

DIOCESE OF ST ANDREWS, DUNKELD AND DUNBLANE

Scottish Charity No SC017654



Diocesan Synod 2024

**9 March 2024
St Ninian's Cathedral, Perth**

Reports and Accounts 2022/23

DIOCESAN OFFICIALS and OFFICE BEARERS – 2024

Diocesan Trustees:	The Bishop The Dean The Chancellor The Registrar
Bishop:	The Right Revd Ian Paton
Dean:	The Very Revd Graham Taylor
Provost:	Vacant
Synod Clerk:	The Revd Canon Alasdair Coles
Chancellor:	Vacant
Registrar:	Mr Paul Keith
Diocesan Protection of Vulnerable Groups Protection Officer:	Revd Ian Boa, Diocesan Office Administrator
Warden of Lay Readers:	Mrs Lis Burke, Lay Reader

DIOCESAN COMMITTEES – 2024

STANDING COMMITTEE

The Bishop (Convener)
The Dean
The Chancellor
The Registrar
Convener of Administration Board
4 Clergy Representatives elected by the Area Councils
4 Lay Representatives elected by the Area Councils

In attendance:
Conveners of Diocesan Groups
Diocesan Office Manager

ADMINISTRATION BOARD

Mr Brendan Grimley (Convener)
The Bishop
The Dean
Mr Nick Cooke
Professor Alan Werritty
Mrs Elizabeth Roads

Ex Officio:
The Chancellor
The Registrar

In attendance:
Diocesan Office Manager

MISSION BOARD

Revd Canon Liz Baker (Convener)
Revd Canon Nerys Brown (Ministry Board) (Convener)
Revd Canon Dr Robert Harley (Global Partnership Group Convener)
Mx James Gardner (Young Peoples Committee and Youth Forum)
Vacant (Communications Group Convener)
Revd Dean Norby (Member of the Provincial Mission Board)
Revd Lesley Ann Craddock
Revd Christopher Lowden

In Attendance:
The Bishop
The Dean
Diocesan Officer Manager

MINISTRY BOARD

Revd Canon Nerys Brown (Convener)
Revd Liz Baker (Convener of the Mission Board)
Mr Ian Scott
Ms Cathy Johnston
Mrs Lis Burke (Lay Readers' Warden)
Revd Elaine Garman (Lay Ministries Group Convener)
Revd Christoph Wutscher

In Attendance:

The Bishop
The Dean
Bishop's PA

DIOCESAN ENVIRONMENT GROUP

Revd Elaine Garman (Convener)
Dr Elaine Cameron
Rev Gerry Dillon
Ms Cathy Johnston
Rev Carol Latimer
Mr Robert Nellist
Prof Alan Werritty
Mr Geoff Smith

In Attendance:

The Bishop
The Dean
Bishop's PA

PENDANT DIOCESAN COMMITTEES

Diocesan Buildings Committee

The Very Revd Graham Taylor (Convener)
Mr Neil Gaunt
Mr Brendan Grimley
Mr Robert Nellist
Mr Adrian Neville

In attendance: The Diocesan Office Administrator

The Diocesan Global Partnership Group

The Revd Canon Dr Robert Harley (Convener)
The Bishop
The Dean
Revd Canon Christine Fraser

Mx James Gardner

The Diocesan Communications Group

The Bishop
Mx James Gardner
Mrs Eleanor McGourty
Mrs Lis Burke

In attendance:
Bishop's PA

The Diocesan Pilgrimage Group

The Bishop (Convener)
Revd David Mackenzie Mills
Mr Nick Cooke
Revd Gennie Evans

In attendance:
Bishop's PA

The Diocesan Young Peoples' Committee

Revd Canon Christine Fraser (Convener)
Mx James Gardner
Mrs Morag Hendry
Revd Rachael Wright
Revd Sarah Shaw
Ms Leeanne Clark

**DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVES ON PROVINCIAL
BOARDS AND COMMITTEES – 2023/2024**

STANDING COMMITTEE

Vacant

FAITH AND ORDER BOARD

The Rt Revd Ian Paton

Revd Gerry Dillon

2023 – 2027

Mr Euan Grant

2023 - 2027

THE MISSION BOARD

The Rt Revd Ian Paton

The Revd Canon Liz Baker

2022 – 2026

THE ADMINISTRATION BOARD

Mr Brendan Grimley

2023 – 2027 (R)

Liturgy Committee

The Rt Revd Ian Paton

Revd Nerys Brown

2023 – 2027 (R)

Revd Canon Christoph Wutscher

2020 - 2024

Church in Society Committee

Revd Bonnie Evans Hills

2020 – 2025

Inter-Church Relations Committee

Revd Carol Latimer

2021 – 2025

Interfaith Relations Committee

Revd Bonnie Evans Hills

2020 – 2025

Revd Gerry Dillon

2023 – 2027

Revd Lara Dose

2023 - 2027

Global Partnerships Committee

Vacant

Committee for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Vacant

Youth Committee

Mx James Gardner

Miss R Cromwell

Buildings Committee

Mr Neil Gaunt

2022 – 2026(R)

Provincial Environment Group

Mrs Cathy Johnston

2021 - 2025

REPORTS

The Reports included in these papers will be TAKEN AS READ at Diocesan Synod. There will not be time to read them during the meeting. Please read them beforehand so that you can make the most effective contribution and get the most of your Synod.

STANDING COMMITTEE

2023 saw a continuation of working together using online means of communication. It appears that the normalisation of using video conferencing during the pandemic has brought unexpected benefits. This has resulted in our Diocesan Boards, Committees and Groups continuing to meet mainly online for convenience and with a thought to Climate Change and our Carbon Footprint. We thank all of these groups for their dedicated commitment to these tasks and to ensure the smooth running of our Diocese.

The Climate Change Group realigned itself with Provincial structures to become the Diocesan Environment Group. A review of its terms of reference has also been agreed. As the Provincial structure takes form following the appointment of Mr Paul Williams, the Net Zero Delivery Director, DEG have been in consultation with Diocesan Boards, Committees and Groups, to draw up a Diocesan Net Zero Action Plan which will align closely with that of the Province. This is a major piece of work that will necessitate good communication to bring it to fruition. As Charges develop and formalise 5-10 Year Plans, the challenge of responding to climate change will need to be a central element of any future developments.

During 2023, the Very Revd Hunter Farquharson retired as Provost at St Ninian's Cathedral, Perth and the Revd Stephen Butler retired from Pittenweem and Elie. We welcomed the Revd Duncan Strathie to Auchterarder and Muthill. Early in 2024 we welcomed both the Revd Aaron Moffit-Jackman to the newly formed linkage of Bridge of Allan and Doune and the Revd Sarah Miller to Cupar and Ladybank.

This year saw further changes in the Diocesan Office. Following the retirement of Carol Aitchison, the Office staff now comprises Holly Scott as Bishop's Secretary and the Revd Ian Boa as Office Administrator. The Diocese is wonderfully served also by our other staff, Eleanor McGourty our Admin Assistant, and by those who give their time voluntarily, especially Brendan Grimley, Convener of our Administration Board. Together with many others who give their time and expertise for the work of this Diocese, we thank them with great appreciation for all that they do.

In addition, following the retirement of Robert Nellist, the Revd Ian Boa has also taken on the position of Diocesan Safeguarding Officer. He is working closely with the newly appointed team at Province as a response to future changes in Safeguarding legislation is rolled out.

Another to be mentioned is the Very Revd Graham Taylor. His dedication to the role of Dean has been outstanding and I am grateful for his support.

The Standing Committee works on behalf of Diocesan Synod when Synod itself is not meeting, that is, most of the year round. The Committee meets regularly to receive Reports from the Boards and Committees, from the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, and from the Bishop and Dean about Charge matters. On behalf of Synod it makes and endorses decisions to enable the good governance of the Diocese. As Convener of the Standing Committee, I would like to thank all its members for everything they do to represent Synod and to carry forward its work, and to add my own thanks to them, and everyone who gives their time and skill to support the work of the Church in this Diocese.

+Ian St Andrews

DEANS REPORT

Having now completed another year as Dean, once again I have found it to be both challenging and rewarding at various times.

Challenging and a steep learning curve in many different areas, including all the different Diocesan Boards and Committees I serve on, being a Trustee, overseeing the vacancies in our diocese, sharing in ministry with the Bishop, to name but a few. A great challenge has been getting my head around all the involvement a Dean has, as well as juggling my time between diocese and the congregation I was called to serve. But a rewarding year with lots of patience and help from others, I am incredibly grateful to you all once again.

The rewarding parts for me has included some Dean's Visitations to our new clergy, trying to offer some encouragement and support and offer a welcome to our diocese. As well as offering support and a listening ear to many other clergy in their appointments, through my Dean's visitations. My sincere thanks to Eleanor in the office for arranging all these visits and appointments for me.

I have loved the opportunity of working with many more charges on making new appointments over the past year, along with Bishop Ian and Vestries. This has been an immense honour to be involved in. Getting to know and work with the Vestry Members, as they look at their congregational profile and advertising, and attending the actual interviews on the day.

A new area of work for me over this past year, has been working with Vestries on Ministry Reviews, setting up a team called the Dean's review group. This was to help vestries and congregations look at their 5 – 10-year plan, following on from the Bishops Charge at last year's Synod. I would take this opportunity on your behalf to thank all of those who have offered to serve on this group so willingly and have been invaluable to many vestries and congregations leading an away day for them.

The Deans throughout the Province have continued to meet here in Perth over this past year. This has been a great support and encouragement for all of us. Although each diocese is different in many ways, it's been invaluable to share and to learn together.

I have valued the support of the Staff Group who try and meet fortnightly, they are great colleagues to work alongside, and have been an immense support to me in my role. My deep gratitude to Holly, Ian, Eleanor and Brendan for all the wise council and support they have offered to me; it has been a privilege to work alongside and be part of a great office team.

I cannot forget to thank the congregation of St. John's, Perth, and the ministry team there for allowing me to fulfil this ministry. I have to say it takes a huge chunk of time out of my week, so for their love and support I am incredibly grateful once again. They are a very patient congregation.

The one person I have left to the last again, but by no means least is Bishop Ian for putting his trust in me and inviting me to share with him in the ministry of our diocese as Dean. I want to acknowledge his tremendous support, encouragement, and friendship and I look forward very much to sharing with him in all the future as we continue on this journey together. I thank him deeply for everything he offers to us all. The love and support he gives is valuable and beyond measure, as I'm sure you would all agree.

I look forward with great hope and encouragement into this next year, and I look forward to seeing many of you on my travels.

Dean Graham.

MISSION BOARD

Introduction

The Mission Board works to offer support to charges in the Diocese and to communicate the priorities and action plan of the Provincial Mission Board whilst working closely with the Diocesan Ministry Board and the Climate Change Group, as good communication between us is vital for taking forward the Missional work of the church in our Diocese.

In 2023 we have communicated the work of mission in the charges in our Diocese to the Provincial Mission Board, with one of the members also a member of that Board having taken part in a Provincial Local Development Committee held at the Bield in April. The links we developed with the Climate Change Group helped to plan the gathering 'Calming the Squall' which took place in October 2023, and we will continue to work with the Climate Change Group and where appropriate the Ministry Board, as care for Creation is one of the elements in the mission of the church and is part of this Board's Contribution to the Draft Diocesan Net Zero Action Plan which we have considered and commented on.

The Board recognises that it is important to be a resource for the Diocese but also to listen to the needs of churches and congregation and at our meeting in January 2024 which took place at the Bield we looked to develop our 5/10 year plan and encourage the development of work plans across our constituent groups, this will be completed in 2024.

Being aware that Mission (*missio dei*) in its broadest terms is the total redeeming work of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – in saving, healing, restoring and renewing the World, we are using the 5 marks of Mission and the imagery and the story from John's Gospel of Christ's encounter with the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well (*John 4: 4 -26*) to encourage our Diocese and congregations to become those wells and that source of encounter with the 'living spirit of Christ' to our people and the communities we serve.

There are exciting examples of Mission within our Diocese to report:

1. The Central Fife Centre of Mission

The Central Fife Centre of Mission is a partnership with St Luke's, Glenrothes; St Finnian's, Lochgelly; the Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane; and Church Army (CA), who's vision is, "... for everyone to encounter God's love, and be empowered to transform their communities through faith in words and actions."

What constitutes mission is every action that we do, in Christ's name, for the use of each person we meet. This means seeing in all people a person with dignity, and in all actions from celebrating Holy Communion to serving food and chat.

Specifically, in Glenrothes we have refurbished the church, and this has allowed many people to notice the church as well as come in. There are many groups that the community can access, from addiction recovery, mental health support, council services, crafts, etc.. We have also created a project with funding from the National Lottery in which we are providing food from the pantry, kitchen or at our community meal every week to the community. Being able to offer to the community has meant that the community have completely embraced us. We have chaplaincies in the local schools and homeless projects, and we are participants in Fife wide discussions about Climate Change, Bereavement, and community development.

We hope to start our refurbishing of Lochgelly soon and have already met with many partners, in the local community, that are looking forward to working with us.

Fr Gerry Dillon
13th February

2. A New Diocesan Curacy

To be based in Stanley will provide a fresh start for the St Columba's after its refurbishment, with new opportunities for ecumenical mission.

We have held 3 meetings of the Mission Board in 2023/24 with our first meeting of 2024 taking place in January. The board includes in its membership those who have specific missional expertise or convene/are members of the following 5 constituent groups.

The Gathering Group
The Diocesan Youth Committee
The Global Partnership Group
The Communication Group
The Pilgrimage Group

The work undertaken by these groups supports the church across generational, geographical, and digital boundaries, and the activities in the previous year are report below.

The Gathering Group

In 2023 there was no formal meeting of the Gathering Group. However, members of the group provided support to the Diocesan Environmental Group to hold the Calming the Squall event at St Luke' Glenrothes in September. The day involved presentations and speakers from Planning Aid Scotland, Rev David Cameron from Eco Congregations Scotland, Local Energy Scotland, and the Fife Communities Climate Action Network, as well. Cathy Johnstone also shared the SEC Provincial Environmental Toolkit which has been developed to support charges in their planning and implementation of their Climate Action Plans.

James Gardner
12th February 2024

The Diocesan Youth Committee

The Youth Committee have been reflecting over the past year to try to ascertain where young people are located in the Diocese and a survey was taken at Diocesan Synod 2023. The Committee are looking at ways of supporting charges in the Diocese and also how to keep contact with those who are part of the Provincial Youth network. James Gardner the Diocesan Children and Youth Officer.

The main event of the year was a competition on the subject of Christmas and Climate Crisis where entrants invited to design an image which encompassed the subject and could be used for an e-card or poster. 2 entries were received; and they both received a £50 voucher. The winning entry from Hannah Buxel, Dunblane, was used as the Diocesan E-card for Christmas and the other entry from Joanna Drage, St Andrews was used on the Diocesan Facebook page as a banner. Congratulations to both girls. The entries are below



Hannah Buxel



Joanna Drage

James Gardner (report below) is working with the Youth Forum to ascertain what activities the young people would like to do in 2024; some of the Diocesan Youth Network attended the Pilgrimage to Iona in October 2023 and are happy to come along to churches to speak about their experiences. There are a number of Provincial Sleepovers organised for 2024, details of which can be found on the Diocesan Website under Children and Young People.

The Committee continues to keep contact with the Provincial Youth Network and would like to encourage those at the end of S1 – S6 at school to attend the annual Provincial Youth Camp held normally at Glenalmond. Plans are being formed for this at present.

The Committee have met once in 2024 and further dates will be organised in due course.

As always, the Committee are keen to support Young Peoples Ministry in the Diocese and welcome suggestions for future events and how charges can be supported.

*Christine Fraser, Convenor
11th February 2024*

Diocesan Young people’s Forum

In 2023 the General Synod provided each Provincial Committee with a Workplan with priorities for the year up to General Synod 2024. The Diocesan Children and Youth Officer has been involved in this work. At the end of 2023, Lucy Peat and Jack Foster agreed to be our new Provincial Youth Committee 12-18 Youth representatives. Thank you to Rebecca Cromwell and Adrian Buxel who had previously been members of the Provincial Youth Committee (PYC) from the Diocese. Rebecca has also been the PYC Chair for a couple of years. A role she took on with great skill and determination.

The Young People’s forum is greatly supported by the Diocesan Young People’s Committee and my thanks to Rev Canon Christine Fraser and the rest of the Young People’s Committee for their support over 2023.

WORK PLAN

Provincial Board, Committee or other body	Convener	Officer/Secretary	Priorities for period to General Synod 2024	Timescale
Youth Committee	Tembu Rongong	Claire Benton-Evans	1. To plan a programme of Diocesan-hosted Provincial meetups for Provincial youth.	Ongoing 2023/2024
Up-to-date 26.10.23			2. To book and plan the Youth Week 2024.	Ongoing till August 2024

Young Peoples Forum	Officer/ Secretary	Priorities for the period to Diocesan Synod 2025	Timescale
	James Gardner – Diocesan Children & Youth Officer	1. To promote YEEK 24 and Provincial Youth events and activities	Ongoing 2024-2025
		2. To develop a programme of termly events for young people in the Diocese including at least one residential experience to fit between Provincial Youth events.	Ongoing 2024/2025
		3. To support & and develop a Young Adult’s network of 18+ in the Diocese.	Ongoing 2024/2025
		4. To get an 18-25 Diocesan representative for the Provincial Youth Committee.	By General Synod 2024
		5. Host and organise a Provincial Youth Event in June 2024 in Lochgelly	June 2024
		6. To go out to charges in the Diocese to share young people’s experiences of Provincial and Diocesan events such as the Iona Pilgrimage in October 2023.	Ongoing 2024-2025
		7. Young People to be empowered and heard in the church. Including issues around Climate Change and achieving Net Zero by 2030	Ongoing 2024-2025

*James Gardner, Diocesan Children & Youth Officer
12th February 2024*

The Global Partnership Committee

The Global Partnership Group has continued to meet on Zoom on a regular basis. This year attendees have been +Ian, Dean Graham, Canons Liz Baker, Christine Fraser and Bob Harley, James Gardner, Vivienne Underwood, and Karen McClain Kiefer.

News from Amazonia

At our Global Partnership Group meeting on 1 February 2024 +Ian reported that +Martinez would arrive in our Diocese on the evening of Saturday 3 February with her interpreter, Paulo. She would attend Sunday services in the Cathedral, including a special evensong at 1500. There would be a dinner in her honour at Tabla, 173 South Street, Perth. Bob was asked to check which Global Partners Group members could attend the dinner. On Monday +Marinez would attend the Diocesan Office to meet people. Thereafter she would attend the Clergy Conference, heading for home on Thursday 8 February.

+Ian reported that +Marinez had got a lot going on in the Diocese of Amazonia. She had shared photographs of rivers that were drying up, and we hope our partnership can help both of us as we work as churches to support our people in the struggle against Climate Change.

News from Calcutta

Sadhu Sundar Singh Church, in Jagathi, Howrah, under St. Thomas' Church Pastorate, celebrated its 34th annual Thanksgiving service and the Birthday of Sadhu Sundar Singh on 3.9.23 with great joy. There was a day long programme involving sports and competitions for all ages. The Rt Revd Dr Paritosh Canning was welcomed in local custom with dance and song in Santhali tradition. In his message he said that we rejoice that a church has been named after our own saint, Sadhu Sundar Singh, and founded indigenously by the Rt Revd Dr Dinesh Chandra Gorai who was also Moderator of the Church of North India. After 34 years the church has 36 families and a communicant membership of 120. Most of the members have also been able to buy their own houses in the neighbourhood. Bishop Canning worked for 9 years as its presbyter stationed in St Thomas' Church Howrah prior to his consecration as Bishop. He looked after other churches in the area and constructed quarters to accommodate more clergy for the "Riverside Parishes", a phrase he coined himself. These churches now have regular monthly fasting and prayer meetings and revival meetings every quarter.

In July 2023 +Paritosh and six of his team visited our Diocese including trips to Pitlochry, Glenrothes and St Andrews.

One of the key developments in our links with the Diocese of Calcutta will be a plan to link churches and schools in our Diocese with their counterparts in Kolkata, and in December a reciprocal visit by Bishop Ian and Ross Stirling- Young to the Diocese of Calcutta continued to develop and deepen our partnership and to encourage the growth in friendship and co-operation between the Dioceses, indeed it is that visit that has proved the impetus for Bishop Ian's Lent Appeal.

The Global Partnership Committee would love to hear from you if you are able to join the committee or would like to progress a link with either of our Partnership Diocese.

*Revd Canon Bob Harley, Convenor
February 2024*

The Communications Group

The Diocesan Communications group said farewell and good luck to Karen McClain Kiefer as she left her post as the Diocesan Missioner in August to start her training and formation for the ministry at the SEI. Our thanks to Karen for all the support she gave to the Diocese in her role and our prayers are with her as she begins this next step in her ministry. The Diocesan Communications group is made up of a small team of Diocesan Office staff and other members of the Diocese who support the running of our Diocesan social media and Website. A special thanks to Lis Burke, Warden of Lay Readers for her thoughtful weekly posts that include photos, and images on the lectionary texts and themes each week.

*James Gardner
12th February 2024*

The Pilgrimage Group

Report from the Pilgrim Pastor

Over the last 15 months I have led various walks of different distances along the FPW for individuals and different groups, including 30 lads from a boys brigade. Some folk walked the whole way with me last summer over a period of time. Numbers ranged from 3 to 45. In these walks I give people something to think about, some historical facts of the area and some spiritual input as well as time for conversations and silence. I have given talks to church and secular groups and attended tourism and historical building meetings. I work closely with the Fife Coast and Countryside Trust who manage the route. Over the winter I have been writing a guidebook which will be published in the spring. This year I will be leading day walks again but in May I will lead a pilgrimage walking the entire route over 5 days staying in church halls. The focus this year continues is on developing infrastructure along the FPW and also seeking to widen knowledge of this route outside Fife and Scotland. It would be great to see more Episcopal churches interested in a pilgrimage walk.

*Rev'd Duncan Weaver
Pilgrim Pastor
The Fife Pilgrim Way*

Conclusion

As convenor I would like to thank all members serving on the Mission Board for their time, energy and input and their contributions to this report, but also to thank all our charges and congregation in the Diocese for the works they do in our communities across the Diocese, spreading by their actions and words the love of Christ to all they meet.

*Revd Canon Liz Baker.
February 2024*

MINISTRY BOARD

The Ministry Board is in a period of transition following the appointment of Revd Canon Nerys Brown as the new Convener of the Board. A big thanks go to the outgoing Convener, The Very Revd Graham Taylor.

The Ministry Board oversee the following:

- Ministry Development (CMD)
- Curacies
- Lay Ministries
- Vocations

A wide range of discussions on these topics take place, gathering together information from the various pending boards and committees. The convenors of both the Ministry Board and Mission Board try to attend each other's meetings. This has proved to be valuable.

ADMINISTRATION BOARD

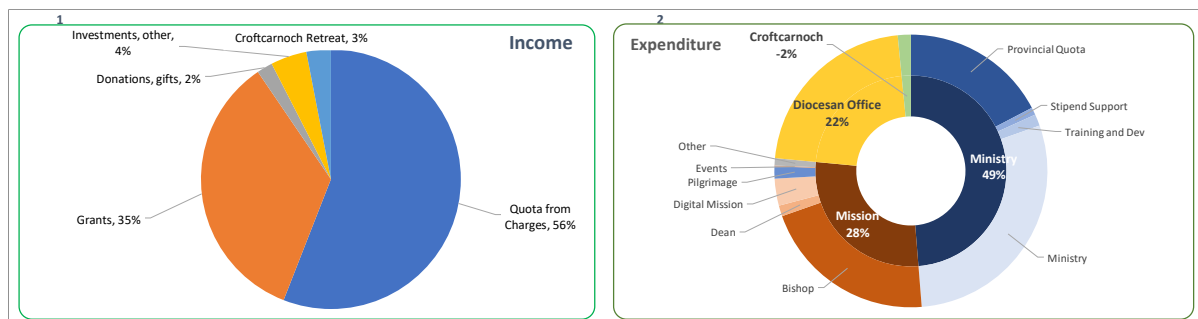
The Diocesan Administration Board has the responsibility for the governance and business processes within the Diocese. The Board has overview of Diocesan financial affairs, monitored through monthly management accounts, and of the preparation of the annual accounts and budget submitted to Standing Committee in advance of Diocesan Synod. The Board reports directly to Standing Committee and advises on all matters of finance and governance. The Board is the direct link to the equivalent and corresponding bodies within the Province in these specific areas.

The Board administers the processes for stipend and other financial support of Charges, drawn from resources within the Diocese and from the Provincial Mission and Ministry Support Grant.

Over the past year The Board has directly provided:

- Continued support (together with the Church Army) for the Central Fife Centre of Mission,
- Stipendiary support for St Margaret’s, Leven,
- Stipendiary provision for a Transitional Priest-in-Charge at St Columba’s, Stanley
- Financial support for the mixed-mode training placement in Central Fife,
- Financial support for the curacy in Dunblane
- Continued Funding for the part-time Digital Missioner post
- Distribution of the Transitional Stipend Support grant to charges.

The ability to fund mission and ministry activities across the Diocese, and to support charges when needed, comes in large part from Charge Quota.



It has been a rather challenging year where we have incurred a small deficit. You’ll see from the charts, that 56% of the income has been received directly from quota (down from 66% last year last year), and 77% of expenditure has been disbursed in Mission & Ministry, and Grants to charges (slightly up from 76% last year). All of charge income during the year has been expended on mission activities. Reserve funds have been used to cover the deficit, which has again been achieved using available cash accounts. No investments have been sold in the past year. It has been a turbulent year for investments, with paper value showing losses over the course of the year.

The requested level of contribution from charges to fund Mission & Ministry, i.e. Quota, has been 16% for several years. The Board is recommending that Sanding Committee retain that level for 2024. Quota contribution is so important to the spiritual health of charges in the Diocese, reflected in their ability to fund mission and ministry. Charges continue to face financial challenges and costs can become burdens. Quota is the best vehicle we have at the moment for an equalisation of burdens. All charges that have benefited from Episcopal support, support from the Dean, and any financial assistance have, in large part, the other charges to thank for sharing their funds to enable that. It has been encouraging to see that a handful of charges opted to forego a share of the

Transitional Stipend Support grant – intended to ease the burden of the 11% increase in stipend salary – in favour of improving the allocation to their neighbours in most need.

The Board anticipates that Charges will face increased financial challenges in the coming year. Two are significant: 1) costs relating to the registration under the Scottish Governments Land Registration law, and 2) costs supporting the SEC ambition for Net Zero 2030. Our ability to support charges, in effect sharing from the common purse, is primarily related to amount we receive in quota. We anticipate a review the Quota level at Synod 2025.

The value of investments, and therefore value of Diocesan reserves, continues to be volatile; the general trend being downward. The reserves have been built up by very careful fiscal management over the past several years, and once reduced, will take a long time to rebuild.

In order to best use investments, the Diocesan 5-year plan will be a response to best serve charge needs based on their 5-year plans.

The Board maintains a Diocesan Risk Register which covers financial, reputational and delivery risks, in addition to other broader issues of sustainability. The Risk Register is subject to frequent review and improvement. The main risks identified are the same as last year; they continue to require careful observation:

- Safeguarding and Wellbeing – there are no active cases, but the impact of any case is potentially significant.
- Finances – As evidenced by diminishing income, there is an increased risk that finances will be stressed. The Diocese has reserves to draw upon if needed, while recognising the long-term impact of drawing on the reserves.
- Charge Management – increasingly charges are finding it difficult to fill all required posts to maintain good governance. While the Administration Board has been able to provide some service as last resort, it is not sustainable in the long term. Alternative models will continue to be explored, for example single vestry/office bearers for joint/linking charges.

The Board exercises governance and oversight of all church buildings through its pendant committee, the Diocesan Building Committee (DBC). The Province provides limited funding and requires that all applications for grants or loans are thoroughly scrutinised by the DBC before being submitted. The DBC continues to exercise diligence and assist Charges with suggestions and alternatives where practical and possible.

We continue to emphasise the importance of adequate and timely Quinquennial Inspections both of church buildings and continue to raise the importance of carrying out inspections of rectories.

I am most grateful to all the members of the Administration Board who give a significant amount of their time, experience, and expertise to the wide spectrum of issues we consider in the Board. The Board is especially indebted to the work of Ian Boa, Holly Scott and Eleanor McGourty in the Diocesan Office.

We are always indebted to Martin Howarth and his colleagues in Morris & Young for all they do so efficiently for us with the accounts and managing the stipend payroll (Central Stipend Scheme). They always go beyond the necessary duty to ensure our financial and charitable responsibilities have been discharged.

Brendan Grimley
Convener – Diocesan Administration Board

DIOCESAN BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

The Diocesan Buildings Committee is a pendant committee of the Diocesan Administration Board and is guided by Canon 35 in the Code of Canons.

The work of the Committee is to assist in any matter concerning all church premises including rectories and ancillary buildings. The Committee also assists with the application of grants from charges to the Provincial Buildings Grant Making Body.

It is essential that all charges adhere to the Code of Canons and Digest of Resolutions regarding Quinquennial surveys on all church plant and curtilage. Where possible I would encourage all charges to notify the Committee of any proposed building work or maintenance in order that any advice or guidance may be offered.

The Committee acknowledge that the maintenance of church buildings and plant can on occasion be challenging and demanding. I would like to thank vestries and clergy for the important work that they undertake. Please do not hesitate to contact the Committee should you have any question regarding building work.

As chair of the committee, I would like to thank all those who work tirelessly to sit on the Board and give of their expertise, their time and talents is invaluable to me and to our diocese which they serve.

I would also add my grateful thanks to Mr Brendan Grimley for stepping in as Chair in my absence. This has been very much appreciated.

We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome Ian Boa as secretary to the committee and thank him for all his assistance so far.

The DBC are seeking new suitably qualified members to serve on the Board. If anyone knows of anyone that may have the skills, please encourage them to chat with the Dean or Mr Brendan Grimley.

Dean Graham.

Chair of Board.

DIOCESAN ENVIRONMENT GROUP

Introduction

The Diocesan Climate Change Group was established in March 2021. During 2023 its remit was widened to Diocesan Environment Group. It reports to the Bishop and Standing Committee to support, encourage, enable, and monitor all activities that reduce the negative impact on the environment, and to support the 5th Mark of Mission to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth. The overall objective is for the Diocese to support action towards the goals of the SEC Net Zero Action Plan 2023-2030, and the Lambeth Calls on The Environment and Sustainable Development.

Membership:

Dr Elaine Cameron
Rev Gerry Dillon
Rev Canon Elaine Garman (Convenor)
Ms Cathy Johnston
Rev Carol Latimer
Mr Geoff Smith
Dean Graham Taylor
Prof Alan Werritty



The Group is supported by the Bishop's Secretary, Holly Scott. To reflect the wider remit of the Group i.e. work on wider environmental issues we are seeking another member with expertise/passion who could contribute to the work. If you are that person or know someone who might be approached, please speak to one of the current members.

Background

At the 2023 General Synod the SEC agreed its Net Zero Action Plan.

(<https://www.scotland.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/NZAP-For-GS-2023-Final.pdf>)

One of its agreed outcomes is that each Diocese should have its own Net Zero Action Plan and that this should be received at Diocesan Synod by 2024. The purpose of the NZAP is to guide the work of the Diocese and importantly to enable the Diocese to monitor its own performance in the journey to Net Zero. The Diocesan Environment Group (DEG) has consulted with Committees and Boards within the Diocese on the NZAP. Our NZAP is ambitious, reflecting the urgency of the situation. The NZAP is not the document to which each of the Charges is directed. That remains the Net Zero Toolkit which can be found here (<https://toolkit.secnetzero.org>)

Work with the Province on Net Zero

The SEC has appointed Paul Williams, SEC Net Zero Delivery Director and has or is in the process of recruiting five Net Zero 'Champions' who will support the Dioceses in the delivery of their NZAPs. These Champions encompass five roles: Innovation (finding new ways to take net zero action), Sustainability (supporting upgrade plans for church properties, enabling Charges to seek out the best guidance for procurement, contracts, and sustainability best practice), Carbon Reduction & Data (helping Vestries and Dioceses gather the data they need to track their progress and prioritise actions), Clean Energy (providing guidance on energy efficiency and installation of clean energy in buildings), and Empowerment (providing a platform for sharing accomplishments and collating knowledge across the Province). One of the five people will be our key contact, but we will be able to access all the posts as required.

A cross-Diocesan group has also been established to help share knowledge across the Province.

Draft Diocesan Net Zero Action Plan

The Provincial Net Zero Outcomes have been used. The Provincial Environment Group has populated some of the sections (petals) in the SEC NZAP with outcomes, but not all. They have prioritised certain work and it is those sections which have Provincial outcomes. However, in this Diocese we have been working for the past three years on other areas as well and this is reflected in our Diocesan draft. The current draft outlines actions for 2024-2025. Subsequent iterations of the document will encompass actions for the years that follow.

Work throughout 2024/25 will be to deliver on the actions contained in the NZAP. Synod is asked to approve the Net Zero Action Plan for the Diocese.

Rev Canon Elaine C Garman

Convenor Diocesan Environment Group

PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS (PVG): SAFEGUARDING REPORT FROM THE DIOCESAN PROTECTION OFFICER

I came into this role when I joined the Diocese as Office Administrator. I am extremely grateful to Robert Nellist as he has been a great help in my settling into the position.

I join the team as a period of transition with regards to Safeguarding. Mr John Wyllie was appointed as Head of Safeguarding for the Province and leads the Safeguarding Team, comprising of Daphne Audsley, Vicki Anderson. A further post will be created in the near future.

Plans for 2024

In person safeguarding training will be offered to clergy and vestry members. Shorter Zoom sessions on PVG will be available for Co-ordinators who are new to the role or need additional advice.

Changes to the PVG scheme

The latest information from disclosure Scotland is that the long-awaited changes to the PVG scheme will be implemented in April 2025. With that in mind an audit of information held has been started. The annual return was much shorter than usual as there will be additional work for Co-ordinators in relation to the audit during 2024.

Revd Ian Boa
Diocesan Protection Officer

A REPORT FROM ST NINIAN'S CATHEDRAL

In July 2023 the Very Revd Hunter Farquharson retired after 23 years as Provost of St Ninian's Cathedral. His ministry was significant and was celebrated with much thanksgiving by the congregation. The Vestry, chaired by John Wright, working with the Bishop and Dean, is preparing the process of appointing a new Provost, who we hope will be in post during the summer of 2024.

In September 2023 Chris Ahern was taken on as Cathedral Manager, accountable to the Vestry, to manage the day to day running of the Cathedral. He is also the line manager for the employees of the Cathedral.

The Cathedral is committed to supporting St Ninian's Episcopal Primary School, and a close relationship has been built up over many years. The Revd Peter Higson (Cathedral deacon) serves as the Chaplain.

The Director of Music leads the Cathedral choir, which supports worship. A new development is the training of choristers from a local private school

A new venture, 'Warm Spaces, 'was set up offering a place for people to be during the day. The Cathedral has worked in conjunction with other providers of warm spaces and covers a Wednesday and a Friday. A small grant was received from the local Council to help cover the costs of extra heating.

The Vestry are looking at new ways along with other agencies to attract tourists and those interested in the historical significance of our Cathedral.

As the Cathedral's 'Interim Pastor 'I would like to thank all the people who have enabled the Cathedral to flourish during the vacancy, especially the Vestry members, the office and other staff, the choir and servers, and volunteers who make so much happen at St Ninian's, and enable it to be a welcoming 'mother church 'to the Diocese.

Bishop Ian

REPORTS FROM THE AREA COUNCILS

Area Councils are encouraged to meet and share resources and information. Some Area Councils have been meeting on a regular basis and have their reports below. Others have not managed to do this due to a lack of personnel, but it is hoped that these councils will meet very soon.

Dunblane Area Council

The Dunblane Area Council has not met during the past year.

Dunkeld Area Council

The Dunkeld Area Council has not met during the past year, and currently we have no Convenor, but we are working and praying to move forward in 2024 and recruit new officers for the Council.

Revd Canon Liz Baker (Secretary)

St Andrews East Area Council

Our Area Council has been without a Secretary since 2022. Diocesan Constitution requires each Area Council's Secretary should be occupied by a member of the clergy. Sadly, there has been no replacement currently available to fill the post. Today, at Diocesan Synod, I am making a formal plea for a member of clergy to undertake this crucial role

Margaret Gray
Convenor Area Council, St Andrews East

The St Andrew's West Area Council

2023 saw the return of face-to face meetings and these were very well received.

In February the meeting was held at St Peter's. Kirkcaldy where the speaker, Carol Morton from St Peter's gave an excellent illustrated talk on her time in Jerusalem with the Church of Scotland where her husband was minister at St Andrew's Jerusalem. Whilst there she became very involved with the Palestinians and spoke about their struggles as well as describing the craft co-operatives which were set up. Jan Benvie, from St Margaret's Rosyth joined her with the presentation. Carol showed a DVD of a visit she made with others from Fair Trade visiting the various settlements. She described her contact since returning from Jerusalem and her involvement with Haddal, the Palestinian shop in Edinburgh. She is taking a study tour out to The Holy Land in May 2023. As well as a very interesting talk, Carol brought along examples of the high quality crafts which are available at the shop and also spoke a little about the conflict where there are organization's for both sides working toward a hope for peace.

In May, the meeting was held at St Margaret's Leven. Ross Stirling-Young, a second-year diocesan ordinand with SEI gave a fascinating illustrated presentation about his scholarship study course at St Georges College, Jerusalem entitled "Footsteps of Jesus". He was one of 34 attendees mainly from the Church of England and the American Episcopal Church for a two-week visit. The College is beside St George's Cathedral and he spoke about the gardens being filled with flora and fauna found in the Bible. The college is situated on the Palestinian side of

Jerusalem and good ecumenical relations were maintained between Christians and Muslims. The 600km Separation Wall which separates Palestine from Israel has a number of murals painted by Banksy, mostly centred around freedom and peace which seems to be a common theme throughout.

The course, Mission and Ministry, concentrated on how to work together with different denominations and how to utilise each individuals' skillsets. Each student was given a particular biblical location and asked to present in that location. Ross was allocated the Church of the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor where he led a reflection and the church at Magdala where he offered intercessions, and where he felt very connected to Mary Magdalene, after whom the church was dedicated.

Ross spoke very movingly of his experiences following in the footsteps where Jesus trod and recounted one particular trip to a convent where he was taken underground to see a first century marketplace, still preserved; and underneath the present site. The slides gave a good representation of his travels and his respect in recounting many of his experiences shone through. In closing, he thanked the donor of the scholarship for enabling him to have such a moving experience and was asked to make a return date to recount his experience at Canterbury earlier in the year and Arunima Hospice in Kolkata.

In November the meeting was held at Holy Trinity Dunfermline. The speaker David Moodie from Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees was unable to attend the meeting due to illness and it was agreed to invite him as a speaker in 2024. The remainder of the meeting took the form of a business meeting where attendees were reminded of the constituted role of area councils within the diocese and a reminder that items to be included in each charges vestry agenda are:

1. PVG Report
2. Health and Safety
3. Climate Change/Zero Carbon
4. 5-10 year planning

The Annual Area Council Service was held at St Margaret's Rosyth, well attended, and took the form of a service based on the Church's Year, with readings and hymns reflecting the changing seasons within the church. A choir and musician from Rosyth provided music and there was an opportunity to continue fellowship with refreshments after the service.

The programme for 2024 has been set.

All meetings are held at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated.

Tuesday 20th February at St Peter's Kirkcaldy Speaker David Moodie, Scottish Faiths Action on Refugees

Thursday 16th May at St Paul's Kinross; Speaker James Gardner, Children and Youth Officer and members of the Diocesan Youth Network on their pilgrimage to Iona

Saturday/Sunday 7th/8th September Area Council Service at Holy Trinity Dunfermline time TBA

Wednesday 13th November at St Margaret's Leven; Speaker Isabelle Pottinger on "RISE UP Against Domestic Abuse"

As always meetings are open to any interested parties who wish to attend.

The Revd Canon Christine Fraser
West Fife Area Council Secretary

REPORT FROM THE MOTHERS' UNION



Prayer continues to be our central focus and our prayer chain is there for anyone who wants or needs prayer not just our members. It is as anonymous as required though a small amount of information helps to focus the prayers. Please contact me in the first instance if you would like us to pray for anyone at any time sarah@thegammells.com

Our monthly prayers on the second Tuesday of the month at 11.30am in the Lady Chapel at St Ninian's have continued and we still send out the prayers via e mail to all our members so that we can all continue to join together at that time in prayer. This time is open to anyone to join us.

The Midday prayers each day also continue to be live streamed on the Mothers' Union Facebook page (an open time so you do not have to join Facebook) with members throughout the world joining in. It really reinforces the world-wideness of our membership.

Our diocesan events have included our Annual Lady Day service at St John's, Perth with Bishop Ian preaching. This was followed by a presentation from one of our members speaking about raising awareness of Domestic Abuse. Following on a meeting was held with Bishop Ian who is very supportive of this work.

In conjunction with Mary Sumner House (MU Headquarters) a Mothers' Union Provincial Committee has now been formed to continue this much needed work of raising awareness and there is a pilot running in St Andrew's diocese which it is hoped will be increased to involve the other diocese in Scotland.

In August we celebrated Mary Sumner Day with a service of thanksgiving at St Catharine's, Blairgowrie and a lunch after at a local hostelry.

In October we held our Annual Meeting and as well as the usual business we decided that this year we would invite churches and or communities to have a red chair in a prominent position as part of the Rise Up Against Domestic Abuse campaign launched by Mary Sumner House. The chair represented someone who was no longer with us, who had either been murdered by their partner or taken their own life.

Our work in local prisons has largely been stopped by the prisons themselves but we continue to collect pants, socks, bags, and towels as well as unused greetings cards for HMP Stirling (previously Cornton Vale). We also made up over 30 emergency toiletry bags which were given to a local cottage hospital and Women's Aid. We are continuing to build a relationship with Women's Aid in Scotland

Our continuing bi-monthly newsletter keeps members informed about past and future events.

We have one or two members about to be enrolled, but have sadly lost other members who have died or moved away to be nearer family.

We gave an AFIA holiday (Away From It All) to a family this year with 6 children who enjoyed a few days away and hope to be able to do the same next year if asked. Referrals can come from clergy as well as Social workers or doctors.

Centrally Mothers' Union continues to empower women throughout the world with literacy and savings schemes as well as other areas of support. These enable women to earn a living and contribute to the marriage which means they gain more respect from their husbands and

violence towards them decreases. It also enables them to send their children to school which increases their chances in life.

All our meetings and diocesan events are open to everyone, male or female, married or not young or old and we look forward to welcoming you.

Sarah Gammell
Mothers' Union Diocesan President