

SOUTHERN RYEDALE PLANNING TEAM PROGRESS REPORT 3

30 March 2022

The Planning Team met for the third time this evening, most of us in person and one person joining using Zoom. It was great to welcome Helen from the Howardian benefice to her first in person meeting. We met at the Wolds Valley vicarage in West Lutton and began by sharing a meal together (thank you, Nicky!)

After Nicky led us in prayer, the Planning Team spent time listening to feedback from each of the small groups we set up at our last meeting: Harton, Street and Howardian as one, Malton and Norton as another and West Buckrose, Buckrose Carrs and Wolds Valley as the third. Each group was asked to ponder questions based around existing ministry strengths and gaps as well as how the future of their parishes and benefices might look within the context of the Deanery. It was fascinating to hear each other's opportunities, challenges and exciting areas of expertise which can be shared more widely but also a burgeoning sense of a common vision to move us forward, realised in different ways in various parts of the Deanery. The need to respond to people where they are and in a way which works for them came through very strongly as did a sharp sense of reality which has shaped everyone's thinking. The groups were tasked to be creative but also realistic – they were both!

Nicky and Sue will distil all the things which were said and then go back to each parish or benefice with some specific questions tailored to their needs and situation for prayer, reflection and consideration in parishes and benefices as we move to the next stage of the planning process.

There is a real sense of momentum building now – after April 27th there will be more conversations and the Planning Team ideas will be formulated into a draft plan which will go to Chapter and the DLT for their consideration. After their input the draft plan will be presented at our next Deanery Gathering on May 18th. Then there will be time for further discussion, reflection and prayer at every level as the Deanery Plan is shaped further over the summer.

There are also some exciting new possibilities of people to help us on the horizon – and who knows who else God will provide! It is also encouraging to hear of support from the Diocese, particularly in relation to Nicky's role, which again gives us cause for optimism.

Please do continue to hold all of us in your prayers as we work to give life to God's plan for us in our parishes, benefices and Deanery.