

Developing Our Deaneries

This is a brief summary of the Report approved by Diocesan Synod in May 2016. The full version of this can be found at <http://dioceseofyork.org.uk/people-and-places/diocesan-synod/>

Too often deaneries have been seen through the eyes of either their Synods, or the Clergy Chapter, and this can severely restrict our vision of what deaneries can contribute to the life of local churches and the wider diocese. This proposal, approved by Diocesan Synod, will see deaneries as “a local network of churches, inspiring, influencing and leading mission and ministry”. It is hoped that this will enable to support the mission of local parishes and individuals better and play a more significant part in developing and delivering the vision and strategy of the diocese.

Our existing deaneries are very varied, in size, context and history and the proposal of the creation of a Deanery Leadership Teams can be applied in all and will address the three key purposes offered for each deanery.

As members of the Body of Christ, we belong to the one holy, catholic and apostolic Church. God has called us to know him, not simply as individuals but in community. The Anglican way challenges any tendency for a congregation to isolate itself. Partnership is encouraged through belonging in parishes, benefices, deaneries and the diocese. The deanery has a vital place in the life of the diocese and there are aspects of mission and ministry which can only be expressed at deanery level.

Shared leadership

The sharing of leadership begins with the Archbishop and Suffragan Bishops. The report proposes that each deanery should have a Deanery Leadership Team (DLT), with clear responsibilities, and with role descriptions for the four required roles. The DLT is to be led by the re-named Area Dean and Lay Dean. The DLT shares with the bishop in the creating and implementation of their Deanery Plan for Mission and Ministry, encouraging partnership in mission, and fulfilling the existing statutory functions of the Deanery Standing Committee, and the Mission and Pastoral Committee.

The DLT of between 6 and 12 members will include the Area Dean, the Lay Dean, the Deanery Financial Adviser and the Deanery Secretary/Administrator. Other members may be included to represent the variety of ministries in the deanery. The Deanery Financial Partnership will continue to have a key role in supporting parishes in their Freewill Offers.

Three Purposes

Deaneries with this renewed vision would be characterised by three overlapping and complementary purposes. They are all significant but different deaneries will have varying needs over time, and so work on the purposes can be picked up in the order appropriate to each deanery:

Enabling Mission, Resourcing Ministry, Supporting Relationships

Deanery Synod, Deanery Plan and Gatherings of Ministers

The primary role of the Deanery Synod will be to work with the DLT in fulfilling the vision and plan for the deanery. The Deanery Plan describes how mission and ministry will be developed in the deanery, beyond the level of benefices. Whilst the DLT will facilitate its creation, the Deanery Synod will be responsible for it. In the future, deaneries meetings will seek to engage those attending more fully, so that the majority make a contribution and there is something significant to feed back to PCCs.

Various Gatherings of Ministers should contribute towards the vision of the deanery, encouraging mutual support of members, learning and development, and opportunities for reflection on local and wider issues. RPAs, Readers, Clergy and ecumenical colleagues may all be involved in some way.

Resourcing

The exact nature of new resources is part of the ongoing consultation but presently it is being considered that each deanery would have £1,000 available per year for help with administrative tasks and that the Archbishop's Mission Fund would be doubled to ensure that at least £20,000 is always available to fund deanery based mission initiatives.

Training material will be delivered at diocesan level for Area and Lay Deans, and locally delivered material made available for members of DLTs, Deanery Synods and PCCs.

A Deaneries Development Group is proposed to see that this vision is implemented.