

# Rural Hope

## THRIVE-ing

*Back in the autumn of 2019 the Rural Hope team introduced the THRIVE initiative to our Diocese.*

The THRIVE course is designed to promote growth and collaboration, especially in leadership in rural parishes, and sessions were quickly underway across the diocese.

Covid certainly slowed things down, but as the Revd Gale Hunt, Assistant Rural Dean of Stonehenge Deanery explains below, THRIVE can still be done on Zoom.

"Towards the end of November, the Avon River Team finally started on their THRIVE journey, along with the other 5 THRIVE Groups that make up the Ramsbury Cohort 2 – we should have started back in June but a pandemic got in the way. This was the very first THRIVE Learning Community to be formed on Zoom!

"In case you've not heard of THRIVE, it's part of the Rural Hope project and is run by CPAS. Each THRIVE group from a benefice is made up of a mix of ordained and lay members. The THRIVE groups then form a THRIVE Community which, over a 2-year period, meets together 4 times, looking at the following areas:

1. Journey: where have we come from and what is God's call for us at this time?
2. Leadership: how can we best support current leaders and grow new ones?
3. Discipleship: how can we deepen our journey of faith and share faith with others?
4. Mission: how can we show God's love in a hurting world in our actions and words?

"In between these 6-monthly meetings, each THRIVE group works on carrying out their action plans, with the support and encouragement of their Rural Field Officer (RFO). The RFOs are also involved in providing support on the training days as well as journeying with us in between the sessions.

"Leadership Specialist Pam McNaughton, our trainer from CPAS, did a great job of adapting what she would normally do over a 2-day training course into an on-line zoom course of an evening and day. We obviously couldn't do some of the practical activities that Cohort 1 were able to do, but we did have a quiz to wake us up after lunch (The RFOs came first and second!) and much use of breakout rooms for group discussion. Everyone in the community helped with ideas for our burning issues by typing them in the chat box.

"We dreamed BIG and were inspired and energised to see where God will take us on this journey over the next 2 years!"