

## BLACKMORE VALE DEANERY PLAN for 2016 – 2022

**Agreed by Synod – 29<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

### Background

The Blackmore Vale Deanery is situated in rural North Dorset and has within it three towns and a much larger number of villages, some of which are in reality hamlets. The Deanery is split into 8 benefices resourced by the following clergy as at September 2015:

Benefice	Parishes	Churches	Clergy	LLMs
Gillingham & Milton	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incumbent</li> <li>• Pioneer Minister</li> <li>• SSM Associate Priest</li> </ul>	0
Hazelbury Bryan & the Hillside	6	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• House for duty Associate Priest</li> </ul>	2
Marnhull	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• House for duty Associate Priest (vacant)</li> </ul>	0
Okeford	5	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incumbent (vacant)</li> </ul>	1
Shaftesbury	6	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team Rector</li> <li>• Team Vicar</li> <li>• Team Vicar (vacant)</li> <li>• SSM Associate Priest</li> </ul>	0
Silton	1	1	Discussions are underway to incorporate Silton into the Gillingham & Milton benefice	
Spire Hill	4	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incumbent</li> </ul>	1
Stour Vale	8	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incumbent</li> </ul>	2
Sturminster Newton, Hinton St Mary & Lydlinch	3	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incumbent</li> <li>• SSM Associate Priest</li> </ul>	0

*Note – the above excludes stipendiary curates as they are not a permanent resource for a benefice.*

In addition, the Deanery benefits from the contribution of 22 clergy with Permission to Officiate and 9 retired LLMs who are still in active ministry. We are also fortunate to have 40 LPAs.

For over 10 years the parishes in the southern part of the Deanery have been known as the Pilgrim Parishes and have covenanted to work together in some areas. An external review of the Pilgrim Parishes took place late in 2014 and some changes to the way in which the clergy meet together for prayer, mutual support and planning were agreed.

In the northern half of the Deanery, the clergy now also meet together for prayer and mutual support.

Under the leadership of the Rural Dean, the clergy chapter meet together on a regular basis.

This new plan is being prepared at a time of considerable change amongst the licensed clergy and it is accepted that it is possible that some pastoral reorganisation may be needed before the Plan end date.

The Deanery believe that the current resourcing level is sufficient to staff the Deanery and are grateful to the Diocesan Bishop and his staff for enabling this level of staffing. However, the Deanery is also aware that the number of self supporting Associate Priests and Licensed Lay Ministers is low and will actively seek to promote vocations to these ministries during the period of the Plan.

## **Deanery Synod priorities for 2016 – 2022**

### **Time to Pray**

A Deanery-wide Prayer Rota will be prepared and encouragement will be given to all churches to use this on a regular basis. At the same time, opportunities will be sought to develop existing and new prayer groups in the Deanery in order to deepen our spirituality. The Deanery will publicise these groups to ensure all are aware of them. Consideration will be given to arranging Deanery wide prayer events if demand is there.

There are several theological discussion groups and bible study groups in operation within the Deanery. Publicity for these will be given to ensure that all are aware of them. If needed, a Deanery wide theological discussion group will be set up.

Encouragement will be given to all PCCs to include additional prayer time and/or bible study into their meetings.

Alongside the expectation that all licensed clergy will take an annual retreat (funded by their benefice) each year, we hope to be able to arrange some Quiet Days for the laity.

The Annual Pilgrimage (currently Pilgrim Parishes only) should be publicised across the Deanery.

**RESOURCES NEEDED: Deanery Publicity Officer, volunteer to organise Quiet Days, if necessary volunteer to organise Deanery prayer events**

## **Serving God in our Communities**

The Deanery will look to be able to fund a Deanery Youth Worker by 2018 on at least a two year contract. An audit of existing work and resources in this area will be carried out and a role description will be developed. It is anticipated that the role will cover working with the secondary schools to encourage young people to have a relationship with God and through that to come forward for confirmation; encouraging the work already going on in many of our primary schools; working alongside and assisting in the resource of the initiatives already underway in the Deanery. The appropriate location and focus will be considered and a suitable governance structure will be agreed. Advice will also be sought from other local Deaneries who have this provision in place already.

The Deanery will encourage the formation of further Fresh Expressions (such as Cafe Church, Messy Church, Mens' Breakfasts etc) by the individual parishes. The Deanery will also publicise such Fresh Expressions to all in the Deanery to enable learning from each other.

All the parishes have expressed a desire to try to bring more 20-40 year olds into the life the church. To this end, the Deanery will encourage parishes to visit others involved in this work and then to share the results with all.

The Deanery commits to continuing to support the outreach tents at both the Gillingham & Shaftesbury Show and the Sturminster Newton Cheese Festival.

**RESOURCES NEEDED:** Money to pay a youth worker; then a youth worker; again Deanery Publicity Officer

## **Serving God in the Wider World**

Acknowledging the strong link that has been developed over the last few years with the Diocese of Lui in South Sudan, along with the Diocese of Lund in Sweden and the Diocese of Missouri in the United States, the Deanery commits to continuing to develop this link through regular visits (when politically feasible) to help provide them with the skills to address their priorities; through regular prayer and through the resourcing of the teacher training commitment already made.

**RESOURCES NEEDED:** Enlarged group to pray for Lui; more members for the small planning group; funding for initiatives agreed with Synod.

## **Growing Disciples**

The Deanery commits to working together in partnership across boundaries where feasible. This has been enhanced already by the agreement that the House for Duty posts in Hazelbury Bryan & the Hillsides and in Marnhull will be at Associate Minister level with the priest-in-charge role being taken by the existing incumbents in Spire Hill and Sturminster Newton respectively.

Deanery Chapter will continue to discuss how they can work more closely together to assist in resourcing each other to ensure continuing wellbeing.

Deanery Chapter along with lay members of the Deanery Standing Committee will work together to consider further ways in which the laity might be more involved (for example: consider running the new Lay Worship Leader course across the Deanery).

The Deanery will encourage all parishes to seek to grow vocations to all forms of ministry (for example chalice assistants, sacristans, church wardens, LPAs, LLMs, ordained ministry, home group leaders, PCC members).

The Deanery acknowledges that due to the small size of some of our congregations, not all facilities (such as home groups or Lent courses) can be offered in all locations. It commits to working with the PCCs to ensure that resources are in place to assist all who wish to attend to be enabled to do so.

Acknowledging the likely upcoming move of the Deanery from Dorset to Sherborne Archdeaconry, the Rural Dean and the Deanery Lay Chair commit to developing relationships with our new colleagues.

**TARGETS: Two churchwardens for each church. At least four new vocations to licensed ministries. New vocations to commissioned ministries.**

## **Evaluation**

A review of the plan will take place in the summer of 2018. This will evaluate the progress made and report to Synod either in the autumn of 2018 or at the latest in the spring of 2019. Prior to the review, a group will be formed to develop the benchmarks for the review.

It is expected that this review will identify where progress has been made, what areas need additional work before progress can be made, and that some items may need to be added. By that date a key will be whether the hoped for Deanery Youth Worker is in post.