

## **St John the Baptist, Tidebrook APCM 16th May 2021**

### **ROTHERFIELD DEANERY SYNOD REPORT**

There have been two Deanery Synod since the last APCM in October 2020 both on Zoom. The meeting on November 3<sup>rd</sup> was attended by Gary. Both Rosie and Gary attended the Zoom meeting on March 23<sup>rd</sup>

November Meeting. This focussed on Diocesan and Deanery finances. We were addressed by the respective finance officers. They spoke warmly of their appreciation of the generosity of parishes but also made us aware of the significant deficits resulting from the Covid-19 crisis. The Diocese has taken steps to reduce its deficit, including reducing the number of new curates from 13 to 4 this year, and funding no quinquennial improvements to vicarages. We were encouraged to maintain our parish share this year if possible. The figures show that in 2021, it is anticipated that overall the Deanery will meet 95.2% of its share payment to the Diocese.

March Meeting. The topic was the church and the environment and the aim that the Church of England should be carbon neutral by 2030. We found the talks very interesting. We heard Will Hazlewood, the new Bishop of Lewes, who said that the Church has an opportunity to proclaim God through the natural world of which we are stewards. We need to ask “what response as Christians can we make to the environmental issues currently facing us?”. As a church we can use environmental issues to build community and make God fully known. We should preach and teach more about creation and the environment.

The Bishop reported the formation of a Diocesan Environmental Subgroup which will look at the challenges of how to help parishes with old draughty church buildings, and will also look at missional opportunities in doing community projects between churches and local enterprise (eg solar panels).

This was followed by a presentation by Penny Evans (Reader at St Mary’s Ticehurst). She described the journey that St Mary’s has been on in becoming part of the Eco Church scheme. This A Rocha UK project was set up 5 years ago and there are now 3,300 churches registered (including Tidebrook). All aspects of church life are included: worship and teaching, management of buildings and church land, community and engagement, and lifestyle. Gary had a special interest in this talk as until recently he and Flora Davies produced the A Rocha magazine, and David and Betty Payne have been involved with A Rocha for many years. Gary sent David and Betty a recording of the meeting, which they very much enjoyed. It is David and Betty that we have to thank for Tidebrook’s excellent Eco Church scheme credentials.

*Rosie Pearson and Gary Davies, Deanery Synod Representatives*

