

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT FOR 2023 – For All Saints’ APMG



The Wycombe Deanery is a family of 35 churches spread across 28 parishes in and around High Wycombe. Like any family, ours 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.

The Deanery is not a big Parish. It does not aim to have a worshipping or missional life outside the churches it serves and takes care to enhance and not displace the life of local churches. Neither is it a small Diocese. It does not have its own resources of money or staff to deploy and its only resources are those freely given by the local churches. One thing all churches 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.

The Deanery 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 Synod on this journey, its members have articulated three principles that is hoped will underpin all that is done within the Deanery 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.

All Saints’ Deanery Synod Reps (2022/23):

Clergy Reps:

Hugh Ellis (Until July 22)
Jackie Lock
Gareth Morley

Laity Reps:

Barry Titchen
Ray Levy
David Knights (+ Diocesan Synod)
(Vacant)

The Wycombe Deanery Synod has met in person 4 times during the past year:

St Francis, Terriers, on 3 May 2022

St Andrews, Hatters Lane on 19 July 2022

Church of the Servant King, on 19 October 2022 meeting in person,

Christ Church, Flackwell Heath, on 23 January 2023

The format of each meeting is roughly the same:

A social half hour or so with light refreshments before the meeting is called to order,

A welcoming prayer which is usually followed by a short brief about the hosting church and the issues it has or is facing.

There is usually a presentation and discussion period on a topic of interest affecting the Deanery. Recent topics have been: growing the church; the 2022 Clergy Conference; Ukraine; and, how is the church changing.

Deanery Business takes up the last 45 minutes or so when there is usually an update on vacancies, major events within the Deanery, finances, lay committee reports and updates from the parishes.

Key activities within the past year within the Deanery has been:

Follow-up work associated with the new Deanery Plan for 2021 to 2025 – the Plan sets out the aims and objectives for the Deanery over the next 5 year period and is available on the Wycombe Deanery Website (www.wycombedeanery.com)

Further follow-up work implementing the recommendations of the Rural Review which has considered a way forward for the rural parishes within the Deanery in dealing with keeping the churches open and regular service running.

Fanning the Flames of Community which was a celebration of our village churches and the rural communities they serve was held on Thursday, 28th April 2022 at Rackleys, which included a visit by Bishop Steven.

After 8 years in the role, Graeme Slocombe stood down as lay-Chair of the Deanery Synod on 19 October 2023. Caroline Sants, who is a churchwarden at Turville, will act as the interim Lay Chair – a voluntary role - until the Deanery AGM to be held on 26 April 2023. A new paid post of Associate Lay Chair has been created to deal with routine operational matters associated with running the Deanery. Nick Gallant had put himself forward for the role and is now employed for 20 hours per month.

Regrettably, it has been necessary to close the Discipleship Training Centre. In 20/21 there had been 3 students who have all gone on to work in churches. There were no applicants for 21/22. Charlotte Lawson had been appointed to prepare for 22/23. She had done a huge amount of work building a network of churches and advertising the course. Unfortunately, only one person applied – a similar problem at other such hubs.

A detailed report on each meeting of the Deanery Synod is presented to the All Saints PCC and is available from the PCC Secretary.

The next Deanery Synod Meeting will be held at All Saints, Marlow on Wednesday, 26th April 2023.

Barry Titchen

B J Titchen

(on behalf of All Saints' Deanery Reps)

14 February 2023