

Video Meeting Guidelines for Wessex Synod

Please note that this is a work in progress - if we have learning points from meetings, then these notes can be updated.

General points

- Arrive ready to start on time. Sign in a few minutes early - the 'room' is available
- If possible have your laptop/tablet/phone on a desk where it can stay still
- try not to wear - or have anything in the background - that has a strong pattern, especially stripes
- do not try to multi-task - conference calls take concentration, and if you do other things you are likely to be distracted, and be a distraction to others
- turn off other applications on your computer so that all it's energy (as well as yours) goes into the meeting
- try to be in a quiet place, where others won't be walking through
- if you have a headset with microphone you may find it helpful to use it. It means that you keep a steady distance from the microphone, and also reduces extraneous noise for yourself and for others
- if you are not speaking, use that 'mute' button (it's a little microphone symbol). Don't forget to switch on again when you do want to speak!
- Make sure that the light is OK for your camera. Too much or too little can make it very difficult to see you, and especially to see your expression...
- ...and remember that just like in a face to face meeting, your expression can be seen
- the way that Lifesize works means that the person speaking moves into the centre of the screen - and others move around
- video conferencing takes more concentration than a face to face meeting. An hour and a half is the absolute maximum it is reasonable to meet for. All of us need to be focussed and well prepared, stick to the agenda item and not say too much

A few specific Wessex ideas

- if you can, have some blue and orange cards available - that way we can all 'see' the opinion of the meeting when needed, more easily than simply looking at nodding or shaking of heads. If you haven't got anything of those colours, a hand with thumb up or down, close to the camera (ie in front of your face) can be a help
- if you want to get the attention of the chair, then wave something brightly coloured
- it helps if the convenor acknowledges who wants to speak - and puts them in order for making their contributions
- there may be times when it is helpful for the convenor to go around the 'room' asking each person in turn. For that purpose - and the way in which people change place on the screen at times - it's important for the convenor to have a full list of participants
- whoever is taking minutes may need to ask for proceedings to stop, and for them to check that they have recorded things correctly

Clare Downing
24th March 2020