

**MINUTES OF THE 147th MEETING OF THE WANTAGE DEANERY SYNOD HELD
ON WEDNESDAY 13th NOVEMBER 2013 IN WANTAGE PARISH CHURCH AT 7:30PM**

Present:

Hugh Rees	Suzanne Fairlie	Ben Mabbett
Chris Gray	Revd. Leonora Hill	Revd John Durant
Sarah Shackleton	Judith Maidens	Rob Soames
Jeffrey Penfold	Denise Elliott	Paul Thompson
Revd. Jason Paul St John Nicolle	Canon John Salter	David Pocklington
Revd. Elizabeth Birch	Graham Stoter	
Fr. Dominic Keech	Gill Mabbett	

Apologies received from:

Revd. Michael Berrett	Leslie Hunter	Karen Salter
Thomas Loyd		

1	Opening Prayer
	The meeting was opened in prayer by Revd. Jason St John Nicolle.
2	Welcome
	Hugh Rees welcomed everyone to the meeting.
3	Attendance and Apologies
	Announced. See above.
4	Minute of the Previous Meeting
	The minutes of the previous meeting on 10 th July 2013 were unanimously accepted.
5	Benefice Update
	<p><u>Wantage</u> Canon John Salter prefaced his remarks by noting that they had recently needed to rebuild the chimney of the church boiler. The heating first came back on this Thursday, but now the pump has given up. On a more positive note they have now received planning permission to develop Trinity Centre at Charlton. They about to submit the architect's drawings to the DAC so that they can apply for a faculty. Hopefully this will help spearhead the mission to the Crab Hill Development.</p> <p><u>Ridgeway:</u> Revd. Leonora Hill noted that a new service rota was starting in December. The benefice is trying to resource services from herself and lay people. A number of positive ways in which Wantage Parish has been helping them were noted. She mentioned that 11 delegates from the Ridgeway had attended "Leading Churches for Growth" in Oxford. Also <i>Open the Book</i> is up and running at the Ridgeway school. Finally she said that three of the churches are starting initiatives to raise money for fabric and maintenance.</p> <p><u>Wantage Downs:</u> Revd. Elizabeth Birch said that the Service of Remembrance for the Departed held on All Souls Day worked very well. Canon John Salter said that he asked people who had been bereaved in the last 12 months but people often came back in future years.</p> <p><u>Vale:</u> Revd. John Durant said that the Vale had appointed second minister, David Payne. David is currently the rector of a small benefice in St Albans diocese. From 23rd Feb the benefice will be at full strength.</p>

6	Archdeaconry & Lay Chair Notices
	<p>Revd. Jason Nicolle said that the Church Commissioners Pastoral committee has now agreed the transfer of four deaneries which includes Wantage. The transfer is virtually certain to proceed now and will occur in the New Year; we would transfer for matters with a Bishop on that date e.g. Confirmations. For Archdeaconry matters, this would await the appointment of the Archdeacon of Dorchester which Bishop Andrew has anticipated to be after Easter/May. In the period of January to the appointment, we will need to work through a messy period. As part of the transfer, there is a desire for a liturgical marking of the transfer. Suggestions are welcome.</p>
7	Proposal for Deanery Synod to meet twice a year
	<p>Revd. Jason Nicolle made some introductory remarks. Our Synod serves the people of God, and there is much flexibility as to how we can meet. There is a proposal to meet twice a year. The meeting in November will agree the finances. The meeting in May, following PCC elections, will be for any Deanery elections.</p> <p>It is also proposed to merge the pastoral and standing committees, which will meet 4 times a year. Jason noted the proposed time allocated for socialising in future synod meetings. It is important that Deanery Synod members get to know each other and learn to work together. He noted that nothing is cast in stone and these arrangements can be reviewed in 12 months' time, to see if they are serving the Deanery as desired.</p> <p>Revd. Leonora Hill suggested that the social part of the meeting be at an interval in the middle, so that late arrivals or early leavers are not excluded. There was support for this idea.</p> <p>Sarah Shackleton proposed and Denise Elliott seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.</p> <p>Decision: Proposal passed on Deanery Synod to meet twice a year, combine Pastoral and Standing committees which is meet four times a year.</p>
8	Training and Church Growth
	<p>Revd. Jason Nicolle introduced this topic by describing his interest in Church Growth. In recent years there have been many books and courses on this subject e.g. the LYCiG (Leading Your Church into Growth) course. He thought that it would be useful to organise an evening on theories of Church Growth and how they can be applied in different contexts e.g. urban or rural. The session is planned for the 23rd January at St Johns in Grove. Jason outlined that the session will look at five quite different approaches. There will be plenty of opportunities for discussion.</p> <p>Following on from this, on 13th February Martin Cavender will lead a session on releasing the potential of all church members for mission, and so Transforming parishes from Maintenance to Mission. This event is for all parish members – not just the PCC. The Church of England as national church did not think in terms of mission until 1990's. The decade of evangelism came out of recognising the vital importance of mission. Following this there arose an interest in engaging with the Holy Spirit and in growing churches. Martin Cavender is director of ReSource, an organisation which encourages this engagement in a number of ways including publishing an eponymous magazine. Martin has much experience of the work of the Spirit. Bishop Andrew asked Martin and part of his team to talk to the deaneries. The desire is to move from thinking about "how to keep the gutters clean" to planning for mission. Martin will talk to PCCs about how to get into "Mission Mode". His thrust is to build on what we do already and develop our churches into communities for mission.</p> <p>Hugh Rees added that the Diocese are very supportive of this initiative and will financially support us. They would like to see at least 50 people to come along. This is achievable across the deanery.</p> <p>Action: All to communicate to their parish members about sessions on Church Growth, and Transforming Maintenance to Mission</p>

	<p>Hugh Rees reviewed the training that had taken place or had been planned for this year. Last month the session “Can you hear me at the back” was run. 12 people (the maximum permitted), all from the parish church of Wantage attended.</p> <p>Unfortunately the “Dementia Day” had had to be cancelled due to lack of numbers; however Hugh said that he would very much like to rerun it in a different format. The notional timing for this May. The idea is to have an introductory evening session with a more in-depth half day.</p> <p>Gill Mabbett said that the evening session (scene setting) would be good if someone from each PCC could attend. How can we adapt what we do to ourselves more “elderly-aware”? For example, how can we improve access to church services?</p> <p>The second session (half day perhaps) will be a more in look in more in depth at issues relating to dementia. E.g. meeting the spiritual needs of those with dementia. Hugh said that he is hoping Revd. Joanna Collicutt will be able to do these sessions, and that he is still trying to tie up dates with her.</p> <p>Canon John Salter asked that plenty of notice is given for any future sessions. He was bitterly disappointed that the previous session had had to be cancelled. He had noticed the changes to the residential care homes, where he had conducted Holy Communion for many years. Residents are often so demented that this is no longer working. It would be good to have a Deanery response to this issue.</p> <p>Gill Mabbett said that locally, the proportion of people suffering from dementia would very likely continue to grow due to the demographics of our deanery.</p> <p>Action: All to request their parishes to provide a representative / point of contact for Dementia Awareness</p> <p>Action: Gill Mabbett and Hugh Rees to move forward on re-scheduled Dementia Awareness events (scene-setting, in-depth session)</p> <p>Hugh asked for views on putting on further courses, and highlighted three that had received some votes in the survey.</p> <p>Sarah Shackleton asked people whether Deanery wide training was what people wanted, since the last two courses had not attracted a deanery wide audience. Hugh Rees said that a previous course in leading intercession had attracted wide interest.</p> <p>Revd. Leonora Hill noted that the courses proposed for the new year (Visiting, Caring for the bereaved and Working with older people) all have a strong connection. She wondered whether they could be put together.</p> <p>Hugh considered that maybe we would have a better view of what training to offer after the Martin Cavender’s visit in February. Jason said that if anyone had any ideas about courses, they should pass on suggestions to Hugh and himself. He asked Hugh to see who was interested in particular courses and take it from there. The training is there to serve the Deanery, so please make suggestions. Sarah Shackleton said that there are funds in the Deanery for putting on training.</p> <p>Action: Hugh Rees to move forward on sessions for Listening Skills and obtain more details on “Making the Words work”</p>
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9	Principles of Allocation of Parish Share
	<p>Jason said that he was excited about the proposals being forward.</p> <p>The Diocese has introduced a new Parish Share scheme which has much more clarity. The Deanery Treasurer, Sarah Shackleton has worked with the PCC Treasurers to come up with an agreed proposal after much consultation. This is Christian discipleship. Everyone feels that they are paying a fair share. He noted that you cannot yet say how much each parish will be paying next year. Sarah Shackleton said that she has talked to all the parishes and to everyone who wanted to discuss this.</p> <p>Revd. Elizabeth Birch was concerned that the wealth of an area does not indicate willingness to part with cash. Sarah said that the wealth factor includes people's Faith (e.g. Muslim), and also the generosity of giving to charities. It was not a perfect formula but it was a reasonable to try and take these factors into account.</p> <p>Proposal 1 (See Attachment 1, Briefing Paper): This was proposed by Revd. Jason Nicolle and seconded by David Pocklington. All voted in favour except for one abstention. Decision: Proposal 1 accepted - new method to be used for allocating parish share.</p> <p>Proposal 2 (See Attachment 1, Briefing Paper): This was proposed by Revd. Jason Nicolle and seconded by David Pocklington. All voted in favour except for two abstentions. Decision: Proposal 2 accepted - new method to commence from January 2014</p> <p>Revd. Jason Nicolle emphasised that the finances serve us as a deanery and therefore we should review them from time to time. The aim is to facilitate the sharing of resources to the glory of God.</p>
10	Any Other Business
	<p>New elections for Deanery Synod are in 2014. The Diocesan Synod however, finishes in 2015. Our deanery still has two vacancies in the electorate for the Diocesan Synod, to serve until 2015, if anyone is interested.</p>
11	Date of Next Meeting and Future Events
	<p>Tuesday 14th January, 8pm Pastoral and Standing Committee, Grove Church</p> <p>Tuesday 23rd January, 7-30 pm Church Growth - St Johns Rooms, Grove</p> <p>Thursday 13th February, 7-30pm Transforming Maintenance to Mission, Grove Church</p> <p>Tuesday 11th March, 7-30pm (Session 1), and Tuesday 18th March (Session 2) 7-30pm, Listening Skills led by Revs. Jean Barton – 2 sessions from 7-30 to 9-30 with coffee break, venue TBC</p> <p>Tuesday 8th April, 8pm Pastoral and Standing Committee, Grove Church Hall</p> <p>Wednesday 14th May 7-30pm Deanery Synod – synod elections, venue TBC</p> <p>May Dementia Awareness sessions reschedule, dates, times and venue(s) TBC</p> <p>Tuesday 16th June, 8pm Pastoral and Standing Committee, Grove St Johns Rooms</p>
12	Closing Prayer
	<p>Father Dominic Keech closed the meeting in prayer at around 8:40pm.</p>

Attachment 1: Briefing Paper (p1/5)

Deanery Meetings / events

Proposal put forward at July 2013 Synod

- a) Deanery synod meets twice a year (instead of 4 times). The first half would be business and the second half would be social.
The 2 times would be
 - November to review deanery finances and parish share.
 - May for any Deanery elections following PCC elections.
- b) The other meetings would be talks that would be open to the entire deanery and not necessarily limited to Anglicans.
- c) Pastoral & Standing Committees would merge and meet four times a year. They would cover preparation of business meetings as well as the other business of the synod.

At the July Synod, Synod representatives were asked to discuss with their PCCs, and bring feedback back to the next meeting - i.e. the November 2013 Deanery Synod

Diocesan Synod – casual vacancies

Nominations and elections to Diocesan Synod from Wantage Deanery were held in June 2012.

The Deanery's House of Laity can choose how and who they decide on to fill the two casual vacancies. For the House of Laity, any person on the electoral roll in a parish within the Deanery is eligible. There is a clergy vacancy, following Revd. Paul Eddy moving on to Vale of White Horse deanery.

Please consider who in your churches would be a good representative on Synod from our deanery, and if they are happy to be considered, then pass their contact details to Hugh Rees.

Update on Archdeaconry Boundary Change

The period of 28 days for objections to Bishop John's decision to the Church Commissioners commenced on/around 5th November.

Assuming no objections to this stage, then the anticipation is that the formal change will be at the beginning of January. In practice, for matters with Archdeacon this will await the appointment of the Archdeacon of Dorchester; Bishop Andrew anticipates this will be after Easter / May. There is envisaged to be a formal ending / celebration of the change.

Attachment 1: Briefing Paper (p2/5)

Church Growth Thursday 23rd January 2014, 7-30pm St John's Rooms Grove

Interested in Church Growth generally? Interested in growing your own particular church community?

In recent years, there have been many studies of church growth, and various theories have been propounded. There are several courses and books out there setting out particular approaches. But which of these approaches actually work? Which approach might be best for a particular congregation?

And then there are the bigger questions. Should Church Growth focus on numbers, or should it focus on individual Christians growing in depth of discipleship?

Where does God fit in with all this? Are Church Growth strategies essentially secular and mechanistic in their assumptions, or are they a profoundly spiritual response to the activity of God in our own lives, in our churches and in our communities?

The evening on 23rd January is designed to introduce some recent approaches to the theory and practice of Church Growth, and suggest some of the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. It will also look at how the different approaches might be applied in urban, suburban and rural contexts.

There will be plenty of opportunity for discussion.

The evening is for everyone, for all church traditions, and for all sizes of church community, from the largest to the tiniest.

I'm really looking forward to the evening, and do hope that you will be able to come!

Jason,
The Revd Jason St John Nicolle, Area Dean

PCC Session – Transforming Maintenance to Mission – Thursday 13th Feb

PCCs session with Martin Cavinder – Thursday 13th February 2014, 7-30pm, Grove

Training

The Training session of “**Can you hear me at the back?**” provided by Ruth Lamdin was held on Wednesday 16th October; this was well attended.

A Dementia Awareness day scheduled for Saturday 5th October is being re-scheduled. Two differing audiences were identified (a) scene setting (b) fuller aspects of ministry to those with Dementia.

Attachment 1: Briefing Paper (p3/5)

The proposal is for a whole day session to be more widely advertised, including adjacent deaneries, other denominations, and for greater advance notice.

The proposed next training events include

- **Making the words work**

Bringing words alive - engaging with and interpreting different texts.

Making the most of the presentation of your text, working on vocal variety and considering organisation and layout of material

- **Leading Worship**

then

- Visiting
- Caring for the bereaved
- Working with older people

It is anticipated that the outcome of the PCCs session on 13th February may well identify additional training events.

Attachment 1: Briefing Paper (p4/5)

Principles of Allocation of Parish Share and Parish Share for 2014

Proposals by Sarah Shackleton, Deanery Treasurer

Proposal 1 - to be voted on

That a new method is used to allocate Parish Share amongst the parishes of the Wantage Deanery.

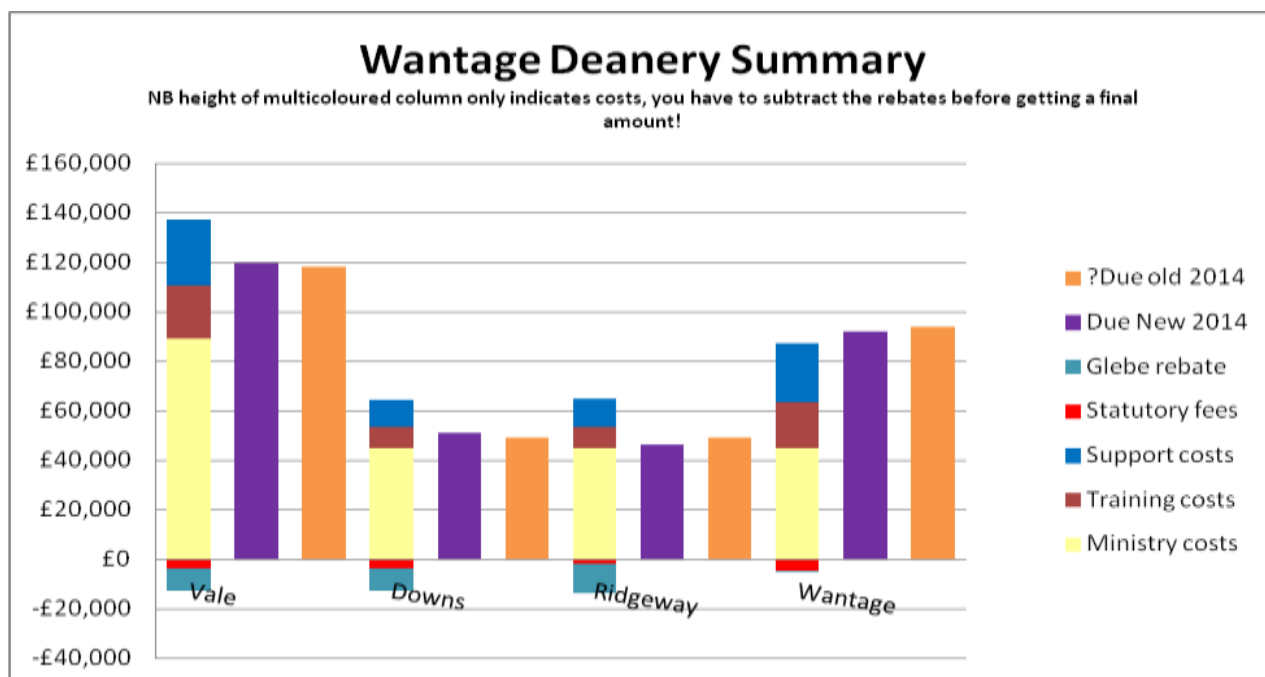
This method would mirror the principles of the new method the Diocese is using from 2014 to allocate Deanery Share.

In summary the proposed Parish Share allocation model will be:

- Clergy costs divided up according to number and cost of clergy allocated to each benefice
 - Within benefices the default method of calculating clergy cost is to be based on relative number of households in each parish. Individual Benefices may choose to use a different system to calculate their division of clergy cost.
- Training future clergy/laity and national support costs are to be allocated at parish level based on 50% congregation size, and 50% parish size with wealth factored in for both figures. These proportions to be reviewed by Synod 2 years after the introduction of this method.
- Diocesan fees to be rebated to the parish that earned them.
- Diocesan glebe rebate money allocated as per diocesan principle of lump sums then share the rest, at £2500 per parish with less than 1000 households. The remainder divided up equally. Again the figures to be reviewed 2 years after the introduction of this method.
- The current cap to individual parishes annual share rise will remain at the agreed 2% above diocesan cap. This will smooth out any changes and make them more manageable for parishes.

Proposal 2 – to be voted on if proposal 1 is accepted.

- That this new scheme should start from January 2014.



Attachment 1: Briefing Paper (p5/5)

