

Chase Benefice Council Milton & Blandford Deanery Synod 2021 Report

The first meeting of the year was held on 14 January via Zoom. A briefing paper was published in advance of the meeting, indicating that the primary purpose of the meeting was to vote on the proposal by the Deanery Working Party to implement a trial pastoral reorganisation. The poll results via the Zoom voting facility were 82% voting in favour, 18% abstaining. Therefore, the Synod endorsed implementation of the Plan on an experimental basis. The Rural Dean indicated that the plan would require approval by the Archidiaconal Mission and Pastoral Committee and ultimately from the Bishop, who has responsibility for the deployment of licensed ministry.

As the Covid pandemic continued, face-to-face Synods were not possible, so, in March, notes from the Deanery Standing Committee meeting on 11 February were issued by way of an update.

In May the outgoing Deanery Treasurer, Tim Smith issued a list updating members on the progress of Share payment in the parishes in the Deanery. A copy of the Salisbury Diocese Mission and Pastoral Plan Summary and Discussion paper was also issued.

In July the Standing Committee issued a further update. Following her resignation as Assistant Rural Dean, Revd Marflitt was thanked for her input. There being no nominations for either Houses of the Diocesan Synod, the following people offered to fill the vacancies: in the house of clergy, David John, Lewis Pearson and Justin Pottinger; in the house of laity, Jane Griffin, Gilly Hescroff, Sara Loch and Mike Dyer. There being no objections, these people were elected as the Deanery's Diocesan Synod representatives.

There was an opportunity for lay people within the Deanery to volunteer to train as Lay Worship Leaders. Canon Richard Hancock was to commence a course running over two Saturdays and via Zoom, rather than over several evenings with vast rural travel involved.

A service was held at Blandford Church on 9 September with the theme of 'thanksgiving'. Following the service, the Rural Dean introduced Reverend Dr David Miell who had been licensed on 26 July as House for Duty Associate Priest to the Chase Benefice, together with his wife Henriët, who is also a priest. The new Diocesan Synod representatives were introduced. The outgoing Treasurer, Tim Smith was thanked for his many years of service and Philip Whitcomb, the new Deanery Treasurer was introduced.

The Lay Worship Leader Course sessions were held at Sixpenny Handley church on 25 September and 16 October, with 9 people preparing to be commissioned by Bishop Karen on 9 January 2022.

A Deanery Open Meeting had been planned for 14 October to discuss the *Living in Love and Faith* materials and to then collate views for a Deanery-wide response. Sadly, due to the continuing pandemic, it was not possible to hold this meeting. However, the deadline for submitting thoughts/responses to the *Living in Love & Faith* materials was extended to 30 April 2022.

It came to light that Revd David Miell had been licensed as Assistant Rural Dean on 8 November.

Gill Baverstock
9 February 2022