

## QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDERS

Diocesan Synod March 2022

### Gwilym Stone, Southampton Deanery

#### 1. To the Bishop of Southampton:

"The Southampton Deanery Synod met on Monday 14th January and in response to the situation in Ukraine there was a shared sense of the importance to giving tangible expression to our compassion, individually and collectively.

With that in mind will the Acting Bishop of Winchester explore if it is possible to make any currently vacant vicarages, or other church properties, available to house refugees or other opportunities to use Diocesan resources to respond to urgent needs arising from the crisis?"

#### Response:

I am grateful to Southampton Deanery for raising this important issue.

Last week the messages below was sent to all clergy. Since then we have begun conversations with the Church Commissioners on the potential to offer some space at Wolvesey for refugees.

Along with other dioceses we have also started initial conversations with Citizens UK, a potential strategic partner who are working to match refugees with potential hosts in the UK.

#### **Message to Clergy:**

*Over the last few days, a number of you have been in touch asking for guidance and advice on our response to the crisis in Ukraine and need to providing housing and support for refugees. This short note is offered to share some practical updates and guidance with you all.*

#### **Toolkit for Churches Responding to the Crisis in Ukraine.**

[https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2022-](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/Ukraine%20toolkit%20for%20Churches%20and%20Individuals%20CofE%20v2-160322.pdf)

[03/Ukraine%20toolkit%20for%20Churches%20and%20Individuals%20CofE%20v2-160322.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/Ukraine%20toolkit%20for%20Churches%20and%20Individuals%20CofE%20v2-160322.pdf)

*The national church have produced the above guidance for parishes and individuals. Please share this with your PCCs and wider Church Community as you see fit.*

#### **Lodging for refugees in clergy homes – Guidance**

*We have been encouraged to hear from a number of you who are keen to explore the possibility of offering space to refugees in your houses. This is of course a significant decision for any clergy household to make and we would therefore like to commend the attached guidance to you. This was initially produced by the Diocese for Truro and has been adapted for our context. The guidance refers to a standard lodging agreement for clergy to use. We hope to be able to share this with you all in the next couple of days but are just waiting on colleague in Truro who are kindly producing a version in both English and Ukrainian.*

#### **Vacant Diocesan Properties**

*We have also been reviewing current vacant diocesan owned properties to see if there are any we can offer for refugees. At present we have identified two large houses which we hope will be suitable. As you will be aware we work hard to ensure that our houses are not left vacant for long periods wherever possible so our current available stock is limited. We will however continue to review other houses as and when they become vacant, working with parishes as necessary.*

## Andrew Orange, Andover Deanery

### 2. To the Director of Operations:

Could we be provided with a list of the Freehold Land & Building Sales in the diocese, in 3 parts:

1. Those making up the £1.9m in the 2020 accounts
2. Those which will make up the total in the (as yet unpublished) 2021 accounts (understood that figures would be provisional)
3. Those known to be likely, or which have already happened, in 2022 (in this case, an approximate estimate will suffice, with estimated dates if available)

### Response:

I am grateful to Andrew for this question and the opportunity it presents to update Synod on the progress of the new Housing Strategy shared at the last meeting.

1. In 2020 three properties were sold:
  - a. **Broughton Rectory** –Former rectory in the parish of Broughton (Romsey Deanery). The parish is part of the wider Mid Test Benefice with the incumbent living in the Rectory in Stockbridge. The House was sold for £850,000
  - b. **Walnut Close** – Former curate house in the parish of the Resurrection (Alton Deanery). Property was one of 3 houses within the benefice. Sold for £375,000.
  - c. **Glebe Cottage, Hyde** – House previously occupied by retired clergy person. One of 4 houses in benefice of Fordingbridge et al. Sold for £675,000.
2. In 2021, eight properties were sold for a total of £5,152,900:
  - a. **Wolverton Rectory and adjacent Glebe Land**– A current benefice house identified as no longer being suitable for occupation due to substantial costs required to modernise property. House sold during vacancy with all funds restricted to be used to purchase a new house in the benefice (as required by the Pastoral & Mission measure and Church Property Measure) pending outcome of current pastoral reorganisation discussions. House and land sold for £1,025,000.
  - b. **Winklebury Vicarage** – Former vicarage in the benefice of Winklebury & Worting (incumbent lives in Worting Rectory). Sold for £411,700.
  - c. **Guernsey, 54 Rue de Fleurs** - Purchased by WDBF for curate in 2012. Identified as no longer being required in consultation with Diocese of Salisbury. Sold for £565,000.
  - d. **Jersey, 35 Nomond Avenue** - Purchased by WDBF for curate in 2008. Identified as no longer being required in consultation with Diocese of Salisbury. Sold for £685,100.
  - e. **12 Church View, Hartley Wintney** – Purchased (with a loan) as a temporary second curate house for the parish in 2016. Not required for future curacy deployment. Sold for £475,000
  - f. **St Nicholas House, Long Parish** – Former vicarage. Sold for £826,100.
  - g. **28 Longfield Road, Winchester** - Former curate house in Winchester. Sold for £355,000.
  - h. **Stuckton Vicarage, Hyde** – Former vicarage no longer required following pastoral reorganisation. Sold for £810,000
3. The picture for 2022 is somewhat more complex. 8 houses are currently on the market with some progressing to exchange/completion. A further 12 houses have been identified for potential sale pending consultation with local parishes, the outcome of some pastoral

schemes and wider deployment discussions. We anticipate total sale proceeds will be in the region of £13m. However, some sales are predicated on the need to purchase replacement houses in alternative locations so net proceeds will be below this.

At their March meeting, the Bishop's Council approved a proposal to create a Ministry Investment Designated Fund. The Fund to have the following description in our Annual Reports & Accounts: *A fund designated by the Directors of the WDBF on 10 March 2022. The capital to be retained to provide a sustainable additional income stream to support costs of stipendiary ministry across the Diocese of Winchester.*

### **Supplementary Question from Andrew Orange at Diocesan Synod 24/03/2022**

The report from Andy Brookes highlighted a lack of trust, an antidote to this is openness. Are we able to publish the details of future expected property sales on the website?

#### **Response from the Director of Operations.**

We would want to look carefully at any commercial and local sensitivities around the information published. We will consider what information it would be appropriate to make widely available. We are actively writing to and consulting with any affected PCCs in advance of putting up a property for sale.

## **Michael Minton, Christchurch Deanery**

### **3. To the Director of Operations:**

In the light of the proposed increase in budget income for 2022 to £11,670,000 from actual in 2020 of £10,993,000 and projected outturn in 2021 of £10,598,000, is the Diocese mounting a campaign to support giving in benefices/parishes? Will this be an update of Generous June? A leaflet has been circulated on CMF showing the relationship to the cost of the incumbent. Is this the extent of the message?

### **Response:**

Thank you for raising this important matter.

Synod will note from the agenda that a major item on the November 2022 Synod agenda will be to consider the new Diocesan Stewardship Strategy. This was presented to Bishop's Council last year and identified as a priority for 2022/2023.

At a diocesan level we are acutely aware of the challenges many of our parishes are facing in discussing stewardship and increased generosity in the current climate and significant increases in cost of living. We continue to offer support, advice, and resources to help parishes discuss these vital elements of discipleship in a time and manner that suits their contexts.

The Bishop's Council have asked the Finance Monitoring Group to actively review our wider financial context, looking at options for diversify income streams and adopting a more intentional approach to our use of restricted funds and endowments. Further information will be shared during the 2023 budget consultations.

### **Supplementary Question from Michael Minton at Diocesan Synod 24/03/2022**

Can we share examples of successful initiatives within parishes with other parishes in the diocese?

#### **Response from the Director of Operations.**

Yes, any parish wishing to share a positive idea or good news story is encouraged to contact Jess Littlewood.

**Supplementary Question from Michael Minton at Diocesan Synod 24/03/2022**

November 2022 is not soon enough to look at Stewardship, is there anything that can be done earlier?

**Response from the Director of Operations.**

In the current economic climate there is a potential negative impact of rolling out the Diocesan Stewardship Campaign too early. However parishes who wish to engage with the material and feel it would be appropriate in their context are encouraged to contact the diocesan Stewardship team.