

Hertford and Ware Deanery

Minutes of the DEANERY SYNOD held on Tuesday 22nd November 2022 at 7:45pm in St Andrew's Church, Hertford.

1. **Welcome:** The Rural Dean welcomed Synod Members and William Masterson from the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Historic Churches Trust and Emma Critchley, Diocesan Pastoral and Advisory Secretary.
2. **Opening Prayers** were led by Rev Mark Dunstan, the Rural Dean.
3. **Attendance:**
Clergy: Mark Dunstan, Ysmena Pentelow, Sarah Forrest, Robert Thompson, John Hookway, Jo Loveridge, Marcus Hart, Alan Stewart.

Laity: Jane Abbott, Phyllis Ballam, Janet Bird, Hannah Orton, Lynne Griffith, Diana Perkins, Mike West, Dorothy Abel Smith, + 2 x St Andrews, Lesley Atterwill.

Apologies for Absence had been received from

Clergy: Amanda Duncan, Theresa Musiwacho, Sarah Forrest, Angela Lynas, Jenny Gray, Jake Pass

Laity: Robin Bishop, Lyn Paddon, Roti Ogunlewe, Beresford Thompson, Colin Bird, Ian Bailey, Sara McCrea

4. **A. Bedfordshire and Hertford Historic Churches Trust:**
William Masterson began by giving some background details of the Trust and its work with not just the Church of England, but also other denominations to keep historic buildings and more modern churches fit for worship. He went on to explain that the application for a grant was straightforward with an application form which gave details of work proposed and expenditure. Before a grant is awarded a member for the Trust will visit, speak to churchwardens, have copies of the church accounts and the faculty for the work proposed. Once a grant is agreed, the funds are available to be drawn down for a long period as the money is only available when the work has been completed and the Church Architect has signed it off.

William then explained that their income came from two sources: subscriptions and fundraising. Individual membership is £30, Joint is £50 and Church and corporate subscription is £50. In this Deanery there are 21 churches, of which only 13 are members. He urged the Synod to encourage all parishes to join. The main fundraising event is Bike & Hike event held annually in September when 50% of the money raised in sponsorship goes to the "host" church and the other 50% to the Trust. Over the past 21 years over £2 million pounds have been raised by this event but sadly due to Covid it has not happened in the last couple of years. Five deanery churches did not participate in the last Bike & Hike. It is hoped we can encourage them to join in for 2023.

www.hertfordandwaredeanery.org.uk

*Our vision is to see flourishing, Christ-centred communities
inspiring people of all ages and backgrounds to discover God,
grow in their relationship with Him
and respond to His transforming love through serving others.*

Mrs Marion Little, Deanery Secretary, secretary@hertfordandwaredeanery.org.uk

There were questions from the floor about how to join and the application paperwork for grants, the amount available for single applications and how long the process took.

The Rural Dean thanked William for his very informative presentation and for leaving a supply of leaflets about the Trust. Mr Masterson then left the meeting.

B. Diocesan Pastoral and Advisory Secretary.

Emma Critchley explained that part of her job was to work with churches and church buildings as they took steps towards Net-Zero. She began by explaining that both the diocesan and Church of England websites had key guidance on many aspects of net-zero including two pages of guidelines which includes simple steps to save electricity, controlling temperatures, reducing drafts and a heating checklist. It is very measured document for parishes to work through and see consider the best options for their circumstances.

Emma explained about a grant being available for a Parish energy audit and various subsidies from the diocese and nationally. Details of this should have already been sent to parishes. There were four case studies being carried out across diocese in both urban and rural and large and small churches to look at different requirements and practical issues.

Emma also gave details of webinar consultations and advice being organised by the Church of England on both general issues and very specific issues. Details of these could be found on the website. This was followed by a discussion on solar panels and renewable energy including planning and faculty issues. As Christians, we have a duty to support the care and preservation of God's world as we work towards St Albans becoming an eco-diocese.

There were many and varied discussions about what we could easily do in our own parishes, about sharing good practices, experiences and useful points of contact.

C. Plenary & Discussion.

There was a general discussion about solar panels and planning issues, keeping heating on permanently or only having it on when the building was in use. Heating providing warm spaces was also discussed. Rev John Hookway thanked the DAC for all their support and advice during the redevelopment of Christ Church.

5. To approve the Minutes of the Last Meeting:

These had been circulated and were agreed as an accurate record.

6. Matters Arising

All matters arising were covered by the agenda.

7. To receive a report from the Diocesan Synod:

A formula outlining the representation at both Deanery and Diocesan Synod was agreed. New Deanery Synod members would be appointed at APCMs in 2023.

The DBF had been encouraged to divest from companies working with fossil fuels.

The new Bishop of Hertford would be announced soon, consecrated on 2nd February 2023 and welcomed with a service locally 4th February 2023. Details to follow.

8. To receive a report from the Diocesan Board of Finance:

In the absence of Colin, Janet Bird gave a brief report highlighting that the Parish Share system is being tweaked following from feedback. There was some discussion as to whether the Diocesan Budgets are producing the outcomes expected or desired.

9. To receive an update on the Deanery Mission Action Plan and the Project Teams:

Fresh Expressions – Diana Perkins was leading on this. Synod was reminded that this group wanted to hear about what was going on across the Deanery so we can help each other and share experiences. They were looking for members to join this group.

Social Action - Revd Sarah Forrest (absent) was leading on this.

Environment – The Rural Dean was leading on this, and the importance of this issue had been highlighted in the presentations earlier in the meeting. A small team was being set up.

Finance – Some communication had taken place with parish treasurers relating to challenges in meeting parish share. Following the pandemic there was concern that parishes were using reserves to meet current commitments.

New Developments – Mike West reported that they had yet to meet. They were anxious to receive information about all new developments big or small and the impact they were having on Parishes.

10. To hear good news stories or specific challenges from around the Deanery:

The Rural Dean reported that Revd Amanda Duncan would be leaving Thundridge & High Cross on 31st December 2022 causing a vacancy. This highlighted a long-term issue on the best way forward for collaboration and support.

Attempts by the Standing Committee to pursue elements of the Deanery Mission Action plan had also highlighted a communication issue (the Standing Committee does not have contact details for all Wardens, Treasurers and Secretaries, so cannot yet communicate effectively with parishes). This would be resolved.

Janet Bird publicised the Mothers Union fund for Ukrainian Refugees and, reported that, as a trustee, she had access to grants for this.

Diana Perkins advertised that Ware Choral would be performing the Messiah at Christ Church on 10th December 2022. Everyone was welcome.

Revd Ysmena Pentelow circulated flyers for St Mary's Ware 72 hour Bible Reading Marathon.

11. To note the date of the next meetings:

Synod Meetings are:

- Monday 20th March 2023
- Thursday 13th July 2023 (was 6th but clashes with General Synod)
- Tuesday 21st November (was 14th but clashes with General Synod)
- Monday 18th March 2024
- Thursday 11th July 2024
- Tuesday 26th November 2024

Standing Committee Meetings are:

- Monday 23rd January 2023
- Tuesday 9th May 2023
- Thursday 21st September 2023
- Monday 22nd January 2024
- Thursday 16th May 2024
- Tuesday 1st October 2024

12. The meeting closed with prayer at 9.30pm