

LEDBURY DEANERY SYNOD

Minutes of the Meeting of the Standing Committee held on
2nd March 2011 at 2.30 pm
at Birchwood Lodge, Storridge.

Present: Rev'd Prebendary M.D.Vockins (Rural Dean), Mr. I.D.S.Beer (Lay Co-Chairman, in the Chair), Mr.M.W.Brothers, Mr.G.W.Hopkinson (Secretary), Rev'd M.Horton, Mr G.Probyn (Treasurer), Mr.B.Speakman, Rev'd Prebendary S.Strutt, Rev'd R Ward.

1. **Welcome and opening prayers.** The Lay Co-Chairman welcomed all present and prayers were said by the Rural Dean.
2. **Apologies.** Mr.M.C.Greensmith.
3. **Minutes of the Standing Committee** held on 3 November 2010: Noted.
4. **Matters arising:** None.
5. **Minutes of Deanery Synod** held on 25 November: Noted.
6. **Finance.**

(i) The Treasurer had provided a document showing outturn for 2010 and the consequent call on Deanery reserves. Those had shrunk by a considerable sum and clearly the situation that had caused that could not be allowed to continue. It was agreed that those parishes who had met their quotas in full should be thanked; those who had fallen short should be encouraged, asked what steps they were taking to make up the deficits, and offered help in meeting their obligation. Especially with stewardship if required. Letters to parishes would be cleared with the Team Vicars and the Rector.

It was noted that some parishes that were shown as falling short believed that they had in fact met the sums required of them. It appeared that the coordinators for the Cider and Hop parishes had unilaterally departed from the decisions of Deanery synod. Whilst benefices were free to allocate their overall sum as they wished the total provided had to equal the sum sought by the Deanery. There was a need to improve procedures to ensure that all, including the Team Ministry and the Deanery Treasurer were sighted on the allocations and that those were compatible with the overall Deanery decisions. The Rural Dean and the Lay Co-Chairman would pursue, consulting the Team Rector.

(ii) The Treasurer reported that progress for the current year was reasonably though there appeared to be confusion over the sums to which some Treasurers were working; (*Note, post-meeting it was agreed that the Treasurer should seek clarification and improved arrangements.*)

(iii) Budgeting for 2011: See ii above.

7. **Stewardship:** The Rural Dean said that he hoped the Deanery as a whole would adopt Stewardship. There was no one formula that must apply to all but help was available to those parishes that had not yet made a start. Work on this would probably merge with that on Mission and Vocation. The new Synod would need to look at all such links.
8. **Women Bishops:** Diocesan Synod would be debating this topic on 5 March but not voting on it. SC agreed that they would put to the March Deanery Synod a motion to go to the Diocese supporting the consecration of women bishops on the terms now proposed.
9. **Good News:** The Rural Dean reported on the impressive and inspirations talk given by one of the trapped Chilean miners. He undertook to circulate his notes to those who were interested. At Stoke Edith the physical state of the Church had been greatly improved and the small but enthusiastic congregation had transformed the impact of the building. It was agreed that a letter of thanks should go to the PCC. In Wellington Heath the Friends of the Church were to put on an Easter exhibition. Colwall had had an urgent need for a new printer and generous donations amounting to £5000 had been forthcoming. Likewise a generous offer to replace their computer. At Easter, Cradley was to launch a monthly service for young people.

10. **Deanery 5 Year Plan:**

- i. 2015 Onwards: The Rev'd Preb S Strutt reported that Mr J Barnes had produced a power point presentation on the Deanery working group's report. It was agreed that that would be on the agenda for the first meeting of the new Synod. Parishes should be encouraged to seek presentations on the Report. The Rural Dean expressed the thanks of SC to the members of the working party who had done a very good job.
- ii. Training and Children and Young Persons: "Open the Book" was well under way and consideration was being given to extending it to older groups. The latest training day had been very valuable and there would probably be one each term. Since not all the funding obtained would be required it was agreed to return, at this stage, £6,000 to the Diocese.
- iii. Communications: The Diocesan Working Group's Interim report was now on the Diocesan website and work had started on the second stage, involving communications to parish level. The Lay Co-Chairman had arranged for a regular insert in the Ledbury magazine for Deanery business and the Rectors of CMS and Colwall agreed to find slots in theirs too. The first item would be a short piece explaining what the Deanery was.
- iv. Social Event: A letter of thanks had been received from Ledbury Age concern for the sum raised at October's social event by the raffle.

11. **Bishops Council and Diocesan Synod:** The Secretary reported that there were no items to report apart from those mentioned above.

12. **Vulnerable Adults:** The Government had brought forward proposals to change the underlying legislation. The Diocesan policy would need to follow that. The Secretary would seek guidance from the Diocese on the likely timescale.

13. Synod 24 March: The Rural Dean had invited the Rev'd C Pascoe (Diocesan Lay Development Officer) to address the meeting on Mission Action Planning. That would link with work the Deanery report on 2015 Onwards in subsequent Synods.

14. Lessons Learned from old Synod: Five points were recoded as valuable lessons:

- (i) Deanery Social Activities were extremely valuable;
- (ii) Communications had improved, though there was still much to be done;
- (iii) There was an enormous fund of goodwill out there for the Church;
- (iv) With fewer meetings of Synod than in earlier years there was a need to concentrate business in SC as the Business Committee, leaving Synod free to concentrate on Mission in all its aspects;
- (v) More effort needed to be made to encourage the attendance of the laity at Synod, and perhaps of the clergy too.

15. Election of New Synod: The Secretary had circulated a Note that set out proposals on three issues: the need to carry on business before the new Synod met, on present plans at the end of July; the election of lay officers and a new Standing and Business Committee; the structure of that committee. The Note recommended seeking the agreement of the next meeting of Synod to its proposals. SC agreed with the recommendation.

The Rural Dean and the Lay Co-Chairman expressed their thanks to the members of SC for their work over the past three years. They expressed particular thanks to Mr M Brothers for his wise and effective contributions to so many aspects of Church life over a much longer period.

16. Forthcoming Meetings:

Synod: Thursday evenings on : 24th March (Much Marcle); 28th July (Colwall Ale House); 29th September (Munsley WI Hall); and 24th November (Cradley Village Hall).

Standing Committee: Wednesday afternoons on 6th July, 7th Sept and 2nd November.

17. Any Other Business: None.