

## EPPING FOREST AND ONGAR DEANERY SYNOD MEETINGS 2023

There were two Deanery Synod meetings in 2023 as follows:

### January

Main focus: Presentation by Fabrizio Ferrari, Public Health Improvement Officer EFDC. Fabrizio presented the model the council is using to measure health and wellbeing, pointing towards areas of particular challenge and explaining how the council is currently trying to improve things in partnership with others, including the Church of England in the Diocese of Chelmsford. Priorities are to reduce health inequalities, improve mental health and wellbeing, reduce loneliness and social isolation, increase physical activity, support residents in relation to the rising cost of living and to tackle alcohol and substance misuse issues. Ninefields Waltham Abbey being cited as having had a number of successful outcomes following support with these challenges. Synod members discussed ways in which we might be able to partner together in this work.

### June

Martin Lockwood stepped down as Lay Chair after 15 years of service, and Richard Kinder was nominated and elected as the new Lay Chair. This was the first meeting of a new Synod, and new Pastoral and Standing Committee representatives were elected.

Main focus: Presentation by Rev Lee Batson on Revisiting the Deanery as a Mission Agency - to consider self-understanding of the Deanery as a mission agency and as a unit of governance.

It was noted that the Parish Share changed in 2022, with significant reductions in some Parishes but heavy increases in others. We were able to give £10,000 to assist Harlow as a result, but this was a "one off" transfer. At this time it was felt difficult to forecast for 2023, with provisional figures expected to be available later in the year.

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### Other

Rev John Fry became Area Dean on 19th October 2023.