

OXFORD DIOCESAN SYNOD

Elected Lay Representation on Deanery Synods, 2026–29

Context

By 31 December in years preceding deanery synod elections, the Diocesan Synod must approve the formula by which elected lay representation from parishes on deanery synods is to be determined. Clergy members of deanery synods are almost all ex-officio, as set out in rule 15 of the Church Representation Rules. Deanery synod elections will next take place at the 2026 round of annual parochial church meetings.

At its meeting on 1st October 2025 Bishop's Council considered whether to recommend any changes to the formula undertaken since 2013 and is not recommending any changes. It is therefore recommending the same formula as was used for Elections to Deanery Synod in 2023.

Considerations:*Statutory*

According to the Church Representation Rules:

19(3) Numbers of elected lay representatives are to be determined by reference either to electoral roll size or to the number of parish churches or districts in each parish, or by some combination of these methods

21(1) So far as practicable, deanery synods should have 50 or more members (laity and clergy combined)

21(1) No deanery synod may have more than 150 members, except to “secure that the house of laity has at least as many members as the house of clergy”.

Special provisions exist whereby the Diocesan Synod may depart from the statutory provisions; however, such departures require the consent of the General Synod.

Based on the formula, we will issue final figures for total numbers of members of each Deanery Synod in good time for 2026 APCMs. Annex 1 sets out how many lay places there will be on each deanery synod using the above formula, based on the latest electoral roll numbers.

The current and proposed formula for elected lay representation on deanery synods is:

Electoral roll size	Elected lay reps
up to 40	1
41–80	2
81–160	3
161–240	4
241–320	5
321–400	6
401–500	7
501–600	8
601–720	9
721–840	10
841–1000	11
>1000	12

Diocesan Synod is asked to approve the use of the representation formula set out above.

Mark Humphriss

Diocesan Secretary

Annex 1

Archdeaconry	Deanery	Deanery Synod Places	Sum of ParishER
BERKSHIRE	BRACKNELL	25	1,106
	BRADFIELD	32	978
	MAIDENHEAD AND WINDSOR	53	2,191
	NEWBURY	59	1,861
	READING	68	2,485
	SONNING	45	1,957
	AMERSHAM	49	2,356
BUCKINGHAM	AYLESBURY	52	1,491
	BUCKINGHAM	25	717
	BURNHAM & SLOUGH	39	1,260
	CLAYDON	30	765
	MILTON KEYNES	33	1,368
	MURSLEY	23	579
	NEWPORT	24	681
	WENDOVER	29	890
	WYCOMBE	57	2,221
	ABINGDON	37	1,478
Dorchester	ASTON & CUDDSDON	62	1,669
	BICESTER & ISLIP	42	1,009
	CHIPPING NORTON	29	825
	DEDDINGTON	41	976
	HENLEY	35	1,056
	VALE OF WHITE HORSE	27	724
	WALLINGFORD	32	917
	WANTAGE	19	618
	WITNEY	41	1,260
	WOODSTOCK	29	794
OXFORD	COWLEY	31	1,049
	OXFORD	53	2,289
Grand Total		1,121	37,570