

**The Parish of Marcham with Garford  
Abingdon Deanery Synod Report for the year 2025  
For Church APCM, 26 April 2026**

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 2025 your representatives were James Gilbert, Tim Jack and Caroline Manders. James stepped down from his role in October 2025. 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).

The Synod met on four occasions during the year. Meetings in the winter are on Zoom, and in the spring and summer they are in person, at different churches around the deanery. The diocese is aiming to double its engagement with children and young people in five years, and the deanery's ministry in this area has been the subject of a number of our meetings. We have begun the process of mapping the work that we do in parishes and as a deanery, and sharing stories of our ministry with children and young people. In January, we were introduced to Anne Perry, the (then) newly appointed Parish Development Advisor for Dorchester Archdeaconry, whose background is in primary education. In April, we considered the challenges and opportunities of the rise in housing developments throughout the deanery, and this was followed up in September with a discussion led by Revd Asa Humphreys, a Parish Development Advisor for Oxford Diocese and experienced planning officer. He made a number of suggestions of how the church might engage effectively with new housing developments.

There have been a number of changes to the deanery clergy during the year. Revd Dr Jennifer Brown was appointed Team Rector of Abingdon in October 2025. Revd Paul Smith retired from his role as Team Vicar of Abingdon in September 2025. Revd Maggie Crosbie was licensed as Vicar of Wootton and Shippon in July 2025. Revd Jonathan Widdess left his role as Vicar of Cumnor in July 2025 to take up a new role in Hereford Diocese.

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.

Revd Nick Weldon  
Clergy Rep.  
24/04/2026

Caroline Manders  
Lay Rep.

Tim Jack  
Lay Rep.