



# Gavin is consecrated as Bishop of Dorchester

IT was an unusual way to be consecrated, but our former archdeacon Gavin Collins is now the Bishop of Dorchester.

Covid restrictions meant that Gavin was consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the chapel at Lambeth Palace in April 2021, with only a handful of family and colleagues present. It was very different from the usual large-scale celebration at St Paul's Cathedral.

Gavin, who had been Archdeacon of the Meon in our diocese since 2011, had also been announced as the bishop-elect unusually - at an online meeting hosted by the Bishop of Oxford. His new responsibilities include leading an episcopal area that is larger than many dioceses, with 326 churches across 11 deaneries.

Bishop Gavin said: "It's a privilege to work and worship alongside the people of these churches as, together, we serve the communities of Oxfordshire.

"Throughout lockdown, churches have shown us that nothing can separate us from the love of God,

and our calling to show and share that love with the communities around us. Jesus' promise is that he came to give us life in full abundance, and, as Bishop of Dorchester, it will be a joy to play a part in helping the Church to grow into and live out that abundance of life."

Gavin is one of the convenors of the Evangelical Forum on Synod and has served as a trustee of Latin Link mission agency and of the London School of Theology.

He was educated in Law at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. He then worked as a solicitor in the City of London before training for ministry at Trinity College Bristol. He was ordained in 1997 and served his curacy in Cambridge, then was vicar of Christ Church, Chorleywood from 2002 and was also rural dean of Rickmansworth from 2006, before becoming Archdeacon of the Meon.

He was elected to the Church of England's General Synod in 2013 and became our Warden of Readers in 2014. Gavin is married to Christina, who is a health visitor, and they have three children.

**Above (l to r): Bishop Christopher; the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby; Bishop Gavin Collins; and the Bishop of Oxford, Steven Croft, at Lambeth Palace**

The Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Rev Steven Croft, said: "Gavin is known for his warmth and approachability, and he is passionate about the mission of the Church.

"He is experienced in bringing churches, local authorities and civil society organisations together for the good of all, and is clear about the issues rural communities and towns face."

And Bishop Christopher, said: "We shall miss Gavin's wisdom, commitment and energy in the many ways his ministry has contributed to our service and outreach, particularly in encouraging and enabling initiatives for the growth and renewal of our individual and corporate discipleship.

"He has filled many important roles, especially as my senior diocesan colleague for some years, but we honour him most not for what he did but for who he is as a fellow disciple of Jesus."