

RICHMOND AND BARNES DEANERY SYNOD
praying together, learning together, working together

Monday 6th February 2023 – 7.30 pm

At CHRIST CHURCH, EAST SHEEN

MINUTES

- 1 Rev Jonathan Haynes sent apologies. Welcome to Christ Church by church warden, Deirdre Munro. She gave a brief history of the church and pointed out the wonderful Victorian frescoes in the chancel. Opening prayers led by Rev Canon Dr Ann Nickson.
- 2 Hymn – Tell Out My Soul.
- 3 Introduction and welcome by Rev Alex Barrow.
- 4 Minutes of the last meeting were approved with the following points:
 - Southwark Anti-Racism Charter – Paula Brackenridge liaised with Ian Bright (St Mary's Mortlake) to table the question of inclusion of numerical targets in UK new vocations, expanding UKME representation to the Diocesan Synod on Saturday 19th November. The Rt Rev Rosemarie Mallet responded that there were no quotas or timetables set to measure the success of the diversity objective at the moment. The full question and answer can be found at the end of the minutes.
 - Deanery Leadership Team – Rev Alex Barrow said that we are still looking to expand our Deanery Leadership Team. In particular we are looking for people with an eco brief or youth brief. There is no need to be a deanery synod member and the commitment would not be onerous.
 - Have we made any progress on the Eco forum idea? – The Deanery has facilitated the Eco leads from churches in the deanery to be in touch with each other via WhatsApp and email but the Deanery is not involved with these conversations.
- 5 The Riverbank Trust
Talk by Laura Lowther, CEO of the Riverbank Trust, a charity supporting single mothers in the Borough of Richmond.

The Riverbank Trust was established 13 years ago. Some of the mums they have known for that long and some for just six months. They have seven paid workers and 64 volunteers.

They reach out to single mums and their families in three ways:

- 1:1 Support – a dedicated team member will meet with a single mum to talk. Single mums are often vulnerable and may have a range of issues such as homelessness, health problems and isolation. They offer practical support such as helping access to grants, Foodbank and debt support, however the greatest value is in the emotional support they offer. The Riverbank Trust has a presence in 4 schools and team members will meet with children in schools.
- Community Groups – the mums support each other through coffee mornings and toddler groups. Often run in churches, they get to know the church community. Craft mornings have been organised to generate conversation around the table. Mums have learnt new skills and enjoy being together. God’s love is present everywhere and there are coffee mornings where open questions about God can be asked (similar to Alpha).
- Network Partnerships –The Riverbank Trust is in partnership with [Kids Matter](#) who run parenting programs. They also work with Foodbank and the Hygiene Bank as well as the network of local churches to provide a wider support network.

The number of women in temporary accommodation rose by 88% in the last decade. Almost one in three single mothers are either in arrears with their rent or facing a constant struggle to keep their home. 47% of single parents are living in poverty. For single families in temporary accommodation, lack of stability from constant moving is a problem. The most important thing the Riverbank Trust do is to share God’s love and show the single mums that even though life is difficult, you are loved.

They can see this love in action through the laughter and joy in the groups and integrating them into the church community. Ministry is gathering around the table and talking. Some mums may come to faith and some may not but God’s love is ever present. Some mums have become volunteers and reached out to other mums thus sharing the love they have found in God.

After Covid, the groups were especially important to provide somewhere for mums to come together as single parent families experienced acute isolation during lockdown. One mum described the groups as “lifesaving”. Another said “I am no longer on my own, I am a community”.

Plans for 2023

- Growing the Ham Hub (a community outreach worker started there last year).
- Want to start a Whitton Hub.
- Partnership with the [LVA Trust](#) to develop a parenting course for families with

- teenage children.
- Developing a trainee program.

How families have been affected by the cost-of-living crisis

- Some families are housed with private landlords and rents are increasing.
- A lot of families have PAYG meters. The Riverbank Trust is advising families how to change this payment method.
- The Riverbank Trust are helping families access Foodbank and [The Real Junk Food Project](#).
- A lot of the mums have medical needs and have rising costs with attending hospital appointments.

How can we get help?

- **Pray** - please pray for the families. Even though they know they are loved, prayer is always needed.
- **Volunteer** – befriending, one-to-one listening or any skill you may have eg beauty therapist, cooking.
- **Be an Ambassador** – fundraising and promoting.

The talk finished with a video showing one of the mums who had been supported describe the impact of the Riverbank Trust and finding God had had on her life.

What training did you and your staff and volunteers receive?

Laura has a psychology and counselling degree and a background in children's services. All staff have a background in child protection to some degree. All volunteers receive safeguarding training.

Can any church access the Riverbank Trust to support single mothers in their congregations/parishes?

The Riverbank Trust work all over the Borough of Richmond and support can be accessed via the website.

Richmond Council used to offer a rent deposit scheme to help people with the upfront costs of renting. Are you able to support single mothers access similar help?

It is very difficult to access that kind of support. The Riverbank Trust do not do advocacy but will sometimes contact council housing departments on someone's behalf.

Do you help single fathers?

They have tried in the past to reach out to single dads but it didn't take off.

How is the organization financed?

Trusts, grants, churches and individual donations.

More information on the Riverbank Trust can be found at riverbanktrust.org.

6 Deanery Synod Elections

This year you are required to elect or re-elect your representatives to the Deanery Synod at your APCMs. This happens every three years but due to the pandemic some of you may have only been in the post two or even one year. If this is the case with you, you are very welcome to stand again. Even though your PCCs are encouraged to set limits on the number of consecutive terms that their elected lay members may serve on Deanery Synod, it's normally a maximum of three terms.

PCCS will be encouraged to welcome proposals from younger members of their congregation and suitably qualified UKME/GMH candidates.

7 Knife Bin Appeal

In the past year we have been trying to move this project forward with St Peter's Walworth but from a very promising start, we have had difficulty in engaging with the vicar, Rev Andrew Moughtin-Mumby to progress this further. We have proposed to Father Andrew that if he does find someone to take this forward on behalf of St Peter's then Marian will seek to access another source of funds, but meanwhile the Deanery funds will be put to another knife project.

We have been back to Nicola Thomas, head of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation at Southwark to ask for her help in identifying another suitable location. She has in mind a couple of churches who might be interested. One recently experienced the murder of a teenage boy in the congregation.

8 Area Dean's Notices

Remember General Synod in your prayers.

Welcome to

- a. The Rt Rev Martin Gainsborough who was consecrated as Bishop of Kingston at Canterbury Cathedral on 2nd February. Bishop Martin is keen to be out and about and it is hoped he will join a Deanery Chapter soon.
- b. Rev James Marston, Associate Priest for St Mary's and St Michael and All Angels in Barnes who was licensed on 4th December.

Kew United Benefice will be joined in the summer by a full time assistant curate, Dr Hannah Swithinbank. Hannah will be ordained deacon on 24th June at Southwark Cathedral.

Prayers for the Richmond Team Ministry during the vacancy at St John the Divine.

Interviews will take place on 1st March.

AOBKew Eco Fair

Diane Morris from St Luke's Kew:

St Luke's Church, Kew is hosting the very first **Kew EcoFair on Saturday March 11th (10:30am – 2pm)**. Launched as part of St Lukes' EcoChurch initiative, the aim of the event is to inspire local residents to take action on climate change and to feel empowered to make changes in our everyday lives to help protect God's Earth. The event will be officially opened by broadcaster and active travel advocate Jeremy Vine, as well as the Mayor of Richmond.

Stalls and activities include:

- **'Good As New' Clothes Swap** – bring your old clothes and swap them for new ones!
- **Repair Cafe** – bring your appliances, furniture, clothes and more in need of mending, and see if our repairers can help!
- **Active Travel Festival** – get your bike health checked with our friends from [London Cycle Workshop](#) in East Sheen, shop for second-hand bike bits and check out different cargo and folding bikes with [Richmond Cycling Campaign](#), and engage with the work of local pedestrian advocacy group [Richmond Living Streets](#).
- **Eco Shopping** – browse eco-business stalls, from [sustainable lifestyle shops](#) to [eco candles](#), from home produce to [rentable party gear](#), as well as our 'Regifted' present stall, we've got you covered!
- **Entertainment** – there will be free childrens' craft activities, music and nature-themed activities for the whole family provided by [Dose of Nature](#)
- **Wishing Tree** – enter for your chance to win one of our fantastic 'mystery prizes' donated by generous local businesses!
- **Refreshments** – a delicious vegetarian lunch and tea/coffee will be available.
- **Tree Planting Ceremony** – Kew Gardens have donated a tree.
- **EcoChurch** - St Luke's would welcome the participation of any church who wish to showcase what they are doing. Please email Charlotte Baker/Suzie O'Brien at kewecofair@gmail.com.

Follow Kew EcoFair on Twitter [@KewEcofair](#) for all the latest news.

St Luke's will be presented with their EcoChurch Bronze award at the end of the fair.

Funds raised will go to St Luke's Church to promote eco-activities and [Thames 21](#)

The Big One

Paula Brackenridge on behalf of Judith Russenberger from Christ Church, East Sheen

Judith Russenberger is also a member of Christian Climate Action (CCA) a non-denominational Christian group that partners Extinction Rebellion (XR). Extinction Rebellion are organizing a mass event, **The Big One, on 21st April**. This event will take

place in Parliament Square (with approval from the policing authorities) where it is hoped to gather 100,000 people to demonstrate to the Government our united desire that they should take action to address the climate crisis. The event will be peaceful and legal and will emphasise the importance of coming together and cooperation.

The invitation from XR is for anyone and everyone to take part, to join others in Parliament Square and stay for as long or as short as they wish. The event will be spread out over the weekend to give everyone a chance of taking part but the 21st is the launch day. It looks as if there will be acts of worship and pilgrimage walks taking place in and around the Square - and equally similar contributions from other faith groups. (XR has numerous branches such as XR Buddhists, XR Jews, XR Quakers, XR Muslims, XR Earth Carers etc.).

It would be good to encourage congregations from our deanery to join in. Judith could provide more information about CCA and about what might be happening in Westminster.

More information can be found at christianclimateaction.org/2022/10/22/the-big-one.

10 The meeting closed with the Grace.

The next meetings of the Deanery Synod will be on

Wednesday 7th June 2023 – St Mary's, Barnes

Tuesday 3rd October 2023 – St Michael and All Angels, Barnes



DIOCESAN SYNOD SYNOD QUESTIONS NOTICE PAPER

Question 1

Q Paula Brackenridge (Richmond & Barnes Deanery)

One of the Southwark Anti-Racism Charter principles is "a clear strategy for increasing and sustaining diversity in our governance structures at Diocesan and parish level, so as to ensure representation and participation of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds at all levels of our organisation."

The Turning up the Volume Action plan commits to "increasing the number of UKME post-holders recruited, both lay and ordained" and "increasing diversity in representative participation on Synodical and Diocesan and parochial governance structures".

As the principles suggest a clear strategy, it would be appropriate that the strategy includes numeric targets and target dates so that we can measure how we are doing and where we want to get to. Will the strategy include these?

A The Bishop of Croydon

Southwark Vision has a clear statement of intent, working to increase the diversity of leadership in lay and ordained roles in our churches and in every area where we are engaging staff and volunteers. This is to ensure that we better reflect the people we serve. The goal is set out in the [Anti-Racism Charter](#).

We know that around 35% of our parishes have UKME majority congregations and that, overall, London as an area (though not East Surrey) has over 50% of the population coming from UKME backgrounds. We have not set any specific targets, quotas, or target dates for individual parishes or for Diocesan structures. Set out below are our reasons at this stage for not doing so.

To be able to set a target we have to ascertain our baseline data, across all of our structures, Diocese, deanery and parish. This includes employed staff, clergy or lay, licensed or volunteers in church offices - such as on the PCC. We are currently undertaking this task.

To ensure greater diversity we need clear and transparent processes for recruitment, promotion, and nomination to roles and responsibilities, reflected in posts being advertised including job descriptions and person specifications for all roles. This work is in hand as is very much a part of our Human Resources' strategies.

Once these first two points are addressed, it may be possible to consider broad quotas at Diocesan level, however, successful implementation and monitoring is dependent upon the active support and engagement of leadership all levels. This is because successful implementation of targets and/or quotas necessitates a change in culture and must be accompanied by appropriate awareness raising and training, showing the benefits that institutions can draw from a more diverse and inclusive leadership balance. We are currently rolling out Unconscious Bias training (and training of trainers) to address this training need at Diocesan and parish level.