

Appointment of the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury

Statement of Needs



Diocese of Canterbury
CHANGED LIVES ➔ CHANGING LIVES

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Introduction

The Diocese of Canterbury is looking forward to welcoming its 106th Archbishop. This Statement of Needs, prepared by the Vacancy in See Committee, sets out a little of what the diocese needs and expects in an Archbishop and describes something of the rich life and ministry of the Church of England in the eastern half of Kent as we seek, together, to be disciples of Jesus Christ and to proclaim in word and action the Good News of Jesus.

Locally we realise that responsibilities in the diocese will form but a small part of the Archbishop's total ministry. We have a long established, valued and well understood system of delegation of day to day responsibility for episcopal ministry in the diocese to the Bishop of Dover and expect this to continue. That said, there is a real and tangible sense of connection and affection for the Archbishop of Canterbury in the parishes and communities of the diocese. The Archbishop is 'our' Archbishop alongside their responsibilities in the Church of England, the nation, the Anglican Communion and on the world stage. We offer in the Diocese of Canterbury and in the Cathedral Precincts a home, where the Archbishop will feel they belong. Canterbury Cathedral is location of the Archbishop's cathedra, the metropolitan seat and the

mother church of the Anglican Communion and the natural location of the Archbishop's ministry in prayer, liturgy and teaching.

The Diocese of Canterbury is not without its challenges. We hope that as we seek to live out a Christ-like life that our next Archbishop would be a supporter and an advocate for us alongside their other weighty tasks.

We are praying for the calling out of a faithful pastor to be our Archbishop. If you are a candidate considering whether to express an interest in the post please be assured that we are praying for you in this time of discernment.

***The Venerable Dr Will Adam
Archdeacon of Canterbury
Chair, Vacancy in See Committee***

*Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ
is the Good Shepherd,
call out, we pray,
a shepherd after your own heart
to serve as Archbishop of Canterbury:
to care for your flock;
to build up your Church;
to care for the needy;
and, in all they do, to give glory to your name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

*“Tend the flock
of God that is
in your charge,
exercising
the oversight,
not under
compulsion but
willingly, as God
would have you
do it”*

1 Peter 5:2

The Archbishop we are seeking...

- has theological depth and a prayer-filled and dynamic personal faith. They will be able to communicate clearly with people of different ages and backgrounds, speaking joyfully and confidently to all of God and his loving purposes.
- is a person of the utmost integrity who is able to speak honestly, out of love for the Lord and the church, about failures and injustices in the church. They will have the humility to be appropriately accountable to dioceses, episcopal colleagues and national bodies.
- is recognised as a servant leader, who shows compassion towards the disadvantaged and marginalised and has a heart to see everyone included in the church.
- will be curious about and committed to understanding the realities of life for young people, both in and outside the church. They will need to be patient and commit to earning the trust of young people through their words and their actions.
- is able to speak prophetically, addressing the social and political issues which impact the most vulnerable in our society.
- will be unapologetic about offering a Christian perspective to local, national and international dialogue.
- will ordain and consecrate women and men, will unequivocally affirm and support the ministry of both, and may themselves be male or female.
- has worked and will continue to work constructively with the *Living in Love and Faith* process and will fully welcome those from the LGBTQIA+ community. They will recognise with honesty the complexity of the current situation and the strongly held, but different, convictions present in the diocese as in the Church of England more widely. They will affirm that we are all created and loved into being whilst all also having sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. They will embrace those who pray for change to enable same-sex partners to marry in the Church of England. They will also embrace those who hold the current Church of England teaching on marriage.

The Archbishop's pastoral staff is a replica of the crozier of St. Gregory the Great, the Pope who sent St Augustine as a missionary to England in 597 AD.

The Archbishop we are seeking...

- will develop a relationship of mutual trust, understanding and support with the Bishop of Dover. This collegiality will require excellent awareness and communication, especially on occasions where the Bishop and Archbishop share roles in services such as Chrism and Ordination. The Bishop of Dover leads every aspect of running the diocese as well as developing our mission strategy as the *de facto* diocesan bishop. Although the Archbishop of Canterbury has legal accountability for all aspects of safeguarding within the diocese, this is delegated to the Bishop of Dover.
- will have demonstrated a commitment to the growth, mission and worship of parish churches, other worshipping communities, church schools and the communities in which they are situated. The Archbishop will have an understanding of the life of the local church based on their own significant parish experience and episcopal ministry. They will take time to understand the needs and opportunities which are specific to Diocese of Canterbury and will be an advocate for our diocese in national discussions.
- is aware of the burden which administrative tasks place on clergy and parish officers and will truly value the gifts of time and talent which lay and ordained people offer to the church.
- will play an active pastoral and missional role as a bishop for the Diocese of Canterbury alongside the Bishop of Dover. The exact shape of this will reflect the vocation and gifting of the Archbishop, but we would welcome the Archbishop's active involvement in deanery mission weeks, teaching days, confirmations and other gatherings.
- will receive the warm hospitality that we will provide, finding our diocese to be a place of joy, hope and nourishment which they will be encouraged to regard as home. They will be supported and prayed for by the ministers and congregations of our parishes and by our schools and worshipping communities.

Our young people ask...

“How much political influence would you want to have?”

Brandon, Year 6



Challenges, Opportunities and Commitments

- Our diocese is committed to ensuring that church becomes more relevant to those not yet attending, by being honest and transparent, regaining trust from those in and outside of the church and having more positive visibility.
- Our diocese is committed to the safeguarding of those within our churches, parishes and outreach projects. This includes the care of victims and survivors of present and historic abuse: ensuring robust safeguarding processes and training, and ensuring transparency.
- Our diocese is committed to enabling and challenging the church to be more diverse and accessible in all areas, enabling people from all walks of life and experiences to discover and grow their faith.
- Our diocese is committed to developing partnerships with other organisations and statutory authorities to meet the practical needs of the most vulnerable in our society, particularly the homeless, refugees, those being exploited and those caught in poverty.
- Our diocese faces the challenge of sustaining ministry in difficult situations, including rural multi-parish benefices that are growing in size or seeing reductions in ministry. We serve in challenging contexts including areas of economic and social deprivation, not least many of our coastal communities.
- Our diocese faces the challenge of reversing decline in church attendance. Our principal strategy is to work towards and resource our Three Bold Outcomes for 2030.
- Our diocese faces the challenge of financial sustainability for our parishes. Our principal strategy is to equip our vision for generous giving throughout our diocese and to explore financial opportunities through investments, diversification of revenue and National Church initiatives.
- Our diocese faces the challenge of improving and maintaining trust between parishes and the Board of Finance and senior leaders.
- Our diocese faces the challenge of achieving our net zero by 2030 target without placing too great a burden on our parishes.

*Students and Staff at The Archbishop's School in Canterbury are consulted about what they are looking for in our next Archbishop.
Photo: P Hayes.*

The Bishop of Dover

The Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin has been the Bishop of Dover since November 2019. She oversees our diocese under the Archbishop of Canterbury's Instrument of Delegation. She leads mission strategy, governance, and pastoral care while serving as President of the Diocesan Synod, Chair of the Archbishop's Council, and convening the Episcopal Staff Team. Leadership is shared with three Archdeacons, the Diocesan Secretary, and others. Safeguarding accountability, while legally held by the Archbishop, is delegated to her.

Bishop Rose integrates her ministry into diocesan life, emphasising her own four priorities of prayer, evangelism, generosity, and scripture. She travels widely to engage with communities, officiates at services, and supports organisations. As a Church Army Evangelist, she is dedicated to spreading the gospel and nurturing local leadership, including through her initiative, The Dover Pathway, which promotes local vocations. With a focus on youth and education, she visits schools and actively supports migrant populations and charities aiding refugees.

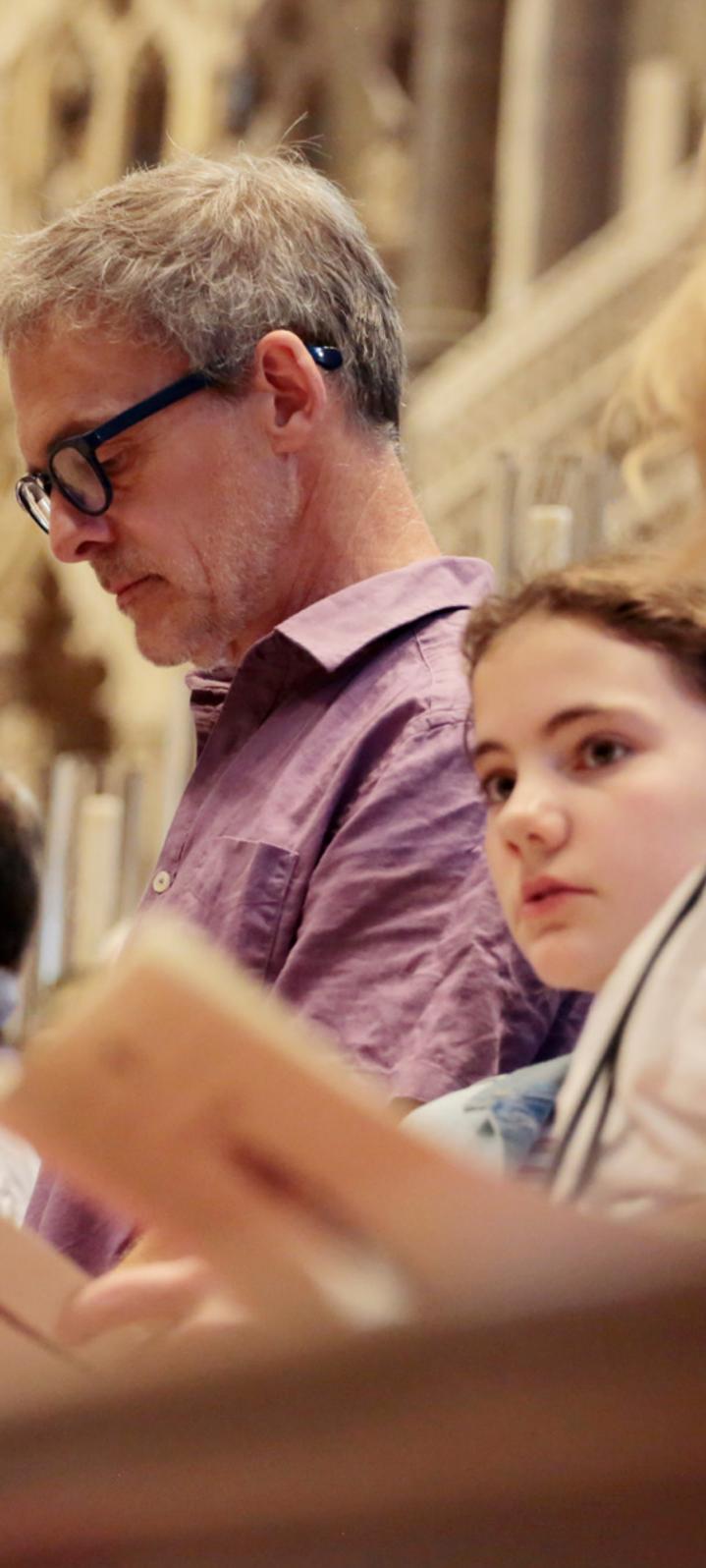
Bishop Rose plays an active role both locally and nationally, often contributing to conferences and discussions on political and community issues. As part of the

Archbishops' Racial Justice Commission, she writes papers and serves as a keynote speaker. Over the past year, she supported refugee efforts in Calais, confirmed over 200 candidates (primarily young people), strengthened ties with bishops in Madagascar, hosted clergy conferences, and chaired Kent Church leaders' meetings, alongside her regular episcopal duties. She maintains close communication with the Archbishop of Canterbury to provide updates on diocesan matters.

The Rt Revd Luke Irvine-Capel and The Rt Revd Dr Rob Munro exercise ministry as Provincial Episcopal Visitors from the suffragan sees of Richborough and Ebbsfleet in the Diocese of Canterbury. There are five traditional catholic parishes in our diocese who have passed resolutions under the House of Bishops Declaration 2014 under the care of Bishop Luke. Three conservative evangelical parishes have also passed resolutions and their request for a male bishop was undertaken by the last Archbishop personally. The Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs, Bishop of Rochester and The Rt Revd Simon Burton-Jones, Bishop of Tonbridge, are also honorary assistant bishops in the diocese.

Bishop Rose records her Easter message.





Safeguarding

Churches should be places where everyone can feel safe and be empowered to speak out, if not. We may never be perfect, but in our diocese, we work together to make our churches safer and to minimise the risks of harm and abuse. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. It is at the heart of everything we do.

Locally the Diocesan Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) are line managed by the Diocesan Secretary. Due to national stipulations around the role of the DSO, the two post-holders in Canterbury share the 1.2 FTE role of DSO and each has a further separate contract as Senior Case Worker (Total 0.8 FTE). The Safeguarding Team also includes a full-time Administrator and part-time Trainer, both of whom are line managed by the DSOs.

The Safeguarding Team meet with the Safeguarding Executive Group every two months and are operationally accountable to them for their work as well as oversight of any existing safety plans/safeguarding agreements.

Strategic external accountability is provided by the Diocesan and Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Panel.

The DSOs are also managed by the South East Regional Lead as appointed by the National Safeguarding Team. The Regional Lead provides oversight and quality assurance in the form of professional supervision.

The team also supports Canterbury Cathedral through a Service Level Agreement, currently for 0.2FTE.

The DSOs are responsible for professional leadership on and management of safeguarding matters. This includes, but is not limited to, the implementation of the Church of England National Safeguarding Standards (NSS) throughout our diocese which are as follows:

- Culture, Leadership and Capacity
- Prevention
- Recognising, Assessing and Managing Risk
- Victims and Survivors
- Learning, Supervision and Support

The NSS encompass all the work the Safeguarding Team undertakes from case referral and management to DBS checks, safeguarding training at all levels and other advice regarding the Safeguarding Code of Practice and House of Bishops or Church of England safeguarding guidance.

In 2024 the Church of England launched its programme of safeguarding audits with INEQE for all dioceses and cathedrals. Our audit is scheduled for November 2026 and will be in person for up to five days with auditors on site. A working group has been convened to ensure our diocese is fully prepared for the audit and the preliminary submissions and evidence which need to be made from July 2026.



Our young people ask...

“What is your vision for the Church of England?”

Jahswil, Year 8

Churches, Chaplaincies and Worshipping Communities

Canterbury is the oldest diocese in the Church of England. It crosses Kent, from Maidstone to Thanet, the Isle of Sheppey to Romney Marsh. The coastline, rural areas, market towns, and urban centres each offer their own challenges and opportunities for mission. We are a vibrant community with a rich history. Our location and excellent transport links make our diocese an appealing place to live and work.

We have three archdeaconries: Canterbury, Ashford, and Maidstone. These are divided into 16 deaneries, 97 benefices and 196 parishes with 303 churches. Our diocese also manages 105 church schools, offering education and spiritual and moral guidance to 26,200 children.

Chaplains extend their ministry beyond parochial work, serving in institutions like

universities, schools, hospitals, hospices, prisons and workplaces through initiatives like the ecumenical Kent Workplace Mission and our diocesan Centre for Healing and Wholeness, The Living Well. There is also chaplaincy ministry to sections of society, including Anna Chaplaincy among older people and the diocesan LGBTQIA+ chaplaincy team.

The Café at The Way Centre, Holy Trinity Margate.



Canterbury Cathedral

With origins dating back to 597, the cathedral serves as the Archbishop's seat and the mother church of the Anglican Communion, Church of England, and diocese. Our ministry spans local, national, and international communities, engaging regular attendees, visitors, and a growing online congregation.

The Chapter's purpose is "inspiring life in all its fullness," guided by values of compassion, collaboration, commitment, and curiosity. With a ten-year strategy, the vision is shaped by the inspiration of Christ the Good Shepherd explicitly linking our patronal dedication to Christ with the episcopal calling.

Cathedral worship takes inspiration from our Benedictine roots with an inclusive take on the Anglican Choral tradition. We emphasise pilgrimage to foster spirituality and faith. Social justice and engagement with our communities marks our commitment to reaching out and building partnerships.

Canterbury Cathedral is also a UNESCO World Heritage site shared with St Augustine's Abbey (run by Historic England) and the parish church of St Martin where Augustine first worshipped. Our building, monastic ruins and precincts form one of the finest historic sites in England and our stained glass, archives and artistic objects

are of international significance. We are aware of the multi-million pound repairs, conservation and development required including the need to imaginatively address greater accessibility and the carbon net zero journey.

The cathedral has a staff of 200-250 people with 600 volunteers and costs about £12.5 million a year to run. More than 75% of this must be raised each year, the remainder coming from investments and rent receipts. Financing the mission and care for the cathedral is an enormous part of the work of the Dean and Chapter. We have significant concerns about mid to long term sustainability.

The next years will focus on the sustaining and growth of regular congregations who have halved in number since COVID. Engagement is the other big focus as we seek to re-connect in multiple ways with the city, East Kent and the people of our diocese. Most still speak about 'the cathedral' rather than 'our cathedral'. We are clear we need to serve the entire diocese including offering the Prayers of Love and Faith. The Dean is an active member of the Episcopal Staff Team. Cathedral clergy go out to parishes once a month.

A packed service at Canterbury Cathedral.

The cathedral supports the Archbishop through provision of the building for services and events. The Archbishop is present for major festivals and their sermons are widely reported in the media. We support their wider work through hosting the Lambeth Conference and steady day-by-day engagement. This includes annual courses for newly consecrated bishops and newly ordained clergy from across the world. These courses are funded by the cathedral. The Dean also travels and speaks across the Communion.

Most vitally, the cathedral seeks to provide a praying base and community to which the Archbishop and their household belongs. We offer a place where it is possible to relax and reconnect with 'everyday mission and ministry' and to be more of 'an ordinary person' when in Canterbury and part of the Precincts community. Staff and volunteers alike long to know their Archbishop. The cathedral will value the support and interest of the Archbishop, not least with fundraising and advocacy and a genuine concern for our mission and ministry. We will seek to make this place home alongside providing the physical and spiritual space for the Chair of Augustine and the ministry of teaching, prayer and pastoral care that it embodies.

Clergy from the Cathedral Chapter lead the Palm Sunday procession through the city centre.





Our Vision and Bold Outcomes

Our mission – why we exist

Changed Lives → Changing Lives

At the heart of all we do is a vision of transformation for ourselves and our communities: no one can encounter God and remain unchanged. We want to increasingly become a Christian community transformed through encounter with Christ, growing and overflowing to transform and bless the families, homes and communities we serve: Changed Lives, Changing Lives.

Our vision – what the future will look like

By God's grace we want to be a people who are...

confident and creative disciples of Jesus Christ,
rooted in scripture and drenched in **prayer**,
living gratefully, giving **generously**, caring for creation and sharing the gospel,
growing in number and expectations – of God and ourselves,
motivated by **justice** and love, open to the Spirit and ready for adventure!

Young people from St. Leonard's, Hythe greet the sunrise after a charity sleep out.

Three Bold Outcomes

Our diocese has been on a journey of listening and discerning to arrive at our vision and strategy, which is distilled into Three Bold Outcomes for 2030:

- Double the number of children and young disciples.
- Two hundred new Christian communities.
- Every parish, benefice and deanery showing signs of revitalisation.

Our strategy – how will we get there?

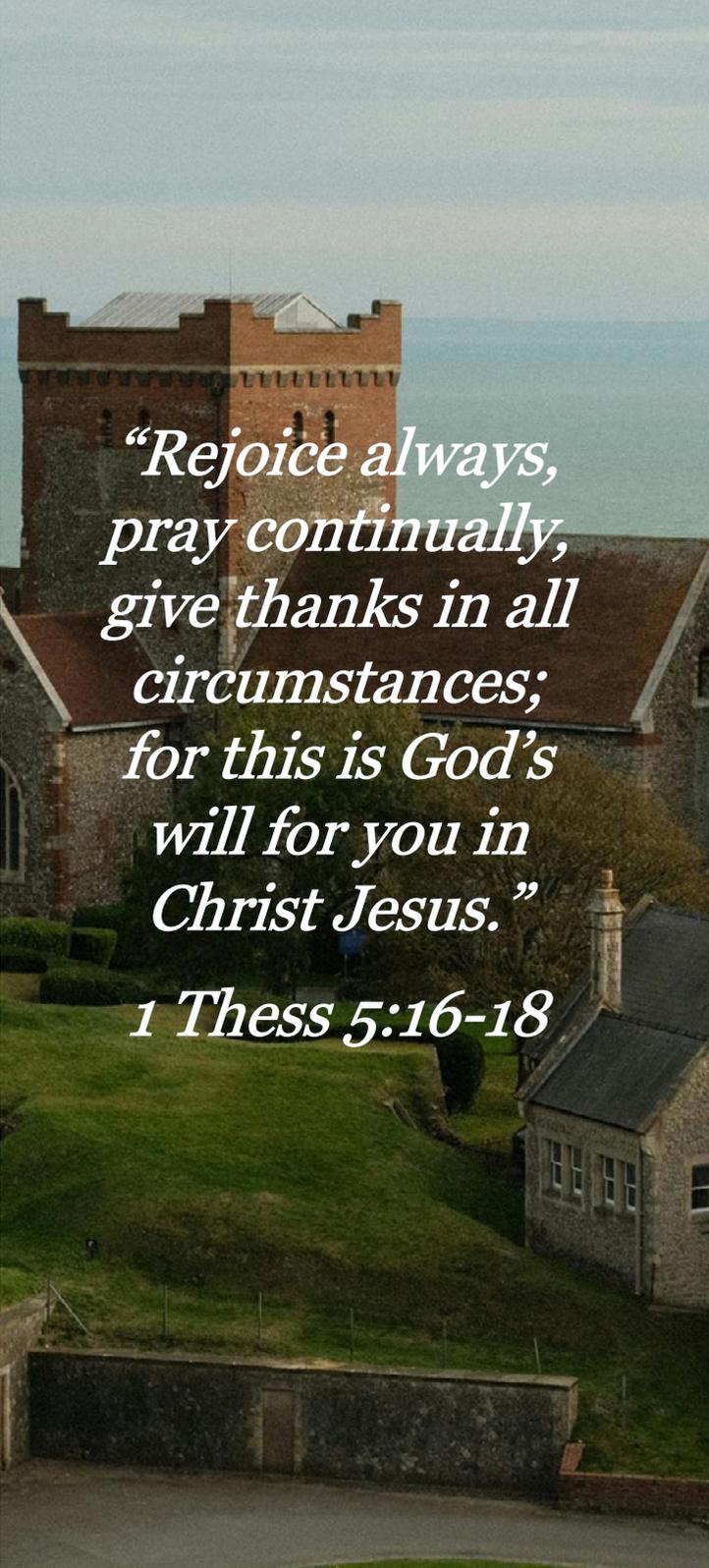
Our strategy is ‘To enable the local church to share in God’s Mission’

We use the phrase “Therefore, we will...” as a recognition that words without actions are empty. It is a commitment to taking real steps now to make our vision a reality soon. The actions will change and develop over time and as we consider our vision and explore together what actions we commit to take at diocese, deanery and parish level.

Tools and resources

Some projects require major investment and are coordinated at diocesan level. This includes the diocesan-wide recruitment of youth ministers, helping to identify and equip our resourcing churches, piloting *Flourish* partnerships between schools and churches, enabling Ignite phase 2 (Ignite is described on page 16), and the research into and launch of focal ministers.

We also support local mission through *Leading your Church into Growth* courses, encouraging both parish mission action planning and deanery planning, training for ministers in youth ministry, growing young leaders, resourcing youth ministry and the ongoing development of a rural strategy.



*“Rejoice always,
pray continually,
give thanks in all
circumstances;
for this is God’s
will for you in
Christ Jesus.”*

1 Thess 5:16-18



Children and Young People

The roles and responsibilities of the Children, Young People and Education team encompass both the statutory duties of the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) and the scope of the Children and Young People Framework. Both bodies work closely together to encourage, support and help resource ministry with and for children and young people in churches, households and schools.

Vision for Children, Young People and Education

We imagine and pray for a hope-filled future for all; both experiencing fullness of life in church schools which are living out a theologically rooted Christian vision, and children and young people growing in faith and discipleship which inspires them to contribute confidently to the Kingdom of God.

We champion:

- An outward-looking church striving to be younger and more diverse
- Mutuality, belonging and justice: no exception, no exclusion
- Shepherding God's flock with skill, compassion and integrity of heart
- People and schools being deeply rooted in the life of their community
- A bold commitment to education rooted in a Christian vision and context.

The Diocesan Board of Education (DBE)

The DBE is a statutory committee of the Diocesan Board of Finance and serves 105 Church of England (CE) schools – 26,200 pupils. We hold an important system leadership role aspiring to build a resilient school system and a collaborative, family ethos in an often fragmented landscape, striving for excellence in church schools and enabling them to share light with their communities as beacons of Christian values.

We support CE schools to live out a Christian vision enabling all children and adults to flourish:

- which is generous and enriching;
- that nurtures a culture of deep reflection and compassion for God's world
- encourages spiritual development
- provides a rich experience and appreciation of the Christian faith.

Officers support schools operationally and pastorally through networks, conferences and training, leadership development programmes and governance advice, school improvement and estates support, along with materials, policy and guidance on issues relating to Christian character and their Anglican foundation.

School pupils participate in stonecarving activity as part of Cathedral Schools' Day.

Strategic Planning

Our current Strategic Plan outlines key ambitions for the period 2025-2030, including:

- Developing missional engagement between schools and parishes, building partnership through new worshipping communities. This contributes to diocesan plans for a flourishing youth, children and families ministry to be within reach of every young person
- All CE schools being evaluated as effective and living up to their Christian foundation: prioritising spiritual flourishing and inclusive, invitational Collective Worship, delivering a high-quality Religious Education (RE) curriculum and developing a culture of mutuality, justice and responsibility for staff and pupils to bring about change
- Establishing an Affiliate Scheme whereby schools without a religious character can access training for RE, Collective Worship, spiritual development and social justice; thus, helping the DBE to contribute to the well-being and support of the wider education community
- Evaluating and refining pathways of training and support for school senior leaders, ensuring that these are progressive and provide regular opportunities for sacred rest, as well as a space for enabling the sharing of best practice and tackling issues of ethical and educational importance
- Promoting more opportunities for children, young people and families to access a Church of England education, with efforts to encourage nursery and pre-school provision in areas of higher deprivation
- Creating mechanisms to hear the voices of young people across diocesan governance structures, to influence dialogue and decision-making
- Replicating existing, successful models of school chaplaincy and missional initiatives that expand engagement with young people.

Our young people ask...

“How do you plan on gaining the trust of young people?”

Jack, Year 12



New Christian Communities

Ignite

Ignite is a parish-based church initiative reaching marginalised and socially deprived communities. Founded in Cliftonville, Margate, it expanded with Strategic Development Funding and now benefits from Benefact Trust support. Hubs are in Margate, Herne Bay, Ashford, Sittingbourne, Maidstone, Aylesham and Canterbury.

Resourcing Churches & Church Planting

The creation of 'Resourcing Churches' is part of the strategy to plant and revitalise churches. These hubs in our urban centres will be a source of expertise and encouragement to churches around them. They will develop lay and ordained leaders who will continue to work locally as they join or plant churches with potential to grow. We currently have resourcing churches in Margate and Maidstone, with the next one expected to be in Ashford.

Fresh expressions of Church and New Christian Communities (FxC/NCC) have played a significant role in the most desirable growth among children and young people over the last year. In other words, children and families respond to appropriate provision for them.

Confirmations take place with members of Ignite in Sittingbourne.

However, we can also see that, while some FxC/NCC or new services are being launched, others seem to be closing year on year, so the growth should be regarded as volatile. Developing the capacity to offer new and appropriate services will need to be part of our ongoing strategy.

Revitalisation: Growing the Church

Our Three Bold Outcomes require or imply growth in three dimensions: numbers of worshipping disciples, depth of discipleship, and missional vitality in local communities.

According to research in 2024, attendance in our diocese has lagged behind the rest of the Church of England in our recovery following the pandemic. Post-pandemic, we faced a net decline, unlike the rest of the Church of England, which has seen some recovery. In 2024, the diocese declined by a modest 1% (figures include a margin of error). However, attendance among children and young people rose by 13.6%. We got younger! Notably, churches that maintained or increased their number of services experienced growth.

Leading your Church into Growth (LYCIG) conferences have proven popular since their launch in the diocese in 2024, with the first fully booked by around 100 attendees from 27 benefices and the second in May

2025 already at capacity and a waiting list for the third conference. There is evidence that participation in LYCIG supports growth across the three dimensions. Success relies on incumbents collaborating with local teams to implement their learning.

A pilot focal ministry cohort will launch after Easter 2025, focusing on one person leading one church in multi-church contexts. Focal ministers act as the main contact for their local church and community, fostering growth and revitalising congregations, whether they are lay or ordained. They will be self-supporting and directly supervised by the incumbent of the benefice. Research suggests this approach can quickly double the size of smaller congregations and give struggling churches renewed life and purpose in their communities.

Our diocese is predominantly rural with many multi-parish benefices. We often face the challenge of incumbents managing larger workloads than their predecessors and in some cases with reduced time. This affects not only church growth but also clergy well-being. As 79% of churches in our diocese are now in multi-church arrangements, the need for effective focal ministry and a rural strategy which includes the stewardship of ancient church buildings is clear and it is crucial to address these issues.

Baptisms at St Luke's Church, Maidstone.



Our young people ask...

“What do you want the church to be like when you’re done and gone?”

Feranmi, Year 9

Revitalisation: Growing Ministry

The Canterbury Diet

Ordained ministers in the Diocese of Canterbury are supported by ‘The Canterbury Diet’. This includes pastoral supervision, spiritual direction and an ongoing process of ministerial development review (MDR). Running through the Canterbury Diet are three golden threads, which are expressed in the following three questions:

- How are prayer and spiritual practices being developed?
- How am I learning and reflecting on ministry practice?
- How are we attending to good relationships and collaborative ministry?

The Canterbury Diet for Lay Ministers provides a framework for applying good practice in recognising, supporting and equipping various forms of lay ministry.

Networking and learning together days for lay ministers during 2024 were attended by over 100 people. They included a range of workshops and courses covering bereavement, pastoral care, worship leading, funeral ministry and Anna Chaplaincy.

In October 2024, all licensed clergy were invited by Bishop Rose to a residential retreat exploring themes around prayer. This was the first time for many years that ordained ministers have gathered together in this way and there are plans to repeat this in two years’ time.

Anna Chaplaincy

This ministry to older people under the umbrella of BRF Ministries, is now well established. We are in the process of completing the three-yearly review for those who were first commissioned as Anna Chaplains or Friends. We currently have 23 Anna Chaplains who are supported by 22 Anna Friends. A further two Anna Chaplains are awaiting commissioning.

Readers/Licensed Lay Ministers

We have 120 active Readers which includes 11 in training with St Augustine’s College and three ordinands (two on the Dover Pathway). The annual ministry survey of Readers is underway. This will enable us to collate a ‘snapshot report’ on the way in which Readers minister across our diocese. The ministerial development review will be initiated in the summer.

A ‘Come and See’ session took place in February. There are likely to be four trainees ready for admission and licensing in September.

Revitalisation: Growing Vocations

The responsibility for noticing and naming God's call in someone's life primarily lies with leaders in the local church as they see that person's journey in faith first-hand. Diocesan staff and officers support local lay and ordained leaders in that task in the following ways:

- Shaping the culture so that our teaching, our language and our practice always point to the widest theological understanding of 'calling'.
- Providing central points of contact, whether this is for young vocations, lay ministry, those exploring a call to ordination or supporting those from minority and marginalised groups.
- Running central events, courses and activities which deepen discipleship, spend time with the question of calling and provide training for a range of pastoral and ministerial roles. This includes one-off events such as 'Come and See' taster days; short courses on worship leading, pastoral care or funeral ministry; and year-long programmes such as the 'Ministry Experience Scheme', 'Growing Young Leaders' or 'Future Youth'.

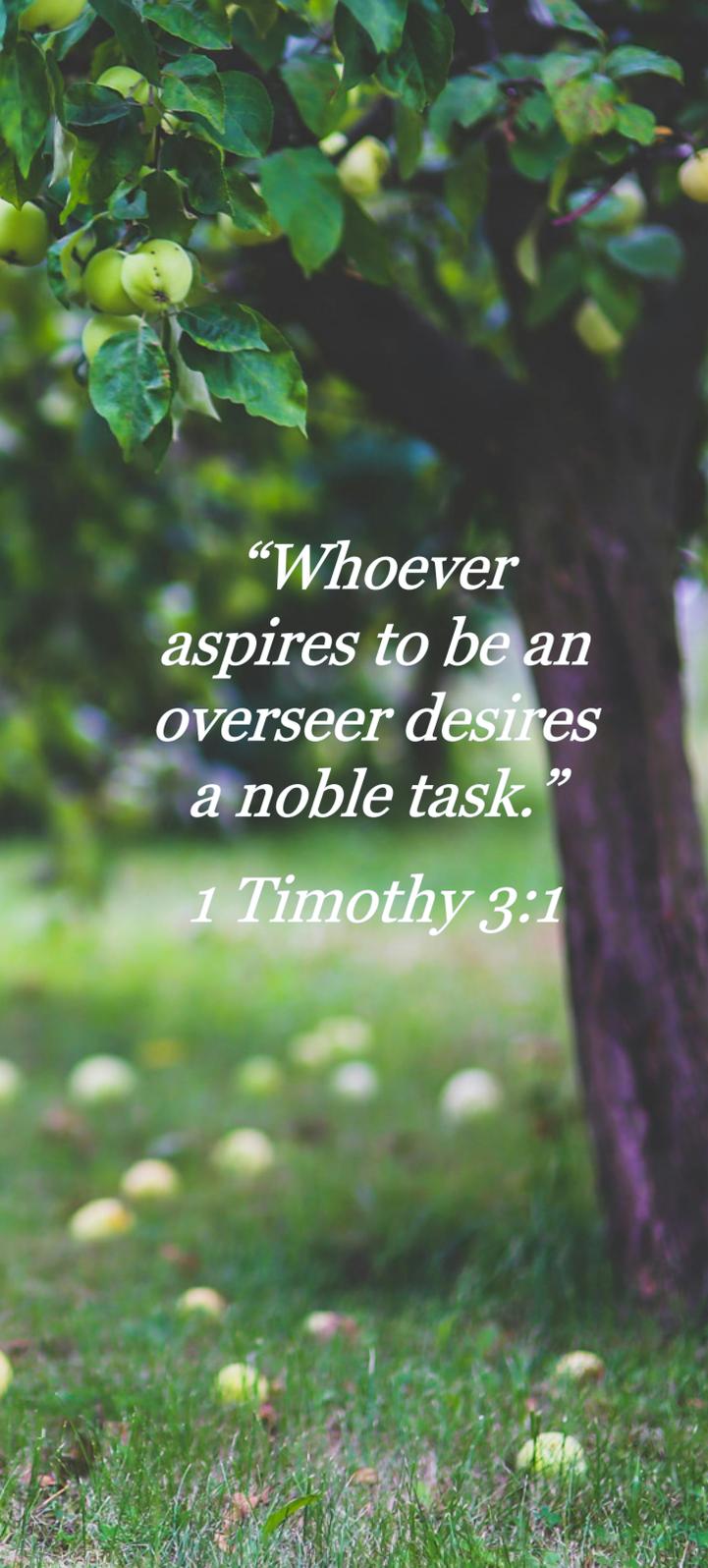
- Linking to regional and national processes for discernment and training. We have a close working relationship with St Augustine's College and the Diocese of Rochester and work together to provide training for readers, ordinands, curates and new incumbents.

We have recently seen two areas of growth in ordained vocations. This is the outworking of a wider understanding of the nature of ordained ministry itself and recognises that there is no age-limit to when God stops calling leaders to step into new areas of responsibility and ministry.

In 2024 there were six candidates ordained to the distinctive diaconate. These people have stayed in the communities where their call was discerned and are establishing themselves as leaders in mission. They encourage the congregation to go out to where people are, rather than expecting people to come in. One of these deacons has a ministry in a local prison and several work alongside our 'Ignite' congregations.

The second area of significant growth is amongst older candidates. 2024 was the first-time candidates over 65 were ordained through 'The Dover Pathway'. This is an accelerated programme of discernment and training for people over 65 who already hold significant positions of leadership within their church. Many of these candidates are Readers who have responded to the need for eucharistic ministers working in a 'focal minister' or 'assistant priest' role and all are local self-supporting ordained ministers - SSOM (Local).

The Archbishop plays an important role in growing vocations and leading a culture which frequently asks the question "what might God be calling you to?" In recent years the Archbishop has taken time during Holy Week deanery missions to meet with those in the early stages of exploring a vocation to lay and ordained ministries and has also directly encouraged people to begin exploring a call to ordained ministry. At the other end of the discernment process, the Archbishop normally presides at the ordination of deacons and gives the ordination charge to all those about to be ordained deacon or priest.



*“Whoever
aspires to be an
overseer desires
a noble task.”*

1 Timothy 3:1

Environmental and Net Zero Goals

As stewards of God’s creation, we are committed to environmental responsibility and achieving net zero carbon emissions. Recognising the urgency of the climate crisis, we strive to model sustainable practice in all areas of diocesan life and to provide leadership both locally and globally.

In alignment with the Church of England’s Net Zero 2030 target, we are actively working towards achieving the Silver Eco Diocese Award. This reflects our growing integration of environmental values across worship, buildings, land, community engagement, and personal lifestyle.

Our current and planned initiatives include:

- Transitioning diocesan buildings and churches to renewable or green energy sources;
- Encouraging biodiversity and sustainable land management across church land;
- Supporting congregations and communities in adopting environmentally conscious practices.

We also seek to collaborate with national and local partners, sharing knowledge, amplifying good practice, and inspiring collective action within and beyond the Church.

We believe that care for creation is not a standalone concern, but one that deepens and unifies the Church’s entire mission. As such, we look to our next Archbishop to champion environmental justice as integral to spiritual renewal and mission—someone who will inspire and lead us in living faithfully and sustainably in harmony with God’s earth. We are seeking an Archbishop who is fully supportive of the net zero and eco church initiatives and more specifically someone who:

- Has a deep understanding and sense of urgency to address the climate and nature crises and who strongly believes that bold action and leadership by the Church to protect God’s creation is intrinsically linked with Mission.
- Recognises that there is a divergence of opinion on the extent that the Church of England should be taking action on these issues and is able to articulate why and how our environmental ambitions and actions are important in a way that positively influences others inside and outside the Church.

The Social Justice Network

The Social Justice Network (SJN) is the Diocese of Canterbury's charity working in communities to alleviate poverty, marginalisation, and vulnerability, especially among the homeless, refugees, asylum seekers and those leaving prison into homelessness. The projects range from local, to national and international. The charity delivers its work through innovative partnerships creating a framework for others to respond to social challenges.

The SJN engages with many partners, especially Canterbury Cathedral, as well as charities, voluntary organisations, and local authorities to encourage a shared approach to responding to poverty and marginalisation. It offers practical advice and guidance to individuals, communities, and parishes, who are considering how they can better serve the socially and financially deprived.

The SJN expresses faith in God and aims to live out the Diocese of Canterbury's mission of 'Changed Lives, Changing Lives', seeking to show the love of God in practical action for those most in need, responding to God's call to love one another, and to act justly, love mercy, walk humbly and show compassion to all.

The Social Justice Network works alongside refugees in Northern France.

Projects and partnerships

Break the Cycle

Break the Cycle works to prevent re-offending by offering supported housing and community support to individuals released from prison, reducing street homelessness. The project focuses on integrating residents into the community to boost self-confidence and mental health. Calculations show it has saved taxpayers over £600,000 by promoting drug-free, crime-free rehabilitation and lowering reoffending rates.

Working with refugees and asylum seekers in Kent and the UK

The SJN works with refugees and asylum seekers within our diocese to identify their current and future needs and provide guidance on where to find support. This work is carried out through important partnerships with other organisations. The SJN also resource and advise the wider Church of England on policy and planning and work globally with World of Neighbours and other agencies.

Refugee and asylum support in France

SJN are joint partners in the Refugee Project in the Northern France Coastal region, seeking to respond to the growing needs of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in





the area. The Diocese in Europe, the Diocese of Canterbury and USPG have shared their resources and experience to facilitate an innovative approach to ministry in this challenging context. It is focused on front-line working with people seeking asylum, and connects partnerships with stakeholder organisations, the Kent Refugee Programmes Manager, and other key contacts in the Diocese in Europe to deepen wider work with refugees.

Connecting Canterbury

Connecting Canterbury is a network of community hubs located across the city of Canterbury. It offers information and signposting alongside access to safe and responsible saving and borrowing through credit union products. With many people and families struggling to survive debt and the inability to provide for basic needs it is able to make small emergency grants for heating and transport. For larger needs such as white goods, applications can be made to charities and trusts such as Acts 435. Connecting Canterbury works alongside organisations such as Canterbury Food Bank, the Salvation Army, Catching Lives, social workers, the City Council and Citizen's Advice. Connecting Canterbury is a member of Christians Together in Canterbury, but its support is open to everyone, of all faiths or none.

A workshop as part of the SJN's Refugee Home Project.

Governance and Management

Senior Staff, Synods and Frameworks

The Archdeacons of Canterbury, Maidstone, and Ashford oversee five to six deaneries each, working closely with the Bishop of Dover. The Archdeacon of Canterbury also serves as a Residentiary Canon of Canterbury Cathedral. Together with Area Deans and Lay Chairs, they support and guide parish and community ministries across the diocese.

In our medium-sized diocese with one bishop, Archdeacons manage tasks typically handled by suffragan bishops elsewhere, such as appointments and the developing and implementation of diocesan strategy.

The Archbishop's Council

The Archbishop's Council is essentially the Standing Committee of the Diocesan Synod. It plans the business of the Synod, advises it, and transacts its business when not in session. The Archbishop's Council advises the Bishop of Dover, appoints members to various committees and formulates, discusses and co-ordinates policies relating to the life and work of our diocese.

Diocesan Frameworks

The detailed work of the Archbishop's Council in overseeing Mission and Ministry and Children and Young People is delegated to frameworks. These support and oversee the work of diocesan staff and officers by drawing on the expertise of members of Archbishop's Council and practitioners from around our diocese to ensure dynamic governance and exemplary stewardship in all aspects of our work and ministry.

Finances

We share a similar financial footprint to most other dioceses in the country. Parish Share revenue comprises 80% of total revenue just as clergy stipends and staff salaries make up 80% of total costs. The Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) is working hard to diversify future sources of revenue away from Parish Share, thus easing the pressure on PCCs.

2024 Year End Figures

Provisional figures for 2024 show an unrestricted deficit of £751k. Nationally deficits of dioceses are estimated to have increased to £60m. Parish Share income was £1.2m below what was a balanced budget between income and costs, contributing significantly to financial challenges. As at year end, 85% of the £7.3m in Parish Share requested had been paid, compared to 90% paid in 2022 and 2023.

Our young people ask...

“How would you prevent racial discrimination?”

Anais, Year 6



Taking into account LinC (Lower Income Communities Funding) and other external funding totalling £900k, other income totalled £1.8m, largely thanks to rental income holding up well.

Total year-end income is expected to reach £8.9m.

Expenditure at £9.7m was £124k above budget. This was largely due to an unavoidable overspend in urgent catch up on property repairs of £460k. Support services at £1.8m showed an overspend on budget of £2k primarily as prices on all IT contracts rose higher than planned, offset by savings in Safeguarding, Media and Engagement and People Services. Other key cost lines came in on plan or better than plan, comprising primarily Children & Young People (£418k) and Social Justice Network (£108k).

Bishop Rose welcomes newly ordained Deacons and Priests. Photo: Jim Drew.

2025 Budget

The headline figures for the diocesan 2025 budget are:

- Revenue £10m; a 5.4% increase over 2024;
- Costs £9.9m; a 4.4% increase over 2024.
- This leaves a modest surplus of £100k, which represents a contingency revenue figure, which follows an initiative presented to Diocesan Synod in July 2024, that sustained financial stability (i.e. breakeven) could be achieved by 2029/30 if an additional 1.2% per annum of income were to be generated. For 2025, this amount was added to the Parish Share figure.
- Assuming a return to a 90% payment of Parish Share in 2025, our diocese will record a deficit just under £800k.

Meeting the Financial Challenge

The Generous Giving team supports parishes to encourage generosity within their congregations and local communities. This support helps raise essential funds that enable the parishes' work, life, and mission, ultimately contributing to the growth of the church. To support parishes, the team provides guidance on digital giving, giving campaigns, regular giving, gifts in wills, Gift Aid, and signposting for grant applications. Additionally, they

help churches extend their opening hours beyond regular worship times to strengthen community engagement, create fundraising materials, and offer to preach on generosity.

With Synod's support, efforts are underway to explore financial opportunities in two areas: internal investments to lessen dependence on Parish Share and ease PCCs' burdens, and initiatives supported by the National Church.

To conclude:

- The DBF will ensure that we are at the forefront for opportunities offered by the National Church.
- We need to rebuild trust between the DBF and the wider diocese. This has already begun through additional interaction between the finance team and the parish/deanery treasurers.
- We need to repurpose the DBF more effectively to support other areas of the diocese. This will involve meeting the demands of diversification in revenues and the ongoing tight management of costs as well as managing all the risks we face. That review is well underway.
- We must maximise the financial opportunities we have identified, and we must be proactive in seeking grants and other funding.

A member of diocesan staff demonstrates a contactless giving device.





Partnerships and Overseas Links

Mission involves the entire body of Christ, with the diocese playing a part. It is most effective through partnerships, primarily in local parishes, though some operate at the diocesan level.

Parish partnerships are shaped by local needs, focusing on community engagement. Key connections include relationships with local schools, supported by the Board of Education and Children and Young People Framework, yielding good news stories.

Other relationships involve cadet forces, sports teams, foodbanks, local charities, and ecumenical partners. Our strategy to work through parish mission action plans and deanery plans encourages further development of local partnership working.

At a diocesan level, partnerships include the Diocese of Rochester for carbon net zero and training for curates. In education, collaborations extend to Southeastern dioceses, Canterbury Christ Church University, the National Institute for Christian Education Research, and the National Society. The Social Justice Network connects Canterbury Diocese with charities in Kent and Calais.

Our young people ask...

“Will you be able to not get upset if someone is rude to you?”

Maisie, Year 6



*“How beautiful
are the feet of
those who bring
good news!”*

Romans 10:15

We have good relationships with statutory authorities in the areas of safeguarding and education, as well as working with our local councils to support the spiritual aspect of civic life. This can be seen in our provision of services for Remembrance Sunday, Mayor-making, or Holocaust Memorial Day, for example.

Internationally, partnerships involve dioceses in Bodo (Norway), Arras (France), Protestant Church Districts in Zossen-Fläming and, Markgräflerland (Germany), and Madagascar. Informal support is also given to the Incumbent of the Falkland Islands by diocesan staff and they are included as a member of the Dover Deanery Chapter.

Madagascar

For over 30 years, we have maintained a Companion Link with dioceses in Madagascar, including episcopal-led visits. The most recent was in August 2023, when Bishop Rose and two clergy attended the Provincial Mothers' Union Conference. Some parishes also have direct connections with a particular diocese in Madagascar. The link aims to strengthen relationships, share resources, deepen understanding of God's mission, and renew commitment to the work of mission.

Being in a partnership with dioceses which are so easily affected by natural disasters and where communication and transport links present such a challenge, has led to rich conversations and learning about mission and prayer. Regular email communication has encouraged mutual prayer and encouragement.

Germany

We have a partnership with two church districts in Germany, Zossen-Fläming (near Berlin) and Markgräflerland (SW Germany), both part of the Protestant Church in Germany (EKD). Established during Germany's division, this three-way link is maintained through annual meetings hosted by one of the churches. In 2023, Bishop Rose led a delegation to the Black Forest, bringing together teenagers from all three churches. A follow-up visit occurred in 2024, led by the Archdeacon of Canterbury, the Ven Dr Will Adam, involving young people from Canterbury's 'Growing Young Leaders' programme. These exchanges fostered understanding of mission in different European contexts.



Diocese of Canterbury
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