



SHEFFIELD DIOCESAN SYNOD AND BOARD OF FINANCE

TO BE HELD AT
TANKERSLEY HUB, PILLEY LANE, TANKERSLEY, BARNSELY, S75 3AP

ON SATURDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2025 at 9.00 am

NOTICE PAPER

09.00 1. **INTRODUCTION AND NOTICES**

The Bishop of Sheffield will welcome members.

Opening worship will be led by Mrs Yvette Cooper (RE Teacher) and children from Tankersley St Peter's CofE School.

The Reverend Canon Matthew Rhodes will chair the meeting.

09.10 2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** are shown below or can be notified to Elizabeth Lunt:

The Revd Canon Claire Dawson	The Revd Tim Mitchell
Stephi Dennis	The Revd Ed Morrison
The Revd Jonny Dyer	The Revd Andy Poultney
The Revd Andrew Howard	The Revd Canon Rick Stordy
The Revd Cliff Kay	The Revd Helen Terry
The Revd Carol Lee	

09.10 3.* **THE MINUTES** of the Synod's meeting held on Saturday 19 July 2025 at Christ Church Pitsmoor (Paper 3.1, circulated with the agenda) are to be confirmed.

Matters arising

09.15 4. **A WINDOW ON TANKERSLEY DEANERY** – To be led by Yvette Cooper and children from Tankersley St Peter's CofE School

09.25 5*. **BISHOP'S COUNCIL'S REPORT** – A Report on the proceedings of the Bishop's Council since the last Synod meeting is to be received (Paper 5.1, circulated with the agenda). Julia Newton will present the report and there will be an opportunity for questions.

MEETING AS MEMBERS OF THE DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE, Canon Ian Walker will take the chair

09.30 6.* **FINANCE REPORT AND 2026 BUDGET**

- i. Review of 2025 finances
- ii. SDBF 2026 Budget – Synod are invited to approve the 2026 SDBF budget (Paper 6.1, circulated with the agenda).

Canon Walker will move:

“THAT Synod, sitting as the DBF, approves the Budget of the Diocesan Board of Finance for the twelve months ending 31 December 2026 as proposed by the Finance Committee and authorises the DBF to work to a deficit Budget of net (outgoing) resources, after transfers, of £1.24m.”

MEETING AS DIOCESAN SYNOD – Dr Rhodes will re-take the Chair

- 10.00 7.* **DIGNITY IN MINISTRY AND AT WORK** – The Reverend Canon Amanda Barraclough will present the new policy (Papers 7.1 and 7.2, circulated with the agenda).

10.15 **COFFEE BREAK**

- 10.45 8. **DEANERY SYNOD ELECTIONS 2026** – Synod is asked to agree the numbers to be elected to Deanery Synods for the 2026-2028 three year term as set out in Paper 8.1, circulated with the agenda. The numbers elected are based on the parish Electoral Roll as at the 2025 APCM.

- 10.50 9.* **SAFEGUARDING REPORT** – update from the Reverend Canon Harry Steele and Canon LJ Buxton on the safeguarding report and 2026 INEQE audit (Papers 9.1 and 9.2, circulated with the agenda)

- 11.10 10. **LIGHTS FOR CHRIST** – Update from Hannah Sandoval, Lights for Christ Enabler

- 11.30 11. **SYNOD QUESTIONS** – Questions received, together with written responses, are shown in the Appendix.

- 11.40 12. **PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS** – Bishop Pete will address Synod

- 12.00 13. **CENTENARY PROJECT AND ITS ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS** – led by Sarah Beardsmore, CP Manager (Paper 13.1, Evaluation Report, circulated with the agenda)

- 12.20 14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 12.25 15. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** – The meetings in 2026 will be:

7 March - 18 July - 21 November

If you have a venue available for any of these, please speak to Elizabeth Lunt.

- 12.25 16. **CONCLUSION** - The meeting will conclude with worship led by the Centenary Project.

Questions to Diocesan Synod – 22 November 2025

	From	Question	Response
1.	The Reverend Christopher Hobbs, Snaith and Hatfield Deanery	<p>The Employment Rights Bill proposes outlawing employers using NDAs to silence victims of workplace harassment and abuse. Archbishop Welby stated the church should stop using NDAs. Have there been any Non Disclosure Agreements put in place in the last five years by the DBF, the office of the Bishop of Sheffield, Sheffield Cathedral, or DSAT? If there have, how many, and have such agreements ceased to be used?</p>	<p><i>Response from Bishop Pete, Katie Bell and the Dean:</i></p> <p>The office of the Bishop of Sheffield, DBF and Cathedral have put no NDAs in place in the last 5 years.. Synod are not the employer or governing body for DSAT, however the Diocesan Director of Education has liaised with the trust and reports the following:</p> <p>DSAT has not and does not use NDAs. It should be noted that, when employment settlement agreements are agreed, as part of capability procedures, these can include a commitment not to disclose the existence or nature of the agreement, outside the circle of 'need to know' contacts working with the colleague - e.g. union reps, supporting family. The purpose of this commitment is in part to protect the employee from having the fact that they have left under an agreed settlement disclosed to future potential employers and to protect the trust from negative publicity in public forums or through social media.</p>
2.	Mr Pete Sandford, Ecclesall Deanery	<p>To Bishop Pete:</p> <p>A) Have you read the letter from Open Church addressed to members of the House of Bishops asking that they commit to offer leadership and direction that honours the inclusive majority of the Church of England and truly values LGBTQ+ people?</p> <p>B) Will you invite Diocesan Synod and the wider Diocese to prayerfully consider the open letter and, whatever their opinion upon it, to commit to pray for the House of Bishops as they navigate these decisions, and for the healing and renewal of the whole Church?</p>	<p>Yes, and I was grateful for the kind and constructive tone of the letter.</p> <p>Yes, and I am grateful for every commitment to pray for me and other members of the House of Bishops.</p>

3.	Mr Pete Sandford, Ecclesall Deanery	<p>To Bishop Leah:</p> <p>Where active Licensed Ministers (both Lay and Ordained) have funded access to national and regional provisions including counselling, training, retreats, and financial support in difficulty, Authorised Lay Ministers (including Focal Ministers) do not always have the same access to all these supports leading to scenarios where a Lay Reader may find themselves more comprehensively supported than their Focal Minister colleague. Please could this inequality be investigated and steps be taken to ensure that parity of esteem is matched by parity of support, especially as both Reader and Focal Minister are also likely to be self supporting (unpaid) volunteers or have some hours of employment in the church where they also minister?</p>	<p>The Diocese, or more accurately the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF), are trustees of the West Riding Charitable Society Trust which provides grants to alleviate hardship amongst clergy, their dependents or licensed lay ministers. There are no hardship funds available to those in other forms of lay ministry in the diocese at present.</p> <p>The Diocese of Sheffield holds strongly to the conviction that all people, whether lay or ordained, ministers or not, are entitled to parity of esteem. We seek to ensure that the whole people of God are enabled to flourish in mission and ministry. Regrettably, it is impossible to provide parity of support to the whole people of God whilst operating within limited budgets. Living within this reality it is of vital importance that we do not allow ourselves to believe that those who for whatever reason do not receive particular forms of support are therefore to be viewed with less esteem.</p> <p>Within the Diocese of Sheffield £5000 is budgeted annually for Ongoing Ministerial Development (OMD) grants to all lay ministers including focal ministers. This fund can be applied to by licensed, authorised and commissioned lay ministers and provides for up to 20 awards each year of £250. These can be spent on retreats and courses. No distinction is made between Readers and other lay ministers in regard to this diocesan funding. It is true that Readers also have access to national grants (whose terms and conditions we have no control over) as well as to the Diocesan Pamela Richardson Fund (which is a restricted fund set up for this purpose and under charity commission rules cannot be used for other purposes). For this reason, we ask Readers to explore those other avenues before applying for an OMD grant, to maximise the use of these funds for other lay ministers. To make the diocesan support that is available more accessible, Beth Burras has produced a Focal Ministry Handbook, which outlines sources of pastoral support and grants for ministerial development and this has recently been shared with Focal Ministers. This handbook stands alongside parallel handbooks which are also provided to licensed ministers, lay and ordained.</p>
4.	The Revd Malcolm Liles, Attercliffe Deanery	<p>To the Archdeacons and Bishop's Chaplain:</p> <p>Is it known how many parishes, congregations and network churches in the diocese are using liturgies for worship which are neither</p>	<p>This is not information we hold centrally and would not have access to unless a parish team tells us directly. We do not currently plan to request this information from parishes, but we will remain vigilant for it as we visit churches throughout the Diocese.</p>

		authorised nor commended, neither BCP nor Common Worship; I understand that the practice of writing one's own eucharistic prayers or affirmation of faith etc. happens in some places outside this diocese, does it happen here?	
5.	The Revd Malcolm Liles, Attercliffe Deanery	<p>To the Diocesan Secretary:</p> <p>In the papers for this meeting there are a number acronyms used without further explanation which can tend to make them impenetrable to the attendees. Can we have a policy of their expansion on first use in a paper, followed by acronym on succeeding occasions?</p>	Thank you for your question. We try to encourage this as best practice, but thank you for the reminder which we will include in future when requesting papers from staff or contributors to Diocesan Synod.
6	The Revd Malcolm Liles, Attercliffe Deanery	<p>To the Diocesan Secretary:</p> <p>Deanery Synod elections are on the agenda paper. Will the Diocesan Secretary ensure that nominations are sought and elections held, if necessary, by deanery synod secretaries for representation of clergy with PTO on Deanery Synods in number in accord with the Church Representation Rules? Presumably the Bishop's Chaplain will have Deanery lists of Clergy with PTO to assist in this objective?</p>	I can confirm that this will be included in the communications which will be sent to Deanery Synod Secretaries regarding the Deanery Synod elections.
7.	Mr Brian Wrigley, Ecclesall Deanery	<p>To the Diocesan Secretary</p> <p>With the Deanery Synod</p>	Due to GDPR we cannot assume that people 'opt-in' to communications, so it needs to be arranged locally by Deanery Synod Secretaries and permission sought from each member for specific

		elections due next year has any further consideration been given to finding a way to ensure that the members of the Deanery Synod have a secure way of contacting each other.	mailings to be sent (for example setting up a group email contact or WhatsApp Group). However, it may be that the preference is to send to the Deanery Synod Secretary for them to disseminate, rather than sharing contact details with everyone. Permissions are also recorded on our central database and we are able to forward any communications on your behalf.
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