

NORHAM DEANERY SYNOD

MINUTES OF THE 28 JUNE 2011 MEETING

The meeting was held at Ancroft Village Hall. There were 19 present and 6 apologies for absence. It was chaired by Rob Kelsey, who welcomed Bishop Frank and also Paul Collins, the new Vicar of Holy Island; Victor Dickinson opened in prayer and Ruth Turner spoke about the current situation at the Ancroft church, including the production of new pamphlets about the history of the church and the village.

1. MINUTES OF THE 14 MARCH 2011 MEETING

Accepted and signed as a correct record. There were no matters arising.

2. BRIDGE MAGAZINE AND DEANERY WEBSITE

- Terry Harris summarised progress to date.
- The website www.norhamdeanery.org.uk is up and running and everybody is encouraged to put it to good use. Some churches still need to let Alan Cater have a brief word picture of their church for the Deanery Churches page. Terry expressed a huge thanks to Alan Cater for his swift and professional work on the site. Bishop Frank queried whether there is a link to the Diocesan website. (There isn't, but this will be rectified.) Matthew Knox reported that he has recently established a website for his churches and commended <http://www.gbbo.co.uk> as a great way to get started.
- The Bridge magazine is now functioning in its new format. Copy is coming in on time; Shiel and Morrison, the printer, is doing a good job; and Terry, as editor until the end of the year, says it's now a simple job. The print quantity has been reduced to 400 copies and churches will be invoiced in Sep for the Jun-Dec 2011 issues.

3. DEANERY DEVELOPMENT GROUP (DDG)

The group met in May and, apart from discussing the matters on the agenda for this Synod meeting, it also had a preliminary look at the question of the policy on retaining part of collections at funeral services: each church seems to have a different policy and there can be deep upset to grieving families if this is handled badly. DDG will investigate further and make recommendations. Rob Kelsey and Terry Harris attended the meeting of Diocesan DDGs recently and were pleased to find that the Diocese has a light touch with its policy towards the Deaneries, wanting to invigorate them to be independent and inter-dependent in relation to the Diocese.

4. DEANERY FINANCE GROUP (DFG)

This ad hoc group (formed for 6 months to work at a more considered, as opposed to emotional, approach to the Parish Share issue) has now met three times and the meetings were very positive, with a pleasing degree of openness between parishes. It has addressed the questions: 'What is the current situation?' and 'What can we do to help ourselves?' It is obvious that there is no perfect formula for allocating Parish Share: any changes to the present system will only throw up further anomalies elsewhere. Questions for further deliberation are:

- How do we change perceptions about Parish Share?
- How do we present the facts and figures and needs more clearly?
- How do we best help the most struggling churches (in particular Tweedmouth with its major inherited financial difficulties)?
- How do we best help parishes to help themselves?

The DFG will draw up an informed position paper before the Archdeacon's visit in Sep. It was emphasised that DFG meetings are open to all.

5. FLODDEN 500

Linda Gardham was away, so more considered discussion was held over to a future meeting. However, Heather Pentland pointed out that virtually all the Deanery churches could be involved with this important project in one way or another and that it was important for the Deanery as a whole to be involved.

6. BISHOP FRANK

The recently-appointed Assistant Bishop of Newcastle was invited to introduce himself to the Synod following his day visiting the Deanery. He was born in Rowlands Gill and worked in the Durham Diocese except for his last job as Suffragan Bishop of Brixworth in the Diocese of Peterborough. His wife is the Vicar of Riding Mill and also the Diocesan Adviser on Spirituality. He has an office in the Shepherds Dene retreat house at Riding Mill and he commended this facility to churches and individuals. His particular concerns are that we should be a praying people, listening to the cries of the heart and promoting the life of faith into the wider community. His task at the moment is to be out and about in the Diocese to get to know the churches and their people

7. WOMEN IN THE EPISCOPATE

A background paper was given out (copies circulated with these minutes for those absent) as a basis for the discussion to be held at the next meeting in Sep. Sheila Bamber will attend this meeting to assist in the discussions. It should be noted that the Deanery does not have a formal vote on these matters: this is a 'Deanery conversation' from which our views can be taken to Diocesan Synod meeting on 12 Nov.

8. AOB

Terry Harris stated that there is £4640 still available in the Deanery fund for implementing Parish Mission Action Plans. Applications to Terry with a brief outline of how the claim relates to mission or outreach; first come first served.

9. FUTURE DEANERY SYNOD MEETING DATES (ALL 7 FOR 7.30 PM)

- **Mon 26 Sep St Cuthbert's Centre Holy Island** (tide open from 6.30 pm)
Women in the episcopate.
- **Tues 6 Dec (venue not yet fixed)** Parish share.