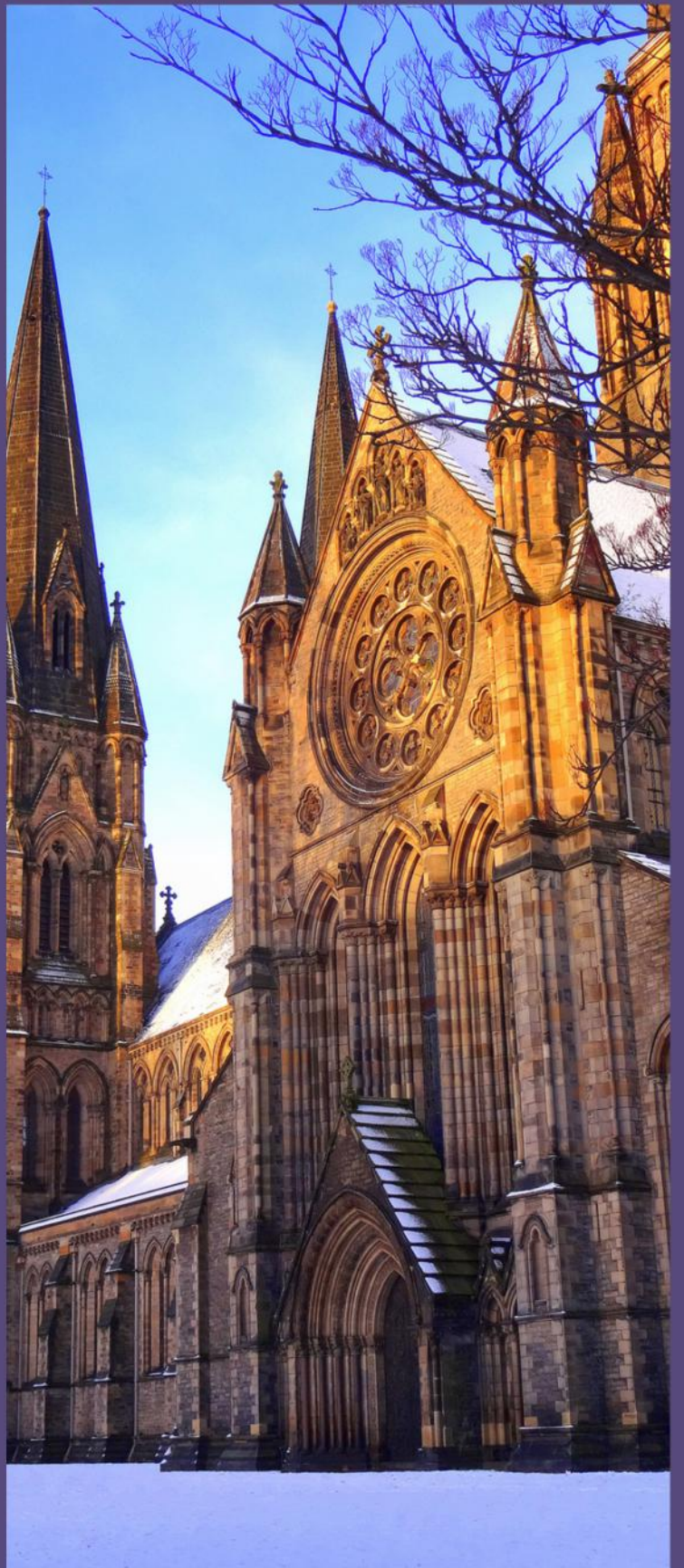


# 2026

# EDINBURGH DIOCESAN SYNOD



ANNUAL REPORT &  
SYNOD AGENDA  
14 MARCH 2026

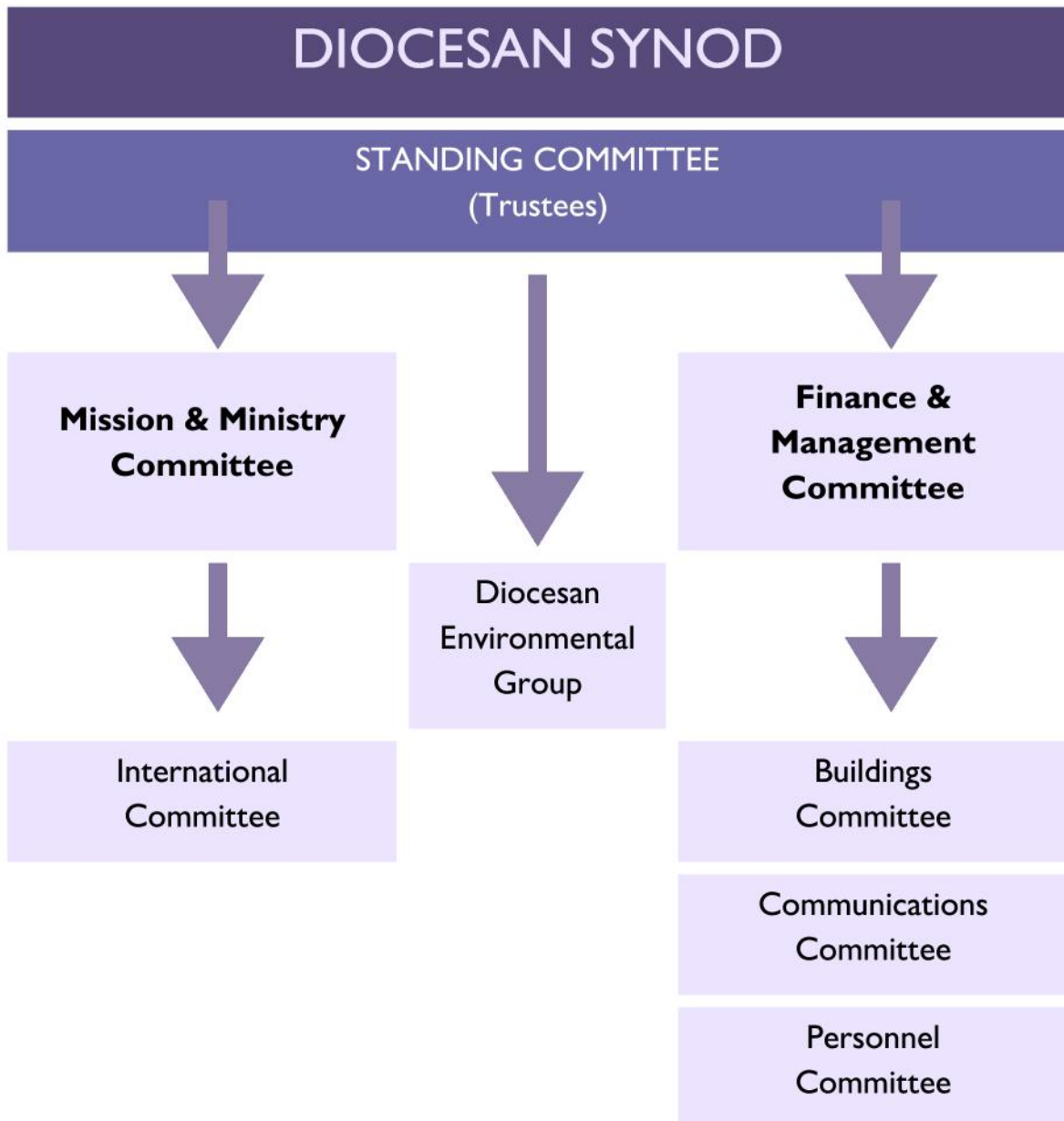
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# DIOCESAN STRUCTURE



# THE DIOCESAN TRUSTEES

**THE MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ARE ELECTED BY DIOCESAN SYNOD AND ARE OUR CHARITY TRUSTEES. ELECTED MEMBERS HAVE A 4-YEAR TERM OF OFFICE RENEWABLE ONCE.**

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## **VACANCY IN SEE**

Bishop of Edinburgh

An Ex-officio member of the committee whilst holding that office.

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## **THE VERY REVD FRANCES BURBERRY**

Dean of Edinburgh Diocese

An Ex-officio member of the committee whilst holding that office, and was appointed as Dean in March 2017.

The Dean holds the office for five years, renewable for a further period or periods of five years. Frances is also Rector of St Ninian's Comely Bank, Edinburgh

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## **THE REVD ROSIE ADDIS**

(2019-2027)

Rector of Bathgate & Linlithgow

Elected by Diocesan Synod



### **THE REVD DAVID DIXON**

(2021-2029)

Priest in Charge of St Barnabas, Moredun in Edinburgh  
Elected by Diocesan Synod

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### **IAN LAWSON**

Diocesan Treasurer

An Ex-officio member of the committee whilst holding that office, and was appointed as Diocesan Treasurer in 2018. Ian is also Treasurer of The Good Shepherd, Murrayfield in Edinburgh.

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### **THE REVD CANON DR SOPHIA MARRIAGE**

Convenor of the Mission & Ministry Committee

An Ex-officio member of the committee whilst holding that office, and was appointed in 2019. Sophia is also Rector of St Mark's Portobello in Edinburgh.

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### **ROBERT O'RIORDAN**

Convenor of the Finance & Management Committee

An Ex-officio member of the committee whilst holding that office, and was appointed in 2024. Robert is a member of the congregation at St Anne's Dunbar.



## **PROFESSOR WILSON POON**

Diocesan Secretary & Convenor during the Vacancy in See An Ex-officio member whilst holding that office, and was appointed in 2024. He is Convenor during the current Episcopal Vacancy. Wilson is a Professor at Edinburgh University's School of Physics & Astronomy and also teaches at the School of Divinity in a masters programme on 'Science and Theology'.

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## **PHILIP SAWYER**

(2025-2026)

Deputy Diocesan Secretary. A member of the congregation at St Barnabas, Moredun in Edinburgh. Lay Representative for St Barnabas.

Elected 'ad interim' by the Diocesan Standing Committee

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## **PIPPA SNELL**

Diocesan Registrar

An Ex-officio member of the committee whilst holding that office, and was appointed in 2019. The Diocesan Registrar advises the Bishop on legal matters.

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## **DR MICHAEL WOOD**

(2024-2028)

A member of the congregation at Holy Trinity Melrose and former Layclerk at St Mary's Cathedral, elected in 2024. Michael is a counsellor and psychotherapist and holds qualifications from Oxford and Edinburgh Universities. Elected by Diocesan Synod

# THE AREA COUNCILS

**THE DIOCESE CONSISTS OF SEVEN AREA COUNCILS. EACH ONE ELECTS A DIOCESAN MEMBER OF THE GENERAL SYNOD. EACH CHURCH WITHIN THE AREA COUNCILS ELECTS A LAY REPRESENTATIVE TO DIOCESAN SYNOD**

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## **BORDERS**

Coldstream • Duns • Eyemouth • Galashiels • Hawick • Innerleithen • Jedburgh • Kelso • Melrose • Peebles • Selkirk

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## **EDINBURGH EAST**

Mustard Seed • Old St Paul's • St Barnabas • St Columba • St Margaret • St Mark • St Peter

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## **EDINBURGH FORTH**

Holy Cross • St David • St James • St Ninian • St Paul & St George • St Philip & St James • St Vincent • South Queensferry



## **EDINBURGH SOUTH**

Christ Church • St Cuthbert • St Fillan • St John • St Michael & All Saints • Penicuik • Roslin • West Linton



## **EDINBURGH SOUTH WEST**

Balerno • Dalmahoy • Cathedral • Good Shepherd • St Martin • St Salvador



## **MID & EAST LoTHIAN**

Dalkeith • Dunbar • Gullane • Haddington • Lasswade • Musselburgh • North Berwick



## **WEST FORTH**

Bathgate • Bo'ness • Falkirk • Grangemouth • Linlithgow • Livingston

# ANNUAL REPORTS

REPORTS FROM  
DIOCESAN COMMITTEES  
AND ASSOCIATED  
SECTORS

## STANDING COMMITTEE • 2025

CONVENOR - THE RT REVD DR JOHN ARMES, BISHOP OF EDINBURGH (UNTIL 31 August), PROF WILSON POON, DIOCESAN SECRETARY

### INTRODUCTION

As set out in the Diocese's Administrative Scheme, the Standing Committee is the Diocese's senior committee, with its membership being the formal **Charity Trustees of the diocese**. It oversees the work of, and receives advice and reports from, its two pendant specialist committees – Finance & Management and Mission & Ministry. The Committee has the authority to take decisions and otherwise act as necessary on Synod's behalf, between Synod meetings.



In practice, the Committee's role is supervisory, considering and acting on recommendations and exploratory

work undertaken by other committees. But **its role is also strategic, able to take a broad view of Diocesan issues and priorities**, as well as dealing with high-level unforeseen issues.

This year, Standing Committee welcomed a new elected lay member, Philip Sawyer, the Lay Representative for Edinburgh St Barnabas

The Committee met four times in person during the year. The first part of the final meeting was attended (online) by two representatives from each area council to discuss the proposed budget for 2026 *in lieu* of an autumn synod. There was also a single online meeting in April to consider a proposal from Personnel Committee concerning the restructuring of the Diocesan Office.

The committee is normally convened by the Bishop. This year, after Bishop John's retirement, the final two meetings of the Committee were convened by the Diocesan Secretary.

## BUSINESS IN THE YEAR

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The committee received and discussed reports from its two main pendant bodies, the Mission & Ministry and the Finance & Management Committees. Important business of the year included:

- **Register of Persons with a Controlling Interest in Land (RCIL).** This topic continued to occupy the Committee's attention. The retirement of Bishop John triggered a tranche of work, which provided a basis for estimating the effort that may be required in the steady state. The Committee looks forward to a detailed recommendation from the Finance & Management Committee in 2026 for a proposal for how this work will be carried out and lines of responsibility for its oversight.
- **Episcopal Election.** From the middle of the year, the Dean provided regular updates to the Committee on the process of electing a new Bishop.
- **Investing In The Future.** Processes are in place for evaluating the impact of the investment. It is heartening to hear from a number of Diocesan Companions that the charges they work with no longer needed continued funding. The committee agreed that this was excellent news and demonstrated the value of the initiative.
- **The Diocesan Office.** The structure and location of the Diocesan Office have been major items on our agenda this year. Standing Committee approved a proposal for restructuring of Office. A first step has been now been taken with the appointment of a Finance and Support Officer. The need to relocate the Office arose part way through this year, and the Committee spent significant time discussing the principles that should govern the choice of new premises and its financial implications. We look forward to welcoming our new Bishop to a relocated office, probably within Cathedral grounds, and work with the new Bishop to continue to enable the office to better serve the needs of charges throughout the diocese.

“It is heartening to hear from a number of Diocesan Companions that the Investing In The Future charges they work with no longer needed continued funding, which demonstrates the value of the initiative.”

Membership: Bishop John Armes (Convenor up to 31 August 2025), Wilson Poon (Convenor from 1 September 2025), The Very Revd Frances Burberry, The Rev David Dixon, Ian Lawson, The Revd Canon Dr Sophia Marriage, Robert O’Riordan, Philip Sawyer (from 25 September 2025) and Michael Wood

*Wilson Poon*  
**Convenor**

# MISSION & MINISTRY COMMITTEE • 2025

CONVENOR - THE REVD CANON DR SOPHIA MARRIAGE

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## MEMBERSHIP

Rt Revd Dr John Armes – Ex-officio	Very Revd Frances Burberry – Ex-officio
Diocesan Secretary, Wilson Poon – Ex-officio	Shirley Green
Revd Canon Dr Sophia Marriage	Anne Martin
Revd Nicky McNelly	Revd Canon Liz O’Ryan
Rachel Penman	Revd Dr Lesley Penny

The vision of the Diocese of Edinburgh is that every congregation be a community where people find faith, grow in faith and share their faith. Our diocese is varied in its traditions, styles of worship and theological approaches. This richness enhances our life together and we have a history of working well together and supporting one another. We are committed to the mission of God, working to listen to the Spirit of God, and encouraging one another to respond to that call in joyful service.

The Diocesan Mission and Ministry Committee exists to help each congregation to grow in their mission and ministry under this vision. The committee helps to resource congregations and clergy, enabling ongoing development and learning, and providing opportunities for people across the diocese to support and nurture each other in their faith journeys. It has committed to shape its work by the Anglican Five Marks of Mission.

It does this through distinct areas of expertise and discrete pieces of work, prioritising clergy development, international links, lay learning and the support of the young people of the diocese. 2025 has continued to consolidate the work of the Committee with the establishment of long term structures and programmes to support mission and ministry across the diocese, building on the foundations and settling into a regular schedule of events and resources.

## Support for those in Authorised Ministry

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There are a number of strands of work to support for those in authorised ministry:

- Day conferences: Our Day Conferences are held three times a year. This year we have used them to reflect on Spiritual Paratexts, Mental Health and Scriptural Christologies. 15-20 people came to these and we have started to open them to colleagues from other dioceses.

- Learning Lunches: we delivered 7 of these (mostly) online Learning Lunches during 2025, covering a wide range of practical topics. These provided an ideal opportunity to report on visits to the world wide church (for example, Bishop John to Jordan and two delegates to Finland), but also covering things like media work and fresh ideas for liturgical seasons.
- Stand alone events:
  - Pre-Retirement Day: this is becoming an important day to encourage stipendiary clergy to prepare for retirement. Colleagues from across the Province now join us for this.
  - DMMC was involved in the organisation of a series of meetings with all the Area Councils to inform and encourage Synod representatives about the Bishop Search process.
- Ministerial Reviews: the review process is overseen by the bishop. All incumbents are offered an annual opportunity to reflect on their ministry with a colleague. Since the organisation of this review system is on a three year cycle, a new set of relationships have been formed and we also welcomed two new reviewers this year.
- The Clergy Conference: this annual conference is the main opportunity for the clergy to come together. In November 2025, the clergy of the diocese used the time together to reflect on a wide range of practical topics, under the Scriptural reflection of Rev Malcolm Round. Once again the diocese welcomed two colleagues from the Diocese of Espoo. The new model, which included many different facilitators mostly drawn from the clergy, was greatly appreciated by the clergy.
- The continued support and accountability structure for the five new opportunities around the diocese receiving funding through the *Investing in the Future* initiative (see below). Conversations and encouragement are now underway for future investment.
- Grants for individual development: five clergy from around the diocese have been awarded grants including for conferences at St George's House, Windsor, two enrolled on training for Transitional Ministry, study leave for a member of the clergy and a contribution to a pilgrimage in the Holy Land.
- Day Conference for Lay Readers: a full-day conference for Lay Readers was held at Prestonfield Golf Club in the autumn, with input from Prof Mike Hull, Rev Jane MacLaren, and the Very Revd Frances Burberry.
- Online Resources: the diocesan website has been undergoing extensive rebuilding in preparation for the Episcopal vacancy. This work has enabled a new design for the Mission and Ministry resources. Daily Prayer prompts, based

on the Diocesan Prayer Cycle, has completed a year on Facebook and Instagram.

## **Adventures in Faith**

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The Adventures in Faith programme is the long established banner for discipleship growth and education for all the people of God. The programme was launched again in 2024 after 7 years of abeyance.

This has included:

- A monthly e-newsletter advertising a wide range of opportunities for lay and clergy to deepen their discipleship and learn new skills for service.
- Afternoon Tea for office bearers in the charges of the diocese – this included three different occasions with people from 18 different charges.
- Two training sessions for Vestry Members. We are very grateful to Gavin McEwan for leading these so graciously. This has meant that 82 people from 31 different congregations joined us this year, meaning that almost every congregation in the diocese have now had people attending this training. This year, the material was updated to include changes to charity legislation.

## **Youth and Children**

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The role of Advisor for Christian Life includes support for the Youth and Children Workers across the diocese. A small number of these positions are paid positions, most are voluntary, which can make gathering together across the diocese difficult.

**Taizé Visit:** In July, 15 young adults and 2 leaders from the diocese spent a week in Taizé. This was a huge logistical undertaking, and the return travel proved particularly challenging; however, the experience was greatly appreciated by all. The rhythm of prayer, Bible reflections, and work nurtured faith and spirituality, whilst the evenings ensured cross-cultural engagement, including a session on Strip the Willow. Connections across the group remain, with attendees actively seeking-out ways to experience Taizé-style worship regularly and encourage others to attend future visits.

**Diocesan Events:** There was a small gathering in a very wet Portobello to mark the end of exams in June, whilst the now-annual Pizza-Bowl attracted 26 young people in August. We trialled a couple of ventures, too: Church Bagging on Sunday evenings, which petered-out after a few months, and an event for 10-14 year olds at Volcano Falls in April. This was in addition to a number of young people attending one or both provincial sleepovers and/or Yeek. We have learnt that especially with this work it is good to try many different things to work out what is appropriate.

DMMC offers small grants to help with Youth and Children's work. This year, one of these grants was used by the Diocese to subscribe to Roots on the Web for a group of charges. This offer has been taken up by 4 charges. Two further grants were given to St Fillan's Buckstone and to St Columba's by the Castle to enable them to diversify the resources they could offer in their Children's Corners.

The Diocesan Play Church has visited St Baldred's, North Berwick; St Mary's Cathedral, and S Ninian's Comely Bank, during the year.

Regular e-newsletters sharing resources and events are sent to those involved in youth and children's work across the diocese. This is in addition to the bi-annual Newsletter, which this year highlighted Toddler Groups in June and mission and ministry beyond the church walls in December.

## **Whole Diocese**

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**Lent Course:** The DMMC produced Lent course was offered to the whole diocese. This was entitled 'The Body of Christ' and encouraged congregations to reflect on how they could become Christ's body in the world today.

**The Big Day:** this annual celebration held in St Mary's Cathedral was combined with a farewell celebration of the ministry of Bishop John Armes. The day enabled all the charges to share the joys and challenges of church life in their locality as well as reflect what the future might hold for the diocese. It was a joyful day with 110 people present.

The **St Hilda's Fund** provides small scale grants to congregations as seed funding for mission initiatives and ventures. This year, 9 different congregations have been granted funds to help with art resources, messy church, community worker costs, infrastructure for mission opportunities, electronic equipment for Beer and Hymns and signage / display boards. This is a really exciting part of DMMC work, as we see small amounts of money giving confidence and enabling charges to risk and try something new.

**Walking Trail of Historic City Centre Churches:** DMMC worked together with representatives of historic city centre churches to produce a walking trail. This was launched in time for the August festivals, with an inaugural walk delivering leaflets to each church. Those who joined this walk (someone came down from Dundee especially) enjoyed the exercise, seeing the different churches, and meeting one another. The event and trail received good publicity from local and Scottish media and is also available to explore on our website.

## **International**

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**Cape Coast, Ghana** – this link is currently mostly with Revd Joseph at the seminary, who keeps the diocese abreast of financial needs in the seminary, they are seeking funding from the Global Partnership Committee (currently unsuccessful). Lesley Ann Hill (Old Saint Paul's) visited the seminary while doing other charity work in Ghana.

**Dunedin** – The diocesan offices continue to meet online and keep up to date on each other's news. Bishop Anne van Gend had a flying visit to Edinburgh in August before attending her bishop's course at Canterbury.

**Espoo** – This link continues to flourish and this year, Revd Jane Maclaren and Revd Simon Schofield attended the Espoo leadership conference in May; Revd Fee Reynolds and Phoebe Pryce attended their English Confirmation Camp in August and Revd Jaakko Niiles and Revd Aino Luhtasela, members of the Espoo Diocese, attended our Clergy Conference in November.

These relationships are now becoming well established and friendships have grown up so that people from both dioceses are visiting the others for personal holidays and always receive wonderful hospitality.

At the end of our Clergy Conference, we committed ourselves to learning the Lord's Prayer in Finnish to enable us to participate in the prayer when they lead worship.

## **Investing in the Future**

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All 5 different charges that were identified in 2022-3 for investment and funding to secure their long term future have now all been up and running for nearly two years. This has led to much encouraging activity and growth.

This year the partnership between Diocesan Companions, Financial Companions and the individual charges has been fully established. This has led to the planning of a tapering of grant for some of the projects.

The experience gained from these five areas of investment is going into the planning for a number of other charges seeking targeted support. Along with three areas of great population expansion around Edinburgh and East Lothian, there is much discernment in how to use our resources appropriately in the future.

In the wake of the bishop's retirement, a Steering Group has been set up with representatives from DMMC, F&M and the Dean. This is ensuring that the strategy and vision for this investment is accountable and planned.

## **DMMC Officers**

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2025 was another year of change in the DMMC officers. We were sorry to say goodbye to Joanna Appleby at the start of the year, but have welcomed Cathy Ballantyne to work alongside Fiona Reynolds on a temporary basis. This has enabled the structure and stability of the work to continue through the year.

In the autumn, a three year review of the post of Advisor for Christian Life was carried out, assessing what has been realised and where the future may be opening. The last three years have been about establishing a pattern of events and support and the review provides a foundation for more specific support for individual congregations going forward.

DMMC would like to register their whole hearted thanks to Fee and Cathy for their dedication and wisdom throughout the year.

## **Going Forward**

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Mission and Ministry is at the heart of our Christian life and our life together as a diocese. It has been a good year for establishing a firm foundation and schedule of workshops, events and support. This has been the main focus for the year so that this schedule can be maintained into the future.

Along with our gratitude to Fee and Cathy, we are grateful for the large number of volunteers from across the diocese who have contributed to the wider life of the diocese in this way.

*Rev Canon Dr Sophia Marriage*  
**Convenor**

# FINANCE & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE • 2025

CONVENOR – Robert O’Riordan

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## MEMBERSHIP

Rt Revd Dr John Armes – Ex-officio	Very Revd Frances Burberry – Ex-officio
Wilson Poon, Diocesan Secretary – Ex-officio	Ian Lawson, Diocesan Treasurer – Ex-officio
Mark Harris	Revd Diana Hall
Ian Kerry	Revd Canon Bob King
Anne McAlister	Kenneth Ramage
Alex Stewart	The Revd David Todd

## REMIT AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

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The Committee’s Remit was stated in full in last year’s report and remains unchanged. In short, responsibilities include supervision of finance and investments (including recommending budget and quota levels), property (amongst other things oversight of churches, halls and rectories, considering changes, and receiving Quinquennial Reports) and administration (ensuring the smooth running of the Diocesan Office and associated staff matters). Both Building and Personnel are the remit of sub-committees that report into the Finance and Management Committee (DFMC). DFMC reports and makes recommendation to Standing Committee.

As in 2024, the Committee met four times in 2025; all meetings were fully, or close to, fully attended. Sub-groups, as well as the formally constituted sub-committees, met during the year;

notably to monitor the Investing in the Future projects, to assist the Standing Committee with the office move and to look at proposed loan protocols.

Thank you as ever, all those who have volunteered to lead or join sub-committees and groups and those who take part in all aspects of the Committee’s work; **we are fortunate that in the Edinburgh Diocese the dedication and professional approach of the volunteers is quite remarkable.**

Aspects of Corporate Governance have been discussed during the year within the DFMC and some questions were raised which were passed on to Standing Committee. The need for clearer definition of areas of responsibility and levels of authority within the corporate structure amongst executives and non-executives is evident. This was highlighted by the Personnel Committee’s Review whose

recommendations have now been partly implemented. **The roles of the Diocesan Secretary and Convenor of DFMC are now separate.** There is overlap on strategy, and sometimes confidential personnel matters, between the various committees. Consequently, better delineation of roles, responsibilities and authority within the management structure is desirable. This will continue to be

considered over the course of 2026. Three members of the Committee have agreed to collate views to feed into a **review of our governing document, the Administrative Scheme.** This was recommended by OSCR (Office of Scottish Charity Regulator) and an exercise has been commissioned by the Standing Committee to be overseen by the Deputy Secretary, Philip Sawyer.

## OVERVIEW

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We knew that 2025 would involve navigating change but we underestimated the extent of unforeseen change. The retiral of Bishop John and the Election process was not a surprise and is covered elsewhere. We were surprised to find ourselves looking for a new Diocesan Office. This followed **a decision by the Provincial Office to vacate Forbes House.** The Secretary directed a sub-group, including some DFMC members, to seek new premises. Regular reports were given to DFMC at and between meetings. This has involved a huge amount of work; several options of varying suitability were examined. Unexpectedly, we arrived at a good solution: converting and leasing The Stonemason's Workshop at the Cathedral. At the time of writing, we are at an early stage of agreeing lease terms, but we hope to move swiftly. There will be disruption, so please be patient as we move beds in.

## ACTIVITIES

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The Diocese's Finances overseen by our valued Treasurer remain sound. At time of writing, the audit is in progress, so the final outcome for 2025 is not known. There is one contingent liability connected with utility supplies that we are still trying to pin down. Subject to this, it is likely that we will have a surplus of income over expenditure, ahead of budget in 2025. Staff losses early in the year led to the Diocese operating with assistance from agency personnel for fewer hours. As a result, activity was less than budgeted, and staffing costs were reduced. At the same time, the Unit Trust Pool made another unexpected increase in

**“We found ourselves looking for a new Diocesan Office and arrived at a good solution: converting and leasing The Stonemason's Workshop at the Cathedral**

distributions, all of which has resulted in the better than expected financial result. In the current year, 2026, the end position is uncertain as the Bishop search and installation costs are unknown as are the extent of grant claims for net zero work. More significantly probably, the cost of the office move and continuing rent are also unknown at the moment. It is likely that rental costs (including amortisation of the improvements) will increase, maybe significantly. **Quota for 2026 has been set at a modest 3% slightly below the 3.6% rate of inflation** so there may be a higher deficit in 2026 than those we saw in some preceding years. How this is addressed, if it occurs, is likely to be challenging and a central preoccupation for the Committee.

The value and the level of income provided from the Episcopal Units has continued to rise. Unit sales were made in the current year to provide available funds not subject to the same level of market risk to meet commitments for Investing in The Future projects and any other short or medium term cash calls. The proceeds of sales have been placed in short to medium terms deposits on the Flagstone platform which lets lenders diversify lending risk and which eliminates dependence on one bank or deposit taker. Rates offered have been decent (around or above inflation) but have started to tail off recently.

**“The value and the level of income provided from the Episcopal Units has continued to rise**

During the year quite sizeable loans were made to two charges to assist them to meet short term commitments while awaiting receipt of funds. This has led us to draw up draft a protocol to provide for emergency loans to charges. The draft protocol will be considered by the next meeting of DFMC before being recommended to Standing Committee and adopted. We did receive one request for matched funding for a net zero project; we are committed to meet such requests but their quantum in 2026 is unknown.

Other work during the year has been the annual assessment of charges' Reports and Accounts. Also assessed is the viability of individual charges as they become vacant and before they advertise a vacancy. The first is a bulky and meticulous piece of work conducted in the first half of the year. **Work has also continued on Investing in the Future projects with a subgroup monitoring and providing support to individual projects.** A small Steering Group comprising members of both DFMC and Mission and Ministry has been set up to make recommendations on the tapering of support and to consider new projects. There are still unallocated funds available for such ventures. These sums are not intended to be subsidies but are designed to help worthwhile initiatives become sustainable and self-supporting over a five-year period.

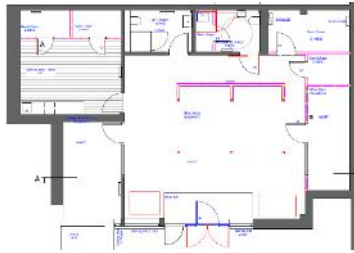
**Implementation of the Register of Controlling Interests in Land remains a thorny and expensive exercise.** We have not succeeded in having the legislation amended to ameliorate the burdens imposed. We will continue to try to achieve this.

Meanwhile we still seek ways to navigate the legislation and reduce the time and cost of compliance.

The work of the Buildings and Personnel Committees is covered elsewhere. The significant volume of important business carefully undertaken by these committees is noted with thanks.

## THE FUTURE

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This time next year we will have a new Bishop and be in new diocesan premises. These are exciting prospects. The year ahead as ever will be filled with routine tasks while attention is also given to refining and improving existing activity and commissioning new initiatives. There is no shortage of ground to be covered. The challenge is to maintain momentum and enthusiasm while covering this ground in an orderly and systematic way. The willing commitment of Committee members, staff and clergy makes this possible.

*Robert O’Riordan*  
**Convenor**

## **BUILDINGS COMMITTEE • 2025**

CONVENOR – ALEX STEWART

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### MEMBERSHIP

David Barrett (Consultant – East Lothian)	Very Revd Frances Burberry – Ex-officio
David Gibbon	Alex Stewart
Revd Matthew Rushton	
Paul Goode (Consultant – Borders)	Nicholas Uglow (Consultant – Edinburgh City)

The Diocesan Buildings Committee is charged with examining and deciding on applications for changes to “the structure, ecclesiastical furniture or ornaments, monuments, mural tablets or painted windows” of churches as required by Canon 35 and provides advice and guidance to the Diocese and Vestries on property matters.

The committee considers applications for grants from the Provincial Building Fund and from the Edinburgh Diocesan St Andrew's Building Fund, receives and examines Quinquennial Reports from charges, commenting and seeking further information as required. The Committee undertakes inspections of vacant rectories prior to them being re-occupied to assess their condition and continued suitability for use as a Rectory.

The committee usually meets monthly (unless there is insufficient business to require a meeting) to ensure applications are dealt with in accordance with the timetable laid down in Canon 35 and visits churches and charges as necessary to deal with applications for change. Email or virtual meetings are held when necessary. The committee met on 6 occasions in the year and considered 35 applications under Canon 35.

The Committee has responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the Bishops' house, currently undergoing refurbishment in readiness for the new Bishop.

The Committee actively monitors the submission of Quinquennial surveys from Charges and issues reminders to those Charges from whom such surveys have not been received at the relevant time. 11 surveys were received and followed up during the year. However, as has been noted in previous years many of the surveys received have not included the pro forma summary report as requested by the Committee and the Diocese despite the fact that this omission might well impact negatively on applications for grants from the charges concerned.

**“The committee continues to be encouraged by the number of applications for grants from the General Synod**

The Committee has discussed the format and guidance provided for Quinquennial Surveys on several occasions during the year and believes that both the format and official guidance on their completion are in need of review and updating. Accordingly, a report and recommendations regarding QQ reports will be submitted to the Finance and Management Committee in 2026.

The committee continues to be encouraged by the number of applications for grants from the General Synod Buildings and Net Zero funds. 10 were dealt with during the year. There is every indication that the number of such applications, particularly Net Zero applications, will grow substantially during 2026. **This will provide substantial additional work for the DBC and the staff supporting it**, a significant part of which stems from the extremely long and complex character of the application forms. At present it is all too easy for a Charge to omit or misinterpret parts of the form and even after Diocesan staff have checked each complex form in great detail, problems can still occur. **It is to be hoped, therefore, that the General Synod office will**

**be able to reduce the complexity and length of these forms to reduce the burden on Charges and Diocesan staff.**

6 applications for grants from the Diocesan St Andrews Fund were received and are now becoming a regular element of the committees' work - this development is welcomed.

The problem of vestries having difficulties in finding members with experience of managing their buildings continues and discussions have continued around providing professional help to Charges. A **proposal for the appointment of a Diocesan Surveyor** able to provide help and guidance to Charges has been agreed by the committee and will be put to the Finance and Management committee for consideration in early 2026.

Liaison between the committee and the General Synod Net Zero initiatives have been much improved by a member of the Net Zero team attending DBC meetings and by Andrew Aveyard, Convenor of the Diocesan Environment committee agreeing to become a full member of the DBC.



Those aware of the issues surrounding the grant of a **lease of the Church and car park at St Andrews Newcraighall (left) to the local community body, Craigmillar Now**, will be pleased to hear that the matter was concluded satisfactorily during the course of 2025.

I would again like once more to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Committee for their commitment and pragmatism in keeping the work of the DBC functioning during what has been a busy and sometimes unusual year.

*Alex Stewart*  
**Convenor**

# PERSONNEL COMMITTEE • 2025

CONVENOR – THE REVD DAVID TODD

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## MEMBERSHIP

The Revd David Todd	Lisa Gallacher
The Revd Nick Bowry	Very Revd Frances Burberry – Ex-officio
Wilson Poon	Philip Sawyer

The Personnel Committee has met six times since the last Synod. Work on the scheduled five-year review of the HR Policies within the Diocesan Staff Handbook is well underway, with a significant proportion of policies already updated. A student from Napier University completed a placement with the Diocesan Office and presented her study on hybrid working to the Committee, offering valuable insights into current working practices.

The Committee has offered assistance with updating the Register of Controlling Interests in Land, though a practical way to streamline this task has not yet been identified. It has also supported office staff throughout the proposed office relocation process and provided advice on a number of staffing matters, including both permanent and contracted appointments.

*The Revd David Todd*  
**Convenor**

## **DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING • 2025**

### **DIOCESAN PROTECTION OFFICER – HANNAH HARCUS**

In July 2025, PVG membership became a legal requirement for individuals undertaking regulated roles. As a result, all church workers in regulated roles are required to complete their PVG application before they start their role.

Guidance on the new legislation was issued by the province to all dioceses and vestries in May 2025 (and remains available to download from the Safeguarding page on the SEC website). Following its circulation, there was a significant increase in the number of PVG applications submitted. Application levels returned to more typical levels towards the end of 2025, which initially suggested we were approaching full compliance. However, the circulation of the PVG audit form in February 2026 prompted a further substantial rise in applications, indicating that compliance is not yet as advanced as previously hoped.



Vestries are legally required to comply with PVG legislation, to identify roles that require PVG membership and to submit PVG applications for clergy and lay appointments. Vestries that have not yet done so are asked to review their lists of volunteers and staff against the guidance issued in May 2025 and to arrange any outstanding PVG checks as a matter of urgency.

Completed PVG forms and any related enquiries should be sent to the shared inbox at [pvg@scotland.anglican.org](mailto:pvg@scotland.anglican.org) rather than to the diocese or to individual members of the safeguarding team.

### **Changes in 2026**

Further changes to the PVG Scheme are expected during 2026. The Scottish Government has confirmed the introduction of five year PVG Scheme membership. Disclosure Scotland has advised that existing PVG Scheme members will be transferred to the new five year membership on a phased basis between 2026 and 2031, and that individuals will be notified when they are required to complete this transfer.

No action is required from vestries at this time. The province will issue further guidance once additional details become available, and safeguarding training sessions scheduled for 2026 will include updates on the PVG Scheme.

## **Safeguarding Training**

In October 2025, the Province held its first Safeguarding Conference in Perth, which Hannah was able to attend. The conference covered safeguarding fundamentals, provided an update on PVG, and addressed the management of individuals who may present particular risks. It also explored the safeguarding agreement process and included a presentation from Police Scotland on personal safety and security for clergy and those working alone. The province hopes to hold a similar conference within our diocese in the future.

All clergy and PVG Co-ordinators across the diocese are invited to attend safeguarding training on 24 March 2026 at St Columba's-by-the-Castle, Edinburgh, from 10am to 2pm. Please RSVP to [hharcus@dioceseofedinburgh.org](mailto:hharcus@dioceseofedinburgh.org) if you are able to attend and have not already done so.

## **ANNUAL RETURN**

In 2025, the province did not ask for a formal Annual Return from Vestries, but instead over the course of the year worked closely with PVG Co-Ordinators across the diocese to implement the changes to legislation.

In February 2026, the province issued a PVG Audit form, individually to each charge for completion and return by mid-March 2026. As PVG is now a legal requirement for all regulated roles, the province need to chart progress towards full compliance across the SEC, so the annual return focused on PVG. Vestries were asked to provide a declaration of compliance, confirming that all people in regulated roles for vestry appointments have obtained a PVG Scheme disclosure through the SEC. A separate exercise will be conducted to check that all Clergy, Lay Readers and Lay Worship Leaders have PVG. If you haven't already done so, please complete the annual return as soon as possible and send to [pvg@scotland.anglican.org](mailto:pvg@scotland.anglican.org).

## **PVG CO-ORDINATORS**

During 2025, we were pleased to confirm the appointment of new PVG Co-ordinators at the following charges:

- Balerno, St Mungo's
- Bathgate, St Columba's
- Edinburgh, Christ Church
- Edinburgh, St James-the-Less
- Edinburgh, St Martin of Tours

- Edinburgh, St Ninian's
- Edinburgh, St Paul's and St George's
- Gullane, St Adrian's

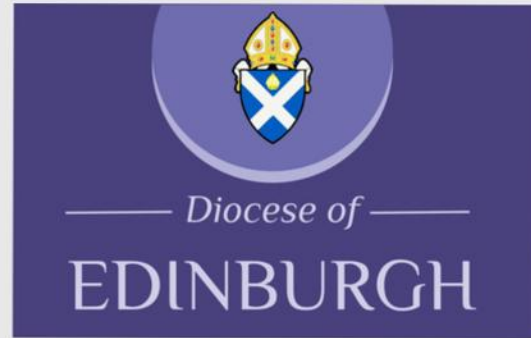
As a reminder, all PVG Co-ordinator appointments must receive the bishop's approval before starting the role. A PVG Co-ordinator does not require a PVG check for this role unless they also hold another position that requires PVG membership.

We extend our sincere thanks to all those who volunteer to undertake this important responsibility within the diocese. We are grateful for the commitment and patience shown by PVG Co-ordinators and others across the diocese as they continue to implement the recent changes.

*Hannah Marcus  
Diocesan Protection Officer*

**“the Bishop  
must approve  
any  
appointment  
before they  
start**

# DIOCESAN SYNOD AGENDA



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## 8.30AM **SYNOD EUCHARIST**

Held in the **Main Church**. Please be quiet when arriving if you are not attending Eucharist.

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## 9.00AM **REFRESHMENTS**

Tea & coffee is available **Please remember to bring your own lunch**

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## 9.30AM **APOLOGIES, NOTICES & BISHOP MARK'S ADDRESS**

Including the welcome and introduction of those members attending their first Synod

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## 9.45AM **BISHOP'S LENT APPEAL 2026**

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## 10.00AM **ADMINISTRATION**

N.B. Questions should be submitted to the Synod Secretary (Simon Filsell) in advance wherever possible

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## **MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of Diocesan Synod held on 15 February 2025 (p29)

Published online at:

<https://edinburgh.anglican.org/diocesan-vestry-resources/resources-diocesan-office-synod/>

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## **QUESTIONS ARISING**

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### **ANNUAL REPORTS 2026**

#### **STANDING COMMITTEE** (p9)

Presented by Wilson Poon, Diocesan Secretary

**Motion:** This Synod approves the report of the Standing Committee

#### **FINANCE & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** (p17)

Presented by Robert O' Riordan, Convenor, Finance & Management Committee

**Motion:** This Synod approves the report of the Finance & Management Committee and its pendant committees

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### **CATHEDRAL ACCOUNTS**

Presented by the Very Revd John Conway, Provost

## **ADMINISTRATION** (CONTINUED)

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### **SAFEGUARDING REPORT** (p24)

Presented by Hannah Marcus, Diocesan Protection Officer

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### **ELECTIONS** (p45)

#### **Provincial Panel for Episcopal Elections**

1x clerical member to be elected

### **OTHER ELECTIONS**

- **General Synod - Clergy**  
2x vacancies & 1x Area Council nomination
- **General Synod - Laity**  
4x vacancies
- **Provincial Faith & Order Board**  
1x Lay vacancy
- **Diocesan Standing Committee**  
1x Lay Vacancy
- **Diocesan Finance & Management Committee**  
1x Clergy vacancy

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**10.45AM MISSION & MINISTRY COMMITTEE**

Annual Report 2025 (p11)

**Motion:** This Synod approves the reports of the Mission & Ministry Committee and its pendant committees.

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**GENERAL SYNOD OFFICE BUSINESS**

**11.45PM LEGACY SLAVERY** (*Miriam Weibye*)

**12.00PM NET ZERO** (*Paul Williams & Neil Rawlins*)

**12.15PM LITURGIES** (*papers online*)

Led by The Revd Rosie Addis, Convenor,  
Provincial Liturgy Committee

Opinions from Diocesan Synods required on the Second Reading of the Proposal that Blessing of a Marriage (2025) be added to the Schedule to Canon 22. The text of the Liturgy is available online at: <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Blessing-of-a-Marriage-1.pdf>

**12.30PM LUNCH**

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**1.15PM**

**FINANCE**

Ian Lawson, Diocesan Treasurer

Presentation of 2024 & 2025 Accounts and  
current financial matters (*p50*)

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**1.45PM**

**DEAN'S REPORT**

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**2.00PM**

**THE BISHOP CONFIRMS THE ACTS  
OF SYNOD**

# Minutes of the Edinburgh Diocesan Synod held on 15 February 2025

at St Paul's & St George's Church, York Place, Edinburgh

*The meeting was in-person as well as being live-streamed*

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## Synod commenced with Eucharist at 8.30am

Clergy (76 Members)	Lay (51 Members)
• Attended – 52 (68 %)	• Attended – 45 (88%)
• Apologies – 9 (12 %)	• Apologies – 1 (2%)
• Total attending or submitting apologies – 61 (80%)	• Total attending or submitting apologies – 46 (90%)

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## STANDING ITEMS

### Welcomes and Apologies

Bishop John welcomed Paul Williams, The Provincial Net Zero Delivery Director, as the Provincial Visitor for this Diocesan Synod.

- Janet Sidaway, Lay Representative, Edinburgh St Peter's
- Michael Crump, Lay Representative, Edinburgh St Marks
- Josese Rokotakala, Lay Representative, Edinburgh St James the Less
- Alan Baker, General Synod Member & Warden of Lay Readers
- Pat Driver, Lay Representative, Jedburgh
- Revd Daniel Muñoz Triviño, Priest in Charge, Musselburgh
- Gavin McEwan, Diocesan Chancellor
- Gillian Cloke, Lay Representative Edinburgh St Columba's
- Carolyn Bennett, Lay Representative, Edinburgh St Michael and All Saints
- Phillip Kear, Lay Representative, Roslin
- Felicity Murdanaigum, Lay Representative, Edinburgh St Martin's

Bishop John then invited Synod for a moment of silence to remember those who had died since the last Synod:

- The Reverend John Wood

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## THE DEAN CHAIRED THE NEXT SECTION OF THE MEETING

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### **Bishop's Address**

Bishop John began by confirming that he would retire as Bishop of Edinburgh at the end of August 2025, with a final service on the 24<sup>th</sup> of August in St Mary's Cathedral. He reflected on the 13 years of his Episcopacy expressing gratitude for the experience, diverse and colourful as it had been, and for the trust which the diocese had given him, backed up always by prayer, kindness and respect.

In preparing for the calling of a chief pastor for a new season he saw it as a time to listen to God, and to discern where the wind of the Holy Spirit was blowing. The gospel reading at the Synod Eucharist spoke eloquently of how God can take the little we have to offer and transform it into something far more than we can ask or imagine.

In the ensuing eight months, he would remain busy with normal business, but also visiting Jordan at the end of March, together with Bishop Kaisamari of Espoo and other bishops of linked Lutheran and Anglican dioceses. There was Easter, the Big Day, Pentecost and General Synod still to come.

Ultimately, he would step back full of confidence in God and knowing that the Diocese of Edinburgh was a community of life and promise, of good and visionary leaders and congregations devoted to God and neighbour.

*The full text of the address is available on the Diocesan website*

Bishop John then introduced Ian Mills, the founder of Abraham's Children in Crisis, a small charity which had been chosen as the beneficiary for the 2025 Bishop's Lent Appeal. Outlined the background to the charity which was working within the dire situation in the West Bank of Gaza. the charity gave support to the children suffering from the conflict, and its aim was simply to give hope two children from different faiths across the region.

## ADMINISTRATION

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### Synod Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th October 2024 were presented.

***The motion that Synod approved the Synod minutes of 24<sup>th</sup> October 2024 was proposed by the Dean and seconded by Wilson Poon. The motion was CARRIED by a majority, with two abstentions***

### Annual Reports

#### Standing Committee

The report was presented by Wilson Poon, Diocesan Secretary.

***The motion that the annual report of the Standing Committee was accepted by Synod was proposed by Wilson Poon and seconded by Ian Lawson. The motion was CARRIED by a majority with one abstention.***

#### Finance and Management Committee

The report was presented by Robert O'Riordan, Finance & Management Committee Convenor.

Bishop John offered a vote of thanks to the members of both committees for their hard work during the previous year.

***The motion that the annual report of the Finance & Management Committee was accepted by Synod was proposed by Robert O'Riordan and seconded by The Reverend Canon Bob King. The motion was CARRIED by a majority with one abstention.***

#### Cathedral Accounts

The Very Reverend John Conway, Provost of St Mary's Cathedral, presented the accounts for June 2023 to June 2024. He felt that many Synod members would

recognise the same challenges faced by the Cathedral in their own churches. Income for the year was £880k within which recurring income was slightly down at £742k. Expenditure had increased, partly through the investment in a new sound system alongside increases in salary costs. The response to the challenges was to invest wisely rather than 'saving for a rainy day'. There had been increased investment in such areas as music in the Cathedral and outreach to schools. It had been observed that there were many new young people coming to the Cathedral looking to explore faith.

Bishop John offered thanks to the Provost, to the Vice Provost - the Reverend Canon Marion Chatterley - and the music team for all the work which maintained the Ministry of the Cathedral.

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## THE BISHOP CHAIRED THE NEXT SECTION OF THE MEETING

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### **Elections**

Before the scheduled elections took place, the Bishop reminded Synod that there were also vacancies within the Province for the roles of Convener of the Provincial Standing Committee and Convener of the Provincial Mission Board. The deadline for nominations was Friday 4th April 2025, and he encouraged Synod members to consider these roles.

The only contested election was for members of the Episcopal Preparatory Committee. Voting was carried out with ballot papers and all voting was within houses. The following elections were made:

Elected to the Preparatory Committee were:

- The Revd Andi Hofbauer (Clergy)
- The Revd Elizabeth O’Ryan (Clergy)
- Jennifer Floether (Lay)
- Josese Rokotakala (Lay)

Elected to General Synod House of Clergy were:

- The Revd Jane MacLaren (2nd term)
- The Revd William Shaw
- The Revd Susan Ward (2nd term)

Elected to General Synod House of Laity were:

- Alan Baker
- Dr Vicki Clark (2nd term) *Mid & East Lothian Area Council*
- Alistair Dinnie
- Lei Garcia (2nd term)
- Ian Gardner
- Steven Gillespie *Edinburgh Forth Area Council*
- Duncan Hughes
- Helen Mitchell (2nd term)
- Michael Wood (2nd term) *Edinburgh South West Area Council*

Elected to the Diocesan Standing Committee was:

- The Revd David Dixon (2nd term)

Elected to the Diocesan Mission & Ministry Committee were:

- The Revd Lesley Penny
- The Revd Christine Downey (co-option)
- Shirley Green

Elected to the Diocesan Finance & Management Committee were:

- The Revd Diana Hall
- Kenneth Ramage

Synod also **CONFIRMED** the election of Wilson Poon as Diocesan Secretary

## **MISSION & MINISTRY**

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The Reverend Canon Dr Sophia Marriage presented the Annual Report. She reflected that mission and ministry were at the heart of the life of the Diocese, and that the work in the areas of finance, management and strategy all worked towards our mission and our ministry. The year had seen a period of consolidation and building on the foundations of previous years, rather than taking on new initiatives. It was good to have Fiona Reynolds steering the work in her role as Advisor for Christian Life.

Fiona Reynolds then reflected on the question she was often asked which was "how are the Laity of the church?". Her response was that "the Laity are our church". The Adventures in Faith Programme for laity had been relaunched with a newsletter, webpage and other resources which signposted events both internally and externally. Youth and children work had seen much activity with Diocese and featured events as

well as support for congregations in their own work. There had been ongoing ministerial support with an events programme for continuing ministerial development. There were many local examples around the Diocese of 'being church', many of which were seldom reported more widely. Investing In The Future funding had been a significant boost to several charges across the diocese where consolidation and growth could be identified.

*Questions & Comments:*

The Reverend Andy Hofbauer, Priest in Charge, Jedburgh & Hawick. Both she and her vestries had been very grateful for the Investing In The Future funds which were enabling looking both forward and outward.

The Reverend Gavin Burnage, Priest in Charge, South Queensferry. From his arrival it had become clear that St Mary's Priory Church was a place of connection and community. South Queensferry itself was expanding at a very fast rate and the Investing In The Future funding was enabling a range of new community activities

Sophia Marriage reported that the Finance & Management was now providing Financial Companions to work alongside the Mission & Ministry Committee's companions to help evaluate and monitor both the financial and mission elements of all the projects.

The St Hildas Fund and grants from the Youth & Children funds had enabled a range of projects around the Diocese. The Reverend Jane McLaren, Priest in Charge, Edinburgh St Philip's and St James's, reported that a grant of £2.5k had enabled the upgrading of kitchen facilities at St James's, for the serving of a hot meal each week for those in need in the local community.

*Questions & Comments:*

The Reverend Simon Metzner, Rector, North Berwick and Gullane. A small grant at Gullane had enabled the engagement of a storyteller in the church garden of St Adrian's as part of the annual fate. this had been a key attraction to bring children and families to the event.

Alan Baker, Lay Reader, Edinburgh Saint Ninian's. Grant funding had enabled monthly Climate Lunches which promoted discussion around Environmental and Net Zero matters. It demonstrated that even small grants could make a big impact. Small stories were equally important to share.

Robin Quinn, Lay Representative, Edinburgh Christ Church. It was good to hear of the Investing In The Future project oversight but was there a strategy for the sustainability of the projects? Also, was there any review of what annual statistics were collected from congregations to help inform the progress of the projects?

Sophia Marriage responded that there were three strands to the evaluation – governance, who we care within those congregations and how the charge is outward-looking. There were tables produced for marking progress in those areas. The Financial Companions were looking carefully at the future financial sustainability of those congregations.

Bishop John responded that the format of congregational statistics had been the same for some years and continued to be useful. However, discussions at Provincial level had recognised that midweek activity and worship in churches needed to also be considered. There were currently pilot schemes for a new range of statistics underway in some other Dioceses.

Steven Haigh, Lay Representative, Dalmahoy. What work was being done around interfaith relations?

Bishop John reported that the Interfaith Relations Committee at provincial level provided the steer for that work, but the question was timely, and it was a good time to review work at Diocesan level.

Sophia Marriage thanked the committee members for their hard work during the year.

***The motion that Synod accepted the annual report of the Mission and Ministry Committee was proposed by the Reverend Canon Dr Sophia Marriage and seconded by the Reverend John Penman. Motion was CARRIED unanimously.***

## **CALLING A BISHOP**

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The Very Reverend Francis Burberry gave a presentation of the process by which a new Bishop would be called, following the retirement announcement of The Right Reverend Dr John Armes. Electing a Bishop was one of the most important acts in the life of a Diocese. The spotlight would be on the Diocese as material was made public, saying who and what we are. The process was governed by Canon 4 and those elected

to the Episcopal Preparatory Committee would present the candidates to the Electoral Synod. It was therefore emphasised that confidentiality within the process was critical. Only the name of the finally-elected candidate would be made public, and the names of other candidates would remain entirely confidential. The important elements in the selection decisions were the calling, competence and chemistry which the diocese would look for in the candidates. She looked forward to leading the Diocese through the process over the coming year.

## COMMUNICATIONS

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Cathy Tingle, Interim Communications Officer, reminded Synod that the survey completed at the October meeting was enabling the production of material to help with compiling a communications strategy for the Diocese. She was very keen to help charges with their local communications. She was also keen to ensure that stories from everywhere within the Diocese were procured, not just the high-profile ones. Whilst events were interesting, it was stories and experiences which presented a better picture of our Diocesan life.

## NET ZERO

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Neil Rawlins, Provincial Carbon Projects & Data Officer, reflected on what had happened since the start of his work in April 2024. He had visited 19 charges in the Diocese, had worked to get Energy Performance Certificates for all rectories and had sourced 34 grant funding bodies. On 19th July 2025 the SEC NetZero Roadshow would come to Edinburgh. The Energy Footprint Toolkit was helping to guide the work of the NetZero team, but it also revealed the types of energy used. It was known that renewable tariffs reduced carbon emissions by 87% whilst recognising that there was not necessarily a resulting financial saving.

Andrew Aveyard, Convener of the Diocesan Environmental Group, said that it was good to have started to understand the individual challenges faced by churches in the Diocese. He felt that there should be an aim that all charges had a plan to move towards net zero by 2030 even though achieving net zero by that date was probably not feasible.

## Questions & Comments:

Howard Thompson, Lay Representative, Musselburgh. [Refer to Live stream]

The Reverend Peter Harris, Rector, Dalkeith and Lasswade. He reflected that it was difficult to get quotes for installation of solar panels and that planning permission had been a significant challenge. He reported that Historic Environment Scotland were helping with simplifying the process for churches.

## LITURGIES

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Bishop John presented the General Synod business from June 2024 which involved a tidying up of the list of approved liturgies. There were out of date versions of the 1982 Scottish liturgy which remained in the list.

A straw poll was taken which indicated majority support, with one abstention.

## FINANCE

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Ian Lawson updated Synod on the financial position at the end of 2024. The accounts were in the process of being audited but would be finalised very soon. There was an operating deficit of £165k. Investment values had gone up by 9% but overall total income was down by £14k due to the phasing-out of the Provincial Transitional Stipend Support funding. Expenditure was up by £100k due to the inclusion of the Investing In The Future grants in the figures provided.

The success of the Unit Trust Pool performance had resulted in the Pension Fund being able to reduce the charges' required contributions to clergy and staff pensions.

The costs involved with the legislation for the Registration of Controlling Interests in Land had been considerable. The initial cost of registration had been covered by the diocese from two funds but, in future, the cost of updating the Register for changes at vestry level would need to be borne by individual congregations.

The Dean proposed a vote of thanks to Ian Lawson for his hard work in maintaining the finances in good order as well as for his clarity in presenting the financial position to Synod.

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## THE BISHOP CHAIRED THE NEXT SECTION OF THE MEETING

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### DEAN'S REPORT

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Amongst the highlights of her work in 2024 were the Chrism Mass, 17 visitations, the appointment of a new Communications Officer, new Honorary Canons, ordinations to the Diaconate, licencing of Lay Readers, and the consecration of a new Bishop of Argyll & the Isles, which was alongside the electoral process for a new Bishop of Glasgow & Galloway. Four vacancies were filled in 2024. Her ninth year as Dean of the Diocese had provided a time of reflection in which she had valued the regular meetings with her colleague Deans from other Dioceses. Once a new Bishop was elected for Edinburgh Diocese she would be stepping down from her time as Dean to concentrate fully, once again, on her congregation at St Ninian's.

Bishop John thanked Dean Frances, on behalf of Synod, for her work in past and previous years as well as for the work that would be coming in the year ahead. Synod gave long applause.

### THE BISHOP CONFIRMED THE ACTS OF SYNOD

# Minutes of the Special Meeting of Edinburgh Diocesan Synod held on 25 June 2025

*The meeting was held online at 7.00pm via Zoom only*

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## ATTENDANCE

Clergy (44 Members)

Lay (41 Members)

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Bishop John reported that a Eucharist had duly taken place at the Cathedral, as required by Canon, in order to constitute a meeting of Synod. He opened the online session with a further prayer.

He thanked members for taking the time to attend the meeting.

It was a necessary meeting of one item. An amendment to Canon 4 was needed, which had its First Reading at General Synod earlier in June. In order to get the change enacted in time to elect our new bishop, via a Second Reading, consultations were needed with the Synods of each diocese.

The paperwork had been circulated prior to the meeting, which was a note from the Convenor of the Canons Committee to explain the need for the changes. In Section 12 there was a change under (12b) where the “*electoral process should be completed within one year of the date of the vacancy*” was being changed to “...*within one year of the date of the ~~vacancy~~ **mandate being issued even if it is necessary to engage in all 3 stages***”. This would enable any necessary work in the diocese to be undertaken before a mandate was issued. This might be needed in the event of a death, as was witnessed in the Diocese of Argyll & The Isles, or in the case of any pastoral breakdown. This would enable the mandate to be delayed.

Revd Nick Bowry (Rector of Penicuik & West Linton) – could some expectation of timescale be included to impose some time-limit, maybe 6 months, as the maximum time delay?

Gavin McEwan (Diocesan Chancellor) – in Section 5 the Primus would issue mandate “within 21 days of a vacancy” but there was a provision that enabled an Episcopal Synod to postpone that if needed.

Philip Sawyer (Lay Representative, St Barnabas, Edinburgh) – suggested an amendment to Section (12b) to say “*the electoral process shall be completed within 1 year of the **issuing** of the mandate*”

Revd Gill Hitchen (Priest in Charge, St Matthew’s, Rosslyn Chapel) – noted that in (12b) it did say “...of the mandate *being issued*”

All comments were noted and would be passed back to the Canons Committee.

The second area concerned Section 26. The version of the Canon which went to the Faith & Order Board was the correct one, but an earlier incorrect version was somehow presented to General Synod. In getting to the point of the Electoral Synod using the transferable vote, by voting in individual Houses (Clergy and also Laity) both Houses could potentially choose two totally different candidates to remain on the ballot paper, and that would clearly make a nonsense of the process.

Neil Stewart (Lay Representative, St Paul's & St George's, Edinburgh) - If candidates with the lowest votes were both tied, what would happen?

Gavin McEwan (Diocesan Chancellor) – indeed, that could happen, and the point needed to be fed back.

Robin Wilson (Lay Representative, Innerleithen) – would that also apply if two candidates at the top were tied?

Bishop John – in that instance it would go to a ballot and not to a transferable vote.

Simon Filsell then explained the voting process using a Google Form with the link only being made accessible to Synod members. It allowed votes of “agree”, “oppose” or “abstain” as well as a space for comments.

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## **VOTING:**

- 83 votes cast
- 2 attendees failed to cast a vote
- 100% - “I AGREE with the proposed changes to Canon 4” (no abstentions)
  - 54.2% Clergy
  - 33.7% Lay Reps
  - 12.1% Bishop & Diocesan Officers/GS Reps

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The Bishop confirmed the Acts of Synod

# Minutes of the Special Meeting of Edinburgh Diocesan Synod held on 27 September 2025

*The meeting was held at St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh,  
following a Synod Eucharist*

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## ATTENDANCE

Clergy (45 Members)

Lay (47 Members)

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A special meeting of the Diocesan Synod was called in order to elect a Synod Clerk following the appointment of The Reverend Canon Sarah Shaw as the Vice Provost of St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Glasgow.

The candidates nominated were:

- The Reverend Elizabeth O'Ryan (Rector of Holy Trinity, Haddington)
- The Reverend Canon Matthew Rushton (Rector of Christ Church, Edinburgh)

The eligible voters were members of the House of Clergy. 44 votes were cast and The Reverend Elizabeth O'Ryan was duly **ELECTED**

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The Bishop confirmed the Act of Synod

# DIOCESAN SYNOD ELECTIONS 2026

Vacancies Nominations & Appointments Eligible for 2<sup>nd</sup> term

## General Synod

CLERGY (16 members)			
Name	Elected by	First Elected	End of term
VACANCY	Diocesan Synod		
VACANCY (Nomination: The Revd Simon Schofield)	Diocesan Synod		
The Revd Ollie Clegg	Diocesan Synod	2024	2028
The Revd Nicki McNelly	Diocesan Synod	2020	2028
The Revd Canon Dave Richards	Diocesan Synod	2019	2027
The Revd Ryan Bennett	Diocesan Synod	2024	2028
The Revd Christine Downey	Standing Committee	2024	2028
The Revd Canon John McLuckie	Standing Committee	2024	2028
The Revd Amy-Jo Philip	Standing Committee	2024	2028
AREA COUNCIL-NOMINATED			
VACANCY	Borders		
The Revd Jane MacLaren	Edinburgh Forth	2021	2029
The Revd Canon Dr Sophia Marriage	Edinburgh East	2024	2028
VACANCY	Edinburgh South		
The Very Revd John Conway	Edinburgh South West	2020	2028
The Revd Peter Harris	Mid & East Lothian	2025	2029
The Revd Susan Ward	West Forth	2021	2029
ALTERNATES			

LAY (16 members)			
Name	Elected by	First Elected	End of term
Lei Garcia	Diocesan Synod	2021	2029
Helen Mitchell	Diocesan Synod	2020	2028
Alan Baker	Diocesan Synod	2025	2029
Alistair Dinnie	Diocesan Synod	2025	2029
Ian Gardner	Diocesan Synod	2025	2029
VACANT	Diocesan Synod		
VACANT	Diocesan Synod		
VACANT	Diocesan Synod		
VACANT	Diocesan Synod		
AREA COUNCIL-NOMINATED			
Tim Hatton	Borders	2024	2028
David Stevens	Edinburgh East	2023	2027
Steven Gillespie	Edinburgh Forth	2025	2029
Andrew Daye	Edinburgh South	2024	2028
Michael Wood	Edinburgh South West	2021	2029
Dr Vicki Clark	Mid & East Lothian	2021	2029
Duncan Sinnett	West Forth	2022	2026
ALTERNATES			

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## Diocesan-Elected Members of Provincial Bodies

*Diocesan Appointments elected by Diocesan Synod for 4-year terms*

**Faith and Order Board:** LAY VACANCY, The Revd Ollie Clegg

**Mission Board:** The Revd Christine Downey

**Provincial Panel for Episcopal Elections:** Canon Alistair Dinnie (LAY) (2024-2028) and CLERGY VACANCY *Nomination: The Revd Canon Dean Fostekew*

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## Diocesan Committees

### Standing Committee Members (Diocesan Charity Trustees)

*Membership - The Bishop who shall convene the Committee; A Vice Convenor who shall be a Lay person to be appointed by the Standing Committee from its membership. Two clerical and two lay members to be appointed by the Diocesan Synod. The Dean, Registrar, Diocesan Secretary, Diocesan Treasurer and the Convenors of the Mission & Ministry and Finance & Management Committees*

Bishop of Edinburgh, Convener (*Ex-officio*)

The Very Revd Frances Burberry, Dean (*Ex-officio*)

### CLERGY

The Revd Rosie Addis (2019-2027) (*Synod appointee*)

The Revd David Dixon (2021-2029) (*Synod appointee*) *second term*

The Revd Canon Dr Sophia Marriage, Convener, Mission & Ministry Committee (2023-2027) (*Ex-officio*)

### LAY

Mr Ian Lawson, Diocesan Treasurer (*Ex-officio*)

Professor Wilson Poon, Diocesan Secretary; (*Ex-officio*)

Mr Philip Sawyer (2025-2029) (*Synod appointee*)

Mrs Pippa Snell, Registrar (October 2024-2029) (*Ex-officio*)

Mr Robert O'Riordan, Convener, Finance & Management Committee (*Ex-officio*)

Michael Wood (2024-2028) (*Synod appointee*)

VACANCY (*Nomination: Philip Sawyer*)

## **Mission & Ministry Committee Members**

*Membership - A Convenor to be elected by the Diocesan Synod; The Bishop, Dean and the Diocesan Secretary; Three clerical and three lay people appointed by the Diocesan Synod*

The Revd Canon Dr Sophia Marriage, Convenor (2019-2027)

The Bishop (*Ex-officio*)

The Dean (*Ex-officio*)

Diocesan Secretary (*Ex-officio*)

### CLERGY

The Revd Lesley Penny (2025-2029) (*Synod appointment*)

The Revd Nicki McNelly (2024–2028) (*Synod appointee*)

The Revd Elizabeth O’Ryan, (2024–2028) (*Synod appointee*)

The Revd Christine Downey, Member of Provincial Mission Board (*co-option*)

### LAY

Anne Martin (2022– 2026) (*Synod appointee*)

Rachel Penman (2022–2026) (*Synod appointee*)

Shirley Green (*Synod appointment*)

## **Finance & Management Committee Members**

*Membership - A Convener to be elected by the Diocesan Synod; The Bishop, the Dean, the Diocesan Secretary and the Diocesan Treasurer; A representative of the Provincial Administration Board who is resident within the Diocese. Three clerical and three lay people to be elected by Synod.*

Robert O’Riordan – Convenor (*Synod appointee*)

Diocesan Secretary (*Ex-officio*)

The Bishop (*Ex-officio*)

The Dean (*Ex-officio*)

Diocesan Treasurer (*Ex-officio*)

### CLERGY

The Revd Diana Hall (2025-2029) (*Synod appointee*)

The Revd David Todd (2023-2027) (*Synod appointee*)

**VACANCY** (*Nomination: Revd Matthew Rushton*) (*Synod appointee*)

### LAY

Mr Ian Kerry (2024-2028) (*Synod appointee*)

Anne McAlister (2019-2027) (*Synod appointee*)  
Mr Kenneth Ramage (*Synod appointee*)  
Mr Alex Stewart, Convenor, Buildings Committee (*Co-opted*)

## **Cathedral Board**

Mrs Anne McAlister

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## **Diocesan Appointments**

### **Diocesan Officers**

Chancellor: Mr Gavin McEwan (from December 2024)  
Registrar: Mrs Pippa Snell (from October 2019)  
Secretary: Professor Wilson Poon (2024-2029)  
Treasurer: Mr Ian Lawson (2018-2028)  
Synod Clerk: The Revd Canon Elizabeth O’Ryan (2025-2030)

### **Diocesan Auditor**

Chiene & Tait (2023-2028)

### **Diocesan Staff**

Cathy Ballantine, Interim Administrative Assistant (Mission & Ministry) (2025 - )  
Simon Filsell, Diocesan Administrator (2012 - )  
Hannah Marcus, Bishop's & Dean's PA & Diocesan Protection Officer (2024 - )  
Caroline Miller, Finance & Support Officer (2025 - )  
Mollie Nijam, Communications Officer (2024 - )  
Fiona Reynolds, Adviser for Christian Life (2023 - )

The 2025 Accounts comprise a Trustees' Report, Auditor's Report, Statement of Financial Activity or "SOFA" (effectively the income and expenditure account), Balance Sheet, Cash Flow Statement and Notes thereto. The accounts were approved by Standing Committee on 26 February 2026. The auditors have also confirmed they have completed their work satisfactorily and issued a report with no adverse comments.

This year, the accounts have been rounded to the nearest £1,000 for greater clarity.

### ***Financial outcome for the year***

The SOFA on page 10 shows an overall deficit (ie an excess of expenditure over income) of £32k.

An deficit on designated funds of £68k was the result of grants totalling £103k in the Investing in the Future programme, net of unspent investment income of £35k in the St Hilda's Fund (for Mission). This was offset by surpluses of £40k on the General Fund and £4k in restricted funds.

### ***General Fund outcome compared to budget***

The General Fund deals with the core running costs of the Diocese, funded mainly by quota and investment income. The attached schedule shows actual income and costs for the year matched against budget.

The net surplus of £40k on the General Fund, compares with a budgeted surplus before contingencies of £7k. The main reasons for this were:

- Investment income was £12k over budget. The UTP distribution rates rose again by more than inflation, and a new deposit platform earned higher rates of interest on uninvested cash balances.
- Planned maintenance works on the Bishop's house during the vacancy were delayed and around £14k of expenditure will now fall into 2026.
- During 2025 the Diocese operated with fewer regular staff and a greater use of temps. For administration support this was more expensive, but mission and ministry activity was less than budgeted and temp costs also reduced. Savings in M&M of £20k were offset by higher administration costs of £13k. (These included unplanned but necessary work on IT network security.)
- Grant costs in the General Fund were reduced by the absence of ordinands qualifying for robes grants this year. (Note that most grants are paid from designated and restricted funds rather than from the General Fund.)

While the total expenditure in the attached schedule agrees with total expenditure in the accounts, the analysis of expenditure in note 4 to the accounts is on a different basis in order to comply with accounting standards. Note 4 shows costs analysed between the major categories of Diocesan activities, with overall support costs allocated between them.

## ***Movements in other funds***

These are disclosed in note 13 to the accounts where you can also find a brief description of the purpose of each fund. In relation to the income and expenditure figures for 2025:

- Income in 'other restricted funds' comprises £84k of specific grant funding from the Scottish Episcopal Church (SEC), mainly for curate grants, with £8k coming from other restricted donations. (A further £75k of SEC grants are included in General Fund income because they are given to help towards aspects of our recurring general fund expenditure on mission, Bishop's stipend etc.)
- Apart from a further £6k of grant receipts, mainly in the Bishop's Discretionary Fund, all other income in restricted and designated funds derives from distributions from investments in the SEC Unit Trust Pool (UTP).
- Designated capital funds include historic 'Mission Funds' invested in the UTP where the related income is used to meet general fund expenditure and help keep quota levels down.
- £750k of investment gains were transferred from these Mission Funds in 2023 to fund the Investing in the Future programme for five years. IIF expenditure in the year includes both the £103k shown and an additional £27k drawn from a restricted fund held for the benefit of one of the congregations supported.
- Diocesan project fund expenditure comprised grants to congregations for building works (£8k), a rectory green grant (£5k), multi-year mission projects (£25k) and other mission grants (£10k).

## ***Balance Sheet***

There is full analysis in the notes to the accounts of the Diocese's assets and liabilities. Note 10 discloses the disposal of part of our holding in UTPs and its reinvestment in fixed term deposits, in order to keep funds off market risk that will be needed in the medium term for future IIF grants. It also discloses two interest-bearing loans made to congregations to assist with high-value bridging issues.

## ***2024 Accounts***

As there was no October Synod in 2025, I also have to present the 2024 audited accounts to the March Synod. However, the numbers are unchanged since the draft accounts I presented to the Synod in February 2025, so this is a formality. The 2024 accounts are available on the Diocesan website at <https://edinburgh.anglican.org/diocesan-synod-14-march-2026/>

**Ian Lawson Diocesan  
Treasurer 10 March 2026**

**Diocese of Edinburgh**  
**General Fund Result compared to budget**  
**Year ended 31 December 2025**

2024	Category Group	2025 results			variance as a % of budget
		Actual	Budget	Variance	
£	Income	£	£	£	
4,878	1000 Voluntary	4,464	2460	2,004	81%
511,352	2100 Quota	552,253	552793	(540)	-0%
70,604	2200 SEC Grants	75,283	75283	0	0%
12,681	2300 Other grants	12,032	11604	428	4%
20,514	2400 Other charitable activities	23,217	22000	1,217	6%
6,732	3000 Charges for services	4,931	8324	(3,393)	-41%
108,938	4000 Investment income	119,743	107751	11,992	11%
<u>735,698</u>		<u>791,922</u>	<u>780,215</u>	<u>11,707</u>	<u>2%</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
297,896	1000 Quota and the wider church	322,398	323500	1,102	0%
154,624	2000 Office of Bishop and Dean	126,460	133017	6,557	5%
117,758	3000 Mission & Ministry (see below)	103,747	124,607	20,860	17%
4,324	4000 Grants (see below)	2,152	7,800	5,648	72%
166,764	5000 Support (see below)	169,873	156,999	(12,874)	-8%
20,656	6000 Governance	26,552	27,316	764	3%
<u>762,020</u>		<u>751,182</u>	<u>773,239</u>	<u>22,057</u>	
(26,323)	(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS	40,740	6,976	33,764	
(1,500)	Transfer to Lambeth Fund	(1,500)	(1,500)		
<u>(27,823)</u>		<u>39,240</u>	<u>5,476</u>	<u>33,764</u>	
<b>3000 Mission &amp; Ministry</b>					
1,265	3100 M&M clergy in training	1,190	3700	2,510	68%
88,491	3200 M&M Authorised ministry support	80,809	93998	13,189	14%
8,510	3400 M&M central activities	10,111	8000	(2,111)	-26%
1,579	3500 Youth and Children's support	4,009	1200	(2,809)	-234%
17,913	3600 M&M support costs	7,628	17709	10,081	57%
<u>117,758</u>		<u>103,747</u>	<u>124,607</u>	<u>20,860</u>	<u>17%</u>
<b>4000 Grants</b>					
429	4100 Grants to congregations	-	2800	2,800	100%
3,895	4200 Grants - individuals	2,152	5000	2,848	57%
<u>4,324</u>		<u>2,152</u>	<u>7,800</u>	<u>5,648</u>	<u>72%</u>
<b>5000 Support</b>					
89,812	5100 Support staff costs	88,870	84515	(4,355)	-5%
34,271	5200 Office premises	31,570	34306	2,736	8%
38,205	5300 Office support services	44,997	35926	(9,071)	-25%
3,576	5400 Communications and Media	3,626	1754	(1,872)	-107%
899	5500 Finance costs	811	498	(313)	-63%
<u>166,764</u>		<u>169,873</u>	<u>156,999</u>	<u>(12,874)</u>	<u>-8%</u>







# DIOCESE OF EDINBURGH

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## CONTACT US

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