

ST ALBANS DEANERY SYNOD

St Albans city parishes

Aldenham – St John the Baptist
Bricket Wood – St Luke
Colney Heath – St Mark
Frogmore – Holy Trinity
London Colney – St Peter
Radlett – Christ Church and St John
Shenley – St Martin

Abbey
Christ Church
St Luke
St Mary, Marshalswick
St Michael with St Mary

St Paul
St Peter
St Saviour
St Stephen with St Julian

ST ALBANS DEANERY STANDING & PASTORAL COMMITTEE

MEETING

held at 8.00 pm on Thursday 31st January 2019
at St Luke's, Cell Barnes Lane, St Albans, Hertfordshire. AL1 5QJ

PRESENT

1 OPENING PRAYERS

The meeting began at 8.00pm with an Opening Prayer led by RD. Members were encouraged to think creatively so that Standing Committee and Synod can concentrate on what is important and park what is not.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from 2 members: -

3 MINUTES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING held on 18th September 2018

The Minutes were signed as a true record of the meeting. There were no matters arising.

Actions Arising from Deanery Synod 23rd October 2018

There were no actions arising from the last meeting of Synod that would not be covered by this evening's agenda.

4 DISCUSSION ON DEANERY WEBSITE

Members had been provided with xxx progress report in advance of the meeting and had been asked to review the "work in progress" site at <https://northlightbeam2.000webhostapp.com>.

He apologised to Standing Committee that the project has stalled over the last six months. If nothing else, it has shown that anything run by only one person is vulnerable. Although there had been attempts to establish a Communications Team, this had not gone well as there had never been a date when they could all meet. The project will need additional people to run it in the future.

At present he would welcome constructive feedback, positive and negative, on the build and look of the site. Do the current headings work? Is he taking it in the right direction?

Standing Committee had read the report but no-one had had a chance to review the website.

Action: Review draft website

Who: All members of Standing Committee (DS to email URL again)

he raised the following points of interest/for discussion

- "Facebook" is a good platform for announcements but it is seen as amoral and receives negative feedback
- Aim of the Deanery website is to be like a magazine, to have pictures that will draw people in to read articles
- The current host allows for 3 Trailers on the front page which would link to items further in
- Idea is to have set items as well as news items
- List of Deanery Churches with pictures of people, not just the church building
- What do we call it? If you search "St Albans Deanery" on the web, it takes you to the Diocesan website!
- Do we do a paper launch to all Parishes and ask people to sign up to receive emails?
- With what frequency should we send out emails alerting people to updates on the website?

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KP – If you run the mail service through Mailchimp, this will allow people to unsubscribe easily and thereby meet the conditions of the GDPR. People should be able to sign up directly via the website onto Mailchimp.

AS – Shared his sympathy with MF's opening remarks regarding setting the site up. The site is going in the right direction. One email alert per month would be best. Managing content and updating the site more frequently would be too onerous plus we run the chance of people seeing the emails as spam if they are sent out too often.

RD – asked MF what his thoughts are about being a lone worker on this project?

MF – need to remain a lone worker for now to get the site up and running then, when we have an active site, set up a team to run it, MF may bow out at that point. MF has run the project so far on the basis of spending no money, we need to be very clear on what we want before thinking about engaging a professional Web Designer/Developer.

RD – thanked MF for all his time and effort to date. For the website to work long term we need to get others involved – gather information to be communicated, editing, uploading, managing etc to make sure it happens. There needs to be a proactive team in place.

CRD – We need to produce a hard copy to demonstrate to members of Synod the proposed information and content so that we can encourage someone/people to join the team and assist Mike.

MD – Why would people go to the site and read its content unless they are looking for something specific?

AS – The website should have links to each of the parishes, regular events around the Deanery as well as one-offs to give it wider appeal.

PH – Parish websites should have links through to the Deanery website too.

CRD – Paper-based copies produced and an email version sent out to Churches who can then distribute it further amongst parishioners.

RD – The "Deanery Summary of 2018" newsletter – has been well received. Estimating the numbers required for printing, we went for $\frac{1}{3}$ of each Church's Electoral Roll numbers plus sending out some email versions too. This was for an ad hoc newsletter.

AS – Tots group at St Julian's, the group has set up a WhatsApp Group to easily communicate with each other. Age groups differ in the ways that they communicate. This group has a common purpose which keeps posts relevant.

KP – That is the way of Social Media. Email is a more effective means of communication than Social Media

Ideas

- Mike should begin to advertise events etc now to start getting interest from people.
- Events could be communicated via Deanery Secretary for now
- What age range will emails be aimed at? Should we have different versions for people to subscribe to?

RD – Do any of us read Alban Life? Do any of us view E-Round? Need to carry out survey at Synod in February to find out how people want to be contacted, receive news etc. Would they use email/web-based communication or prefer hard copy?

**Action: Communications Survey at February Synod
Who: Rural Dean/Deanery Secretary**

5 THE BEAUTIFUL BURIAL GROUND PROJECT – Update Report

Members were provided with a progress report by the Deanery Secretary (Appendix 1). Four churches with churchyards/burial grounds have expressed interest in the training sessions being offered: The Abbey, St Mary's Childwickbury, St Stephen's and St Peter's, London Colney. A couple of others are supportive of the initiative but do not have the grounds themselves. A Trustee of Sustainable St Albans (a parishioner of St Paul's Church) is keen to promote the project through the Festival of Sustainability in May/June 2019.

The BBG Project Co-ordinator, George, is obtaining additional information from the four churches. Her initial thoughts are to run 2 training sessions, 1 at St Stephen's and 1 at St Peter's. Interested parties from all four churches could attend these sessions to enable them to implement the work at their own churchyard. Maximum 15 delegates per session. Spaces could be offered to people from other parishes if numbers allow.

Action: Contact George for update on details and possible dates

6 SPEAKERS AT DEANERY SYNOD

RD has invited 2 speakers to Deanery Synod in February 2019.

Chris Birch-Evans, Director of STEP – St Albans and Harpenden Christian Education Project. He will present on the work undertaken by STEP and how it could support churches within St Albans Deanery.

Dave Jones - Jones joined St Albans Diocesan Office as one of the Fresh Development Officers with the Reaching New People project in March 2018. His mission is to provide training, help our communities build a culture of intentional discipleship and develop new fresh expressions of church.

There followed a discussion of other potential speakers for Deanery Synod

- Marriage Preparation – RD currently meets with couples five or six times before their wedding, they watch HTV recordings and have general discussions. A couple, based in Norwich, have written a book and run courses on Marriage Preparation. The couple are themselves Christian although the courses themselves are not specifically Christian. The aim of the course is to support couples from all backgrounds so that marriages last longer. Should we invite the couple to speak at Deanery Synod to see if there would be interest in running the course Deanery-wide? KP suggested that this would be better dealt with at Chapter than Deanery.

Action: Refer question re: Marriage Preparation to Chapter

Who: Rural Dean

- Caroline Godden – Adult Learning Officer, Study Centre, St Alban's Cathedral Caroline is keen to raise awareness of what is on offer at the Study Centre.

Action: Invite Caroline Godden to speak at future Deanery Synod

Who: Rural Dean

7 FINANCE REPORT

- PF reported that the balance of the Deanery Bank Account is £4,550.19 however 3 cheques have been paid – X:Site; Web Hosting; and Mark's expenses which will take the balance down to just under £3,000. These costs have come out of this Financial Year but were actually from the last Financial Year.
- Looking at alternative Banks to hold the account.
 - Santander no longer offer 2 signatories accounts so that has been struck off the list.
 - CAF Bank – offer 2 signatories but there is an annual charge
 - Metro Bank – offer a Business Account but the charges are high. Possibility that they might offer a different account for non-charitable organisations? PF to investigate. KP suggested that she speak with Jill Huckersby of St Michael's who has recently been looking into bank accounts on behalf of the church.
- Accounts to be reviewed and presented at Deanery Synod in February. Note that costs from last year are coming out of this year.
- Review at Deanery Synod in June if we will need to take a contribution for Lay Members in 2020
- RD wished Standing Committee to consider when Deanery Synod should partially cover the cost of 2 new radio microphones for use at X:Site. The current ones are unsatisfactory. The cost for the microphones is c£1400 - £430 for the 2 headsets and £1000 for the packs. RD proposed that St Luke's would contribute £1000 and Deanery could contribute £430. As per the Banners for X:Site, this would be a one-off cost. X:Site is Mission therefore AS proposed that Deanery Synod should pay towards the costs. MF seconded this however, he proposed that Deanery Synod should pay the higher amount.

Action: Email the exact figures to members of Standing Committee for approval

Who: Rural Dean

- Review of Parish Shares – AS has spoken with the relevant Diocesan Officer to find out how other Deaneries work out the Share Factor. He was told that this is the official way to do it. KP to raise the point at Synod – look at the Share Factor in relation to relative wealth/demographic model.

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8 PASTORAL MATTERS

Clergy

- St Peter's, London Colney – Revd Pat Jones will be inducted and installed on Monday 4th February.
- St Mark's, Colney Heath – Vacancy update. Closing date for applications is next week. A shortlist of candidates will be drawn up the following week. Interviews will take place on Monday 4th March.
- Radlett, Christ Church & St John's – Revd Canon Javid Iqbal is on compassionate leave in Pakistan to attend his mother's funeral and assist with matters there.
- Shenley, St Martin's – Revd Dan McCarthy is doing well. His course of treatment has ended, his condition continues to be monitored and he is working part-time only to help aid his recovery.

Lay Members

- MD had received an email from a long-standing lay member of Deanery Synod saying that a new, young Lay Member will be standing down as a Deanery Rep at this year's APCM. The reason given is that Deanery business is boring.

There was a general discussion on what Deanery Synod meetings were for.

- Speakers – only specifically to do with Deanery business
- Speakers as "entertainment" only in the sense of educational
- Should Deanery Synod meetings be open to all church members, rather than just Deanery Reps, when Speakers are invited? RD recommended that if Speakers are well received at Deanery Synod, they could be invited to speak again at a separate meeting which would be open to a wider audience.
- MD asked, "Better Together"? How will we know if Deanery is achieving this?
- Speakers invited to Deanery Synod – Deanery Reps then report back to their PCC. Some parishes may wish to invite the Speaker to a PCC Meeting or to a talk in their parish.
- AS – Speaker on Emergency Planning following the Hatfield Train accident and Buncefield explosion. Whilst it was very useful, the talk took over the whole meeting and Synod Business was crammed into 15 minutes with non-members getting up and leaving.
- X:Site – some parishes are engaging with this project, others are not. It would be useful to know why.

9 AGENDA FOR NEXT DEANERY SYNOD – 28th February 2019, St Albans, Christ Church

- Speakers – Chris Birch-Evans of STEP; Mark Dunwoody of RNP
- Update on DMAP projects
- Report on X:Site
- Deanery website – ask members for feedback
- Biodiversity Project update
- Pastoral Matters update
- Standard Items – Minutes of last meeting and Matters Arising; Finance; Synod Reports – Diocesan and General;

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There being no other business the Rural Dean closed the meeting with all saying The Grace.

Dates of Standing Committee 2019 – all to be held at St Luke's, Cell Barnes Lane

Thursday 31st January

Thursday 16th May

Thursday 26th September