

## DEANERY REPORT

### TO THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING 2025

#### Richmond & Barnes Deanery Synod – 2024 Summary

Richmond and Barnes Deanery is a grouping of Anglican parishes within the Diocese of Southwark, encompassing areas like Barnes, Kew, Mortlake, East Sheen, Richmond, Ham, and Petersham. The deanery acts as an intermediary between the parochial church councils and the diocese and provides a platform for cooperation and collaboration among the parishes to:

- Promote faith and environmental awareness
- Address local issues
- Support the work of individual parishes
- Share information and resources relevant to Mission Action Plans

The 15 churches within our Richmond & Barnes Deanery hold synod meetings three times each year. The Deanery Synod comprises both clergy and lay members, who are elected from their parishes to represent local parish views and experiences and relay information back to the PCC.

The Richmond & Barnes Area Dean is Rev'd Alex Barrow. The post of Secretary and Communicator is currently vacant.

Apart from reports/updates on ongoing initiatives concerning the Environment and Net Carbon, Finances and Funding, Diocesan Synod elections, the Anti-Racism Charter and Operation Forgiveness, the deanery synod heard discussions/special presentations on the following key projects:

- A forum was held by the Rt Revd Lord Harries, former Bishop of Oxford, and writer Rhidian Brook to discuss "*How should Christians think and pray about the current situation in Israel and Palestine?*" Bishop Harries reflected on the current conflict in Gaza by considering both sides and cautioning us to be critical of all the news stories emerging. Rhidian Brook spent a year at St George's College, Jerusalem, as artist in residence and spoke about his time there and the people he encountered. The politics is immensely complicated and difficult - we should pray for an end to the killing and an establishment of a true and just lasting peace.
- A new venture through St. Anne's, Kew called the *Kew Institute for Theology and Gardening* (KTG) was established to deepen the Church's connection with nature and to find a way of speaking about the environment that is different from climate activism of groups like Just Stop Oil. KTG provides lectures, study days, walks and performs outreach work such as bringing young people with special needs to participate in therapeutic gardening.
- A *Vatican Climate Summit* was called by Pope Francis and was attended by London Mayor Sadiq Khan. The Deanery heard that the summit called on experts and leaders from around the world to look at the climate crisis affecting the planet and discuss guidelines and actions for climate resilience. The output of discussions will help to establish a formal protocol that would be submitted to the

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and eventually shared with nations worldwide.

- Deputy Diocesan Secretary, Jackie Pontin, talked about Southwark Diocesan's ten year "*Christ-Centred, Outward Focussed*" plan to sustain and grow the Church throughout the Diocese, and how churches can look to align their own work with the diocese's goals by embracing the diocese's plan, prayerfully reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses, and identifying opportunities for improvement.
- A proposal was made by Judith Russenberger (Eco Deanery) for individual members and parishes to endorse the *Fossil Fuel Non-proliferation Treaty* - a concrete, binding plan to end the expansion of new coal, oil and gas projects and a managed global transition away from harmful fossil fuels. To date, the treaty has been endorsed by several cities across six continents - forty-five in Europe, as well as the World Health Organisation, European Parliament and various faith groups in the UK.

Prepared by Renée Fletcher (St Matthias)

29 April 2025