

Annual Report of the Proceeding of the Woodstock Deanery Synod 2019

Synod met three times – on 13 February at St. Mary Magdalene Woodstock, 18 June at St. Bartholomew's Yarnnton and 13th November at St. Mary Magdalene Woodstock. The Annual Meeting was during the 18 June synod. Revd David Tyler (Hanborough and Freeland) presided over all the 2019 meetings as interim Area Dean.

At the February meeting the synod was advised that Marenka Roseby (Bladon) had resigned as secretary to the synod and the Area Dean appealed for a potential replacement to come forward. Ian Hale presented the accounts of the Deanery Quinquennial Inspections Fund covering the inspection of church buildings 3 in the deanery in 2018 and 5 more in 2019. New financials were proposed and agreed. The principal business was a presentation from Revd Charles Chadwick, Parish Development Advisor for the Diocese. A network of support has been set up and training courses are being developed to facilitate ministry in rural parishes across the Diocese. Support is also available from the Diocese to help foster links between the Church and rural schools, and a range of resources are available to enhance rural ministry. Rural parishes are also encouraged to share resources, including financial resources.

The June meeting included the Annual Meeting, which confirmed Anthony Watkinson (Bladon) as the deanery secretary. The Area Dean thanked those who had helped during the interregnum. The annual accounts were presented by Mike Sinfield and unanimously accepted. Mr Sinfield under another item explained the present state of interactions over the parish share arrangements with the diocese. There has been no progress. Mr Sinfield emphasised our aim is to meet the targets for the Deanery Recovery Scheme which is central to our strategy as we are enabled to meet the 100% target by the end of November. It looks as if we are taking advantage of the Deanery Mission Fund in 2019. The Area Dean mentioned how keen he is on parishes helping one another as an example of Christian fellowship. Also on the agenda was a presentation by Adrian Salter (Woodstock) on Digital Giving. The main item was a presentation about youth work from Ollie Shaw (Eynsham) currently partly seconded to the diocese and available to parishes in the deanery. He intends to report on initiatives he has become aware of in the deanery.

Maranda St. John Nicolle (World Development Advisor for the Diocese) spoke to the November meeting on Climate Change from a Christian Viewpoint. She described the steps which led her to accept the reality of climate change and the consequences. She offered ten pledges as some practical steps towards making a difference. Her recommendation was to do as many of the pledges as you think you can achieve. As usual Mike Sinfield spoke on the situation of the parish share arrangements. The Diocesan position was as before. The majority of those present accepted that it is too late now to do other than accept the 2020 share split. Mr Sinfield recommended that parishes who were unhappy could consider writing direct to the finance department at the Diocese. Under her agenda item the Lay Chair looked forward to the arrival of the new Area Dean who is making the journey south in the New Year and said 2020 is to be a year of pilgrimage and a year of cathedrals too. She thanked David Tyler for all his hard work as Area Dean, handed over two small tokens of our gratitude and announced that he is to be made an Honorary Canon of Christ Church Cathedral in January in recognition of his contribution to the diocese.

Current 2020 dates and venues for the synod: to be confirmed by the new Area Dean, Revd Jeremy Auld, when he is in position

3rd March Eynsham; 24th June Stonesfield; 12 November Woodstock

