



**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
HEREFORD DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE**

and

**GENERAL MEETING OF THE
HEREFORD DIOCESAN SYNOD**

Proclaiming Christ – Growing Disciples

Shared Priorities

- Spiritual & Numerical Growth
- Contributing to the Common Good
- Reimagining Ministry, Prayer & Worship

Minutes of Meeting Thursday 20 October 2016

Constituency	Total	Vacant	Attended	Apologies	No Indication
Bishops	2	0	2	0	0
Clergy	59	20	16	10	13
Laity	66	11	30	15	10
Lay Co-Chairs	13	1	6	6	0
Rural Deans	13	0	9	3	1
Clergy Co-options	5	5	0	0	0
Lay Co-Options	5	5	0	0	0
Clergy Ex Officio	5	0	4	0	1
Lay Ex Officio	7	0	1	1	5
Bishop's Nominee	10	8	0	0	2
Total Places	185	50	68	35	32
Total Filled	135	Quorum =	45		

Opening Worship

Led by Bromyard Deanery.

ITEM 1 – Apologies & Welcome

1.1 35 members as indicated above.

ITEM 2 – Minutes of the Previous Meetings (7 July 16)

2.1 Approved.

2.2 No Matters Arising.

ITEM 3 – Presidential Address

3.1 Text of the address to Synod by Bishop Richard may be found at Annex A.

ITEM 4 – Diocesan Mission Action Planning (MAPing)

- 4.1 Caroline Pascoe, Lizzie Hackney and Sam Pratley briefed Synod/DBF on progress since July in relation to MAPing, the next steps for Deaneries, and gave information about future bids to the Church Commissioners.
- 4.2 Caroline Pascoe, Lay Development Officer, gave a slide presentation updating Synod on the unfolding Follow! story, Mission Action Planning and the agreed Strategic Priorities agreed at July Synod:
- SP1 Spiritual and numerical growth
 - SP2 Contributing to the common good
 - SP3 Re-imagining ministry for the 21st century
- And a Shared Commitment “to putting our resources where there is greatest mission need and opportunity” – with the intention of turning this into a strategy, with an implementation plan.
- 4.3 Caroline gave details of Follow! and Inspire! events in the autumn.
- 4.4 MAPPING wouldn’t work if it only came from the centre, it had to be embraced by deaneries and parishes. To support this, details of Deanery and Parish/Benefice MAPPING were outlined: each Deanery will be matched to a member of staff to give mission planning support, and a member of Bishop’s Council/DBFX to give financial planning support. They will work with the Deanery providing advice, best practice and support, whilst also listening and learning from the Deanery about its concerns so we network and all learn & grow together.
- 4.5 A team of people experienced in MAPPING were also available to offer support to benefices who should contact Caroline for information.
- 4.6 The next steps were to be underpinned by prayer across the Diocese.
- 4.7 Lizzie Hackney, Children & Families Support Officer spoke on becoming more of an intergenerational church, proclaiming Christ and discipling one another. Intergenerational church is all about all ages being welcomed into God’s house and God’s story; it’s about praying intentionally together for the opportunities and being ready to welcome whoever God sends.
- 4.8 Our Follow! conversations have shown that God is at work in our diocese and we can see fruit and new growth. Lizzie outlined innovative ways churches across our diocese were proclaiming Christ and growing disciples.
- 4.9 Lizzie enthusiastically offered a variety of suggestions for growing our churches and where individual parishes didn’t have capacity for this work, suggested working together as a benefice to create those spaces and opportunities.
- 4.10 Diocesan support staff were there to help with support and resources; one of the ways was through a bid for Church Commissioners’ funding to employ intergenerational missionaries, to be placed strategically where there is identified need and opportunity, but it was hoped that there would be one in every deanery. They would form a missional team within the diocese with lots of skills and experiences to support parishes but with a deep willingness to learn from local contexts and your stories. They will start new work and seek to support the existing and developing work parishes are already doing and will identify and support new intergenerational leaders.
- 4.11 “Together we can inspire each generation to follow Jesus.”

- 4.12 Sam Pratley spoke on funding bids to Archbishop’s Council in support of the strategy and mission plans for the diocese. The Church Commissioners were changing their funding schemes to dioceses. Previous funding would cease and instead there would be three funds that dioceses can *bid* for:
- Strategic Capacity Funding
 - Restructuring Funding
 - Strategic Development Funding
- 4.13 The ***Strategic Capacity Funding*** was to support dioceses develop strategies for mission and growth. Hereford applied to the fund for the support of a consultant to help develop strategy and bid for the Strategic Development Funding
- 4.14 ***Restructuring Funding*** was a one-off payment to dioceses, available Jan 2017 to Dec 2019, to support taking forward more proactively Mission & Growth plans and help develop financial sustainability. Hereford was pre-allocated £172k.
- 4.15 ***Strategic Development Funding*** offered substantial funding to support dioceses in major mission & growth projects. Dioceses were expected to contribute match funding and a rigorous application process applies. Bids were expected to flow out of the key priorities of a diocesan strategy for mission & growth.
- 4.16 Members noted that the plans, strategy and bid funding proposals were all formed by feedback from Follow! The Diocese had been presented with a very tight timeframe for the funding bids, which would be lost if submissions were not on time.

ITEM 5 – Thy Kingdom Come

- 5.1 Brian Chave briefed Synod/DBF on the Archbishop of Canterbury’s invitation to join the global wave of prayer, titled ‘Thy Kingdom Come’ and taking place from 24 May to 4 June 2017. As a church, from Ascension to Pentecost, we especially pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the power of the Spirit is central to all that we do. Archbishop Justin had noted that this was not just another initiative; “Prayer is something that Christians do”.
- 5.2 The three core aims are
- To join in prayer with the whole family of God the Father
 - To pray for the empowering of God the Holy Spirit
 - That we may be effective witnesses to God the Son, Jesus Christ
- 5.3 The invitation was to be focused and intentional in what we do; keep it local; have events for different age groups; streams of prayer linking places; perhaps use art & music; invite those who have never prayed; something simple and engaging; identify any resources needed, including for those unable to get to church.
- 5.4 Synod noted that the dates fall within school half term, but that’s when Ascension and Pentecost happen to fall. Not all schools have half term in the same week any more and not being at school could make more children available to take part.

ITEM 6 – Prayer for our Diocese to Proclaim Christ and Grow Disciples

- 6.1 Following Thy Kingdom Come and the presentation on Mission Action Planning, Synod/DBF was divided into groups and asked to spend time in silent or communal prayer, before discussing and giving feedback on how to best encourage one another through prayer to Proclaim Christ and Grow Disciples.
- 6.2 Feedback and suggestions included:
- Could the Diocese provide boards with a ‘corporate’ logo, one for every church, so that Post It Note prayers could be applied which could be incorporated into the prayers offered.

- Capitalise on it being half term with a pilgrimage (ie Leominster Priory to Hereford Cathedral), with prayer stations along the way.
- A walk or pilgrimage to touch every deanery.
- Some like to pray publicly but others prefer privately, enable both.
- Maybe widen the timeline and draw from All Saints and the Christmas celebrations, creating an atmosphere to follow Jesus throughout life – or extend the timeframe back earlier in May and go into secondary schools to pray for those taking exams. It was noted though that while both were good ideas and could be done independently, this particular event was intended to focus on a specific time.
- It felt very powerful being exposed to public prayer but is not easy to learn to do. In the lead up to the event, try teaching how to pray more openly in the Sunday Services, so that people are ready for it.
- Non church goers needed to be encouraged and enticed. Maybe approved but quirky slogans such as ‘Prayer is Not Just for Christmas’, etc. to make people think and hopefully get involved.
- Make use of modern media to reach people, especially younger people, and take prayer forward in the way they’ll understand.
- Beacon Events, linked electronically, could be something organised centrally.

6.3 Synod/DBF was asked to let Brian have feedback on any other suggestions.

ITEM 7 – DBF AGM & Budget

2017 Budget:

- 7.1 The 2015 Annual Report & Accounts had been approved at the July Synod. In October 2015, Synod/DBF overwhelmingly approved a deficit Budget for 2016 (over £350k) – a budget for growth and to drive through new initiatives in mission and ministry. The 2017 Budget was presented by Stephen Herbert together with an update on 2016, parish offers, and some projections for 2018 & 2019.
- 7.2 The current forecast for 2016 showed that the deficit had grown to well above that figure. Despite diocesan expenditure being below budget by some £150k, unpaid Parish Share of £236k meant a likely operating deficit in the region of £450k by the year end.
- 7.3 The good news was that nearly 3 out of 5 parishes had chosen to make an offer to the Common Fund that exceeded their 2016 Parish Share commitment, bringing in an extra £100k. It’s not too late for parishes to review their commitment for next year, and recently some have.
- 7.4 The Finance Team and Budget Review Group working together with budget-holders had reduced planned expenditure for 2017 by c£220k from that reported to Synod/DBF in July. However, this still leaves the diocese c£470 away from covering the cost of parish ministry because over a third of parishes had decided to contribute less to the Common Fund than their portion of 2016 Parish Share.
- 7.5 Diocesan unrestricted, accessible reserves were modest and declining quickly; some long-term investments will most likely have to be sold to meet day-to-day cash needs. In contrast, at the end of 2015, there was over £8m of unrestricted reserves known to be available to PCCs.
- 7.6 Increases in Parish Share over recent years had not kept up with the underlying cost of ministry as well as not being paid in full. Balancing the books by 2019 could still be achieved, however, if for example everyone on our church electoral rolls gave just £2 more every week.

- 7.7 PCCs may not feel their individual contribution to the Common Fund mattered, but it mattered very much; if giving was not increased there would be consequences in the number of clergy and staff and the delivery of future mission & ministry; the outcomes may not be what local parishes really want.
- 7.8 The answer was a balanced approach to increasing income and reducing costs, which will require wisdom and imagination, rooted in prayer. Working collaboratively at benefice level, and parish MAPPING would help focus on mission and growth. Talking honestly about finance and giving too, and challenging a static level of giving as e.g. £10 in the collection plate 12 years ago if still being given today is worth only £6.19 in real terms.
- 7.9 The diocese were applying for Church Commissioner funding for Stewardship Advisers to help parishes free up their funds, ie helping with Gift Aid and releasing capital from small trust funds, etc.
- 7.10 Following the presentation there was one question from the floor: PCCs have lots of money that is also tied up in trusts for grave maintenance, etc. can they call these in?
- 7.11 The Diocesan Office have been looking at releasing these funds wherever the DBF is Custodian Trustee. Under £10k can be returned to the PCC without having to get Charity Commission permission. The funds belong to the PCC and they are charities in their own right so need to consider how best to use that money. Restrictions are often not as onerous as they appear and application can be made to the Charity Commission to cancel them. Staff do want to help PCCs with this over time (are currently very stretched with other work).

DBFX Membership:

- 7.12 There were no DBFX elections this year but Synod members were reminded that the following are DBFX members: Revd J Rogers (Chair), Mr C Smith (Vice Chair), Mr C Hunter, Revd L Cronin, Mr Nat Hone, The Ven G P Benson, Rt Revd R M C Frith, Mrs S Lewis, Canon R Lording, Rt Revd A Magowan, Mr A Mence, Mr C J Whitmey, Mrs J Woodroffe

Actions:

- 7.13 Synod/DBF members were asked to vote to approve the 2017 budget.
- | | |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
| Proposed by: | Mark Johnson, Ross & Archenfield |
| Seconded by: | Neil Patterson, General Synod |
| For: | 66 |
| Against: | 0 |
| Abstentions: | 2 |
- 7.14 Synod/DBF members were asked to vote to approve the appointment of Thorne Widgery Accountancy Ltd as Auditor for the period ending 31 December 2017.
- | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Proposed by: | Nat Hone, Ledbury |
| Seconded by: | Chris Smith, Kington & Weobley |
| For: | 67 |
| Against: | 0 |
| Abstentions: | 1 |

ITEM 8 - Any Other Business

- 8.1 Mr Christopher Whitmey (Hereford Deanery) had submitted a question to the Chair of Bishop's Council & Standing Committee, ahead of the meeting:
- “The comprehensive Review of Local Ministry 2016 made 28 recommendations. Who is responsible for (a) considering each of them; and (b) ensuring those accepted are implemented soonest?”

- 8.2 +Alistair replied on behalf of +Richard that the Report was primarily for the Bishops, but in a spirit of transparency had been more widely circulated.
- 8.3 It was concerned primarily with things discussed during this evening at Synod: strategy, MAPping, Shared Priorities, etc. and should be set against the context of what we were doing and trying to achieve; ministry for all of God’s people and improving the way we do mission looking forward.
- 8.4 Support Ministers and Senior Staff would be looking at the report and seeing, in this context, all that helps enable that ministry.

ITEM 9 – Dates of Future Meetings

9.1

Meeting	Date of Meeting	Time	Location	Notes
DBFX	Tues 8 Nov 16	1400	Hereford	
B Council	Thurs 17 Nov 16	1900	LMC	
BC Res	20-21 Jan 17	-	Hereford	
DBFX	Tues 24 Jan 17	1400	Hereford	
DBFX	Tues 28 Feb 17	1400	Ludlow	
DBF/Synod	Sat 4 Mar 17	1000	Hereford	Bishop of Hereford Bluecoat School
B Council	Thurs 9 Mar 17	1900	Hereford	
B Council*	Weds 26 April 17	1900	Hereford	Additional Meeting – sign off SDF Bid
DBFX	Tues 16 May 17	1400	Hereford	
B Council	Thurs 15 Jun 17	1900	LMC	
DBFX	Tues 20 Jun 17	1400	Ludlow	
DBF/Synod	Thurs 13 Jul 17	1900	Ludlow	Ludlow Assembly Rooms
DBFX	Tues 25 Jul 17	1400	Hereford	
DBFX	Tues 5 Sept 17	1400	Ludlow	
B Council	Thurs 12 Oct 17	1900	LMC	
DBF/Synod	Thurs 19 Oct 17	1900	Ludlow School	
DBFX	Tues 7 Nov 17	1400	Hereford	
B Council	Thurs 16 Nov 17	1900	Hereford	

**Bishop Richard's Presidential Address
to the Diocesan Synod 20/10/16**

When one of my daughters was at school, she greatly enjoyed going on adventure trips run by a company called PGL. Somehow it was then appropriate, even inevitable, that she married a man whose initials are PGL.

In this diocese, we are trying to develop a shared sense of purpose, facing in the same direction across parishes, benefices, and deaneries. Somehow it is appropriate, even inevitable that in appointing our new Diocesan Secretary, Sam Pratley, we should appoint someone whose very initials stand for Shared Priorities.

Sam, it's good to welcome you to your first Diocesan Synod since you started in your new job, but it is about our Shared Priorities that I want to talk today.

At our last meeting, we focused on our diocesan MAP. This stands for Mission Action Plan – and it's good that MAP is not just initials, but a word, as map itself implies a plan, a sense of direction. But if taken too literally it can seem too prescriptive, too inflexible.

I'm told that Head Teachers have been encouraged not to see their school improvement plans as documents to be laminated on a wall, but a framework for action and development.

Similarly, our diocesan MAP is not something that can be laminated as though it's an end in itself.

I have a feeling we also need a diocesan Sat-nav. I've spoken before of my dependence on my Sat-nav. I believe – again, as long as we don't take it too literally – that a Sat-nav has quite a lot to tell us.

There are choices to be made – the most economical, the fastest or shortest route; there's the response to traffic conditions; the instruction to make a U-turn where possible, contrasting with other instructions to keep on this road for a long time; the warning of problems ahead; times when, as when happened to me the other week, you drive past a big sign saying, "Ignore Sat-nav".

I've gone on about maps and Sat-navs because I want to underline that we're not after documents for their own sake, we're not after uniformity – to quote another diocese's MAP we're to be "permissive and not prescriptive"; and we're seeking to help things actually to happen – to look at How? As well as What?

Our shared priorities are:

- 1: Spiritual and numerical growth
- 2: Serving the common good
- 3: Reimagining ministry

And spiritual and numerical growth is our first priority. That's much easier to say than actually to do anything about.

John Daniels, our Local Ministry Officer, wrote this recently,

"In my view the greatest blockage to growth is culture, and in three ways. First, there is the long-term secularisation of society, in which the historic (especially rural) identification of Englishness with church going has been slowly eroded over decades. Second, the long term decline in church going has more recently been accompanied by an explicit rejection of belief in God, not least among younger people. Third, there is the distinction (if not the tension) between – on the one hand – the rural tradition of supporting the church as a symbolisation of the local place (which may or may not be expressed through church going) and - on the other – Christian discipleship. Can efforts to promote discipleship – through evangelism and Christian nurture – match, let alone out pace, the secular decline trend?"

I think that is a very helpful reminder of the context we are in and the challenges we face. Given this, it's not surprising that there is often a gravitational pull resisting change.

Nevertheless, I am enormously encouraged by much that is happening and I want to thank you Synod members, for all that you do and for all that you bring to our common life.

This evening's meeting has two particular ingredients to highlight. Yes, there is a budget, there is money talk – we can't get away from it. All I want to say about that is to point out that there are real issues for this year: not next year and the offer system, but this year. Please Synod members, do all make it your business to check with your PCC where your parish and benefice are with this year's parish share payments and do please do all you can to ensure they are brought up to date and paid in full.

And the second ingredient is prayer. This evening we shall be hearing about prayer, being encouraged to pray and actually praying.

I shall let the presentations speak for themselves, but I just want to say one thing about it. It is prayer that is the antidote to the sense of having to do too much, of everything being so much effort, of it all being about our own strength. We say in our worship, "The Lord is here. His spirit is with us." Do we mean that?

When speaking recently to those about to be ordained priest, I went on about what I believe is the most powerful bit of the ordination service, largely because I was saying it to myself and I need to be reminded of it time and time again. But it's something that not only applies to those in ordained ministry – I believe it is significant for every Christian disciple, not least members of the Hereford Diocesan Synod. This is what it says:

"You cannot bear the weight of this calling in your own strength, but only by the grace and power of God. Pray therefore that your heart may daily be enlarged and your understanding of the scriptures enlightened: pray earnestly for the gift of the Holy Spirit."