

what it does spend. It is clear that churches are putting off spending until it becomes really urgent and that a difficulty for some small contributions is that the task is too daunting. Two pilot projects have been run in London and Suffolk to provide support in identifying and commissioning the work. In Gloucester a charity has provided this support.

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (yes it really exists) is to establish a training programme.

What can we do?

- Liaise with other local authority organisations to help them to see the possibilities which church buildings offer to their communities;
- Learn how to use our buildings better;
- Send the post cards included in *Inspire!*
- Engage local politicians;
- Discussion at deanery level.

**Stewart Mews** spoke of the value of friends of churches groups, not just as those who provide money, but who work to maintain and develop the building. He also reminded the Synod of the importance of developing church tourism.

**Bishop John** reminded the Synod that buildings are a 'mission issue' and drew attention to the complementary publication *Building Faith in our Future* published by the

national Church Buildings Division. **Richard Turpin** remarked that English Heritage have sometimes been very obstructive in relation to the development of church buildings and he wishes to be assured that this kind of response was a thing of the past.

### Church Urban Fund

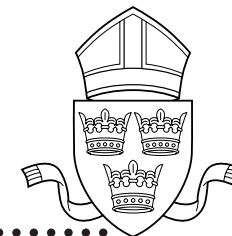
Canon **Alan Hargrave** introduced the proposal to make the re-launched Church Urban Fund's campaign, *Challenging Poverty*, the subject of next year's diocesan Lent appeal. A speaker from CUF showed a recording of some of the work the fund has sponsored in rural areas.

He asked 'What is poverty?' It is living on less than £100 a week. 11 million people in the UK live in poverty: this includes 3 million children and 2 million pensioners. Poverty is a scandal and this is why the Church Urban Fund is calling its campaign *Challenging Poverty*.

### Diocesan Synod dates for 2007

Synod dates for 2007 are: 10 March, 9 June, and 20 October.

# Diocesan Synod Report



### Presidential Address

**Bishop Anthony** noted valuable developments at the end of the summer

- 21 ordinations to the diaconate and the priesthood
- 82 Accredited Lay Ministers had been commissioned
- 2 new rural deans had been licensed.

There had also been many inductions and licensings. He thanked the rural deans and the archdeacons who oversee much of the appointments work.

He went on to say that we must look at where the energy is in the diocese to discern the work of the Holy Spirit. We often speak of moving from ministry to mission but he wished to view this idea with caution for both activities are equally important and hold together. We view mission in the work of many parishes for whom it is a priority. We had also seen it in the Eucharist with which the Synod began with the licensing of the Revd **Dave Male** as the first Fresh Expressions Officer in the country, in partnership with the Federation in Cambridge.

The newly-elected Diocesan Synod met at Ely on Saturday 21 October 2006. The Synod began with a celebration of the Eucharist in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral, at which the Revd **David Male** was licensed as Fresh Expressions Officer, and continuing in the Hayward Theatre of the King's School.

Canon **Jonathan Young** and **Stephen Tooke** had been elected as Vice Presidents without opposition.

Displays and stalls were provided by The Mothers' Union, the Committee for Family and Social Welfare, the Church Urban Fund and SPCK.

### SPCK

The Synod was informed that an agreement has been announced between SPCK and St Stephen the Great Charitable Trust, an Orthodox charity. The charity was founded in 2004 in the USA by Mark Brewer and wishes to co-operate with SPCK in providing high quality religious bookshops to the British market and so enable SPCK to continue safely into its fourth century of service.

There were no questions under Standing Order 41.

21 October 2006

He reminded the Synod that 2009 would mark the nine hundredth anniversary of the diocese. A group to lead the celebrations is to be led by the Revd **Sue Wyatt** and its thrust will be mission. It is also expected that schools will be particularly interested in this.

2008 will mark the next Lambeth Conference and it was envisaged that bishops with connections to this diocese from across the world would be invited to spend the week before the conference in our diocese for a period for rest after their journeys and preparation for the conference.

A new initiative will make provision for the study of issues in relation to the possibility of the ordination of women to the episcopate and there are initiatives afoot in relation to church planting.

The Bishop thanked the Revd **Derek Billings** for fifty years of ordained ministry, most of it in this diocese. He also thanked all those involved in organising the clergy conference, in particular Canon **Jeremy Pemberton** who led the organising group. He announced that **Mary Streeter** is shortly leaving Bishop Woodford House and will be replaced by **Peggy Banks**.

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**Finance**  
In introducing the Budget debate **Hugh Duberly** said that it was an achievement to be introducing the

second balanced budget in a row, for this has not always been the case in recent years. The Budget represented a forward looking vision. A reduction in the number of stipendiary priests was part of plan in accordance with a nationwide reduction in numbers available

The spend of £2 million annually on the maintenance of houses had been questioned and the Synod was reminded this was offset by an income of £200,000 from the letting of unused houses in addition to accumulated income from some properties which had been sold.

It was expected that in 2006 the diocese will break though we should be cautious about the results of the first year in which the new ministry share is operating. The biggest variable in the levels of expenditure is accounted for by stipends. What is being asked of parishes this year is very little different from last. However, it was necessary to point out that there are three risks which may bear upon the plan:

- There may actually be more clergy in post than is anticipated;
- The Pensions requirements may have an impact.

It is impossible accurately to predict the result of the ministry share collected.

In debate **John King** from Shelford deanery pointed out that they would be unlikely to equal their last year's 100% payment of parish share and

there was a concern about continued rises. **Hugh Duberly** said that he understood the concern but the finance committee is confident that the budget is achievable.

**John Abbott** from Fordham deanery said that it was felt that the capping factor meant that smaller parishes were subsidising larger ones.

The motions to accept the Budget and the Ministry Share were both passed overwhelmingly.

The Chair welcomed this and noted that the passing of such a substantial item of business with so little comment is testimony to the work of the Finance Committee.

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**Clergy pensions**  
The **Diocesan Secretary** made presentation on clergy pensions which had been prepared by **Shaun Farrell**, Director of the Pensions Board and which had already been made to clergy around the diocese. This presentation provided the Synod with the opportunity to comment.

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**English Heritage**  
*presentation on its booklet Inspired!*  
The presentation was made by **Richard Halsey** who has worked on this project for English Heritage after having been an officer in East Anglia for a number of years.

He remarked that the National Church Institutions have criticised the campaign as negative but he sees

it as complimentary to their work on Building Faith in the Future.

Every campaign needs a purpose and in the campaign, English Heritage's purpose is to highlight the need to restore church buildings as the biggest heritage issue in the coming years. Society is changing and old buildings don't fit what we want to do

Any diocesan strategy will mention buildings: *All Good Gifts* mentions a reduction in no of buildings when they no longer serve the purpose of the church in a particular area. He compared this with the information on the Durham diocesan website that buildings must be fit for purpose. On the Church Commissioners' website there is commended a process of local buildings audits and together with the Pastoral Measure and Building Faith in the Future this represents a long term strategy. However, church buildings are made redundant and they are then care for by the Churches' Conservation Trust. There is a question however about how long the CCT can go on picking up this work from their funding. It should be recognised that Heritage is not a high political priority, particularly in the light of the forthcoming Government expenditure review which will aim at a zero increase. English Heritage needs more money to support the work for it turns down many applications and needs to spend twice