

Deanery Synod Report for Annual Meetings 2020

1. General Organisation

Deanery Synod: The deanery comprises 43 parishes (about 30000 people in total) forming 9 benefices and is the organisational tier between PCCs and the Diocesan Synod. It is led by the Rural Dean and the Lay Chair, and chairing Deanery Synod meetings usually alternates between them. Each parish is entitled to elect one or more official representatives to the Deanery Synod (number dependant on size) and does so at its APCM. Guests are very welcome at meetings but if there is a vote, only the official representatives can take part. Reps report to their parishes following meetings.

The Deanery Synod can ask parishes for funding through subscriptions.

The Standing Committee meets in the weeks before a Deanery Synod meeting to plan the agenda and discuss deanery business. Items suggested by PCCs for discussion at a Deanery Synod meeting should be sent to the secretary before the preceding Standing Committee meeting. The secretary should also be notified of changes of parish representatives, as contact details are needed for correspondence.

The Standing Committee comprises the Rural Dean, the Chapter Clerk, the Lay Chair, the Deanery Treasurer, the Deanery Secretary, and anyone who represents the Deanery as a member of the Diocesan Synod. Thus:

Rural Dean: the Revd Stephen Trott (Pitsford & Boughton).

* Stephen comes to the end of the 5-year tenure of this post in April 2020.

Lay Chair: Mrs Sheila Robertson (Yelvertoft)

Treasurer: Mr Neil Robertson (Yelvertoft)

*Neil has said does not intend to continue as Deanery Treasurer after May 2020.

Secretary: Mrs Janys Alexander 7 The Horsepool Lilbourne Rugby jkalexander51@gmail.com

Diocesan Synod Representatives (following reorganisation last year we are allowed five clergy and three laity members)

Clergy: the Reverends Graham Collingridge (chapter clerk); Stephen Trott, James Watson

Laity: Alan Chantler, Sheila Robertson, Bob Tomalin

The three Deanery Synod officers (Lay Chair, Treasurer and Secretary) are elected for a three-year period; next election is May 2020, at the meeting at Harrington, 14th May.

The Rural Dean is elected 5-yearly, at a clergy Chapter Meeting, and 2020 is the end of this quinquennial period.

Deanery Synod Meetings: There are usually three Deanery Synod meetings in the year, and occasionally a social occasion may be added in the summer. Efforts are made to hold the meetings in different parishes, although this sometimes isn't easy. The church, church hall or village hall used should have wheelchair access, facilities and, ideally, sufficient parking nearby. It saves funds if a venue that doesn't have to be paid for can be used.

After an opportunity to chat over coffee and biscuits from 7.00pm, Deanery Synod meetings begin at 7.30pm with a short period of worship. Meetings are in two parts - a business section for updates on appointments or events in the deanery / diocese, and on financial issues such as the Parish Share or the Christian Aid collection; and a speaker or a discussion / activity. There may be a retiring collection, if it seems relevant to the evening's topic. A Fair Trade stall is often available.

2. Brixworth Deanery Synod Meetings May 2019- April 2020

DATE	VENUE	THEME	SPEAKER	PRESENT
14/05/19	Meeting cancelled due to late cancellation by speaker			
22 nd July: service, with licensing of remaining churchwardens, and supper, at All Saints' Church, Yelvertoft				
22/10/19	Crick	The Rural Church	The Archdeacon of Brixworth	28
14/01/20	Clipston	The Rural Church	The C of E National Rural Officer	28

Attendance May 2019 & April 2020: 28 at each meeting.

The business section of meetings 2019-2020 included reports that:

- there had been some clergy movement in 2019, resulting in some restructuring of benefices. The deanery then had a full complement of clergy up to February 2020, when the Revd Chloe Willson-Thomas (Brixworth) left for a new incumbency in Oxfordshire.
- the increases in Parish Share were still proving hugely stressful, with some parishes unable to pay their full amount. Last year's increase was 2% but over the Diocese as a whole only 1% had been paid. Our deanery had moved off the 'lowest' position but was still some £105,000 short of the expectation.
- the Parish Giving Scheme had been introduced and was proving successful
- following a request for subscriptions the Deanery finances now stood at almost £500
- safeguarding remained an area of major importance
- farm crimes were causing great concern
- Christian Aid was somewhat better in 2019 than it had been in 2018, because a parish had re-joined. 19 parishes across the deanery participated in 2019.

Speakers:

The two meetings both focused on issues facing the rural Church. They were different in style, but both touched upon :

- the need for benefices to work together, and that the incumbent does not need to be present at every meeting.
- Church and community - PCCs should continually think of the role of the Church in the community – what are the needs, and how can we help?
- that fact the closure of a church is very unusual and is at the instigation of its PCC (usually after falling attendance cannot meet the demands of keeping a very old building going.)

The speaker at the cancelled meeting was to have been the Deanery Safeguarding Adviser, Bev Huff. The speaker at the January meeting should have been John Stevens, the National Director of the Fellowship of Evangelical Churches, but as he was unfortunately unable to attend, the Revd Dr Mark Betson, recently appointed as National Rural Officer, agreed to speak.

Meetings arranged for later in 2020:

Standing Committee		Deanery Synod	
7 th May	Boughton Church Room	14 th May Election meeting	Harrington village hall
15 th October	Yelvertoft	22 nd October	Long Buckby

*J. Alexander
Deanery Secretary
February 2020*