

DEANERY STRATEGIC PLAN FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY

Each Deanery has been asked by the Diocese to review their plans for the future.

The last plan for the Sherborne Deanery in 1999 evolved around the need to reduce numbers of stipendiary clergy by one. This was achieved and certain pastoral re-organisation has taken place with benefices and across deanery boundaries.

The revised plan has a much wider remit, looking at the mission of the church and what resources we need to carry out that mission.

Any deanery strategic plan needs to involve the full consultation of the parishes in a 'bottom up' process. So each individual parish is being asked to contribute their views and aspirations about where they want to go in the future, what resources they need, and what they may be able to offer to the wider church in the deanery. This process will also give direction in discerning what the purpose of the diocese will be and what it should be doing to serve the needs of the parishes and deaneries.

At the last synod our lay co-chairman, Gil Williams, gave a presentation on the subject "mission shaped church". He drew attention to the changing context of our culture and the need for churches to discover new ways of being church in order to carry out more effectively God's mission in the world.

At the next deanery synod each benefice will make a presentation giving a summary of the views and ideas put forward by the P.C.C.s. The Bishop of Salisbury will be here to listen to us and to respond on behalf of the diocese.

Here are some of the issues raised by our Deanery lay co-chairman for each P.C.C. to consider. Please give this some thought and come to our P.C.C. meeting ready to participate in the discussion. We do want to know what you think.

As a parish / benefice

- What are we here for? What is our purpose?
- Do we all know our communities? What happens within and around them, the every day problems people face – what makes people tick and what are positive things / events which really do bring the community together?
- What changes are we able to identify in the culture of our villages and in the people we know, which impinge upon our church life?
- Are we aware of individuals or groups of people who may feel 'excluded' from where we are and what we do?
- What do we think is going well in our parish / benefice and why?
- What do we need to build on and encourage?
- What new initiatives would we like to see happen and can we resource them?
- What do we need to stop doing and why? Where do we need to let go?
- What changes do we need to make in order to meet people where they are?
- Can we accept that the worship and life of the church needs to be a mixture of the old and the new, realising that any tradition must be a living tradition not a dead one?
- What resources (ordained and lay) do we have? What do we need to carry out God's mission in our communities?
- What help do we need? What resources are we prepared to offer – both clergy and lay – for deanery initiatives?
- What must we do for mission within our parish, benefice and deanery?

- Do we support permeable boundaries within and outside the Deanery? Are boundaries a problem or an opportunity? What about a priest or lay person working across the deanery doing a specific task?
- Do we have too many churches in our benefice / deanery? If the answer is 'No', then are we prepared to pay The Share and for their upkeep recognising our responsibilities? If the answer is 'Yes', then what should we seek to achieve over the next five years?
- Are there areas of mission which our parish / benefice could take a lead in the implementation of our Deanery Strategic Plan?
- What about this statement as being a suitable aim for our Deanery? "To make and sustain Christians (in the Anglican tradition?) and to enable them to be instruments of the Kingdom of God." Would we want to put it differently, if so, in what way?