

Area Report for Bishop's Council

Buckingham

The Revd Valerie Plumb was welcomed and licensed on 22<sup>nd</sup> September as the Area Dean for Rural Mission and Development. Valerie, who comes with much rural experience from the Bath and Wells diocese, will live in Ludgershall and work with the deaneries of Mursley, Claydon, Buckingham and the rural parts of Aylesbury, to encourage simplification, the sharing of good practice, clergy well-being and church growth amongst the rural churches. She will be part of our Area Team.

Many churches are responding practically and pastorally to the needs of the refugee crisis, including Christian involvement in Citizen MK, and initiatives in Chesham, Slough and High Wycombe.

Work continues to take place in our new communities. The diocese have recently purchased a house in Newton Leys, a new area of housing (2000+ homes) between Bletchley (MK deanery) and Newton Longville (Mursley deanery), and it is hoped that a pioneer minister will be appointed there in the New Year and be part of the Bletchley team.

The 2015 Mission Fund grants were allocated over the summer to a variety of projects including the development of a café on Berryfields, Aylesbury as part of outreach to that new community, a rural children's work project and the production of a radio advertisement for Father's day which was broadcast across MK. Other significant developments in the archdeaconry include a new partnership between the National Trust and the local church at Stowe, which is resulting in an increase in visitor numbers to the church, and, following the installation of a water supply (enabled by a small archdeacon's grant and mission grant), the development of outreach and hospitality to visitors.

The plans for HS2 are concerning a number of our communities and churches. A recent visit by a cross party committee visited various sites, and discussions continue, including noise mitigation at Wendover Church.

We are delighted that Caroline Windley, Area DDO and Vocation Development Officer for Bucks, has been appointed Diocesan Director of Ordinands, and are pleased that her reshaped Team Leader role will enable her to continue with her vital work in the area (fully funded by the diocese rather than a 0.5 archdeaconry post). Also that Andrew Gear, Parish Development Advisor, has been appointed Director of Mission. Andrew's important work with parishes over the years has been much valued in the area. The Area Team therefore will need to be reshaped in the coming months to reflect ongoing needs, especially addressing how discipleship, stewardship and training all fit with a new PDA and Val's work in the rural communities.

Karen Gorham