

# Beyond the Present

## Beyond the Present: what's next

*Over 600 clergy and deanery representatives from across the Diocese have attended our Beyond the Present Meetings.*

The 16 Episcopal Meetings were an opportunity to give thanks to God for all we are doing as a Diocese through this pandemic, as well as listening and looking together at how we can move beyond the present and confidently approach an uncertain future.

Originally planned as a chance for the Bishops to meet in person with the deaneries, the meetings moved online via Zoom because of the pandemic restrictions and carried on during this second lockdown.

Despite being online, the meetings hosted lively and enthusiastic discussions, with those attending sharing good practice and a wealth of ideas, as well as their concerns over finances. They also revealed a strong sense of the challenge churches face, as well as a deep hope for the future.

It is hoped that the visits will be just the start of an ongoing conversation in deaneries and parishes across the Diocese, and to help with this a video and a set of reflective questions and Bible study for groups has been made available via <http://bit.ly/beyondthep>.

Bishop Nicholas said:

“In these strange and tumultuous times we need to talk together about what we are thinking, praying, doing, so we see more clearly what God is teaching us in the time of this pandemic. As Christians and as churches, how will we continue to Renew Hope in the places where we live, work and serve?”

“I was left with a stronger sense of the scale of the challenge as well as with a deeper hope about how together we will respond creatively and positively. Thank you to everyone who took part.”

The Bishops will now meet to review all the feedback from the meetings.