



The Church of England
Diocese of Ely

Living ely2025

**Deanery Development
Planning across
The Diocese of Ely**

Parochial Church Council (PCC)
Summary Guide

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Introduction: The Vision of the Diocese of Ely

We pray to be generous and visible people of Jesus Christ. Believing that God calls us to discover together his transforming presence in our lives and in every community, in Jesus Christ we pray:

- to engage fully and courageously with the needs of our communities, locally and globally
- to grow God's church by finding disciples and nurturing leaders
- to deepen our commitment to God through word, worship and prayer.

Our Aims are to:

- Grow in confidence as Christians
- Develop healthy churches and leaders
- Serve the community
- Re-imagine the use of our buildings
- Focus limited resources efficiently.

Why now?

The global pandemic has impacted every part of society including the church. We all need to recognise the health and sustainability of our churches, the reality of our contexts and resources, and adapt accordingly. We are therefore asking each deanery to produce an ambitious, realistic and sustainable plan.

The task of planning for the future shape of the church in the Diocese of Ely is urgent and important as new opportunities as well as challenges are presenting themselves. The process needs us to cooperate and to be mindful of our relationships with each other.

We are asking every parish, benefice, and deanery to review its mission and ministry. This will require honesty and objectivity; openness to one another and the Holy Spirit as together we determine what is actually feasible and desirable within the constraints of limited resources.

The Church is present where people gather in prayer and worship, are fed by Word and Sacrament, sent out to serve, and draw other into the life of the Church to know Jesus.

In our planning we need to ask:

- are our churches vibrant and viable worshipping communities of Word and Sacrament?
- are we planning to share the faith and nurture new believers?
- are we welcoming and accessible to those who come for 'life events'; and how are those contacts followed up ?

- do our plans include commitment to the schools across the deanery?
- is there a shared vision for our churches to be agents of transformation in the wider community?
- do we need to try something completely different and separate from any of our current expressions of church?
- are there pockets of the parish or whole communities not really reached by the Parish church and what it has to offer?

Planning as Deaneries reminds us that we are part of a church that is wider than our own immediate worshipping community; that the church is 'ordered' in terms of ministry, worship, and the legal frameworks that hold us together.

- Whilst we can be imaginative, brave and radical, we can't just do our own thing! We are part of a wider church family – expressed most immediately through the diocese – where help, support, and guidance is available. As Christians we are all called to minister in one form or another: all part of the one Body.

Finance for the Future

When the missional and pastoral needs of the Deanery along with those of the benefices/parishes has been determined it will inevitably be necessary to consider how that ministry is to be funded: what is realistically affordable and what isn't. Are there alternatives of resourcing ministry?

Funding comes from two sources: Ministry Share (paid by the parishes) and Diocesan investment income. Over the years many parishes/benefices have been cushioned from bearing the true cost of ministry thanks to this investment income. However stipendiary ministry is increasingly costly and with a decline in income the Diocese can no longer guarantee the traditional level of subsidy.

Deaneries need to take account of the actual costs of ministry in each place, based on the figures below. Sustainable ministry depends on most benefices covering their full costs, while some places may contribute more in order to support those who can afford less.

The Diocesan Synod and the Bishop's Council have agreed that, for budgetary purposes, they wish to see the number of full-and half-stipendiary posts

capped at 104. The Diocese estimates this is the number of affordable posts based on predicted Ministry Share receipt levels. Limited resources are

likely to result in posts being lost but with new posts being established in locations where there has been growth.

Costs	Full Stipend	Half Stipend	House for Duty
Stipend and on-costs	£39,283	£19,035	-
Housing	£8,497	£8,497	£8,497
Wider Ministry	£18,193	£18,193	£18,193
Investing in the Future	£9,750	£9,750	£9,750
Full Cost of Clergy Post	£75,723	£55,475	£36,440
Support (if needed)			
Wider Ministry (up to 33%)	(£6,004)	(£6,004)	(£6,004)
Investing in the Future (up to 100%)	(£9,750)	(£9,750)	(£9,750)
Supported Cost of Clergy Post	£59,969	£39,721	£20,686

Nb these figures are for 2021

From Subsidy towards Sustainable Ministry

Deaneries therefore are asked to review their local plans for mission and ministry, including number of stipendiary posts, with the aim of reducing current dependency on subsidy.

They should also estimate the level of subsidy required to sustain viable ministry - given the present level of parish income.

Parishes are also urged to produce a sustainable and annual budget for the coming year to inform congregations and the wider community of the financial challenges faced by parish churches.

Ministries

Ordained Ministry

Future leadership especially in the rural church need to be diverse and flexible.

In the future there will be fewer full-time stipendiary clergy. In many places they will be team leaders, exercising missional oversight across enlarged groups. Ministry will be shared with ordained Self-Supporting Ministers – people who give generously of their time and gifts while also pursuing other forms of employment.

The Diocese will continue to develop the new pathway into Local Contextual Ordained Ministry (which may be particularly appropriate for older candidates and experienced lay ministers who sense that their vocation is changing).

Lay Ministry - some examples

Licensed Lay Ministry: LLMs include 'Readers' in the traditional form also excise ministry in a variety of contexts: working with children, schools, youth, hospitals, prisons, care homes, etc.

Authorised Lay Ministry. The Diocese is keen to encourage and respond positively to locally discerned needs, opportunities and gifts. This ministry might be outward-facing, such as school or small-group work, or inward-facing, such as administration).

Local Pastoral Assistants (LPAs) work within Ministry Teams, representing the wider church community as well as being the face of the church in a particular place and a resource for pastoral care. The Diocese will provide model role descriptions to help manage expectations.

Churchwardens play a significant role in the life local church; often taking on huge amounts of work in the church. They need to be clear about their role, responsibilities and how they play their part in the wider lay ministry

Church Buildings into the Future

Church buildings must be more than monuments to our Christian heritage; they must serve the needs of the church today. People Fully Alive: Ely2025

Work has begun to help parishes and deaneries identify different categories of Church Buildings and their use.

Leadership and Governance into the Future

Where there are not enough willing people to become PCC members and officers the Church Representation Rules (revised 2020) provide for several possible options, including:

Joint Councils / Single Council

Two or more churches within a benefice or group ministry to formally join together, becoming a Joint Council and acting as a PCC for two or more churches in the benefice.

It is also possible for Joint Councils to be scaled up into a single council acting as the PCC for all the churches in a benefice or group ministry.

Variations on the model PCC

The 2020 rules permit individual PCCs (and joint councils), with the consent of Bishop's Council, to vary the model to suit their own situation. For example, it is now possible to admit non-communicants to full membership of the PCC.

Principles to guide Deanery Planning

Locally owned - this is not a top-down exercise, each PCC and benefice needs to be engaged so its voice can be heard.

Just (not equal) - Being fair does not mean treating everyone equally. It means taking difference seriously and doing the right thing in each situation.

Affordable - Plans must be affordable. Ultimately, this is a diocesan responsibility, however, deaneries should approach their planning with a clear view about what ministry the local church can fund.

Healthy - Church should propose patterns of ministry and mission that seek to be life-giving not life draining.

Strategic - The church has often had to adapt to changing situations: it is a movement as much as it is an institution. Some things that used to work well are no longer helpful or possible. New opportunities and challenges lie all around us. Deanery plans need to take their present reality seriously and determine what best serves the long-term interests and aims of the church in their area.

Corporate - The Diocesan vision begins, "We pray to be: "That is the "one, holy, catholic church" of the creed, not just my church. Deanery plans should balance the needs of each local church with those of the wider Body of Christ, as we seek to engage meaningfully with every context.

Collaborative - The New Testament pictures everyone contributing in different ways to the overall ministry of the church (e.g. Ephesians 4). Moreover, all ministers are collaborative workers, not solo operators (e.g. Luke 10). Deanery plans should assume a wide ministry base, drawing on the gifts of all God's people.

Consultation - Deaneries must be frank about challenges, share information openly and carefully consider different insights and ideas. There should be a planned approach to consultation,

designed to engage a wide audience in an interactive process.

Accountability - Deaneries must agree criteria for decision-making and ensure that decisions are not based on other (hidden) agendas. Evidence (both quantitative and qualitative) and be prepared to test assumptions and they should be bold in pursuing pastoral reorganisation where current arrangements are unsuitable or unsustainable.

Deaneries should plan for emerging contexts, such as new housing developments. They should also consider the importance of schools and the need to engage children, young people and families.

Blended - In accordance with the diocesan strategy, Deanery plans should promote both inherited and Fresh Expressions of church.

Pro-Growth - The focus of deanery planning should be on (re-)organising for growth, rather than maintaining the status quo. This is especially important in situations where the right approach to stewardship involves reducing the costs of ministry and mission (e.g. by reducing stipendiary posts).

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People Fully Alive

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