

## Deanery Synod Report

Here are excerpts from the PCC minutes from the last year for the reports our Deanery Synod representatives made to the PCC:



### June 2023

The deanery has noted that it is one of only two deaneries in the diocese that is not subject to reductions in the number of stipendiary clergy. This is due to the significant amount of house building in the area. The deanery has yet to work out how to refocus clergy resource from current activities onto outreach to new estates.

### July 2023

Debbie Turley has been appointed as Assistant Area Dean following Mary Styles's move to another benefice. Jim Cox continues as Area Dean and Julian Lawrence as the other Assistant Dean. Richard Carpenter has been chosen as the new Lay Dean following the retirement from that role of Stephen Grimshaw. The role will see a focus on the development of lay ministries. Darren Chalmers continues as Assistant Lay Dean and Ruth Cook as secretary. Andy Wadsworth and Nick Griffin join the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group as clergy members, alongside Elizabeth Shearcroft. Roger Trigg and Martin Wakefield continue as DMPG members.

### October 2023

There had been a meeting with the bishops for Area Deans and Lay Deans on 16 September. The Bishop was keen to emphasise that the diocesan strategy is that:

- each of us is called by God" – together we are more than the sum of the parts
- we have a need to renew life of churches to pass on the story to new generations
- how do we offer our faith in new ways while valuing and cherishing what we have?
- start with what we have and don't worry about what we lack.

At a Lay Deans evening on 2 October, the Bishop observed that we have operated far too long on a Victorian model of church; especially for funding. Moving on will be a big change for, all, especially perhaps clergy. He recommended that in our deaneries we do not ask simply about God's vision for our church; rather ask what is God's vision for our community and therefore what sort of church might help.

### November 2023

The Deanery Synod meeting on 31 October 2023 focussed on training. Three speakers looked at different aspects available locally, in particular training for lay ministries. The diocese is developing a learning pathway for those exploring any form of ministry: after discernment, the pathway might follow a course structure, or mentoring, or apprenticeship, leading eventually to commissioning. Initially it will comprise common introductory sessions, and include established courses such as for Lay Pastoral Assistants and Lay Worship assistants, and will be progressively widened to cover other ministries. Synod was then informed about the Ministry Experience Scheme being run by Nick Griffin from Wilton, and Robin Lodge from St Andrews talked about Lay Worship Assistant training.

### March 2024

The February meeting of the Deanery Synod had focussed on the proposed revisions to the way that Parish Share requests are calculated. Matthew Pinnock of the diocesan staff gave a lengthy explanation and then took questions. His key point was that parishes need to either "grow worshippers" or cut costs.