

DIOCESE OF WINCHESTER ANNUAL REVIEW

2023



DIOCESE of
WINCHESTER

Foreword

Welcome to the Review of 2023! This document has been created to help share, celebrate and explain the impact some of the work and ministry of the diocesan team across our parishes, schools and chaplaincies last year. Of course there are countless stories of how churches, schools and chaplaincies have blessed their communities through many creative ways of sharing God's love, some we at the diocese never even get to hear about! With 240 parishes, 100 schools, and numerous chaplaincies, fresh expressions and worshipping communities across our diocese, this review is inevitably just a snapshot of activity. It focuses specifically on the activity of the diocesan team and the Bishop's Staff in its direct interactions with parishes and communities.

Looking back, 2023 was a time of great hope and significant transitions for our diocesan community. We started the year with prayerful excitement as the Crown Nominations Commission began their task of discerning who was called to be the next Bishop of Winchester. We saw a wonderful, record turnout of clergy at our Chrism Mass, an indication of our continuing efforts to grow a culture of mutuality and openness, and of our shared hope for the future.

We saw churches respond to the Coronation and to the cost of living crisis through initiatives such as warm spaces, food banks and lunch clubs. Finally concluding the year with Bishop Philip and Ruth moving to Winchester ready to help lead us forward.

It continues to be a true joy and privilege to help lead the Diocesan Team. Whilst I delight in the important work we undertake, I do try to remember with all humility that those of us working in diocesan roles represent a tiny fraction of all the work that happens in our Diocese.



So to all the unseen and unsung efforts, we thank you – you are the hands and feet of Jesus Christ in this place.

Colin Harbidge
Diocesan Secretary

I'm delighted to add a few words of my own to this Annual Review, even though I only became Bishop at the end of 2023 – and didn't start my public ministry until early in 2024.

But if I were to hold up a mirror to the Diocese of Winchester at the end of 2023, I would say this, 'Be encouraged by what you see!' I've been so impressed myself by all I have seen and heard: churches, schools and chaplaincies the length and breadth of the Diocese getting on with the serious yet joyful business of loving God and loving their neighbours.

I look forward to all that 2024 holds, as we develop plans for the future, including the appointment of a new Bishop of Southampton, but please don't overlook what is very good in this Diocese. And do recognise above all else that we have a God who is good, faithful and

loving, who has blessed us, and wants us to trust him as we step forward into the future. As we look back on 2023, and look forward to all that's to come, let's, together, be determined to do just that.



Philip Mounstephen
Bishop of Winchester



Deacon Ordinations, July 2023



School Leavers Service, June 2023

Highlights of 2023



Diocesan Visit to Burundi, August 2023



Chrim Mass Service, April 2023



Mother's Union President Visits the Diocese, August 2023



Marquee Season, July 2023



Lay Celebration Day, June 2023



Seafaring Rogationtide at Mudeford, May 2023



Coronation Celebrations, May 2023



Bishop's Study Day, October 2023



Ordinations, June 2023



New Bishop of Winchester Announced, July 2023

Leadership and Governance

It was a year of significant change in our leadership as we joyfully welcomed a new Archdeacon of Bournemouth, Jean Burgess, in June, shortly followed by the news in July that Philip Mounstephen, an experienced diocesan bishop already serving in the Diocese of Truro, was to become the 98th Bishop of Winchester. This was a long-awaited and much celebrated announcement, and the result of a great deal of prayer from across the diocese and the hard work of our dedicated Vacancy-in-See Committee. We were then very sad to say farewell to Bishop Debbie Sellin who left the diocese in November to become the Bishop of Peterborough, after four years of devoted service and exemplary leadership in challenging times.

Our Diocesan Synod and its three Houses (the House of Bishops, the House of Clergy, and the House of Laity) met 9 times over the year – in addition to 3 meetings of the Deanery Finance Chairs Forum and 6 meetings of the Diocesan Finance Committee. One of the key pieces of work was the Budget consultation process which resulted in the resounding approval of our three-year diocesan financial plan – and creating a template for discussion, consultation and collaboration with the whole diocese which is now being used in subsequent review processes.



Archdeacon Jean at Epiphany School

The Bishop's Council continued its programme of reviews into different areas of diocesan work, commissioning reviews into the Winchester School of Mission, Clergy Housing, and the Common Mission Fund. As these Reviews report back they help us to continually reflect and improve on the support we offer, ensuring our structures, strategy and culture all align.

£29,000 OF WELFARE
GRANTS WERE MADE TO
MEMBERS OF CLERGY
DURING 2023

In Focus: Enabling Mission at Holy Saviour Bitterne

The Diocesan Finance Committee is responsible for reviewing and assessing loan applications from PCCs. In 2023, the parish of Bitterne in Southampton reached out for help to enable them to invest in a major refurbishment of their church faculties to better serve their community and engage in mission. The DFC was able to approve a large loan to enable this exciting work to continue without delays or penalties.

“We have been so incredibly well supported by the Diocesan team over the course of the Holy Saviour Redevelopment project – over 14 years in the planning. As with any significant building project, there were many hurdles with cash flow and ensuring that we continued to meet our financial commitments. The Finance committee were amazing in supporting us to meet our contractual obligations on numerous occasions through short term cash injections and longer term loans. Without such dynamic support and encouragement we may well have not managed to fulfil the long term vision and plans for redevelopment in Bitterne. Having only been fully open 2 months, we are already seeing what an incredible resource and blessing the building is both for the mission of the church and the blessing of the local community.”



The inside of Holy Saviour Bitterne following the building project



The Diocese of Winchester says goodbye to Bishop Debbie, November 2023



Bishop Philip visits St Mark's CE School, July 2023

The Bishop's Staff Team (BST) changed shape in 2023, not only with a new Bishop of Winchester and Archdeacon of Bournemouth, but also as, following Bishop Debbie's move to Peterborough, the team benefitted from the experience of the Rt Revd Geoff Annas who generously agreed to serve as Acting Bishop of Southampton. Towards the end of the year, the team also said farewell to Revd Dr Philip Krinks as Bishop's Chaplain and welcomed Revd Theresa Ricketts to the role.

The varied work, both strategic and pastoral, of the BST in 2023 included many opportunities to visit parishes and schools, attending PCCs and other meetings, and for hosting Visitations and Clergy Breakfast Briefings, leading, preaching and licensing new clergy, as well as some specific projects for 2023 which included: developing guidance and support for our Area Deans, investing in strategies for improving clergy wellbeing, and supporting initiatives such as Female Clergy Gatherings and the first Neuro-divergent Clergy Lunch.

Above all, though, the work of the BST, under Bishop Philip's leadership, is to provide effective over the work of the Diocese, addressing challenges, seeking opportunities, ensuring effective pastoral care, casting vision, setting strategy – and enabling our Diocese to be the best it can be, for the sake of Jesus and the Church and the world he loves.

**IN 2023, THERE WERE 93 LICENSES
PRODUCED IN 2023 (FOR APPOINTMENTS,
CURATES AND SCHEME CHANGES) ACROSS
51 BENEFICES AND CHAPLAINCIES**



Clergy at the Neuro-divergent Clergy Lunch, November 2023

**OVER 4,330 SAFEGUARDING TRAINING
COURSES WERE COMPLETED BY INDIVIDUALS,
SUPPORTED, RUN AND PROMOTED BY OUR
SAFEGUARDING TEAM**



The Bishop's Staff Team meet the new Bishop of Winchester, July 2023

Mission and Ministry

Releasing the Gifts of All

It was a fruitful year in equipping many more people in our diocese to follow God's call on their lives, with 25 ordination candidates successfully completing the discernment process and beginning ordination training in 2023, and the ordination of 18 deacons and 16 priests in Winchester Cathedral at Petertide. We also welcomed new Licensed Lay Ministers (LLM) began training in 2023, along with 12 new candidates for the Bishop's Permission to Preach (BPP). In October, a further 80 people from across the diocese were licensed as lay ministers into various ministries, including preaching, leading worship and pastoral care.

The focus of 2023 was on building support networks for the various groups ministering within the diocese and increasing the opportunities they had to meet and pray together, to feel affirmed and connected. We held networking meetings all around the diocese for chaplains, for youth and family workers, for spiritual directors and for LLMs. This was in addition to a full programme of workshops on preaching, spirituality and discipleship, some well received Quiet Days, and the Lay Ministry Celebration Day which has become a firm fixture in the calendar!



Lay Licensing Service, October 2023



Chaplains Resourcing Day, July 2023



Bishop's Study Day, October 2023



Everyone gathered outside Winchester Cathedral at the Lay Licensing Service, October 2023

It was encouraging to gather together in September for a Bishop's Study Day, facilitated by Emma Buchan, the Archbishop's Evangelism Task Group Project Leader, as we shared ideas around encouraging children and young people to become active disciples. This event signalled an ongoing diocesan commitment to 'growing younger' in line with the national church goal of doubling the number of children and young people by 2030.

Flourishing Links Overseas

There were two key diocesan-link visits in 2023: in February, representatives from the Education team, including two headteachers from our schools, and from the Winchester School of Mission, travelled to Rwanda to see some key partners, particularly focusing on mutual benefits and reciprocity for children and teachers in UK schools and in Rwanda, teaching in schools and contributing to a tree planting social enterprise.

In August, Bishop Debbie and a team from Andover Parish and Romsey Abbey travelled to Burundi to reinvigorate a companion link that dates back to the 1970s, taking part in a clergy conference and then travelling to a further three dioceses, meeting many representatives and being encouraged by the stories of hope and transformation.



Lay Celebration Day, June 2023



Burundi Visit, August 2023



Rwanda Visit, February 2023

Channeling National Resources

We started 2023 with five ongoing resource church projects (in Andover Parish, St Wins Totton, Basingstoke Resource Church, St Mike's Bournemouth, and St Barnabas, Southampton (based in initially at St Mary's)) funded by the national church Strategic Development Fund (SDF) for a total of just over £5 million. By the end of the year, these parishes had a combined figure of 1,340 weekly worshippers, an increase of 300 from 2022 (and an increase of 932 since the projects started). The churches have continued to see a vibrant development of the faith and discipleship in their worshippers and a combined total of 342 people followed the Alpha course across the five parishes during the year.

In July, we were delighted to be awarded our first round of Diocesan Investment Programme (DIP) funding, receiving £4.5 million over a five-year period, which will allow us to revitalise worship in six parishes in Bournemouth and Southampton, and build on the success of our Benefice of the Future programme to support a further nine rural multi-parish benefices. During the autumn, the first two parish revitalisation projects were launched at Lord's Hill in Southampton and St Andrew's Charminster in Bournemouth. We also undertook a mini bidding round to select our first three projects to Grow Rural Parishes (in Sherfield on Loddon, Thorngate & Blackwater and a joint project between Bright Waters and Overton).



Volunteers from St Mary's Andover distributing fresh fruit and vegetables from their 'Life Bus', also used for youth outreach in the community.



A national Innovation Fund was used to set up 'The Pillar', a mental health initiative for young people run by St Win's Totton



Bishop David Visits Basingstoke Church Estates Ministry

Support for Schools

The Portsmouth & Winchester Joint Diocesan Education Team supports 140 schools with 39,000 pupils, engaging with the children, their families, and teachers. Our resources to support schools are also increasingly being used by Community schools and other dioceses – particularly in the areas of Courageous Advocacy and Racial Justice. The Education Project for 2023 was 'Everyday Ubuntu' (based on the African philosophy often translated as 'I am because we are') which schools and many parishes embraced and used to reflect on our connected humanity. We also continue as the Diocese with the most number of schools achieving the Christian Aid Global Neighbours Award, engaging and empowering pupils as agents of change in the transformation of our world.



St Luke's Church of England Primary School in Sway, is one of a handful of schools in the country to achieve a Christian Aid Global Neighbours Gold Award.



Children from schools across the diocese come together for Ubuntu themed drumming workshop at the Year 6 Leaver's Service Winchester Cathedral.

Supporting Church Life

The Parish Support team were very busy in 2023, working often in the background to support and equip our churches and communities, through training, advice and hosting the occasional cream tea! Some of the highlights of the events programme included well attended training for churchwardens with some great feedback, and the first post-Covid Treasurers event with a speaker from Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers.



The Diocesan team offering support at the Deanery Roadshow



The Parish Support Team volunteering at SCRATCH Southampton, helping pack boxes of Christmas presents for vulnerable families

The team also completed a full year of Deanery Roadshows (six in total, where we chatted to 645 people!), setting up camp in churches around the diocese, answering questions and enabling people to get to know some of the faces the diocesan team and how they can help, as we continue in our work to develop a culture of presence and collaboration with parishes.

**14 PASTORAL
SCHEMES CAME TO
A SUCCESSFUL
CONCLUSION IN
2023**



The new Parish of Four Saints which was created in October 2023

In Focus: A New Identity for the Parish of Four Saints

The Parish Support Team work closely with church teams when it comes to parishes seeking help with reorganization and mergers. There were 14 successful schemes in 2023, including the creation of the Parish of Four Saints which was formed on 1st October 2023 through the merger of St Francis of Assisi, Charminster and the Parish of Winton, Moordown and Charminster (the Parish of WMC). "Some really wonderful relationships have come out of it where we've all felt able to bring something to the table," said Kate Bicknell, Church Warden of Four Saints.

In Focus: Specialist Help and Support in Challenging Times

The Diocesan Advisory Committee staff team processed 292 new applications in 2023 and conducted over 70 meetings with parishes directly.

One very pertinent example from 2023 was the team's help and support of All Saints, Mudeford following a devastating fire at the church, providing specialist advice on crucial issues surrounding the design and approach to the new building project and arranging for early discussions with external interested stakeholders.



Outdoor service one year after the Mudeford All Saints Church fire

**THE CLERICAL REGISTRY COVERED 1,688
SERVICES ACROSS THE DIOCESE, AN AVERAGE OF
141/MONTH**

Encouraging a Culture of Generosity

One of the greatest successes of 2023 as the contactless card reader roll-out throughout September. Part of the national Digital Giving Rollout initiative, the diocese offered 44 heavily subsidised card readers to parishes, as well as ongoing training and support, allowing them to take a significant step forward in meeting the evolving financial needs of their communities. Participating churches have since collectively raised £40,989 through their card machines and online platforms!

“The impact has been huge. It's helped to engage both regular churchgoers and visitors to the church by placing it in the entrance to the church. We've also used the machine to galvanise one off gifts for particular appeals or fundraising, including at Christmas time. By creating separate campaigns and having a simple mechanism of giving, we've also seen those who regularly give through planned monthly giving going further in their generosity and supporting additional appeals which has been really encouraging as we seek to see this culture grow in the church family.” (Revd Tom Hodgkinson)

In addition, Generous June took place 11-18 June 2023 and was a great success, with over 1700 page views of the website and its various resources, designed to help parishes engage their congregation in giving and stewardship. As well as the well-received podcast series, two video sermons from Revd Marianne Foster and Bishop David were shared widely amongst our communities, and five of our curates volunteered to be guest preachers in a new context, bringing fresh perspectives on what it means to be a generous church!



Revd Tom Hodgkinson delighted with the new card reader at St Andrew's, Charminster!

**OVER 50 GOOD NEWS STORIES ON
THE WEBSITE AND 21 VIDEOS
SHARED BY THE COMMUNICATIONS
TEAM IN 2023**

Pursuing Kingdom Justice

It was also a year when the diocese took significant strides in tackling areas of injustice and inequality in church life which have identified as key national priorities. Using grant funds from the national church, we were able to appoint a Diocesan Environment Officer and a Net Zero & Racial Justice Project Co-ordinator, who began galvanising our efforts in these vital areas. A new racial justice committee was formed, bringing together people committed to seeing the generous and inclusive Kingdom of God replicated in all our diocesan processes and structures.

Similarly, building on the work of the Diocesan Environment Group, the team is increasingly supporting parishes and schools to embed Creation Care in church life, responding seriously to climate change emergency and the call on all our lives to be stewards of God's creation.

**WE GAINED 11 NEW ECO CHURCH AWARDS IN THE
DIOCESE IN 2023 (8 BRONZE AND 3 SILVER) TAKING
THE TOTAL TO 88 AWARDS BY THE END OF THE YEAR**



Bishop David and representatives from our diocesan Racial Justice Strategy Group gathered at Liverpool Cathedral to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in March 2023.



The diocesan team worked with St Mark's Kempshott when their heating system failed, helping advise them on suppliers and grants in order to install a new system using BioLPG system which does not rely on fossil fuels and reduces in CO2 emissions by up to 85%.



To gain their Silver Eco Church award, St Mark's used an Energy Efficiency Survey subsidised by the diocese to ratify changes to their building and churchyard. Other activities included a Green Fayre (pictured above).

Thank You

The diocesan team is only able to carry out the work described in this review thanks to the generosity, in all its many forms, of you: our people, parishes, schools, chaplaincies and worshipping communities. We are grateful for the ongoing support of so many and we thank God for His faithfulness to us all in 2023.

The Annual Accounts for 2023 are available at:
www.winchester.anglican.org/governance/annual-reports



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