

## WORCESTER DIOCESAN SYNOD

### WORCESTER DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE LTD

#### Mission Accompaniers – TO NOTE

##### Executive Summary

This paper informs the Synod of Bishop's Council's approval of a programme to support parishes by making available a number of Mission Accompaniers work alongside parishes to help review local health and sustainability, to develop and implement plans and to help parishes access the funding that they need.

##### Mission Accompaniers

We would like to offer all parishes the opportunity to receive some support in the form of a Mission Accompanier, who will work alongside the clergy and laity in the parish, church or benefice to help understand what health and sustainability might look like in your context, setting or tradition.

Mission Accompaniers are being offered completely free of charge to parishes. Some will be voluntary, whilst others will be paid (and will be funded with a grant from the Healthier Churches fund).

There is no obligation for parishes to work with a Mission Accompanier, but it is hoped that many will take up this offer of someone who will listen and understand where your parish is at the moment and where it would like to get to. The person will also be able to help parishes access support and resources, for example helping with grant applications as needed.

##### What will a Mission Accompanier do?

The Mission Accompanier's key role will be to come alongside your parish/ church/ benefice or wider group to listen to you and help you work through how you might be able to grow and develop to become healthier and more sustainable.

They will work with the clergy and lay team to help your parish establish some priorities for the next few years and provide support and input in reaching these, for example signposting to training or helping to fill in grant applications as appropriate.

It is anticipated that a Mission Accompanier will work with a particular parish/church/benefice on ten to a dozen occasions over a two to three years period, although this will vary from place to place.

##### What commitment is needed by the parish?

Churches will be expected to sign up to a simple partnership agreement with the Mission Accompanier, committing to regular meetings including preparation beforehand and following up on actions afterwards. Together the parish and Mission Accompanier will develop appropriate priorities with a 'health and sustainability plan' and you will need to commit to taking the first steps towards these. This plan is a simple document, and some examples are attached as an Annex to this paper.

The partnership should be reviewed at six-monthly intervals to ensure it is proving effective and any learning shared with others – including those areas which didn't work as well as hoped.

## **Who decides who our Mission Accompanier will be?**

It is important that the right Mission Accompanier is found to work with each parish/ church/ benefice etc as the needs and contexts of our churches differ widely. Our Mission Accompanier Co-ordinator will chat to you to understand the support you might be looking for and set up an initial meeting with an Accompanier and the parish to ensure that everyone involved feels they can work together effectively. It may well be that you already have an idea of someone that would be really helpful to you in this role as they are already known to you.

## **How do we get involved?**

It is hoped that the programme will get under way early in 2022. If you are interested in working with a Mission Accompanier please contact Kathy Jones in the Archdeacons' office in the first instance.

## **Synod Action**

Synod are asked to take note.

Nikki Groarke,  
Diocesan Leader of Transformation and Change  
1<sup>st</sup> November 2021