



Diocese of Salisbury

Mission & Pastoral Plan

Summary & discussion paper Spring 2021

Christ is our hope, and the sure foundation of his Church. Because of this we may face the future with confidence, however turbulent the times. The Covid-19 pandemic is changing the world we have known, accelerating already present challenges. We must therefore prepare maps that allow us to navigate the shifting landscape ahead.

The Mission & Pastoral Plan is being prepared by the Mission & Ministry Council of the Diocese to help us re-imagine mission and ministry and sets some strategic aspirations for its funding and development over the next five years. These stem from our Diocesan vision of *Renewing Hope: Pray, Serve, Grow* and its three themes:

- Discipleship & evangelism
- Dynamic collaboration
- Community transformation

This discussion paper has a dual purpose: to communicate the priorities that will guide decision-making about resourcing local ministry and to stimulate conversation about the future of church life in your locality. Questions on the last page are offered to help with this.

The Plan, which will be overseen by Bishop's Council, is grounded in our confidence in God's provision, and the

conviction that our Christian vision must lead and shape our financial planning.

As a Diocese we remain committed to parochial ministry – and the local, visible presence of its priests, people and buildings. The key to the extraordinary resilience of the parish has been both its combination of deep-rooted steadiness and adaptability to change.

To secure its future, we must discern and cultivate the church to come while at the same time tending the traditional ministry that remains our core. The Plan aims at easing the burden of inherited pastoral ministry while extending the mission to those places and people this does not reach.



Our priorities

- CLEARER PATHS TO MISSION & MINISTRY
- BETTER CARE FOR THOSE WHO SERVE
- STRONGER ROOTS FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

CLEARER PATHS TO MISSION & MINISTRY

Growing vocations

Our vocations strategy starts with the local call of Christ, who sends us out in his name, to serve church and world according to our gifts.

We hope for a significant increase in vocations to all forms of Christian service, including licensed and commissioned ministries. We will provide encouragement and discernment to this end, and a range of accessible online and in-person training paths leading to a variety of roles.

We will make realistic projections for the number of stipendiary clergy (and parsonages to house them) while growing a new cohort of Associate Priests and Licensed Lay Ministers via a two-year training pathway at Sarum College. We will also continue to encourage the vital contribution made by our retired and PTO clergy, without whom many of our churches could not operate.

Releasing lay ministry

We shall review our range of commissioned ministries and explore creative opportunities to release the whole people of God in the service of the local church. Working with our partners at the DBE and Sarum College we will invest in the

development of lay chaplaincy, youth workers, lay evangelists and pioneers.

We will aspire to grow significantly vocations to Licensed Lay Ministry and develop the role and responsibilities of LLMs within the local church.

Resourcing mission

In growing collaboration with the Diocesan Board of Education, local schools and civic partnerships, we will respond to emerging missionary challenges by resourcing programmes for discipleship and community transformation.

These will include recommendations for reaching Net Zero by 2030 and responding to the social impact of the pandemic upon, for example, young people's mental health and local unemployment. Increasing the number of community hubs (local centres for joining church, community and school) will be central to this, as will the expansion of the Aldhelm Fund as a resource pool for mission and ministry initiatives.

BETTER CARE FOR THOSE WHO SERVE

The welfare and training of our ministers and volunteers is of paramount importance, and the demands upon them (as upon all those who serve the church) are changing with the times.

We will make recommendations arising from the national Clergy Wellbeing Covenant and revise our Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD) programme in partnership with Sarum College and the national church. We aim to offer more locally-accessible training for those taking on a range of responsibilities in church and community. We also hope to improve our parish support services, through revised DAC processes, property provision and better-connected parish administration.

STRONGER ROOTS FOR LOCAL CHURCHES

Financing the Future

The funding of the local church has evolved over the centuries. While the parish share remains the foundation of our finances, it will be reassessed in the light of the changes we are seeing (in, for example, the growth of online worship) and the need to develop sustainable models, especially for the smaller village churches.

We will encourage new forms of deanery financial collaboration and consider setting local aspirations for meeting the costs of ministry and mission. There will be a review of the Fairer Share scheme and, in 2021, a Diocesan stewardship programme with the aim of equipping every church in the Diocese to have a fruitful conversation about giving and generosity.

Sustaining church buildings

A vision and strategy for church buildings will be prepared and put to Bishop's Council by the end of 2021. This must prioritise care for parishioners and preserving the heritage - and thus the missionary value - of our historic buildings.

The buildings strategy will consider how both the burden and asset of the church building may be shared between the Diocesan Board of Finance, PCC and wider local community, and will offer options to those parishes reviewing the future of buildings in their care.



“My Father is glorified by this: that you bear much fruit and become my disciples”
John 15v8

Your involvement

The Mission & Pastoral Plan identifies priorities for resourcing the local church over the next five years. It is vital that this connects with local planning in deanery and benefice and so archdeacons are speaking with rural deans and other colleagues about the situation in your locality. Many of you are already discussing this together and we invite you to share your consideration of the questions below with your archdeacon.

- How might ministry & mission be imagined or arranged here more fruitfully, fairly and economically?
- Where is God growing new things - and what might need cutting back?
- How might we collaborate to meet the particular challenges of buildings & stewardship before us here?
- How can our ‘people’ resources (volunteers, officers, licensed ministers) be renewed to help us remain faithful to the places we serve?

While some decisions sit with the bishops (especially around the deployment of stipendiary clergy), there is much freedom for developing a local ministry strategy for benefice and deanery. ‘A flourishing Christian presence’ will look different in each community, so we need your continued imagination and enterprise in realising this.

Thank you for your fruitful ministry. The Lord is with us.