



**THE DIOCESE OF ST EDMUNDSBURY AND IPSWICH
DIOCESAN SYNOD**

Minutes of a meeting of the Diocesan Synod held on Saturday 25 June 2022 at St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds.

Present:

House of Bishops:	Bishop Martin Seeley		(1 apology)
House of Clergy:	28 Members of the House	(8 additional ex-officio)	(25 apologies)
House of Laity:	33 Members of the House	(4 additional ex-officio)	(27 apologies)

In Attendance:

The Diocesan Registrar, 13 members of staff and 5 visitors.

Revd Canon Sharon Potter, Chair of House of Clergy, in the Chair

	WORSHIP
	Dwelling in the Word was led by Bishop Martin.
22.14	WELCOME
	Bishop Martin welcomed everyone and made specific acknowledgement to Catherine Banthorp, the new Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, the new Diocesan Secretary Gavin Bultitude and the new DBF Chair, Edward Creasy.
22.15	ALAN SMITH, FIRST CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSIONER
	Alan was appointed as Frist Church Estates Commissioner in September 2021. A brief biography can be found in paper DS(22)P15.
	Alan chairs the Church Commissioners' Assets Committee, a statutory committee responsible for the strategic management of the Church Commissioners' £9.2 billion investment portfolio. Alan gave Synod an oversight of The Church Commissioners, the 2023-25 triennium, and the decade ahead. This focused on supporting the church to deliver the bold outcomes and strategic priorities of the vision and strategy, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reaching the young and the poor, and better representing the communities we serve • helping the Church to transition to a lower carbon approach in line with Net Zero 2030 goal • making a step change in the area of Justice, in particular racial and social justice and other areas of diversity and inclusion • ensuring the Church is a safe place for all

The Church Commissioners intend to distribute £1.2 billion over 2023-25 (up from £930 million in 2020-22) and they hope to be able to maintain funding over the following two triennia, enabling a bold long-term investment in the ministry and mission of the Church of England of £3.6 billion over nine years. Their priority is to ensure the church is growing and is sustainable.

Alan also commented on what this would mean for our diocese which is in the process of applying for c£1.3m funding, over five years, from the Church Commissioners to bolster Growing in God from 2022 – 2026.

The full presentation and a copy of the slides can be found on the website.

Tony Allwood, Chair of the House of Laity, in the Chair

22.16 **GROWING IN GOD**

Revd Canon Dave Gardner, Director of Mission & Ministry gave a presentation outlining new resources to support the diocesan strategy of Growing in God which was first launched in 2015.

Growing in God is the diocesan strategy for realising the diocesan vision of "Flourishing congregations making a difference". It is underpinned by the gospel that invites us to celebrate the good news of God’s saving love. The diocese holds four priorities and these remain the same; to grow in depth, influence, number and younger.

The resources planned throughout 2022-2026 include the commitment to a new leadership programme, new materials to help support parishes discern their Plans for Growth, supporting all vocations and training those called to ministry, developing an online learning hub, funding being put into working with young people & families, and increasing the Growing in God fund to £35k per year for the next five years.

The full presentation can be found on paper ref DS(22)P16.1.

Questions:

Revd Alison Alder (Waveney & Blyth deanery) asked how the diocese is investing in growing in younger. Revd Canon Dave Gardner replied to say that should the funding bid be successful, some resources will be put into the growing younger workstream. +Martin commented that the proceeds from the sale of Leiston Abbey will be solely restricted for growing in younger resources.

Revd Laura Mumford (Thingoe deanery) asked how the diocese is reaching out to young couples without children. Revd Canon Dave Gardner responded to say there is a definite need to acknowledge this profile and not solely working with young families. He encouraged parishes to work together and share ideas across the diocese. Dave also encouraged parishes to use the Growth Fund to bid to help financially with any initiatives being set up.

The following comments were also made:

- Revd Canon Andrew Dotchin (Colneys deanery) commented that all parishes must be inclusive and welcoming to all, or the church will not attract the younger generations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mary Hare (Woodbridge deanery) encouraged parishes to connect with Revd Phil Dykes (Diocesan Mission Enabler) who has been a great support to them recently when struggling to decide on which ministries should continue or be disbanded in their parish.
22.17	<p>LIVING IN LOVE AND FAITH (LLF)</p> <p>At March's Diocesan Synod +Martin made a commitment to meet with a small group of individuals to look at how to respond as a diocese to the LLF work.</p> <p>A small group of individuals has now been established and they hope to meet soon. The group will be: +Martin, Revd Canon Sharon Potter, Dean Joe. Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford, Revd Tiffer Robinson, Tony Allwood and Mary Hare.</p> <p>+Martin plans to provide an update at October's Synod. ACTION: Update on LLF to be scheduled for October's Synod.</p>
22.18	<p>ANNUAL REPORT ON RURAL MISSION</p> <p>Paper ref DS(22)P18. AD Sally gave a presentation on the work of the SDF project throughout 2021.</p>
22.19	<p>2021 DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS</p> <p>Steve West, DBF Treasurer presented the 2021 DBF Financial Statements. Paper ref DS(22)P19.</p> <p>Highlights included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total expenditure was £9.2m which included support from national church of £600k. Total income was £9.9m of which parish share was made up of £6m. By far the largest percentage of income comes from parish share so this is critical to the working of the diocese. Out of a total of £83m of total funds, only £4.4m is available as unrestricted funds In summary, the DBF is in a reasonable position especially in the context of covid, though it is still going to be difficult in the next few years. <p>Questions:</p> <p>Brian Rogerson (Samford deanery) asked what the criteria is for the allocation of funds in relation to the sustainable fund.</p> <p>Steve West replied to say that central church had around £35m which they gave all dioceses a portion of. This was dependent on parish share, which at the time, we were around 15% down on. As 2021 saw a small surplus which was helped by investments going up slightly, so the view was taken to give us a smaller sum of money. The overall national pot was also smaller in 2021.</p>

	<p>Guy McGregor (Hoxne & Hartismere deanery) asked how investments were performing since the year end.</p> <p>Whilst not having the latest CCLA results to hand, Steve West, DBF Treasurer responded to say that another charity Steve is a trustee for, who also uses CCLA as their investment manager, has seen an 8% drop in investment values since the beginning of the year.</p>
22.20	<p>CATHEDRAL UPDATE</p> <p>Revd Canon Philip Banks gave an update on the work of the cathedral. Highlighted areas of work were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The abbey celebrations to mark 1,000 years since the founding of the Abbey of St Edmund in Bury St Edmunds by King Canute • The Queen's platinum jubilee celebrations • The hosting of the RAF's 75th anniversary • The 30th anniversary of the Beer festival • The 1000 years flower exhibition
22.21	<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 19 March 2022, paper ref DS(22)P21_M1 were approved.</p>
22.22	<p>MATTERS ARISING NOT OTHERWISE ON THE AGENDA</p> <p>No matters arising were raised.</p>
22.23	<p>MINUTES OF THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL</p> <p>The minutes of the following Bishop's Council meetings were received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31 March 2022, ref DS(22)P23.1_BC(22)M2 • 17 May 2022, ref DS(22)P23.2_BC(22)M3
22.24	<p>QUESTIONS</p> <p>Six questions were asked and responses were prepared and sent out with the Order Paper. Full questions and answers can be found on paper ref DS(22)P24.</p> <p>No supplementary questions were asked.</p> <p>The Archdeacon of Sudbury commented that it was disappointing to see that none of the original questioners were present at the meeting. This meant that follow up questions or discussions did not take place. Although Synod members are, of course, very welcome to submit questions, members were asked to note that it can be very time consuming for diocesan staff to prepare a detailed reply and ideally the questioner should be present to formally receive the response, perhaps ask a follow-on question, and to allow others to contribute to a wider discussion.</p>

22.25

NOTICES

1. Suffolk Show / Queens Jubilee

Revd Sarah du Boulay gave a brief summary of the contributions parishes made towards the Queen's Platinum Jubilee which had the theme of the "Suffolk Blessing". The Suffolk Show also led with this theme which was a great team effort. We served nearly 2000 people in the marquee and reflected on what the church means in Suffolk.

2. Bishop's Lent Appeal and other Bishop's Update

The Bishop's Lent appeal to date has raised £83,735 and has been donated to World Vision to help the crisis in Ukraine.

+Martin also commented that as a diocese we need to widen our fundraising base. As such, he is working with a number of individuals to help work through the options, including setting up "Friends" groups, how to encourage legacies and encouraging giving in the parishes. A focus on giving will commence in the autumn.

3. Update from the Stewardship Team

Gary Peverley, Finance Director gave a brief update on the various ways giving can be encouraged:

- The Parish Giving Scheme (a direct debit scheme) has been adopted by just under half of parishes. From September donors can give one off gifts if they wish. Gary strongly encourages all parishes to join this scheme.
- Contactless terminals – these could be shared across a benefice. There is also the ability to give using QR codes which is a good option as it doesn't require wifi.
- The diocese was part of a pilot scheme which led to 30 churches set up with contactless giving terminals. The national church has now rolled this out to all dioceses and there is the opportunity to provide a further 40 free devices from October. Applications open from 30 June for 3 weeks. Parishes were encouraged to apply, details can be found on the website.
- The stewardship team are rolling out a series of workshops, which began in April, for parishes to learn more about PGS, legacies, church buildings, trusts, banking gift aid and more.
- Becky Hills is the diocesan Grants and Fundraising Officer and is happy to help and provide support if required.

**The next meeting of the Diocesan Synod will be held at
9.30am, on Saturday 1 October 2022 via Zoom**