



DIOCESE OF
Bath & Wells

Living and telling the story of Jesus

Deanery Handbook



September 2024

Welcome from Bishop Michael

As a diocese, we seek to release the gifts of all God's people, sharing in ministry and responding to God's generous love as fruitful disciples. This handbook affirms the principal of working together, clergy and laity, across our deaneries, in shared local ministries; developing partnerships, within and beyond the church, that serve our communities and the common good.

Area Deans, Lay Deans and their assistants play key roles in leading their deaneries as together they join in with God's mission. Deanery leadership combines a strategic role in ministry and mission with pastoral and legal responsibilities. Each deanery is unique and will develop its own patterns of working. This handbook contains some guidance that we hope will be of help in your shared ministry.

God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts.

Use them well to serve one another.

1 Peter 4:10

Deaneries are a vital element in the functioning of the diocese: they have a part to play in the decision-making structures, and they are also crucial in helping us understand both the richness and the challenges that exist across the diocese. Area Deans and Lay Deans meet as a group with the Bishops' Staff several times a year to create a wider leadership team for the diocese. Area and Lay Deans also meet regularly with their archdeacons. Each deanery has a Deanery Accompanier from diocesan Support Services to make it easy for deaneries to connect to the range of support that is available and to ensure that Support Services have a good understanding of the reality on the ground.

We recognise that an enormous amount of work locally falls to deanery leadership teams; this handbook is part of the diocese's work to help deaneries. We hope that as well as offering useful information it will support and encourage conversations about shared deanery leadership, what it means, who might be involved and how we can best work together.

This document sets out the responsibilities of those involved in deanery leadership. You will find other information listed within the document and available on the diocesan website, including the [Constitution and Standing Orders of Deanery Synods](#).

The work done in the deaneries, formally through chapters, synods and committees, as well as informally in developing loving relationships, is where much of the hard work is done in providing the support and structures for confident and courageous Christian communities to grow and flourish so that as a Church, we can truly be a Christian presence in every community.

May God bless and sustain you in this important part of your ministry.

+ Michael Barr & Wells.

Bishop Michael

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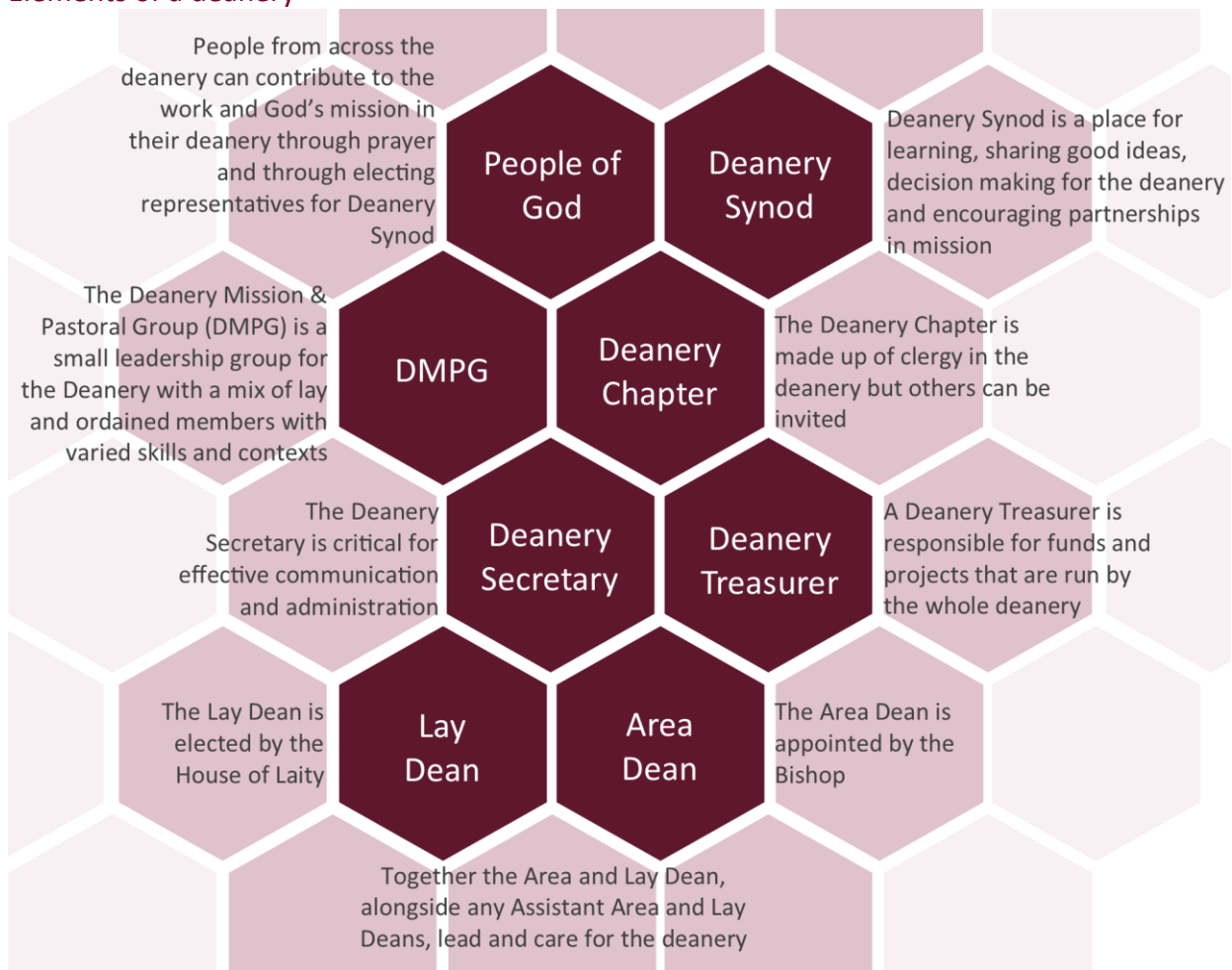
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1. What is a deanery?

Everyone lives in a deanery, yet many regular churchgoers still struggle to understand what a deanery is, what the constituent parts are and how they fit together. The diagram below gives an overview of how a deanery fits together and what the purpose of the different parts are.

The Diocese of Bath and Wells has 18 deaneries, within the three archdeaconries of Bath, Taunton and Wells. Deaneries differ in size, but most are made of around 20 to 30 parishes grouped together in benefices. One deanery operates as a Group Ministry. Deaneries and their synods have an important role in representing parishes and in shaping the mission of the Church of England.

Elements of a deanery



Each deanery has a [Deanery Accompanier](#) from the diocesan Support Services. Their purpose is to make it easy for deaneries to connect to the variety of support available, and to ensure that Support Services have a good understanding of the reality on the ground.

2. Deanery Synods

A synod is a place for gathering, sharing and decision-making. Deaneries are ideally places to share across a greater range of voices and contexts than is sometimes present in individual parishes or benefices. Some deaneries choose to do the business aspects of synod as simply as possible and make deanery wide gatherings focus on shared learning and support. So long as any voting is only synod members, such gatherings can be open to anyone in the deanery. When functioning well, deanery synods are important places for discussing diocesan-wide concerns or developments at greater depth. These insights are fed back to diocesan leaders and are invaluable for informing our collective work.

Membership and decision making

Deanery Synods are made up of lay and ordained members:

- licensed clergy are ex-officio members,
- lay members are elected by parishes.

Deanery Synods are governed by the Church Representation Rules 2020, Synodical Government Measure 1969 and by their own Standing Orders.¹ Deanery Synods are required by the Standing Orders to meet at least twice a year and are the electing bodies to Diocesan and General Synod.

Deanery Synods have a direct relationship with Parochial Church Councils (PCCs), Diocesan Synod and, through Diocesan Synod, with General Synod.²

- Members of Deanery Synods are elected every three years at Annual Parochial Church Meetings (APCMs)³.
- All synod representatives are ex-officio members of their PCCs

It is important that members of synods report back regularly at PCC meetings: enabling the two-way flow of communication that helps decision making. Deaneries might choose to give members a brief summary of what has been covered to use as the starting point for their feedback.

Deanery Synod representatives may bring any matter, either of general church interest or affecting their parish, to Deanery Synods. Deanery Synods may move to put such a motion before the Diocesan Synod and may propose one of its own deanery representatives on Diocesan Synod to speak to and move such motion. Such requests need to go first to Bishop's Council (the standing committee of Diocesan Synod), via the Diocesan Secretary (see the [useful contacts](#) list).

Diocesan Synod may request a motion to be discussed at Deanery Synods and a vote taken. Occasionally the motion may have originated in General Synod and a wider opinion is desired.

When a formal vote is taken at Deanery Synods, it is carried by a simple majority, except when specific conditions are agreed⁴. This reflects the voting practice at Diocesan and General Synod.

The Area Deans and Lay Deans are ultimately responsible for the correct and effective operation of the synod and its committees (see below). The key joint task of the Chairs is to enable all within the deanery to contribute to the life and mission of the Church according to their gifts.

¹ See [Constitution and Standing Orders of Deanery Synods](#) which can be downloaded from the diocesan website.

² See diagram in [Appendix B](#) for the relationship between these bodies.

³ The Deanery Secretary plays an important role in elections - see section on [Deanery Secretary](#).

⁴ See Standing Orders as above.

3. The Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group (DMPG)

This small group, elected by Deanery Synod, is made up of lay and ordained members, including the Area and Lay Dean and any Assistant Area Deans and Assistant Lay Deans (where they exist). The membership (ideally between six and ten) should represent a range of contexts and skills from across the deanery so that discussions and decisions are well informed. See [Appendix C](#) for full Terms of Reference, approved by Diocesan Synod.

As a smaller group than the full synod, the DMPG is in an excellent position to act as the standing committee for Deanery Synod⁵. The DMPG should ‘dream dreams’ as well as have ‘an eye for detail’. An effective DMPG will be noticing what is happening in the parishes and communities of the deanery and reflecting on the mission and ministry implications of changes, such as new or closing schools, planned expansion of communities through house building etc. Having the more detailed discussions in the smaller group frees up full synod meetings.

The DMPG should meet at least as often as Deanery Synod and help form the Synod’s agenda. Dates of meetings therefore need to be synchronised with Deanery Synod, as well as Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Group in order to help with smooth planning and communication.

The Deanery Accompanier will usually be invited to attend the DMPG to provide a two-way connection between the deaneries and Support Services. The accompanier can often suggest who might be able to provide support with particular areas of work or questions.

The group has responsibility for making recommendations to the Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Group (AMPG) on such matters as pastoral reorganisation and the deployment of posts, although it is obviously important that such recommendations have the support of their Deanery Synod.

There are Terms of Reference for DMPGs, passed by Diocesan Synod⁶, including more detail on such matters as membership, purpose and accountability. The DMPG is a place for considering the wellbeing and development of the deanery as a whole, not a forum for lobbying for individual parishes or agendas. It is important to consider the skills of members so that some strategic thinking and excellent communication skills are in the mix, as well as understanding of a range of contexts and church traditions.

⁵ Some deaneries choose to have a standing committee in addition to the DMPG, where there is a particular reason.

⁶ On the diocesan website and in [Appendix C](#).

4. Pastoral reorganisation and other significant deanery decisions

One of the responsibilities of the DMPG is to discern such matters as pastoral reorganisation and the deployment of ministry across the deanery and make recommendations to the AMPG. Any alterations to legal structures ultimately go to the Church Commissioners, who will rightly want to know the missional case for changes, whether consultation has happened and whether there are local objections. It is important that changes are discerned locally and collectively: taking the time to do this at an early stage may well save time and energy later.

Decision making for significant changes within the deanery:

- i. It is important that the DMPG is trusted by its Deanery Synod to make decisions about recommendations, and that Synod has been communicated with. Where local agreement is reached within the deanery and in line with diocesan plans, the subsequent stages should be relatively straightforward.
- ii. The DMPG, as an elected committee of Deanery Synod, makes a recommendation to the Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Group (AMPG) which operates with powers delegated by Bishops Council, acting as the Standing Committee of Diocesan Synod.
- iii. If pastoral reorganisation⁷ is part of the recommendation, it is a lengthy process even after the decision has been agreed at diocesan level and approved by the bishop. However, it is possible to informally operate according to what has been decided and approved by the bishop before the full legal process has been completed.⁸
- iv. Since any alteration of legal boundaries etc ultimately must go to the Church Commissioners, and it is possible for interested parties to make representation to the Commissioners, systematic consultation on any proposal is indispensable. This both enables a decision to be carefully and properly made and makes it less likely to be overturned by the Commissioners.

See the flowchart in [Appendix D](#) for the stages of pastoral reorganisation.

⁷ See flow diagram in [Appendix D](#).

⁸ This formal process can take as long as two years to complete, but in practice you can begin to operate in the new configuration, 'as if', before the legalities are completed.

5. Deanery Chapters

Deanery Chapter meets regularly for prayer, support and encouragement, with the Area Dean as Chair. Licensed clergy are automatically members, but it is possible to extend the invitation more widely, and Chapter meetings are important places for communication, giving a safe space for questions to be asked and wisdom shared, both about ministry in general and information that comes to Chapter from the wider diocese or national church.

It is helpful to have a Chapter Clerk to share the administrative load.

Frequency of meetings

This is locally decided but obviously there should be some regularity dates and times set that enable as many clergy as possible to attend. In practice this can require a varied pattern in order to accommodate those whose work or other duties preclude meetings on particular days or during the daytime. The pattern of meetings will also depend on the membership.

Membership of chapters

Deanery Chapter automatically includes those in parochial posts in the deanery and licensed ordained clergy in the deanery – for example chaplains and OSSMs.

In order to model shared leadership and help with communication, some Chapters invite the Lay Dean and the Deanery Accompanier, as well as Churchwardens/Chapelwardens in Vacancy and Readers and retired clergy to attend meetings. Some deaneries have such wider Chapters as standard and some on an occasional basis.

Diocesan communication

The Area Dean has a responsibility to report to Chapter on issues raised at meetings with the bishops and archdeacons, and also to identify questions and issues that can be raised at such meetings on behalf of the Chapter.

Relationship with Deanery Synod and DMPG

Whilst Chapter is an excellent forum for discussion, it is important that the Area Dean and the other members of Chapter recognise the limits of the Chapter's authority and do not make or pre-empt any decisions which more properly belong to PCCs, DMPG or Deanery Synod.

6. Roles, Appointment and Terms of Office for deanery leaders

Below is a brief description of key deanery roles. When nominating and appointing deanery leaders, it is important to consider the range of skills needed in the deanery leadership team: pastoral wisdom, strategic thinking, administrative competence, excellent communication. How deanery leadership tasks are divided up between the deanery leaders is a matter for local discernment: draft roles descriptions to localise can be found in [Appendix F](#).

Area Dean

The Area Dean is a diocesan bishop's appointment. Before making an appointment, the bishop takes advice from the archdeacon, deanery clergy, Lay Dean, Readers, Deanery Secretary and Deanery Treasurer, to find a person who is both capable of undertaking the task and who will receive the support of the deanery in exercising this ministry. The appointment is initially for six years, which may be extended for a further period.

Lay Deans

Lay Deans are elected by the Deanery Synod House of Laity for the three-year life of the synod, and commissioned by the archdeacon. Once an election has taken place, the Deanery Secretary needs to inform the Archdeacon's Office. It is possible for a Lay Dean to be re-elected at the end of their term.

Assistant Area Dean

An Area Dean may request the archdeacon that a colleague becomes an Assistant Area Dean. The Assistant Area Dean is then appointed in writing by the bishop and commissioned by the archdeacon. It is not assumed that an Assistant Area Dean will automatically become an Area Dean. How the Area Dean role is divided between the Area Dean and Assistant is a matter for local decision making, depending on the gifts and experience of those involved.

Assistant Lay Deans

Assistant Lay Deans are elected by the Deanery Synod House of Laity for the three-year life of the synod and commissioned by the archdeacon. Once an election has taken place, the Deanery Secretary will need to inform the Archdeacon's Office.

Informing the Bishops' Office and Archdeacon's Office

The appointment of an Area Dean is subject to a Clergy Change – Bishop's Notification (CCBN) and so the information of the appointment is automatically circulated. The other appointments do not require a CCBN and so it is important that the Archdeacon's Office is informed. This enables arrangements to be made for formalising the appointment, and post holders can be properly recognised and added to distribution lists for invitations, training opportunities and updates. This is a responsibility of the Deanery Secretary.

7. Commissioning, induction, continuing support and development

Commissioning

It is important to mark the beginning of new deanery ministries with prayer in whatever context works best to affirm and pray for both the work to be done and the individual appointed.

- The archdeacon will make themselves available to commission a new Area or Lay Dean during a public act of worship. Please contact your archdeacon's office to agree a suitable time.
- For other new post holders, such as Deanery Secretaries, Treasurers, members of DMPG, new members of Synod etc, deaneries are encouraged to build in an act of worship to acknowledge, and pray for, the beginning of that new role and ministry.

Induction (introduction to the role)

General

- Where possible there should be a transition period between the outgoing and current post holders. In practice, this is sometimes more achievable in lay posts. For Area Deans, if the Area Dean is leaving before a new appointment is made then they should ensure that either the Lay Dean or Assistant Area Dean has all the information and understanding necessary for the transition.
- Those new in a deanery wide post may wish to contact the Head of Deanery and Parish Support to arrange a visit to Flourish House to meet members of staff with whom they may have contact in their new role and to discuss how best to access support.
- Each deanery has a Deanery Accompanier from diocesan Support Services. The archdeacon will connect you to your accompanier but they are also listed on the [diocesan website](#).

Area Deans and Lay Deans

- The archdeacon will connect the new post holder with a nearby Area Dean or Lay Dean who is willing to act as a mentor for the first few months.
- There will be a meeting within six months of appointment with the archdeacon. The purpose of this meeting is to come together to review the work of the deanery and to reflect on its future direction. If training needs are identified, they will be passed on to the Head of Deanery and Parish Support who will work with colleagues to identify the best way of providing support.
- The Diocese of Bath and Wells is part of the Regional Learning Partnership with neighbouring dioceses. As part of its Transitions in Ministry Programme, it has historically run an annual three-day consultation for newly appointed Area Deans, usually in January. Some development is happening in this area so please check with the Ministry Training Team what is available and how to access it.

Deanery Secretaries and Treasurers

It is good practice for the Area Dean and/or Lay Dean to meet with a new Deanery Secretary or Deanery Treasurer after six months in role to review their role and any training or support needs. This is in addition to regular supportive contact. If training or support needs emerge, please contact the Head of Deanery and Parish Support for help.

Continuing support and development

Area Deans and Lay Deans

The pattern of meetings below offers opportunities for ongoing support and development, as does regular contact with your archdeacon. For particular training requests, please speak either to your archdeacon or the Ministry Training Team Leader.

- There are three meetings of Area Deans, Lay Deans and Bishops' Staff each year. If the Area or Lay Dean is unavailable, they should ask their assistant to go in their place.
- There is an annual day for Area Deans and Lay Deans and Bishops' Staff, usually on a Saturday in September.
- Archdeaconry meetings of Area Deans and Lay Deans with their archdeacons take place regularly.

Deanery Secretaries and Treasurers

- The primary support and opportunities for development will come through your Area Dean and Lay Dean.
- Diocesan Support Services are happy to receive requests for additional support or training on particular areas and will do their best to meet your requests either directly or by connecting you to others with relevant expertise – see the [useful contacts](#) section.

Deanery Reviews

The purpose of these reviews is to use the data we have to help provide annual proactive, systematic, holistic, well-informed support to deaneries across our diocese.

This is done by

- Support Services pulling together all the data relevant to the deanery (e.g. from Parish Returns System, Safeguarding Dashboards, information on ministries and roles from CMS and information from the Church Buildings Adviser, Giving and Funding Team and Finance Team)
- Sharing that information with the Area and Lay Dean two weeks in advance of meeting together so that they have a chance to take a look, and also spot any obvious errors
- Area and Lay Dean meeting in the deanery with the archdeacon and a variety of members of Support Services to see what they are noticing in the data, alongside the stories of people and places across the deanery
- Deciding together on what follow up will be helpful: e.g. correcting data errors, identifying individual support, sharing good news stories, identifying areas of work that would benefit from offering workshops to parishes in the deanery.

For a full explanation of Deanery Reviews, see [Appendix E](#).

8. Expenses of office

Payment of expenses is part of the diocesan commitment to supporting shared deanery leadership.

Claims for the following expenses need to be authorised by the relevant archdeacon on the standard form, which can be obtained from the [finance team](#). The Archdeacon's Office will then forward the claim onto the finance team.

Travel expenses

Area Deans and Lay Deans and assistants can claim for:

- Travel to deanery business within the deanery.
- Travel to diocesan meetings on deanery business.

General expenses

Deanery leadership, including Deanery Secretaries and Treasurers can claim necessary administrative costs including postage, stationery and telephone calls relating to deanery matters.

Hospitality

An annual amount is available for hospitality. This deanery hospitality figure is calculated on the basis of £50 per deanery plus up to £10 per full time equivalent stipendiary post.

It is at the discretion of the Area Dean and Lay Dean as to how this money is used in the deanery in respect of offering hospitality to laity and clergy within the deanery.

Administrative support

Administration costs in a deanery can be reimbursed by the DBF up to a maximum of four hours per week.

The hourly rate should be at least the national living wage and must be agreed with the archdeacon/Head of Finance in advance to ensure that it falls within the wages budget available.

Where there is no volunteer Deanery Secretary, a paid administrative person could fulfil part, or all, of that role.

For administrative support or other matters agreed as appropriate by the deanery leadership, additional amounts may be sourced through a local deanery levy on parishes.

Please speak to your archdeacon for further advice on what you can claim. All claims should be supported by receipts, highlighted phone bills or a mileage record sheet please.

9. Ministries across the deanery

Deanery leaders have an important role in understanding, supporting and developing ministries across their deaneries so that there is a Christian presence in every community: geographical or otherwise.

The Diocese of Bath and Wells is committed to encouraging and enabling the call of all God's people through a wide variety of shared local ministries: lay and ordained, paid and unpaid, full time and part-time, formal and informal, church-based and in the wider community. See the [shared local ministry](#) pages on the diocesan website for more information

Whilst the Area Deans and Lay Deans need to retain an overview of ministries across the deanery, and will have direct oversight of some ministries, the responsibility for developing and supporting ministries should be shared across the deanery so that the workload of deanery leaders is not unmanageable.

How ministries are best supported within the deanery is decided locally. Some Area Deans and Lay Deans share the care of lay and ordained; in some the Area Dean focuses on ordained ministry and the Lay Dean on lay ministry; some deaneries have clergy posts that include a focus on lay ministry across the deanery – there is no 'one size fits all'.

The following sections contain information relating to some of the formally recognised ministries likely to feature within your deanery; but the list is not exhaustive, is growing, and these ministries sit alongside the rich variety of informal ministries that Christians exercise in their daily lives.

There are some key moments in the life of the diocese to come together to celebrate a range of ministries:

- Crism Eucharist, Renewal of Vows and Commitment to Ministry – usually the Tuesday of Holy Week
- Archdeacon's Visitations – usually May/June/July
- Ordination of Deacons and Priests – usually June/July
- Celebration of Lay Ministries – usually June/July
- Clergy Day- usually mid-June
- Reader Day – usually 1st weekend in October
- Pre-Advent Retreat Day – usually in November

If you would like support in exploring how your deanery might develop its range of ministries, please contact the [Ministry Training Team Leader](#).

Ordained stipendiary ministry

Each deanery has a number of ordained stipendiary posts, with the clergy in those posts playing a pivotal role in the life of the deanery through their membership of Chapter, Deanery Synod and, in some cases, the DMPG. All clergy play a key role in encouraging, equipping and enabling the ministry of others.

Alongside parochial responsibilities, stipendiary clergy are encouraged to explore how their gifts might be used in the service of the deanery. Some deaneries choose to do this in a formal way by

including particular deanery remits such as prayer, youth ministry, lay ministry or discipleship, and this can be formalised on the statement of particulars during the appointments process. Clergy with a particular focus will help resource their wider deanery. This may be arranging courses to equip people taking up commissioned ministries, such as leading worship or pastoral care. They may offer oversight for a deanery post such as a pioneer, a youth worker or school's chaplain.

Ordained self-supporting ministry (OSSMs)

OSSMs can take any ministerial role within a deanery; Associate Priest, Associate Minister, Area/Assistant Area Dean, Chaplain, Incumbent. They may work exclusively in a benefice, but more usually spread their time over several commitments, exercising their priestly ministry and leadership in other roles. Some OSSMs are ministers in full-time secular employment, and therefore their primary calling is to be priests in their place of work. Some are deployed outside their home parish.

The number of OSSMs equates to about a quarter of ordained minister numbers working across the diocese, a proportion that is expected to grow steadily. The majority of OSSMs are currently licensed to an incumbent and work in a particular benefice. Some are called to a wider ministry across a number of benefices, the deanery or further afield.

Current examples of wider ministry OSSM ministry include:

- An area dean and assistant area dean, alongside their other parish duties.
- A designated 'local priest' to exercise ministry across a number of parishes within a larger benefice.
- A part-time incumbent of a benefice.

Where an OSSM with an existing licence has the calling to exercise their ministry across a wider area this should be discussed with their incumbent and/or the Archdeaconry OSSM Adviser to explore how to provide a good match between calling and context.

Readers

Readers are licensed, nationally recognised lay ministers. Following discernment and training they are given a licence by the bishop to lead services, including funerals; to preach; and to work alongside their incumbent in pastoral and other ministries. Trained as lay theologians, Readers help people to think and talk about God and God's relationship to the world.

The majority of Readers are currently licensed to the incumbent and work in their own benefice. Some Readers may feel a call to a wider ministry across a number of benefices or the deanery. Where this wider call is discerned at the time of training, the ministry specification and licence can be set up to reflect this wider ministry. Where a Reader with an existing licence has the potential to exercise their ministry across a wider area this should be discussed with their incumbent and/or the Archdeaconry Warden of Readers in the first instance.

Deanery Wardens of Readers are the first point of call for the support of Readers in the deanery. Where there is no Deanery Warden of Readers then the Archdeaconry Warden of Readers or Assistant Archdeaconry Warden of Readers is the main contact. See the [useful contacts](#) section for contact details for these roles. For the Reader Handbook and guidelines, see the [Reader handbook and resources](#) page on the diocesan website.

Retired clergy and permission to officiate (PTO)

The Area Dean meets with all newly arrived clergy living in their deanery receiving the Bishop's Permission to Officiate (PTO) before they begin to exercise their new ministry, as this:

- provides an opportunity for clergy to express their thoughts on when, where, and how often they might want to serve and also to share particular gifts and skills or interests which might be used within the deanery.
- allows the Area Dean to give any relevant background information including details of the Deanery Clergy Retirement Officer.

The transition into retirement is a significant psychological shift, and retired clergy often offer substantial support to parishes. Identifying opportunities for them to be included in ongoing supportive and informative structures can be very important. Whilst they are not automatically members of Deanery Chapters, it can be helpful and supportive to have some Chapter meetings to which retired clergy are invited. An annual meeting could be used as an opportunity to welcome and affirm newly retired clergy, as well as updating them on recent deanery and diocesan developments. A deanery service is another opportunity to welcome newly retired colleagues.

No-one should be ministering without a current PTO from the bishop (which involves DBS checks and up to date safeguarding training). Some clergy let their PTO lapse and may need to be told that they must stop formal ministry unless they renew it. Contact the [Bishops' Chaplain](#) for support if someone is continuing to exercise ministry without PTO.

Local ministry and Local Ministers

In Bath and Wells we are committed to growing shared local ministry:

- lay and ordained ministry working in collaboration
- a mixture of church-focused and community-focused roles

forming a team that builds up the body of Christ in the local church and community, leading the church in mission, with the oversight and support of an incumbent.

The Lay Ministry Pathway now gives a greater variety of ways in which people can engage with and be equipped for ministry, ranging across mentoring, apprenticeship-style learning and courses. Alongside the long-established Lay Worship Assistant (LWA) and Lay Pastoral Assistant (LPA) roles, we are developing new ministries, including the role of Local Minister/s where a person or team takes day to day responsibility for a parish or parishes within a benefice.

For more information on discerning and equipping people locally for a wide variety of ministries, see the Lay Ministry Pathway pages on the diocesan website. The Ministry Training Team is there to support deaneries in developing a range of ministries locally and can signpost and help with resources and training. Running sessions to explore local ministries at a deanery level can spark the release of hitherto unnoticed gifts.

Chaplains

There is a wide variety of chaplains: part-time and full-time, paid and honorary, lay and ordained, adults and children, across our diocese, serving in a variety of contexts - healthcare and education, business, industry and leisure, police, HM forces, cadets and beyond.

The different contexts in which chaplains serve offer perspectives that can enrich the life and understanding of deaneries. Establishing good relationships with chaplains benefits both the deanery and the chaplains. The following ideas might help:

- Keep an up-to-date list of all the chaplains in the deanery. The [Chaplaincy Development Adviser](#) can help with this.
- Encourage chaplains to join Deanery Chapter, at least occasionally.
- Review whether chaplaincy work in your deanery features as part of discussions at DMPG, Chapter, Deanery Synod etc.
- Encourage partnerships and cooperation between chaplains and churches as part of the mixed ecology of church.

Children, young people and family's ministry

Deaneries have an important role to play as we seek to grow the diversity of our churches, including connecting with children and young people. Sometimes there isn't the capacity to run things for children and young people at a parish or even a benefice level, but putting some deanery wide capacity into ministry can make a difference. For help with exploring how to make your ministry with children and young people work well for everyone, please get in touch with the Go-Team. [One example of a deanery wide approach to this work can be seen on Exmoor.](#)

Pioneers

There is a great variety of pioneers across Bath and Wells: lay and ordained, paid and unpaid, formal and informal. While some pioneers seek to grow new Christian communities outside of the time-honoured church, others work from a parish base and from there develop new ways of doing things, expanding the growth and reach of the local church.

If you are unsure who the pioneers in your deanery are, want to know more about pioneering and new Christian communities for your deanery, or about how pioneers can be discerned, equipped, recognised and supported then see the [pioneer pages on the website](#) or use the [useful contacts](#) section to get in touch.

10. Key ministry changes

Deanery Leaders have an important part to play when an incumbent or other stipendiary postholder moves on:

- supporting the parish leaders in what can be a challenging time
- and considering how the vacancy fits within the deanery's plan for ministry and mission.

The role of the Area Dean and Lay Dean (and any Assistants) is particularly important in terms of support and ensuring that parishes continue to receive communication that would ordinarily have gone via their incumbent. The role of the DMPG is pivotal in considering the ministry needs of the deanery going forwards when a vacancy occurs.

11. Vacant benefices

During a vacancy, parishes look mainly to the deanery for day-to-day support if it is an incumbent post, and mainly to the archdeacon's office for support with the appointment process. See the [Parish vacancy process pages](#) on the website for information and relevant documents.

When a vacancy arises, the archdeacon will meet with the Area Dean, Lay Dean and Churchwardens/Chapelwardens as soon as possible.

If the vacancy is for an incumbent's post, the Churchwardens/Chapelwardens of every parish in the benefice, and the Area Dean (together with any other person appointed by the bishop), act as sequestrators. The Area and Lay Dean should ensure that the following matters are covered:

- Churchwardens/Chapelwardens should ensure that the incumbent has left all keys to the property. At least one key to the front of the house should be in the keycode box. All remaining keys should be left in a kitchen drawer. No keys should be left in locks, including window keys.
- Early contact with the Churchwardens/Chapelwardens to help them arrange for the conduct of Sunday and occasional services.
- Checking that proper provision is in place for administering the income of the benefice.
- Working closely with the archdeacon during the appointment process.
- Take responsibility for the planning of institutions, collations and licensings in collaboration with the Churchwardens/Chapelwardens and the incumbent-designate (or equivalent).
- Welcoming the incoming minister to the Chapter and the Synod.

12. Clergy institutions, collations and licensings

When a new clergy person has been appointed within the deanery, the Bishops' Office will send an official notification of the date of the licensing in the form of a Clergy Change – Bishop's Notification (CCBN). The responsibility for preparing the service lies with the parish, who will plan it with their incumbent designate. The Area Dean leads the service rehearsal. A good transition and welcome service makes all the difference.

The Archdeacon's Office will supply you with the template for the Order of Service for 'Celebration for a New Ministry' and can offer guidance for preparing invitations, service sheets, parking, robing, etc.

13. Inspection of churches, registers etc

Canon F18 requires each archdeacon to inspect every church in their area at least once every three years. This can be done in person by the archdeacon, or it can be delegated by them. The delegation will be either to the Area Dean, or another fit and proper person, nominated by the Area Dean and authorised by the archdeacon.

[The Inspection of Churches, Registers and Archdeacon's Form](#) provides all the guidance necessary to carry out the inspection.

Appendix A Abbreviations and Glossary of Terms

AMPG	<p>Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Group</p> <p>This group, chaired by each archdeacon, with Area Deans and Lay Deans as members, has authority delegated to it by the Bishops Council. It is convened by each archdeacon twice a year.</p> <p>Recommendations on pastoral reorganisation and allocation of posts are made to this group by the DMPG.</p>
APCM	<p>Annual Parochial Church Meeting</p> <p>This meeting is normally only for church members on the Electoral Roll. The APCM includes Annual Reports of activity in the life of the parish and from Deanery Synod during the past year, the presentation of the Electoral Roll, the Financial Statements, a fabric report on the building of the church, the appointment of representatives to Deanery Synod, election of PCC members, appointment of sides-persons, and any other business that needs to be discussed.</p>
DBF	<p>Diocesan Board of Finance</p> <p>The overarching legal entity that incorporates diocesan Support Services, which exist to support parishes, deaneries and schools across the diocese in their ministry and mission. See the useful contacts section.</p>
Deanery Accompanier	<p>Member of the diocesan Support Services who is allocated to a deanery as a point of connection: to help with signposting to relevant support and to get to know the deanery so that diocesan Support Services have a good idea of the reality on the ground on what support is useful. See diocesan website for a current list of accompaniers. See Appendix F for Deanery Accompanier Role Description.</p>
DMPG	<p>Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group</p> <p>See Appendix B for Terms of Reference</p>
PCC	<p>Parochial Church Council</p> <p>The PCC is to “promote in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.” The responsibility of the PCC is to discuss and carefully work together to address legal matters, financial matters, as well as spiritual matters.</p>

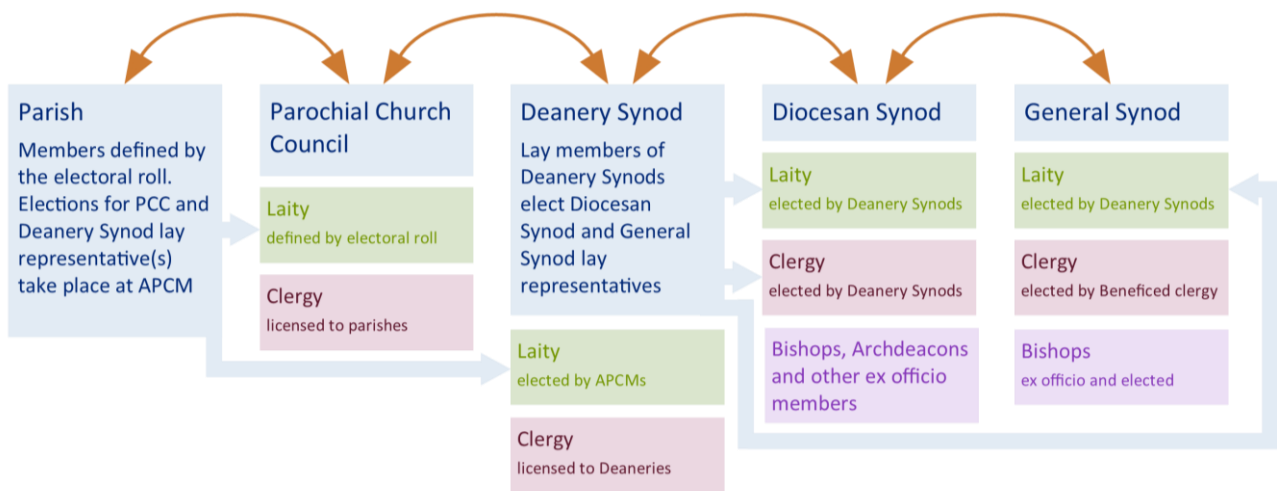
See also a useful A-Z of Terms on the [Axbridge Deanery website](#).

Appendix B Governance and listening



The chart below illustrates the relationship between parishes, PCCs and Synods: how elections enable representation at the different levels of church governance and how information and understanding flows in both directions between these bodies.

For PCCs and Deanery Synod, clergy licensed in those contexts are ex-officio members. For Diocesan Synod and General Synod, the clergy representatives are those elected by Deanery Synods.

The laity on Diocesan Synod are elected by the laity on their Deanery Synod.



Key

-  election flow
-  communication flow

Appendix C DMPG Terms of Reference (updated June 2022)

Deanery Mission and Pastoral Groups in the Diocese of Bath and Wells

A Purpose

1. To develop and strengthen the life of the deanery and in particular
 - a. To grow the church spiritually and numerically
 - b. To reimagine ministry
 - c. To contribute to the common good
2. To hold a strategic overview of the life of the deanery.⁹
3. To create, regularly review and maintain a deanery plan for mission, in whatever form is most useful.¹⁰
4. Within the context of relationships and partnerships across the deanery, to make recommendations in respect of pastoral reorganisation, and the deployment of posts, to the Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Group (AMPG) as a delegated committee of Bishops Council.
5. To promote and encourage actions and events which encourage mission, pastoral care and discipleship across the deanery.
6. To understand, comment on and help implement diocesan plans within the deanery.
7. To contribute towards the development of an archdeaconry mission and pastoral strategy by reporting to the AMPG on a regular basis.

B Accountability

1. Deanery Synod (and where it exists, Deanery Standing Committee).
2. Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Group and Bishop's Council.

In addition to the formal accountability to the above bodies, the DMPG has a duty to ensure that it communicates effectively with those bodies and with the wider deanery.

C Membership

1. Ideally between six and 10¹¹, the actual number being determined locally.
2. Area Dean, Lay Dean and (where they exist) Assistant Area Dean/Lay Dean as ex-officio.

⁹ In some deaneries it may be that the Deanery Standing Committee currently holds this 'strategic overview'. There is no reason why the DMPG and DSC should not be combined. If the DSC is to continue, the deanery would need to be clear as to its separate and distinctive nature, purpose and functioning.

¹⁰ In planning, factors such as the following will need to be borne in mind: number of buildings, clergy, Readers, LPAs, LPWs, other ministries, paid staff, size of congregations, population, ecumenical relationships, community and church schools etc. It should also take note of changes within the deanery e.g. new house building, school closures (and openings), geographical, sociological and economic factors, and the recent history of relationships between parishes and benefices. Proposals for the future might include changes to boundaries, suspensions, church closure (or new building) and other matters of pastoral reorganisation.

¹¹ Large enough to have a range of voices and skills, small enough to work effectively on matters requiring substantial reflection and planning.

3. Ideally, at least two other priests, one of whom is an incumbent and two other lay members, and a balance of lay and ordained members. It is recognised that this may not be possible in some circumstances.
4. No more than two elected members of the DMPG from one benefice, to avoid 'skewing'.
5. Members to be elected by Deanery Synod for a term of three years. If members are not elected synod members, they will be co-opted onto synod.
6. Members should be committed to the life of the whole deanery.

The group may co-opt up to two other members with the necessary skills or experience to allow the group to do its work effectively. The group should be attentive to the representation of lay ministries on the group, such as Reader, Chaplains, Pioneers etc.

D Working

1. DMPG members are not representatives of their parish, benefice or other context. Their key task is to have an overview of the whole deanery and an eye to the ongoing flourishing of God's mission throughout its life.¹²
2. DMPG should meet at least as often as Deanery Synod. Dates of meetings will need to be synchronised with Deanery Synod and AMPG to ensure regular feedback and accountability.
3. The group will monitor diocesan pastoral plans and feed-back comments and suggestions.
4. It will be an important conduit of communication to and from parishes and benefices and will regularly receive updates from them and report to them. The key parish points of contact will be their elected Deanery Synod reps. (See section E below).
5. The group will seek to stay up to date with community and wider church developments in the deanery (eg new or closing schools, planned expansion of communities through house building et al).
6. It will monitor needs and opportunities for mission and pastoral work that can best be met at a wider level than parish or benefice and will initiate responses to those needs and opportunities.
7. The Deanery Accompanier and diocesan Support Services colleagues are there to help, including signposting to deaneries and parishes that have tried particular approaches and connecting the DMPG to wider learning and guidance. DMPGs are encouraged to hold early discussions about pastoral reorganisation with their archdeacon and/or the Assistant Diocesan Secretary.
8. DMPG is both to 'dream dreams' and to have 'an eye for detail'.

E Connection to parishes in the deanery

Some parishes may wonder how 'their voice may be heard' at deanery level. Each parish elects Deanery Synod reps at its APCM and the DMPG maintains a close relationship to Deanery Synod, particularly through the Area Dean, Lay Dean and any Assistants.

¹² Their role is not to be spokespeople for their home patch or to lobby for particular interest groups

1. Each parish is represented at synod by their incumbent and at least one elected lay person. It is essential that person understands the parish situation, its plans and aspirations, and is able to represent them well. Multi parish benefices may appoint a single lay rep providing they are able to fulfil this last aspect well.
2. Deanery Synod reps should regularly update the PCC and be available to attend a meeting of the DMPG if called upon.
3. Reps will also hopefully bring constructive suggestions to the DMPG on deanery plans and ways of promoting mission, care and discipleship within the life of the deanery.

Appendix D Guide to pastoral reorganisation

Based on Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011¹³



¹³ For full information of the process and legalities see [the Church of England website](http://www.churchofengland.org.uk).

Appendix E Deanery Reviews

Purpose

To use the data we already have to help provide annual proactive, systematic, holistic, well-informed support to deaneries across our diocese.

Format

An annual meeting with each deanery to reflect together¹⁴ on the data for the deanery, alongside the stories of people and places, so that good news and support needs are identified.

- The Review is held locally, so hosting deanery is asked to find a venue with Wi-Fi and enough space for attendees (usually 6-10 people)
- The meeting is half to full day, depending on the size of deanery
- The data is collated by Support Services, including from the datasets below:

Statistics for Mission	Ministry data from CMS
Parish Finance Returns	Parish share payments progress
Energy Footprint Tool	Safeguarding Dashboard
Parish Giving Scheme, Ways to Give,	Buildings – listing, major projects or at-risk
Contactless uptake etc	buildings
Schools' information	Some census information.
- The Area and Lay Dean are sent an overview document a fortnight before the meeting, with a link to a SharePoint folder containing additional parish and benefice level information.
- The Area Dean and Lay Dean are asked to share the overview document with all parishes in order that they can check for accuracy.
- All those involved look at the data, see what they are noticing. If they spot obvious factual errors or want more information on something they get in touch with Julia Hill.
- The meeting is chaired by the archdeacon and notes and action points are taken during the meeting, circulated afterwards and stored in the Deanery Review SharePoint folder.
- The format of the meeting is to look at the headlines of what people are noticing in the data, including what seems wrong or missing, and then go through each benefice to reflect on anything that stands out as something to learn from that is good or something that would benefit from particular support – either from the deanery or Support Services. Any topics/themes for workshops are identified, as well as individual support contact.
- The notes and actions are circulated after the meeting and will be reviewed in archdeaconry meetings as most appropriate.

This is a new system for 2024 and we fully expect to keep improving how it works in practice so please give feedback.

¹⁴ Area Dean, Lay Dean, archdeacon, Head of Finance, Giving & Funding Adviser, and usually Deanery and Parish Development Adviser, Deanery Accompanier and Head of Deanery and Parish Support

Appendix F Role Descriptions

In the following pages you will find role descriptions for Area Deans, Lay Deans, Deanery Secretaries, Deanery Treasurers and Deanery Accompaniers. These are designed to help you clarify what each role involves but they should be adapted to suit your local context and the skills and capacity of the people involved.

Role description of the Area Dean

Purpose

The Area Dean is an officer of the Bishop of Bath and Wells exercising pastoral care and oversight of clergy in their deanery alongside the archdeacon and bishops. Together with the Lay Dean, the Area Dean supports and encourages shared local ministry across the deanery, so that ministry and mission can flourish in every context.

Principal tasks and responsibilities

It is a matter of local discernment how the principal tasks and responsibilities are shared between Area Dean, Lay Dean and any assistants, recognising the different gifts and experience of those in the roles.

Key relationships

- Lay Dean and Assistant Area Dean and Assistant Lay Dean where appointed
- Deanery Secretary and Deanery Treasurer where appointed
- Deanery Chapter
- Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group (DMPG)
- Archdeacon and Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Group (AMPG)
- Bishops
- Deanery Accompanier from diocesan Support Services

Deanery

- To work prayerfully with lay and ordained colleagues across the deanery and from diocesan Support Services to shape and further the mission of the Church in the deanery.
- To develop and maintain a strong collegiate relationship with the Lay Dean, any Assistant Area or Lay Deans and other members of the deanery leadership team.
- With the Lay Dean, and with input from the DMPG, to gather Deanery Synods and create a Godly space where matters can be openly discussed and decisions made.
- With the Lay Dean, to Chair the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group (DMPG).
- To facilitate Chapter meetings that promote good communication between parishes and the wider diocese and encourage ongoing ministerial development by sharing of information and good practice and by including times for reflection, worship and prayer.
- To meet with any clergy who are newly arrived in the deanery.
- To attend the Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Group (AMPG) for updates and collegiate working on current issues or developing themes. To also attend archdeaconry review sessions on Parish Share contributions to the Common Fund.

Parishes

- To provide pastoral support for clergy (including during periods of illness) and ensure that any concerns raised by clergy or laity are properly managed in consultation with the archdeacon.
- To liaise with the archdeacon during a transition in ministry (vacancy) and to enable Churchwardens/Chapelwardens to exercise their functions during vacancies including consulting on arrangements for services.
- To assist the archdeacon/bishop in deanery services such as visitations, confirmations, services of welcome and induction and other key moments in the life of the deanery.
- To carry out church inspections as required, on behalf of the archdeacon.

Commitment

When taking on the role of Area Dean or Assistant Area Dean it is important to consider how to balance the commitment of that role with other responsibilities, including to your own health and wellbeing. You are encouraged to consider which aspects of your ministry can be shared for the benefit of all – both at a deanery level, with the Lay Dean and any Assistant Area or Assistant Lay Dean, and at a benefice level, with people from your communities, including those on the periphery of the church who may have skills to offer.

Area Deans can expect to be involved with the following, some always in person, some with a mixture of online and in person:

- Deanery Synod meetings (minimum of two per year, more in some deaneries)
- DMPG meetings (usually at least one more meeting than meetings of Synod)
- Meetings with Lay Dean (agreed locally but typically monthly)
- Meetings with Assistant Area Deans where they have been appointed
- Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Groups (two per year)
- Bishops' Staff, Area and Lay Deans meeting (three per year)
- Chapter meetings (varies according to deanery but monthly in some)
- Annual Conference with Bishops' Staff (one day per year)
- Parish review sessions (once a year)
- Individual meetings with clergy
- Parish vacancy meetings with archdeacon (eg Pre-Section 11)
- Licensing of clergy within the deanery
- Annual Archdeacon's Visitation

In addition to the above commitments, time to plan, prepare and communicate needs to be factored in. Some Area Deans suggest that one day a week is a conservative estimate of the time required and that a more realistic estimate is two days per week. This can obviously only be done through shared local ministry at both a benefice and deanery level.

Administrative support is vital. Please see the section on [expenses of office](#) for how this can be supported through the DBF.

Role description of the Lay Dean

Purpose

The Lay Dean works alongside the Area Dean to support and encourage the development of ministry and mission across the deanery. The Lay Dean is appointed by the Deanery Synod's House of Laity and therefore has a particular role in being the key spokesperson for the laity in the deanery and as a bridge, where needed, between the laity and clergy of the deanery.

The Lay Dean is appointed triennially by the Deanery Synod's House of Laity from among its members as its representative and key spokesperson. Along with the Area Dean they lead the synodical life of the deanery, with an overview of all issues affecting the parishes.

Principal tasks and responsibilities

It is a matter of local discernment how the principal tasks and responsibilities are shared between Area Dean, Lay Dean and any assistants, recognising the different gifts and experience of those in the roles.

Key relationships

- Area Dean and Assistant Lay Dean and Assistant Area Dean, where appointed
- Deanery Secretary and Deanery Treasurer where appointed
- Deanery laity, especially Deanery Synod members
- Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group (DMPG)
- Archdeacon and Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Group (AMPG)
- Bishops
- Deanery Accompanier from diocesan Support Services

Deanery

- To work prayerfully with lay and ordained colleagues across the deanery and from diocesan Support Services to shape and further the mission of the Church in the deanery.
- To develop and maintain a strong collegiate relationship with the Area Dean, any Assistant Area or Lay Deans and other members of the deanery leadership team.
- With the Area Dean, and with input from the DMPG, to gather Deanery Synods and create a Godly space where matters can be openly discussed and decisions made.
- With the Area Dean, to Chair the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group (DMPG).
- To be willing to attend wider Chapter meetings in order to understand and work effectively alongside the clergy of the deanery.
- To offer particular pastoral care for lay synod members, attending deanery events and special services to support and encourage the laity in benefices and parishes.
- To attend the Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Group (AMPG) for updates and collegiate working on current issues or developing themes. To also attend archdeaconry review sessions on Parish Share contributions to the Common Fund.
- To act as an independent returning officer in elections for the House of Clergy.

Parishes

- To assist with the appointments of clergy following deanery vacancies by consultation and membership of the interview panel.
- To assist the archdeacon/bishop in deanery services such as visitations, confirmations, services of welcome and induction and other key moments in the life of the deanery.
- To provide support and insight alongside the Area Dean and archdeacon when difficulties/conflicts arise in parish structures.

Commitment

When taking on the role of Lay Dean or Assistant Lay Dean it is important to consider how to balance the commitment of that role with any other responsibilities, including to your own health and wellbeing. You are encouraged to consider which aspects of your ministry can be shared, for the benefit of all.

Lay Deans can expect to be involved with the following, some always in person, some with a mixture of online and in person. For some meetings, where the Lay Dean is unavailable eg if working during the day, then an Assistant Lay Dean could well go instead:

- Deanery Synod meetings (minimum of two per year, more in some deaneries)
- DMPG meetings (usually at least one more meeting than meetings of Synod)
- Meetings with Area Dean (agreed locally but typically monthly)
- Meetings with Assistant Lay Deans where they have been appointed
- Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Groups (two per year)
- Bishops' Staff, Area and Lay Deans meeting (three per year)
- Wider Chapter meetings (where invited – local practice varies)
- Annual Conference with Bishops' Staff (one day per year)
- Parish review sessions (once a year)
- Individual meetings with parishes
- Parish vacancy meetings with archdeacon (e.g. Pre-Section 11)
- Licensing of clergy within the deanery
- Annual Archdeacon's Visitation

In addition to the above commitments, time to plan, prepare and communicate needs to be factored in. Lay Deans are frequently undertaking the role alongside paid employment or other significant commitments so it is important to be realistic about what capacity you have and this role can obviously only be done through shared local ministry at both a benefice and deanery level.

Administrative support is vital. Please see the section on [expenses of office](#) for how this can be supported through the DBF.

Role description of the Deanery Secretary

Purpose

To support the Area Deans and Lay Deans so that the deanery functions effectively as part of the collaborative and decision-making structures of the diocese.

To ensure that they operate effectively, synods are required, under their Standing Orders, to appoint a Deanery Secretary, although they do not have to be a member of Synod.

Key relationships

- Area Dean and Lay Dean
- Deanery Synod members
- Deanery Treasurer where appointed
- Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group (DMPG)
- Parish, PCC and Benefice Administrators
- Deanery Accompanier from diocesan Support Services

Principal tasks and responsibilities

- Keep an up-to-date membership of members of Deanery Synod, of the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group (DMPG) and Standing Committee where applicable, (including main points of contact).
- Be the main point of contact for all synod communications.
- Keep an up-to-date list of PCC Secretaries, Churchwardens/Chapelwardens (including main points of contact).
- In co-operation with the Area Dean and Lay Dean/DMPG compile and circulate agenda for meetings of synod, the DMPG and Standing Committee where applicable at least seven days before the meeting.
- Attend and take notes at meetings and circulate to members (and synod minutes to PCC Secretaries also) in good time after each meeting. Where attendance is not possible, ensure that a suitable deputy is responsible for taking notes.
- Provide and circulate a calendar of meetings for the forthcoming year in the autumn and arrange venues.
- Each January, send out to PCC Secretaries the previous year's Notification of Officers' Form with a request that it be returned following the year's Annual Parochial Council Meeting (APCM).
- Initiate the production of the Deanery Annual Report and send it out in January to PCC Secretaries.
- Liaise with the diocese concerning synodical elections and co-ordinate said elections alongside the Area Dean and Lay Dean. Keep the Bishops' Office and also the Archdeacon's Office up to date with any elections of Lay Deans or Assistant Lay Deans.
- Attend any training sessions for Deanery Secretaries that are arranged at diocesan level.

The above tasks are essential to the role. Where they have the skills and calling to do so, the Deanery Secretary could operate more widely as a member of the deanery leadership team, meeting regularly with the Area Dean and Lay Dean.

Commitment

The time commitment for this role varies according to the time of the year. The following is a general guide, but not absolute so we suggest you update the following bullet points to reflect

the reality in your deanery:

- Generally, meetings take place in evenings, except deanery leadership meetings if all deanery leaders are available in the daytime.
- The DMPG meets at least once a quarter and sometimes as much as every second month. They usually last two hours.
- Deanery Synod/open deanery meetings happen four times a year. These meetings usually last up to two hours.
- Standing Committee meets once a quarter, for up to one and a half hours.
- January is generally busy with sending out notifications and the annual report.
- Receiving notifications after APCMs is busy. This would usually be around May or June.
- Election times are busy – usually April to June.
- August is usually very quiet.

Most of the above tasks, apart from attending meetings, can be undertaken flexibly to suit the Deanery Secretary.

Remuneration

Historically the Deanery Secretary role has been undertaken by a volunteer. In some deaneries, the Deanery Secretary role is undertaken by a paid administrator working across the deanery – see the section on [expenses of office](#) for details of what is possible in terms of accessing support from the DBF with wages and expenses.

It is important to understand that the deanery is not a corporate body and cannot therefore enter into contracts. The deanery wide paid post is envisaged, talk to diocesan Support Services or churches in the deanery about suitable employment options.

Deanery Secretary key skills and attributes

The following check list might be a helpful starting point for recruitment:

Key skills and attributes of a Deanery Secretary

- Good computer skills: using Word, Excel and e-mail'
- Access to the internet and a computer.
- Systematic approach to information retention and sharing.
- Ability to write clearly and take accurate notes of meetings.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and to work collegially.
- Either a personal faith or a willingness to operate within the ethos of Christian organisation.

Role description of the Deanery Treasurer

Purpose

A Deanery Treasurer is responsible for funds and projects that are run by the whole deanery.

Key relationships

- Area Dean and Lay Dean
- Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group (DMPG)
- Deanery Synod

- Finance team in diocesan Support Services
- Deanery PCC, Church and Benefice Treasurers

Principal tasks and responsibilities

These tasks are indicative not absolute, based on what treasurers across various deaneries undertake. Each deanery will want to decide on tasks that are relevant in their context, depending on the capacity and skills of the treasurer. There is no one-size fits all and therefore it is important to choose the right tasks and scale for the context.

Core tasks

- Managing any deanery wide bank accounts and the associated income and expenditure, including the accurate recording of transactions and bank reconciliation.
- Operating according to guidelines agreed with the Area Dean and Lay Dean, DMPG and Deanery Synod.
- Putting together annual deanery accounts and reports and presenting them at the relevant forum.

Possible additional tasks

- Helping the DMPG understand the financial implications and opportunities of mission in the deanery, so that finances play their part in enabling mission rather than being a barrier.
- Providing support to Parish/Benefice Treasurers particularly in matters that require more expertise than is available at local level.

Remuneration and parish levies

This has historically been a voluntary role. Some deaneries choose to use a parish levy for a variety of purposes.

- To enable payment to a Deanery Treasurer, where the role is particularly complex.
- To create a deanery wide fund that can then be used according to the mission priorities identified by the deanery.

Deanery Treasurers can claim necessary administrative costs including postage, stationery and telephone calls relating to deanery matters. See the section on [expenses of office](#) for details.

It is important to understand that the deanery is not a corporate body and cannot therefore enter into contracts. The deanery wide paid post is envisaged, talk to diocesan Support Services or churches in the deanery about suitable employment options.

Role description of Deanery Accompanier

Purpose of Role

Deanery Accompaniers provide a point of connection between deaneries and the diocesan Support Services, so that

- deaneries can easily access the support that they want and need
- the support offered is shaped by an understanding of the realities across the diocese.

Tasks involved

- To develop a relationship with the Deanery and the key post holders and other voices within it.
- To develop a deep understanding of the deanery, its aspirations and the challenges it faces.
- To provide support and a listening ear to members of the DMPG and to normally attend DMPG meetings.
- To provide an accessible point of contact and bridge to other Diocesan staff and resources
- In the longer term, to offer an external voice and help the deanery reflect on the work it is doing.
- To attend as many Deanery Synods as practical.
- To commit to attend three Accompanier meetings a year: Full group twice a year and in Archdeaconry groups with the relevant archdeacon once a year.
- To engage with the emerging system of parish and deanery support in order to help deaneries by connecting them to relevant sources of support. Accompaniers will not be expert in all areas, but they should have a good understanding of the areas of expertise within the diocese and therefore who best to connect deaneries to for support on particular areas of work.

Level of commitment:

Inevitably, an accompanier will not always be able to attend all the meetings that a deanery holds. The needs and capacity of deaneries vary. Staff will be matched to deaneries taking account of geography, their area of work and workload and the input required by the deanery.

Below is guidance on what meetings are held and what the absolute expectation of the role is:

- DMPGs meet on average 2-4 times a year
- Deanery Synods usually meet a maximum of 3 times a year
- The above meetings can be evening or daytime
- The termly accompanier meetings (usually two in archdeaconry groups and a summer one with all the accompaniers together) are in working hours.

The absolutes are:

- That the accompanier ensures that they attend enough synods and DMPG meetings to keep connected to the deanery and their work – realistically an accompanier will not find themselves able to attend every single meeting but they need to plan in enough attendance to maintain the reality of the relationship
- That the accompanier is willing to be named as such to the deanery and sees that as a cross organisational role and so makes connections between the deanery and other diocesan staff. In reality this might be very informal – e.g. if you are at a meeting and an area of work is discussed, you use your internal knowledge to suggest a member of the diocesan team who could offer support.
- That an accompanier prioritises attending the termly accompanier meetings (usually two in archdeaconry groups and a summer one with all the accompaniers together).

Appendix G Deanery communications

There is a wide variety of ways of communicating with people across the different deaneries. Below are some examples that may be of assistance. As well as communicating within your deanery, it is also great to be able to share stories from the deanery across the wider diocese so please get in touch with the [comms team](#) to tell us your stories.

Some of the questions to bear in mind are:

- Who is the audience?
- What are we trying to communicate?
- How do we hear from across the deanery as well as communicate out?
- How will people know what decisions have been made and why, and that their voice has been heard?
- What is the best method to reach our audience for our particular purpose(s)?
- Do we have the skills, resources and capacity to deliver/maintain anything we set up?

If you want to know more about any of the approaches mentioned below then please contact either the relevant deanery or the [Support Services comms team](#). You may also find the comms team's [Sharing our Stories Toolkit](#) useful. There is no one size fits all approach. Decide what works best for your deanery.

Deanery newsletters

[Quantock Deanery Newsletter - Spring 2024](#)

Deanery directories

[Chew Magna Deanery Directory](#)

Facebook pages

[Deanery of Portishead | Facebook](#)

Deanery websites

[Axbridge Deanery – Resourcing Effective Ministry for Effective Mission](#)

Appendix H Useful contacts

A list of useful diocesan key contacts can be downloaded from our website via the Contact Us pages bathandwells.org.uk/contact-us.

The key contacts list is updated regularly, so please check via the link for the most up to date version.