

1. **Welcome:** The Area Dean, Revd Mike Smith, warmly welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly new any new members attending for the first time, and our guest speaker Revd Canon Dr Andrew Braddock, Diocesan Director of the Department of Mission and Ministry. A big thank you to Cainscross for hosting our meeting and to Jane and Mary for helping with the very welcome refreshments.
2. **Present/Apologies:** There were 37 Synod members present, as per the Register, with apologies received from: Audrey Ricks, Revd Deborah Curram, Revd Charles Minchin, Mike Campbell, Graham Collins, Harold Lay, Sarah Rogally, Ann Greaves, John Swann, Penny Lidstone, David Swinson, Janet Ryan, Jane Williams, Penny Sumsion, Bernard Twiddy, Corinne Aldis, Hazel Stacey, Ian Sullivan, Wendy Hanvey.

Mike Smith continued with a number of announcements:

- Following +Rachel's official announcement, Malcolm King retired at the end of September. Malcolm has requested no public farewell of any kind. There is a card for people to sign from members of Deanery Synod. A collection is being made within the Stroud Team - The family will be moving to Dursley in 10 days' time, where Rowena continues her curacy.
- Letter received from former Bishop Michael requesting our prayers – very unwelcome news, he has been diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor and has had to cancel all engagements. He is awaiting the results of further blood tests – please include him in your prayers.
- Following his recent Licensing, congratulations to Peter Francis who is now the Vicar of Rodborough, along with Brimscombe & Woodchester.

3. **Prayer** – The meeting began with prayer led by Revd Peter Quinnell

4. **Minutes of the last meeting** held on Wednesday 8th June 2016 at St Laurence Church, were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Matters arising – not already covered elsewhere on the Agenda:

- February Synod meeting - Statistical information, specific to each parish – We are still chasing Ben Preece-Smith for the links promised, following his visit to Synod back in February.

5. **Speaker: Revd Canon Dr Andrew Braddock – Journeying-on Vision 2016 – the next steps**

Andrew reminded us of the prayerful journey and process so far in +Rachel's Vision for the Diocese, to discern where God is leading us. Following the consultations over the summer, 6 thousand people from across the Diocese and the wider community at large have taken part and responded. Feedback has been collated and fed into a 48 hour retreat hosted by +R and a small group, which has led to the key themes and priorities laid out in the draft paper. Following the recent Deanery Plenary Meeting, further comments and suggestions were fed back by clergy at the Clergy Conference and the final statement is due to be published on the 18th November. A huge 'thank-you' to everyone who has taken part in the process, which has very much been a process 'from the grassroots' upwards.

+R is inviting everyone to the party of celebration on Saturday 26th November from 4pm – 6.30pm at Francis Close Hall over in Cheltenham (*specifically set in a more secular environment*) to mark the end of this next stage in the process. Over the next few years we will be tasked together to interpret these priorities into action on the ground, and how we might find our own place within them set in our own particular context. The statement will form a 'common framework within the Diocese' and will help to guide and shape our energies for the future.

Andrew confirmed that the whole process had led to a real sense of encouragement, confidence and optimism for the future at the recent Clergy Conference.

There followed a time for questions, including:

- **Are we going to have to draw up another Deanery Action Plan**, because the previous format was rather 'turgid and uninspiring'?
There will possibly be common themes across the Deaneries, with a keenness for training at Deanery Level, sharing best practice and developing partnerships across Deaneries. They are committed to create more stability for the longer term, particularly with the number of clergy.

- **Ordinands** – There is a very low level of people being trained for ministry. Is there any sign that we are going to up that within the Diocese itself?
Nationally, there are concerns that there are gaps. Gloucester Diocese is doing reasonably well compared to some others, but we are very aware of the part that we have to play in the wider church, and are keen to encourage more younger Ordinands.
- **Imagination** – Please can we have more imagination and openness to opportunities!
- **The younger generation** – digital/social media – much more needs to be done to reach youngsters in a way appropriate to them, Facebook, Instagram etc. We need to connect outside our own experiences, to help empower and encourage involvement, however small.
Very aware that this is a priority and partnership is the key to help empower youngsters to become involved. The Diocesan Communication Team has recently appointed a specialist on a 3 year contract to focus particularly on this, one of our weakest areas.
- **Working with other partnerships**, to be more open with our other ‘partners in faith’, e.g. Street Pastors in Stroud.
This point was highlighted in +R’s letter.
- **Diocesan Support** – *there are resources available – grassroots discussions – how can we support you/can we pool resources across other Deaneries for the good of all?*
- **Vision paper** – Can it be translated into another medium/more radical visual?
Acceptance that it was put together in rather a rush and could be sharper/more dynamic visually.
- **Celebration Party** – *The party is especially aimed at families, youth groups, Sunday School clubs etc. Please put the invitation out to them.*
- **Engaging with the younger generation** – Some parishes do not have schools within their boundaries and contact is mainly through Cubs/Scouts/Brownies, in fact any youth organisations with a Christian ethic. Christingle/Harvest/Remembrance vital opportunities to welcome youngsters into church.
- **What about the older generation?** – The importance of not forgetting the value of the older generation with possible hearing/sight problems. Hearing loops/large print service booklets – general awareness of the wider picture.
- **Relationships** – Everyone is welcome: A smile, an offer of kindness – the importance of a small seed planted ...

Mike thanked Andrew for the very useful update and taking the time to come and talk to us.

6. Pastoral Re-Organisation –

- Rodborough – Peter Francis has now been licensed as Priest-in-Charge of Rodborough. The formal scheme for Rodborough, Brimscombe & Woodchester to become one will be finalised in the very near future. House for Duty priest has been appointed to begin on 6th November.
- The Stroud Water Team – The name put forward as the most popular for the new West of Stroud Deanery Benefice! Two further meetings have been held by the Archdeacon with those parishes who expressed concerns. The Team Vicar and Team Rector from the North Cotswold Team attended, highlighting the benefits and advantages of a larger team and as a result the Scheme has now been signed-off by Bishops Council, gone to the Church Commissioners, and the formal document is with the Diocese now. The Scheme will now be put out for a final consultation period of 28 days. Barring any further hitches, it is hoped that the scheme will be in place by mid-November.

7. Lay Vacancy – Ian Marsh has now decided to retire after many years on the Standing & Pastoral Committee, particularly as Lay Chair. We are very grateful for all his hard work and commitment to our Deanery over that time. Mr Harold Lay from Oakridge has expressed a interest in joining the Committee – as no further nominations were forthcoming, Harold was duly elected. Rosie Woodall has kindly agreed to let him know. We do rely on the generosity of people coming forward to help out on such committees, for which we are very, very grateful.

8. Reports

8.1 Diocesan Synod – Lay Chair - Please see the attached report by the Lay Chair, particularly the slight change to the Diocesan Stipends Fund.

8.2 Parish Share 2016 – Lay Chair - Grateful thanks to all parishes for their efforts in keeping PS monies flowing in steadily, and we are generally on target for this time of the year. Your continued efforts and hugely appreciated.

Parish Share 2017 – In the last few days we have received the PS allocation for the coming year as follows:

Stroud	2017 £	2016 £
Parish share initial allocation	733,836	
Allocation of Diocesan Stipends Fund – bias to the poor	(10,264)	
Allocation of DSF – equal share between Deaneries	(10,927)	
Parish share allocation required from your Deanery	712,645	722,653

The good news is that due to the use of central funds, this is a less challenging allocation than we have seen in the past. Breakdown figures per Benefice will be out shortly – it will be up to each individual Benefice to decide on the allocation per parish. The implementation and long term success of the vision process, with all its exciting opportunities, will be dependent upon our continued generosity, both in terms of money and time.

Rea Dean - Margaret continues to oversee PS, in the absence of anyone coming forward to take on the role of Parish Share Officer - If anyone would like to step up and become the link between the parishes and the Diocese do please speak to us – this is a real plea, please.

- 8.3 Deanery Office Funding** – Mike Lambert, the Interim Deanery Treasurer, has kindly prepared a sheet updating the Deanery Office accounts for 2016, including a projected budget forecast for 2017, updated since its originally circulated with the Agenda, following release of the PS 2017 figure. Instead of the 1.3% for this year, this can now be reduced to 1.25% or 1.2% depending upon confirmed commitments from the parishes. Mike would like to recommend to Treasurers 1.25%, but once we know what the final commitments are going to be, we might be able to reduce this to 1.2%. We will need formal agreement of how we are going to fund the office at this meeting – a proposal was therefore made that we request 1.25% from Treasurers, but if we can reduce this figure we will. By show of hands, all in favour, with no votes against.

9. Meeting Dates for 2017

Standing/Pastoral Com.10am-12 noon all at The Church Office, Stroud	Deanery Synod all at 7.30 pm	Speaker/Topic
Tuesday 17th January	Wednesday 1st February at Horsley Church	Bishop Robert Springett
Tuesday 16th May	Wednesday 31st May St Laurence Church, Stroud	TBC
Tuesday 19th September	Wednesday 4th October at Cainscross Church Hall	TBC

10. Chair's Announcements

- For those not already aware, Archdeacon Robert Springett is to shortly become the new Bishop of Tewkesbury. He is keen to come and meet with Deaneries in the Gloucester Diocese and will be coming on a 2 day visit 1st & 2nd February. (*Open act of worship on the evening of 31st January, details tbc, followed by 2 days of visits to all the Deanery Clergy, including Synod on the evening of 1st February at Horsley Church*)
- Deanery Website – Please use the website and promote it to others. All the papers you need for Deanery Synod can be found there, also details of events happening around the Deanery. If you would like anything added, just drop Sally an email. Do please include a 'link' to the Deanery website on your own parish websites. If you have any other suggestions of things you would like to see included, please let us know.

11. AOB

Best wishes were expressed to Mike Smith on his appointment as Area Dean. Mike confirmed that he has agreed to take on the role for a period of 2 years, and that we are now looking for a new Assistant Area Dean.

- 12. Closing Prayer** - There being no other business, the meeting closed with The Grace.