



Diocese of Swansea and Brecon
Esgobaeth Abertawe ac Aberhonddu

Annual Report

2020



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BISHOP'S FOREWORD

The Most Rev'd John Davies

Dear Fellow-workers for the Gospel,

SEEING A NEW NORMAL

Enough has been both said and written about the strange, unexpected and unwelcome times in which we currently live. For the moment, this remains 'a given'; a fact of life.

What, perhaps, has not been sufficiently emphasised is the remarkable and innovative response which this has brought about. Far from shutting up shop and diving under the covers, the Church of God has, and we in our own part of it, have responded imaginatively and faithfully to the daunting challenge presented.

New ways of communicating the Gospel, celebrating the liturgy and talking about faith have emerged in ways that few if any of us could have imagined. That being so, I want to say very clearly how impressed and heartened I have been by the efforts which so many of you have made to make this so. I, personally, have found myself quite staggered by the numbers of people who have been watching live-streamed services and other broadcasts and, although it would be naïve to imagine that each 'view' has been an indication of someone watching from start to finish, I am certain that the level of participation is an indication that the faith remains something attractive, interesting and relevant to many more people than we often think. It has taught us that we have often lagged well behind others in using a rich variety of means to communicate with them and to engage with them; and we must now commit to not letting this opportunity slip through our fingers.

Some of you are already aware of the Life Events initiative pioneered by Canon Sandra Millar of the Church of England, and of the impact of her presentation to the Governing Body, making us aware of the thousands and thousands of people with whom we are in touch year-on-year through baptisms, marriages and funerals. She will be with us in the Diocese in (I hope) the not too distant future. Maintaining communication with those who have linked with us via social media during lockdown and with those who, in life-events, cross our paths, must give us real impetus to re-imagine just how readily we can evangelise.

In my foreword to the Annual Report last year, I insisted that Evangelism should be Item 1 on the agendas of many of our meetings. And the opportunities with which lockdown and Life Events present us should offer real encouragement and living proof that evangelism is not as difficult a concept upon which to take fresh hold as we might fear or imagine. So, be ready to take that hold and work with others to make it happen where you are. Don't let your imagination and enthusiasm vanish in a desire to get things back to where they were, because that was not always a good place

for the church to be. Things won't be the same again, nor should they be. We have a Gospel to proclaim and we are discovering and implementing new ways of doing so.

CONSTRUCTING A NEW NORMAL

Last year I also made mention of the Evangelism Fund which the Representative Body of the Church in Wales had made available to dioceses as a means of funding new initiatives. Some dioceses are already on the way with a variety of projects which range from locally based outreach through family centres, pilgrimage and spirituality projects, and large-scale church plants.

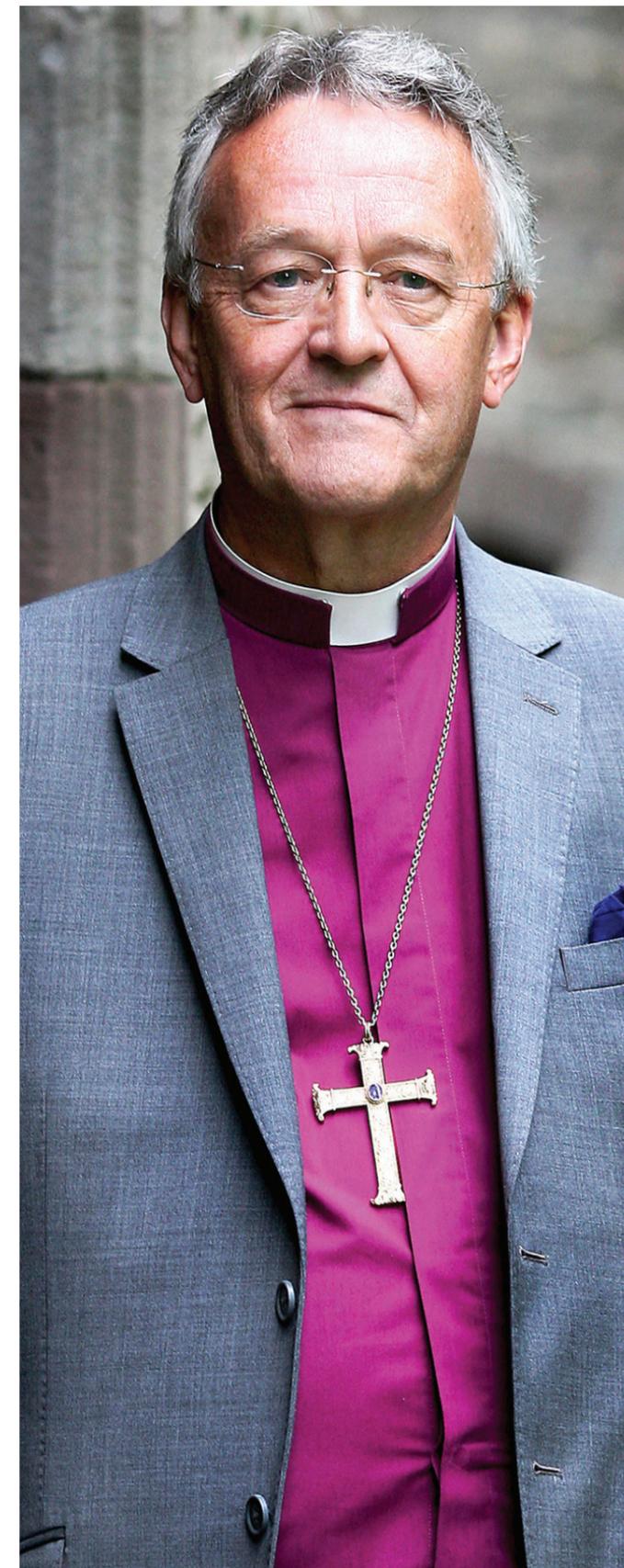
Our own Diocese has a plan to partner with the Church Army, a hugely respected Anglican evangelism organization which will be well-known to some of you, less well-known to others, and details of what we propose are being communicated across the Diocese.

As a part of our planning, we have engaged the services of Mandy Bayton whom some will remember speaking inspiringly at our Diocesan Conference in 2016 and who is a tried and trusted professional in the field of Christian outreach and new initiatives. Plans remain in the making, but we hope to be able to employ, with Evangelism Fund support, a worker in each Area Deanery who will form part of an Evangelism Team made up of laity and clergy from every Ministry Area whose task it will be to establish and maintain new faith-based projects across the Diocese which will offer accessible and welcoming opportunities to those very people about whom I have already written to encounter the Lord Jesus, his Church and the Christian faith in ways that speak afresh of our calling to go and make disciples. This will be no short-term project, but one which it is proposed will be long-lasting and deeply rooted.

There are places in the Diocese where things are already happening in new and exciting ways, and I warmly welcome this. But the desire to see it happen further and further afield has yet to be re-kindled in too many areas where the flame burns less vigorously than it could and should. I rely on your prayerful and committed support for the efforts which we are making.

SUSTAINING A NEW NORMAL

I must end by writing about matters material. Present times have created massive financial challenges to the Church in Wales as a whole and to its constituent ministry areas. Investment income has reduced significantly, church buildings have been closed for a lengthy period, many still cannot be safely re-opened, and all of this has impacted severely.



Our vision

*A family, rooted in Christ, committed to transforming lives by:
Gathering as God's People
Growing more like Jesus
Going out in the power of the spirit*

Ein Gweledigaeth

*Teulu wedi ein gwreiddio yng Nghrist, yn gweddwid bwyddau trwy:
Gyd-gyfarfod yn bobl Dduw
Cyd-dyfu'nfwy tebyg i Iesu
Cyd-genhadu yn nerth yr Ysbryd*

The Representative Body (RB) has stepped in to offer a generous package of support to dioceses, encouraging them, at the same time, to carefully review the way in which they are moving forward in developing new structures for team working.

Some have interpreted this as a stealthy means of making cuts or closing buildings (of which we have an abundance and probably too many). I can and must say clearly that this is not so.

The RB, as a charity, is legally required to expend its resources in order to further the objects of the charity – basically growing the church. Put differently, it cannot legally or morally justify bailing out parts of the church where little or no effort is made to engage with its new structures and where realism about non-essential buildings is absent.

Be clear, be very clear: The Lord himself called his disciples to work together as a team. Last year Tim Hollingdale reminded us, and powerfully, of what joyous results will emerge when we follow his example and do the same, sharing our gifts, talents and ministry, loving and welcoming people where they are, and drawing them into the family.

So I commend the RB for its generosity, and I commend you for your faithful giving and for the efforts which, together, you have made and continue to make in sustaining our task and our work of ministry.

I encourage you to recognise just how strong we are when we are willing, with proper realism to work together in times of challenge, and how brilliant the results could and can be when we make that same willingness the basis of our new normal.

With the assurance of my love and prayers as always.

+John Cambrensis

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN CONFERENCE HELD ON 12TH OCTOBER 2019 AT BRECON CATHEDRAL

1. Archbishop John welcomed those present and thanked them for their ongoing work and witness, and for the great contribution each makes to the life of the Diocese. The speakers were formally welcomed, outgoing Clerical Secretary, Revd Andrew Holmes, was thanked for his contribution, and incoming Secretary Revd Ian Drew-Jones was welcomed into the role.

2. Formal Business:

- i.** Elections to Electoral College: Very Revd Dr Paul Shacklerley, Ven Jonathan Davies, Ven Alan Jevons, Revd Canon Keith Evans, Revd Steven Bunting, Revd Dr Jonathan Wright, Mr Tim Davenport Esq, LLB, Mrs Barbara Edwards, Mrs Annabelle Elletson, Mrs Carolyn Kirby, Mr Paul Murray, Mr Richard Verge.
- ii.** Elections to Governing Body: Revd Steven Griffith, Revd Dr Jonathan Wright, Mrs Annabelle Elletson, Mrs Karen Evans, Mr Jonathan Hughes, Mr Craig Thomas.
- iii.** Apologies: Fr Paul Keown, Fr Dewi Roberts.
- iv.** Minutes of the 2018 Diocesan Conference: ++John proposed, and all agreed that the minutes be adopted.
- v.** The remainder of the 2018 Conference Report: was duly received, ++John thanked everyone for their continued huge work, witness and continued activity in promoting the Gospel across the Diocese, in what are challenging times.
- vi.** Standing Committee: A new Standing Committee for 2020-2022 needs to be elected. Representatives will be elected from Deanery Conferences.
- vii.** Mothers' Union and the Clewer Initiative: Awareness was raised at Conference about the joint initiative to end modern slavery by 2030.
- viii.** Evangelism Fund Bid: it was reported that the Community Survey undertaken had not been entirely successful, as most of the respondents were in a specific demographic, so it was felt that the results were not necessarily represent-

ative of the wider Diocese. Work is ongoing to proceed to making the first Diocesan bid.

ix. Eco Church Proposal: The Diocesan Eco Church Committee proposed that the Diocese become an Eco Diocese. A presentation was made by Mrs Gillian Knight and Revd Canon Dr Mark Clavier highlighting how churches in the Diocese were beginning to explore how to become more Eco-friendly. A film was shown of various initiatives undertaken in conjunction with A Rocha UK to reduce carbon footprint. The aim is to get 10% of the churches in the Diocese signed up to the scheme, and for there to be a monitoring and reporting regime so that Conference can keep tabs on developments. A Rocha awards Bronze, Silver and Gold status to those who sign up to, and engage, with their online survey. There are a variety of resources that help communities engage and better plan their activities. Questions were raised: Canon Alison Jones asked how the Fairtrade Province was being monitored; Mr Richard Tyler asked that the DAC be mindful of ecological considerations when looking at applications to modify buildings. Revd Dr Adrian Morgan noted that the scheme had had a beneficial effect in galvanizing parishioners to work together on a shared project. It was proposed by Canon Mark and seconded by ++John. Conference unanimously agreed to the proposal.

3. Archbishop's Address:

++John addressed Conference by suggesting that many people are interested in discovering their roots to get a sense of who they are. He suggested the Church could be asking the same question, and reminded Conference of the experiences of Abraham, who was promised that he would be a blessing to the world; Isaiah, who stated that the faith community would be a light to the nations; and Jesus, who is the promised light of the world. The Church is a community that exists

to make disciples. Archbishop William Temple argued that the Church exists for the benefit of its non-members. There are some voices that say we do not have the capacity to engage in this enterprise, but it would be a mistake to think that nothing can be done: small acts can bring in the kingdom. It was proposed that church councils should reflect on the question: who do we think we are? In concluding his address ++John invited Conference to reflect on the words of the Lord's Prayer. Conference vocalized that prayer together. To underline much of what was said, Life Events was also mentioned, with a proposed future Conference that would go into more detail. Occasional Offices are a way in which many outside the Church engage with it at seminal moments in life. Across the Province 880,000 people made contact with churches. In Swansea and Brecon, there were 398 baptisms, 307 marriages and 1,200 funerals conducted last year, evidencing the number of people with whom the churches have fruitful encounters. The challenge is in capitalizing on those encounters. Statistics show that we are in contact with a significant amount of people in day to day ministry.

4. Presentations:

- i.** Tim Hollingdale reported on progress being made in the formation of Ministry Areas. There is a huge effort being expended in some parts of the Diocese and functioning Ministry Areas are emerging: talent is being harnessed and teamwork is in evidence. Alongside this there are some concerns and clarity needs to be given in some Areas. There is some disagreement in Areas, some of it is healthy. There is some frustration too and others who are simply opting out of the process for the time being. Moving forward, there needs to be a season of prayer and teaching alongside more practical support. The next step will be working with Ministry Areas to come up with a mission plan.
- ii.** Sharon Atkins and Sian Millar made a presentation on

behalf of Faith in Families. St John's Centre, Brecon, has seen an 88% increase in service users. Programmes to combat social isolation are many and varied, including luncheon, gardening and cooking clubs. In Swansea, over 6,000 children live in poverty. The Bonymaen, Clase and Teilo Community Cwtches work in areas of social deprivation delivering a number of programmes including parent and toddler groups, basic parenting skills, after school and school holiday clubs. Since April 2019 Faith in Families has been able to secure funding to engage in a Brighter Futures Project, working with children who are excluded from education or who are on limited hours arrangements. Three engagements workers have been recruited and, within the first month 40 referrals were made by local schools. These workers are able to work with partner organisations to address issues, and there is evidence that the positive engagement has led to an increase in confidence and self-worth among beneficiaries.

iii. Roger Faulkner outlined the work of Open Doors, a global organisation that works on behalf of persecuted Christians. Their work includes relief and advocacy work, education, especially literacy and numeracy, as well as highlighting the plight of the persecuted. 3,731 Christians were martyred last year in Northern Nigeria alone, which is 90% of the world total 4,176. It was an initiative started by Brother Andrew in 1955. Daily devotional material is available, as well as an informative website.

++John thanked all three speakers for the quality of their presentations

5. Closing Remarks:

++John summarised the business of the day, announced the 2020 conference date would take place on October 10th, and concluded the meeting with the Diocesan Vision Prayer, AND COMMENDING Conference to reflect on the question: who do you think you are?

NOMINATIONS BOARD

Rev'd Sam Aldred - Clerical Secretary

The Standing Committee has suspended the nominations board and appointments are undertaken by Bishop and Senior Staff in consultation with vacant parishes.

Justin Davies as Priest in Charge of South West Gower
Hywel Griffiths as Assistant Priest of Llwynderw
Adrian Morgan as Vicar of Casllwchwr and Gorseinon
Steven Bunting as Vicar of Swansea St Thomas
Ian Folks as Assistant Priest of Central Swansea
Ian Drew Jones as Vicar of Manselton & Cwmbwrla
Jonathon Wright as Vicar of Swansea St Peter (Cockett)

STANDING COMMITTEE

Rev'd Sam Aldred - Clerical Secretary

The Standing Committee has met four times over the year ending in June 2020. Matters discussed include the following:

- The state of theological education in the province and the Diocese, and especially the provision of Theology for Life.
- Membership of the Diocesan Conference.
- The progress of ministry areas in the Diocese.
- The progress of the incipient Mission Project.
- The Strategic Aims of the Diocese.
- The vitality of God's Church in this Diocese during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The Gender Assessment Report 2019

OUR DIOCESAN STRATEGIC AIMS

The Framework for Ministry Areas and Local Ministry Programmes

A Family rooted in Christ, committed to transforming lives by the following Strategic Aims:

STRATEGIC AIM 1

The Diocese will have vibrant Ministry Areas at the heart of our communities

And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me'. And immediately they left their nets and followed him

(Mark 1:17-18)

STRATEGIC AIM 2

The Diocese will be structured and governed for mission

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
(Matthew 28: 19)

STRATEGIC AIM 3

The Diocese will provide learning and discipleship programmes to deliver its mission

Jesus began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone *(Luke 4: 15)*

STRATEGIC AIM 4

The Diocese will seek to build God's Kingdom in community and public life

Which of the three do you think was a neighbour to the one who fell into the hands of the robbers? Jesus said, 'The one who showed mercy'. Jesus said, 'Go and do likewise' *(Luke 10. 36-37).*

STRATEGIC AIM 5

The Diocesan mission & ministry will be sustainable and resourced

For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? *(Luke 14:28)*

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Sir Paul Silk

Chair of the Swansea and Brecon Diocesan Board of Finance Limited



God is unchanging, but human institutions constantly change and evolve. For us in the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon, 2019 was a year of continuing change as we developed our Ministry Area working structures. For some of us, the progression to collaborative working was trouble-free, even liberating; for others, this new way of working has brought increased challenges. The diocese's new, 12-step strategic plan to an effective Ministry Area was well received, and diocesan staff worked closely with Ministry Areas to support them through their change journey, with first commissionings anticipated in 2020. As well as seeing our Ministry Areas as our focus for sustainable growth and outreach, we continued to develop our Evangelism plan. Stewardship support also remained an area for development.

During the year, receipt of ministry share arrears increased to £107,209 (£62,917 in 2018); of this, £52,739 was attributable to the historic arrears' discussions and review that took place in 2018. Agreements are in place that should result in further receipts amounting to £88,670. A policy for the review and management of arrears has been agreed, and the new review working party meets quarterly. The Board recognises the difficulties faced by some deaneries in apportioning share in a climate of increasing costs of ministry, but this is a responsibility they must exercise. The Board also keenly supports our Ministry Areas in their efforts to re-structure for growth and long-term sustainability. We are particularly grateful for the thoughtful consideration, the cooperative working, the willingness to share one another's burdens, and the selflessness that is being shown by the great majority of our parishes, and particularly by their Treasurers. We are also grateful to the Gower Deanery for their generous continuation of subsidy to the Afan Tawe, Radnor & Builth and Brecon Deaneries. Collection of Ministry Share for 2019 was 92.2%. While our collection figure compares well with other Anglican dioceses, the collection trend is consistently downwards, and the Board recognise that the cost of providing against unpaid share has risen, from £48,693 in 2016 to £242,634 in 2019. This includes a write-off package of £201,693 resulting from the 2018 historic arrears review.

There have been a number of significant operational factors which were unforeseen at the time of budgeting:

- The funding of long-term renovation works to designated key properties that became vacant due to clerical turnover required £491,878 (2018: £125,760) of additional funding to be provided to the Parsonage Board.

- An upturn in investment values over the year resulted in total net realised and unrealised gains on investments during the year of £492,164 (2018: £408,549 losses).

Savings were also achieved:

Overall, there has been a small reduction of £27,287 in net funds over the financial year. Whilst this continues to provide a strong reserve holding, the board remains vigilant against recognised potential financial risks and is mindful to maintain an appropriate provision.

Like every other organisation, our plans for 2020 have been thrown into turmoil by the impact of the global pandemic of COVID-19. Our focus has been on supporting our parishes in new methods of digital operation and ensuring that they have the pastoral and resourcing support that they require at this challenging time. Inevitably parish income, through donations, fund-raising and life events, will reduce due to legislation that has closed our churches and made gatherings illegal. In addition, we anticipate a significant downturn in income from investments as global share markets show record levels of decline. We have been advised by the Representative Body of the Church in Wales that they are prepared to offer financial support to Dioceses to help mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and we are extremely grateful for this generous offer. The overall impact of COVID-19 will undoubtedly be substantial, but we are committed to do all we can to minimise the effects,

Einstein famously said that great opportunity lay in the midst of every crisis. Our opportunity is to re-energise the Church as we emerge from the social restrictions and the economic downturn. There are likely to be difficult decisions that we will need to confront. Every area in our heterogeneous diocese, each with its unique settings, strengths, gifts and burdens, will have its role in strengthening our foundations and sustaining our Church for future generations. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all during these unprecedented times. Please also remember us in your prayers.

TRUSTEES' REPORT

The trustees/directors present their report together with the audited financial statements of the Company for the year ended 31 December 2019.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and Accounting and Reporting for Charities Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2016).

Legal and administrative details

The Swansea and Brecon Diocesan Board of Finance Limited ("the Company") was set up under the provisions of the Constitution of the Church in Wales, Chapter IV, and Paragraph 16. The Company was incorporated as a charity limited by guarantee on 13 December 1967.

The Charity was registered with the Charity Commission on 17 April 1968 and is exempt from United Kingdom income and corporation tax. The governing document of the Company is the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The Company meets in general meeting twice annually. The day to day management of the Company is delegated to the Executive Committee, whose members are the trustees of the charity and directors of the Company for the purpose of company law.

The Company does not have a share capital. The trustees/directors guarantee to contribute to the assets of the Company, such amount as may be required not exceeding £1 per guarantor. The number of guarantors at 31 December 2019 was 8.

Our Purposes and Aims

The purposes of the charity are:

- To maintain a sustainable, led and transforming Christian ministry across the Diocese.
- To enable all to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with God.
- To maintain a sustainable, led and transforming Christian ministry across the Diocese.
- To enable all to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with God.

Our activities are inspired by a shared Diocesan Vision to become a family, rooted in Christ committed to transforming lives by:

Gathering, as God's people **Growing**, more like Jesus **Going Out**, in the power of the Spirit.

At the heart of our mission-shaped vision is the commitment to see lives transformed; this is therefore the fundamental purpose to which funding is directed.

The trustees/directors are aware that a diocese succeeds through the mission and ministry of its parishes, its senior clergy and its bishop. Through striving for the highest standards of financial management the trustees/directors aim to create the conditions in which the mission and ministry of the diocese can flourish and be maximised.

Objectives and Activities for the Public Benefit

In shaping the objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees/directors have considered the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit.

The trustees/directors acknowledge the Charity Commission's guidance set out in The Advancement of Religion for the Public Benefit and have had regard to it in the administration of the Company. The trustees refer to the guidance in the Charity Commission general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the aims and objectives of the charity and planning future activities.

The trustees/directors believe that by promoting, facilitating and supporting the work of the Church in Wales in the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon, it helps to promote the whole mission of the Church (pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical) more effectively, both in the Diocese as a whole and in its individual parishes, and that by doing so it provides a benefit to the public by:

- Promoting Christian values, and service by members of the Church in and to their communities, to the benefit of individuals and society as a whole; and
- Providing facilities for public worship, pastoral care and spiritual, moral and intellectual development, both for its members and for anyone who wishes to benefit from what the Church

The memorandum of association of the Company permits it to make grants in pursuance of its objects, and the nature of grants made in 2019 is indicated in note 6.4 to the financial statements.

Review of Achievements and Performance

The trustees/directors interpret their role broadly, contributing to the strategic leadership of the Diocese, balancing careful stewardship with a flexible and proactive approach.

The main activities are:

- The management of diocesan funds in the support of clergy, parishes and their communities
- Securing and providing the finance for the development and implementation of the Diocesan Vision to encourage

mission and church growth strategies

- Contributing to the national work of the Church in Wales
- Securing funds in support of wider Diocesan and World-wide Mission

For 2019, the main objectives were:

- o To sustain Diocesan ministry by maintaining financial stability
- o To support the formation of Ministry Areas
- o Training and Support of Ordained and Lay Ministries
- o To provide support and advice for Parishes in all aspects of their activities, specifically in their preparation for Ministry Areas.
- o To continue to support a Diocesan Mission fund to provide funding for mission projects which aim to reflect the Diocesan Vision.

Monitoring Achievements

Sustaining Diocesan ministry by maintaining financial stability: The trustees/directors continue to closely monitor income and expenditure levels to maintain a balanced budget and this is evidenced in the financial statements. They remain particularly mindful of the challenges faced by Parishes and also the requirement to ensure that the Company remains financially stable and viable. In 2019 the costs of Ministry exceeded income collected from Ministry Share however the Company's Investment portfolio benefited from a significant increase in value. As a result, there was a small increase in total net assets to £6,019,452 (2018: £5,903,133) during the year

Supporting the formation of Ministry Areas: The trustees/directors continue to provide support to Ministry Areas through the allocation of key personnel to facilitate the internal review process and provision of resources for growth.

In collaboration with St Padarn's, the trustees/directors are pleased to be able to continue to support and train candidates for stipendiary and non-stipendiary ministry, alongside a newly developed, programme of lay ministerial training.

During 2019, our lay training programme supported:
3 individuals trained and commissioned as Lay Pastoral Visitors (2018 - 19) 10 individuals trained and commissioned as Lay Worship Leaders (2018 - 22) 24 individuals trained and commissioned as Eucharistic Assistants (2018 - 8) 2 individuals trained and licensed as a Reader (2018 - 2) 2 individuals received as Readers from other dioceses (2018 - 2) 2 individuals in training as Readers (2018 - 2)

To provide advice and support for parishes in all aspects of their activities, specifically in their preparation for Ministry Areas: The trustees/directors continue to endorse the ongoing provision of practical and financial support to the

Parishes across the Diocese through the provision of advice and support in managing and maintaining buildings, access to grant funding and the availability of a network of support staff in key areas.

To continue to support a Diocesan Mission Fund to provide funding for projects which aim to reflect the Diocesan Vision: The trustees/directors again budgeted a significant fund for mission projects and were pleased to award £74,621 in grant payments.

Financial Review

The principal aim of the Company is to generate sufficient income to fund its activities, predominantly the support of ministry within the Diocese which represented approximately 7.4% (2018: 7.3%) of unrestricted expenditure for 2019.

Income

The Company's major income sources and receipts are consistent with 2018. Total incoming resources of £3.80m (2018: £3.79m) include £2.60m (2018: £2.57m) collectable Ministry Share, £0.85m (2018: £0.85m) in the form of the Representative Body annual Block Grant, and Investment Income of £0.19m (2018: £0.22m).

Expenditure

Total resources expended were £4.33m (2018: £3.76m). Support for ministry continues to be the major area of expenditure for the Company with total costs of £3.20m (2018: £2.84m). With the exception of Parsonage Board expenditure, support for ministry costs £2,283,234 (2018: £2,201,912) were consistent with previous years. The cost of maintaining Parsonage Board properties increased to £914k (2018 £640k). The major contributory factor was the increase in the number of major renovation projects required during the year.

Support for Parishes expenditure increased to £436k (2018 £280k) reflecting the growth of the Children, Youth and Families Ministry and the increased training and development activities in the formation of our ministry areas.

Church property costs rose to £0.68m (2018 £0.56m) as the number of inspections of churches and halls was increased from the previous year.

Other financial support costs decreased to £239k (2018: £332k) In 2018 the Company's commitment to underwrite the Faith in Families Christmas fund-raising campaign resulted in a one-off provision of £98k of additional funding.

Other resources costs increased to £243k (2018 £112k). Following a major review exercise of Ministry Share arrears by the Company chairman and secretary £107k of arrears was collected during the year and £202k of arrears were written off. The provision for unpaid ministry share as a percentage of unpaid share at the yearend has increased in the 2019

accounts in comparison with previous years reflecting the financial challenges and uncertainties associated with the COVID -19 pandemic in 2020.

Support Costs - Management and Administration

Management and administration support costs (see note 6.6) include essential Diocesan Centre repair and improvement costs and the provision of IT equipment to enable off-site working.

Support costs are allocated across the statement of financial activities headings as shown in note 6.6.

As described below the costs of Diocesan Centre repairs and improvements and the provision of IT equipment were met from the designated repair fund.

Designated Funds

An unrestricted designated repair fund of £200k was established in 2015 to provide a fund to meet the costs of renovating and repairing the Diocesan Centre building and the temporary relocation of staff during the period of renovations. In 2019 £40k was allocated from this fund to meet the costs of office repairs and improvements and £13k to provide the IT infrastructure for employees to work remotely.

Restricted Funds

Total funding of £156,236 was transferred from the Restricted Ministry Area Transformation Fund during 2019 (2018: £81,490) and used to contribute towards Children, Youth and Family Ministry costs and Ministry Area Development costs. Parsonage

The Restricted Income Fund relating to the activities of the Parsonage Board and the deficit balance of £77,974 (2018: £35,898) reflects the policy of the Executive Committee to continue to fund long-term renovation works in designated key properties that become vacant due to clerical turnover. £491,878 (2018: £125,760) of additional funding was provided to the Parsonage Board during the year. The Parsonage Board account is showing a deficit for the second successive year. A "break-even" budget has been set for the Parsonage Board for 2020 and in the longer term the Executive Committee is committed to providing the funding required to eliminate the deficit.

Net Income

Net income before other recognised gains/(losses) on unrestricted funds showed a deficit of £89,820 (2018: surplus £328,266). The Company does not plan or budget with the intention of reporting significant deficits or surpluses. The Board notes that the reported deficit derives from provision of Ministry activities and specifically from the funding of the Parsonage Board which is responsible for providing and maintaining accommodation for members of clergy in the Diocese. The Board also notes that if it were not for the realised gains on the investments in the year the deficit would be higher. The budgeting process will continue to be reviewed and monitored to ensure the costs of Ministry recharged to the Deaneries are as fair and as accurate as possible. However, the Board are aware that there will

always be factors arising during the financial year that will lead to variance between the budgeted and actual costs of ministry.

Investments

Total net realised and unrealised gains/(losses) on investments during the year were £492,164 (2018: £281,346)). This marks a return to the upward trajectory of investment values over recent years following the declines in the markets in 2018. Given the current volatility and uncertainty in the markets the trustees/directors are satisfied that investments continue to be managed prudently and in line with parameters set by the Investment Sub-Committee. Overall, the financial position of the Diocese at 31st December 2019 is considered to be satisfactory.

Investment Policy and Performance

The Executive Committee, whilst retaining overall responsibility for the company's investments, has devolved the management of the investments to the Investment Sub-Committee in conjunction with the Company's appointed Investment Managers, Brewin Dolphin Limited. The Executive Committee has stipulated that investments are limited to medium risk assets, within parameters set by the Investment Sub-Committee, whilst generating a target level of current income. The investments are made in full accordance with the Ethical Investment Policy adopted by the Church in Wales.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 virus will undoubtedly have a significant financial and non-financial impact on the Company. In the financial terms the main challenges facing the Company relate to a reduction in collectable Ministry Share, a reduction in investment income and a fall in the value of investments. A number of initiatives have been undertaken in 2020 to mitigate the impact of these factors: -

- The Company is working with the Representative Body of the Church in Wales and Ministry Areas in the Diocese to implement a financial support programme offered by the Representative Body to assist in meeting the costs of Ministry in the Diocese.
- The Company's Investment Sub-Committee is meeting with the DBF's Investment Managers to review the impact of COVID-19 on investment income and investment values and identify measures that can be taken to mitigate the impact
- The Company's senior management team has reviewed the 2020 budgets to identify costs that can be removed, reduced, or deferred to a later date.
- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. Where statutory measures introduced by the Government to curtail the spread of the COVID-19 virus have meant that employees are unable to fulfil their work duties the employees affected have been furloughed and a claim for financial support made under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Reserves Policy

The Representative Body funded a block grant to the Company of £850,663 in 2019, representing approximately

22% of total income. It has been confirmed that this level of grant support will be maintained until 2021 but there is no certainty that the level of this grant will be maintained after 2021. Therefore, the Company aims to maintain a prudent level of reserves.

The Reserves Policy states that funds equivalent to at least 9 months of operating expenditure should be held as reserve. At 31 December 2019, the balance held in unrestricted funds was £4,327,713, which includes unrealised gains on the value of investments amounting to £982,775; this figure represents the equivalent of 12 months expenditure at 2019 levels. The current level of reserves is considered appropriate to meet the stated reserves policy while also considering the impact of inflation.

At the end of Quarter 1 for 2020 unrestricted funds were the equivalent of 9 months expenditure at 2019 levels. The situation will continue to be reviewed however the recovery of investment values since March 2020 provides significant encouragement that the value of reserves can be maintained at a minimum of the equivalent of 9 months operating expenditure as per the current reserves policy.

Plans for the Future

For 2020, the main objectives are:

- To sustain Diocesan Ministry by maintaining financial stability
- To actively support the transition to Ministry Areas
- To provide a programme of training and support of Ordained and Lay Ministries
- To provide support and advice for Parishes in all aspects of their activities, specifically in their preparation for, and transition to, Ministry Areas.
- To continue to support the allocation of Ministry Share apportionment at Deanery level.
- To continue to support a Diocesan Mission fund to provide funding for mission projects which aim to reflect the Diocesan Vision
- To establish a strategy for evangelism and outreach for the whole Diocese.

It is expected that the statutory restrictions put in place to limit the spread of COVID -19 will impact to a greater or lesser degree on the ability and opportunities to progress the objectives above however the Dioceses remains committed to progressing all these initiatives where this is practical and possible.

Structure, Governance and Management

Membership - Composition

Members of the Company are appointed for a three-year term, and there are four categories of membership as set out in the memorandum and articles of association:

- ex officio members, which include the Bishop of the Diocese, senior clergy and Diocesan officers
- up to ten members nominated by the Bishop
- up to ten members co-opted by the Company
- elected members - one cleric and two lay members elected by each Area Deanery Conference

Executive Committee

The day-to-day management of the Company has been delegated to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall not exceed 15 members. Every effort is made to ensure that those elected to serve have skills and experience appropriate to the needs and responsibilities of the Committee.

Other Committees

The Constitution of the Church in Wales states that there shall be established in each Diocese, a Parsonage Board and a Churches and Pastoral Committee. The Executive Committee has established principal subcommittees, including the Assistance Committee, Investment Committee, Funding Committee, and a Widows, Orphans and Dependants Committee. Members of committees are appointed for a three-year term.

Parsonage Board

The Parsonage Board has responsibility for the management of diocesan parsonages, their upkeep and repair, and for buying and selling houses as appropriate. The aim of the Parsonage Board is to provide adequate and comfortable accommodation for clerics in the Diocese.

Churches and Pastoral Committee

The Committee is responsible for:

- Keeping church buildings under review in relation to pastoral need and to advise the Bishop and Diocesan Conference accordingly
- Advising on grants and loans for maintaining church property and administering the Diocesan Churches Grant Fund
- The administration of the scheme for inspection of churches and halls
- Overseeing the process required for declaring a church

Assistance Committee

A fund is set aside to assist those Parishes who are facing financial difficulties. Application can be made for help with paying the Ministry Share and/or church insurance premiums.

Investment Committee

The Committee is responsible for setting and reviewing the strategy for the Company's investments, and for monitoring the performance of the Board's portfolio. The Committee acts for the Diocesan Trust and the Cathedral Choir Endowment as well as the Diocesan Board of Finance.

Funding Committee

The Funding Committee is responsible for considering and awarding internal grants in respect of Parish, Benefice or Ministry Area projects, and providing advice and guidance as necessary.

Widows, Orphans and Dependants Committee

The Widows, Orphans and Dependants Committee is funded

by personal donations from those, who in gratitude for the dedicated service given by clerics, wish to make sure that no clergy widow or dependant should find themselves in financial need.

The Committee is also able to offer assistance in particular circumstances, and it is a sincere wish that no clergy widow should find themselves in any situation of financial need. Induction and Training of Trustees

The Charities Commission guidance has been adopted as a training resource for all trustees and is a standard agenda item. Induction for new trustees is currently on an informal basis. A planned and structured induction programme will be developed during 2020. Trustees are also encouraged to attend appropriate training seminars of which details are circulated.

Risk Management

The Company has a risk management system to identify and assess significant risks and to put in place appropriate mitigating procedures. The Diocesan Audit Committee is charged with reviewing the effectiveness and robustness of these systems and reporting thereon to the Executive Committee. Apart from the impact of general economic conditions, the principal risks to which the Company is exposed are the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the effect of changes in equity prices and interest rates.

The Executive Committee seeks to mitigate these risks by close monitoring of investment performance. Liquidity risk is mitigated through the maintenance of appropriate levels of bank and short-term deposits.

The risk of any non-collection of Parish Share is regularly considered by the Executive Committee and is included on the risk register. A provision for doubtful debts has been made and is included in the financial statements.

The full name of the Company is Swansea and Brecon Diocesan Board of Finance Limited.

The Swansea and Brecon Diocesan Board of Finance Limited (the Company) is a multi-faceted structure. It is:

- A registered charity (No. 249810)
- A company limited by guarantee (No. 924565)
- A Board of Finance established under the Constitution of the Church in Wales.

Details of the trustees and directors (trustees/directors) who served during the year, secretary, registered office, registered auditors, principal bankers and stockbrokers are set out below.

Board of Trustees/Directors

The Most Revd John David Edward Davies (President)
Sir Paul Silk (Chairman)
The Ven Alan Neil Jevons
The Very Revd Albert Paul Shackerley
Gwynfor Lewis, FCA

	2019	2018
Ministry Share Collection Performance (receipts are now firstly offset against current debt)	92.2%	92.7%
Net incoming resources for the year on unrestricted funds before unrealised gains	206,426	328,266
Level of unrestricted reserves held	4,327,713	4,229,943
Clergy positions	2019	2018
Stipendiary	56	54
Non-stipendiary	13.5	11
House for duty	-	1

Key performance indicators

The trustees/directors consider the key performance indicators to be the parish share collection, net incoming/ (outgoing) resources for the financial year, the level of unrestricted reserves held, and the number of clergy in post within the Diocese:

Pay policy for senior staff

The trustees consider that the senior management team comprise the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the Board on a day to day basis. The remuneration of the key management personnel is set in line with the Diocesan Pay and Grading Structure. The key management personnel of the Company are the Diocesan Secretary and the Finance Officer.

Sir Andrew McLeod Brooks Large
The Ven Jonathan Byron Davies
Sonia Jones

Consultants

The Ven Alfred James Randolph Thomas
T J P Davenport (Diocesan Registrar)

Company Secretary

Louise Anne Pearson

Registered Office

Diocesan Centre, Cathedral Close, Brecon, Powys, LD3 9DP.

Independent Auditors

Baldwins Audit Services, Waters Lane Chambers, 1-3 Waters Lane, Newport, NP20 1 LA

Principal Bankers

HSBC, Portland Street Branch, Swansea, SA 1 3DF.

Investment Managers

Brewin Dolphin Limited, 2nd Floor, 5 Callaghan Square, Cardiff, CF10 5BT.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES IN RESPECT OF THE ANNUAL REPORT AND THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The trustees (who are also directors of Swansea and Brecon Diocesan Board of Finance Limited for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report (incorporating the strategic report and directors' report) and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP.
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements, and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

By order of the Board of Trustees

Sir Paul Silk

Chair of the Swansea and Brecon Diocesan Board of Finance Limited
Date: 2nd July 2020

Swansea and Brecon Diocesan Board of Finance Limited

Balance sheet as at 31 December 2019

	Note	2019 £	2018 £
Fixed Assets			
Investments	10	5,078,253	4,606,804
Long Term Loans	11	350,000	380,000
		<u>5,428,253</u>	<u>4,986,804</u>
Current Assets			
Debtors: due within one year	12	264,571	298,749
Cash at bank and in hand	13	988,363	1,185,678
Total current assets		<u>1,252,934</u>	<u>1,484,427</u>
Liabilities			
Creditors falling due within one year	14	(428,341)	(161,098)
Net current assets		<u>824,593</u>	<u>1,323,329</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			
Creditors falling due after more than one year	15	(350,000)	(380,000)
Net assets		<u>5,902,846</u>	<u>5,930,133</u>
The funds of the charity			
Unrestricted funds	16	4,327,713	4,229,943
Designated Repair Fund	16	146,431	199,370
Total unrestricted funds		<u>4,474,144</u>	<u>4,429,313</u>
Restricted funds			
Ministry Area Transformation Fund	16	330,213	486,449
Restricted Income Funds (Parsonage Maintenance Fund and Church Maintenance Fund)	16	(77,974)	(35,898)
Legacy and Benefactions Account and Trust Funds (Restricted Capital Endowment Funds)	16	1,176,463	1,050,269
Total restricted funds		<u>1,428,702</u>	<u>1,500,820</u>
Total Charity funds		<u>5,902,846</u>	<u>5,930,133</u>

The Company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 December 2019.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.



Sir Paul Silk
Chair of the Swansea and Brecon Diocesan Board of Finance Limited
Date: 2nd July 2020

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Rev'd Dr Gillian Todd - Chair of Audit Committee

The Audit Committee experienced a year of considerable challenge in 2019.

The newly appointed external auditors MHA Broomfield Alexander for the Diocesan Board of Finance and the Diocesan Trust identified several issues which needed attention.

The Audit Committee welcomed their fresh approach and worked with the Diocesan Board of Finance and the Diocesan Trust to address the issues identified. Considerable work needed to be undertaken by Trustees of the Diocesan Trust, the Diocesan Secretary and the Diocesan Finance Officer in order to reconstruct the Diocesan Trust accounts in a way which met the requirements of the Charity Commission and which ensured that assets were not counted more than once in Diocesan Accounts.

Throughout the year the Audit Committee remained concerned that the net Ministry Share debtor for the end of the year was greater than the provision made to cover it.

The Committee is aware that work is going on in the Diocese to further decrease this and welcomes the reports made to it by the Diocesan Secretary and the Finance Officer.

The Audit Committee was aware throughout the year of the hard work done by Faith in Families to manage the organisation within the financial resources available to them. However, it is the view of the Audit Committee that sufficient reserves must be held by the organisation in order to provide the flexibility to manage during difficult times.

The Auditors recommended the agreement of a revised reserve policy which is explicit about its purposes. This was considered to be very important as assessing reserves is a way in which grant funders judge the financial position of the organisation.

The Diocesan Board of Finance, The Diocesan Trust and Faith in Families all had their end of year financial statements approved by the Audit Committee.

DIOCESAN TRUST

Louise Pearson - Secretary

In accordance with the relevant Trust Deeds, the Trustees of this custodian trust continue to oversee the investment of funds and to manage properties on behalf of parochial trusts.

With the support of our auditors and the Audit Committee, the Trust officers have continued their program of review and update of the processes and procedures to strengthen the administration of the Trust.

In 2018 the Audit Committee conducted a tender process for the role of financial auditors and Baldwins Audit Services were appointed. The financial statement for the year ending 30th June 2019 was their first year acting on our behalf.

In conjunction with the Audit Committee and Baldwins Audit Services, the opportunity was taken to review the information presented in the financial statements. Our Education properties were valued, and these are now included as fixed assets. Our review also concluded that Custodian Funds be excluded from the financial statements and our year end accounts to 30th June 2019 reflect this amendment.

With the support of the Investment Committee and our investment

management brokers, Brewin Dolphin, our investment portfolio has been closely monitored throughout the pandemic period. The portfolio fell by about 20% in the first quarter of 2020, but has since recovered and now sits at around 10% lower than market values at 31st December 2019. Income generation for the year ahead proves to be more challenging as companies decide, and/or regulators instruct, not to pay dividends.

With the potential of a second global spike in the pandemic, and the impact that this too may have on market recovery, our income investment policy has been restructured to a total returns basis. Our program of identifying and facilitating the liquidation of small charity permanent endowments has continued and several small-value funds have been liquidated with funds distributed to the beneficiaries.

Through the Education Trust the Custodians continue to support our 6 VA schools and 8 VC schools across the Diocese. We continue to insure our school buildings and to manage the Capital Repair and Maintenance Program (CRAMP) for our schools, in line with directive from the Welsh Assembly Government. Two further schools have indicated their interest in converting to a Church In Wales school; discussions are ongoing and various options continue to be explored.

PARSONAGE BOARD

J E Jones - Parsonage Board Chairman

At the 31st December 2019, the Parsonage Board's Working Fund was £71,661 in deficit, while the Diocesan Improvement Fund was £413,424 in credit. The Board also received income of £32,659 from its rental portfolio and, after expenditure of £26,372 the rental fund deficit of £12,600 at the start of the year was reduced to £6,313 by the 31st December 2020.

Several significant projects were completed this year, including the construction of a two-storey rear extension at Rhayader Vicarage (pictured), and a new single-storey rear extension at Knelston Rectory. These projects have not only greatly improved the quality of these properties, and their suitability as family homes, they have also been vitally important in securing the long-term presence of a parsonage in their respective ministry areas.

One of the Board's current projects is the construction of a purpose-built parsonage for the Llchwyr Ministry Area which, in line with the Diocese's Eco Church commitments, has been designed with energy efficiency and environmental

impact in mind. Although this project has been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic the site recently reopened, and it is hoped that the building will be completed early in 2021. Similarly, the purchase of a new-build property for the Irfon and Wye Ministry Area has faced delays, but the Board continues to closely monitor the project's progress.

By focusing its resources on projects such as these, the Parsonage Board is now in a position to dispose of several properties that are no longer required under the ministry area system, with three properties scheduled to be sold in the next year. In addition, a development plot in the Llanwrtyd Wells area will also be sold in due course. Despite the difficulties faced by the Diocese this year, I am confident that the Parsonage Board will continue to support our clergy and ministry areas in the months ahead by improving and maintaining our housing stock to a high standard. Finally, I would like to thank the members of the Parsonage Board and the Property Team for their ongoing commitment, as well as the significant contribution they have made to our work during a challenging year.

CHURCHES & PASTORAL COMMITTEE

Kes Seymour - Administrator for the Churches & Pastoral Committee

Due to the Covid19 outbreak and the lockdown throughout Wales and the wider UK, it will come as no surprise that it has been a quieter year than usual for the Churches and Pastoral Committee. The closure of churches across the Diocese has meant a lot of activities such as quinquennial inspections and church repair work have had to be delayed or put on hold this year.

However, the Committee has still been able to award some assistance grants to help churches at this time. These grants have included making contributions to the building costs at the reordering project at Swansea St Thomas', assisting with replacing the heating system at St Mary's, Brecon, and funding asbestos surveys for churches in the Buallt Ministry Area.

At the beginning of this year, several of our churches were affected by the numerous storms that Wales was subjected to, and the Committee was able to assist with grants towards emergency work to dangerous and fallen trees, as well as repairs to damaged churchyard walls in Swansea St James and Llangyfelach.

In total, an amount of £28,651 in grants has been made in the last 12 months.

In addition to making grants, the Committee has offered more support to churches regarding proposed building projects, church management and church closures/ redundancies. The Committee is here to assist on all such issues so please do not hesitate to contact the Diocesan Office.

This last year also saw the final year of the current five-year cycle of quinquennial inspections, focusing on the ministry areas of Clyne Trinity, Tawe Uchaf, Hay, Penderi and East Radnor. Of course, given the lockdown a lot of these inspections have been delayed, but we are working with our inspectors to ensure that the inspections can go ahead safely in due course.

Can I just take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support and patience in what has been an unusual and challenging year.

ORDINANDS & VOCATIONS

Rev'd Canon Ian Rees

June 2019 saw one of the largest ordination services for some years with a total of 9 people ordained in Brecon Cathedral, 7 as Deacons and 2 as Priests.

Deacons

Sam Aldred
Janet Day
Peter Letson
David Owen
Meinir Ronicle
Marian Thomas
Gill Todd

Priests

Petrina Lodge
Sue Rumbelow

The Retreat Leader and Preacher at the Ordination service was Revd Canon Dr Mark Clavier.

There have been a good number of people exploring their vocation through the year, both for lay and ordained ministry which has been encouraging. Numbers in the last few years of people ordained and licensed, or entering training, have been very good, but there remains a need to seek to nurture vocations to all forms of ministry.

In July 2019, five people began training at St Padarn's, four of those for ordained ministry and one for licensed youth ministry. Apart from those ordained in June there were another three who continued in training for ordained ministry.

Through training the candidates undertake various courses of academic theology combined with practical placement experience. All who train, whether full time or part time, lay or ordained, also attend a number of residential courses each year. All are also members of Formational Cells which offer an opportunity to reflect on their training and their ministry. The residential courses continue for the first few years after ordination or licensing as part of an ongoing training programme. Regular meetings are held each year with St Padarn's who report back with updates to the Bishop on the various candidates being trained.

The Ordinations planned for June 2020 have obviously had to be rescheduled but please continue to pray for those to be ordained Deacon or Priest, as well as those continuing in training and those hoping to start training.

In recent years the Initial Continuing Ministerial Education has been led by The Revd Canon Dr Ian Davies and involved two residential weekends at Llangasty which offer the newly ordained a chance to meet up and reflect on how ordained ministry is going for them. These have been very useful and important times of 'space' as people busily go about their day to day ministry. Ian Davies is due to retire at the end of 2020 and he has obviously played a really important role in the Ministry team in the diocese for a long time. His contribution has been immense, and he will be much missed. We're grateful to him for all his work.

As a diocese we continue to have a number of people studying on the Theology for Life Course. As well as some who are training non-residentially for either ordained or licensed ministry, some of those who are studying are exploring vocations to lay or ordained ministry. Others will be taking the course just to add to their depth of theological knowledge and the groups that have been meeting in Brecon, Swansea and Crickhowell have all proved stimulating and enjoyable for members of the groups and the group facilitators.

The course is administered by St Padarn's Institute. St Padarn's have also continued to develop the 'Living and Learning' series of resources which are designed to be run in parishes or ministry areas and help people to grow in their faith. These are also suitable for people thinking about where God may be leading them. The Worship Leaders and the Pastoral Visiting modules are also used for training people for commissioned ministry.

Ministry in the Church in Wales has changed a great deal in relatively recent years and we encourage people to continue to ask the question of where God might be leading them and would welcome discussion with anyone who is thinking about it.



Some photographs from 2020's Ordinations services at Brecon Cathedral

LITURGY

Rev'd Canon Chris Darvill

With the unprecedented events of 2020, this report might be expected to be the shortest ever of any Bishop's Officer for Liturgy (at least since one written in 1208 following Pope Innocent III's Interdict!)

On the contrary, however, this has been a very busy year where there has been the need to address an extraordinary situation calling for ingenuity, resilience and determination. The year began with the usual run of applications for help and guidance with the preparation of services bespoke for individual occasions just as normal -some for Mothers' Union events and even the blessing of a Lychgate! These always present an interesting and welcome challenge and the chance to enjoy working with colleagues preparing for special services. The innovative approach to exploring linking school visits and visits to nursing homes with music and worship continued, kindly supported by a grant from the Board of Mission. Sadly, this was brought to a juddering halt in March but will start again as soon as events allow.

The cessation of public worship has presented an enormous challenge to us. Many clergy have worked with great patience, love and skill to support their congregations with online services, (there has also been some wonderful support from St Padarn's and others) in what is a far more difficult transition than many think. It is to their credit that they have made it look so simple.

Lockdown, however, has also brought not only challenges in the medium of presentation, but a much welcome national resurgence in interest. There is, therefore, the need to provide what many in our established congregations are used

to on a Sunday, but also the opportunity to provide a perhaps more accessible vehicle for worship and teaching for those who have become estranged from, or have never been to, church.

One of the greatest allies to liturgy over the centuries has been music -so the further challenge thrown up by the present situation is a very grave one. Grave in that the beauty and impact of our services can be diminished without it, but grave also because it presents a challenge to the deeply held sense of vocation within the many who, for years, have enhanced our worship as musicians and choristers and grave too because the physical and mental well-being associated with singing and listening to music are well researched and documented. The challenge to include music with online liturgy has been one as much technological as liturgical. Obviously pre-recorded copyrighted music cannot be used in streamed or recorded services, so having each chorister record in their own home to a backing track and then re-mastering all the voices of the choir is a painstaking but ultimately rewarding effort.

These challenges have been approached, with kind support again from the Board of Mission, and the results can be seen on YouTube site- Virtually St.Peter's.

Since it looks likely that there will be the need to continue offering services for those who cannot, or should not, attend church, online services will continue to need to be offered and there will be a continuing need to adapt liturgy in its fullness to the circumstances that present themselves.

EVANGELISM

Rev'd Geraint Wathan

Evangelism can have a polarising effect on people, some love it, some find the idea excruciating. But at its simplest evangelism is telling people about Jesus and there is probably a lot more of this going on in the Diocese than is often known. There are the more structured forms of evangelism where parishes have run an Alpha or Start course, which aims to introduce the fundamentals of the Christian faith in a friendly manner. These seek to encourage those taking part to move into a deeper faith in Jesus Christ. Then there are the numerous ways parishes have engaged with the

local community which have shown the love of God at work in very practical ways. These include the many foodbanks that have been set up or supported by parishes to feed people in times of need. There are community meals, where people have a chance to share a meal and enjoy the company of others. There have been numerous community events, carol services and harvest services which, along with many others of a similar vein, allows us to keep connected with and relevant to the community in which we live and serve.

TRAINING & CONTINUAL MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT

Rev'd Canon Tim Hewitt

Last Summer, Dr Colin Greene from Sarum College came to a Clergy Synod to help us understand in a deeper way the challenges of living in a post-modern society with regards to religious beliefs.

Not surprisingly, this prompted quite energized discussions and thinking on the day. Changes to the registration of marriages have been on the horizon, so staff from the General Register Officer visited the diocese in November to explain how these would impact on the work of clergy, but other political considerations have delayed their implementation.

In the March 2020 Synod, Chris Burr from St Padarn's Institute led us through the changes that are happening with the introduction of a new Ministerial Development Review Scheme. The day gave the diocese the opportunity to explore the kind of questions that should be unique to Swansea and Brecon, and a series of six questions were formulated looking at issues such as the management of expectations, the growth of discipleship rather than bigger congregations, how the Kingdom of God becomes manifest amongst us, and how Diocesan Vision becomes a reality.

The Diocese is keen to financially support the work of evangelism through the Diocesan Mission Fund. This fund provides financial assistance for new projects that engage in mission and evangelism, encouraging us to look at different ways to be the church and by this spread the message of the Gospel. Recent research has found that a majority of non-Christians actually enjoy the company of their 'practising Christian' friends and more than half of them said they are comfortable talking about faith if their friends raise it. People are

Plans are currently underway to see how best to introduce the Life Events initiative in the diocese, which seeks to make the most of the opportunities of ministry that baptisms, weddings, and funerals present to us.

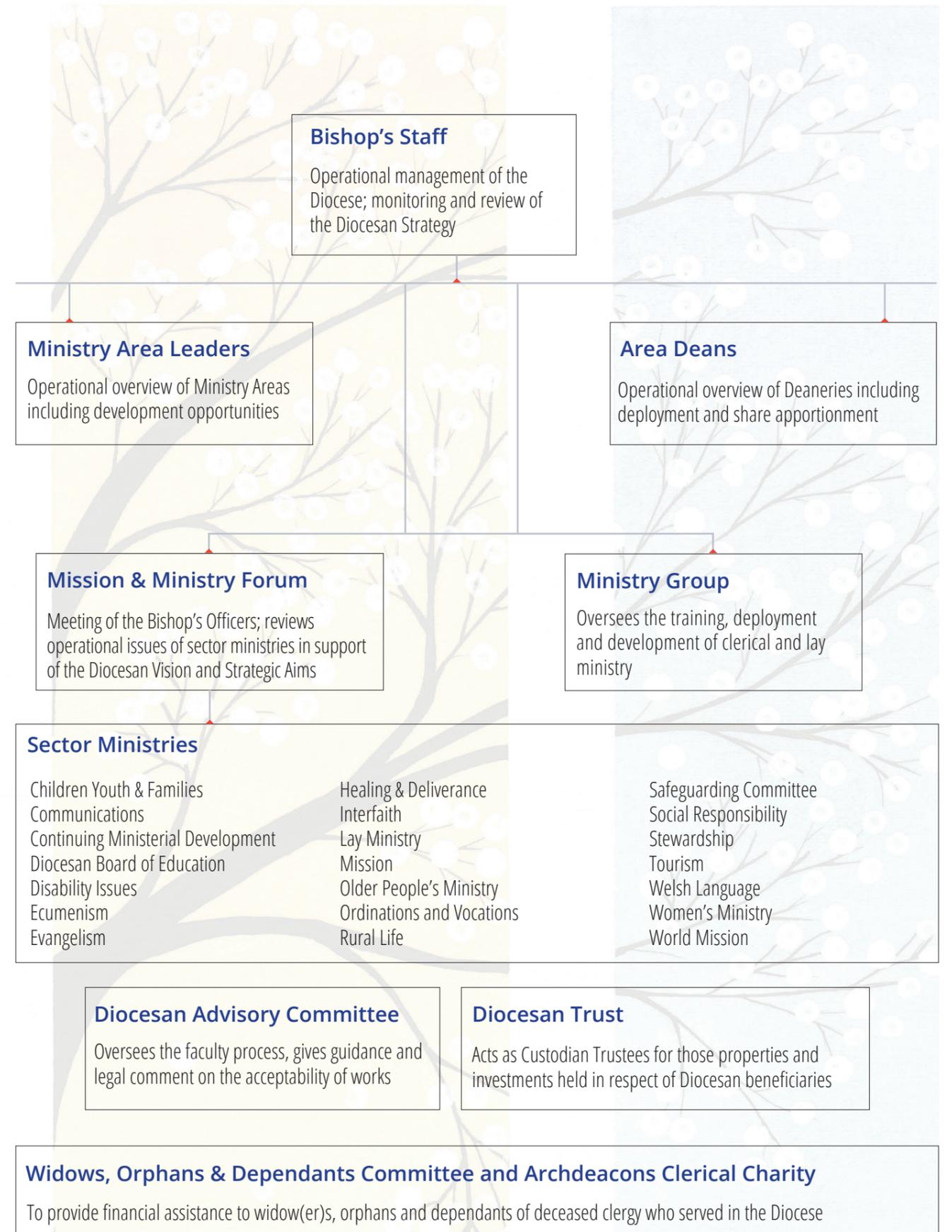
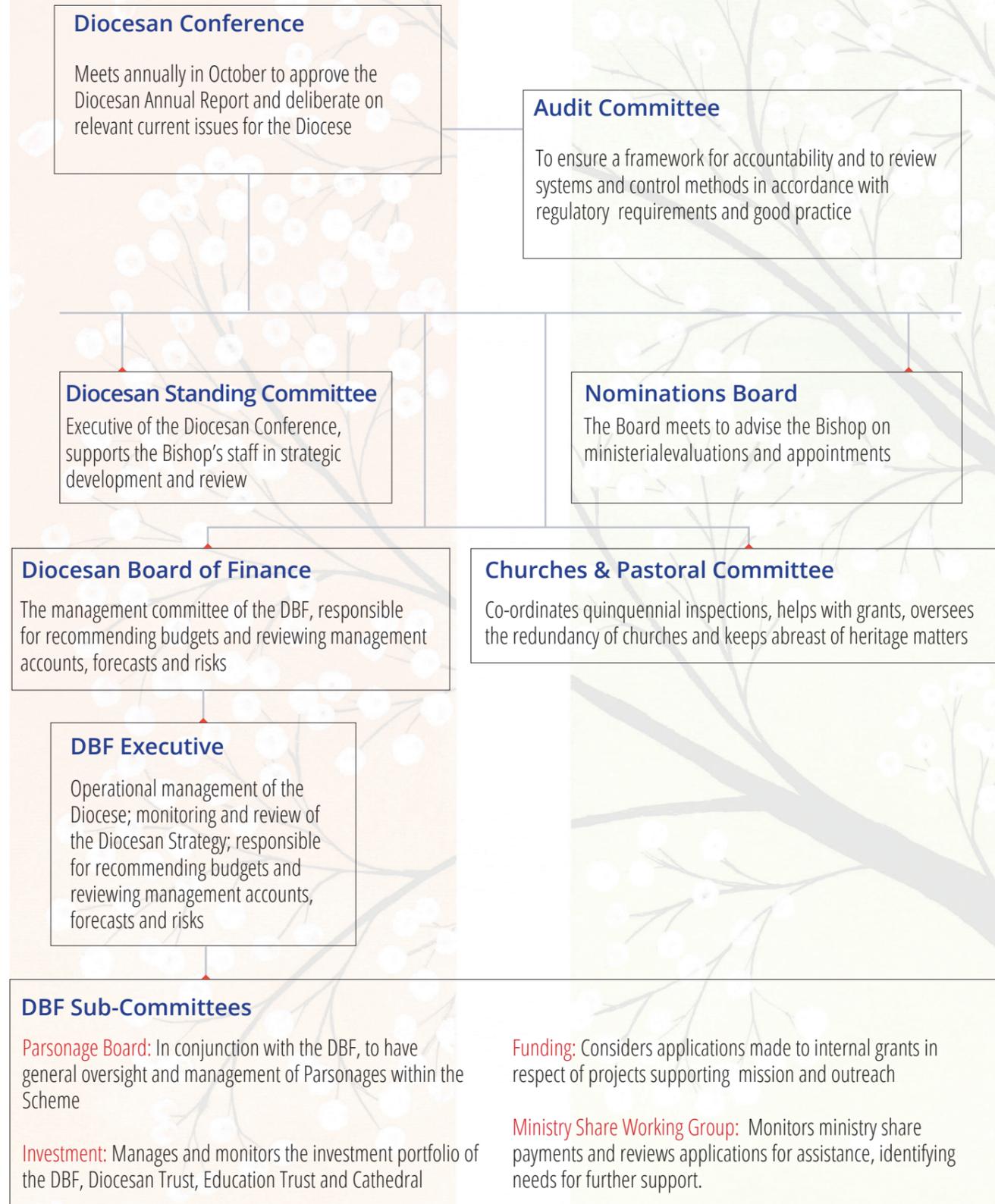
The first half of 2020 so far has brought to the fore many issues and needs when it comes to the ministerial development of Licensed Ministers, and of how Church life and ministry will be different for all of us, and these things will shape the Clergy Synods for 2021.

2021 will see some kind of Ministry Conference in some shape, with participation being very different to past years, and the current directions for this centre around our values as a diocese, seeking to discern to what God is calling us as a diocese, and how far we have travelled from vision to turning vision into a reality.

I would like to thank the staff in the Diocesan Office for their support and assistance enabling me to carry out my work, and to the other Ministry Development Officers for the opportunities we have together to exchange ideas and consider the practicalities that follow them.

most likely to respond to God's invitation to know Him when that invitation is made by someone that they know and trust, a family member or a friend. This shows us that our greatest resource for evangelism is the people of our Diocese and there have been many ways in which people have been encouraged to develop confidence in their faith, through study groups of many different types or discipleship courses. All this helps us to see that evangelism is not so much about what we do but about who we are, people who believe in the risen Christ and want others to experience the same.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE



SAFEGUARDING

Rev'd Dr Gillian Todd - Chair of Safeguarding Committee

The Diocesan Safeguarding Committee continues to work towards achieving a high level of awareness of safeguarding issues across the Diocese. 2019 has seen a major change in the way in which safeguarding and safeguarding training is organised within the Province. The Provincial Safeguarding Policy is online, and amendments are made and updated, online. This means that those PCC's which do not use the internet feel that they are not as well informed as churches where use of the internet is now part of their working pattern. The Safeguarding Committee realises that this is an issue in parts of the Diocese and is working with the Area Deans to help to raise awareness and seek ways to maximise access and adherence to the Provincial Policy.

The Safeguarding Committee was delighted to welcome Mr Dorian Davies, the new Provincial Safeguarding lead to a meeting and pleased that he has agreed to attend future meetings. Mr Dorian Davies advised the committee that his safeguarding remit for the province was divided into 'church concerns' and 'community concerns' and that he believed it was important not to focus entirely on church structures. He explained that a new team was being appointed at St Padarn's and that a new modular programme of training will be introduced consisting of Awareness, Safeguarding in Ministry, Safeguarding in Parochial Leadership and Safeguarding in Senior Leadership. The Committee welcomed this development of training.

Safeguarding training for the Province is at present being organised and undertaken on an 'opt-in-opt-out' basis and advertised to all, the clergy no longer have responsibility for keeping track of who attends it. Nevertheless, the Deaneries and the Diocese are attempting to monitor attendance.

During the latter part of 2020, the Chair met with all

four Area Deans and in a number of deaneries, church representatives. The need for each deanery to compile a list of Safeguarding Officers in each parish and for there to be at least three DBS cleared members on each PCC was discussed. This is a challenge for some of the deaneries but by the time of 'Lockdown' considerable progress was being made across the diocese.

Three particular issues were raised at these meetings, firstly, that PCCs were struggling with the safeguarding policy on the website. The Area Deans were advised that the front sheet of the policy could be printed off and used as an index to navigate their way to the relevant pages and forms in the policy. The Area Deans were asked to pass this suggestion on to the PCCs. Secondly at least three people on the PCC (and each churchwarden) must have DBS clearance and the topic of DBS should be a standing item on the agenda of every PCC meeting. Finally, the minutes of the PCC meeting at which the safeguarding policies and procedures are adopted and agreed must be signed by all members and by doing this, they signify their individual agreement. Absent members should be briefed by the safeguarding officer and a note recorded in the minutes that they have been briefed and that they agree.

The Safeguarding Committee stress that it is important that people have the confidence to assess any safeguarding risks and regularly review procedures, for all events and practices in their church. They need support from their PCCs to do this. The church is involved with many activities in the community and provides an open door to members of the community. This inclusivity brings with it wonderful benefits, but also potential risks, and the church has a duty to recognise and act upon these risks in the interests of all concerned.



DIOCESAN BOARD OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Sharon Atkins - Company Secretary

For the first time in many years, we did not have to hand out redundancy threat letters just before Christmas, which was such a joy and relief, and sparked hope for the future. This would be our 21st Birthday year and we had a whole host of events and activities planned. However, due to the pandemic, we put our plans on hold and have faced very different challenges.

We were greatly concerned about the children we have been supporting who were already vulnerable and living in adversity. We believed that these children would not have any support until September at the earliest. At which point, they would be going into different classes and some different schools without any transitional provision. With the assistance of our MP we secured and have been able to deliver iPads to some of these children so that we could keep in touch with them and continue to deliver Play Therapy.

We adapted our approach to services; compiling videos, blogs, story times, a telephone support line and coached parents on parenting and how to deliver Play Therapy themselves. Home support and activity packs have been delivered to hundreds of families focussed on wellbeing and play.

In March, we began our Inspiring Futures project - targeting those over 25 who are unemployed or economically inactive to participate in confidence building and training courses with the vision of entering further education or employment. During the pandemic, participants have been able to access online training courses and the team have kept in touch with them to encourage them to complete and check on mental health.

St Johns Centre continues to be a multi-generational hub of wellbeing support for the surrounding communities, delivering services such as Food Co-op, gardening club, child and adult cookery classes and over 50s luncheon club, with many partner agencies working collaboratively providing a package of support. Since lockdown, we have worked in partnership with One Brecon to facilitate care packages and support to those shielding.

Our Teilo's Tots Daycare showed great promise in becoming a self-sustaining social enterprise prior to lockdown, this will need to be monitored carefully going forward. Whilst this year has presented different challenges than usual, our staff and volunteers have demonstrated great care and dedication to their roles in providing meaningful services to those in need in new and innovative ways, and we are incredibly proud of all they have achieved.

EDUCATION

John Meredith - Diocesan Director of Education

Education is at the heart of the ministry and mission of the diocese, with schools making up a large proportion of parish congregations, where they work in collaboration to grow communities. Numerous best practice case studies have been collated for Religious Education, Collective Worship, Community Engagement and Wellbeing, with a highlight being the intergenerational work at Llangors, Clyro and St Mary's Church in Wales Primary Schools. These are being developed into a portfolio, highlighting the excellent work being undertaken in our schools and shared across the Church in Wales.

Wellbeing underpins everything and is rooted in the Bible, with the diocese supporting and creating communities, based upon the gospel message of Jesus bringing the message of life in all its fullness for everyone. This emphasises why wellbeing has been a major focus, sharing the message of peace, forgiveness, freedom, justice, reconciliation, compassion and above all love and hope. We have a huge capacity for joy, living in world where we love thy neighbour and care for everyone's wellbeing.

The diocese has, and will continue to be the focus for schools and communities to promote wellbeing by using the gospel message in the context of today's world; Jesus' love for the world, working in the world and as Christians we are signposts to God's Kingdom with God's promises and positive message of hope. Wellbeing is an important topic for everyone and how the church emphasises wellbeing in worship and prayers, with more and more churches in the diocese praying for their local schools.

Schools, teachers and headteachers are in regular contact with the diocese, with regular focused visits, bespoke training and support given to schools by the DDE through the delivery of training sessions, consultancy and model lessons. A key aspect of the education role is sign-posting resources, streamlining and reducing workload for the schools and teachers, and this is available to all schools in the diocese. Further work is being undertaken to assist schools in returning to school and the new norm.

The introduction and development of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource in the

diocesan school has had a major impact, supporting teachers in developing their own knowledge and understanding of Christian theology, allowing them to teach with confidence, supporting children in developing their own thinking and their understanding of Christianity, as a contribution to their understanding of the world and their own experience. The aim is for children to leave school with a coherent understanding of Christian belief and practice, as the language of Christian faith, the stories of the Bible and the activities of worship are unfamiliar to most. The Understanding Christianity resource fills this gap, where they have the opportunity to explore the significant theological concepts within Christianity as part of developing their wider religious, theological and cultural literacy, in line with the new curriculum in Wales.

During the lockdown period a YouTube channel was developed, containing resources for RE lessons, Collective Worship, Reflective Prayer Spaces, Wellbeing and Professional Learning. An immense thank you to all the contributors to the channel and the vision is to grow it with more members of the diocese being involved in developing content. The vision is to add resources for Sunday Schools, Messy Church, Godly Play, both in English and Welsh, as well as webinars and online training material, similar to what I delivered for St Padarn's on the themes of developing links with schools and Collective Worship.

Online 'Blended Learning' is very much the future of teaching and learning in Wales, with the diocese being key to this. Schools have been creative in ways they have been teaching, and the curriculum is being slimmed down to fit the needs of the situation and the YouTube channel is helping with this. Please promote and share resources that have already been created and if you or anyone know would like to be part of it and contribute content, please contact dde.swanbrec@churchinwales.org.uk Wales Association for Standing Council for Religious Education has promoted the diocesan education twitter @swanbrec and YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCddiE1uVosQE3nmTAS2mhTg> as a resource



for all schools in Wales, as well as the Church in Wales, Thy Kingdom Come and other dioceses regularly retweeting resources and links. This is enhanced with a new education section of the website.

Several future projects have been identified, where churches, PCCs and all schools can work together, supported by DDE. A link has been established with Caring for God's Acre, Going Public Theatre Company, Rock UK, Project Touchline and Child Led Collective Worship. Exciting times are ahead in the world of education. The 2020 Education Day

(originally planned for 4th June 2020 entitled: Life in all its fullness - Wellbeing and Outdoor Education and Learning) has been postponed, with the planning in place for a date to be confirmed when further information is available about when appropriate to hold it. Gladestry Church in Wales Primary School Headteacher, Hilary Morris, has retired at the end of Summer Term 2020 and I would like to thank her for all her efforts and

commitment to the school. It is a good school and Estyn have used it for case studies. When the time is right an appropriate celebration and presentation will be undertaken. St Mary's Church in Wales Primary School's headteacher is undertaking a year secondment with the EAS, with an acting headteacher in place.

Thank you to all the Foundation Governors in the diocese and when the time is right, further training will be provided to help them support their schools. Thank you to the Children's Youth and Families Ministry team for their continued support of the education work. I continue to be an advocate for schools, being a member of the Powys Schools Forum, Blaenau Gwent, Powys and Swansea Stand Council for Religious Education (SACRE).

This has been a positive year, despite the challenges, in the world of education and if you would like more information and be involved please contact me at dde.swanbrec@churchinwales.org.uk

For most of 2020 the Cathedral communities, like all churches, have been living with uncertainty, learning to love unanswered questions, and negotiate basic activities in new ways. Like church communities across the Diocese, the Cathedral has been no stranger to finding new ways of being imaginative and creative in ministry and mission that required a renewed energy and theological reflection.

Enforced isolation has educated us in slowness and the need for space to reflect on who we are, where we belong and what we value. That has been a positive gift for the Church. July – April saw an encouraging growth in the Cathedral's numbers and fellowship.

New members became involved not only in the Church, but in our local community. I am grateful to my colleagues, both lay and ordained, for their hard work and commitment to the Cathedral's vision and ministry.

However, before March 2020, the cathedral also enjoyed a busy schedule that included a visit from the Zulu King, an interfaith service called Peace Mala, the annual services of Rourke's Drift, Christ College Christmas service, and the establishing of a successful new Junior Choir for years 3-6, organized by the Assistant Organist. The Cathedral recruited new choristers to the Cathedral choir because of the Junior Choir.

The Children, Family and Youth Officer set up a Cathedral Chaos, which welcomed nearly 200 people visit the Cathedral to enjoy children's activities, including a bouncy castle in the nave. I think the Dean's balloon sculpting skills were a surprise.

The Harvest Supper, in support of the Food Bank and local families for the second year, was well supported, and also raised £500 for the Food Bank.

The Cathedral's Convivium Project has been a great success, inviting many people to the Cathedral. While the academic conference has had to be postponed because of the virus, it has been rescheduled for June 2021, with even more speakers now included.

We welcomed Revd Dr Gill Todd, ordained deacon at Petertide in 2019 to work in the Brecon Ministry Area, based at the Cathedral. Rich Wootten began his training this summer and will be placed at the Cathedral to develop his formation and training for the sacred ministry. Please pray for them both as we prayerfully shape and inform their vocations in the Church.

In 2019 several Brecknock Sinfonia concerts, as well as the annual Jazz and Fringe Festival, welcomed hundreds of visitors.

In September, the Archbishop presented certificates of Merit in Church Music to four people from the Diocese for their contributions to Church music.



BRECON CATHEDRAL

The Very Rev'd Dr Paul Shackerley, Dean of Brecon

The Cathedral established a choral scholarship in memory of Tim Morgan, once organ scholar of Brecon Cathedral, who died young and suddenly.

We currently have two teenage organ scholars who are progressing well.

The Sacred Synod and Consecration of the Bishop of Monmouth took place at the Cathedral in December and January. Of course, many concerts, services and events have not taken place during the summer.

Two constitutional changes took place this year. The Cathedral Scheme, which was not fit for purpose, has been replaced

with a new Cathedral Constitution. This permits the Cathedral Chapter to appoint new members, including laity. The current Canons will retain their Canon titles as members of a 'College of Canons', but will not be members of Chapter. Secondly, the Friends of Brecon Cathedral, established to support the building, mission and ministry of the Cathedral, also established a new constitution. The refreshed executive committee is currently planning innovative events for members and the congregations.

The Arwain Project that was established 18 months ago came to an end on 30 September. Funding has been secured to sustain the work beyond this date.

It will continue to enable the Brecon communities of heritage, culture and creative arts to work collaboratively, share and promote their activities to you through the newly created digital and marketing platforms to provide information

services to optimize the economic, environmental and social benefits for Brecon and the surrounding area.

The Dean and Chapter are working with consultants to secure a Heritage Lottery Resilience Grant of £100k to accelerate a third application after disappointing news in September 2019 that our second application was not successful due to a high demand for grant funding. Heritage Lottery continues to work with the Dean and Chapter to secure grants for restoration and reordering. This is work in progress since August 2020.

Finally, the Cathedral clergy went to Belmont Abbey for 24 hours to explore a new vision and purpose for the Cathedral, facilitated by the Very Reverend Michael Sadgrove, Dean emeritus of Durham Cathedral. Further consultation with the new Chapter, congregations and other partners will take place in 2021.

MOTHERS' UNION

Sally Freedman, Diocesan President

Mothers' Union is a worldwide charity started in 1876 by Mary Sumner, to give women and girls support and advice on marriage and family life through our Christian faith and founded in prayer. We now are working in 84 countries and have over 4 million members worldwide.

In Swansea and Brecon we support the work of the Mothers' Union overseas through the various projects run from Mary Sumner House - 'Make a Mother's Day', 'Summer of Hope', '5K Walk Challenge', as well as our regular support for Action and Outreach within our branches.

Our Diocesan charity is to support Faith in Families which we do with much pleasure to support their centres; we arrange holidays for four disadvantaged families (AFIA), support the various safe houses with goods and groceries, and we also play a large part in our 'home' parishes. We attend Wedding Fayres, to ensure the church is kept in people's sights as weddings are planned. We supply wooden crosses to the Chaplaincy at Morriston Hospital, which are much appreciated by patients. These are all part of our outreach to our communities, to support stable family life and good loving relationships.

We hold monthly Archidiaconal Eucharists in St Mary's, Swansea and the Cathedral through the help of our clergy. We hold a service in November each year to mark the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence and we always support the Cytûn Tent at the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show.

We enjoy meeting together at our annual Deanery Festivals, and especially coming to the Cathedral for our annual Diocesan Festival which always encourages us to recommit to our work for the encouragement of marriage and family life.

We are grateful to our Patron, the Most Reverend John Davies, Archbishop of Wales, for his support of our organisation. This year the Diocesan Festival included the Commissioning of the new Diocesan President and Trustees.

2019 is the first year of our new triennial and this year we were pleased to welcome our new Worldwide President, Mrs Sheran Harper, for a day visit. She was able to see both Swansea and Brecon in the day and met with many members. It is the first time in the history of the Mothers' Union that the Worldwide President is a member from outside the UK and we were very lucky to have her here.

Again, many branches celebrated significant anniversaries and we continue to work supporting the aims of Mary Sumner, encapsulated in her personal prayer:

"All this day, O Lord, let me touch as many lives as possible for thee;
and every life I touch, do thou by thy spirit quicken,
whether through the word I speak,
the prayer I breathe, or the life I live. Amen"



ECO CHURCH

Gill Knight

In the 2019 Diocesan Conference the diocese unanimously decided to register as an Eco Diocese, which meant that we committed ourselves to work to being more environmentally aware – and more environmentally responsible. Following a previous Governing Body decision, we agreed to do so using A Rocha's Eco Church scheme – an award scheme that asks a number of searching questions to help us examine how much we do care for God's creation. There are various resources available, and those churches that have worked with it have found it an encouraging process.

I have taken part in various presentations, and an ecumenical workshop, obtained a Carbon Literacy certificate through distance learning, and benefited from sharing learning at the provincial environment committee.

We have found that Renew Wales, a Government funded organisation, provides peer mentors to a parish as it moves forward, offering professional

advice, and links to other groups. Two parishes have already benefited from this, and it is open to other parishes.

Fourteen parishes have now registered as eco churches, and four have received bronze awards. The diocesan office in Brecon has also received a bronze award. Two parishes have registered with Caring for Gods Acre, which concentrates on the grounds, one of the four categories. Achievements by individual eco churches have ranged from solar panels to planting plum trees at the side of a carpark (recommended by a botanist as insect friendly and for community sharing) or discovering how to recycle crisp and biscuit packets. Green electricity was found not only to be accessible, but less expensive than an existing contract!

As a group, we have been encouraged by the progress made by several parishes, but saddened by

the number who speak positively, but have yet to engage with the scheme. Climate change needs action! This scheme is practical, achievable and realistic. Small steps in learning and better practice do have an effect, and registration communicates your commitment to all. Young people enjoy working with older members on the scheme and achieving as a Parish. Sign up!

There is a small diocesan Eco Church working group, all of whom are willing to give advice – they not only look at ways for the diocese to progress, but also each belong to a registered Eco Church. They are: Mrs. Kath Johnson, kath.neuadd@gmail.com; Mrs Karen Williams, bkwilliams55@outlook.com; Mr Jon Howard, jon.cartref@gmail.com; Canon Mark Clavier, rescanon@breconcathedral.org.uk; and Mr Kes Seymour, kesseymour@cinw.org.uk, as well as myself gillknight@phonecoop.coop or 01792 736159.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

Rev'd Sister Marian - SCL

"Sister Marian? She's a Roman Catholic then, is she?" "No, she's an Anglican." "But the Anglican church doesn't have nuns!" "Oh yes they do and there are many others, men and women living different versions of the Religious life."

Such goes the way of many conversations when people first hear about me. The order to which I belong as an Oblate Sister (The Society of the Sacred Cross) and is in Tymawr Convent in Lydart, in Monmouthshire.

This means years ago I made promises to the order to live a rule of life under their guidance. Later - as with many others, both men and women affiliated in some way to other orders - due to circumstances, I was unable to make my vows to live as a full sister in the convent and after a period of discernment, I was allowed to take my vows of Chastity, Simplicity of Life and Obedience to my Bishop to live as a sister of the network called, 'The Single Consecrated Life'. (SCL).

I lived under temporary vows for four years before taking my life vows before the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon in 2002.

The network includes people registered with the Council for Religious Life from across the Anglican Communion. Its website can be found at: www.singleconsecratedlife-anglican.org.uk/vows

As well as having a prayer ministry in our parishes, we are used according to our gifts. For example, I have been a Reader for many years and in June this year I was ordained as Deacon in Brecon.

Whatever the title or ministry, ordained or lay, first and foremost we are all called to be servants of God and His church and to share His love and concern for all people and to show them they are all valued by God.

If anyone feels called to live the Religious life, please speak to your vicar or contact me at: sister.marian@btopenworld.com

RURAL LIFE

Rev'd Michelle Bailey

From Brexit, floods and drought... life in the countryside is always changing, and we never stop learning.

At the Rural relevance conference, the Bishop of Manchester David Walker, who is lead on rural theology spoke about 'the way rural life is changing'. Something I would like to share with you. Nothing new you might think but it is good to revisit this. He talked about understanding who lives in the countryside was the way to begin, and the fact that statistically, the rural church is still relevant and is still attended.

He talked about four-fold dimension of church, belonging and countryside.

1. Activities - (regularity) if people attend things more than twice a month, they will make an ongoing commitment.

2. Events - which are one offs for example Harvest, Christmas etc. Expectation has changed. They consider that if they attend once they are attending regularly. It is about recognising that people no longer want long term commitment. During these events we should use the Amazon.com strategy by advertising the next event. For example, if you have enjoyed this why not come along to this?

3. People - in rural life belonging is still very relevant in Rural communities. Personal contact is very important. Recognising the person everyone looks to for information is key. There is usually one in every community and then using that contact when you are organising things. This person can be used to grow the Rural Church. People belong to God and local church through people and relationships. This led into leading one church at a time - a book by Bob Jackson talking about focal ministry.

4. Special Places - due to people in rural life still wanting to belong, the church building and graveyard becomes incredibly important, they still care about the 'rural' church. The Theology of Place - they see God's presence in the building even if they don't go across the threshold. The graveyard is important to people - it's space to remember, 'the bones of our ancestors lie here'. It matters to people.

Governing Body (GB)

With the other Rural Life officers across Wales, we discussed and came up with a proposal to take to GB, Bishop Joanne proposed the motion. During this process we produced a booklet, which has been reproduced to give out. If you would like a copy, please do let me know.

Firstly, this motion asks the GB to affirm the importance of the local church in the rural communities of Wales. In the second part of this motion, GB is asking each diocese to develop



a strategy for constructive engagement with their rural communities and as a key part of this, to appoint a Rural Life Advisor (RLA) with dedicated time to fulfil the role.

The proposal was:- That the Governing Body:

i affirm the role of the local church in supporting rural communities;

ii request each diocese to:

(a) appoint a Rural Life Adviser, with dedicated time to carry out the role;

(b) develop a strategy for constructive engagement with rural communities.

This was agreed by the majority of the GB with only one abstention.

'Being a Bishop's Officer for Rural Life isn't a hat, it's a role that needs time, it also needs a budget, which this motion doesn't mention but is obviously vital. This motion is asking each diocese to use the expertise of their RLA to develop a practical, timed and costed strategy for making real the support the diocese can give to the churches at ground level, whose role in engaging with our rural communities is vital.'

Charities

Helping and supporting those who live in rural areas is a real privilege. Wales is predominately rural, and so is our Diocese of Swansea & Brecon, the question is how can we support and help when we are asked? Farming has one of the highest suicide rates, due to many issues - isolation and finance are just two of the issues.

As Rural Life officer I am involved closely with both Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI), and in December 2019, we received funding for Tir Dewi to move into Powys. This has been an extremely exciting step forward, and I have become part of the team working towards launching this charity here in Powys, please do pray for us. We plan to launch on 22nd July. This year also saw the launch of Farm Well with every charity listed in one place, do keep this to hand should you find yourself in a position to help someone. Farmwell.org.uk.

Shows

It was an interesting year with the shows, both those on the Royal Welsh Showground and local shows. The Royal Welsh Summer Show celebrated its 100th year with royal visitors and once again Roy Jenkins, from the BBC, shadowed me as I 'wandered' around the showground as Lead Chaplain, finding out more about the work of the Chaplaincy.

Walrus Dip

There have been many memories of this last year, but my lasting one was taking part and raising money by taking part in 'The Walrus Dip' a very chilly dip in the sea at Pembrey on Boxing Day dressed as little Bo Peep to show support for the farming charities.

Thank You

It has been a great privilege and pleasure to work with a great team of people, the Chaplains, the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society staff, the charities RABI, Tir Dewi, Young Farmers Club and the farmers themselves.

DISABILITY ISSUES

Rev'd Dr John Gillibrand

2019 was very much a year for planning and reflection. The coronavirus outbreak means that much will have to be postponed, but I am taking the opportunity to set out here the direction in which things are moving.

I am hugely grateful to the diocese for setting a budget item to assist in this work, as also to Canon Carol Wardman, the Bishops' Adviser for Church and Society for her continuing encouragement and support.

When it is possible, the intention is to have two gatherings, one in the north and one in the south of the Diocese. It will be an opportunity to discuss with all those with an interest in this area - above all disabled people, but also parents and carers, as well as those with professional interest. These sessions will also be open to members of individual congregations who simply want to raise their awareness of the issues.

I am very keen to provide support for all those involved in ministry and am always glad to receive an email or a phone call on these matters. There is however no substitute to listening to both individual disabled people and in the wider community, and then acting upon that listening.

I am hoping to build up a library of resources to be held available at diocesan level, as well as providing suggestions for sources of information on the web.

In the 1990s there was an explosion of interest in disability studies, and the development of disability theology has been a part of that. I

am very interested to investigate the ways in which disability theology can be explored in terms of the major traditions within Anglicanism, as well as in our ecumenical relationships.

I do believe that genuine inclusion is a key element in Christian mission. I was very struck some years ago when I was speaking at a conference in the Diocese of Manchester by their tag-line "Welcome - as if you are expected."

I would be most grateful to hear from congregations that are enhancing the quality of their inclusive welcome, so that I am able to share your best practice across the diocese and make it ours.

HEALING AND DELIVERANCE

Rev'd Canon Peter Brooks

We have in the past year as a team, Lay and Ordained members who assist in this ministry, undertaken a number of cases some of which are ongoing. Sadly, none of the team will be able to attend the Deliverance Study Group Course this year due to the COVID 19 regulations but we hope that all will be able to attend in 2021.

We are aware that ongoing training and good guidelines for operating in this field are essential as we are dealing with people whose lives are sometimes in turmoil with the challenges they are faced with. We are also aware that close co-operation with the Provincial Safeguarding team is also critical due to the sensitive nature of the work we undertake. Our work is to help Parish clergy when faced with people who come to them and to work with them to provide ongoing pastoral support and to bring to them the Kingdom of God in a way they can understand and that helps them with the problems they are undergoing.

Last year I attended on behalf of the Archbishop a day meeting in Lambeth Palace to observe and contribute to an ongoing discussion on safeguarding and best practice. This

work is ongoing and Bishop Peter Eagles, the lead Bishop of the Church of England in this field will be releasing new material and guidelines for England in the future that Wales will certainly wish to look at and absorb into our ministries here.

Again the stress is working in co-operation with each other as a team suitably called and qualified both Lay and Ordained and working with medical professionals in a variety of fields to assist the people who come to us for help that may prove to be pastoral, psychological and where spiritual, to bring the full blessing of God's light to dark places.

This is not an easy task and sometimes it is two steps forward and one step back, however what is paramount in this ministry is that we are there, a presence to talk to and to pray with when God's healing touch and protection is needed. What is quite startling is that in a large number of cases these enquiries come from outside the church and yet people call upon us because there is in their minds a latent belief in something far greater than their present troubles.

WORLD MISSION

Rev'd Petra Goodband

Lambeth 2020

This has now become Lambeth 2021 and we look forward to hosting three Bishops and their spouses next year.

Asante Mampong

Our link with Asante Mampong continues and we were asked to support their ordination project but there were no takers from parishes to donate financially, If we are to help then I will need to put together a comprehensive package for people to see where their money is going. However, all needs throughout the world are changing in the present climate. Another request was to host a priest for five months. the deal was that he is put up, fed and given pocket money in exchange for, 'putting him to work and making use of him'. Unfortunately this was a non

starter this time due to COVID19.

Fairtrade

A Fairtrade audit is to be carried out at Diocesan level. In the discussions I have been having over lockdown, it has become apparent that some churches are using Traidecraft, which in some cases are ethically sourced to a higher standard. This is an ongoing project.

Catholic Countries

The Anglican Church is growing in some Catholic countries but many do not have their building to worship from. I have links on Gozo, Malta where the Anglican Church have been looking for their own premises. This was at the discussion stage when I was last there. I hope to chase this up when I next go out.

Open Doors

This organisation is being supported by the World Mission Fund. My aim was to have talks given by Open Doors at deanery level to raise awareness of the plight of persecuted Christians in the world. However, at present this has not been possible due to COVID19.

XRPeace

I have had conversations with some influential people from XRPeace. These have been centred around the questions, what do they want to achieve and how is what they are doing going to help them? The channels of communication are open and it is interesting to hear what they have to say and how they are willing to rethink. They are also talking of how they can do more locally to help.

MINISTRY AREA DEVELOPMENT

Tim Hollingdale, Ministry Area Development Officer



Writing a 2019 report in the middle of the 2020 coronavirus pandemic feels like reading a story when you know the ending. God goes before us – it is God that we are following on our journey. So, can we look back and glimpse how the progress made put us in a better place to deal with what was to come? Here are three things that I am thankful we did in 2019.

First, facing tough issues together. I often hear this phrase 'we know it can't continue like this'. The 'like this' could mean lack of finances or clergy, ageing buildings, critically low congregation numbers. The Cinnamon Network survey showed we have good contact with those we know, but there are parts of our communities we do not know well. It was encouraging to work with those ministry area teams willing to think and pray through 'what next' as they wrestled with how 'gather, grow and go' could look going forward. The work of our children, youth and families officers is proving a crucial investment in this emerging future.

Second, clarity on what we mean by a ministry area. We do not have a ministry area blueprint. Each ministry area can

create its own ways of working based on core principles, so it can fit its geography, history, worship styles, church traditions, buildings, and most importantly its people. This flexibility is a strength for such a diverse diocese. There have been good ways of working and developing. In 2019 those core principles were clarified into '12 headings' which describe a 'vibrant ministry area for mission'. By the end of 2019, a plan was being drawn up to help each ministry area through a review during 2020 based on these '12 headings'.

Third, resourcing ministry area leaders. Throughout 2019 we continued to run ministry area leaders' workshops, one specialist workshop looking at rural ministry and an online forum. These allowed prayer, support, and ideas to be shared. Learning how to work using digital technology as well as face-to-face meetings was beginning to grow. (Just think, the word Zoom had not even been uttered in 2019!).

We know how the story starts to unfold in 2020 where the 'it can't continue like this' becomes so much clearer to see. As we say in our diocesan prayer 'God of our journeying, be our way, our truth, our life, our beginning and our end'.



COMMUNICATION

Eryl Jones, Director of Communications and Community Engagement

The impact the pandemic has had on services and events has meant it has been a year of change for communications, at both a diocesan and provincial level.

Updates to Covid-19 guidelines, Zoom and live-streaming have taken the place of the planned coverage, but it has been encouraging to see so many people embrace the new and varied ways of communication, and the new audience they have brought in.

The new diocesan website is now live. We have the same framework as the new provincial site, which means a more modern look, and it offers far more than the previous version.

There is a new resources section, which provides information for everything from grants to faculty applications, and there are dedicated areas for vocations and Ministry Areas. Several of our different ministries also have their own sections and the site will continue to grow and develop.

Brecon Cathedral also has a new website, based on the same design and framework as the diocesan site, which brings together the online presence of both the diocese and cathedral.

Several parish websites, and the Faith in Families site, have also been moved to a different platform, which will make them easier to update and more capable of meeting future needs.

There has been increased traffic to our social media pages, and many new followers, reflecting the switch to online services and events, and the diocesan bulletin is now sent out weekly.

Cymuned has been on hold because of the difficulties presented by the Covid-19 pandemic but will return as soon as possible.

My thanks again to all those who have submitted stories, photos and ideas throughout the year.

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

Rev'd Tim Arduin



Interfaith gatherings and events at St David's Cathedral, Swansea University, Cardiff City Hall, Cardiff University and Swansea City Centre have been rearranged for 2021. A revised schedule will be available in November 2020.

During COVID-19 'lock-down', meetings of the Swansea Interfaith Forum have taken place on Zoom, once a month. The forum has made statements to the press and on social media during this time (including a short film edited by Swansea University about hope and faith in this time) and about racism after the killing of George Floyd by police in the US.

Here is an example of a recent statement:
"The Swansea Interfaith Forum is horrified to hear the devastating news about the massive explosion in Beirut seaport that claimed numerous lives, injured thousands, caused devastating damage to the city and left Lebanon and the whole world in shock.

"The forum expresses its deepest sympathies to all those affected by this blast, and calls everyone to support the relief efforts in any possible way.
"Our condolences to all those who lost loved ones and we pray for a speedy recovery for those who are injured."

Monthly meetings continue to take place online until they can be held in public again. Dialogue continues to be wide ranging and open on areas of faith such as, for example: 'What is underneath our religion if we peel back the layers? How might we help religious and not religious people find their way home to a deeper or more authentic way of living, being, relating?'

Faith representatives continue to look for ways of working together socially and publicly (foodbanks, service for homeless people in Swansea, shared schoolwork, charity raising etc) as well as coming together for prayer and meditation.

This year has brought new opportunities with the appointment of Sian Smith, Children, Youth and Families Officer for Radnor and Builth in December. She is the only Welsh speaker on the team and is working alongside Clare Morgan (Greater Brecon), Sian Parkhouse (Greater Gower), and Rachel Bunting, Bishops Officer for Family Ministry in the Swansea Deanery.

A key part of the role is networking with the intention to support churches and link resources. One way is through the Children and Youth Leaders network which meets every half term. We also rely on training events, visiting churches, and on volunteers and clergy contacting us. We held two drop-in sessions in February and March, in Cockett and Brecon, with another scheduled in Builth. These showcased our resources and were well received by people who came.

The 2019 'Gateway Camp' was due to take place at Llangorse Activity Centre but was cancelled due to health and safety concerns. The 2020 camp was planned to join with Spree Wales but has been cancelled due to the Covid pandemic.

In May we held Cathedral Chaos in Brecon, which was a popular day with worship, crafts, a bouncy castle, balloon modelling, tower tours and chorister experience, Guardians of Ancora, and much more. The day was well received, and we hope to make it a more regular event.

The Eastmoor Resource Library Youth and Children's section is well-stocked and is frequently being added to. There is also a Prayer Spaces Resource bank in both the Eastmoor Centre and Diocesan Centre in Brecon. Items for your prayer spaces can be signed out and returned after your event. The Lamplighter shop in Bishopston is also a fantastic place to buy resources for your ministry. We are also adding a number of digital resources so please get in touch with one of the team. We hold subscriptions to Roots, Premier Youth and Children magazine and Urban Saints Energize materials. Rachel, Sian P and Clare are registered Open the Book trainers, and



CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Rev'd Rachel Bunting, Bishop's Officer for Family Ministry of Afon Tawe

Sian P and Clare are trained for Godly Play, so we can provide support and training for local teams. Get in touch if this is something you would find useful.

The Swansea Baby Basics scheme is now well established, with additional branches in Gorseinon and Bridgend alongside Port Tennant. There were

78 referrals in 2019 and many churches are supportive with donations. Sadly, many of the events we had planned for 2020 have had to be cancelled due to the pandemic, however the team have found other ways to engage with children and young people. Sian S produces a weekly bilingual magazine, Cymuned

Bach, with a different theme each week for churches to send home. Sian P also produces a magazine called Fish Tales which provides a Sunday school session for families, along with make-along sessions online. Clare has run virtual events over Facebook with activities to join in with throughout the day. Rachel has been running zoom sessions with young people to keep in touch during lockdown.

This is alongside continuing to support churches, sharing resources on social media, and continuing with their studies. We are also sending out a weekly newsletter with resources, training and events. You can keep in touch through the year via our Facebook pages, Twitter and Instagram accounts, the diocesan website, or by signing up to our newsletter.

WELSH LANGUAGE MATTERS - MATERION YR IAITH GYMRAEG

Rev'd Canon Dewi Roberts

First of all, may I thank all who support and use the Welsh Language as much as they can in our parishes and in our diocese. The Diocesan Board of Finance has set aside money to help clergy and worship leaders with Welsh learning courses. Please contact me for this assistance. Help with basic Welsh greetings and phrases as well as parts of liturgy can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ynNaSk7tjv8>. Hopefully this will help you gain confidence to use the language during an act of worship and in a pastoral context. Welsh language support sessions are offered on Zoom and are publicised in the Diocesan Bulletin. You can always contact me for further help. Welsh speakers will greatly value the effort you make. During the last year Cymuned Bach has produced a great deal of resources in Welsh for children in our parishes. Some of the Welsh speakers in our churches have recorded themselves reading Bible stories for the children as well. I am also working with Cymuned Bach to see if we can organise coffee mornings for young Welsh speaking parents who are members of churches in areas of our diocese where it is not that easy to meet others to speak Welsh. We are indebted to Mrs Siân Smith for her support and enthusiasm.

For guidelines regarding the Welsh Language in our churches please look up the language policy of the Church in Wales on their website.

Os ydych chi mewn plwyf di-Gymraeg ac yn gweld eisiau adnoddau yn yr iaith i'ch helpu chi allu ddweud y Foreol Weddi neu'r Hwyrrol Weddi yn Gymraeg. Mae gen i wasanaethau ar eich cyfer chi ac mae croeso i chi gysylltu â mi i gael copi. Dim ond teg yw gadael eich offeiriad plwyf wybod eich bod chi yn gwneud hyn. Mi fydda i hefyd yn cysylltu a'ch offeiriad er mwyn iddo /iddi wybod ein bod ni yn cyfathrebu.

Dwi yn gobeithio bydd plwyfi di-Gymraeg yn gofyn am gymorth i weinidogaethu yn yr iaith. Os ydych chi yn gallu rhoi cymorth mewn unrhyw fodd cysylltwch â mi os gwelwch yn dda. Bydd hi'n llawer haws i mi os ydych chi yn byw yn agos i'r plwyf sydd mewn angen, ac yn well fyth os ydych yn adnabod y rhai sydd yn gofyn am gymorth.

Yn olaf, gofynnwch i'ch offeiriad plwyf os gallwch chi helpu'ch eglwys i wneud yr iaith Gymraeg yn fwy amlwg. Gall hyn fod yn gymorth mawr i'r rhai sydd yn gyfrifol am gylchgronnau, taflenni, poster, Facebook a gwefannau.

LLANGASTY RETREAT HOUSE

Janet Haynes and Sheila Cotterill

Like most of this year's reports, this report is sharply divided into 'before' and 'after'. 'Before' - the house provided the things you know we do. The retreat house hosted the Ordination retreat; two Creative Arts retreats (one stitching, one painting); Discernment conferences; Mothers' Union retreats; Incumbency retreats; house programme retreats including an inspiring Icon retreat led by Revd Sue Mobberley; an Individually Guided retreat and our regular monthly drop-in-days. We had welcomed Tim Hollingdale and several Ministry Areas as they met to review where they are and where they might go.

As activity began to increase at the house after the winter, we had to shut our doors as the lockdown was imposed on everyone. Even if we could have continued to offer accommodation and food, no one was permitted to travel more than five miles and collective worship was forbidden. Many people were forced to retreat into their homes. Everything in our diary was either cancelled or postponed.

We have been fortunate to benefit from the Government furlough scheme which has helped tremendously with salary costs. We have also benefited greatly from attending the Retreat House Association Zoom Conferences for Retreat

House Wardens. Other retreat houses are in similar positions, those which have re-opened are sharing their experiences. Like churches, retreat houses have reported a surprising level of interest in programmes they have made available on-line.

At the time of writing, the plan is for Llangasty retreat house to open its doors in August 2020. However, as with our churches, for the foreseeable future things will be very different from 'before'. Social distancing must be observed and we must comply with all the coronavirus regulations impacting hospitality to ensure everyone's safety e.g. as the chapel will only accommodate nine people, group sizes will be limited. We may even have to close at short notice due to changing regulations. This will affect our overall income. We are encouraged that the Association for Promoting Retreats (APR) is offering bursaries towards the cost of retreats for NHS staff for retreats taken before the end of April 2021.

Like many others, we are exploring how we might adapt to this 'new normal' whilst continuing to offer opportunities to refresh, renew and re-equip. Our drop-in-days have become 'book in days' and we will be providing more 'rest, work and play' times for individuals to visit. We look forward to being able to welcome retreatants to Llangasty.

RETREATS AND SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Rev'd George Bennett

What is spirituality? William M Thompson suggests that it is "living one's entire life as fully as one can in tune with the Spirit of God through grace and faith". Our lifelong task as Christians is to enable ourselves and others to see God in the ordinary and everyday and so to see the ordinary and everyday in a new light. In normal times my main task as Bishops Officer is to help those within the diocese who are looking for a spiritual director or considering where to go on retreat or how to deepen their spiritual life. In normal circumstances I am pleased to speak to groups on spirituality and I value the opportunity of leading retreats and Quiet Days at Llangasty or Nicholaston House in Gower. The challenge of the coronavirus pandemic has affected this aspect of the church's life as much as any, with the closure of our retreat houses. Meanwhile the enforced inactivity of the months of lockdown has perhaps brought many of us to a new attentiveness and perhaps a deeper awareness of God. At the moment in the province a Provincial Spiritual Direction Course has taken place via Zoom. Interviews were held in May. The course is planned for July to October, delivered in two to three day blocks via Zoom. In the wider church the Spiritual Direction Network is collecting experiences from those involved in spiritual direction and collating examples of good practice using modern technology.

An example of what has been done was the Spiritual Discernment Day on 1st June when 19 participants joined together via Zoom from our own diocese, Hereford and Monmouth. The long-term effects of the pandemic on the delivery of spiritual direction and retreats remains unknown. What is certainly true is that the lockdown may have helped many to discover stillness and silence which in normal times is crowded out. Writing in the Church Times on 12th June, the Revd Barry Preece who chairs the Association for Promoting Retreats said "I think people will realise that life has, for many of us, become a merry-go-round of responsibilities, of work, and families; this time has given some space to reflect, and that is precious, and they will seek it again". Of course, you don't have to go away to have time for reflection, but it is a lot easier to climb off the roundabout and create some space for reflection on retreat. Lockdown has also taught us the value of people. Before, perhaps we took other people for granted. The future will be more diverse for retreats, as for lots of things, but the value of choosing to take a retreat and step aside from daily life, as opposed to the enforced lockdown we've all been through, will only grow. "We need to be sensitive and creative as we use the opportunities our unlooked-for crisis presents to us in this vital area of the church's life".

OLDER PEOPLE'S MINISTRY

Rev'd Sally Rees

Training for Ministry among Older People Taster Course

In September 2019, five people from the Swansea and Brecon Diocese attended a weekend course at Cliff College Derbyshire, 'An introduction to Ministry among Older People - the Anna Chaplaincy approach' being led by Debbie Thrower. Together we addressed topics such as why older people matter; the spirituality of ageing; promoting the importance of spiritual care in later life; knowing one's patch; forging partnerships locally and facing up to one's own mortality. It was both inspirational and informative and it was good to meet others with a particular interest in Older People's Ministry in different denominations and in diverse parts of England. It has enthused the five of us to continue to develop Older Peoples Ministry in our areas of Brecon and Gower deaneries.

Anna Chaplaincy for Older People's Ministry, Network gathering

I and Revd Gill Todd attended the Anna Chaplaincy (for Older People's Ministry) Network Gathering on October 28th - 30th 2019 at High Leigh, Hertfordshire. The theme for the 2019 gathering was 'Loneliness'. It was a valuable learning experience, in a supportive environment where ideas and resources were shared freely.

Certificate in Ministry among Older People

In February 2020, Revd Sue Rumbelow and Revd Petrina Lodge undertook a week-long course at Cliff College leading to a Certificate in Ministry among Older People.

Diocesan Training

Revd Sally Rees led a training session on 'Dementia Friendly Church' for those in the St Catwg's Ministry Area in September 2019. The information and training day on Older People's Ministry and Anna Chaplaincy that was to take place in Gorseinon on June 25th, 2020 was postponed until we are able to have large gatherings again.

Development of Anna Chaplaincy for Older People in Swansea and Brecon Diocese and the Province of Wales

In the Autumn of 2019, I was invited to join with the Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) to develop Anna Chaplaincy for Older People in Wales. After discussion with Archbishop

John, Sally agreed to become the 'Anna Chaplain Lead for Wales' which will involve following up enquires and speaking at engagements and conferences where invited across Wales to promote Anna Chaplaincy. Sally's Commissioning that was to take place at the Mothers Union Diocesan Conference in May has been postponed due to the current health care crisis.

During the lockdown, I have kept in touch with the Anna Chaplaincy Network and has disseminated suggestions of good practice for supporting those in pastoral need, and those in our congregations through the SwanBrec Ideas Exchange (which has been a very helpful resource). The suggestions have included information on phone contact, writing postcards, supplying resources and activities e.g. colouring bookmarkers and cards of bible texts and the advertisement of the Church of England free phoneline resource 'Daily Hope'.

Booklets for Carers and Care Home staff

In my role as Anna Chaplain Lead for Wales I have also been involved in a Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) project to write a series of five booklets that are intended to help Carers provide spiritual care for older people who are isolated or unwell, whether in their own homes or in care homes. The series of five booklets, 'Carers Guides: How To...' provide information and advice on 'how to' provide spiritual care in a variety of contexts. The titles include 'How to worship with individuals in your care'; 'How to worship with a group of residents in a Care Home'; 'How to help with spiritual care at the end of life'; and 'How to have a memorial service at home when you are unable to attend the funeral'. The booklets are laid out in easy to follow steps that can be read as a whole or 'dipped into' for helpful reference. Each booklet also provides ready-to-use resources to help give carers confidence to lead a service.

The booklets will be available from July 17th 2020 and details of each of these will be publicised on the diocesan website shortly.

On a Personal Note

Sally is due to be ordained as Priest on September 26th 2020.



Leslie Ryan has been awarded the RSCM "Certificate of Special Service" to mark the tremendous contribution he has made to Church Music in the Swansea and Brecon Area

ROYAL SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC SWANSEA AND BRECON

Prof Tony Davies

The RSCM is currently undergoing a fundamental restructuring with the various Areas being grouped to form larger Regions as from April 2021.

The present Area committees will still continue to operate, however, reporting to a Regional Manager. Wales will form one of the new Regions and our Education and Training Officer Dr William Reynolds, who in January was appointed the RSCM Coordinator for Wales, has been appointed as RSCM Regional Manager (Wales). We look forward to working with William to maintain and extend RSCM activity in the Swansea and Brecon area.

We are very pleased to report that long-time member of our committee, Leslie Ryan, has been awarded the prestigious RSCM "Certificate of Special Service" to mark the tremendous contribution he has made to Church Music. He has contributed greatly to our activities by organising events and acting as accompanist in many of them.

Whilst at All Saints Church Oystermouth he and his wife Penny developed choral music there to an extremely high level and their choristers achieved 39 RSCM bronze, silver and gold medals. Now organist for Llwynderw Parish Swansea, Leslie was also awarded the Archbishop of Wales Certificate of Merit in Church Music in 2006.

The Director of Music at Brecon Cathedral, Stephen Power, directed a very successful Organ Workshop in Brecon Cathedral last September when there were seven participants all of whom found the experience very enjoyable and beneficial.

The Area Education and Training Officer, Dr William Reynolds, held an Autumn Singing Workshop on 17th October in Holy Cross Church Swansea where he explored music for eventide. Fifteen participants thoroughly enjoyed the event both musically and socially. William also directed the RSCM's Complete Organist course which met monthly between October and March at Christ Church, Swansea.

Due to the present Coronavirus pandemic, area RSCM Events have had to be cancelled for 2020. Centrally, however, the RSCM has held two on-line world-wide services - the first at Easter and the second on RSCM "Music Sunday" in June.

They have also provided on-line support for singing practice and a series of "Webinars" to enable participants to improve their musical skills. It is hoped to resume a full programme of national and local RSCM Events in 2021.

Further details of RSCM activities are available from Prof Tony Davies, 17, Wimmerfield Ave, Killay, Swansea, Tel 01792 429543, Email adavies55@ntlworld.com.

SWANSEA AND BRECON DIOCESAN GUILD OF BELL-RINGERS

Kath Johnson



The Guild, like many groups, experienced a year divided into two contrasting parts - before and after Covid19 lockdown. From the annual general meeting in July 2019 to March 2020, the Guild's regular programme of quarterly meetings, monthly practices, training sessions, and social events continued as normal, as did Sunday service ringing. Practices and training events were held at churches throughout the diocese from Knighton in the north to Swansea, St Mary's in the south.

One feature of the past year has been the ringing of quarter peals (set pieces of ringing lasting about 45 minutes), rung partly as practice for the annual All Wales Striking Competition in September but continuing after that with several first time performances helping Guild ringers to make progress in ringing. Thanks go to Hal Drysdale (Tower Captain at St Peter's, Glasbury) for organising the intensive quarter peal programme.

Last year's report noted the retirement of Doug Davison after a long spell of devoted service as Secretary of the Guild. As a token of the Guild's thanks Doug was made an Honorary Vice-President and was later presented with a wooden model bell crafted by Hal Drysdale. Laura Childs of

Builth Wells has been elected Secretary in his place.

With lockdown, all the bells fell silent, leaving ringers missing the bells and the society of their ringing colleagues. However, like other activities, ringing has quickly developed virtual alternatives and Guild members can now join weekly and monthly on-line practices and post-ringing chats. It's nothing like real ringing but is important in keeping the fellowship of ringers going and is good mental exercise. Thanks to the Guild Master, David Katz and Treasurer, David Childs for organising and leading these 'Ringing Room' sessions.

No services has meant no service ringing, but in some places a single bell has occasionally been chimed. A Brecon resident, recounting how touched she had been by the sound of just one bell chiming on Easter Morning, said 'It was as if the town had got its voice back again'. With churches gradually re-opening bells may again be heard on Sundays, although limited by strict rules on hygiene and social distancing. On Sunday 26th July, five of Brecon Cathedral's ten bells were rung before morning service for the first time since March by ringers suitably hand-sanitized, masked and appropriately distanced on alternate bells but delighted to be back in action.

ARCHIVES

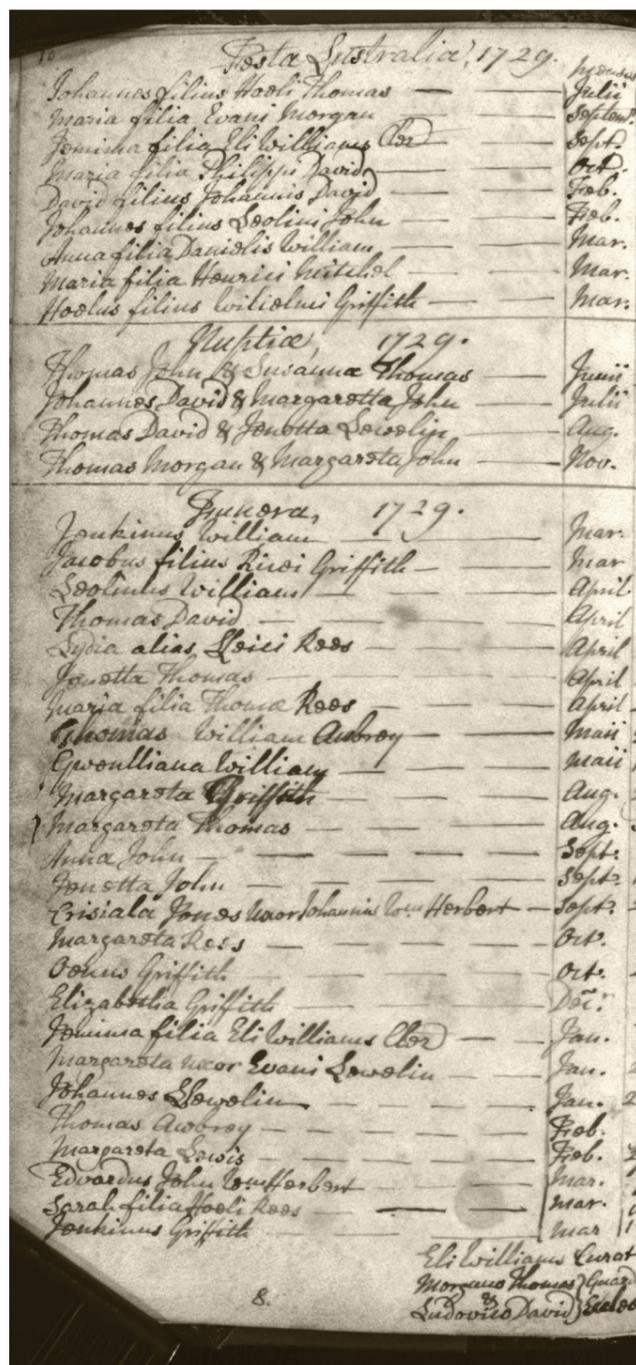
Andrew Dulley, Diocesan Archive Advisor

Parish records for the archdeaconry of Gower are held at West Glamorgan Archives in Swansea, while those for the archdeaconry of Brecon can be consulted at Powys Archives in Llandrindod Wells, and the diocesan records are looked after at the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth. This has been a curious year, to say the least, resulting in all three institutions being closed to the public for several months. At the time of writing preparations are under way to open them up again, albeit with different procedures in place to ensure the safety of researchers and staff alike.

Behind the scenes, work continues. Those of you with an interest in family history might remember the digitisation of Welsh parish registers back in 2007. They have been available up to now on the Find My Past website, although there have been some issues with parishes being wrongly named and the indexes not working as they should. Welsh county archives are currently in negotiations with other companies to widen access to the historic registers. An important part of that work involves ensuring that the parishes are properly identified. This change in suppliers does not involve the wholesale re-digitisation of the records.

Following on from that, it has become very clear how much change there has been in the way parishes are organised on a local level, with the building of new churches and chapels-of-ease, the establishment of new parishes, closures, amalgamations and, most recently, the creation of ministry areas. Although we have seen a lot of change more recently, this is not a new phenomenon, but simply the latest phase, as the church adapts to the pressures and opportunities it encounters. In order to keep track of all of these, I am currently in the process of drawing up a definitive list of the parishes and churches of the diocese with information about where the records are held. This is prompted in part by queries I have received about the whereabouts of records of churches that have closed.

In the meantime, any information from incumbents who know this is an issue for them would be greatly appreciated, as would information about planned changes, closures and regroupings in the future. I welcome the chance to meet with incumbents to discuss issues regarding their parish records, always observing, in the current climate, the appropriate social distancing.



Diocesan Secretary

Louise Pearson (FT)

Member of the Bishop's Staff; Development & Delivery of Strategy; Management of the Diocese in support of the Diocesan Vision, strategic and policy decisions; Overall Financial and Administrative Responsibility. Secretary to the Diocesan Trust, WOD's and ACC.

Finance Team

finance.swanbrec@cinw.org.uk

Huw Evans, Finance Officer (FT)

Financial reports and management accounts; Diocesan Trust; Support to: Investment Committee, Assistance Committee, Treasurer to Diocesan Trust, WOD's and ACC

Veronica Alexander, Finance Assistant (PT)

Financial Administration including expenses, payroll, banking, invoice management and Ministry Share administration; Payroll for Cathedral & Llangasty

Property Team

Liz Wheat, Property Administration Supervisor (FT)

lizwheat@cinw.org.uk

Supervision of property administration for the Parsonage Board, Church Buildings and Diocesan Trust. Management of parsonage enquiries and administrative support to the Parsonage Committee, including: Contractor & Parish Liaison; Co-ordination of Parsonage Quinquennial Inspections; Work Orders Management; Invoicing and Budgetary Reporting

Pip Elton, Administrator (PT)

pipelton@cinw.org.uk

Vacancy management for Parsonage and Diocesan Trust properties, administrative support to the Diocesan Trust and enquiry management.

Parsonage Board

Parsonage [parsonage.swanbrec@churchinwales.org.uk]

Simon Holland, Diocesan Inspector (FT)

Inspection and Management of Parsonage Board Properties.

Grants and Church Buildings

Kes Seymour, Administrator (FT)

kesseymour@cinw.org.uk

External Grants Advisor and administration of internal grants including: mission fund, transformation fund and churches & pastoral fund. Administrative support to Churches & Pastoral Committee, including

DIOCESAN TEAM

The administrative team are primarily based in The Diocesan Centre, Brecon with a satellite office at The Eastmoor Centre, Swansea. Collectively we manage the administrative and financial functions of the Diocese, providing administrative and operational support for the Bishop's staff, Diocesan Officers and wider structure. Please see below for suitable contacts within the team:

co-ordination of church quinquennial inspections. Co-ordination of ministry and finance returns.

DAC

alison.amphlett@redkitelaw.co.uk

Alison Amphlett, DAC Administrator (PT)

Based at the Registrar's Office Management of Faculty Applications and administrative support to the DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee).

Communications

Eryl Jones, Director of Communications & Community Engagement (FT)

eryljones@cinw.org.uk

Development and implementation of communications strategy; wider community participation through website management and social media; training & support to parishes in developing communication skills.

Ministry Area Development

Tim Hollingdale, Ministry Area Development Officer (FT)

timhollingdale@cinw.org.uk

Support in the formation of Ministry Area Teams. Identifying gifts and skills, signposting resources and facilitating development in line with Diocesan Vision and Strategic Aims.

Children, Youth & Families Officers

Rev Rachel Bunting, Afon Tawe (FT) –

rachelbunting@cinw.org.uk

Clare Morgan, Greater Brecon (FT) –

claremorgan@cinw.org.uk

Sian Parkhouse, Greater Brecon (FT)

sianparkhouse@cinw.org.uk

Sian Smith, Radnor & Builth (FT)

siansmith@cinw.org.uk

Deanery representatives for CYF work; consultants in developing work projects; enabling churches to nurture children and young people as they grow in faith; devel-

oping relationships with external agencies and collaborating to provide Diocesan-wide projects.

Evangelism Enablement

Mandy Bayton, Evangelism Enablement Officer (PT)

mandybayton@cinw.org.uk

Working with laity and clergy and Diocesan partners to strengthen relationships with their wider communities; providing tools and resources to empower evangelistic interactions. Supporting the Bishop, Diocesan Secretary and Working Team to deliver a successful Evangelism Bid.

Education

John Meredith, Diocesan Director of Education (DDE) (PT)

dde.swanbrec@cinw.org.uk

Church School liaison and advisor; parish support for school engagement projects; local government liaison; bishop visitor's co-ordinator; management of school leavers' service and educational events.

Contact details:

The Diocesan Centre, Cathedral Close, Brecon, LD3 9DP (diocese.swanbrec@cinw.org.uk)

Eastmoor Resource Centre, St Barnabas Church, Uplands, Swansea (diocese.swanbrec@cinw.org.uk)

Diocesan Administration

Olivia Morris, Reception Administration Supervisor (FT)

oliviamorris@cinw.org.uk

Supervision of the administrative team at the Diocesan Centre and Eastmoor Resource Centre; support to the DBF Executive & Full Board; Health & Safety, Data Management Administration; Reception Services and Equipment Maintenance.

Diocesan Centre Reception

Susan Cambell, Receptionist (PT)

diocese.swanbrec@cinw.org.uk

Reception and photocopying services; room and videoconference reservations; catering arrangements; diocesan mailings; filing management; stationery and stock procurement.

Eastmoor Resource Centre

Geraldine Twinney, Administrator (PT)

geraldinetwinney@cinw.org.uk

Reception and photocopying services, room reservations and catering arrangements.

OUR PRAYER//EIN GWEDDI

Father, we hold before you our family
in the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon

Dad, dygwn ger dy fron ein teulu
yn Esgobaeth Abertawe ac Aberhonddu

And we open our hearts and minds to your Spirit:

Agorwn ein calonnau a'n meddyliau i'th Ysbryd:

Bless us as we gather in your name;

Bendithia ni wrth inni gyd-gyfarfod yn dy enw;

Guide us as we grow into the likeness of your Son;

Arwain ni wrth inni dyfu ar lun dy Fab;

Lead us by your Spirit to go out
and make disciples of others.

Tywys ni a'th Ysbryd i fynd allan
a gwneudd disgyblion o eraill.

God of our journeying, be our way
and our truth and our life;

Dduw ein siwrneio, bydd di ein ffordd,
a'n gwirionedd, a'n bywyd;

Our beginning and our end,
we pray through Jesus our Lord.

Ein dechrau a'n diwedd,
gweddiwn trwy Iesu ein Harglwydd.

Amen.