

## Deanery Synod review of the term 2008 - 2011



The three year term started with a series of meetings reviewing deaneries and the consolidation of 14 deaneries to 9. After much discussion and preparation Nottingham North and Nottingham South were created and Bishop Tony Porter carried out an inauguration service of the new deaneries.

The usual elections of lay chairs and treasurers followed with the deaneries then setting its mission priorities. A new deanery leadership team, part of the evolving nature of the work of the two deaneries, came together with a central theme of collaboration; greater working together to share resources and look at the allocation of parish share. There was majority support for joint synod meetings with a mixture of joint and separate gatherings and this has formed the basis of the meetings thus far.

After looking at resources and practicalities, the following year's meetings concentrated on the deanery mission priorities, looking at projects and other ways the deaneries could meet these. Various projects were identified.

Next came the appointment of an administrator, shared across the two deaneries, with a joint deanery website being launched – [www.nottinghamdeaneries.org](http://www.nottinghamdeaneries.org)

Having established seven mission priorities, the deaneries looked at ways in which these were already being met and what could be done about the gaps. E.g., a group was set up to look at "Those searching for spirituality" from which a course was put together, 'Fighting the Fear', and offered to the Diocese; a men's group, which has held various events over the three year term, and 'Church disconnection from Culture' – this was looked at in depth in one of our meetings, looking at the individual spirituality of the churches in the deaneries and how this affects our mission. We considered the ministry of welcome – again we offered a variety of resources and received a presentation, and the School of Disciples was explored, always keeping us in touch with new and alternative ways of doing things

As well as information and sharing from other churches, we have received reports from General Synod and updates from the diocese – Back to Church Sunday; Giving for Life; partnerships updates; winter shelter and a social action survey, showing how churches are involved or can get involved.

Deanery quiet & study days led by David Runcorn and Paula Gooder have been welcomed by many with a further day booked for November this year.

Whatever we have done, has always been with a watchful eye on our mission priorities assessing how we are doing against these.

Deanery synod has welcomed visits from Bishop Tony and Bishop Rubin, and in 2010, an introduction to Bishop Paul; our chief executive Nigel Spraggins, talking about deanery synods – to quote Nigel, "*We are units of mission and ministry. We are not about debating for no reason. We should be considering and reflecting on how we bring mission into the local community. We do need to bring in motions to diocesan synod.*" For our first meeting in 2011, we welcomed Ven Peter Hill who gave a presentation and lead a discussion on the Big Society and how we might respond.

We have tried to improve communication across the deaneries through the website and deanery newsletters. We try and visit a variety of churches always taking in to account general accessibility and sufficient car parking.

All this is only communicated with the aid of our deanery synod representatives making sure that parishes are kept up to date with events, discussions and motions in the diocese. No two deanery synod meetings are the same and this review gives a taster of the possibilities which we hope will inspire you to join us and help steer in the direction you believe God is calling us to.