan Safeguarding Officer Mrs Becca Faal (Wednesday, Thursday & Friday) 01452 835516 Email: [bfaal@glosdioc.org.uk](mailto:bfaal@glosdioc.org.uk)*  
*Out of hours safeguarding mobile: 079440680320*  
**Please be aware, if a situation did arise in a parish, without their being a safeguarding protocol in place, it would negate your insurance cover. Also, it is a clergy disciplinary measure if no person is in place.**
- **Deanery Website** – Is there anything else you would like to see added? We welcome suggestions for any improvements, please let Sally know.
- **Women within the Church** – Leaflets available, detailing the current position.

There being no other business the meeting closed with prayer.