

MINUTES OF THE ROMSEY DEANERY SYNOD – MONDAY 13 JUNE 2016 AT BRAISHFIELD CHURCH ROOM

Present: House of Clergy	7	Apologies: House of Clergy	3
House of Laity	21	House of Laity	8

1. The meeting opened with prayers led by the Area Dean, who welcomed
 - new members attending their first meeting;
 - Foundation governors attending this meeting;
 - Jeff Williams, Diocesan Director of Education;
 - Richard Wharton, Diocesan Schools Adviser;
 - Andy Saunders, Children and Families Adviser;
 - Sarah Long, Youth Adviser, and
 - the Bishop of Southampton.

2. **SCHOOLS MINISTRY AS AN EXPRESSION OF THE COMMON GOOD**
 - 2.1. Everyone was invited to write on a card examples of things their church does successfully or could do with local schools. The cards were taken away to be written up and circulated around the Deanery.
 - 2.2. Jeff Williams provided the context for the evening's discussion: The Church of England has 4700 Church Schools in England, catering for over one million children, and with 23 000 Foundation Governors. In Winchester Diocese there are 35 000 children in 160 church schools and academies. This is a huge opportunity for mission in schools, through incarnational Christianity, linking to the Winchester Diocese's third Strategic Priority – Transforming Society. We need to share our Christian values and share our story.
 - 2.3. The national church is strengthening its schools policy – See the recent report “Deeply Christian: Serving the Common Good”. [Not yet on CofE website?]
 - 2.4. Resources were available to help churches to get involved in their local schools, whether they are church schools or community schools. It was important to get permission for any activities , particularly in community schools. But any involvement, whether directly sharing our faith or not, can provide opportunities for mission.
 - 2.5. Questions from the floor:
 - 2.5.1. *What are funding arrangements for church schools?* Broadly, the building and land are held in trust by the Diocese; day to day running costs are met by the State.
 - 2.5.2. *Is it possible for a community school to become a church school?* Yes, and there are some in the two Dioceses currently going through the process. This has to be agreed by the governors and parents, and there is public consultation. Any school changing its status now will become an Academy, as it is treated as a new school.
 - 2.5.3. *Can the Diocese provide security for small, rural schools?* The Diocese will always seek to support church schools, but consideration also has to be given to maintaining the highest standards for children, which may mean amalgamation or closure in some cases.
 - 2.5.4. *How should the Church respond to the aggressive promotion of Islam?* The church should not retaliate in kind, but should confidently and gently promote God's love. God will work through us if we are true to him.
 - 2.5.5. *What is being done to improve the teaching of the Christian faith in schools?* An Ofsted report recently found that church schools were better at teaching other faiths than their own. The Church has responded with a new project “Understanding Christianity”, to promote better teaching of Christianity in RE.
 - 2.7 Jeff Williams offered the team to work with PCCs to increase involvement in schools.

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting** of 14 October 2016 were agreed and signed.

4. **Matters arising** : None

5. **Committee Reports**

5.1. General Synod

5.1.1. Written report of the February meeting attached, including links to papers. Jay Greene talked about the report "Social Transformation and Working for the Common Good", which explored the impacts of sanctions on those claiming benefits and arguing for a review of the policy. Deanery Synod members are encouraged to let Jay and James Pitkin know of any issues they feel strongly about as General Synod provides an opportunity to influence national policy on such matters. Jay also offered to ask questions on behalf of the Deanery.

5.2. Diocesan Synod

5.2.1. An open meeting of Synod on 19 March heard from Bishop Graham Cray, leader of Fresh Expressions, and considered the Archdeaconry Mission Action Plan.

5.2.2. There are still two lay vacancies for Romsey Deanery representatives to Diocesan Synod.

ACTION: Anyone interested should contact the Deanery Synod Secretary.

ACTION: Secretary to produce a paragraph for inclusion in parish bulletins/magazines.

5.3. Overseas Mission Committee

5.3.1. Jane Horne's report from her visit in February was circulated. This had been very useful in improving accountability for the funds that the Deanery sends out each year.

5.4. Vision and Strategy Group

5.4.1. **Fresh Expressions in Rural Ministry** – A follow-up meeting to the January workshop would be held on the evening of Thursday 15 September

5.4.2. This year's **Pre-Advent Course** would take place on Wednesdays 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd November at Poppies, Choice Plants.

5.4.3. **The Shoebox Service** would be at Awbridge Church on Sunday 20 November at 3pm.

5.4.4. A meeting for those interesting in volunteering as **drivers/helpers for Operation Christmas Child** would be held at Poppies on **23 June**.

5.5. Parish Share Group

5.5.1. Sarah Boothman thanked everyone for their hard work which ensured the Deanery met almost all of its share commitment this year. She asked Synod members to encourage their PCCs to pay at least some of their parish share by direct debit monthly in order to help fund Diocesan salaries such as the Education Team who had attended this evening's meeting.

6. **Deanery Accounts 2015 and Budget 2016**

6.1. Ian Clark presented the accounts and budget. He thanked Debbie Parkes, the Romsey Parish Administrator who had kept the records ticking over while there was a vacancy for Deanery Treasurer. The Accounts for 2015 had been independently examined by Mary Dovey, and a signed copy was available at the meeting to view.

6.2. The Standing Committee had agreed to keep the Parish Levy at the current level of £25 per 50 on the electoral role for 2016.

6.3. Alan Parks proposed **that the accounts and the proposed levy be accepted by Synod**. Sarah Boothman seconded. There were no votes against.

7. **Any other business**

7.1. The Area Dean congratulated the Revd Gill Nobes on her appointment to Highcliffe Parish. She will take up her role in July.

7.2. The Revd Canon Tim Sledge thanked Braishfield Parish for hosting the meeting, and closed the meeting with prayer.

Date of future Synod meetings :

Wednesday 12 October 2016 – Romsey Church Rooms

Dates for Synod meetings in 2017:

Monday 6 February 2017
Wednesday 14 June 2017
Thursday 12 October 2017

See more details about other events in the Deanery on the Calendar page of <http://www.romseydeanery.org/> .