

**Note of business transacted at a meeting of  
the Newcastle Diocesan Synod held on  
Saturday 9th March, 2024 at 10:00am  
at St John's Church, St John's Terrace, North Shields NE29 6HS**

The President was the Rt Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley, Bishop of Newcastle and the meeting was chaired by the Chair of the House of Clergy, the Revd Canon Brian Hurst and the Chair of the House of Laity, Canon Izzy McDonald-Booth. The Registrar gave her apologies.

The Register, attached, recorded 61 members; 4 visitors; and 10 officers in attendance.

**1. Welcome and opening worship**

The Bishop of Newcastle welcomed members to the meeting and extended a warm welcome to Jackie McHanwell, the Independent Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP) and the Director of Mission and Ministry, the Revd Canon Dr Richard (Ric) Whaite.

The Bishop led the opening prayer.

*The Revd Canon Brian Hurst took the chair*

**2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from 22 members.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

No new declarations of interest were made.

**4. Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2023**

**4.1 Note of business transacted on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2023** (paper DS24 02)

The Synod noted and approved the business transacted.

**4.2 Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

**5. Notices**

*The Chair invited the Diocesan Secretary to speak to this item.*

The Secretary notified Synod that Timothy Lewthwaite had been appointed to the post of Church Buildings Support Officer and he would begin his role on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April. This new post was funded by the National Church. The Secretary also explained that the Diocese of Newcastle had been awarded funding to offer minor repairs and improvement grants to churches and that part of Timothy's role would be to help PCC's to access this funding. The Secretary confirmed that further information on the minor repairs fund would be announced as soon as the application process had been agreed.

**6. Questions**

*The Chair noted that the following question had been received for answer.*

**The Revd Canon Ian Flintoft** (*General Synod Member*) had asked:

*Given:*

- i) our reliance on the ministry of stipendiary clergy to take a number of services; and*
- ii) that the amount received by retired stipendiary clergy payment for Sunday services has not increased in recent years, and*
- iii) that this amount compares unfavourably with the payment offered by a number of other dioceses [Blackburn £40, St Albans £62, Worcester £40.91, Guilford £47], what plans are in place to review these payments?*

The Archdeacon of Northumberland replied to the question and explained that the payments to retired stipendiary clergy had been discussed at the February meeting of Bishop's Staff and following this, a proposal to increase the payments would be taken to Bishop's Council later in March.

## **7. Presidential Address**

*The Chair invited the Bishop of Newcastle to give their Presidential Address to the Synod.*

Bishop Helen-Ann gave a Presidential Address and a copy of the Address is attached to this note.

## **8. Welcome and Introduction to the Revd Dr Richard (Ric) Whaite, Director of Mission and Ministry**

*The Bishop welcomed the Director, who had taken up his new role on 4<sup>th</sup> March, to his first meeting of the Diocesan Synod and invited the Director address the Synod.*

On behalf of the Synod, the Chair thanked the Director for his Address and extended Synod's welcome to the Diocese of Newcastle and explained how enthused and delighted people were about this appointment.

*The Chair invited Synod to respond to the Director's Address.*

Members shared their enthusiasm for the appointment of a Director of Mission and Ministry and warmly welcomed the missional and ministerial vision expressed through the Director's Address.

In response to concerns raised by **Dr John Appleby** (Tynemouth) with regards to the future use of church buildings, the Director explained that it was important to continue to ask what we are doing outside as well as inside our church buildings and noted that there was still much to learn from what happened during the COVID pandemic when church buildings could not be used.

## **9. General Synod Report** (paper DS24 03 supported this item)

*The Chair invited General Synod Members Nicola Denyer and the Revd Claire Robson to give a report from the February sitting of the General Synod.*

**Nicola Denyer** and the **Revd Claire Robson** spoke to the paper prepared by Nic Denyer in collaboration with fellow General Synod member **Robin Brims**.

*The Chair invited questions or comments.*

**The Archdeacon of Northumberland** welcomed the debate on Estates Ministry and enquired as to what the next steps in this process would be. In response, Nicola Denyer explained that General Synod would be making enquiries with each diocese to check what commitments had been made in relation to initiatives with Estates Ministry and to ascertain which initiatives had been met.

**The Revd Dr Rae Caro** (Tynemouth) asked if a more equitable deal regarding clergy stipend could be expected. In response, the Revd Claire Robson reported that the message from the General Synod was that it was time to address the income drop in real terms for stipendiary clergy and that the way pensions and stipends were calculated was unfair. Therefore, there was a commitment going forward to lessen the gaps that had opened up with regards to clergy stipends. The Diocesan Secretary explained that the Board of Finance would struggle to pick up the financial responsibility of such a provision if the commitment from the General Synod was to be put in place without additional funding from the National Church.

In relation to stipendiary positions **the Revd Stephanie Hunter** (Bedlington) enquired as to whether the issue of what was considered to be full-time/part-time for clergy had been raised at General Synod. In response, the Revd Claire Robson noted that this had not been discussed but there was potential to raise this question at an upcoming meeting. For clarification, the Diocesan Secretary explained that there was a clear distinction between employed posts and posts held as

an Ecclesiastical Office Holder. Full-time Office Holders were expected to carry out the duties of the Office over a six-day week whereas full-time employees worked to a five-day week.

**The Revd Canon Allan Marks** (Newcastle Central) asked if it was possible that future Agendas for General Synod could be more laity led going forward. In response, Nicola Denyer explained that there was a way in which a diocese could take forward a motion to General Synod. As the Newcastle members on General Synod were still fairly new to their positions it had taken a while to comprehend the many intricacies to the role correct mechanisms to use within General Synod, however, this would certainly be something lay members could look to action going forward.

*The Chair thanked both Nicola Denyer and the Revd Claire Robson for their report and responses to Synod.*

#### **10. Safeguarding** (paper DS24 04 supported this item)

*The Chair invited Jackie McHanwell, Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP), to speak to this item.*

The DSAP Chair highlighted the importance of safeguarding and the devastating impact on victims when safeguarding procedures were not implemented or followed correctly. The DSAP Chair explained that the DSAP Annual Report for 2023 had been published on the diocesan website and reported the following key details:

- DSAP was a partnership between senior clergy and officers, Newcastle Cathedral and external partners which included Northumbria Police and the Local Authorities serving in the diocese as well as survivors with lived experience of abuse in a church setting.
- The Diocese of Newcastle had made good progress with regards to safeguarding business objectives set for 2023, however there was still much that could be achieved.
- Reporting from the Parish Dashboards showed that parishes across the diocese were doing well in terms of compliance.
- DSAP subgroups had been created as an outcome of the 2022 Lessons Learned Reviews (LLR). Among these was a subgroup to ensure appropriate social media practices were followed and a recruitment hub was also set up to help parishes fulfil safer recruitment processes.
- In response to recommendations from the Past Cases Review for the DSAP to reach out to local theological institutions, a joint group had been formed with the Dioceses of Newcastle and Durham, Lindisfarne College of Theology and Cranmer Hall to ensure a whole system approach to safeguarding and safeguarding practices.
- Links had also been established with the University of Sunderland to initiate research into how the diocesan safeguarding policies and procedures could be more effective in practice. The findings from this research were presented in December 2023 and from these findings, partners had been willing to collaborate with DSAP to help implement recommendations made.
- The Diocese of Newcastle had contributed to national research on safeguarding as a pathfinder diocese for IICSA. This research was led by Prof. Alexis Jay. The report published from this work would be recommending a model for fully independent safeguarding in the Church of England.

The DSAP Chair thanked all those across the diocese for their help and support in making safe places for worship. Particular thanks were extended to the survivors who had participated in the diocesan efforts to improve safeguarding as well as the Lead Officer, Chaplaincy to Survivors, Maggi Crease for her support with this key area of work. Thanks were also extended to the

Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, Carol Butler, and Safeguarding Operations Officer, Donna Brown for their continued work and support to ensure improved safeguarding across the diocese.

In discussion **the Revd Canon Sarah Lunn** (Bellingham) noted that there seemed to be a disparity in how the elderly demographic of congregations perceived and engaged with safeguarding in comparison to the younger demographic and that it was important to address this if safeguarding was to be improved. It was noted that for some it was difficult to access and navigate online courses. **Aidan Evans** (Newcastle West) noted that despite the good amount of advice and guidance about safeguarding, there still appeared to be a lack of consistency in how it applied to different places and settings.

In response, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser acknowledged that some people preferred in-person meetings and learning events and members noted the flexibility of online and in-person learning offered by the Safeguarding Team, with in-person programmes running for all safeguarding courses. Data had shown that training was perceived positively but there was a disparity depending on the role and as such there was a need for more engagement with church wardens. The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser also noted that data suggested that trust in safeguarding had still not been fully established. There remained a perception that those in power would be favoured over those reporting safeguarding incidents.

In response to concerns raised by **the Revd Capt. Paul Allinson** (Newcastle West) regarding the 15-25 % gap that remained for overall compliance to minimum safeguarding requirements in each Deanery, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser explained that there was a plan in place for the Archdeacons to engage with parishes to offer support with these matters. **Nicola Denyer** (Tynemouth) extended her gratitude for the work the Safeguarding Team had completed with Sunderland University and was proud of the progress the diocese had made, particularly with respect to the work carried out by the Chaplaincy for Survivors. Nicola Denyer acknowledged that there remained some resistance to safeguarding training from parishes however, it was paramount that everyone complied with safeguarding policies and procedures.

The Chair thanked Jackie McHanwell and Carol Butler for their presentation and to all those engaged across the diocese who were supporting safeguarding practice.

#### **11. Racial Justice** (paper DS24 05 supported this item)

*The Chair invited the Bishop of Berwick to speak to this item.*

The Bishop informed members that the paper was simply an update and an invitation seeking volunteers for the Racial Justice Group. The paper presented to Diocesan Synod in December had set out the Group's aims and recommendations and these had been agreed. The next step was to form the Racial Justice Task Group and proceed with the work. The Bishop asked members to contact the Diocesan Secretary if they wished to be involved and if there was anyone outside of the Synod who would like to offer their support they were encouraged to contact the Bishop directly.

*The Synod paused for a break.*

*Canon Izzy McDonald-Booth took the chair*

#### **12. Newcastle Cathedral**

*The Chair invited the Dean, the Very Revd Lee Batson to speak to this item.*

The Dean facilitated some group discussions and plenary feedback about the Cathedral, particularly in terms of how members related to the Cathedral and how the Cathedral served the people of the diocese. In light of this the Very Revd Batson asked the following questions:

**1) *When you hear of Newcastle Cathedral as Mother Church, does it seem fitting?***

During discussion some members noted that the phrase was problematic for them and questioned the term 'mother' in relation to the Cathedral's role within the diocese.

**2) *At this point in time do you think the Cathedral provides a focus for the life and work of the Church of England.***

Members highlighted that the Cathedral was a forerunner of safeguarding work for the diocese and the its outreach work enabled children to experience the Cathedral in a new and exciting way.

The Dean shared a short film about the Lantern Initiative which was established to provide a radical welcome for all by reaching out into the wider city to engage those in need and by using the Cathedral as a space of belonging for individuals who were isolated, judged or oppressed by wider society. The Synod also heard that the Cathedral provided a valuable safe space for those in recovery from addiction and those who attended the Cathedral's Recovery Church tended to have shorter periods of relapse.

To conclude the Dean noted that the Cathedral was not merely a city-based ministry and therefore it must support the work and life of the diocese as a whole. Synod was asked to continue to think about how the Cathedral could be a better resource and members were encouraged to contact the Dean with any potential suggestions and ideas.

On behalf of the Synod, the Chair thanked the Dean for his inspiring presentation and for facilitating the open and helpful discussions.

**13. Deanery Planning (oral report)**

*The Chair invited the Archdeacon of Northumberland, the Archdeacon of Lindisfarne and the Bedlington Deanery Finance Officer (DFO), David Lea to speak to this item.*

The Archdeacon of Northumberland noted that having begun in October 2022, the Deanery Planning process was now well underway and making good progress. A check-in meeting had recently been held in Morpeth on February 10<sup>th</sup> at which the Director of Ordinands and Vocations, the Revd Stephen Tranter, had been invited to speak.

The Archdeacon of Northumberland introduced David Lea to share his perspective on the Deanery Planning process thus far.

David Lea informed Synod that Readers from Bedlington had recently met to share resources and ideas and these would be discussed at an upcoming Deanery Synod to help explore, from a community setting, potential wider uses for their churches and church buildings. David praised the logical framework which had supported the deanery planning process. He and others had found the process was both iterative and transparent. David further noted that Bedlington Deanery was grateful for the ongoing opportunity to receive feedback on the developing plans through regular input from the Archdeacon of Northumberland who was able to provide a wider perspective and background on what was happening in other deaneries across the diocese.

The Archdeacon of Lindisfarne thanked David for his input and for providing Synod with a fresh perspective on the process which had helped all deaneries to build confidence and joy in who they were and who they served. The Archdeacon noted it was important that each deanery, whether rural or urban, was able to celebrate its strengths. Members noted that the recent Heritage Lottery Project, Rural Churches for Everyone had produced a toolkit that could be accessed on the diocesan website. The toolkit could be used by all PCCs, urban as well as rural.

The Archdeacon reported that Deanery Development Groups (DDG) had been engaging more with the Generous Giving Team and reported that many parishes had an increased awareness of the relationship between Parish Share and the resources required to support deanery plans.

The Archdeacon of Lindisfarne also welcomed the new Director for Mission and Ministry and recognised that the Director's voice would be an important addition to the deanery planning process going forward. The Director would be attending the next round of DDG visits.

#### **14. Finance Update (presentation)**

The Chair of the Board of Finance, Canon Simon Harper, spoke to this item and reported on the following key issues:

##### **i. Outturn for 2023 (pre-audit completion)**

The Chair informed Synod that the 2023 accounts were close to completion and the Year End position was likely to show:

- Net unrestricted operating deficit of £265K.
- Net unrealised unrestricted investment gain of £197k. The Chair noted that it was important to remember these gains were related to stock market value and were therefore still unrealised.
- An overall unrestricted deficit of £68k.

In relation to cashflow the Chair reported that:

- As of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023, there was £4.01m in unrestricted cash
- Provided £300k of savings were made in 2024, there was expected to be a sum of £3.178m in unrestricted cash at year end 2024.

The 2023 Year End position was better than had been expected due to pension expenditure being less than what had been budgeted due to reductions in the contributions to the Clergy Pension Scheme. Also, £147k of savings had been made within staff costs due to staff vacancies. As a result of timings of clergy leaving and new appointments being made, £209k of savings had been made with expenditure on clergy posts. The Chair underlined the fact that although these savings were a welcome gain for the diocese, they were not structural savings and savings must still be made in 2024 to help close the budget's structural deficit.

##### **ii. Progress on the 300k of savings to be made in 2024**

The Chair reported that the Diocesan Secretary and Interim Head of Finance were continuing to work to find the required £300k of savings within the 2024 budget. Thus far £275k of saving had been identified. However, a large proportion of this sum was due to pensions savings within the staff pension scheme which would not be carried into future years. The Chair also noted that some of the savings gained from the lower rate of clergy pension contributions in the 2024 budget had been used to fund an additional stipend increase from April.

##### **iii. The Estate of Bishop Alec Graham**

The Chair informed members about the Estate of Bishop Alec Graham, a former Bishop of Newcastle. The Chair explained to Synod:

- In accordance with Bishop Alec Graham's will, a Legacy had been left to the Newcastle Diocesan Society without restriction and for the benefit of the Newcastle Diocesan Board of Finance.
- The Estate was complex and comprised a variety of assets which included investments, properties and cash. This meant it was taking time to realise the assets within the Estate.
- At the end of October 2022, the Diocesan Society had received a £2M investment portfolio from the Estate and this was by Brewin Dolphin. At this point the portfolio did not meet the diocesan ethical investment policy and the Society then worked with the

investment manager to ensure such compliance. As at 31 December 2023 the portfolio was valued at £2.24M.

- In 2022 £700k of cash was received from the Estate and at 31 December 2023 the cash received from cash assets and the sale of property (including interest earned) was £2.15M.
- As part of internal governance process the Diocesan Secretary has provided the Society and Board of Finance Trustees with regular updates about the Estate's progress.
- It was hoped that all assets would be realised and the Estate settled by mid-2024.

The Chair clarified that the Board of Finance would be seeking to ensure a number of additional activities across the diocese would benefit from this bequest and that the bequest would fund activities for the long-term.

*There were no questions or comments from members.*

#### **15. Environment (oral update)**

*The Chair invited the Diocesan Secretary to speak to this item.*

The Diocesan Secretary reported that a draft Net Zero Action Plan had been drawn up by a Consultant, Tristan Oliver. The draft action plan would be brought to the May sitting of Synod. Tristan would be joining Synod for this item and sufficient time would be set aside to look at environmental issues in general as well as the Net Zero Action Plan.

The Secretary explained that he had recently attended a Net Zero Conference to gain further insight into planning and funding and there would be continuing engagement with the national team to help to source funding to progress the Net Zero work. To date national church had earmarked £190,000,000 over the next nine years but this would be nowhere near enough to support what needs to be done to meet National Net Zero targets. The Secretary explained that the action plan was a route forward with this work.

*The Chair invited questions/comments from members*

**Carol Griffiths** (Bamburgh and Glendale) informed the Synod that the Revd Tim Mayfield, Bishop's Adviser on the Environment, would be offering a Carbon Literacy Program in the summer and also asked if it would be possible for one or two Diocesan Synods per year to be held online in order to help reduce the Synod's carbon footprint.

The Secretary agreed that the Synod could seek to look at this request as it worked through the Action Plan for Net Zero.

#### **16. Any other business**

There was no other business.

#### **17. Closing prayer and dismissal**

The Bishop thanked all in attendance for their support and gave a special thank you to Administration Lead, Ruth O'Hagan, Administration Support Officer, Kyrinn Whittaker and Sound Technician, Daniel Doran for their help with the Synod's organisation.

The Bishop led the Synod in prayer and with a blessing and drew the meeting to a close.

## Diocesan Synod Address

March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024

At the start of last month, I had the pleasure of attending a Newcastle University guest lecture given by George Robertson, former NATO Secretary General. The lecture was entitled: 'Can we manage a dangerous world?' To illustrate his theme, Lord Robertson articulated 6 words beginning with the letter 'V':

*Volatility* of events.

*Velocity* of change.

*Vulnerability*.

*Values* that we are used to under threat.

*Vacuum* of leadership.

And a lack of *Vision* for the future.

The lecture was a *tour de force* covering a confluence of global events, their impact on the UK and our well-intentioned, but it would seem nowadays, capacity-diminishing response. The packed audience represented a reasonably diverse group of people. It included a large group of army cadets, and our own General Synod representative (himself no stranger to military affairs), Robin Brims. Towards the end of his lecture, Lord Robertson offered suggestions for what might be done to address the mess that the world finds itself in. These include investing in diplomacy, developing a concept of statecraft, looking at our own domestic politics with a sense of collective determination to engage in the defence of our nation, and reviewing, reforming, and modernising our institutions. His final suggestion was this: prepare for the worst and hope for the best.

As I reflected on the implications of his lecture I asked myself the question: when faced with such overwhelming challenges, where might I/we begin? This is a good question to ponder while we are in the season of Lent which can lead to an unhelpful introspective bubble of anxiety instead of a collective stock-taking of where we are in relationship with God, with one another, with our communities



however configured they might be. When I gave my Advent talks last year I unpacked the *seeking, sharing, and sending* of our diocesan values and described theologian +Stephen Pickard's powerful image of the need for human beings to live lives that are untwisted into God, developing a theme with origins in Luther (who warned against the human being twisted into self) and much Pickard's own Durham-based doctoral supervisor, the late Canon Professor Dan Hardy. I like this image of being untwisted into God because of its physicality but it's promise of divine comfort and release: life as a disciple is not set up to be easy. Lent might be about the wilderness, but that is always held with the reality that even in the unlikeliest of places, growth can happen. I'm struck when I look at social media by the frequency of people posting photos of concrete, surprised by a shoot of green that appears. Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, but he also found grace there in resisting what was offered to him as quick-fix solutions to any identity soul-searching he may have been doing.

One answer about where to begin when things look overwhelming lies in an experience I had the day *after* Lord Robertson's lecture. My first attempt to visit Warkworth and Shilbottle schools before Christmas had been thwarted by snow. This turned out to be a divinely fortuitous delay as the visit was rescheduled for Candlemas, and the celebration of Christingle.

I was pleasantly reassured that cocktail sticks and sweets were still in use, but it was an image from Warkworth School that remains with me: a school hall filled with children and staff all holding up a lit Christingle. The children at the front showed immense concentration carefully holding their orange straight out in front of them while those at the back exhibited a more confident but no less thoughtful stance. The candles were held high in the low light, with the sun streaming across over our heads. It was realistic, it was hopeful, it was (dare I say) a bit risky (a hall filled with children and lit candles might be considered a health and safety risk by some). It was the light of Christ shining out illuminating lives which even if just for a moment were

filled with joy and wonder at the spectacle. You could see the smiles ripple round the hall.

We meet as a diocesan Synod mindful still of the many challenges we face. The Church isn't immune from situations that challenge us, but we do have something important to say about how to respond, and about hope, about justice, about the love of God in Jesus Christ. I've said before in addressing this Synod, we aren't separate from the world we are part of it. As we seek to turn outwards in mission and grow younger and more diverse *we will change. It bears repeating, please remember 'younger' is relative. Growth comes in different forms in different contexts.* We live in a broader context of change, with a General Election due at some point probably this year, and a process of regional devolution that will also impact how we live and work in our region.

Paying attention to growing younger and more diverse has a lot to do with *intentionality* in how we engage with young people and how we resource this work (look at the excellent work that 'Beyond Youth' is doing serving Ashington, Seaton Hirst, Woodhorn and Newbiggin-by-the-Sea; and Cresswell and Lynemouth. And Jac Atkinson, Children and Families' Missioner in Denton; I still have my LEGO bishop from that wonderful encounter). You won't be surprised to hear me say that I want all our churches and chaplaincy contexts to be places of inclusion and welcome for LGBTQIA+ people, and above all to be places where attention to safeguarding is given the highest regard. I fully respect theological difference. I don't believe that differences held with integrity and conscience require any hard restructuring of who and how we are as Church. I lament when communities feel they must withhold Share as a result of disagreement or restrict resources in separate funds, something that only fuels division and does not work with the complex granularity of unity. I am delighted that we are making good progress with the establishment of a chaplaincy for LGBTQIA+ people, and I am very grateful to Gill Alexander and Robert Lawrance for their work in developing this important chaplaincy

together with Archdeacon Rachel and others who have given of their time during a period of consultation.

I am delighted that today we welcome Ric Whaite, our new Diocesan Director of Mission and Ministry. Please don't form an orderly line just yet, as his licensing and installation isn't for another couple of weeks: March 17<sup>th</sup>, 4pm, the Cathedral (all welcome!). At that service, Ric will become an Honorary Canon of Newcastle Cathedral. I am pleased that we are to hear today from the Dean about the Cathedral and its engagement with parish and chaplaincy life across our diocese.

As Bishop Mark continues to develop our strategy based on our values of seeking, sharing, and sending, with Ric's arrival I expect we will now see an acceleration in the development and implementation of our vision and strategy one that will take root in every corner of our diocese in ways that are both big and small, in the now and the not yet. It's exciting!

I want now to briefly address a matter that has already been the subject of speculation: the legacy left to our diocese by the late Bishop of Newcastle, Alec Graham. Some of my thinking on this has already been shared with Bishop's Council. It is my hope that acting as trustees, Bishop's Council will bring a collective proposal with a shared vision about the Legacy for discussion at a future Synod. It's not a good look, being frank, if trustees end up in public disagreement. I expect Bishop's Council to have robust discussions, and I welcome that. I have spent a good amount of time reflecting very carefully about how such a legacy might be used in a way that honours Bishop Alec and the things he cared about in his ministry. We aren't the only entity to benefit from his incredible generosity and as I have spoken with others in positions of leadership who are beneficiaries institutionally I have been struck by the care and commitment and tone that is shown in carefully working out how legacy can form the basis for future development not just plugging a gap where there is deficit, tempting as that might be. The first thing to say is that the amount of the legacy is not settled yet, so anything you might hear about its value at the moment is purely speculative and is *not* based on fact.

The vision I shared with Bishop's Council is to explore using Bishop Alec's legacy to form a 'Bishop of Newcastle Foundation' with the long-term intention of:

- **Enhancing** our children and young people's team particularly in the area of early years provision.
- **Enabling** all licensed stipendiary clergy to receive pastoral supervision (making it a requirement of license for those new in post, and an invitation to those already in post).
- **Establishing** a new role to drive the roll-out of a new faith and disciple course as a pre-discernment track, encouraging confidence in following Jesus. This course would be hub-based across the diocese, and intentionally located in places you wouldn't necessarily expect, specifically aimed at growing more diverse.
- **Encouraging** innovation at a local level with seed-funding for parish and chaplaincy initiatives that speak into the Five Marks of Mission: anything from social enterprise, Anna Chaplaincy, or work with environmental concerns.

I am not suggesting we direct the legacy towards reducing Parish Share or reducing our deficit. I am not advocating for using the Legacy to help us achieve Net Zero. There has to be a balance, and with these proposals there also lies the potential to attract match-funding from the National Church. If we don't disciple ourselves and others (and by that I mean an intentional focus on nurturing lay vocations and confidence in faith) there will be no lasting foundation for the work of engaging in God's mission, only voices that shout loudly on one topic whilst ignoring other issues like safeguarding and racial justice? If we don't care for clergy we will have increasing levels of burnout and low morale.

If we don't support children and young people in their faith and value our work with schools (both Church schools and community schools), looking to children and young people as the Church of today never mind the Church of the future then actually we have no future to

entrust to generations yet to be born. If we don't encourage a culture of innovation and risk-taking and a readiness to fail sometimes then we can set no example to other institutions who are doing just that to help grow and develop. If we assume 'the Diocese' will pay for everything then we will never break the cycle of a dependency culture and expectations that are completely unrealistic. Our diocese is the sum of many parts – and it's for all those parts to work together. The Apostle of Paul had something to say about that: the Body of Christ. Mothering Sunday tomorrow is in origin more about the breadth of the Church as a place of welcome, nurture and prophetic witness into the world (not separate from it).

On Wednesday this week I attended a breakfast roundtable in Parliament ahead of the Budget. Like all parliamentarians I get lots of invites to attend events and I must have clicked 'yes' on this one because I knew I was in London and being Budget day it would be good to show willing and represent the Northeast. One thing I have learnt about being a member of the House of Lords is that my horizons and perspectives are being transformed by the people I meet and the conversations and debates I take part in. In this particular context however I found myself in a relatively intimate breakfast setting hosted by the Quoted Companies Alliance discussing economics with my GCSE B in maths as my foundation (I hope our DBF Chair is impressed!). The phrase, 'out of my comfort zone' applies here. One of my take home phrases was the contribution of one participant who said: *you can't make economic policy by looking through the rear-view mirror.*

In my mind, I swapped 'economic policy' with 'preach the Gospel.' How then can we, as members together of the Body of Christ look forward and dare to hope that we can and will turn further outwards in mission and grow younger and more diverse? It will require change, it will be tough at times, I've said as much before in my Synod Addresses but with the children and staff at Warkworth school my goodness it is worth holding up our candle to see the way forward in hope.

A few days after his lecture, I sent Lord Robertson a 'thank you' note and in it I reflected another 'V' word had come to mind as I listened to his excellent lecture: *Vocation*. Who are we being called to be at this time, and what are we being called to do? And of course it's not just *who* it's *whose*: as God's Church I believe we are being called to transform our communities across our diocese in partnership and renewal, with energy, resilience, and initiative: seeking, sharing, and sending.

Diocesan Synod 9th March

<b>Surname</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>House</b>	<b>Deanery</b>	<b>Attended (Signed)</b>
Hartley	Helen-Ann	Bishops	Ex-officio	Attended
Wroe	Mark	Bishops	Ex-officio	Attended
Allinson	Paul	Clergy	Newcastle West	Attended
Batson	Lee	Clergy	Ex-officio	Attended
Birch	Tom	Clergy	Corbridge	Attended
Brown	Christine	Clergy	Newcastle West	Attended
Caro	Rae	Clergy	Tynemouth	Attended
Cleugh	Hannah	Clergy	Tynemouth	Attended
Flintoft	Ian	Clergy	Ex-officio	Attended
Gill	Helen	Clergy	Newcastle East	Attended
Glover	David	Clergy	Hexham	Attended
Harding	Allison	Clergy	Newcastle West	Attended
Hardy	Alison	Clergy	Alnwick	Attended
Hennebry	Ian	Clergy	Bedlington	Attended
Heslop	Neil	Clergy	Newcastle West	Attended
Hills	Sarah	Clergy	Norham	Attended
Hunter	Matthew	Clergy	Newcastle West	Attended
Hunter	Stephanie	Clergy	Bedlington	Attended

Diocesan Synod 9th March

<b>Surname</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>House</b>	<b>Deanery</b>	<b>Attended (Signed)</b>
Hurst	Brian	Clergy	Bamburgh & Glendale	Attended
Lunn	Sarah	Clergy	Bellingham	Attended
Macpherson	Catherine	Clergy	Bedlington	Attended
Marks	Allan	Clergy	Newcastle Central	Attended
McGowan	James	Clergy	Newcastle West	Attended
Moon	Sarah	Clergy	Bedlington	Attended
O'Grady	Anthony	Clergy	Morpeth	Attended
O'Sullivan	Helen	Clergy	Alnwick	Attended
Pearson	Pauline	Clergy	Newcastle Central	Attended
Robson	Claire	Clergy	Ex-officio	Attended
Shipton	Andrew	Clergy	Newcastle Central	Attended
Sourbut Groves	Catherine	Clergy	Ex-officio	Attended
Taylor-Kenyon	Louise	Clergy	Bamburgh & Glendale	Attended
White	Simon	Clergy	Morpeth	Attended
Wood	Rachel	Clergy	Ex-officio	Attended
Wright	Steve	Clergy	Hexham	Attended
Alexander	Gill	Clergy	Ex-officio	Apology
Bowsher	Andii	Clergy	Newcastle Central	Apology



Diocesan Synod 9th March

<b>Surname</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>House</b>	<b>Deanery</b>	<b>Attended (Signed)</b>
Dixon	Steve	Clergy	Tynemouth	Apology
Dobson	Peter	Clergy	Newcastle Central	Apology
Doolan	Ben	Clergy	Newcastle Central	Apology
Grocock	Chris	Clergy	Morpeth	Apology
Hills	Mike	Clergy	Newcastle Central	Apology
Hudson	Rachel	Clergy	Norham	Apology
Hughes	Adrian	Clergy	Tynemouth	Apology
Kennedy	David	Clergy	Corbridge	Apology
Lawrance	Robert	Clergy	Ex-officio	Apology
Maclaren	Clare	Clergy	Newcastle Central	Apology
Naylor	Martin	Clergy	Hexham	Apology
Terry	Neal	Clergy	Newcastle East	Apology
Appleby	John	Laity	Tynemouth	Attended
Arckless	Robert	Laity	Alnwick	Attended
Atkinson	Jacqueline	Laity	Newcastle West	Attended
Barclay	Carol	Laity	Newcastle Central	Attended
Brims	Robin	Laity	Ex-officio	Attended
Brown	Christine	Laity	Bedlington	Attended

Diocesan Synod 9th March

<b>Surname</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>House</b>	<b>Deanery</b>	<b>Attended (Signed)</b>
Craggs	Lynne	Laity	Bedlington	Attended
Denyer	Nicola	Laity	Ex-officio	Attended
Doran	Emma	Laity	Tynemouth	Attended
Evans	Aidan	Laity	Newcastle West	Attended
Field	Carole	Laity	Bamburgh & Glendale	Attended
Fox	Louisa	Laity	Newcastle East	Attended
Griffiths	Carol	Laity	Bamburgh & Glendale	Attended
Hamilton	John	Laity	Bedlington	Attended
Harper	Simon	Laity	Ex-officio	Attended
Holmes	Gary	Laity	Morpeth	Attended
Jones	Jennie	Laity	Newcastle West	Attended
McDonald-Booth	Izzy	Laity	Ex-officio	Attended
Mitchell	John	Laity	Hexham	Attended
O'Hagan	Ruth	Laity	Newcastle Central	Attended
Pope	Valerie	Laity	Morpeth	Attended
Ramshaw	Susan	Laity	Bedlington	Attended
Styring	Roger	Laity	Ex-officio	Attended
Swaile	Jill	Laity	Bellingham	Attended

Diocesan Synod 9th March

<b>Surname</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>House</b>	<b>Deanery</b>	<b>Attended (Signed)</b>
Tasker-Brown	Margy	Laity	Bishop's Appointment	Attended
Williams	Hugh	Laity	Alnwick	Attended
Wilson	Carol	Laity	Hexham	Attended
Abrams	Jane	Laity	Bellingham	Apology
Charlton	Joyce	Laity	Hexham	Apology
Fisher	Meg	Laity	Newcastle West	Apology
Kerry	Liz	Laity	Bishop's Appointment	Apology
McKenzie	Gwyn	Laity	Corbridge	Apology
Morsman	Andy	Laity	Hexham	Apology
Murray	Alice	Laity	Bellingham	Apology
Windass	Roger	Laity	Bishop's Appointment	Apology
Butler	Carol	Officer: Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser		Attended (Officer)
Carr	Candis	Officer: Administrator		Attended (Officer)
Doran	Dan	Officer: IT/Sound Support		Attended (Officer)
Hunter	Karen	Officer: Administrator		Attended (Officer)
Johnson	Leigh	Officer: Senior Communications Officer		Attended (Officer)
Royle	Tom	Officer: Interim Head of Finance		Attended (Officer)
Russell	Tara	Officer: Children and Youth Team Lead		Attended (Officer)

Diocesan Synod 9th March

<b>Surname</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>House</b>	<b>Deanery</b>	<b>Attended (Signed)</b>
Waddle	Shane	Officer: Diocesan Secretary		Attended (Officer)
Whaite	Ric	Officer: Director of Mission and Ministry		Attended (Officer)
Whittaker	Kyrinn	Officer: Administrator		Attended (Officer)
Askew	Pete	Officer: Bishop's Chaplain		Apology (Officer)
Peace	Laura	Officer: Registrar		Apology (Officer)
Tranter	Stephen	Officer: Director of Ordinands and Vocations		Apology (Officer)
Collingwood	Nigel	Visitor: Member of Diocesan Finance Group		Attended (Guest)
Lea	David	Visitor: Bedlington Deanery Finance Officer		Attended (Guest)
McHanwell	Jackie	Visitor: Chair, Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel		Attended (Guest)
Medley	Phil	Visitor: Area Dean Newcastle East		Attended (Guest)