

Deanery Synod Meeting 26-06-23 KRASIFAID

The Lay Chair of the Deanery Synod, Keith Rushforth, explained that the Rt Revd Robert Atwell is retiring and that the diocese hoped to have a new bishop in a place in a year's time. In the meantime the Rt Rev'd Jackie Searle will be acting bishop.

Simon Talbot (who was Rural Dean) is moving on to be an army Chaplain.

Keith introduced Brian and Chris Clarke who run the charity Krasifaid. Krasif means 'beautiful' in Bulgarian.

Brian and Chris volunteered to go to Amsterdam's red light district to be house parents in a house called The Ark. They worked there for 5 years, during which time they also visited Berlin. They witnessed some of the removal of the Berlin Wall and were struck by the contrast between West and East Berlin.

This inspired them to go and work in Bulgaria, a forgotten Eastern Bloc country which had relied heavily on 'Mother Russia' until the collapse of the Soviet Union. In 2007 they founded Krasifaid to support their work.

Four years ago they returned to the UK to live in Cullompton where, unbeknown to them, they discovered a group of about 400 Bulgarians working at the Chicken Factory. These Bulgarians were mostly from the Roma people and not the Bulgars, they were used to being ostracised. They were surprised to find British Bulgarian speakers. Brian and Chris have been working to improve the acceptance of these people in Cullompton.

Brian, Chris and Keith Rushforth have also been involved in trying help Ukrainian refugees.

Kate Henshall