

A Report from the Deanery Synods 2021

Four Deanery Synods were held in 2021; in February, June, September and November. The first two were by zoom with the Eucharist and chairing of the meetings taking place at St Marys, Kempton. The last two meetings were hybrid meetings with the option of attending either by zoom or in person at St Marys. The Deanery were very fortunate to have an administrator at St Marys who was able to stream everything live.

The Parish of All Saints has four allotted places on Deanery Synod (based on Electoral role numbers at the time of the Deanery elections). In 2021 three places were filled and this was reduced to two following the death of Fran Ward in August. At the Synod immediately following, the Lay Chair gave a fulsome tribute to Fran's contribution to Brighton Deanery, Hove Deanery and to All Saints Church Patcham and said that he wished to extend his sympathy and prayers to Fran's widow and family.

The Assistant Rural Dean Rev Alison Bowman retired and Rev Helen Garratt was appointed as the new Assistant Rural Dean.

All Deanery Synod minutes are issued to Deanery Synod member, Wardens and PCC Secretaries; these are public documents and congregation can view these.

Synod 1.

The Diocesan Programme Delivery Manager spoke of the Strategic Development Fund. Originally an application for £4million had been sought but this was expected to be less. A joint application had gone forward from All Saints, Hove and St Peters, Brighton.

The Hospital Chaplains had worked incredibly hard during the pandemic and Standing Committee agreed to send book token to the five Anglican clergy in appreciation.

An update was given on the work of the Deanery children and young person's coordinator as his three-year contract came to an end. His work had effectively come to an end with the pandemic. The Lay Chair (who is also the Director of Family Support work) spoke of the Christian response in a time of lockdown. Over the past 10 months, 1200 food boxes (providing 20 meals for 4 people) were made up and delivered, 1700 food top ups were made, 1500 activity packs were produced, washing machines, coats and school uniforms were purchased. IT equipment/WIFI/internet was provided and it became clear that it wasn't that parents weren't engaging with school work it was because they didn't have the necessary facilities to do so.

Synod 2

Archdeacon Martin and Fr Ryan Green (All Saints, Hove) gave more detail about the Strategic Development Fund. Archdeacon Martin said that the application had been successful and £2.5 million had been awarded towards these projects. Bids take a long time to write and the SDF was looking to fund projects that would lead to church growth based around two different hubs of churchmanship: St Peter's, Brighton (evangelical) and All Saints, Hove (catholic). The Church Commissioners in evaluating the bids look for local buy in (match funding) and imagination. This bid was greater than the sum of the individual parts and had been 4 years in the making. It was an imaginative vision with church plants proposed by St Peter's and

Apostolic projects proposed by All Saints Hove. Over the coming months it was hoped to engage more widely and to work together more closely and to become engaged with the projects. It was important to keep communicating, to keep communication channels open as this was an exciting opportunity. All Saints and St Peters were planning different approaches;

Each Parish was required to enter into a community Mission Audit/Mission Action plan. Audits will need to be completed by Advent and a Deanery plan would be collated.

Nominations to the Diocesan Synod were due. The roles of Deanery Officers (Lay Chair, Treasurer and Secretary) were due for nomination/election in June 2020 but this did not happen because of the inevitable fallout from COVID. It is planned to have elections for these posts in the September Synod.

The Deanery Children's and Young Persons Coordinator spoke of his time in the Deanery It was necessary to put this project into perspective – it was an ambitious pilot with nothing similar having been tried. His was a three-year contract. The arrival of COVID decimated what had been developing and year 3 was again restricted by COVID arrangements. A number of key learning points were identified. The Lay Chair thanked the ex-Deanery Children and Young person's coordinator for the presentation and said that we had been very lucky to have John working in the Deanery and he was very committed to the work. The five churches involved were St Martins, Holy Cross Woodingdean, St Andrews Moulsecomb with St Marys Coldean, St Johns Preston (but they struggled) and St Luke's, Queens Park.

A brief mention was made of Covid-Gavi (the vaccine Alliance ([Covax.who.int](https://covax.who.int/))).

This was only to be a brief presentation Living in Love and Faith or more commonly called LLF. This project had been started about 2/3 years ago; material was now available. It is intended that Diocesan Synod will have a special Synod in February 2022.

Synod 3

There were three groups of guest speakers, from Voices in Exile, Rev Canon Archie Coates and pre-recorded presentation by Rev Jayne Prestwood.

A Background to Voices (previously Voices in Exile) and started by showing an image from the 2015/2016 migrant crisis of refugees in an inflatable boat. The heading was “no one puts their children in a boat unless the water is safer than the land”. A history of the organisation was given including their accreditation with the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) and to provide immigration legal advice. This is a unique service offered within the city and the region. The 2014 Immigration Act caused a hostile environment for asylum seekers and refugees and this was quickly followed by the 2015-16 EU migrant crisis. In 2016 Voices dropped the word Brighton from its name as the organisation was also working outside the city (in east and west Sussex) and it became Voices in Exile.

The organization moved and its work spread across Brighton and Hove and into East and West Sussex and (a bit of) Surrey. Approximately 900 clients were seen each year. There was a weekly destitution drop-in and independent food bank and the organization had worked with Syrian families and those from the Hong Kong visa scheme. Covid 19 caused a large raft of fresh challenges for staff who overnight had to move to remote working and to adapt to the

challenge of technology and working remotely. For clients the lockdown was a frightening time and created social isolation, fear, anxiety and an increase in the risk of domestic violence.

The Rural Dean told Synod of a proposal relating to a couple of parishes in the Deanery. (St Michael and All Angels, Brighton St Paul and St Bartholomew.

Elections for the General Synod of the Church of England were under way and voting needed to be completed by 8th October. There are 5 clergy places and 8 laity places to be filled from the Diocese; there are a record number of candidates 17 clergy nominations and 33 laity nominations.

There are still vacancies on the Diocesan Synod from Brighton Deanery we were allocated 7 places for lay members and eleven places for clergy there are 2 laity and 3 clergy vacancies.

Rev Canon Archie Coates gave an update on the Strategic Development Fund and explained that under the agenda of Reform and Renewal agenda of the General Synod the Church Commissioners released £270 million which they called the Strategic Development Fund (SDF) for a 10-year period from 2017 to 2026 for which the 42 Diocese could bid. Chichester Diocese had some funding from the SDF several years ago when they did some work in Crawley and at St Matthias, Brighton. The Church Commissioner changed the criteria for the latest round of funding; the new criteria comprise of three separate areas, it has to cover a conurbation of a minimum of 100,000 people, there has to be an area/area of social deprivation and it has to be based around to work with non-church attending young people. Across the Chichester Diocese only Brighton and Hove met the criteria. The Diocese decided to put in a partnership bid of St Peters, Brighton and All Saints, Hove. The Diocese applied for £4 million and in April 2021 it was confirmed that £2.5 had been awarded of which St Peters received £1.7 million and All Saints, Hove £765,000. The Church Commissioners feedback was that they thought that St Peters had particular experience and expertise in Church partnerships as demonstrated with St Cuthman's in Whitehawk and various other places. This funding is for four more partnerships in the Brighton and Hove conurbation over the next 4 years.

The first two identified by the Diocese are St Leonards Hove and St Richards Hollingdean. Numbers three and four have still to be identified but under the Church Commissioners Rules these need to be identified within the next few years. Ali Marshall is now licensed as an assistant vicar at St Leonards with a fresh team from some who had worshipped at St Peters. The bid does allow for paid posts and one of these will be a community pastor. St Richards Hollingdean is actually part of the parish of St Matthias. What St Richards needed was a bridge head into the community and this is being started with a food bank and community meal, a small Alpha group on a Sunday morning and there is a plan to do a 4pm Sunday gathering. Archie described this as long hard work.

A pre-recorded presentation was given by Rev Jayne Prestwood on the Living Faith Course initiative. The Diocesan course has been running in the Diocese since 2017 and is for lay Christians to develop find and develop their gifts and to work out what discipleship means. It

is also Part 1 of the Lay Ministry (ALM) training programme. The course is open to anyone and you don't need to become an ALM to take part in the Living Faith course. The course is about exploring gifts and calling and about service to God in the church and the world. The aim of the course is to provide a foundation for the development of Christian discipleship and ministry in the church and the world. A significant part of the course is about collaborative Ministry. A central ethos of the course is valuing difference. Participants will be from different backgrounds and heading in different directions. It is about, learning from each other some coming onto the course will have a clear idea where they are headed whereas others will be seeking direction for their lives. The Living Faith course does not always lead people into new directions but confirms their current ministry in their church or in the world and enables them to feel better equipped to serve.

Living Faith is not about expanding a person's bible knowledge or Christian theology it is about applying the knowledge that is known already. It is assumed that participants have a level of Biblical knowledge and familiarity with the scriptures. The course seeks to provide some basic knowledge, skills and opportunity for growth and development which will stand participants in good stead in whichever area God is calling them to serve. The Course is on weekday evenings, there are three terms each making up a module and a total of 18 sessions. Each session is in two parts; the first an input from the speaker and the second a period of group discussion. Each participant is assigned to a group and stays with that group throughout the course. The groups are supported by lay group mentors. Term 1: Church, Kingdom and Action (making connections between faith and life); Term 2 Ministry, Vocation and Teamwork (what we do in the world, work, home or community, looking at what our gifts might be); Term 3 (Mission and Growth and how we can communicate the good news in our current situation and how we can respond to hard questions and issues that we will come across when talking about our Christian faith)

Participants are expected to prepare for each session by reflecting, thinking and doing some tasks between sessions – this is referred to as link work. Link work is designed to take about an hour and will feed into the sessions so that the whole course hangs together really well and helps people to reflect on each of the different stages of the course. To apply for the course or to find out more information go to www.chichester.anglican.org/living-faith/. The closing date for the 2022 course is December 3. Jayne thanked people for listening to the presentation and said that she hope hoped people would be encourage to apply or to encourage others to apply for the course.

The cost is £40 a year for those in employment and £20 a year for those who are unwaged. It is hoped that parishes will pay these costs. If there are any problems with this then the Diocese will cover the cost. The age range is wide ranging. The applicant must be proposed by their church (incumbent and PCC).

Synod 4

Work had begun on the Mission Action Plans (MAPs) following community and ministry audits. The parish MAPs would then be copied into a Deanery Action Plan template.

A short clip-on growing partnerships with church schools across the Diocese was shown. A presentation was given by Archdeacon Luke (the chair of the Diocesan Board of Education) about the launch of the Growing Initiatives programme. He said that 37,000 children attend

the 156 Diocesan Church schools each rooted in the life of the local community and parishes. As members of the household of faith we are encouraged to build one another up and be sources of strength as we build up our common life. It is an opportunity for people to discern how God is calling individuals to service in the community in which they live.

A Head Teacher and a vicar were introduced and together spoke about their partnership and what they believed had made it successful. They had a joint vision to share the light of Jesus to the community in which they both worked. It was unlocking the potential of everyone.

The next example was a Head Teacher from a Church of England Academy with 1100 pupils who had been working closely with the local vicar. Church and school were part of the same community. Worship, testing of students, putting care packages together were all examples of working together in partnership as church and school were part of the same family and community. The students have a greater understanding of the church's role because they saw the vicar around the building and the parish feels that they are in a relationship with the school.

Permission to Officiate (PTOs) safeguarding issues were raised; anyone covering a parish in a vacancy who did not have C2 training, then clergy or RD if no incumbent were asked to meet respective PTOs if they have particular responsibility and to consider whether C2 training was required.

The past case review was now complete and the report is awaited; Bishop Ruth says the overall findings are positive.

Elections to Diocesan Synod (until 31 July 2024) had recently taken place but there were still vacancies for lay and clergy from the Deanery. There remained two vacancies for lay representatives and vacancies for clergy representation. There were no new nominations for Lay Chair, Deanery Treasurer and Deanery Secretary; All three were duly elected for a further three years. The General Synod Elections have also taken place. Two laity and two clergy from the Deanery had been elected.

The Rural Dean said that at a recent meeting with the Rural Deans Bishop Martin had said "that the discussion about Living in Love and Faith was not about moving to a predetermined position but it is about facing new questions about being human, it is an invitation to listen and to learn, not telling you to change your mind but asking do you know your mind". A special Diocesan Synod on 5 February would be devoted to Living in Love and Faith. The purpose of the Synod was to gather feedback towards the Diocesan Synod. The Church of England pastoral Group sets out six principles: -acknowledge prejudice, speak into silence, address ignorance, cast out fear, admit hypocrisy, and attend to power. Dr Eeva John gave a presentation on Living in Love and Faith. Dr John began with an overview under the following three headings: The Resources, The Journey and the Map and destination.

The church had talked about sexuality for many decades, but the living in Love and Faith resources are quite distinctive, broadening the framework of our conversations. It is about being human and what our Christian understanding of being human means. It is not about particular groups of people but about everyone. The subtitle of living in Love and Faith is "Christian teaching and learning about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage."

At the heart of the learning is quite a sizeable Living in Love and Faith book, accompanied by 16 podcasts, Living in Love and Faith Course (available on video and booklet). All resources are available on <https://lhf.churchofengland.org/>

What are they about: - this was about being human, what is our Christian understanding, and our Christian teaching and learning? The book beginning and ends with words from the bishops who commend these resources to us. The book covers the following areas: - An invitation, reflecting: what we have received? Paying attention: what is going on? Making connections: where are we in God's story? Seeking answers: how do we hear God? Conversing: what can we learn from each other and an appeal to add our own learning. In between each part there are little vignettes or life stories of peoples lived experiences helping us to encounter people that we might otherwise not have met.

The Course is designed for people to do in small groups (about 5 or 6) and covers the following sessions: Learning Together (what it means to learn together as followers of Jesus Christ, Identity (How our identity in Christ relates to sex and gender), relationships (What kinds of relationship God calls us to), sex (Where our bodies and sex fits into all of this) and Life Together (How diversity and differences affect our life together as a church)

Each session outlines one of the six pastoral principles, a couple of teaching sessions, Bible study and time for prayer and reflection. There are also story films to watch and these are stories of real people. Engagement has taken place over these questions. Dr John said We need to do it in such a way that it is braver and safer. We need to be brave enough to ask questions and to share our experiences but we can only do that if we feel absolutely safe from being judged and ridiculed. To enable this to happen at the beginning of each session participants are asked to reflect on one of the Living in Love and Love and faith is about all of us learning together, listening to what is saying and how God is shaping the church today. Various short clips were shown to Synod.

Rev Jason Roach, an advisor to the Bishop, Diocese of London said that Love is expressed differently in different relationship and that the Ancient Greeks had various words for love, the New Testament highlights agape as self-giving love seen in Jesus expressed in commitment and faithfulness and seeking the best for others in not putting self-interest first. The more we experience this love the more we will grow in maturity ourselves. Friendship is a key relationship and all good friendships depend on creating a safe place where people can open their hearts to each other. The Bible shows us many intimate friendships. Jesus showed the deepest form of love for his friends, even though they and we constantly let him down. This is the kind of friendship that Jesus's followers are called to express in their relationships to embody in the life of the church and to nurture in the wider community.

Deanery Finance

The Total Net (after Vacancy Credit and Parochial Fees) Parish Ministry Cost for the Brighton Deanery for 2021 is £1,571,416. This compares to £1,574,821 in 2020. The total Pledged amount for Brighton Deanery for 2021 is £1,070,329. This compares to £1,184,700 in 2020 – a difference of (£114,371), or approx. 10% reduction. There is therefore a shortfall

for the Brighton Deanery of 501,087 or 32% of the overall cost. This compares to 2020 where the shortfall was £390,121 or 25%.

The Treasurer said that the position has worsened by 7% for 2021, The Diocese has advised us that they are looking at finances carefully, and cannot continue to fund such a large deficit across the Diocese. A new Deanery plan will soon be published which will look at Deanery resources and sustainability. It will also look at mission and opportunities to grow. There would be no Credit for Mission applications this year. However, Bishop Martin had said that 2020 was to be a year of Jubilee and that all arrears would be written off.

The PMC cost for the Deanery of Brighton for 2021 was £1.73 million and parishes had pledged to pay £1.2 million so there was a gap of £500,000. This deficit was currently being picked up by the Diocese. Each Deanery has been asked by the Diocese to come up with a plan over the next 3 years to eliminate the deficit. This is called the Deanery plan and both PCCs and Deaneries will need to contribute to its preparation.

2022 Chichester Diocesan Budget

Prior to the Treasurers meeting in October, The Treasurer circulated the draft 2022 budget booklet, which showed a deficit for the year of £661,546.

Since there has been discussion of the Bank of England's warning that inflation rates may reach 5% by next year, both here and in other dioceses. There are concerns about how the combination of increased National Insurance contributions and inflation will impact the cost of living of both Clergy and Lay Staff, and especially the lower paid. The budget already included a stipend increase of 1.5% and an average salary increase of 2.75%, weighted towards the lower paid. Indications from other Dioceses are that they are planning stipend increases of around 3%. In order to help our principal asset, that is our Clergy and our Employees, the Chichester Diocesan Board of Finance have proposed raising the Stipend increase on 1st April, the normal review date for clergy stipends, to 3% and an average of 3.5% for lay staff from 1st January, which is when Diocesan staff salaries are normally reviewed.

This proposal has been taken to the Remuneration Committee who have given their approval, subject to agreement of the revised budget by Synod.

These proposed changes have been put into the budget, and the impact is an increased budget deficit of £748,485, an increase of £86,939. £77,852 of this is as a result of the proposed increase in stipends (including NI) with the balance resulting from the increase in salaries, NI and pensions. Clergy pensions are based on prior year stipends and so there is no impact on these this year.

It is too late to incorporate these changes into the 2022 Parish Ministry Costs which have already been communicated to parishes. The impact will be included in the PMC figure for 2023, along with any increases to stipends and salaries proposed for that year.