

Strategic LIFE Plan for the Benefices and Parishes in the North Cotswolds

Autumn 2022 update and invitation

The Strategic Plan Working Group would like to invite your involvement and input to help them create the right conditions to allow the parishes and benefices of the North Cotswolds to flourish now and in the future. These are difficult times; the cost of living crisis follows the Covid crisis, together we want to be part of a church that can responsively and creatively meet these and other challenges so that we can share the transforming gospel of Jesus Christ, so that all people may know life in all its fullness.

We work together as parishes and benefices in partnership with one another and with the wider Diocese of Gloucester, national church and other denominations. The Diocesan Board of Finance has made a commitment to continue to support parish ministry in the North Cotswolds and across the Diocese by setting a deficit budget so that parish ministry can be maintained in an increasingly difficult time. Together we have an opportunity to shape the church so that we, our churches, parishes, benefices and communities thrive.

Please carefully and prayerfully read the associated paperwork. The framework being developed is not intended to be prescriptive but rather an identification of common issues and opportunities. Different parishes and benefices will engage with these in different ways and that diversity is something to affirm and celebrate.

Thank you for your on-going prayers for this process, for your discussions and feedback and for the further work to be done. We work together as children of God, followers of Jesus Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit. Please continue to pray for this. You might like to use this prayer:

*God of hope and transformation,
who in our Lord Jesus Christ offers the gift of life in all its fullness,
send your Holy Spirit upon us across this Deanery.
Help us to listen for your voice,
to be led by your hand and
to be guided in your wisdom.
We pray, that as we build our Deanery plans
we may constantly be rooted in you
and filled with love to share your good news,
as we pray for your kingdom to come. Amen.*

Our thanks; on behalf of the Strategic Plan working group

Michael Storey
(Lay Chair)

Revd Canon S. Craig Bishop
(Acting Area Dean)