

A letter from Bishop Mark

Thank you for your interest in the post of Archdeacon of Macclesfield.

This is a role that will be utterly life-giving for the right person and really challenging if it's 'just a job' or you are not a team player. So... let's get our workaday gear on, roll up our sleeves, stick our arms in the sink, and see if you are up for this.

This is among the most important jobs in the diocese and it is also one of the most complex. You will need the patience of a saint, the skin of a rhino, the humility of a British tennis player, and the persistent determination of a lioness around her cubs.

You will be joining an amazing team revitalising the Diocese of Chester for mission in the twenty-first century around a new vision... devoting yourself to making certain that not a single person among the 1.65 million inhabitants of this remarkable region miss out on hearing of what God has for them in Christ. I'd love to have an informal conversation about this with you if you're interested.

The Archdeacons staff the engine-room for mission in this Diocese. There is nothing that they will not turn their hands to if needed as they enable, release, inspire, encourage, and tirelessly urge the church to share the love of Christ in each of our communities. They constantly dance around the edge of the limelight pointing people to Christ and pushing others forwards. It is not so much that it is thankless work, more that the thanks is always directed to others and the focus is always on Jesus.

Without doubt it is a demanding role, but I can think of few roles in the Diocese which I value more highly.

Do you love Jesus with all that you are?

Are you utterly committed to serving others (particularly the most disadvantaged)?

Can you organise a herd of cats juggling jelly on a hot tin roof, and still be enthusiastic about getting the detail right?

Have you been ordained for 6 or more years and got a good grounding in parish ministry?

If you are still reading, please let's have a conversation: God might have a plan he needs you to explore.

This might just be the toughest job you will ever do... but I believe it will be with the best colleagues, unceasing support, and an impact that spans generations. If you are the right person there are few better things that you can do with your life (and please don't forget that we value previous experience in roles whether they are outside or within the church).

Be assured of my prayers (and that the offer of an informal conversation really is intended for you not just for the people you think are better suited to the role than you would be: if the Holy Spirit is nagging you, please don't ignore it).

+Mark



The Archdeacon of Macclesfield: an introduction

The Diocese of Chester stretches from Merseyside to Manchester and serves from Wallasey to Warrington to Wilmslow to Whitewell. We engage communities aching in poverty and others in great security; the 'Cheshire Set', Ellesmere Port, Jodrell Bank, and New Brighton... coast, hills, rurality, ethnic diversity, industrial creativity, academic and scientific excellence, farmers, commuters, and areas of significant poverty. We have no one overwhelming centre of population and so we stand together, united in Christ as we have been called to do for the last Millennium. We cling to Him through the rather dramatically changing scenes of life, and we are utterly committed to the communities we serve; as we proclaim faith in this generation so we experience the love of God bridging the gaps between us and with Him.

We exist to serve the 1.65 million people with the Good News of Jesus in our diverse and rapidly changing communities. We are divided by geography, wealth, education, ethnicity, but united in our need for Christ. We have a vocation to bridge gaps and make links, and the new Archdeacon needs to embody this.

We work with two archdeaconries: Chester serving the western half and Macclesfield serving the east. Macclesfield Archdeaconry stretches from Tintwistle in the north east to the M6 along its western border. It comprises the deaneries of Bowdon, Congleton, Knutsford, Macclesfield, Mottram, Nantwich, Stockport, Chadkirk, and Cheadle. This may be reviewed as part of our strategic programme as our archidiaconal work is under resourced, but the Archdeacon of Macclesfield will remain as a permanent post however this development takes place, and the new postholder will be instrumental in developing any emerging new shape.



The Archdeacon of Macclesfield: an introduction

We are looking for an approachable, inspiring, and faithful priest to join the team and help us 'love Jesus and love others'. We're not looking for a hero, we need someone who walks simply and humbly with Christ and inspires others to do the same. We're looking for someone with a high level of emotional intelligence and a deeply practical ability to serve, who enables us to be better 'together in Christ, sharing hope'. We're looking for someone who loves the church enough to keep us true to our calling and who does this in a deeply practical way. As a couple of Rural Deans put it we need 'an Arch-pastor who can make things happen' who 'gets the detail... prays... and loves people'.

Will you come and pray with us, laugh with us, open the scriptures with us, dream with us, cry with us, wrestle with us, and share Christian life with us? We want archdeacons who serve the privileged and the outcast without fear or favour and draw both into Jesus' dance of hope. We want ministers who keep survivors central to our safeguarding work, the lost central to our missional work, and Christ central to all that we are.

The new archdeacon will be an inspiring servant of God's people and a visible invitation of grace to those who don't think they belong. They will be an agent of hope, reconciliation, and grace. They will communicate excellently, pastor humbly, pray faithfully, focus missionally, and live a life of transparent discipleship to Christ. They will need to be resilient, strategic, and collaborative as they join us at a time of considerable change in the Diocese. They will also be much loved and regularly held in prayer.



Person Specification

“Appoint those to senior leadership whose character you want to see replicated in the church”

Ness Wilson, Regional Leader for Pioneer Midlands

“ the overall tone... is serious, joyful, spiritual, playful. We definitely need someone like that!”

Liz Geddes, Chester Diocesan Director of HR
when consulted about this Role Description

We are looking to appoint a person of deep and transparent Christian faith with sustainable, healthy, and exemplary patterns of life, spirituality, mission, and self-care. All senior staff in this diocese should be role models, examples (albeit imperfect and humble examples) to all whom we are privileged to serve. Technical competence matters, but so do things like taking time off, going on retreat, daily attention to their own devotional life, and having a hobby or two.

We also wish to be transparent in noticing that our current senior team is very male and very white (although far from being 'stale'). We continue to seek every opportunity to address this lack of diversity. This concern will be in our minds when making this appointment and applications are particularly encouraged from women and those of Global Majority Heritage.

(Please note that we will only interview those whose safeguarding training and DBS checks are up to date.)



Person Specification

The following specification illustrates the kind of person we are seeking for this role.

Inspirational

- > Clear, Christ centred, servant-hearted and infectious faith
- > Inspired by our diocesan vision, committed to our missional goals and impact
- > Able to inspire others to commit to a common vision and hold them to it
- > Inspires confidence and trust through consistency, reliability and transparency

Humble

- > A key part of the Bishop's team: willingly participating in the culture, strategy, and direction which is ultimately held by the bishop
- > A generous champion of others: the 'chief deacon' suggested by the title
- > Cheerfully negotiating the process of stepping in and out of the primary leadership role as the context demands: always able to raise the energy in a room and call it to focus, but equally skilled at joining another's team and serving common purpose

Relational

- > Accessible, approachable, and demonstrably kind: reflecting deep Christian faith in each interaction.
Joyful, kind, and caring, and 'utterly lacking flannel' (what you see needs to be what you get)
- > High level of evidenced emotional intelligence, able to engage with different socio-economic, age, and ethnic groups
- > A strategic visionary who is able to work as part of a team both as leader and member; 'able both to think outside the box and to respect that the box sometimes matters'
- > Demonstrable impact across the whole of community
- > Has demonstrable experience of and commitment to fostering a culture of diversity and inclusion, particularly for under-represented or minority groups
- > Able to spot talents and gifts in others, lay and ordained, and to invest effectively in them
- > A learner – able to develop new skills and understanding
- > A listener and coach, able to nurture and encourage
- > A permission-giver, encouraging new thinking and experimentation, whilst also valuing more traditional values

Person Specification

Technical

- Significant experience of parish ministry
- Demonstrable understanding of the statutory functions of an archdeacon, and how these may be exercised to foster life and growth
- Excellent safeguarding understanding and skills, and up to date with safeguarding training
- Understands and values the collection and management of data in relation to missional outcomes
- Manages detail, specifics and technicalities while shaping and grasping the "big picture"
- Clarity of communication – in digital and traditional form, both written and spoken

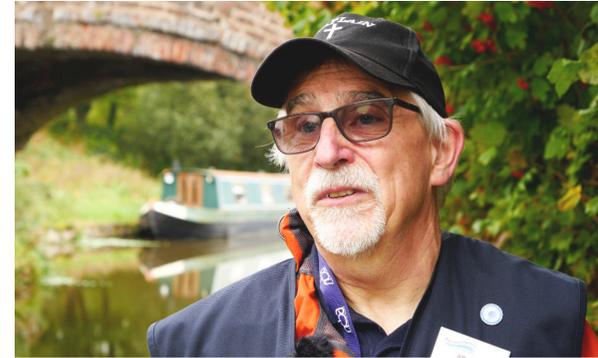
Leader and Change Manager

- A skilled leader able to work within a senior management team with an adaptable and flexible approach
- Team leader who can take responsibility – with evidenced experience of effective teamwork
- Contributes to culture change by taking opportunities to articulate vision and values at key strategic moments
- Able to identify, translate and implement shifts in culture and practice
- Impactful leader within their environment, with;
 - Evidence of delivering significant positive change
 - Evidence of negotiating conflict
 - Evidence of project management with successful outcomes and impact.
- Demonstrable ability to take tough decisions, to hold a line, but with pastoral sensitivity
- Entrepreneurial – able to identify new possibilities for innovation or promising connections, whether within church, between churches, or with other community partners
- Able to grasp the impact and opportunities post Covid within emerging churches

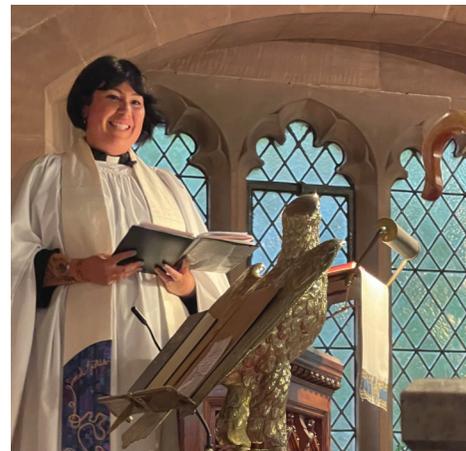
Key Relationships

An archdeacon's work is relational. It is many other things, too, but none of them happen effectively if the relationships are not functional. There are far more people who will form key relationships with the new Archdeacon than we could list here, but an illustrative list would include:

- > Clergy of the Archdeaconry
- > Lay leaders, especially church wardens of the Archdeaconry
- > Rural Deans and Lay Chairs of the Archdeaconry
- > The Archdeacon of Chester
- > Church House Staff
- > Dean and Chapter alongside cathedral
- > Bishops and Bishop's House team
- > Civic Leaders
- > Third sector partners in leadership
- > Other Archdeacons



The Archdeacon's house is in Congleton and they will have an office base (alongside the Archdeacon of Chester) at Church House, Daresbury. Each Archdeacon is supported and resourced by a part time PA.





Responsibilities

General duties of an Archdeacon

- Encouragement of parishes in mission (including our visional foci, for example: younger and more diverse, mixed ecology, missionary discipleship)
- Pastoral care of clergy, including focussing on well-being and spiritual health
- Fostering a strong safeguarding culture, including specific responsibilities as set out in the House of Bishops' practice guidance
- Playing a full role in the running of the diocese (finance, housing, and various other committees including Bishops' Council, Mission and Pastoral Committee, and Diocesan Synod)
- Integral part of the Bishop's Staff Team in administrative and liturgical function
- Strong team-working with rural deans and lay chairs especially as this evolves
- Close working with Church House colleagues including the Archdeacon of Chester
- Engaging and wise communication across a range of formats, for example in preaching, written work, and social media
- Overseeing pastoral re-organization
- Offering Ministerial Development Reviews within the Diocesan Provision
- Pastoral holder of discipline and good order, both formally and informally (for example in the use of CDM, but also dispute resolution and mediation in parishes)
- Wide community engagement
- Appropriate engagement with appointments and parochial vacancies
- Sunday and midweek engagement in parishes
- Archdeacon's visitations and enabling of faculty work



Responsibilities

Bishop's Senior Staff: Diocese of Chester

- Sharing the outward-looking, mission-focused diocesan vision which is emerging
- Playing a full part in the development and effective implementation of the new diocesan strategy
- Being open to possible future re-organization of deaneries/archdeaconries
- Availability and approachability

Illustrative Responsibilities

- Leading on environmental issues including Net Zero. It's important to have strong Senior Staff engagement with this.
- Transforming Lives Together. The chair of this has passed to an excellent priest in the Diocese, but some Senior Staff involvement would be useful.
- Chiring the Closed Church Uses Committee. Not the most exciting part of diocesan life, but it is actually rather important. The former occupant of this post chaired this, and as it happens almost all the closed churches we are currently dealing with are on the Macclesfield side.



A brief look at the Diocese

The Diocese of Chester is...

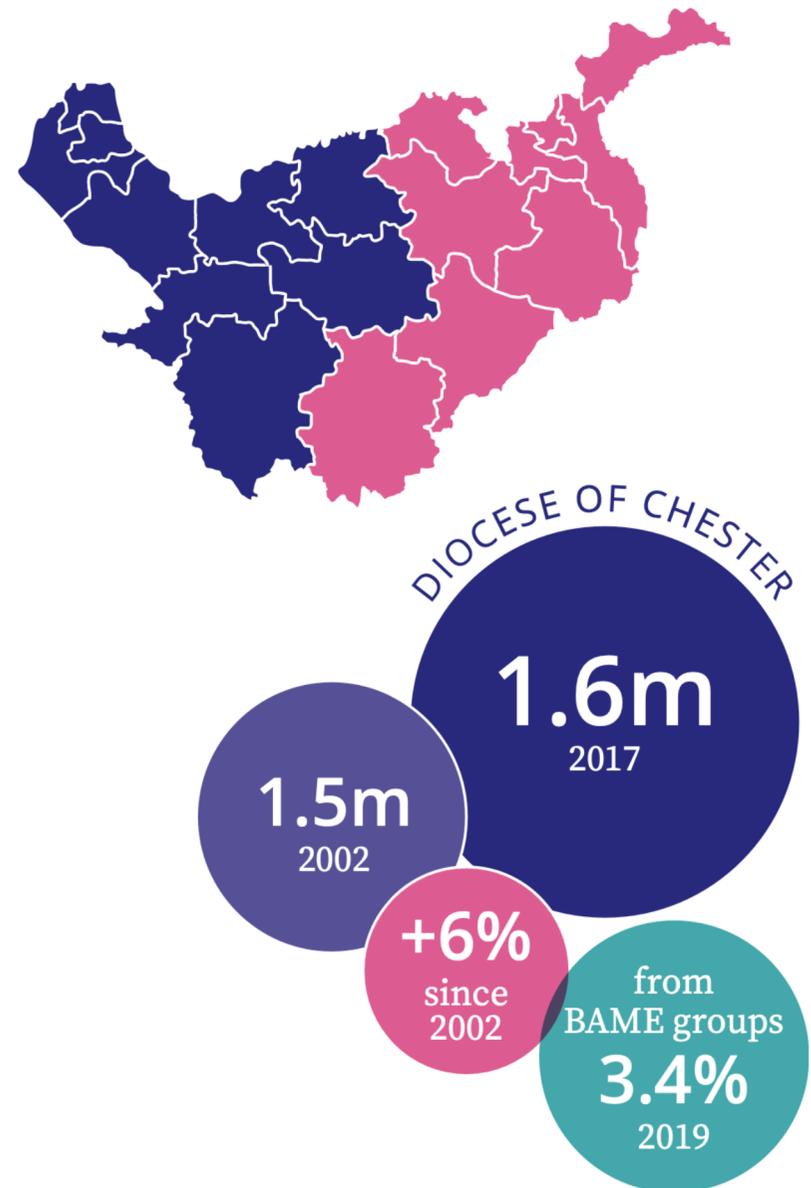
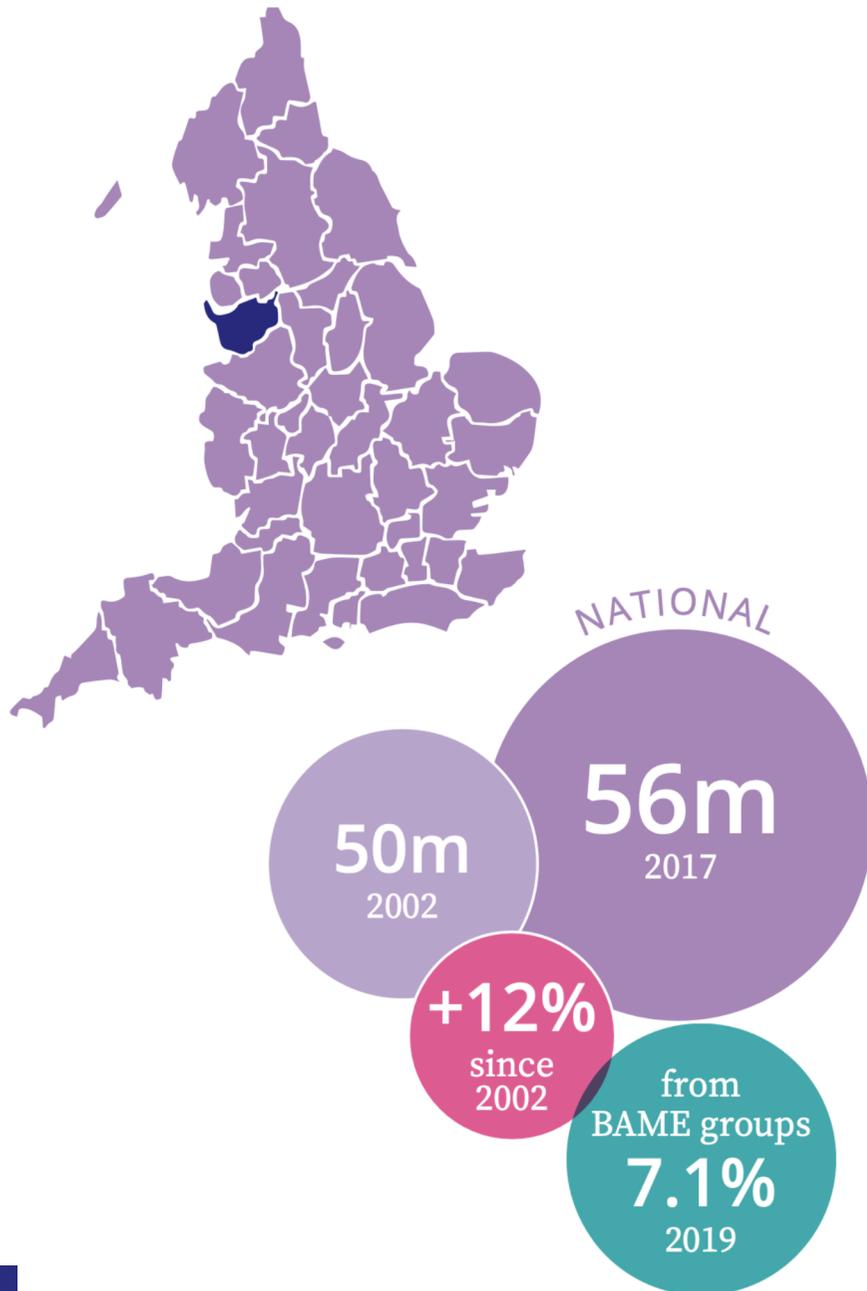
- 1 home to some of the most deprived and least deprived communities in our nation.
- 2 beginning an exciting new phase of strategic work to reach 1.5million people with the love of Jesus
- 3 accepting of its complex identity and mix of traditions, theological convictions, and cultural influences.
- 4 the diocese in which the first woman bishop in the Church of England was appointed.
- 5 parish-focused, enjoying a precious heritage of parishes as missional communities.
- 6 partner to vibrant overseas links with the Church of Melanesia made up of dioceses in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and New Caledonia and with the dioceses of Aru and Boga in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of Congo.



The diocese spans from Wirral and the Welsh border in the west to the limestone hills of the Derbyshire Peak District in the east. The north of the diocese reaches up to the rivers Mersey and Tame and the conurbations of south and east Manchester, and south to the towns of Crewe, Sandbach and Nantwich on the outskirts of Stoke-on-Trent and Shropshire.

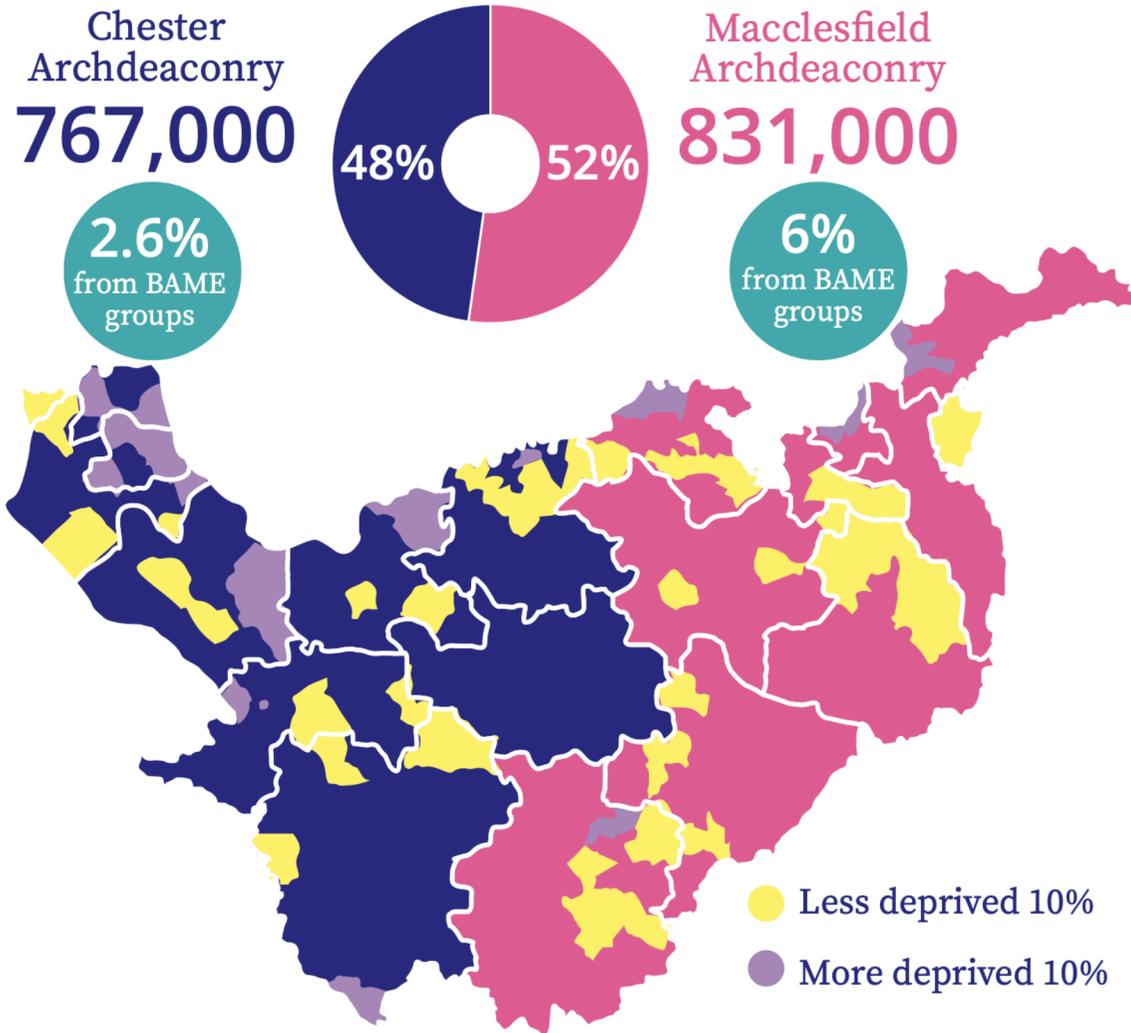


Population



Population of the archdeaonries

The archdeaonries of Chester and Macclesfield are roughly separated by the M6 which runs north and south through the heart of the diocese. Each archdeaconry has a broad mix of parishes and socio-cultural areas.



Deprivation ranking

Parishes in our diocese include communities in the most and in the least deprived 0.1% of neighbourhoods. The disparity could not be clearer.



Local Authorities

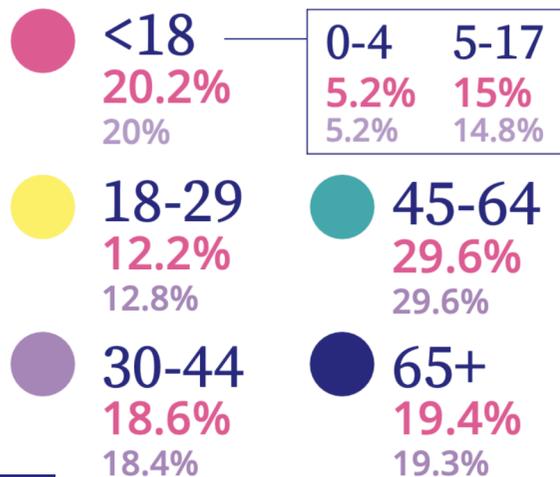
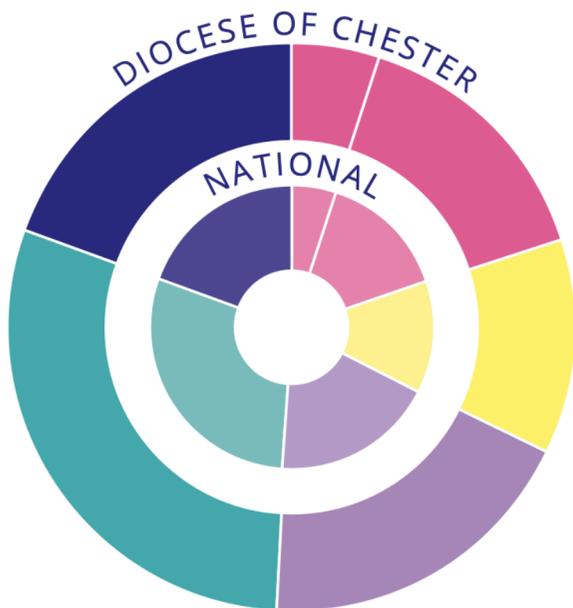
There are 11 local authorities within the boundaries of the Diocese of Chester, including two Welsh authorities.

The local authorities are:

- Cheshire East Council
- Cheshire West and Chester Council
- Flintshire County Council
- Halton Borough Council
- Manchester City Council
- Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
- Trafford Council
- Warrington Borough Council
- Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
- Wrexham County Borough Council

Age

The Diocese of Chester follows almost exactly the national average in terms of the age profile of its population.



Religion

DIOCESE OF CHESTER

68%
identify as
Christian

1.11m
2017

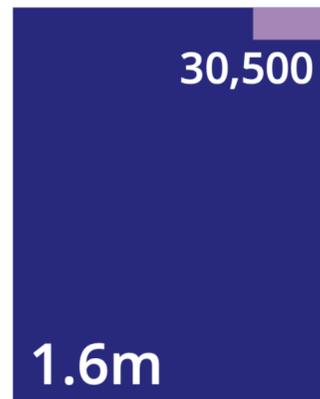
NATIONAL

59%
identify as
Christian

33.06m
2017

Church attendance

(all age average weekly attendance)



2.1%
of the diocesan
population



1.6%
of the national
population

Next steps

If you would like an informal conversation
with Bishop Mark about this post,
please contact Bishop's House

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