

Hertford and Ware Deanery

Minutes of the STANDING COMMITTEE Meeting held on Monday 23 January 2023 at 1.15pm at Saint Andrew's Church Hall, Stanstead Abbots

Present: Mrs Janet Bird (JB), Revd Mark Dunstan (MD)(Chair), Revd Dr Sarah Forrest (SF), Mrs Lyn Paddon (LP), Revd Ysmena Pentelow (YP), Mr Mike West (MW), Mrs Marion Little (ML) (Secretary).

1. MD opened the meeting in prayer.
2. Apologies had been received from Diana Perkins. Everyone else was in attendance.
3. No declarations of interest were made.
4. Minutes of the meeting on 20th September 2022 were agreed after adding JB's apologies.
5. **Matters Arising:**
Everything was covered by the agenda.
6. **Review of the Synod Meeting of date of last Synod meeting on 22nd November**
The advice on NetZero and Historic Churches was wide ranging and not all of it practical, but helpful in sharing best practice. Historic Churches: grant application process not as quick as advertised! Attendance was variable and we need to check and update the list of representatives. It was a good and useful topic as every parish has issues and challenges.
7. **To receive reports from Task Groups:**
 - a. Environment: MD has had a couple of conversations; one person has expressed interest. The issue of details of PCC secretaries was discussed and needs to be sorted to get contact. The main focus is sharing best practice, ideas, events and contact details around the Deanery. YP suggested we focus on this for next Deanery Synod – asking each PCC to submit a presentation about what they are doing and what works, and to invite guests to come along and share.
 - b. Fresh Expressions / Reaching New People: DP had said no action has been taken.
 - c. New Developments: MW had enquired about proposed developments. He knew outline details of proposed developments in Aston, Essendon, the Quarry at Stanstead Abbots, South of Hunsdon and the Ware North Planning Application submitted with EHDC. Hertford has lots of infill along Waterford Road with lots of little development. A large development is well underway in Sele in St Andrew's Parish. Revd Alison Jackson at High Wych has some in depth knowledge on this. Burial space is not on anyone's radar, and this will become an issue. MD highlighted this issue with regards to the Hunsdon development. This has a potential to become a real problem in small parishes with open churchyards and also in Ware, where the cemetery space is limited. It was suggested that to invite someone, possibly from the DAC, to explain the issues, challenges and legal position, might be useful for a future Deanery Synod.

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*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

- d. **Parish Share & Finances:** JB reported that the Diocesan Finances were in good shape. She also reported that Colin Bird had spent a lot of time with High Cross and discovered that they had substantially more money than they were aware of. MD reported that 97.5% of the Parish Shares had been received in 2022. Ponsborne is behind but this is in hand. The concern is that Parishes are dipping into reserves. If so, this would not be sustainable. MD will send out a note and ask for feedback. JB has offered to have a meeting. Short questions suggested by SF for the Deanery would be very helpful.
 - e. **Social Action:** SF has just been getting on with it in the benefice. Hertford Food Bank has lots of money coming in, but food is what is needed. Homeless issues are now coming back onto the agenda and contact details and information to access local charities would be useful. SF challenge for the Deanery is finding someone to help co-ordinate and to input and inform on Social Action, not just deliver support. MD to circulate a virtual "White Board" note for everyone to put ideas.
8. **To receive an update on the Deanery MAP:** MD highlighted that the outstanding item is mutual training in First Aid; Health and Safety and Food Hygiene. Can we find trainers and provide dates? JB suggested the Methodist Church might be able to help with Food Hygiene. YP had an idea on First Aid and Health and Safety. A need to support and train volunteers to provide Pastoral Care might be a future training area.
 9. **Deanery & Parish news and updates:** Amanda Duncan has left the Deanery and MD and Archdeacon Janet have been discussing with Church wardens on the vacancy and how the Deanery supports them. Revd Jo Loveridge is out of action for a while and we might need to keep an eye on cover there. YP reported that Thundridge and Tonwell Schools are now a Federation (both are church schools). High Cross school is also linked with Albury. The Reader from Waterford and Stapleford has retired so JB is still helping out when she can.
 10. **Draft Agenda for the Synod Meeting on 20th March 2023:** There will be a New Bishop in Hertford and also a General Synod report from Rachel. We will concentrate on the Environment as previously suggested. It was agreed we would start promptly and have coffee halfway through to allow the sharing of best practices, ideas and discussion. The venue is St Mary's Church Hall, Ware.
 11. **To select topics and consider speakers for future Synod meetings:** MD had received a request from the Racial Justice Group to send a speaker. He would pursue this.
 12. **Other Business:** There was no other urgent business.
 13. **The dates for future Synod Meetings are:**
 - a. Thursday 13th July 2023 (was 6th, but clashes with Gen Syn)
 - b. Tuesday 21st November 2023 (was 14th, but clashes with Gen Syn)
 - c. Monday 18th March 2024
 - d. Thursday 11th July 2024
 - e. Tuesday 26th November 2024
 14. **The dates for the Standing Committee are:**
 - a. Tuesday 9th May 2023
 - b. Thursday 21st September 2023
 - c. Monday 22nd January 2024
 - d. Thursday 16th May 2024
 - e. Tuesday 1st October 2024
 15. The meeting closed with prayer.