**The Parish of Marcham with Garford**

**Abingdon Deanery Synod Report for the year 2022**

**For Church APCM, 30 April 2023**

Many will know that our Parish is part of Abingdon Deanery, and we can send three elected lay representatives to our Deanery Synod, who are also (ex-officio) members of our PCC. In 2022 your representatives were Caroline Manders and Tim Jack, with one vacancy. Our vicar Nick Weldon also attends, as well as meeting with other clergy colleagues in the Deanery Chapter.

The main role of the Deanery is to encourage, link and co-ordinate the work of adjacent parishes, including our near neighbours in Abingdon, Kingston Bagpuize, Appleton and Cumnor parishes. An important part of this has been support during and after the Covid pandemic, especially for churches which have struggled financially or practically, due often to loss of congregations, or finance, or both. So the annual cycle of agreeing Parish Shares has been especially crucial recently, and Martin Steel, our Deanery Treasurer, has guided us brilliantly through a difficult period, which has included helping us develop a more just and fair Parish Share allocation formula, which is another Deanery-level responsibility. We have maintained a Contingency Fund to support struggling churches, especially those who need short-term help with paying their Share, or with the cost of local Mission activities.

But, I hasten to add, it's not just about money! During 2022 your Synod met five times, on Zoom in January and November, and in person in March, May (when Bishop Steven visited) and September, when Andrew Anderson-Gear (Diocesan Director of Ministry and Mission) was our Guest Speaker.

Other regular business includes the sharing of news updates from each parish, including outreach initiatives and new ideas, as well as times of prayer. Zoom meetings may play some part in future too, not so much to avoid infection, but to reduce our carbon footprint and encourage wider participation in the winter months.

Our Area Dean was Revd Helen Kendrick for most of the year, and Revd Keith Dunnett (Christ Church, Abingdon) took on that role when Helen was appointed joint Acting Archdeacon after Judi French’s retirement. Sue Scott (St Michael’s, Abingdon) continues as Lay Chair.

Tim Jack and Caroline Manders

Lay Representatives

26/4/2023