Appointment of the Archdeacon of Wells

DIOCESE OF
Bath&Wells
Living and telling the story of Jesus

‘In response to God’s immense love for us, we seek to be God’s people, living and telling the story of Jesus.’

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A message from Bishop Michael

One of the things I have appreciated most since becoming bishop here in Bath and Wells is the bishop's staff team. Our archdeacons are central to our work together. I am sure that the next Archdeacon of Wells will appreciate the strength, vitality, comradeship and encouragement of our whole team as I did when I arrived in Somerset. So if you're reading this document, I'm delighted that you're considering joining us.

So what are we looking for in our next Archdeacon of Wells? Most importantly, we're looking forward to welcoming a colleague who'll bring the following:

- A positive enjoyment in enabling the whole life of the parishes of the archdeaconry to work well. For the seven deaneries that come under their care, the Archdeacon of Wells is the 'oil in the machine' – solving problems, identifying opportunities, making sure that the infrastructure works. We want a colleague who'll be energised and enthused by such a task.
- A pastoral heart for all the people with whom the Archdeacon of Wells will work – churchwardens and clergy, PCC members and people, diocesan support services and many others. The archdeacon is the 'team leader' of our excellent area and lay deans, growing their capacity and offering high challenge and high support so that our churches can grow and transform our communities as together we live and tell the story of Jesus.
- An ability to use their deep knowledge and connectedness of the hopes and challenges, needs and dreams of local parishes and people to shape and hone the vision and strategy of our diocese. We're constantly saying to our parishes, schools and chaplaincies 'You are the experts'. The next Archdeacon of Wells will play a key role in enabling local expertise powerfully to shape our wider plans and picture.
- Contribute to the life and development of the Cathedral and the Chapter as Residentiary Canon and Non-Executive Member of Chapter. They will make, of those opportunities, all that is possible in the 10 per cent of the Archdeacon's ministry that is dedicated to our Cathedral.

Above all, we pray that the next Archdeacon of Wells will be the person that God has called to take on this role. For then it will be for that person's flourishing and joy – and ours too. So please do prayerfully consider whether this might be your next step on your journey with God. If you think that might be the case, we look forward to reading your application.

+ Michael Bath & Wells.

The Diocese of Bath and Wells

The Diocese of Bath and Wells broadly encompasses the historic county of Somerset, extending to include a small part of the county of Dorset. It is a diverse region with more than 500 settlements across the county, many of them small and rural which account for 43 per cent of the population. Although two thirds of Somerset is rural, more than half the population lives in urban areas.

The diocese loves and serves in the region of one million people who live here through its family of 466 parishes and 182 church schools and more than 170 chaplaincies. This family works for the good of local communities in a range of practical and pastoral ways, caring for the vulnerable, supporting families and encouraging children and young people.

The Bishop of Bath and Wells has overall responsibility for the diocese. He is assisted by a suffragan bishop, the Bishop of Taunton.

There are three archdeacons in our diocese, serving the archdeaconries of Bath, Wells and Taunton. There are 160 stipendiary clergy posts, 42 self-supporting licensed clergy and 210 licensed Readers.

Everything the diocese does is underpinned by prayer and worship and we are driven by our vision that: ‘In response to God’s immense love for us, we seek to be God’s people, living and telling the story of Jesus.’ We seek to live this story as disciples of Jesus Christ in the world and to tell it, both in sharing the good news and by the way in which our lives speak about Him.

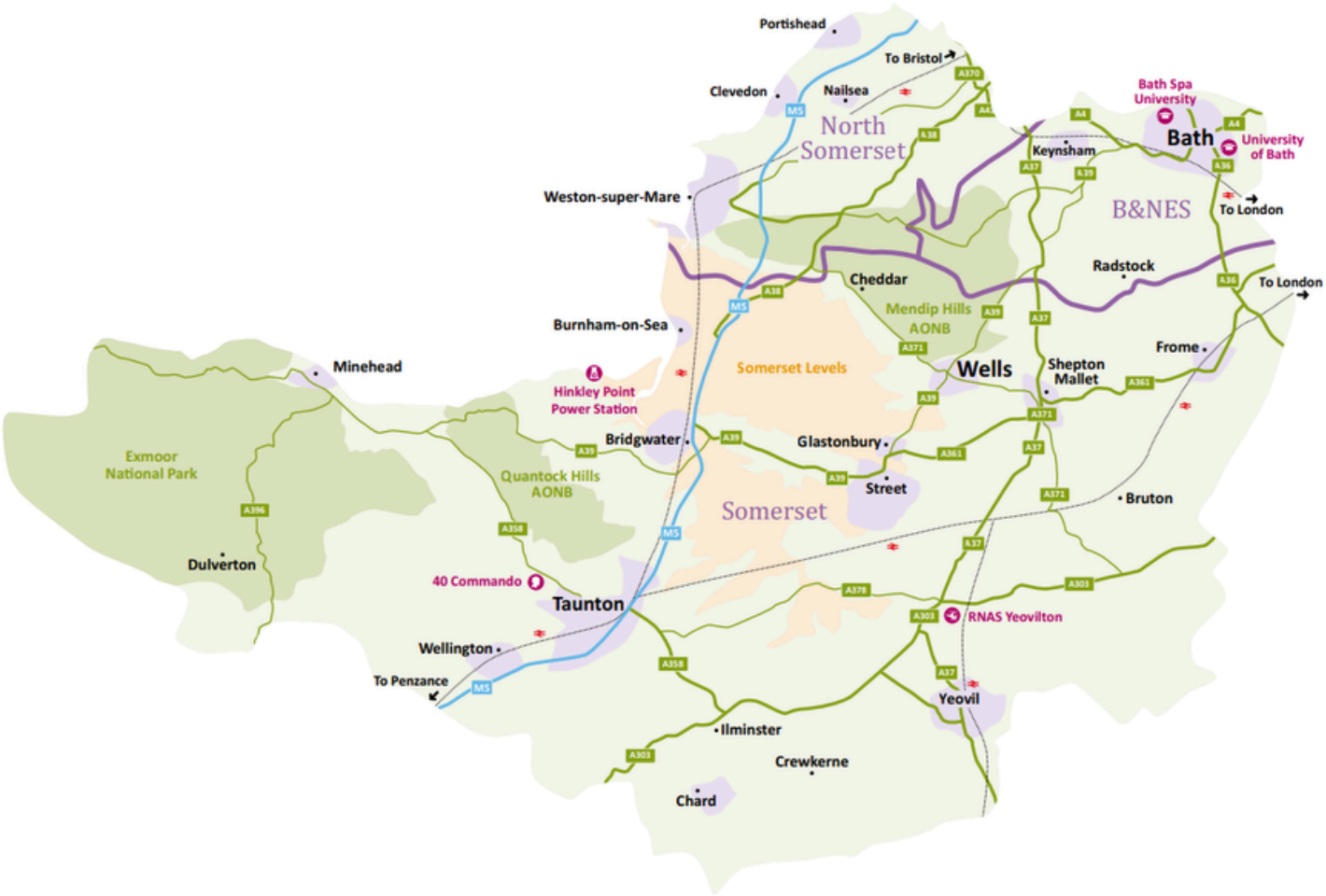
Living and telling the story of Jesus

Our vision and strategy speaks to the story of Jesus; his life, teaching and work, his death and resurrection; the story which is the context of our faith and the content of our message. In the Diocese of Bath and Wells we strive to be a growing church. We are committed to witnessing and to living out the Gospel of Jesus as we seek to transform and be at the heart of our local communities, bringing love and care for our neighbours, and service to those in need.

We are seeking to bring our vision to life by being prayerful, authentic, courageous, joyful, asset-based and generous, and are working together to achieve this by:

- Valuing and cherishing the people and resources we already have
- Developing new Christian worshipping communities
- Sharing in leadership and ministry
- Deepening and growing faith
- Transforming communities

The Diocese of Bath and Wells



Ministry

Stipendiary clergy posts 169

Self-supporting clergy 56

All licensed clergy 228

Licensed chaplains 83

Clergy with permission to officiate 340

Readers 158

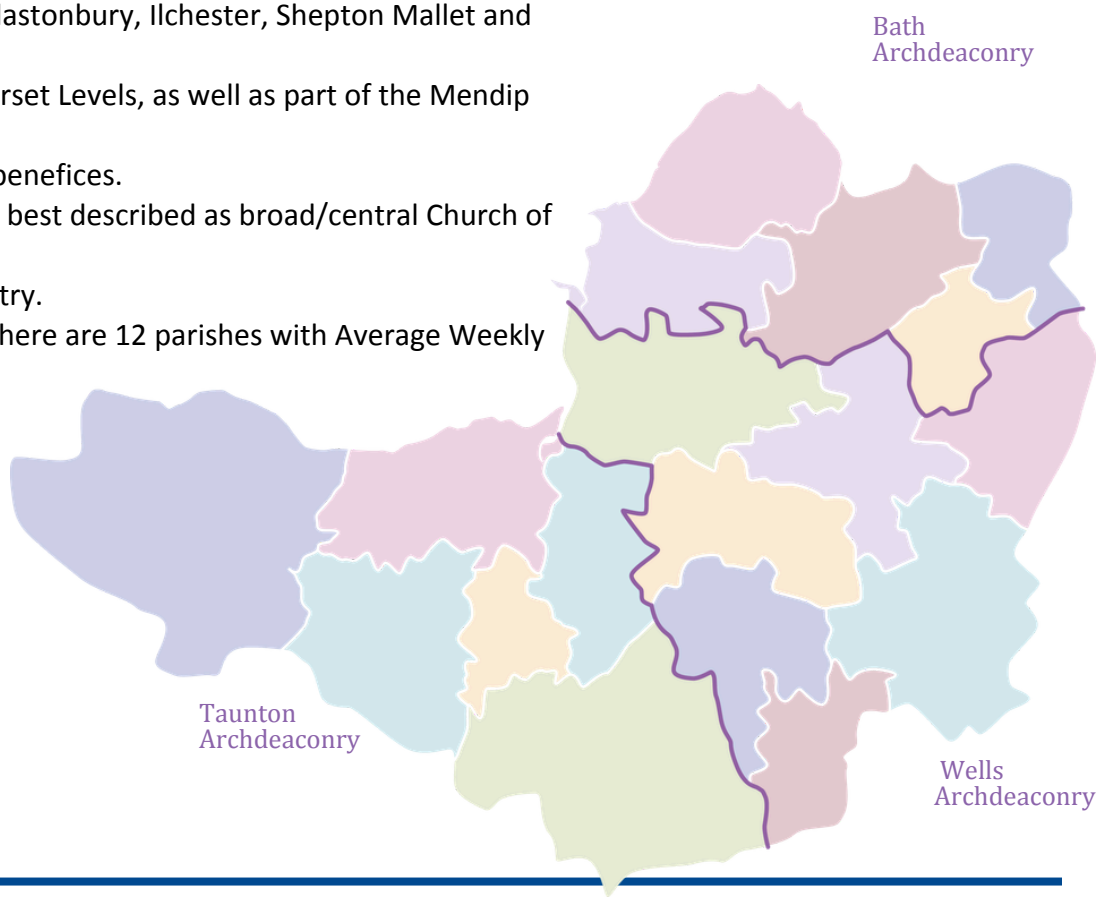
Lay Worship Assistants 142

Lay Pastoral Assistants 90

Archdeaconry of Wells

The Archdeaconry covers the central part of the diocese: from the coast at Burnham-on Sea to Frome on the Wiltshire border; from the Mendip Hills across the Somerset Levels
to Yeovil in the south.

- Yeovil is the biggest town; other larger communities include Shepton Mallet, Wells, Glastonbury, Street, Wincanton, Highbridge and Burnham-on-Sea.
- There are seven deaneries: Axbridge, Bruton and Cary, Frome, Glastonbury, Ilchester, Shepton Mallet and Yeovil.
- The area is geographically varied, and includes most of the Somerset Levels, as well as part of the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- There are 213 churches and chapels within 173 parishes and 64 benefices.
- The tradition of most of the archdeaconry's churches is probably best described as broad/central Church of England.
- One parish has adopted resolutions in relation to women's ministry.
- The majority of ministry is in villages and smaller communities. There are 12 parishes with Average Weekly Attendance of more than 100.



Role of archdeacons in our Diocese of Bath and Wells

In our diocese, archdeacons are trusted and valued members of our diocesan leadership team who enable, support and challenge parishes, make our diocesan systems work and tackle problems as they arise. Working closely with their archdeaconry assistant, archdeacons ensure that the day-to-day statutory responsibilities and needs of churches are met. With the bishops, they are responsible for making clergy appointments.

The archdeacons in the diocese are responsible respectively for the archdeaconries of Bath, Taunton and Wells. The three archdeacons are mutually supportive of each other and seek to model the 'no-one alone' policy that the diocese commends to all parochial clergy.

They are strategic leaders, working within the bishop's leadership team and alongside area and lay deans and Bishop's Council to shape our vision and mission.

The archdeacons work closely with our diocesan support services enabling parishes, schools and chaplaincies to receive help and assistance that is relevant, timely and effective.

Although not a reporting line in the conventional sense, archdeacons are the key persons in the development of the individuals and parishes in their care. Theirs involves a responsibility to and for ordained and lay ministers in the archdeaconry. They offer pastoral care, high challenge and high support to all those they serve.

Our archdeacons play a key role in setting our diocesan culture. They are team players with a high trust in local expertise and decision making. As archdeacons they are committed to the highest standards in safeguarding and consistently advocate for the five areas of our diocesan vision that helps us grow our churches and transform our communities.

Person specification

The person appointed should have been in Anglican orders for at least six years. She/he will need to be:

Grounded in their own faith
The next Archdeacon of Wells will be committed to the flourishing of all and able to relate well to all the traditions of the Church of England. A person of prayer, they will prioritise sustaining their own walk with God through engagement with scripture, study and times of retreat and refreshment.

Strongly experienced in parish ministry
They will be committed to the growth, good order and thriving of our parishes, missionally, pastorally and financially. Willing to grasp nettles, they will be committed to the routines of sustaining our parish systems including a strong support for safeguarding.

A team player
They will be a resilient, calm, approachable presence who is able to share in collective responsibility for the leadership of our diocese marked by honesty, integrity and wisdom. They will be committed to building up and enabling the work of deanery teams.

A strategic thinker
They will be outward looking and gifted in spotting potential and encouraging diversity. They will grow teams and empower others, able to draw on the strengths of all. A good listener, they will be a natural communicator, able to speak up both for our diocese, the deaneries of the archdeaconry and our parishes, schools and chaplaincies.

Our next Archdeacon of Wells will be a generalist who can absorb information, interpret it and communicate it. Sometimes they won’t know the answers! What they will need is the ability to draw on the expertise of others and recognise when that is required.

Statutory duties

The statutory responsibilities are set out in Canon C22 and other legislation and can be summarised as follows:

- Conduct quinquennial Archdeacon's Visitations in parishes and carry out duties under the Inspection of Churches Measure 1955.
- Arrange yearly visitations and admit churchwardens annually to their office.
- On receiving the directions of the bishop, induct any priest who has been instituted to a benefice.
- Working with the bishop, take responsibility for identifying the need for pastoral re-organisation and negotiating any proposals for it with all interested parties.
- Be involved in the consultation with parishes on clergy vacancies and the subsequent discernment process, including role descriptions, interview and appointment processes.
- Have oversight of glebe and parsonages in the archdeaconry, working in close partnership with the diocesan secretary and the diocesan property department.
- Under the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018, oversee all churches in the archdeaconry, be a member of the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC), and be responsible for ensuring that proper records are maintained in churches.
- Visit churchyards and parishes to prepare reports for the registrar when consecrations or closures are required.
- Be appropriately involved in matters of clergy discipline and capability procedures, including specific duties outlined in the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 and the Ecclesiastical Office (Terms of Service) Measure 2009.
- Investigate grievances under the Grievance Procedure code of practice.

Currently our archdeacons are all members of the following:

- Diocesan Synod (ex officio)
- Bishop’s Council (ex officio)
- Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches (ex officio)
- Diocesan and Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committees (ex officio)
- Board of Finance and its Finance Group

The three archdeacons also individually chair or are members of other diocesan committees and bodies. In addition, archdeacons also take on particular strategic portfolios, as agreed with the bishop. Other commitments include regular meetings with area deans and lay deans. Archdeacons also take part in Safeguarding Case Management Groups.

The Archdeacon of Wells will contribute to the life and development of Wells Cathedral and the Chapter in their role as Residentiary Canon and Non-Executive Member of Chapter.

Wells Cathedral role

The ministry of the Archdeacon of Wells has been consciously linked with that of the Cathedral with the hope that being spiritually rooted in the Cathedral, sharing in our worship and common life and living as part of the Cathedral's resident clergy community will give sustenance, support and inspiration for an otherwise itinerant ministry. Given other commitments, the detail of how this might work will need to be explored. The working principle is that the Archdeacon is able to give about 10% of their ministry to the Cathedral.

Wells Cathedral

Rooted in the transforming love of God, the Cathedral seeks to be a beacon of light and hope, welcoming and serving people, churches and communities across our diocese, county and beyond.

For over 800 years, Wells Cathedral has stood at the heart of this tiny city, offering a place of prayer, peace, healing and beauty that is open and welcoming to all. Steeped in daily worship and supported by a outstanding choral tradition, its soaring gothic architecture lifts the eyes heavenward and the soul toward God. Hundreds of thousands of visitors come each year to experience this extraordinary building and the medieval street of Vicars' Close, guided by over 400 dedicated volunteers who ensure hospitality and spiritual care for all.

Our Cathedral's vision for the future

In 2025, the Cathedral launched a Strategic Plan setting a bold direction for the next decade: to preserve and enhance this extraordinary place for generations to come. At the heart of that vision is a renewed commitment to joyful collaboration -expressed in an aspiration to become the most joyful cathedral in the country. The strategy rests on four pillars - the Four Cs:

- Christianity – Deepening our worship and witness to Christ.
- Connection – Building relationships across our community, county and beyond.
- Culture – Celebrating music, heritage, and creativity.
- Commerce – Ensuring sustainability for future generations.

The heart of our worship

At the centre of Cathedral life is the daily rhythm of prayer, which it is hoped an in-coming colleague would rejoice in, be committed to, and feel nourished by the Morning Liturgies, Evensongs and Sunday Worship.

The marking of the liturgical year is of key importance with significant commitments around the marking of the Incarnation and the Paschal Mystery. The Cathedral has a strong commitment to rejoice in the tapestry of Festal evensongs and marking the heroes and heroines of the Faith. It is currently enriching its life with new plans for Emmaus groups; study groups; exploring the diocesan Year of Prayer; renewing healing ministry.

Role of non-executive member of Chapter and Canon Residentiary

Chapter members, members of the Board of Trustees for the Cathedral, hold the responsibility for directing and overseeing the Cathedral's affairs.

As a non-executive member of chapter the archdeacon will provide critical friendship in the discharge of the chapter's responsibilities, which are:

- To order the worship and promote the mission of the Cathedral
- To formulate proposals in connection with the strategic direction and mission of the Cathedral
- To manage all property vested in the Cathedral and the income accruing from it
- to ensure that necessary repairs and maintenance of the Cathedral and its contents and other buildings and monuments are carried out
- To attend to all matters concerning the appointment of senior staff to the Cathedral
- To prepare an annual budget
- To prepare an annual report and accounts.
- To keep under review the Constitution and Statutes of the Cathedral
- To ensure legal, regulatory and governance compliance
- To exercise the power if necessary to provide for the incorporation of limited companies for the better management of the Cathedral.

Person specification

You will be joining a growing ministry team , accountable to the Dean and the Bishop of Bath and Wells (in the Bishop's capacity as Visitor) ,with the Dean, 3 Residentiary Canons (Chancellor, Precentor and Archdeacon), Sub-Dean, Curate, 6 Priests Vicar, 3 Cathedral Readers, 2 Ministry Experience Scheme Students and a plethora of others, both lay and ordained. You will need to be:

- Committed to the Cathedral's Christian vision, mission and ministry, and values.
- able to carry out legal duties as set out in the Charity Commission's 'CC3 - The Essential Trustee'. and to make decisions in accordance with the guidance provided in 'CC27 - It's Your Decision'.
- Willing to follow the Chapter's Code of Conduct and to uphold all of Chapter's legal safeguarding responsibilities.
- Able to reflect the ethos set out in the Nolan Principles within our charitable context.
- demonstrable strategic leadership and management skills; previous experience volunteering as a trustee is welcome but not essential.
- Willingness to attend to professional personal development including undertaking training.

Terms and conditions

Appointment

The appointment will be made by the Bishop of Bath and Wells in consultation with his colleagues and in line with our diocesan commitment to safeguarding and safer recruitment. The appointment is made under common tenure and the archdeacon will take part in a regular cycle of Ministerial Development Review.

Diocesan and archdeaconry structures

The archdeacon has statutory authority and exercises ordinary jurisdiction in the archdeaconry for which she/he is accountable to the diocesan bishop. In the day-to-day supervision of the parishes and office holders she/he works in close partnership with the Bishop of Bath and Wells and the Bishop of Taunton.

Remuneration and pension

The archdeacon's stipend will be paid at the prevailing rate, reviewed annually. The standard provision of the Church of England pensions scheme applies.

Housing

The archdeacon's house is in the Liberty, a close of canons' houses overlooking the Cathedral West Front. There are four bedrooms, a study, a private garden and an archdeaconry office which has separate access.

Holidays

Six weeks per year.

Retreats and continuing ministerial development

Time is available for personal continuing education and retreats.

Expenses of office

Paid in full at current diocesan rates.

Car driver

Due to the extensive travel required for this post, the post holder is required to have a full driver's licence and a car.

Archdeaconry assistance

The archdeacon line-manages and is supported by Stephanie Smith, Archdeaconry Assistant.

EDI statement

The Diocese of Bath and Wells is committed to being a truly representative and inclusive community, where everyone is respected, valued, and supported in contributing their skills, experience, and perspectives. We recognise that there is more work to do to ensure our diocese fully reflects the rich diversity of the communities we serve. We are actively learning, growing, and taking steps to address these gaps.

As part of our ongoing commitment to nurturing a diverse and inclusive community, we warmly welcome and encourage applications from individuals and groups who are currently under-represented within the Diocese of Bath and Wells. You can find out more about how we are championing diversity in Bath and Wells, including the work led by our Lament to Action Working Group.

How to apply

Please apply for this post using the application form which can be downloaded from bathandwells.org.uk/clergy-vacancies - and send this by post or email, to:

Enita Andrews, HR Manager
The Diocese of Bath and Wells
Flourish House
Cathedral Park
Wells BA5 1FD
Email: enita.andrews@bathwells.anglican.org | Tel: 01749 685113

The closing date for applications is 20 April 2026.
Interview dates: Visits on Monday, 11 May 2026. Formal interviews on Tuesday, 12 May 2026.

This appointment is subject to a clear enhanced DBS disclosure and full compliance with current Church of England safeguarding training requirements. This appointment is subject to proof of the right to residency in the UK under UK Visa and Immigration regulations.

For an informal discussion and for factual enquiries please contact Michael Beasley, Bishop of Bath and Wells. Email: bishop@bathwells.anglican.org
For an informal discussion about the Cathedral aspect of the role please contact Toby Wright, Dean of Wells. Email:dean@wellscathedral.org.uk

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