

# DEANERY SYNODS IN THE BLACKBURN DIOCESE

## GUIDANCE NOTES

### What is a Deanery Synod?

In the Church of England a Deanery is a group of parishes forming a district within an archdeaconry.

The Deanery Synod body, created by the Synodical Government Measure 1969, has a membership of all clergy who are licensed to a parish within the Deanery, elected lay members from every parish, plus those detailed in Part 3 of the Church Representation Rules on Deanery Synods (House of Clergy and House of Laity).

### Deanery Synod Rules

A set of rules for Deanery Synods were agreed by Diocesan Synod in July 2023 and can be found [here](#). These should be used alongside [Part 3 of the Church Representation Rules on Deanery Synods](#).

### Record Keeping

The following is a suggested list of documents for keeping on record within the Deanery:

- Deanery Synod meeting papers, including agendas, minutes, reports, motions and decisions made
- an up-to-date register of members of the House of Clergy and House of Laity of the Deanery Synod, including names and contact details
- Diocesan Synod election documentation, including nomination forms, voting records and results
- relevant correspondence relating to Synod business, especially communications with the Diocese or parishes
- any reports submitted to Diocesan Synod or received from parishes
- if the Deanery Synod manages any funds, it should keep financial records including budgets, audit reports, receipts and bank account statements.

The National Church Institutions have produced some guidance on record retention periods designed for use by cathedrals, minsters, bishops' offices, diocesan offices (including DBFs and DBEs), archdeacons, deaneries, and parishes of the Church of England. This is available via the Church of England Website: [Records and Information Management in the Church of England](#).

# Deanery Synod Officers

## Area Deans

An Area Dean will serve for five years, although this can be extendable by a further three years. The Area Dean should aim to have regular one-to-ones with each incumbent in their deanery.

### Purpose

#### Vision

In collaboration with the Bishop's Leadership Team:

- To inspire, encourage and support the Deanery to flourish so that, under the inspiration of God's Spirit, we can grow "Healthy Churches Transforming Communities"
- To be a strategic leader in mission in the deanery
- To support and promote initiatives that flow from the Diocesan Vision (e.g. working closely with the Director of Vision Delivery on the 'Mission and Financial Flourishing' project)
- To bring the views and opinions of deanery clergy to the attention of the Bishop's Leadership Team.

#### General

To share with Bishops & Archdeacons in the pastoral care and oversight of licensed & PTO clergy (parish & chaplains) and licensed lay workers in the Deanery.

#### Specific

##### 1. Support for colleagues:

- Praying for them to flourish in faith and courage
- Sign-posting tools for them to flourish in their roles and vocations
- Contributing to clergy wellbeing through pastoral care and the sustaining of good and purposeful relationships
- Extending a welcome to clergy who are new in post, PTOs and lay workers and offering particular support to first incumbents.

##### 2. Oversight of Clergy Chapter:

- To enable collegiality and to encourage and inspire fresh thinking and to pray and worship together
- To foster a positive culture at Chapter by giving good notice of meetings and setting a purposeful agenda
- To meet at least four times a year
- To work with a Chapter Clerk in encouraging good Chapter relations and efficient communication.

##### 3. Chair of Deanery Synod:

- To fulfil the statutory responsibilities of Deanery Synod
- To foster a positive culture at Synod by giving good notice of meetings and setting a purposeful agenda
- To build close working relationships with the Deanery Lay Chair

- To build a Standing Committee to encourage strategic and collegial planning of the oversight of deanery life.

#### **4. Vacancies:**

Collaborating with bishops and archdeacons to:

- Be familiar with, and work according to, the Appointments Policy agreed by the Bishop's Appointment Team
- Suggest potential candidates and, where requested, speak to potential candidates who are seeking more information about an advertised post
- Attend and advise at pre-Section 11, Section 12 and interview panels (NB the Area Dean may not attend the Section 11 meeting)
- Advise on the production of the Parish Profile in conjunction with other external support put in place by the Bishop's Appointments Team.
- Advise on pastoral reorganisation through Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee/Standing Committee and in your own right as 'an interested party' in any scheme
- In co-operation with the relevant Bishop, organise the service of licensing and induction of new clergy and arrange the rehearsal
- Act as a sequestrator for vacant parishes and work closely with Church Wardens and Lay Leaders of parishes in vacancies with prayer, encouragement, advice and help finding cover.

#### **5. Parish Visitations:**

- To assist the archdeacons with the conduct of parish visitations in the deanery as requested in fulfilment of Canon F 18.

#### **6. Growth and Mission:**

- To maximize the opportunity of the SMIB funding (up to 14 hours per week for PA or an alternative role) by enabling growth in the ministry and mission in the Deanery.
- To ensure all DBF employees are managed in line with the funding agreement as part of the SMIB procedures.

#### **Support for Area Deans**

As key ministers sharing episcopacy/oversight in the Diocese, Area Deans are offered:

- Termly Diocesan Area Deans' meetings
- Regular Archdeaconry Area Deans' meetings (blend of Video conference and in person)
- Support in seeking mentors for new Area Deans, conferences/training (eg coaching)
- Appropriate expenses of office within the agreed budget
- Regular prayer for our Area Deans.

### **Deanery Lay Chair**

#### **Purpose**

Under the leadership of the Bishop and together with the Area Dean, the role of the Lay Chair is to further the mission and ministry of the Deanery. The Lay Chair will be a person of well-developed faith and spirituality with the skills and commitment to fill this important leadership role at deanery level. They will jointly chair the Deanery Synod with the Area Dean and, beyond this, work with the Area Dean on the transformation of

our churches in line with the Diocesan Vision. They will also work with the Area Dean in promoting team building amongst clergy and laity.

## **Key Relationships**

The Lay Chair is elected by lay representatives of the Deanery Synod on a triennial basis.

They will work closely with the Area Dean and other clergy and lay leaders in the Deanery, as well as the Bishops and Archdeacon, bringing to the attention of the Bishop or Archdeacon as appropriate, any pastoral or other concerns they may have in relation to the Deanery.

They will work closely with members of the Standing Committee of the Deanery Synod. There will be close working with other Lay Chairs to ensure the consistent development and implementation of the Diocese's strategy for growth and mission. The Lay Chair is to be consulted as an interested party on all matters of pastoral reorganisation in the Deanery in conjunction with the Area Dean.

## **Key Responsibilities**

1. With the Area Dean, ensure that the Deanery Synod is able to consider matters concerning the Church of England and make provision for such matters in their Deanery, as well as any other matters of religious or public interest.
2. With the Area Dean, bring together the views of the parishes of the Deanery on common problems, discuss and formulate common policies on those problems, foster a sense of community and inter-dependence among those parishes, and generally promote in the Deanery the whole mission of the Church – pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.
3. With the Area Dean, ensure that practical arrangements for Deanery Synod meetings are put in place, including calling meetings of the Deanery Synod and determining the date, place and agenda of Deanery Synod meetings with the Deanery Standing Committee.
4. Participate as a member of the committees of the Deanery Synod and, with the Area Dean, co-chair the standing committee and any other sub-committees of the Deanery.
5. Participate at parish events and other key events in the life of the Deanery including Archdeacons' visitations as appropriate.
6. Convene and chair occasional meetings of the House of Laity as appropriate.

## **Deanery Secretary**

### **Purpose**

Working closely with the Area Dean and the Lay Chair, the role of the Deanery Secretary is to ensure the smooth-running of the Deanery Synod and the Standing Committee of the Deanery Synod, in support of the vision for the Deanery and the Diocese. The Deanery Secretary will be an excellent team player, organised and efficient in record-keeping and communication, and have good IT skills.

### **Key Relationships**

The Deanery Secretary is elected by representatives of the Deanery Synod on a triennial basis. They will work closely with the Area Dean, the Lay Chair and other members of the Standing Committee of the Deanery Synod.

They will liaise with colleagues in the central diocesan team, in particular the DMPC & DAC Secretary, and with the Diocesan Presiding Officer/Diocesan Electoral Roll Officer to ensure that deanery elections are held as appropriate and that accurate records of

Deanery Synod members are maintained.

### **Key Responsibilities**

1. Keep the roll of the members of the Deanery Synod constantly up-to-date, including the name, address and parish of each person, and inform the diocesan office of any changes.
2. Ensure that at least two meetings of the Deanery Synod are held each year and communicate dates to members well in advance.
3. Circulate an agenda to every member of Deanery Synod at least one week before Deanery Synod meetings.
4. Prepare minutes of every meeting of the Deanery Synod and circulate them to members of the Deanery Synod, including a note of: those present; decisions made, including where necessary the wording of resolutions passed and the results of any votes taken; the outcome of discussions; and important information presented at the meeting.
5. Support the Area Dean and Lay Chair in the administration of the Deanery Synod Standing Committee.
6. Ensure that the election of diocesan synod members occurs at the appropriate time.

## **Honorary Treasurer**

### **Purpose**

Working closely with the Area Dean and the Lay Chair, the role of the Honorary Treasurer is to offer advice to the Deanery Synod and Deanery Synod Standing Committee on financial matters when required, to support parish treasurers and enable networking amongst them, and to keep the Deanery Synod's accounts as needed. The Treasurer will be a passionate advocate for good stewardship and act as an advocate for the Parish Share system. Preferably they will have experience of being a parish treasurer. They will be an excellent team player, organised and efficient in record-keeping and communication, and have good IT skills.

Deanery Synod accounts should sit within a PCC account as a restricted fund and managed by the PCC signatories under the oversight of the deanery treasurer.

### **Key Relationships**

The Treasurer is elected by representatives of the Deanery Synod on a triennial basis.

They will work closely with the Area Dean, the Lay Chair and other members of the Standing Committee of the Deanery Synod.

They will establish positive relationships with the PCC Treasurers in the Deanery.

### **Key Responsibilities**

1. Monitor, with the Area Dean, parishes seen to be in difficulty and investigate why and offer support.
2. Encourage discussions at Deanery Synod on the Diocese's annual budget and overall financial position.
3. Encourage good practice with joyful, generous giving and income generation, promoting awareness of on-line resources and encouraging parishes to seek support from the Diocese where appropriate.
4. Support parish treasurers, particularly new ones, by facilitating networking,

encouraging engagement with diocesan training events and pointing to available guidance on good practice in relation to budgeting, reserves management, reporting and accounting.

5. Ensure any deanery initiatives requiring funding are supported appropriately.
6. Pay agreed deanery expenses, where applicable.
7. Keep the Deanery Synod's accounts and present accounts annually to synod as appropriate.