DIOCESE OF BATH & WELLS

GUIDANCE NOTES

FOR

DEANERY MISSION PLANNING

January 2017

Guidance Notes for Deanery Mission Planning

Contents

The following notes are intended to provide helpful guidelines as you consider the process of Deanery Mission Planning in your DMPG.

Part One

Introduction

Our diocesan strategy aims to equip all God's people in our churches to live and tell the story of Jesus. We want to be as intentional as possible in shaping all our energy to this aim, and deaneries have a key part to play in this. The Deanery Mission Plan (DMP) is a tool to enable deaneries to take a strategic overview of mission and ministry, and to enable change and development within the deanery. Prayer needs to be continually part of the process of developing the DMP.

Emphasis

The DMP is not a conventional exercise in dividing up ministry resources and moving parish boundaries. The emphasis needs to be on mission and discipleship, not primarily on roles, responsibilities and boundaries.   In the past, the rationale for deanery plans has often been the need to reduce stipendiary clergy posts and the resultant demands for parish re-organisation. Whilst there was often an attempt to introduce mission planning to the process, this is very difficult to achieve alongside a process of cutting resources.

This Diocese is committed to maintaining the current level of stipendiary posts and therefore the pressure on deaneries to reduce staffing has been removed. However, historic patterns can be difficult to change and we need to communicate very clearly that the DMP is not primarily about pastoral re-organisation.   Instead it is about mission and discipleship – how the churches of the deanery can work together to effectively live out our common faith in Christ and to share his love in our communities.

Of course it is right and proper for deaneries to take an overview of parochial ministry and deployment. The point is that it is best not to begin with that. Instead the DMP should start by considering the future priorities for mission in the area, and then consider whether to make any recommendations for pastoral reorganisation or deployment of posts in the light of those priorities.

Aims and Outcomes

As a Diocese, we are not setting a prescriptive shape for the character of DMPs. The specific details of the aims and outcomes of the DMP will need to be determined by each deanery individually. This is important because plans will only be successful if they reflect local needs and priorities. Across the Diocese there is significant diversity in the contexts that churches operate in, a diversity which has several dimensions. The urban-rural spectrum is perhaps the most obvious of these dimensions, but it is by no means the only significant one. This means that there is no standard model that will work in all deaneries – each will need to find a model that works in their context.

However, the DMP should reflect the Diocese's three strategic priorities:

1. To place mission and evangelism at the heart of all we do
2. To re-align our ministry resources towards mission
3. To identify, develop and use the gifts of all our people

In addition, there is a **checklist** for deaneries to use during the DMP process. You will find this on pages 15-17. This checklist will serve as a helpful reminder of the principal areas to consider and the issues to address. An optional full DMP template is available as a separate document.

The following points may also be helpful:

Spot mission opportunities

Taking an overview of a whole deanery can help to identify where the potential is for new missional activity. The most obvious case is where there is significant new housing development. However this is not the only opportunity that we have – there are other groups or places where the church is not currently making an impact. There are also communities on the margins of mainstream society where the church has a chance to show God's love in action.

Add value

One of the challenges facing deaneries is how to create a plan which takes account of all the activity at parish level. A realistic solution to this is, rather than attempting to own everything that is already happening, to look at what is not happening. The deanery is often well placed to initiate things that involve churches working together to increase their impact. So, for example, where are the gaps in our ministry that we need to fill? Or, what could we do together that we are not able to do on our own?

Dream dreams

The DMP is an opportunity for the deanery to exercise leadership at a local level. This implies that there is a vision for the future, with possibilities that people in the churches will find exciting and will want to support. A good DMP will show imagination and creativity. In particular, the DMP process should not be constrained by resources. Obviously at a later stage there needs to be some consideration of how ambitious plans could be resourced, but we do not want the mission of God's church to be limited by the question, "can we afford this?"

Method

Since the nature of the DMP needs to be determined locally, the exact process will also reflect the local situation. Among the deaneries that already have an agreed plan, there is huge variety in the way in which they carried out their planning. However there are two principles which will work well across all contexts.

Firstly, good plans emerge from building relationships and collegiality between parishes. A DMP which emerges fully formed from a small group meeting in isolation is unlikely to gain much traction. Similarly, something which is not rooted in a common understanding and vision will fail because churches will have no interest in it. Time spent in talking and planning together will not be wasted. The clergy are particularly important here, because of their leadership responsibility, and sadly because deanery plans sometimes founder on poor relationships between neighbouring parishes.

Secondly, consider the principles of Mission Action Planning (MAP). Although the DMP is broader than purely a deanery MAP, a good DMP is likely to have all the elements of a MAP. The principles of discerning, planning, acting and reviewing are essential to the kind of exercise that is called for to produce the DMP.

Accompaniment

Each Deanery will have an accompanier throughout the first two years of the process. The exact nature of accompaniment will very between deaneries but in principle will include:

- Advice and facilitation if requested
- Positive critical reflection – asking questions about the emerging plan
- Supporting progress – accompaniers will return after the initial planning process to enquire about progress

Accompaniers will be members of Ministry for Mission staff or other suitably experienced people from around the Diocese. The accompanier will be chosen in consultation with the Deanery to match their needs.

A) Preparation

In order for the Deanery Mission Plan to be effective, relevant, exciting and creative preparation is important. Those who will be involved in making it happen need to own and catch the vision. It is not just a question of the 'how' but also the 'why'. Asking the question 'what is the point of this/us?' sounds rude, but it also provides a really helpful springboard for reflection and a chance to articulate the 'why' for ourselves. The preparation time could be done in various groups: in chapters, in Local Ministry Groups (LMGs), in parishes. As well as providing a space for prayerful reflection before embarking on a plan of action, this time could be an opportunity to deepen relationships and enjoy exploring and learning together.

In line with the third Diocesan priority "to identify, develop and use the gifts of all our people" it is hoped that lay people will be fully involved as equal partners in the Mission planning process. This is particularly in the light of the recent findings from the national "Renewal and Reform" process regarding the need to shift culture and practice in the involvement of lay people in Mission and Evangelism.

> This report identifies the need for **two shifts in culture and practice** that we see as critical to the flourishing of the Church and the evangelisation of the nation.
>
> 1. **Until, together, ordained and lay, we form and equip lay people to follow Jesus confidently in every sphere of life in ways that demonstrate the Gospel we will never set God's people free to evangelise the nation.**
>
> 2. **Until laity and clergy are convinced, based on their baptismal mutuality, that they are equal in worth and status, complementary in gifting and vocation, mutually accountable in discipleship, and equal partners in mission, we will never form Christian communities that can evangelise the nation.**
>
> We believe that these two shifts would represent a seismic revolution in the culture of the Church. The first is about the focus of our activity and the scope of our mission, the second is about the nature of the relationship between clergy and lay. They are both vital. And they are both rare. *Cf Renewal and Reform: "Setting God's People Free"*

B) Exploring

You may like to consider what Mission and Evangelism means to you: in parishes, or LMGs, in Chapters or at Deanery level. Every deanery and every parish will have a slightly different context. Where is God already at work and where do you join in? How do you live and tell the story? What is the story you tell? Where are the missed or the future opportunities? What holds you back?

There are various resources to help explore Mission and Evangelism. A list of these will soon be available. The Diocese has also compiled an index of useful websites which offer discipleship resources for a variety of contexts.

Below are three examples of some of the resources on offer:

- The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC) have produced Fruitfulness on the Frontline http://www.licc.org.uk/splash/index.html
- The Arthur Rank Centre have a rural evangelism course http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/rural-evangelism
- The Church Army have a 'one step at a time' resource http://www.faithpictures.org/Groups/268222/Church_Army/ms/Faith_Pictures/Sessions_Preview/Session_1/Session_1.aspx

C) Deanery Audit of Community

The DMP will work best when it emerges from a deanery which has a clear understanding of itself and its community. Taking stock of your community shows where the real needs are.

A community audit is best done as the first part, or foundation, of the Mission Planning process. Churches tend to be good at talking about themselves and this can lead to plans which can be delivered but which may not necessarily be relevant to the wider community. The community audit means that the planning begins outside the Church, giving an outward-looking focus.

The aim of the audit is gain an accurate picture of our community. This will shape our mission in various ways. In particular, it will help the deanery to run its activities in ways that are appropriate to the demographics and lifestyle of the people in its community. It will also identify the areas of social need that the Church should take notice of.

There are several ways in which a community audit can be built, including:

Mapping
Literally producing a map of the deanery can be very helpful. It can be used to mark significant "hubs" such as schools, shopping areas, community facilities, etc. It can help to identify the various residential areas in the parish; the smaller communities within the larger area.

Statistics
Use of data such as the 2011 census or government statistics http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/ ensures that the audit reflects the reality of the local situation.

There are various sources which provide a ready-made analysis of the data. The following have the advantage that they have plotted the numbers to ecclesiastical parishes.

- The most obvious are the "parish spotlights" published by the Church of England statistics unit in 2013. https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/supporting-parishes/finances/parish-spotlights/
- The Church Urban Fund's "poverty look-up" tool http://www2.cuf.org.uk/lookup-tool also provides a useful guide to levels of deprivation

You may also consider checking any planning for new houses on your local government website.

Local survey

At parish level taking a survey or questionnaire out into the community adds another dimension to the audit which could be fed back into the DMPG. As well as gathering the opinions of real people in the community, it has a missional value, showing that the church cares about what its neighbours think. The survey will need to be carefully planned. It is worth asking some questions about what people's perceptions of the church are, and what they would like from the church, but it shouldn't be just about church. What do people feel about life in their area and what are the issues that matter locally?

Church connections with the community

What are the strong links that parishes and/or deanery have? For example, links to secular partnerships and networks; particular relationships with parish/district/county authorities, companies or voluntary bodies?

Schools

The Deanery Mission Plans offer a unique opportunity for developing the key role of education in mission and evangelism at local level. The diocese has a strong education department with great experience and expertise to advise, guide and facilitate for all those whose are called to serve is in this way. The team will be undertaking visits to every deanery over the coming months to look at the new CofE Vision for Education and how this can express the Diocesan Strategic Priorities through deanery mission plans. Expertise in engaging with Children and Young People outside of school is also based in the DBE.

D) Deanery profile

The aim of this process is to get a sense of where the deanery is now, before we think about moving on. At one level this can be a simple assessment of strengths and weaknesses, to identify the areas that need developing. However it is also an opportunity to identify, develop and use the gifts of all.

Some deaneries are changing the way they use Deanery Synods and Chapters to support engagement with developing a Mission Plan. Case Studies will be available from your accompanier.

Some possible ways to build the deanery profile could include:

Survey of parishes/LMGs

A brief questionnaire to parishes to get a feel of what the parishes believe is needed. These could cover general questions such as in the example that follows, and also include an audit of the all the resources.

Example of questions that might be used:

- What is a deanery for?
- What might prevent it fulfilling this purpose?
- How might being part of the deanery support the ministry and the mission of your parish?
- What are the obstacles for this?
- Are there any significant changes or developments within the wider community that you can tell us about? Do these offer opportunity or threat for your Christian presence in that place?
- What two priorities for mission would each church in your parish or benefice like to set over the coming year?
- How might others across the deanery help with these?
- Is there anything you would like to see us commit to together across the deanery?

Audit of existing resources (physical – buildings, places)

- Number of parishes
- Number of benefices
- Number of functioning LMGs
- Number of ecclesiastical buildings
- Number of other buildings (e.g. parish halls, youth centres)

Audit of resources (people)

Audit of resources (People, one of the Diocesan priorities is to identify, develop and use the gifts of all our people. In this part of the audit we have an opportunity to consider and re-evaluate all the ministries that we have. As with all lists the following is not comprehensive but encourages us to look beyond the ordained clergy to the whole Laos (People) of God . Who are the people that sustain the ministry of the whole Church in our deanery? Are there opportunities here to release the gifts of more?

People

- Stipendiary clergy
- Self-supporting clergy
- Clergy with PTO
- Active lay readers
- Chaplains
- Lay Pastoral Assistants
- Lay Worship Assistants
- Healing prayer ministry
- Spiritual accompaniers
- Youth workers
- Deanery Mission enablers
- Deanery Training facilitators
- Churchwardens
- Administrators
- Who else?

SWOT-type analysis

The SWOT model can be a useful tool to help map the picture of the Deanery. It could be carried out by the DMPG after receiving completed questionnaires and in conjunction with the data gathered about the demographics.

SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. If the language doesn't seem appropriate, the titles can be changed to fit the context. For example, SWOB, where B stands for barriers.

Strengths – things we are good at or gifts that God has given us or things that are going well

Weaknesses – things that need improvement, things that have gone not so well, things we are not doing that we feel should be done, things that are missing

Opportunities – things that seem to be waiting to be done and would be in an ideal world, dreams/hopes that might come to fruition, ways that God seems to be leading us and paths that are beginning to become open to us

Threats – barriers that might be standing in our way to achieving God's work, outside forces that are preventing us from going forward

When the 4 areas have been completed, discuss what is significant about what you have read on the sheets – is anything controversial in terms of its accuracy? – has the group missed anything that needs adding? – is there any disagreement about what is on each sheet? – This is a point where there needs to be a reasonable amount of agreement to the accuracy of the analysis

Identifying mission opportunities

Mission is defined here by the five marks of Mission:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

Reflecting on each of these aspects of mission, in conjunction with the overview of the whole deanery from the community audit, should help to identify where new missional activity is needed. The most obvious example is where there is significant new housing development.

However this is not the only opportunity– there are many other groups or places where the Church is not currently making an impact. There are also communities on the margins of mainstream society where the Church has a chance to show God's love in action. It's also useful to ask what is already going on that we could join in with? For example: A Community Transport Scheme or a secular youth group or a project started by other Christians. For more information visit: https://do-it.org/

To help with the process of identifying mission opportunities there is a **Checklist** at the end of this document (pages 15-17) for those using their own plan outline and the same information appears in the optional **Template** which accompanies the Guidance Notes.

Part Three: Resource Implications

As has been noted earlier, the DMP process should not be constrained by resources. However there will come a point where ideas need to be planned and costed. The process, especially the community audits and looking for mission opportunities among different groups and contexts will hopefully several possibilities for new engagement. At this point the deanery needs to consider how, realistically, these can be resourced.

Resourcing does not necessarily involve heavy financial commitment. In many cases the best way to begin a missional initiative is with voluntary, lay leadership. If this path is taken then the main resource implications for the deanery are the provision of suitable training and oversight for the leaders and volunteers.

Where the creation of a new missional post is desired, the following factors should be considered:

- New mission initiatives do not need to be seen necessarily as permanent fixtures – many things may be short term, others may developmental situations that might require say 1-5 years support.
- If the new post is a priority for the deanery, the implication is that other things are less high on the priority list. Deaneries should consider re-allocating stipendiary resources in order to create missional posts, in line with our second strategic priority ("to realign our ministry resources towards mission").
- If the deanery leadership feel that a case can be made for additional diocesan funding, this can be put into the DMP and will be taken seriously by the Archdeaconry Missional Pastoral Committee and the Bishop's Council. However it needs to be understood that this also would involve realignment of resources that are currently committed elsewhere.
- There are kinds of mission which work on the assumption of financial sustainability in the long term. Examples include church planting, where planned giving will be expected from members of the new church, and some fresh expressions which are based around the operation of a social enterprise, generating income. In these cases a simple financial plan needs to be produced, to show the expected balance of income and costs over the first few years.

There are many trusts that support Christian activity. When starting initiatives that are in part providing a community service, and using volunteer resources or creating partnership opportunities, projects may attract secular funding. Andrew Rainsford, Andrew.rainsford@bathwells.anglican.org , the Stewardship Adviser in the Diocese can advise of the opportunities that exist in these areas.

Mission opportunities and vision

Having consulted as widely as appropriate and completed the audit, what should emerge is a sense of what is really needed in your deanery. . This will naturally lead you through a prayerful process of discernment to a genuine vision (What God is calling us to) and Mission (where God is calling us to).

Planning

Writing a DMP should be straightforward if there has been a good process of vision and discernment, as suggested in phases 1 and 2. The challenge is to produce something which can help you to make real changes in the deanery.

SMART

The acronym SMART can be helpful in remembering what's important in a plan. The letters of SMART stand for:

Specific & Measurable: The plan is about concrete actions and targets, rather than vague aspirations. So, "start a group for junior age children on Tuesday evenings", not "do more activities with children". 'Measurable' refers to the question of how you will know whether you have succeeded in your aim. This may be as simple as saying "yes, we did it", but it is important to include some way of reviewing the effectiveness of the plan. It is about being clear about what you aim to achieve.

Achievable & Realistic: The goals you set for yourselves need to have a good chance of actually happening. This doesn't mean you should limit your ambition, but rather that you should have a clear plan of how you are going to get there. So grand aspirations such as "we aim to double the size of the congregation in 5 years" are best avoided. Instead, go for things like "take part in Back to Church Sunday and invite at least 20 people", or "invite all newcomers to a welcome tea every 6 months". Plans are incremental. They change and grow as we see God's spirit at work among us.

Timed: Timescales are vital in order to keep the plan moving. The exact timing varies depending on the nature of the goal, but in general a MAP shouldn't contain things that take longer than 2 years. If there is further development envisaged after the initial phase, that can be written into future plans.

Other planning tips

High levels of accountability – Involve a Wide Number of People both Lay and Ordained. Make things visible (writing up plans and displaying them) seems to increase attainment and energy – reporting back is important.

Invite a Critical Friend – The outcomes are better when there is an objective and fearless facilitator who is able to help challenge you. This could be your accompanier. Have a critical friend who is both with people at the start and at the review period.

Could your deanery offer something of the peer mentoring ethos to one another or across deaneries, as you learn and grow as disciples and plan for mission? There are time and resource

implications for this, as for all things, but there is a huge well of skill and experience and wisdom in the DMPG's and it would be good to use it, as well as drawing on external resources.

'Do a few things and do them well'- Having a few priorities and being clear about what they are and why you have chosen them is vital for success. Having no more than three main priorities helps to let go of others (meaning you don't get burnt out) and strengthens the focus and impact of what you plan to do. It also helps you to articulate to others what the plan is and why you are doing it. These priorities are then expressed and developed through specific plans and goals.

Pray, pray, pray – Ensure that prayer undergirds and underlies all you are doing,

Essential elements

The final plan should include a list of specific projects or objectives, including the following information:

- **What?** – Exactly what is to be done
- **How?** – What are the key steps to be taken? Also the resource implications, i.e. costs, work required, etc.
- **When?** – The timescale
- **Who?** – The people responsible for making it happen

Part Five: Checklist to Support Planning

Deanery Mission Plan Checklist
Please note: A full plan template document is available as a separate attachment

Deanery name:
Lead contact:
Date signed off by DMPG:

Summary of deanery vision (the 'why' of our deanery)	
Deanery audit of community	
Results of community audit	
Results of any mapping exercise carried out	
Local statistics which give a picture of the deanery	
Results of any local survey carried out	
Summary of key connections with community	
Results of survey of parishes/benefices/LMGs	
Audit of existing resources (physical things such as buildings and places)	
Number of parishes	
Number of parishes included above that are in the top 20% for deprivation	
Number of benefices	
Number of (functioning) LMGs	
Number of ecclesiastical buildings	
Number of other buildings (e.g. parish halls, youth centres)	
Audit of existing resources (people)	
Stipendiary clergy	
Self-supporting clergy	
Clergy with PTO	
Pioneer ministers (no. of Lay /Ordained– including those counted above)	
Active lay readers	
Chaplains (both Anglican and ecumenical appointments)	
Ministers in secular employment	
Lay pastoral assistants	
Lay worship assistants	
Healing prayer ministry	
Spiritual accompaniers	
Youth workers	
Special ministry posts (e.g. seniors)	
Deanery mission enablers	
Deanery training facilitators	
Churchwardens	
Number of parishes with administrators	
Others (please list)	

Mission opportunities (some suggested areas to consider)	
New housing planned in the deanery	
Other under-churched areas where church planting may be appropriate	
Parts of existing communities where the church has little connection e.g. areas of deprivation	
Support for marginal groups	
Support for people with specific needs (e.g. mental health, ex-prisoners)	
Support for those who are lonely and/or isolated	
Outreach and Integration of people with disabilities	
Gaps in contact with and provision for children (aged 0-11)	
Gaps in contact with and provision for youth (aged 11-18)	
Gaps in contact with and provision for young adults (aged 19-35)	
Gaps in contact with and provision for older adults (aged 55+)	
Gaps in contact with and provision for men/women	
Contact with key institutions	
Contact with work places	
Contact with schools without a church engagement or where it could be increased	
Opportunities for prayer ministry	
Opportunities for chaplaincy	
Developing Interest in world mission	
Use of "Eco Church" tool to develop care for creation (or similar)	
Other things already going on that we could join in with	

What dreams do we have as a deanery?

What are the priorities we identify based on our prayer, analysis, discernment, mission opportunities and dreams?

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

To meet each of these priorities we plan			
WHAT	**HOW**	**WHEN**	**WHO**
Exactly **WHAT** is to be done. With objectives and indicators of progress.	**HOW** will the key steps to be taken? What are the resource implications, e.g. costs, work required, etc.	Provide a timeline of **WHEN** key milestones will be done (detailed time plan to the right)	**WHO** are the people responsible for making the plan happen.
Plans for review and evaluation: (dates, people involved etc.)			
Date for new planning process			

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For more information please contact Charlie Peer or David Maggs or visit www.
http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/ministry-for-mission/mission/deanery-mission-planning

The referenced **DMP Template** is available as a separate document that accompanies these Guidance Notes. Use of this template is entirely <u>optional</u>. The format of your DMP is up to you but it should include all aspects of the checklist provided in the previous section of this document.