

**The Parish of Marcham with Garford
Abingdon Deanery Synod Report for the year 2024
For Church APCM, 27 April 2025**

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 2024 your representatives were James Gilbert, Tim Jack and Caroline Manders. Our vicar, Nick Weldon, also attends and (in his role as Associate Area Dean), Nick also serves on the Synod's standing committee.

The main role of the Deanery is to encourage, link and co-ordinate the work of adjacent parishes. It is arranged in four geographical clusters; we are in the western cluster together with Appleton & Besselsleigh, Dry Sandford, Fyfield & Tubney, Kingston Bagpuize & Southmoor, and Shippon. As a deanery, we raise the Parish Shares which go to support the diocese meet the costs of ministry, training and mission, and (at deanery level) the support of local mission activities. The annual cycle of agreeing Parish Shares is led by the excellent Martin Steel, our Deanery Treasurer. The deanery also sets aside and administers small funds to support smaller and struggling churches, and to support outreach and missionary projects (that parishes can apply for).

We met as a Synod on four occasions. Meetings continue to be a combination of in person (visiting different churches each time) or on Zoom. The diocesan lead on children and young people as the focus for mission action was highlighted at our meeting in May. The diocese aims to double its engagement with children and young people in five years, and as a deanery we have begun a process of mapping the work that we do and sharing our stories in synod meetings.

Dry Sandford reported that its church was reopened on Easter Sunday 2024. New incumbents have been appointed at Appleton and Besselsleigh (Revd Wealands Bell) and at Kingston Bagpuize (Revd Catherine Schneider). Revd James Whymark has been appointed as Associate Vicar at Christ Church North Abingdon, and Revd Nick Weldon licensed to Fyfield and Tubney. Vacancies have arisen at Abingdon St Helen's, Wootton and Shippon, and at Dry Sandford.

Our Area Dean is Revd Rob Glenny (Radley, Sunningwell and Kennington), and our Revd Nick Weldon is Associate Area Dean. Sue Scott (St Michael's, Abingdon) continues as Lay Chair.

Caroline Manders, James Gilbert and Tim Jack
Lay Representatives
23/4/2025