

Bishop's Waltham Deanery Synod
Minutes of meeting
23rd August 2023
St Barnabas Church, Swanmore
Inaugural Meeting of triennium – 2023-26

Area Dean - Revd Canon David Isaac

Lay Chair – Paul Quinn

Present: Laity 25 Clergy 3

The session began with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist in St Barnabas Church.

Meeting of the House of Laity

Chaired by Lay Canon Adrian Jordan, by the invitation of the Area Dean, proceeded to the election of the Lay Chair of the Synod. One nomination was received and Paul Quinn was accordingly appointed, with the approval of the House.

Meeting of the Deanery Synod

Apologies: Rachel Houlberg, Janet Clarke, Keith Wickert, Paul Buxton, John Symes, Zoe Clarke, Rosemary Crane.

Report of meeting of the House of Laity.

Lay Canon Adrian Jordan reported that the House had elected Paul Quinn to serve as lay chair for this triennium. The synod welcomed Paul to his new role and offered sincere thanks to Norman Chapman for his many years of dedicated service.

Election of officers of the deanery synod

Standing Committee – no nominations had been received. The election will be re-run via email contact.

Finance Group – Paul Emmerson was elected as Chair of the Finance Group. His proposal of Andrew Wilkinson and Brian Page as members of the Finance Group was welcomed and accepted by the synod.

Treasurer – the Area Dean proposed the re-appointment of Rob Scott as Treasurer, pending his co-option into membership of the synod.

Secretary – no nominations were received.

Co-options – pending the agreement of the Standing Committee, the following suggestions were made for the co-option of additional members: Norman Chapman, Janet Clarke, Rob Scott.

1. **The Minutes** of the synod meeting held 7th March 2023 were accepted as a correct record.
2. **The draft minutes** of the meeting of the Standing Committee held 27th July were presented for information.

3. **Anna Chaplaincy** – the Area Dean reported that The Revd Jill Phipps, Assistant Curate in Wickham and Shedfield, had been appointed as Deanery Anna Chaplain. It is hope to hold a commissioning service for her in that role on t he evening of October 2nd.
4. **Finance Report** - Paul Emmerson reported that, from his conversations with parish treasurers, most churches appeared to be coping well financially, albeit with some needing to draw on reserves in order to meet all needs. He reminded synod of the ongoing work of the parish share review group, which will produce a new framework for assessment of parish shares for 2025. He drew attention also to the Bishop’s encouragement to parishes to engage enthusiastically with Generosity Week, 24th Sept – 1st Oct, details of which have been distributed to parishes. Deanery synod members were encouraged to help their PCCs respond to the opportunity and challenge presented by the Bishop’s initiative.
5. **Portsmouth Diocesan Rules for Deanery Synods** – the Area Dean reported that the diocesan standing orders review group is in the process of revising the rules, to ensure appropriateness for current contexts of church life.
6. **Parish Audits/Evaluation** – most parishes engaged enthusiastically with the opportunity to reflect on their current range of activities and provision, based on the self-evaluation form produced by the small working group led by Petrina Hillier. The results, having been tabulated, have been translated into a dynamic and descriptive on-screen presentation by Jonathan Montgomery, who led the synod through the process of approaching the data with due sensitivity to its incompleteness, and with clear highlighting of issues needing to be addressed.

The presentation slides will be distributed to synod members who are asked to take the lead in helping their PCCs and wider congregation engage with some of the over-arching themes, both affirming and challenging, which emerge.

Jonathan and the Area Dean will reflect further on the kinds of developmental initiatives that it might be appropriate for the synod to promote in response to the identified needs emerging.

Immediate responses from synod members included:

The development of work with young people as a high priority

Collaboration between parishes, based on shared activity rather than unidentified aspirations

Much energy is being spent on resourcing past work, not future trends

Lack of leadership can develop a ‘learned helplessness’

Sunday is not the best day or context for community engagement

Deanery-wide occasions for promoting vision and enthusiasm

What might a heat-map to strengths and weaknesses look like?

Date of next meeting : to be arranged by the standing committee.