

23 January 2017

Dear Colleagues,

### **Living and Telling the Story**

I am delighted to offer you guidance for Deanery Mission Planning. To access these materials please visit our website: <http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/deanery-mission-planning/>

It is one of the central elements of our strategy that deaneries are able to implement our three strategic priorities at the local level. This means supporting the mission and ministry of benefices, but also acting as agents of change, taking a strategic overview and enabling the growth of mission and ministry.

The Deanery Mission Plan is a tool for deaneries to take responsibility for this process and to ensure that opportunities for mission and evangelism are identified. It is also part of our support for deanery leadership teams as they seek to build the capacity of the churches in their deaneries, and these materials have been provided to offer direction and shape to your planning process. Further support responding to the particular requests you may have will be provided by the diocesan Ministry for Mission team.

Let me emphasise that these notes are for your guidance, rather than a prescription to be followed. It is clear that Deanery Mission Plans will only be successful if they are a genuine reflection of local priorities and are shaped by the Christian communities within each individual deanery. For this reason we have resisted the idea of a prescriptive one-size-fits-all model and taken a permissive approach which will bear more fruit in the longer term.

Your initial Deanery Mission Plan should be ready for sharing with the Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Group (AMPG) by September this year (some deaneries may wish to submit before that). This does not have to be the finished product – in fact the plan should never really be finished, in that it is a dynamic document which will need constant review. However it is important that we all engage with this process. To that end the AMPG will be looking at the plans later this year. This will provide an essential element of peer review. At a later stage the Bishop's Council will take an overview of the emerging plans, in order to identify the common themes, questions about resourcing and what responses are required at a diocesan level.

This comes with the assurance of the support and prayers of Bishop Ruth and me as you engage in this crucial piece of work. We are grateful for all you are doing in your deanery and hope you are encouraged by what God is doing in your communities as together we seek to live and tell the story of Jesus together.

With warm Christian greetings

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