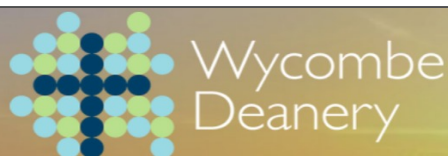


ALL SAINTS' DEANERY SYNOD REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT



Serving Our Fellowships, Shaping Our Future, Spurring On Our Friends, Sharing the Fire

The **Wycombe Deanery** is a family of 35 churches spread across 28 parishes in and around High Wycombe. Like any family, our contains significant diversity. It stretches from the Thames Valley in the South East to the Chiltern Escarpment in the North West. We have urban areas in High Wycombe, a few small towns and dozens of villages in the beautiful surrounding countryside.

One thing we share in common is a vision to see the churches of Wycombe Deanery flourishing individually, working effectively together and contributing to the renewal of the wider church.

We believe passionately that God is at work renewing and reforming his church in this country and we are committed to playing our part in this work. We believe that as we join together, each sharing freely what God has given us, the Spirit will lead us into growth as we follow Jesus together.

To guide us on this journey, we have articulated three principles that we hope will underpin all we do together:

- Serving our fellowships - The Deanery exists to serve its churches.
- Shaping our future - We take responsibility for leading our churches into growth.
- Spurring on our friends - Learning to work better together.
- Sharing the fire - Growing the vision.

On the Deanery website (www.wycombedeanery.com), you will find details of our churches, our strategic deanery plan and other information about our life together. Please pray for us and let us know if there is any way we can serve you. Generally, the Synod meets 4 time a year visiting a new church each meeting within the Deanery. Of course, during the pandemic, its meetings have been held on zoom.

Current All Saints' Synod Members are: Barry Titchen, Nick Cousins and David Knights. Currently, we are one member short of our allotted 4 places on the Synod – an additional volunteer would be most welcome!

A Deanery Synod Member represents the PCC at local Deanery Synods that form part of the Synodical Government of the Church of England from PCC, through Deanery, Diocese and finally General Synod. They are also members of the Parochial Church Council which is the governing body of a parish church.

Deanery Key Players are: the Rev Dave Bull – Area Dean; Graeme Slocumbe – Deanery Synod Lay Chair; and, the Rev Hugh Ellis and Rev Lieth Johnson – Associate Area Deans.

In addition to its routine responsibilities of: monitoring staff vacancies; managing quinquennial inspections; deciding on and managing parish share contributions, and maintaining the spiritual well-being of all churches within the Deanery, in recent years priority has been given to formulating and establishing a Deanery Plan for Growth and Mission.

The Deanery Plan is the means by which we develop and share our proactive long-term plans for growth. It encompasses both a “big picture” strategic plan for our 35 churches and a “bottom up” picture of the priorities of each parish.

Our current goals for the deanery plan are:

1. Achieve sustainable clergy deployment – 5 new clergy appointed.
2. Respond to the needs revealed in the parish plans.
3. Invest in what grows and then spread it.

The means by which we intend to achieve these goals are:

- Growing a healthy culture of right relationships and a common spirit.
- Freely sharing knowledge and experience.
- Making good plans and communicating them clearly.
- Forming mission focused partnerships.
- Deploying our resources effectively and sustainably to achieve these plans.
- Ensuring all our work is aligned with these objectives and ways of working.

Here are some examples of what this looks like in practice:

- **A Rural Review.** This a Deanery review of the 15 churches in the Western half of the Deanery which are all in rural areas, (with some in vacancy) in vacancy. It is considered to be a 'once in a generation' opportunity to consider the delivery of Lay and ordained ministry and to share resources. Everybody, including those not situated within the western rural area is asked to pray for the review and contribute to the discussion.
- **Partnership Network.** Within Buckinghamshire, the Wycombe area has:
 - The highest concentration of children living in low-income households
 - The most ethnically diverse community with lower levels of health and wellbeing.
 - The highest rates for emergency admissions to hospital overall, for both adults and children.
 - 14,000 residents living in households at higher risk of food poverty.
 - A significantly higher proportion of unemployment benefit claimants compared with the County average
 - A higher proportion of residents seeking support from the Citizens Advice Bureau compared with the County average
 - A higher rate of domestic abuse related incidents and crime than the County average.
 - A higher number of young people and adults with issues of mental health and wellbeing.
- It is unfortunate that poverty in the midst of wealth often gets missed and therefore it has to be right that one of the Deanery's aims is to deepen the relationship with our mission focussed partners to help tackle the issues highlighted above. It aims to do this by establishing a partnership network which will support the mission and activities of our individual churches; and to encourage them to interact with and to pray for these partners. There may also be opportunities to help fund some of their activities as has been done in past years from our Deanery Mission Fund.
- **Resource Church.** A vision to grow congregations in the Wycombe Deanery. Among many ideas is the Greenhouse project, providing courses and leadership training.
- **Caring for our Leaders/Wellbeing.** The wellbeing of our Clergy and Lay leaders Churchwardens and Treasurers has a very high priority in the Deanery. There are a number of chaplains working across the Deanery to support this priority.
- **Sharing the Fire/Deanery Plan.** Looking to see how to best build upon the success of the Sharing the Fire Event and to keep alive and active, the vision and mission established there.
- **Communications Plan** Making more use of the website and social media to communicate better with all the churches in our Deanery.
- **Mission, The big picture ahead.** Focussing on how churches best recover, re-focus, and stay sustainable following the pandemic.

Sadly, the onset of the Corona Virus last year has slowed our progress in many areas of developing and implementing the Deanery Plan; however, we remain confident that, as we emerge from the current COVID restrictions, we will be able to recommence with our plans fore the future.

The deanery plan can be viewed at www.wycombedeanery.com along with the appendices to the deanery plan, including the individual parish plans.

29th March 2021

Barry Titchen
(on behalf of the All Saints')
(Deanery Members)