

**DIOCESE OF CHELMSFORD
DIOCESAN SYNOD**

**Minutes of the 139th meeting of the Synod held on
Saturday 18 June 2016 at Chelmsford Cathedral**

PRESENT : The President and 98 Members

The Revd Annie McTighe led Synod in a period of worship to open the Synod.

1. NOTICES

The Chair highlighted the bookstall and the Workplace Chaplain's Annual Report.

The President welcomed Revd Mercy Mwamiki from the Diocese of Embu. He also highlighted the Bradwell Festival, which would take place on 2 – 3 July 2016.

2. MINUTES OF DIOCESAN SYNOD MEETING HELD 12 MARCH 2016

The minutes were approved.

3. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

The Presidential Address can be found on this webpage:

[http://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/uploads/June%202016%20Presidential%20Address%20\(4\).pdf](http://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/uploads/June%202016%20Presidential%20Address%20(4).pdf)

4. NEW HOUSING AREAS AND STRATEGIC MISSION PRIORITY AREAS

The Chair invited the Archdeacon of Colchester to speak to this item. The Archdeacon began by recalling experiences of the building of a new shared church building in Great Notley in 2010. It was dedicated as a place for ecumenical worship and serves a new village. It is in daily use and is at the centre of the new community. This had been enabled because a developer had provided a plot of land for the new church building. Would all future developments be the same?

The Archdeacon went on to make the following points:

- There is pressure on developments for profit and space and therefore community and church are not always considered.
- New Braiswick Park – there is a house used by the Church which is also used for contextual ordination training. A retail unit has also been rented.
- The pace of change on new housing areas is rapid.
- The Diocesan Mission in Regeneration Adviser, Carol Richards, has been keeping abreast of developments across the Diocese.

The Archdeacon invited Carol Richards to address Synod. Carol Richards took members through an overview of the housing developments ongoing or potential in the Diocese making the following points:

- Barking Riverside is the largest new development in the Diocese and could become the largest in the country. In Essex, the largest is the development of Beaulieu Park where the Diocese is developing a model of good practice for Church involvement with new housing areas that can be shared across other developments. North Colchester continues to grow rapidly.
- Key drivers in development are transport links, in particular Crossrail and Crossrail 2. Another is the government's desire to build homes for first time buyers.
- Focus is now what our response as a diocese will be.
- The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that economic considerations take precedence over community considerations. Each Local Planning Authority is asked to produce a local plan to meet the number of homes requested by government. This can be challenged, but once agreed they have to produce the number of homes.
- All MMUs will have housing developments within them. Ten top tips on how to respond are available, along with other resources, on the Diocesan website - <http://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/faith/regeneration>
- In terms of priorities for the Diocese, Barking Riverside, Beaulieu Park and Purfleet are key developments.

Members were invited to ask questions of clarification. The following members asked a question:

Colin Setchfield (Waltham Forest)
Revd James Rodley (Harlow)
Revd Charles Mason (Braintree)
Revd Canon David Banting (General Synod)

The questions, with responses, were as follows:

- There are some developments on the western border of the Diocese which straddle Dioceses. What are the protocols in such cases? *The Bishop of Barking responded to this in the debate.*
- Is Section 106 still in place? *It does remain in effect at present. The Community Infrastructure Levy has been introduced and was supposed to replace s106.*
- Where is the demand for additional housing coming from and are new parishes being considered as a response? *The single biggest reason for increased demand are the changes in family lifestyle including family breakdown. New parishes will be considered if they are right to facilitate mission – this needs to be discussed with the Deanery and Area Mission and Pastoral Committee.*
- Is there any further advice on how to encourage the development of community facilities? *The best approach is to discuss with Local Councillors as they have the ability to influence the shape of the developments.*

Members were invited to consider three questions in small groups during the refreshment break.

1. With the rapid expansion of new housing continuing and gaining pace across our diocese, what challenges do you see for the MMUs, parishes where you live and worship or the diocese as a whole?
2. What would a toolkit for local churches look like and need to include? What would most help you (members of Diocesan Synod who would like to be involved in creating this please leave your name with Archdeacon Annette)?
3. Having heard of the challenges of the growth of New Housing Areas we face across the diocese, what is the one commitment you could make to ensure that God's love is made known?

The Archdeacon moved the motion

'This Synod note the mission opportunities and challenges of new housing areas and call on the Area Mission and Pastoral Committees to oversee plans to respond to strategic mission priority areas in this diocese.'

The following members spoke in the debate:

Percy Lomax (Chair of DBF)
Revd Anne Marie Renshaw (Witham)
Revd James Rodley (Harlow)
Bishop of Barking
Revd Helen Gheorghiu Gould (Harlow)
Revd Canon David Banting (General Synod)
Archdeacon of West Ham

The DBF Chair moved an amendment which proposed the addition of the words 'and help prepare' so that the motion read:

'This Synod note the mission opportunities and challenges of new housing areas and call on the Area Mission and Pastoral Committees to oversee and help prepare plans to respond to strategic mission priority areas in this diocese.'

The amendment was accepted by the Chair and put to a vote. The amendment was carried.

The contributions in the debate on the amended motion and any responses were:

- Sometimes structures do not facilitate the thinking we need to do. Problems are caused where no community provision is included in a development and we need to commit resources to this. *There is an urgent need to get community space into developments. It was noted that having a Chaplain for a development site is a way to facilitate this conversation.*
- Mindful of the decline in the availability of full time stipendiary clergy we need to ensure that this responsibility does not fall on the clergy alone. There needs to be significant lay involvement, if not lay leadership. There is also a need for long lasting reconciliation as developments are often not popular with local

communities. *It is important that this is not left to the stipendiary Priests and worked across the Mission and Ministry Unit and wider to reach reconciliation.*

- This is an exciting vision and discipleship challenge. We need to join the thinking across the diocese and create partnership resources. Schools and education facilities need to be brought into this. Some financial support may come from national sources, but we will need to give sacrificially.
- We need dedicated people to respond to this issue as has been modelled in Beaulieu Park. We need a prayerful response to divisive tactics. Carol Richards and Diocesan Staff are available to assist, but are people aware of this? What is God's vision? Yes, *dedicated people are important and Deaneries may wish to invite Carol Richards to talk to them about their particular contexts.*
- Prayer walks and building links with people in the community are useful in developing mission opportunities.
- We will need to ask for more investment in schools and church buildings. We need to be ambitious. *This is God's ambition and we need to keep up with it.*

The debate closed and the Chair put the amended motion to the vote. The motion was carried unanimously.

5. EVELYN UNDERHILL ANNIVERSARY WALK – PRAYER

The President blessed the beginning of a pilgrimage marking the 75th Anniversary of the death of Evelyn Underhill.

6. DBF AGM see separate minutes

7. BUDGET 2017

The Chair of the DBF thanked Canon Don Cardy for his years of leadership on the Budget Committee. He also thanked everyone for their generosity in the amounts raised through giving. He then invited the Chief Executive to deliver a presentation on the proposed Budget for 2017.

The Chief Executive began by highlighting three contextual factors in the 2017 Budget. 2017 is a year of significant change, with the beginning of the reduction in National Church funding, the new share scheme and the desire to continue to grow vocations. Bringing approval of the Budget earlier would hopefully provide the parishes with more certainty as they prepare for next year. He then went on to say:

- The reduction in the supply of stipendiary level clergy was beginning to impact us with vacancies seeing fewer applicants and in some cases, none at all.
- In terms of vocations the Diocese is now taking 16 Stipendiary Curates per annum. There is growth in SSM and Locally Deployed SSM curates. This is all encouraging but there is further work to be done. The numbers coming forward for Readers and LLMs had been gradually declining over the recent years but this is now starting to turn. There is significant growth in new forms of Authorised Ministry.

- Income from the National Church will begin a phased decrease from 2017 onwards, with a £95,000 reduction. We are still a major recipient of National Church support.
- The Mutual Support Fund will begin with £5 million in it.
- Stipends will increase by 1.5% from April 2017.
- There will be 284.4 FTE parochial stipendiary ministers budgeted for. This is a reduction of 4 on 2016. The vacancy rate is 7.5%.
- We are budgeting for increased lay and ordained vocations with 52.2 FTE stipendiary and 60 SSM curates.
- There is a proposal to cap the increase in gross share (before credits) at benefice level by 2%.

Members were invited to ask questions for clarification. The following members did so:

Robin Stevens (Co-opted)
Revd Canon David Tomlinson (Saffron Walden)

The questions, with answers, were:

- Is it possible to have the presentation put on the Diocesan website? Yes, *these will be displayed on the Synod page.*
- Are there plans to sustain the cap of 2% of share requests? *A Budget consultation will be held to decide what parameters we want as a Diocese. However, gradual transition is better than sudden shock.*

The Chair of the DBF moved the motion:

'That this Synod

- a) approve the Diocesan Budget for 2017 and the total Share of £16,529,850; and
b) approve the apportionment of the total Share to benefices in accordance with the transition provisions for the new Share Scheme, subject to a cap of 2.0% in increases in gross share (before credits) at benefice level compared with 2016.'*

The following members spoke in the debate:

Revd Vernon Ross (Epping Forest and Ongar)
Revd James Rodley (Harlow)
Bishop of Chelmsford

The contributions to the debate were as follows:

- Can we incorporate the need to invest in mission into new housing areas into future budgets?
- It is concerning to see reduced expenditure onto clergy housing as reduced maintenance sometimes leads to larger repairs costs. Is this a factor in vacancy rates? *This is less in real terms. However we are investing in purchasing houses for curates with a mortgage facility from Natwest and this will save money in the long term. We are projecting an increase in the expenditure for 2018.*

- Thank you to the Chair of the DBF, the Chief Executive and Finance Team, we are well served in this Diocese. We also need to acknowledge the DDO and DDO Team. We are one of only half a dozen of Dioceses who have faced up to the issue of availability of stipendiary clergy. The amount of vocations have been the first fruit of the change, however we need to still work to meet the demand.

Members voted on the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

8. TIME FOR YOUTH

The Chair suspended Standing Orders so that the Youth Advisers from the Bradwell and Colchester Areas could introduce a video compiled from Time for Youth events around the Diocese.

9. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: CITIZENS UK

The Bishop of Colchester briefly introduced the item. Citizens UK had established a system of creating broad based community organisation. This was pioneered in several Dioceses including some work in Chelmsford Diocese and thought is being given to how this is spreading. He then introduced Jonathan Cox, Deputy Director of Citizens UK. Members were shown a video explaining how Citizens UK was founded. Jonathan Cox then went on to explain how work with the Church was developing. He made the following points:

- Citizens UK is not a Christian organisation but as a Christian, he gave testimony that this was the closest he had come to living out his vocation.
- Citizens had worked with Battersea St Mary who, after the London Riots, engaged in a community listening exercise to see what had happened and it helped to build the mission of reaching out to the estates. They also helped to form Residence Associations which 80% of the local residents joined.
- The Church in Taunton used their link by becoming sponsors to welcome refugees.
- In Cardiff Citizens have been involved in work between the Church and Church Schools. One initiative created a link between children and older people. They had also set up a meeting where all four of the main political parties had pledged to improve the provision of care for the elderly.
- You don't have to leave your faith at the door, there is understanding of it. There is also work underway on the development of a contemplative model.

The Bishop of Colchester shared an example of how this had work in Colchester with the organisation of a Peace Picnic to be held after an EDL march. The ugliness of the situation was defeated by the love and peace of the people.

The Chair reinstated Standing Orders.

The Bishop of Colchester moved that:

'This Synod commends the work of Citizens UK and asks the Bishop's Council to explore ways in which the relationship of Citizens UK with churches in this diocese could be developed'

The following members spoke during the debate on the motion:

Archdeacon of Chelmsford
Roger Ennals (Colchester)
Revd Penny Sayer (Barking and Dagenham)
Rosalind Tatum (Waltham Forest)
Revd Helen Gheorghiu Gould (Harlow)
Revd Vernon Ross (Epping Forest and Ongar)
Bishop of Barking
Revd Canon David Tomlinson (Saffron Walden)
Bishop of Bradwell
Bishop of Chelmsford

The points raised during the debate and any responses from the Bishop of Colchester were:

- One member spoke of their experience of establishing a branch of Citizens in their previous parish. This helped the Church to reach out to new housing areas. It also helped to improve the bus service to the area, which was minimal. Ultimately it made a huge difference to relationships.
- Another member shared their experiences of being part of the discussions on whether to establish a branch in Colchester. It feels the right thing to do and can be shaped in the locality. There is a lot of apathy and less of a sense of community, which this can help to tackle.
- Another member spoke of their experience. The Mayoral Debate held at the Copperbox had been respectful and challenging. Christian values do need to be spoken into the process. Working with this is expensive for many parishes so the Diocese could be in a position to facilitate this. *Being a critical friend is important. We also need to avoid the temptation of misusing relationships.*
- Is asking Bishop's Council to explore the proposal the right thing to do? What does exploration involve? *Involvement can be prohibitively expensive for a single parish, therefore the Bishop's Council will be considering whether financial support can be provided to facilitate this.*
- In many ways this is reclaiming old skills the Church used to have in community organisation. However, if this is about doing it for us, then that might not be the best way forward. *Citizens will not do the work for you, they do it with the people in the locality.*
- It is good to see faiths work together and this only really works when it is grounded in the community. Can Deaneries be added to the motion? *The Chair confirmed that the proposal to amend the motion had not been delivered in writing and therefore could not be accepted.*
- This does cost. If possible it would be good for it to come from the Diocesan funds. Citizens UK work with you to realise the common good. This is also about us being salt and light.

- Are the Area Mission and Pastoral Committees the best place to consider this? Yes, in time this can be considered at AMPCs and in the parishes.
- Many in society are beset by fear and may voice it in an inappropriate way. This work enables voices to be heard. One of the greatest aspects is the work with children and schools. This needs the support of us all if this is to grow.
- The reason for the proposal that the Bishop's Council explore this is because it may involve financial commitment and needs to be considered by the trustees and understood strategically.

Members voted on the motion. The motion was carried with three abstentions recorded.

10. NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Synod took note of the various policies and practice guidance provided by National Church in the area of safeguarding.

11. ANGLICAN COMMUNION COVENANT MOTION – WITHDRAWAL

The Chair moved the motion that:

'Note and commend the work of the Archbishop of Canterbury in the Anglican Communion since his appointment, note that the following motion passed by this Diocesan Synod on 3 March 2012 is now out of date, and therefore rescind the said following motion and withdraw the request for it to be debated by the General Synod.'

*'This Diocesan Synod requests the General Synod to debate the following motion:
"That this Synod:*

- (a) *rejoice in the fellowship of the world-wide Anglican Communion, which is rooted in our shared worship and held together by bonds of affection and our common appeal to Scripture, tradition and reason;*
- (b) *thank the Archbishop of Canterbury for his tireless efforts throughout the Communion to sustain and strengthen unity in difficult times; and*
- (c) *call on the House of Bishops:*
 - i. *to find ways to maintain and reinforce strong links across the world-wide Anglican Communion and to deepen the Church of England's involvement with the existing Communion ministries and networks (especially the continuing Indaba process);*
 - ii. *to publicise and promote this work within the dioceses of the Church of England in order to broaden understanding of, and enthusiasm for, the Anglican Communion; and*
 - iii. *to encourage a wide understanding of, and support for, the next Lambeth Conference."*

An amendment had been submitted from Colin Setchfield (Waltham Forest) which would replace the word 'commend' with the words 'express appreciation for'. So the motion would read:

'Note and express appreciation for the work of the Archbishop of Canterbury in the Anglican Communion since his appointment, note that the following motion passed by this Diocesan Synod on 3 March 2012 is now out of date, and therefore rescind the said following motion and withdraw the request for it to be debated by the General Synod.'

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- i. to find ways to maintain and reinforce strong links across the world-wide Anglican Communion and to deepen the Church of England's involvement with the existing Communion ministries and networks (especially the continuing Indaba process);*
- ii. to publicise and promote this work within the dioceses of the Church of England in order to broaden understanding of, and enthusiasm for, the Anglican Communion; and*
- iii. to encourage a wide understanding of, and support for, the next Lambeth Conference."'*

The amendment was accepted by the Chair and put to a vote. The amendment was carried.

The motion as amended was carried unanimously.

12. BISHOP'S COUNCIL AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORTS

Synod received the reports.

13. QUESTIONS

Q.1 Canon Harry Marsh (Chelmsford South) to ask the Bishop of Chelmsford:

Have the rules changed such that permission for a lay person to assist with the administration of Holy Communion need no longer be given by a Bishop?
If so, what is the new process and is any renewal appropriate after a given period of years?

A

Canon B 12, concerning regulations for the Administration of Holy Communion, was amended by the General Synod in 2015 making it possible, amongst other things, for children who have been admitted to Holy Communion to administer the Sacrament

to others and, provided the person has the support of the Parochial Church Council of the parish or, in the case of a school, the headteacher, for the diocesan bishop to delegate the necessary authorisation for this, and for other lay ministers of Holy Communion, to the incumbent, priest-in-charge or (during a vacancy) the area dean. No such guidelines or authorisation for this has yet been issued in the Chelmsford diocese, though it is something that has been discussed by the bishops and it is our intention to move this forward in due course. Synod may also be interested to know that with regard to children and young people administering Holy Communion, there is a pilot project in the Bradwell Episcopal Area.

Q.2 Revd James Rodley (Harlow) to ask the Bishop of Chelmsford:

Following the revelations in Parliament recently about appalling working and business practices at Sports Direct and BHS, would the Bishop and Chair of the DBF confirm that this Synod and Diocese of Chelmsford should, on behalf of those in our pastoral care, condemn all such practices, actively campaign against them, and take steps to ensure that Diocesan funds are not invested in these and other organisations which perpetuate these practices?

A

The Chair of the DBF and I would clearly want to condemn any action by any employer which infringes on the rights and wellbeing of any of its employees.

It is not however for either of us to presume to speak for Synod on any issue the Synod has not debated.

The correct approach for raising this issue in the synodical system is for this to come in the form of a motion, which can be done using either the provision under Standing Order 88, a Deanery Synod Motion, or Standing Order 91, a Private Members Motion. It may also be possible, given this is an issue of national significance, to raise the matter with our General Synod representatives and see whether they would be willing to take the matter forward at the national level.

In respect of investments made by the Chelmsford Diocesan Board of Finance, our Investment Managers have a clear mandate that all investments must meet the Church of England's 'Statement of Ethical Investments Policy', which states that 'the National Investing Bodies do not wish directly to profit from, or provide capital to, activities that are materially inconsistent with Christian values, and are also mindful of the danger of undermining the credibility, effectiveness and unity of the Church's witness were they to do so'.

Q.3 Revd Guy Thorburn (St Osyth) to ask the Chair of the Diocesan Board of Education:

In wake of the decision of the Board of Education to use Stonewall materials to help our schools combat anti-homophobic bullying, and in light of the fact that much of the material in the training pack is clearly supportive of a moral equivalence between

marriage and other relationships which 'fall short of this ideal', could the Board of Education please consider issuing guidance to our church schools on the biblical view of marriage as being God-ordained, uniquely precious and between a man and a woman?

A

The short answer is 'yes'. Thank you for the suggestion which will be considered by the Diocesan Board of Education at its next meeting in November.

I do understand the concern, but let me say this: At the end of a week that started with the news of the killing of 49 LGBT men and women in Orlando, with 53 injured, I believe that this synod would surely want to reaffirm the Archbishop of Canterbury's public commitment, made to General Synod in July 2013, to support our schools in eradicating homophobic stereotyping and bullying. That same year, in our own diocese, a teenager by the name of Ayden Olson was found dead at his home in Colchester and his suicide note gave the dual reasons of homophobic and racist bullying.

Following the Archbishop's speech at Synod, an enormous amount of work went into producing a guidance document, Valuing all God's children so that the commitment he had made could be turned into action. It was written with the aim of helping our schools to express God's love by ensuring that they offer a safe and welcoming place for all God's children. That is the purpose of the training.

At about the same time, it was the government who, through the Department for Education and the Government Equalities Office, allocated £2 million to fund activity to prevent and tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in schools. It was also a government decision to award by far the biggest slice of that £2 million to Stonewall to extend and share its 'train the trainer' course. And it is in taking up the government's offer that we are working with Stonewall, but it must be understood that the diocese's training is delivered by one of our own advisers, not by Stonewall, and she assures me that the training as delivered is entirely consistent with the guidance contained in the Church of England's report, Valuing all God's children.

Let me be clear: Sex and Relationship Education in our schools should certainly uphold Christian values regarding relationships and marriage. In doing that, it must be sensitive to the circumstances of all our children, parents and staff and mindful of the variety of expressions of family life in our culture. The complexity of combatting homophobic bullying whilst explaining traditional Anglican teachings about the sanctity of marriage and about same-sex relationships is one that must be acknowledged and faced openly. Our teachers and headteachers do a great job of coping with that complexity daily, and at our next meeting in November the DBE will be considering how we might support them better in that task.

Supplementary questions

Q. Would the DBE accept that Stonewall have a political agenda which includes non-Christian values?

A. An answer can't be given for the whole DBE, however there are numerous bodies which the Church works with where values are not shared. We can work with Stonewall without compromising our values.

Q. Have the DBE assessed the ongoing effectiveness of this?

A. The feedback to date has been positive. However more will be done to assess the impact at the November meeting of the DBE.

CLOSE The President closed Synod.

DRAFT