

# STOKESLEY DEANERY In the Diocese of York

## Minutes of the Deanery Synod held at St. Francis, Ingleby Barwick Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> June, 7.30 pm.

**Attendees: Clergy:** Revds. Tessa Stephens (Area Dean) Kate Brown, Brenda Forrester, Anne Heading, Geoff Jaques, Darren Moore, Paul Peverell, Laura Wild. **Lay:** John Dickinson (Lay Dean), Liz Taylorson (Secretary) Bob Ardley (Treasurer), Ken Taylor (DFA), Malcolm Granville, Sally Hamlin, Judy Hall, Linda Wells, Sarah Weyell, Roy Parsonage, David Heading, David Haworth, Astrid Wood, Haley Durant, Christine Young, Richard Besford, Diana Baker, Julia Ardley, Jenny James, David Hand, Avril Rhodes, David Local, Nick Land. **Guests:** David Young, Revd. Marie Edwards, Jonny Hedges, Janine Busbridge.

### 1. Welcome and Prayers (Revd. Tessa Stephens, Area Dean)

### 2. Apologies for absence

**Clergy:** Revds. Ben Gunter, Vanessa Kirby, Nik Stevenson. **Lay:** Carol McGee, Frances Brown, Linda King, Margaret Lawrance, Linda Smith, Shelagh Holley, Jane Kitching, John Rhodes, David Yates.

### 3. Minutes of last meeting (7<sup>th</sup> February 2024)

Accepted

### 4. Diocesan synod elections:

**Clergy:** applications submitted from Revds. Tessa Stephens, Brenda Forrester and Laura Wild for 4 available positions.

**Lay:** applications submitted from David Yates, David Local, Nick Land and Roy Parsonage for 4 available positions.

No vote will be necessary.

### 5. Deanery Finance Advisor Update (Ken Taylor, DFA):

Two meetings with Deanery treasurers have taken place.

- DFA was invited to a productive meeting of Whorlton Treasurers/Churchwardens to discuss the financial implications of Whorlton Benefice becoming a united single PCC.
- Half yearly meeting of Deanery Treasurers (21<sup>st</sup> May) attended by 8 treasurers and the Area Dean, discussed:
  - Reminder from Diocesan Office to submit accounts within 28 days of each parish APCM (before end of June). 8 already submitted.
  - Forecast Parish Freewill Offer for 2026 was optimistic (next scheduled review by Diocese scheduled in 2026) – 8 out of 9 parishes thought FWO would increase.
  - Parish Buying Scheme – 2 parishes reported competitive quotes for energy.
  - Management of reserves – particularly restricted reserves. Under what circumstances could they be de-restricted?

- Good news from parishes, particularly around successful family-oriented services.

**6. Finance update (Treasurer, Bob Ardley):**

- Balance of Deanery Accounts today is £3270
- Requests have been sent out for payment of Parish levy, the levy for 28 out of 30 reps have already been paid by bank transfer and others are expected to be paid soon by cheque.
- Book grant cheques for Lay Readers/ALMs have been dispersed, and recipients are encouraged to cash them soon.

**7. Welcome to new Deanery Synod Reps:**

Welcome to Malcolm Granville (Brookfield). [Also first meeting for Revd. Marie Edwards, though not yet officially a member of Synod]

**8. Technology for Churches (Jonny Hedges)**

After a background in youth and charity work Jonny is currently the Lead for the Diocesan Digital Transformations Team, working on developments from Living Christ's Story. As such, he works with the diocese, parishes and deaneries to find solutions for problems – both small scale tech. issues and big projects. He has worked on 'simplicity, structure and streamlined practices' for the Diocesan Office, and worked on a better communication strategy to help those who feel detached, creating a new website based on users needs, providing easy to navigate information. As examples of the kind of work he does Jonny cited work with Mowbray Deanery where an audit of skills and resources was undertaken, Bridlington DLT where a focus was on a better process for safe recruitment of volunteers and Middlesbrough where he helped to investigate improving targeted social media use. He also cited a case where he was able to offer a simple and speedy AI based solution to a difficult rota problem. He can offer 45 minute sessions (addressing problems in areas such as IT, sound, individual projects and faculties) and is happy to help.

**9. Developments at St. Francis (Revd. Brenda Forrester)**

The 'Creation Club' at St. Francis' came from a remit to bring new ideas, open out to the community and revitalise the parish. This was achieved by listening (to God and to people) and learning about the area, leading to a plan. [Diagram attached] Seeds of projects (Friendship café, Eco Church, schools work, Growing Shed) grow from a bedrock of commonality (policies, charters, handbook), and a soil of local context (issues such as a high level of mental health problems in the community). All growth is filtered through the rainbow of mission (tell, teach, tend, transform, treasure) and the oversight of the Creation Club Council (includes church and community leaders). Pages of a longer document are given as an example of the type of work undertaken - eg gardening group, new 'potters' shed', plans to create a prayer labyrinth. 2024 is cited as a time for consolidation. Brenda stressed the need to act, rather than waiting for everything to be perfect. Don't wait for all your ducks to be in place

before you try and herd them across the busy road – gather up all the ducks you have and make a run for it!

**10. Carousel Conversations – an opportunity to ask questions and discuss new developments.**

- Developments at St. Francis – Revd. Brenda Forrester
- Technology for Churches – Jonny Hedges
- Music for Mission – Janine Busbridge. Janine is director of music at St. Mary Magdalene, Yarm. She took over a choir of 5 in 2022, now a flourishing group of 20. In particular she looked at issues around retention, resources and development of music in church.

**11. What's on around the deanery and beyond.**

- **Festival Teesside – Revd. Brenda Forrester.** A family and music event with a message of Christian hope. Stewart Park, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> June. This event is aimed at bringing people to faith through family events during the afternoon and Christian bands in the evening. Each session will include a Gospel call to bring people into local churches. Everyone is encouraged to bring along anyone who they feel might be interested.
- **Churchwardens' admission service:** Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June, 7 pm, St. Mary Magdalene, Yarm. All churchwardens are encouraged to attend.
- **Deanery Eco service:** Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup> at 3 pm, St. Francis, Ingleby Barwick. All welcome!

**12. AOB and date of next meeting**

- **AOB:**
  - **Choose Life (Revd Geoff Jaques):** Copies of *Choose Life* were distributed to each benefice. A valuable resource for all interested in the 5<sup>th</sup> mark of mission "To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth". Available for free download at <https://sites.google.com/view/chooselifecreation>.
  - **Electoral Roll figures (Liz Taylorson)** now all APCMs are complete electoral roll certificates need to be submitted to the Diocesan Office and copied to Deanery Secretary, please.
- **Date of next meeting:** Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 7 pm for 7.30 pm start, St. Margaret, Brookfield.

**13. Closing Prayers**

