

THE ANGLICAN ARCHDEACONRY OF FRANCE

SYNOD

25 APRIL 2026

Held by Zoom videoconference



A list of attendees and apologies for absence is attached.

1 Welcome and opening prayer

The meeting opened with Morning Prayer. The Archdeacon (Peter Hooper) chaired proceedings. Minutes of the 2025 spring meeting were accepted unanimously with no matters arising. Note: the autumn 2025 workshops were separate events and reports were posted on the website.

2. Archdeacon's Report

Diocese – Bishops & Staffing

- Bishop Robert now functions as Diocesan bishop across the whole Diocese; Bishop Andrew holds portfolio projects including ministry and strategy.
- Honorary assistant bishops continue to support confirmations, chrism services, and other episcopal duties.
- Mervyn McCulloch the new CEO joined as Andrew Caspari's replacement in January 2026.
- Recruitment is underway for a Director of Finance following Susan Stelfox's retirement at the end of 2025.

Safeguarding

- An independent safeguarding audit by INIQ is scheduled for 2027; 2026 is the preparation year.
- The audit will be paper-based (spring 2027) followed by in-person visits and interviews (early autumn 2027), with a report towards end 2027.
- Key priority: all chaplaincies must be registered on and actively using the safeguarding dashboard.
- Craig (training lead) has stepped down; recruitment is underway. Nick Sherrett covers training in the interim.
- At national level, the National Safeguarding Team (NST) is being externalised into a new Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). A public consultation is running; diocesan teams remain unchanged.

Diocesan Strategy

- Strategy Director Ella Sibley (a grant-funded, 3-year post) is running five work groups: training & leadership, church planting, ministry, social responsibility & racial justice, and cross-jurisdictional working.
- Target: to submit a Church Commissioners funding application for the DinE in autumn 2026; a decision is expected in early 2027.

Archdeaconry – Vacancies & Appointments

- Andrew Wallace (ordained in New Zealand, formerly a lay reader in Nottingham) licensed at Beaulieu-sur-Mer from 24 May 2026, joined by his civil partner John.
- Active recruitment ongoing for Lille and Saint-Raphaël.
- Marseille vacancy paperwork in development; active recruitment to begin shortly.

- Biarritz, Caen, and Arras continue under lay leadership and are exploring lay-led chaplaincy models.

Legal Structures – Fédération Protestante de France (FPF) & Union Nationale

- The archdeaconry was granted associate FPF membership in January 2025; Peter attended the annual meeting in January 2025.
- A meeting on 29 April 2026 is part of the process for moving from associate to full FPF membership.
- A practical benefit so far is a simplified “formulaire unique” visa route for incoming priests. Tina Twelves (chaplain, Pas de Calais) was the first to use it.
- A resolution was proposed: and unanimously agreed: Strasbourg Chaplaincy is accepted as associate member of the Union Nationale, enabling visa route access while respecting Alsace’s Napoleonic legal constraints. Strasbourg’s own AGM will need to amend its statutes accordingly.

Future Opportunities via the Union Nationale

- Collective insurance/mutuelles: exploring whether all 32 legal entities could obtain cover nationally through FPF-negotiated terms, reducing administration and potentially cost.
- Centralising CAVIMAC contact: proposal to route all clergy social-security interactions through a single Union Nationale contact point, reducing complexity for chaplaincies and for CAVIMAC. Preventative health programmes available through CAVIMAC are currently unused. A joint meeting for treasurers and chaplains with CAVIMAC is being planned.

Other Ecumenical Relations

- Roman Catholic Church: formal ecumenical conversations resumed following the appointment of a new RC lead bishop for ecumenical affairs (half-French, half-American). Autumn 2026 focus areas: new church planting and French Alpha.

Bishop’s tours

Southeast and Southwest France completed in late 2025; Northwest France tour planned for June 2026.

Spiritual Nourishment Initiative

- In response to feedback that online-only formats lack spiritual depth, bishop-led quiet days are being trialled, one per deanery.
- First event: Northwest France, June 2026 (details to follow). Three further dates (NE, SE, SW France) being scheduled.

Announcement: Archdeacon’s Departure

Bishop Robert announced that the Ven Dr Peter Hooper will leave the diocese at the end of July 2026, returning to the Diocese of Leicester to support its change programme. Key achievements cited: 27 chaplain appointments (20 France, 7 Switzerland), new generic constitutions for all chaplaincies, establishment of the Union Nationale, FPF membership, and the visa route for incoming priests.

Peter confirmed he is committed to completing open projects through July and that recruitment for his successor is already under way, so there should be no gap.

3. Diocesan & General Synod Update (Andy Brewerton)

Diocesan Synod – June 2025 Highlights

- Opening report from Kyiv chaplaincy: ministry continuing through wartime, with monthly visits from priest travelling from Poland.
- Presidential address (Bishop Robert): “Confident faith and gospel action”; including an account of attending Pope Leo’s inaugural ministry.
- Bible study each morning led by Bishop Andrew on John 14–17.
- MES (Ministry Experience Scheme) intern reports: encouraging accounts of young people engaged in mission across chaplaincies.
- Strategy session: children & young people, church planting, refugee support, and launch of Ella Sibley’s strategy role.
- Finance overview: common fund income ~£1 million, ~95% spent on diocesan operations; diocese running an agreed multi-year deficit budget. Church Commissioners funding available for new initiatives.

General Synod – February 2026 Highlights

- Archbishop Sarah’s first presidential address acknowledged safeguarding failures, and called for rebuilding trust and transparency.
- Safeguarding reforms were approved overwhelmingly: the creation of an independent safeguarding charity separate from the Church of England hierarchy (the new ISA – see above).
- Living in Love and Faith (LLF): formally closed after bishops concluded consensus on same-sex relationships and marriage was not reachable. Two working groups to continue pastoral and theological work. New synod elections (summer/autumn 2026) may shift the balance. *
- Clergy Conduct Measure: a new complaints system was enacted.
- Other items: clergy pension reform, new register of ministers.

* Discussion: Charlotte Lomax asked how chaplaincies can engage constructively. Peter confirmed two working groups will continue and encouraged use of existing LLF study materials.

4. Finance (David Bean, Treasurer)

2025 Actuals

- **Income:** €680 (all bank interest).
- **Expenditure:** €4,600 (administration €1,646; training €202; CME €2,680 – Alpha course England, language training; bank charges €73).
- Net draw-down: €3,920. No synod meeting was held.
- Balances: cash account €17,000; savings €32,000; CME restricted fund ~€1,000. Total available €49,442.

2026 Budget (Outline)

- Income: €700 (interest).
- Expenditure budget: €21,600 – includes €4,000 for deanery meetings, €3,050 admin, €2,000 training, €10,000 CME (aspirational, linked to the new MDR programme), €2,000 ecumenical.
- Theoretical budget deficit €20,900, covered by existing reserves. David Bean does not expect full spend.
- CME fund is restricted; the largest variable is the new Ministry Development Review (MDR) programme.

Questions from the floor concerned the possibility of arranging an in-person synod meeting. This would involve either asking for a quota from the chaplaincies and also to pay the costs of attendance.

Arguments in favour:

- personal contact, spiritual uplift

Arguments against:

- huge cost to be born directly by chaplaincies, some of which cannot afford it

Projects account (page 2):

The archdeaconry acts as a pass-through for the Calais refugee project (partners: USPG, Diocese of Canterbury, Diocese in Europe; employee Braden managed via Detaxia payroll). Net-zero officer post ended mid-2025; that project is now closed. The Calais project may or may not conclude end 2026 – €20,600 outstanding from previous years.

Anita Phillips requested a written narrative explaining the Calais project funding structure to accompany future accounts. Agreed – Rosemary to include in minutes. *

* See annex 1 for details.

RESOLUTION PASSED (proposed: David Bean; seconded: Chris Robert): 2025 accounts accepted unanimously.

RESOLUTION PASSED (proposed: David Bean; seconded: Charlotte Sullivan, Maisons Laffitte): 2026 outline budget accepted unanimously.

David Bean is stepping down as Treasurer. Peter expressed warm thanks on behalf of the archdeaconry. A new Treasurer will be elected at the 27 June meeting.

5. Breakout Group Feedback

Six groups of 7–8 discussed three questions: (1) What gives you hope? (2) Where should the archdeaconry focus its energy? (3) Are there issues to raise at Diocesan Synod?

Themes of Hope

- Recent chaplaincy appointments generating renewed momentum and growth.
- Vibrant Sunday worship as the foundation of chaplaincy life.
- Post-Brexit/COVID recovery; growing congregational diversity and nationality mix.
- 7% increase in the archdeaconry electoral roll.
- Growing archdeaconry cohesion over the past two years.
- Strengthened ecumenical links (Protestant and Catholic).
- Expanding networks (treasurers, safeguarding officers, eco project).
- Excitement about FPF membership and simplified visa route.
- Catholics attending Anglican services in some chaplaincies.

Energy & Focus

- Children, young people, and youth workers: request for training/equipping resources, possibly via archdeaconry programme.
- In-person meetings: strong appetite across all groups; financial constraints acknowledged. Suggestions included a working group to find affordable models, a survey of chaplaincy willingness to self-fund, and developing more local/deanery-level gatherings.
- Bishop-led quiet days: broad support as a step towards spiritual nourishment.

- Central technical guidance and an archdeaconry handbook: consolidating procedures and standing orders in one accessible place (recognised as a significant undertaking which will need time and effort to accomplish).
- CME accessibility: one group felt the process for accessing CME funds could be simpler and faster.
- Archdeacon's office support: multiple groups noted the breadth of work and suggested the incoming archdeacon would benefit from additional administrative support.
- New worship communities using technology (Zoom cell groups) to connect people in remote areas.
- HR structures: one participant flagged the need for better national-church HR processes as a potential issue to raise at Diocesan Synod.

Paul Willis (facilitator) summarised: real signs of hope; a desire to deepen spirituality as the foundation; strong traction for bishop-led quiet days. Groups asked for more time in future breakout sessions.

6. Other Business & Closing remarks

June 27 Additional Synod Meeting (Zoom)

- Purpose: welcome new/returning archdeaconry synod representatives and elect the standing committee for the next three years.
- Standing committee members: four area deans, lay secretary, lay treasurer, lay vice chair.
- Duration: approximately two hours, starting 09:00.
- Note: an extraordinary general meeting will also be held to change the registered address of the 1901 association following David Bean's departure.
- All synod members, including current and newly elected synod representatives should attend.

Closing Remarks

Ben Harding led thanks to Peter Hooper on behalf of all present. Peter responded warmly, reflecting on five and a half years of ministry, the joy of each calling, and his sadness at leaving, while expressing confidence in the archdeaconry's future.

The meeting closed in prayer.

ACTION POINTS

- Rosemary: include narrative on Calais project funding structure in the minutes.
- Strasbourg Chaplaincy: hold AGM vote to amend statutes to enable associate membership of Union Nationale.
- Peter / Standing Committee: publish details of Northwest France bishop-led quiet day within the week; schedule NE, SE, SW France dates.
- Peter / Rosemary: circulate agenda for June 27 Zoom meeting; confirm standing-committee nomination process.
- David Bean / Peter: explore collective insurance options via FPF for 2026/27.
- Peter / Rosemary: arrange joint CAVIMAC meeting for treasurers and chaplains.
- Standing Committee: develop autumn 2026 programme based on breakout group feedback.
- All chaplaincies: ensure registration on and active use of the safeguarding dashboard ahead of 2027 audit.

Annex 1

Projects for which the Archdeaconry acts as a facilitator.

1.1 Refugee Officer

Background:

Three partners came together with the shared aim of putting a Refugee Officer in place based in Calais. The post was advertised and the successful candidate started in September 2023.

The three partners are:

- Diocese in Europe
- Diocese of Canterbury
- USPG

Each of the three partners send an agreed sum to the Archdeaconry to support this employment.

Practicalities:

As this post is based in France, it was agreed that the Archdeaconry of France would become the employer. The Actes6-linked payroll company, Datexia, was contracted to deal with the payroll and to create the payslips. The monthly sum of €33 fee for this work comes from the partners, not from the Archdeaconry.

The Archdeaconry set up a specific sub account at the bank, to receive the monies from the partners and to pay salary and associated costs, and the fee to Datexia.

In fact, the Treasurer and the Secretary needed to complement the work of the payroll company, for such things as “Médecine du Travail”, “Formation”, “Mutuelle”, “Prévoyance” and paying the monthly salary once figures were received from Datexia. All costs are all covered by the project fund.

Archdeaconry involvement

The Archdeaconry has no say as to the employment conditions, pay or terms of the employment. There is no financial contribution from the Archdeaconry.

Full financial reports are sent to the partners.

The Refugee Officer’s Line Manager is based in Canterbury.

Current situation

The project is due to finish soon, and we are waiting for further information.

1.2 Net Zero Officer

Following the employment of the Refugee Officer, someone living in Lyon, France, was appointed in May 2024 to work as Net Zero Officer for the diocese, reporting to the Diocesan Office in London.

This post was entirely funded by the Diocese in Europe, who transferred the necessary funds to a specific Archdeaconry subaccount.

Practicalities and Archdeaconry involvement

Similarly to the employment of the Refugee Officer, Datexia was contracted to handle the payroll, while the Treasurer and the Secretary handled the associated costs and requirements (Médecine du Travail, Mutuelle, Prévoyance etc) The money disbursed came from the specific subaccount.

The Archdeaconry had no say in the terms of employment, and merely acted as an intermediary.

This contract ended in 2025 when the person was unable to continue in that role. The subaccount therefore was closed.

Annex 2

Several Clergy with PTO and Readers also attended.

Apologies for absence

Clergy

Apologies for absence:

Heather Aston, Jeremy Auld, John Bavington, Debbie Flach

Present

Hugh	Bearn
Andy	Brewerton
Roy	Cole
Jay	Colwill
Hazel	Door
Ben	Evans
John	Gay
Ben	Harding
Christopher	Harrison
Peter	Hooper
Jeffrey	John
Patrick	Malone
Stephen	Stephen
Donald	McFadyen
David	McLeod

Elected Lay Synod Representatives

Apologies for absence:

Lucy Gay, Alison Bearn, Renata Pepper, Alastair Ross

Present

Paul	Wigmore	John	Errey
Katharine	Giry-Deloison	Catherine	Chambers
Nicola	Karlsen	Geoffrey	Cornwall
Michelle	Lavaud	Anne	Dellar
Carol	Birch	Martin	Door
Alan	Mason	Christina	Galley
Carol Anne	Hart		
Barbara	Sauron		
Nancy	Austin		
Suzanne	Bréant		
Penelope	Vincent-Sweet		
Maggie	Devos		
Rosemary	Ulyett		
Charlotte	Lomax		
David	Bean		
Robbie	Gibson		
Christine	Portman		
Joseph Lee	Gagan		
Freda	King		
Anita	Phillips		
Morag	Jordan		
Patricia	Page		