

## DEANERY OF GRANTHAM

### Annual Parochial Church Meetings, 2023

#### Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod, 2022-2023

The following report is provided to deanery churches for their Annual Parochial Church Meetings in 2023, as required under the *Church Representation Rules 2020*, Rule M5(1)(e).

The Grantham Deanery Synod has met four times since it reported to APCMs in the Spring of 2022. All meetings were held in person.

Each Synod meeting is preceded by meetings of the Standing and Pastoral Committees, where the Synod agenda is planned. The Synod receives a written report on the proceedings of the committees at each meeting. Other regular items on Deanery Synod agenda are: a report on Deanery finances by the Treasurer (the current balance in the fund is £153); a digest of the proceedings of Lincoln Diocesan Synod; an update on the 'To Love and Serve the Lord' course and ALM training; and news of parish initiatives from which other parishes may learn. From time to time, a visiting speaker is invited to make a presentation to the Synod on a topic of interest.

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At the meeting of Deanery Synod on **30 June 2022**, a special welcome was extended to the Revd Sarah Tierney, Interim Priest in Charge of Barrowby with Great Gonerby and the Harlaxton Group of Parishes (The West Grantham Group of Villages) and to Mthr Hannah Grivell, Mthr Kate Hough, and Fr Yuce Kabacki (Assistant Curates, St Wulfram's).

In the presence of their incumbents, and using the prescribed rite, the Rural Dean swore in four deanery churchwardens who had been unable to attend the service at Lincoln Cathedral on 8 June 2022.

An invited talk was given by Clayton Stiff, who took up the post of Children, Youth & Families Worker at St Wulfram's Church in September 2021, after spending the previous 19 years in primary education, and worshipping at St Wulfram's for four years. Clayton stressed that safeguarding is at the forefront of his daily practice. A handout listed the support that Clayton had provided to date within the deanery and the diocese. This included circulating the monthly newsletter from the diocesan Youth and Children's Work Enabler (Micki Carey-Slater); participation in the diocesan Children and Youth Working Group, hosted by Bishop David, to discuss the vision and strategy for children and youth work across the diocese; and deanery meetings at Grantham House, where those who work with children and youth at deanery churches were encouraged to celebrate their work, reflect on the impact of COVID-19, and encourage and equip each other to move forward. Clayton outlined several initiatives that had emerged from the deanery meetings. These included a Grantham Deanery Padlet Wall (an online platform to share success stories, prayer requests, and answers to prayer); a parent survey to discover how needs could be served – resulting in organically grown ventures to support parish schools; future joint ventures (including a Youth Alpha or equivalent, summer activities, Light Parties following the pattern of well attended events in earlier years, and Youth Church). A Q&A session followed. Clayton suggested that it is crucial for churches that currently lack children in their congregations to focus on the future rather than the here and now. He said that by attending deanery gatherings, they can begin to share the vision and capture what is achievable: the key action is to put on events, publicise them well, and people will attend.

The eight participants who completed the second 'To Love and Serve the Lord' course on 18 November 2021 met with tutors and the diocesan Warden of Lay Ministry at a final

gathering on 24 March 2022. Four students on the second course applied for authorisation for lay ministry and pursued one of two ALM Foundation Modules ('Assisting in Public Worship' or 'Pastoral Visiting'). The four (from the Loveden Deanery) were joined on the modules by seven individuals (all from the Grantham Deanery), many of whom were already authorised lay ministers and wished to refresh their knowledge or extend the scope of their ministry. This cohort, and other lay ministers whose authorisation had expired or was due to expire shortly, were due to be authorised by their respective Rural Dean at an outdoor Eucharist at Grantham House on Sunday 3 July 2021, at 6.00 p.m., to which all the deanery was invited.

The Rural Dean spoke briefly about the timeframe for the 'church plant' at St Anne's from St George's Stamford. It was understood that the move would take place part way through 2023. It was noted that St Anne's was one element of the current Trinity Parish; that there was no physical church on the Earlesfield estate; and that St John's Spitalgate had been closed since lockdown (but was destined to be a local plant by St Wulfram's). Responding to a question about whether the new priest for St Anne's would take full responsibility for the Trinity Parish, the Rural Dean reminded Synod that the Deanery Plan envisaged a West group (as currently conceived), a Central group (comprising St Wulfram's, St John's Manthorpe, St John's Spitalgate, and Earlesfield) and an East group (Church of the Ascension, Londonthorpe, St Anne's).

Dave Parker (Churchwarden, All Saints Barrowby) shared news of the new Lincolnshire Co-operative Society store being constructed in the village. He said the church had reached out to the Society and held a good meeting that day, covering the Foodbank, wastage etc. The Society was keen to work with the church.

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At the meeting of Deanery Synod on **13 October 2022**, an invited talk was given by Peter Middleton (Ecclesiastical's Church Insurance Consultant for the Diocese of Lincoln). He used a slideshow to provide an overview of Ecclesiastical's guidance encouraging churches to have the confidence to be open for visitors through the week. He dispelled some common myths about open churches and put forward reasons to keep churches open (for example: open churches provide an opportunity for mission and ministry; being open can have a positive effect on security – legitimate visitors will deter criminals and anti-social behaviour; and, in case of incidents, claims costs are reduced as there is no break-in damage). He outlined the guiding principles for open churches: encourage activities in the church; focus on protection with 'flexibility' (a balance between risk, security and accessibility is needed); and use common sense. He emphasised the importance of keeping churches locked during hours of darkness (save for normal activities, such as Compline), and said that Ecclesiastical do not recommend key safes or automatic time-locks (which create additional risk and attract an additional premium). Finally, Peter set out 6 steps for open churches, concerning people, removing temptation, deterrence, reducing arson risks, recovery, and assessing risks / making churches safe for visitors etc. (a fire risk assessment is required by law; a lone working policy should be in place). A Q&A followed Peter's presentation; and he was available to talk with members on an individual basis at the end of the meeting.

At the same meeting, the House of Clergy appointed Fr Yuce Kabakci as Assistant Secretary of Synod and a member of the Pastoral and Standing Committees, following the resignation of the Revd Barbara Manterfield from those roles. Fr Clay spoke about progress with St John's Spitalgate which had been re-opened as a local plant from St Wulfram's. Regular worship began after his licensing to the Trinity Parish on 4 September 2022. Funding applications were being made, including a cost-of-living grant to create a 'warm hub' with the goal of opening every day during the winter.

Following a suggestion by Kate Waghorn, in the context of ‘Time to Change Together’, Synod voted to convey to Diocesan Synod its view about the need to recruit and train more lay ministers. The following question was subsequently sent to Diocesan Synod:

Grantham Deanery Synod welcomes and supports the Diocesan strategy of Time to Change Together and the inclusion of an emphasis on the ministry of all the people of God in the Diocese of Lincoln. However, we are concerned that this emphasis is not being matched by an equivalent focus on the recruitment and training of both LLMs and ALMs, and that this will compromise the success of TTCT.

We therefore ask the Warden of the College of St Hugh to detail the following:

- The net change in the numbers of serving ALMs and LLMs within the diocese over the past 5 years;
- The projected change in the number of ALMs and LLMs within the diocese over the next 5 years;
- What measures are being taken by the Diocese of Lincoln to nurture and encourage existing lay ministers to continue and develop their ministry; and
- What measures are being taken by the Diocese of Lincoln to identify, train and nurture new lay ministers.

Synod received an update on the third 16-session ‘To Love and Serve the Lord’ course (run jointly with the Loveden Deanery), which started on 8 September 2022 and was due to run until March 2023. The tutors and participants were drawn from the two deaneries. There was subsequently a short hiatus in teaching for the course during the period of national mourning for Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

In addition, oral reports were given on the Community Hall attached to St John’s Manthorpe (which had been open for one year); the refurbishment of the tarmac drive and gravel carpark at Harlaxton Church; and the new ‘Wulfram Bear’s Baby Clothes Carousel’, which follows Wulfram Tots (at 9.30 a.m.) once a month on Friday mornings in St Wulfram’s Church, enabling clothing for 0-to-2-year-olds to be recycled.

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The meeting of Deanery Synod on **16 March 2023** was relatively short. The Rural Dean welcomed Cynthia Treggiden, newly elected by the Trinity Parish as its second lay representative on Synod.

There was no invited talk on this occasion.

Synod received the written response from the Warden of the College of St Hugh to its question to Diocesan Synod about LLMs and ALMs. See: <https://www.lincoln.anglican.org/news/diocesan-synod-digest-november-2022>.

The Revd Canon Geraldine Pond (course leader, and a member of the diocesan Reader Board) spoke about the third ‘To Love and Serve the Lord’ course, which had ended on 2 March. Participants are now exploring a possible call to Authorised Lay Ministry. The application process includes a PCC resolution. The ALM Foundation Modules will be taught on four Thursday evenings (25 May, 8, 15 and 22 June), and open to those newly discerned for ALM, existing ALMs wishing to broaden the scope of their ministry, and those whose authorisation has lapsed or will soon expire and have been asked by their deanery to study as a refresher. The joint deanery Authorisation Service had been arranged for Sunday 2 July 2023 at 7.30 p.m. The Rural Dean encouraged members to come along and support the new ministers, especially those from their own parish.

The public consultation is due to begin shortly on the pastoral scheme for the Dissolution of the Trinity Parish. The PCCs of St John’s Manthorpe, the Trinity Parish, and St Wulfram’s have recently endorsed a proposed pastoral scheme to hold in plurality the benefices of St John’s Manthorpe, St Wulfram’s Grantham and the proposed new Parish of

St John's Spitalgate with Earlesfield, thus forming a central grouping within the deanery, consistent with the Deanery Plan. A public consultation on that scheme will follow.

An update was given on 'plant churches' within the diocesan Strategic Development Programme. The Revd David Shenton is due to retire on 30 June 2023 and the Revd Andy Acheson will arrive at St Anne's New Somerby soon afterwards. A progress report on St John's Spitalgate was received. The ministry and volunteer teams are growing. Fr Clay Roundtree expressed his gratitude for financial support to St John's from the Trinity Parish and St Wulfram's Church.

To enhance collaboration in the deanery, Synod is building on the work on strengths and weaknesses that it conducted in October 2021. A mechanism is being established to make it easy for colleagues around the deanery to make contact with people who can advise about a strength in a particular parish.

This was the final meeting of the current Triennium. Thanks were expressed to current lay representatives, who were elected for three years at APCMs in 2020. Guidance has been circulated about Elections to Deanery Synod at APCMs in 2023. Newly elected lay members will take up office on 1 July 2023; and the first Synod of the new Triennium will be held on Thursday 6 July 2023.

This was the final meeting before the retirement of The Revd David Shenton. David has served on Deanery Synod since 2012. He expressed thanks for the love and support shown to him and said he would miss everyone. Responding to an invitation from the Rural Dean, David gave a blessing at the end of the meeting.

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A topic on the agenda of all recent meetings has been '**Time to Change – Together**', which is the agreed way forward for the Diocese of Lincoln. As a family of churches, the diocese has committed to collaborative working between churches of different types and between a rich variety of ministers; strategically focusing resources for mission and growth; supporting each church to flourish in its distinctive role; enriching our lives as a Christian family through layers of belonging; and promoting a culture of being church that is collaborative, generous, active, hospitable and centred on Christ. Essential to the new way of working are two new overlaid structures that bring together parishes, benefices and deaneries into workable, missional joined-up patterns: Deanery Partnerships and Local Mission Partnerships. There are 9 Deanery Partnerships (DPs) within the diocese. The DPs roughly map onto the 9 Local Authorities and follow existing deanery lines for the most part. In each DP, a new DP Dean and a new parallel lay leadership role are helping the establishment of the DP and its long-term role. Grantham Deanery is located within the South Kesteven DP, which includes all South Kesteven save The Deepings, plus a little of North Kesteven. The Revd Stephen Buckman is the DP Dean. Grantham Deanery Synod has received regular reports from the SK DP Steering Group, on which it is represented. On 12 January 2023, Grantham Deanery Synod members attended a meeting of all four synods within the SK DP, held in Corby Glen.

In many ways, Local Mission Partnerships (LMPs) are the most important part of the new ways of working together. Defining and establishing these partnerships was a big task for the diocese in 2022. Like DPs, LMPs do not replace benefices, groups or parishes, but join these together to create missional working communities of churches, worshippers and ministers. LMPs will embody a culture of collaborative, multi-disciplinary, generous and mission-focused church. Wherever possible, LMPs will have at least three stipendiary ministers.

At recent meetings of Deanery Synod, there has been extensive discussion of the various options for the LMP/s in which deanery parishes will sit. A special meeting of Synod

took place on **22 September 2022** to consider three possible models for the LMP: (1) Grantham Deanery form an LMP; (2) Grantham Deanery form an LMP with Loveden Deanery; (3) There be two LMPs: one comprising the urban parishes of Grantham; another comprising the West Grantham Group of Villages together with Loveden Deanery. The churchwardens of the seven churches in the West Grantham Group met in May to discuss a suggestion that the group join with the Loveden Deanery. The overriding feeling of that meeting was that the West Grantham Group should remain with the parishes of Grantham Deanery. So, Deanery Synod's discussions focused on options (1) and (2). At the meeting on 22 September 2022, the pros and cons of each model were considered, and straw polls were taken before Synod proceeded to vote. The voting revealed that the majority favoured Grantham and Loveden Deaneries forming an LMP together.

This model was commended to deanery parishes in late September; and replies were sought by the end of January 2023. The outcome of the PCCs' discussions was presented to the Deanery Pastoral Committee in February and to Deanery Synod on 16 March 2023. All parishes agreed that Grantham and Loveden Deaneries should form an LMP together, but some reservations were expressed and two parishes attached conditions to their approval (primarily that any sharing of human resources should be on an entirely voluntary basis to protect the wellbeing of clergy and lay ministers).

At the meeting of Deanery Synod on **16 March 2023**, it was learned that the Loveden Deanery Synod had decided not to join with the Grantham Deanery to form an LMP. After discussion, Grantham Deanery Synod decided to convey a fresh recommendation to deanery parishes, in light of Loveden's recent decision, namely that our Local Mission Partnership be coterminous with the current Grantham Deanery boundary. Replies were sought by 16 April 2023.

JAM/PC/SWC  
22.3.23