



# Berkshire Archdeaconry Narrative and Workplan

2015 – 2019



**The vision:** the transformation of all human life under God.  
**The purpose:** to join with God in creating a caring, sustainable and growing Christian presence in every part of the Archdeaconry of Berkshire, enabling every Christian and every Christian community to live and share the love of God, seen in the life of Jesus Christ.

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## Foreword by the Bishop of Reading

This Archdeaconry Plan has been produced in partnership with the Area Deans in Berkshire and is offered in faith and trust: we believe it is a faithful response to what God is calling us to and we trust that it provides a framework for practical action. The Plan is intended for the Berkshire Mission and Pastoral Committee and the Bishop's Council, to help us as a Diocese to match resources to missional needs. However, we commend it to Deanery Synods and PCCs too, for discussion and reference. It usefully describes the changing climate we operate in, the deep culture change we need if we are to respond faithfully to God's call, and some common priorities which we hope will inspire us all to action.

## The Headlines

### **We want to:**

- uphold and sustain all that is good and positive in our current mission and ministry
- think in new ways about what God is asking of us

### **This will involve:**

- understanding the changing climate around us
- deep cultural change in our church
- a faithful response to God's call
- common priorities that inspire action

We know the national picture of the church and society in the UK and our local context.

We are excited by the fact that the Church of England is the biggest voluntary sector organisation in the Thames Valley.

We know the gifts, strengths, passion and vision we need for God's preferred future are already with us.

### **Cultural change**

- we want a flat structure where all are free to use their gifts and talents
- we want collaborative ministry where lay and ordained work together for a common purpose
- we want mission and discipleship as top priorities
- we want laws and structures to give permission to act in mission and ministry
- we want a church that young people want to be part of

### **Greater collaboration**

- in leadership and ministry
- between lay and ordained people
- by resourcing and releasing area deans
- through greater involvement of lay chairs
- in generating parish and deanery Mission Action Plans

### **Particular aspects of mission**

- schools in relationship with churches
- funerals
- new communities
- chaplaincy

### **Strategic Partnerships**

- with Berkshire Community Foundation
- chaplaincy
- links SSMs and LLMs have with community organisations

### **Resource Planning**

- leadership training for clergy, Churchwardens and people authorised for particular ministries
- vocations adviser and community development advisers

## **Introduction**

As part of the Diocese of Oxford, we are committed to working within the Diocesan framework of Living Faith, which provides a flexible and comprehensive schema in which to consider how God is calling us to move forward into God's promised and preferred future.

This document is a first iteration of a statement of how, as an archdeaconry, we would like to resource and enable our churches and congregations to meet our purpose. We recognise that it has been largely clergy-led, and will aim to involve a wider group in subsequent revisions. The document has a dual focus:

- upholding and sustaining all that is good and positive about our current mission and ministry, recognising the necessary elements of institution and organisation in it;
- thinking in new ways about what God might be asking of us over the coming years as we seek to 'sing a new song' that resonates with the society and culture in which we are incarnate and which we serve; enabling parts of the Church to operate more like a movement than an organisation.

We firmly believe that mission and ministry are contextual and that there is no 'one size fits all' solution for the complexities which face us. However, we can identify mission themes, shared values and the resources which will be needed at both diocesan and archdeaconry level in order that we can move closer towards *joining with God in creating a caring, sustainable and growing Christian presence in every part of the Archdeaconry of Berkshire.*

The Archdeaconry Mission & Pastoral Committee is a key body, made up of Bishop, Archdeacon, PDA, Lay Chairs, Area Deans and some Diocesan Synod representatives. We intend to develop and enhance the role of this group, adding to its terms of reference to make it an effective body for formulating, debating, and scrutinising local level policy within the diocesan framework of Living Faith.

It sits between:

- the Diocese, which makes macro decisions about policy<sup>1</sup> and allocation of resources, through the Planning & Budgets Sub-Committee, Bishop's Council (which incorporates the function of a Diocesan Mission & Pastoral Committee), and the Bishop's Staff Meeting/Senior Management Group
- and Deaneries, which are charged with mission action planning (mission strategy and ministry deployment), working with their constituent parishes (the primary centres and agents of mission) and through Deanery Pastoral Committees, Deanery Synods and Clergy Chapters

It is hoped that this document will prove useful to the first, in helping the Diocese to plan well, and to the second in providing to the Deaneries and parishes encouragement, some firm priorities and a sense of the bigger picture. It will also serve as an important tool for orienting new clergy and licensed/authorised ministers into the Diocese and Area.

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<sup>1</sup> Policy documents which are pertinent are:  
*Oxford Diocesan Ministry Policy (draft), 2011*

## The national picture

This is a rapidly changing picture. Information on the Church of England website, indicates that:

- 45% of people in England visited a church or chapel within the last year, whether worshippers, tourists or guests.
- Local congregations look after 16,000 churches across England from Cathedrals to small modern buildings.
- Today, around 1 million pupils are educated in 4,700 Church of England schools.
- Across the country, 1 in 4 of all primary schools and 1 in 16 of all secondaries are Church of England schools.
- The Church of England has over 28,000 licensed ministers. In addition to 11,300 serving clergy, there are 1,000 chaplains, 6,600 licenced readers & 5,700 active retired priests.
- 1 million people attend Church of England services each week.
- 2.4 million people take part in a Church of England service on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. During Advent, 5 million people take part in a special Christmas service.
- Over 80,000 volunteers and around 2,700 Church Staff provide support and activities for children, young people and families.
- Over 100,000 young people participate in activities connected to the church outside of services.
- Church of England congregations give over £46 million annually to other charities.

However, there is evidence that there has been an overall decline of 9% in church attendance over the past decade. Smaller congregations mean fewer interactions between the people of God and the surrounding community, and fewer opportunities to kindle the spark of Christian faith which exists in many on the edge of the Church. If these trends continue, there will be places where the burden of the building will become too much for the remnant and the Church's most visible witness in that community will cease. The age profiles of our congregations present an additional challenge. A congregation which consists mainly of those over 65 will find it harder to attract young people or families with children. If it loses that struggle, there will be no younger generation to take its place when the time comes<sup>2</sup>.

### Census information 2011:

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<sup>2</sup> See Facing up to near decimation, Paul Handley in *How healthy is the C of E*, Canterbury Press, 2014

- More people reject religion than reject God. Nearly half of adults under 30 responded 'none' to the census question 'What is your religion'. But less than half of these say they are atheists.
- Attitudes towards the C of E are not encouraging. When asked if they view the Church as a positive force in society, only 18% respond 'yes', and only 14% 'no'. Most people say 'neither' or 'don't know'. Ignorance of, or indifference to the Church is the norm.
- Younger people now state a strong moral objection to the Church. Rather than seeing it as 'stuffy and boring' they are more likely to see it as prejudiced against women and gay people.

### **Ministry numbers:**

In the decade 2002 and 2012

- Stipendiary clergy numbers fell from 9432 to 7674.
- SSM numbers increased slightly from 2091 to 3048.
- Reader (LLM) numbers fell by 20% in that decade to 6623.
- There were fewer than 100 stipendiary clergy under 30, and only 1 in five was female
- Young women are either not coming forward for selection or are not being recommended for training. In 2012 71% of candidates recommended for training were male.
- In 9 dioceses, self-supporting clergy made up a third of all licensed clergy
- In 2012 PTO clergy represented 20% of the entire licensed ministerial workforce.

The Archbishops have recently launched a programme for renewal and reform, and task groups have reported to General Synod (Feb 2015) on a number of the issues which are of direct concern to us on the ground, in particular the question of vocations and lay ministry.

One of these task group stated that what is needed is an increase in ordained ministers of 50% by 2020. There is current debate on how realistic this is and how the selection, training and employment of such an increase might be afforded. If it proves over-ambitious, the C of E is clearly soon going to have to operate with far fewer ministers. Women's ordination has helped, but women continue to be disproportionately represented in unpaid, part-time jobs in the Church. If there are no longer enough troops to keep the show on the road, the show will have to change.

### **Our part of the garden**

The Archdeaconry of Berkshire, since the 2014 boundary changes, is now almost co-terminus with the county of Berkshire and covers 5 out of the 6 Unitary Authorities (the exception being Slough, which remains in Buckingham Archdeaconry).

Berkshire is one of the wealthiest counties in the British Isles. By and large, people have chosen to live here for many reasons, largely because of

- employment opportunities in ‘ silicon valley’
- the proximity to London and road and rail links with the rest of the country
- good independent and state schools
- many of the villages are beautiful and unspoilt

**The Archdeaconry of Berkshire: quick facts**

Population (2010)	705,600
Deaneries	6
Benefices	79
Churches	170
Stipendiary clergy	93.75
House for duty clergy	8
Self supporting clergy	22
Stipendiary curates in training	15
SSM curates in training	12
Licensed lay ministers	54

However, there is much need in Berkshire - social, economic and spiritual. Data from the Berkshire Community Foundation Vital Signs survey<sup>3</sup> shows significant areas of real social and economic deprivation, some of it ‘hidden’ amidst signs of apparent prosperity. For example, several areas of Reading have long-term unemployment in excess of 38% and are in the top 40% for crime in the UK. Inequality is a key issue for Berkshire, with data on average incomes masking significant pockets of poverty and food insecurity. A recent diocesan report on food banks<sup>4</sup> highlighted the increased importance of the role they play. In more than a third of the wards in Reading, more than a quarter of all children are living in poverty. House prices across Berkshire have increased by an average of 35% in the last 10 years. A number of reports describe the impact on vulnerable groups living in sub-standard rented accommodation. Funding to civil society organisations has been radically cut – 66% of local groups have seen their funding reduced. Social isolation is a considerable and growing concern, affecting all age-groups.

Spiritual need, of course, is equally present whatever one’s social and economic status and is a factor clearly independent of churchgoing. Peter Brierley’s statistics<sup>5</sup> show a usual Sunday attendance across all Christian denominations in Berkshire of only 5.1% of the population, projected to reduce to 4.5% by 2020. This must tell us something about our need to reflect deeply on how to meet spiritual need if it is not only by encouraging people coming to church.

The Church of England is the biggest voluntary sector organisation in the Thames Valley, providing more volunteer hours in the local community than any other<sup>6</sup>. Most of the church buildings in our Diocese are greatly loved, kept in good order and have

<sup>3</sup> Berkshire’s Vital Signs, Berkshire Community Foundation, 2013 [www.berkshirecf.org/vitalsigns](http://www.berkshirecf.org/vitalsigns)

<sup>4</sup> 999 Food: Emergency food aid in the Thames Valley, a snapshot, Alison Webster, Diocese of Oxford 2014

<sup>5</sup> UK Church Statistics 2005-2015, Peter Brierley (ed.) ABCD 2011

<sup>6</sup> See *Building Better Neighbourhoods*, Jarvis D. et al. Coventry University 2010

been re-ordered for community use<sup>7</sup>. Some of them are outstanding and contain real treasures.

The riches of our cultural heritage and the social environment in which we live can lead to feelings of satisfaction with the way things are and complacency about social justice issues.

For many reasons, we believe we need to shift from a come-structured, church-focus, to a more radical, Kingdom-focussed mission and ministry, where the Good News is shared far more widely, disciples are made, vibrant Christian community is formed and we make a real difference in the world.

The issue of discipleship is foundational to all of our thinking about the way we relate to the world, for *‘every disciple is liberated by grace to pursue their distinctive vocation in life to the glory of God’*<sup>8</sup>. And this vocation leads all of us into service and some of us into ministry.

In order to make a difference in the world, our starting point is a generous, global vision of what God is doing, leading to positive community engagement with many of the social needs of our time: food banks; people who are homeless, mentally ill, isolated and elderly; young people at risk of offending; and the welcome and care of refugees. These will best be done in a series of partnerships, with other denominations and community based organisations.

## Culture Change

In order to become more fully the Church we are called to be, and in response to changing circumstances, we need to change. We want to create a far less hierarchical and patriarchal culture, which values everyone’s gifts and which encourages collaborative working and makes mission its first priority. We want our parishes to know that whilst we have a duty to be good stewards of our resources, that shall not be our primary focus and we will be much more trusting of local initiatives. We want to work together to use existing structures and laws to give, rather than withhold permission for this. We recognise that the parish system is the basis of our mission and ministry, and that there is scope within this for initiatives which are both innovative and respectful.

**“I’d like to belong to a church in which...**

*Buildings and finance don’t dominate*

*It’s OK to make mistakes*

*Everyone knows they are loved and accepted*

*People are serious about seeking God  
Is full of laughter*

*People want to say ‘yes’*

*There is abundant life*

*It’s safe to explore doubt*

*There is a connection between Sunday  
and the rest of the week”*

<sup>7</sup> See *Churches for Communities*, Payne, B. Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust, 2014

<sup>8</sup> *Oxford Diocesan Ministry Policy (draft)*

In order to achieve all of this, we believe we need to be much more connected with the world. We shall seek to create a climate where discipleship is our first priority, to equip and encourage each other to follow Christ at work, at home and at leisure. This will need to be underpinned by a generous, life-giving understanding of what it means for each of us to reach our full potential within the Body of Christ.

We are already committed to starting all our meetings with half an hour of Dwelling in the Word [see appendix 4]. Experiencing the Scriptures as a holy and living event in this way has built mutual trust and opened us up to the presence of God in our midst and inspired us to share and develop ideas together.

We particularly want to create a church that young people want to join today. For most young people, spiritual excitement is triggered more by mystery, the universe, social justice, ecological concerns, incarnation, connectedness and the big questions of our time. They are far less excited about our heritage, or church structures and doctrine.

We know that the gifts, strengths, passion and vision we need for God's preferred future are already with us. God equips us, his people, always to respond. To that end, we are working to develop an imaginative and attractive vocations strategy, which inspires people to offer for lay and ordained ministry. We recognise that theological education for all will have an important part to play in that.

**We need to promote whole life discipleship, which is underpinned theologically by a generous, life-giving understanding of what it means for each of us to be 'fully alive' and to belong to the Body of Christ.**

**"I'd like to belong to a church...**

*where compassion trump everything  
which cares about justice and inclusion  
which knows how to stop doing things (as well as start)  
which can talk intelligently (as well as emotionally) about  
faith  
which is less Radio 3 & 4  
which is lightbrow, more YouTube  
which is able to find its prophetic voice and use it  
which is a club for the non-members"*

**How will we go about it?**

There are a number of things which will need to change about the way we 'do business. We will need to

- ❖ Pray more and worry less
- ❖ Get back to being a people of The Way – more movement than organisation
- ❖ Remember that it is God’s church
- ❖ Lose our institutional anxiety
- ❖ Allow people to improvise
- ❖ Share leadership roles and tasks more widely
- ❖ Resource administrative support within the deaneries
- ❖ Lighten the burden of legal responsibility on incumbents
- ❖ Share responsibility for resource planning and allocation
- ❖ Exercise prophetic leadership
- ❖ Start with ourselves!

### How will we sustain our sacred centre?

We are committed to keeping God at the centre of our identity and creating a climate of trust that this is God’s Church. We shall continue to seek opportunities at local and archdeaconry level to enhance the spiritual role we still have within the nation.

We shall seek to do this in a number of ways: in the life of our congregations, by developing leadership in the local church, through celebrating ‘that which is of God’ in each other, and working with anyone who finds themselves on a quest for beauty and meaning, but cannot name it.

Unless God builds the house,  
those who build it labour in vain  
*Psalms 127.1*

A clear priority for us as an area leadership team is that all our work must be steeped in prayer and that we must spend time trying to align ourselves with God’s longed-for future for Berkshire.

We have committed to the practice of *Dwelling in the Word* – a form of lectio divina, which we are working to build into

- Weekly area team meetings
- Area Deans meetings
- Occasions when the Bishop or Archdeacon meet with groups of clergy or wardens or with ministry teams
- Archdeaconry mission & pastoral committee
- Meetings of Church school teachers and governors

We will encourage this practice across the archdeaconry in all kinds of contexts and hope that it may become a part of the culture.

Bishop and Archdeacon will offer to lead a number of reflections and quiet days for different groups of clergy and lay people each year. These are already planned for clergy, LLMs, members of the vocations fellowship, churchwardens.

We shall make and take more opportunities for prayer generally and encourage our clergy to put on Quiet Days locally and to keep our churches open and offer open spaces for visitors to pray and leave requests for prayer.

We are blessed in this Diocese with theological institutions and religious communities and we would like to explore how to develop and more intentional partnership with them to help us in all of this.

## Clergy wellbeing

In September 2014 a diocese wide online survey of clergy wellbeing was conducted by Interhealth. There was a good response rate from Berkshire clergy, and in general the survey showed some very positive things about what it is like to serve in Oxford Diocese. Most clergy reported that they found the culture, relationships and support which was offered to them good. There were no problematic issues related to gender or marital status.

What the survey did highlight was that the sheer volume of work which clergy have to deal with, and the speed at which it appears, creates significant pressure. Additional factors exacerbate this in some cases, such as having a working spouse, living in a tied house, trying to maintain home space for the family and having three or more parishes to look after. Worries about church finance also create pressure, especially in those who have been in ministry for a long time.

From an initial look at the survey results it appears that the provision of workshops which focus on helping clergy to identify and hold boundaries and gain clarity on their roles in a fast changing ministry environment might be very useful, and we will ask the CMD team to investigate this.

Ministry Development Review continues to be well-received and most clergy appreciate the opportunity it offers to reflect on their ministry in a safe and supportive conversation. We are extremely fortunate in the quality of our MDR reviewers.

## Role & Responsibilities

Bishop, Archdeacon and Parish Development Adviser form the senior leadership team of the Archdeaconry. The current postholders see their roles in these ways:

### **Bishop**

The Bishop plays a vital role as vision caster and in calling us back to our priorities. His priorities are summarised as follows.

- To take forward the holistic mission agenda of the Diocese by constantly gathering, shaping and articulating our response to the Living Faith agenda. To do this, he is committed to
  - generous listening and consultation,
  - clear spiritual and missional leadership
  - regular teaching.
- To make the vision a reality, he will provide regular opportunities for clergy, people and parishes to meet with God through
  - Confirmations
  - Quiet Days
  - Parish visits.
- He will work with deaneries and local ministry teams to make mission a priority.
- He will use his role to negotiate new shapes for mission and ministry, taking account of the predicted shortfall in ordained clergy, ever tighter financial resources and increasing mission opportunities.
- Through being a figure of unity, he will seek to hold open the space to allow the local to connect with Diocesan and national thinking. There will be occasions when brave decision making is required at key moments of opportunity.

### **Archdeacon**

The archdeacon works closely with the Bishop in all matters which support his aims above. In particular

- Planning for and promoting the mission of the Church both present and future, chairing the Archdeaconry Mission & Pastoral Committee, working with parishes which are addressing issues of new housing developments.
- The pastoral care and discipline of the clergy, deployment, SoPs, housing and finance.
- Ensuring that the Faculty rules are adhered to, and that our buildings and churchyards are properly cared for with the assistance of a deputy.
- Working with the other archdeacons to ensure that decisions about the use of strategic resources (housing stock, stipends) cohere with the desired outcomes of the deanery plans and are fairly allocated across the diocese.
- Working closely churchwardens including admitting them to office on behalf of the Bishop and being available to support and consult with them on anything which may concern them.

## **Parish Development Adviser (PDA)**

The PDA works with parishes and deaneries

- Assisting in the development and articulation of their vision and mission plans
- during vacancies, assisting with the preparation of parish profiles
- troubleshooting
- working with conflict
- advising and supporting clergy in role, consultancy, mentoring
- responding to training and development needs of clergy and lay people

## **Greater collaboration in leadership & ministry, lay and ordained**

Leadership in the archdeaconry is provided by the Bishop, Archdeacon and PDA working in collaboration with the Area Deans, Lay Chairs, and DDO. In addition, there are a number of other important consultees to decision making, including the LLM advisers, the SSM officer, the Schools Adviser, the ecumenical officer and the retired clergy officer.

Bishop and Archdeacon meet with Area Deans and Lay co-Chairs of each deanery and we intend to increase the frequency to twice a year from 2016.

Additionally, we are exploring ways in which a wider group of lay people can become consultees to planning and decision making. The leadership of change must become a widely owned task, involving all who are actively involved in church and secular life as disciples of Christ.

## ***Resourcing and releasing Area Deans***

We are working to enhance the role of Area Deans as co-overseers with the Bishop and Archdeacon. Currently we meet 5 times a year as an Area Leadership Team to pray and plan together and are developing our current pattern of Area Deans meetings to include more strategic and missional discussion and planning

We are aware that there are more demands than ever being placed on Area Deans and are investigating:

- ❖ the possibility of full-time Area Deans in the larger deaneries
- ❖ developing the model of assistant/associate Area Deans (4/6 deaneries now have such a post) and working up realistic role descriptions
- ❖ deliberately placing extra ministry support with the Area Deans in the form of SSM clergy and LLMs from within the Deanery,

- ❖ providing enhanced administrative support

### *Lay Chairs*

The most senior lay person in the deanery, the Lay Chair is a key connector between the interests of the wardens and lay members of the deanery synod and the institution of the church. We are increasingly aware of the need for Lay Chairs to play a more central role in planning and decision making. They are ex-officio members of the Archdeaconry Mission & Pastoral Committee, and will be included in the invitation to attend the annual residential meeting with Area Deans. We are exploring ways of involving them in the Area Leadership Team.

### *Working with Deanery Synods*

Great responsibility for local level planning for mission and ministry now falls on the deaneries. It is true to say that parishes have, historically, not always offered their most forward looking, strategic thinkers to be members of deanery synods. This has hampered synods' effectiveness as sponsors of, and contributors to the deanery MAPs, often leaving responsibility for the MAPping to a small number of committed people. This in turn has resulted in MAPs not gaining wide ownership or acceptance. We would encourage parishes to take the election of deanery synod representatives extremely seriously, in order to enhance the capacity of the deanery to engage seriously and effectively with the tasks which have been devolved to it. And also to note that it is the members of deanery synod who elect to the diocesan synod.

The bishop and archdeacon are always willing to respond to invitations to deanery synods and gatherings to provide encouragement, information and direction.

We are very aware that as a Diocese we have devolved to the deaneries primary responsibility for

- allocation and delivery of parish share
- recommending pastoral re-organisations
- mission and deployment plans

### **Allocation of share**

This has been a deanery responsibility for some years, and deaneries have worked very hard to ensure that they cover the share being requested. The new share scheme has been widely welcomed for its increased transparency and simplicity and its division of elements into ministry costs, central costs and church of the future costs.

However, there are currently a number of factors which are proving challenging:

- Parishes are now more acutely aware of the costs of their ministry, and in some cases this has led to PCC decisions to cap share on the grounds that they are being asked to contribute unreasonably to the central and future church costs, in spite of relative wealth.
- We have particular issues over this in Bracknell, Bradfield and Sonning deaneries which the deaneries themselves are struggling to solve through local negotiation and persuasion.
- The deanery has no executive power to enforce payment.
- The new share scheme, by tying ministry provision and cost so closely together, may have had the unintended consequence of encouraging a 'congregational' mindset in some of our churches, especially the ones which appear to owe their primary allegiance to a para-church network and only secondary allegiance to the Diocese/Church of England.

### **Pastoral re-organisation**

The deanery needs to continue to be the key player in decisions about deployment of stipendiary and non-stipendiary ministry resources. The deanery MAP is the key document, and the Deanery Pastoral Committee the key policy body. Deanery recommendations are scrutinised by the AMPC for missional impact and financial realism.

### **Parish and deanery plans**

We will continue to work with the MAP process for both parishes and deaneries. In the first iteration of the planning process the issue of sustainability within deaneries was given high prominence, and for some deaneries became a primary driver of planning. We are now encouraging deaneries to keep in mind the question of how they will pay for resources, but to make this secondary to the primary question of *'how can we discover the heart and mind and imagination of God here, and work with God's longing for God's people?'*

- ❖ The deaneries will be encouraged to keep their MAPs under review
- ❖ Parishes will be encouraged to develop and update their MAPs alongside their parish profiles, and to keep this thinking high on their agendas

The request to the deaneries to take primary responsibility for local level mission planning has in some cases highlighted capacity issues. Whilst remaining committed to the principle that the local churches are best placed to make local decisions, we are aware that we need to encourage more lay people with relevant skills and commitment to participate in this.

- ❖ Deanery skills audits
- ❖ Encouragement to PCCs to put forward good people on to Deanery Synods
- ❖ Careful thought given to membership of deanery pastoral committees (model ToR in appendix 1)

### ***Vital role of Churchwardens***

We want to place particular emphasis on the role played by churchwardens in the leadership of the local church. In the 2014 visitations, the Archdeacon encouraged the wardens to think of their role in terms of collaborative leadership, emphasised the part the wardens play in identifying gifts and callings and as key connectors between church and community. She also encouraged wardens to pay attention to their own spiritual lives. Finally, she invited them to write down what would help them in their role. As a result we have begun a pattern of

- ❖ A series of informal evenings for churchwardens by deanery with the archdeacon in the autumn
- ❖ Churchwarden training with input from diocesan officers (next one in March 2015)
- ❖ Quiet days planned for churchwardens twice a year from 2016

### ***Archdeaconry Mission & Pastoral Committee***

The Archdeaconry MPC will continue to develop as a body which

- holds the mission perspective
- has responsibility for thinking strategically and operationally about the shape of mission and ministry across the archdeaconry with particular reference to deployment and pastoral organisation
- affirms, reviews and challenges deanery plans
- engages with creative thinking about the next 5-10 years
- works with the tension between the primacy of the parochial system and the resourcing of mission in para- or trans-parochial expressions.

## **Aspects of Mission**

### ***Schools and strategic relationship with churches***

With as many young people in our Church of England schools midweek as we have people in Church on a Sunday morning, schools are clearly an important part of our mission. Many parishes already have a very positive and creative relationship with local schools; some struggle to know how best to serve them. We want to explore a variety of ways of developing our schools work:

- ❖ Inviting the clergy of relevant parishes to the regular Bishop's meetings with the Berkshire education team.
- ❖ Annual Deanery meetings for incumbents and school heads, facilitated by the Berkshire education team
- ❖ Involving the School community in parochial appointment processes: profile, interview day etc

- ❖ Bishop's visitation at School AGMs
- ❖ Explore the possibility of employing chaplains in Church secondary Schools
- ❖ Build strategic relationships with DBE, including Archdeaconry representatives, especially in relation to schools in new communities and school governance

### ***Funerals***

All of the occasional offices are clearly missional opportunities, but we want to pay particular attention to funeral ministry, both because the Church has lost ground in this vital area of spiritual and pastoral connection with parishioners, and also because the central Church is currently putting a lot of energy into resourcing funeral ministry. We will make 2015 a year in which we encourage participation in national and local training events and hold deanery conversations about how to improve our funeral ministry, making use where appropriate of the excellent set of resources which the national church has produced.

### ***New communities***

Our large new housing developments affect four out of Berkshire's six deaneries (Newbury, Reading, Sonning and Bracknell), where 17-18,000 new homes are being built in developments of more than 1000 units. Some of this is already built. Some is still waiting for planning permission or for a developer to come forward. Some parishes have been engaged in conversations with local authorities and ecumenical partners for some time; others are frustrated by constantly moving goal posts and lack of clarity about timing (See Appendix 3).

### **Principles of our engagement**

The Church of England is the established church. Our local churches must be engaged in, and resourced for building community where the community is or is to become. Therefore engagement with new communities is part of our core purpose. In this we will seek to work in partnership with other churches and organisations wherever possible. Our aim is, in line with Living Faith, to make disciples, create vibrant Christian communities, and make a difference in the world.

There are two aspects to this:

#### **Engagement with the secular planning process, forward planning and early response**

- We need to train and resource our church leaders in how to deal with local authorities and encourage them to be tenacious

- We need to identify teams of people who can put in the time and attention needed to enable the church to be fully engaged with the local authorities and planning process.
- We must be flexible in our thinking about parish boundaries and ready to realign them
- We must intentionally build partnerships

**When communities start to form, engagement with community building, development and integration, and forming Christian community**

- We must ensure that we have people with relevant community development skills/experience, and actively seek them out
- We must be creative and flexible in the way we reach out, drawing on experience from other places and models e.g. various forms of Fresh Expression, missional communities etc.
- We must recognise that there are elements of resistance and doubt among our congregations in relation to having new communities on their doorsteps, and our church leaders can get personally caught up in this, and be seen to be compromised.
- We must encourage openness and honesty, and recognise that reconciliation may be needed.

**What is needed**

- ❖ An archdeaconry new communities group to meet regularly and update knowledge, share information and ideas
- ❖ An archdeaconry resource team
- ❖ A paid area development post to combine planning and community building/church planting skills
- ❖ We need good information about the location and likely timing of developments of <1000 houses, which currently do not figure in our planning, but will have a significant effect on those communities where they are built
- ❖ Prompt response from Board of Education to enquiries about acquiring schools

***Appointments – creating confident, collaborative leadership***

A vacancy provides a unique opportunity to have some impact on the direction of travel in a parish. Whilst some parishes view a vacancy as an opportunity to cast a fresh, shared vision of where they want to go, many are concerned solely to preserve what has gone before. This may be partly due to the fear induced by the narrative of hostility and indifference from the outside world, and decline in attendance, and can be manifested as pride and self-satisfaction.

We want to engender a clear parish development agenda across the Archdeaconry. In order to do this, we need as clear and accurate a picture, as possible, of where a parish has got to and where it is going, wherever possible in the form of a mission action plan. The outgoing incumbent can often bring a very helpful perspective on this, which could feed into the preparation of the Parish Profile as well as providing a useful basis for a conversation between the Bishop/Archdeacon and candidates.

- ❖ Exit interviews with out-going incumbents to inform the profile and appointment process.
- ❖ Promote vacancy arrangements which help parishes to think forwards without denying their past, and draw on experience in the Archdeaconry to grow the number of people who can help in this work.

### ***Vocations & Training***

This is a vital area of development in the life of our church, closely allied to the issue of discipleship. A more detailed look at vocations and training is set out in a separate paper at Appendix 3. Broadly speaking, we recognise that the word is a difficult one for some; that there is a blurred line between those who have a vocation to licensed or authorised ministry and those who feel God prompting them to do something to serve the local church or community. All of these are to be taken seriously, for they arise out of discipleship, which is a pre-requisite to the development of any vocation or calling to ministry or service.

We recognise that, given the Berkshire picture of the age profile of our current ministers (see Appendix 6), the national picture, and the strains which ministry is already under, it is an urgent priority to pay attention to both lay and ordained vocations for both local and national deployment.

In five years' time we want:

- To have lay leaders and clergy who are skilled in recognising the early shoots of vocation and encouraging growth and maturity
- Everybody who comes to church to receive the message that they are gifted people who are constantly called to keep on reassessing what their gifting is
- Every church to have the conviction that God has given them all the people they need to take the next steps towards the mission God has for them. Discovery of this is a key task.
- A consistent message coming out of the Diocesan Leadership that the nurturing and development of vocations is a priority
- An environment where stepping out is encouraged and mistakes are OK.

### **Proposals**

- ❖ Identify a team of 24 people in the archdeaconry to go out and talk about vocation (all ages and stages)
- ❖ We need to think about re-inventing our VA system to encourage/discern/resource all vocations (a SpiDir type list of who is out there?)
- ❖ Every deanery to have a vocations promoter/discovery agent (could be the VA?)
- ❖ Train and encourage incumbents, youth leaders, pastoral care leaders to feel confident in supporting people who have the first stirrings of vocation
- ❖ Encourage every church to make something of Vocations Sunday and involve theological colleges/courses in that
- ❖ A mentoring and buddying system for those who are exploring vocation
- ❖ A deanery-based programme for authorised lay ministers which provides a minimum training for basic competences together with flexible, accompanied development over time.
- ❖ Link in with school and college chaplains in helping to identify and nurture vocations

### ***Retired clergy, clergy widows, clergy with permission to officiate***

We have a large number of retired clergy in Berkshire, about 100 of whom have PtO, and a number of clergy widows. We are enormously grateful to those with PtO for the ongoing ministry they exercise in retirement, which is a tremendous support to parish ministry. We are working to improve the way in which we communicate with and support them. We have an archdeaconry officer for retired clergy, and a network of deanery-based assistant officers, and a newly appointed widows' visitor. The Berks Clergy Charity has funds available to assist those who are facing hardship, and this is operated in consultation with the Area Deans.

### **Strategic partnerships**

The Bishop is developing links with the Local Strategic Partnership in Reading.

We hope shortly to identify an area office will be a place where the Area Team can work closely together and which could provide a local base for the Education Advisers.

We are convinced of the importance of raising the profile of the Church as a key local player, and educating other bodies about what the Church can bring to partnership working to enhance the effectiveness of social welfare, outreach and community building activities.

We recognize that such partnerships

- Play out differently in rural and urban contexts
- Can be at archdeaconry, deanery, town or parish level

- Can be vital to our effectiveness
- Can be strategic, tactical or operational
- Can add value to our understanding, analysis, planning or activity

We want to highlight that relationships are key to partnership working, and that forming relationships which embody Christ-centred, Kingdom values are a valuable form of witness.

## **Proposals**

- ❖ Enhance links with the chaplaincy world and through chaplains into secular institutions
- ❖ Stronger recognition of, and capitalising on, the relationships which SSMs/LLMs have with secular organisations and bodies
- ❖ Work to break down the separation between church members' Sunday and week-day lives and encourage deeper thinking about opportunities for joined up ministry

## **New models of mission**

### ***Church Plants and Bishop's Mission Orders (BMOs)***

We are committed to church growth and want to create an environment where parishes can innovate and try new ideas. We shall always seek to put the Kingdom of God first, and will actively support proposals which emerge from proper Deanery planning and collaborative engagement.

Both BMOs and Church plants are elements in our strategy for growth, but it is important to be clear about the distinction between them.

**Planting:** We wish to encourage parish-to-parish initiatives to share resources and to engage in mission and we are committed to working with those who have the capacity and the initiative to plant congregations. However, we are clear that those who either cannot or will not meet their parish share commitment should not be allowed to plant congregations elsewhere outside their parish.

**BMOs:** We recognise that as the number of BMOs increases, they are going to test our commitment to culture change and missional innovation, but we see BMOs as a good way to resource the local Church. Because BMOs can easily be perceived as a 'Trojan Horse,' we will only establish them after full and open discussion, careful negotiation, careful communication and the full co-operation of the local churches.

As an Archdeaconry, we want to avoid misunderstanding and pastoral damage. We believe this has to come out of a shared vision, so with the Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee [in consultation with the Deanery MPCs], we shall collect evidence, to identify where BMOs might be needed and where they might work well.

Before a BMO is approved by the Archdeaconry MPC, we would need to see evidence of the following:

- good social engagement, clear spiritual need, real pastoral opportunity
- lack of current capacity [ie. that the local Church has really tried, but does not have the resources of itself to do a specific piece of work]
- proper accountability in place
- it fits in with what our existing partners are already doing

Any BMO shall be thoroughly checked by the Diocesan Registrar and a license will only ever be given to a priest to minister in a specific location.

### ***Partnership for Missional Church (PMC)***

PMC is a three year process which enables a church to undergo a fundamental change in the way it approaches mission: to change from seeing mission as something that the Church does (a 'programme'), to seeing mission as underlying the very 'being' of the church. It is an approach which we are piloting in Berkshire, and we already have a number of churches which are interested in finding out more about it. We hope that we will have a start date of mid-2015. See appendix 2 for more detail.

## **Resource planning**

### ***Training and development needs***

#### **Leadership**

Oxford Diocese has, for a decade and more, been a major player in developing clergy leadership programmes, both through the rolling out of its own *Developing Servant Leaders*, and through regular engagement with the other dioceses which have similarly recognised the vital importance of good leadership in the local church. The central diocesan discussions about how this programme needs to adapt to the changing needs of the church are underway, and Berkshire archdeaconry welcomes the shift to making leadership training contextual and inclusive of lay leaders.

#### **New communities**

We have noted the need for training and resources for clergy who are engaging with local authorities and developments e.g. seminars, online resources, and request the Department of Mission to plan for this.

#### **Authorised Lay Ministry training**

We note that there is an urgent need for a programme of compact deanery-based training courses for lay people who wish to offer local ministry and service to their church or community without engaging with the full LLM selection and training. This is both for operational reasons (to enhance provision of parish based ministry in response to mission opportunities) and strategic reasons (many who have the experience of such roles go on to offer themselves for licensed ministry, lay and ordained). Such ministries would be authorised by Incumbent and PCC. A core course in deepening discipleship should be common to all of them, followed by a specialism leading to authorisation in roles such as:

- Worship leaders and musicians
- Pastoral Assistant
- Mission Enabler
- Youth leader
- Healing and Wholeness Minister
- Children's leader
- Funeral minister

We need a training provision which is flexible enough to be able to respond to a request from a deanery where, for example, 10-15 want local training and a venue can be provided. See, for example,

<http://www.canterburydiocese.org/media/alm/almcourseguide.pdf>

We would request the Bishop's Staff and Department of Mission to investigate this as a priority.

### **Churchwarden training**

A well trained cohort of churchwardens is a vital element in the smooth running of the local church, and too often churchwardens have been left to flounder or find their own solutions to common problems. Training has been offered and appreciated in the past, and a morning of training has been planned for March 2015 with input from officers from the Department of Mission. It would be excellent if this could now be repeated annually.

### ***Development posts***

These are posts which will make a difference to our ability to address in an effective and timely way two of the challenges which we have identified:

To respond to our desire to put energy and resource into identifying and developing a whole range of lay and ordained ministries, and co-ordinate a network of deanery vocations champions:

- ❖ A 0.5 archdeaconry vocations officer (possibly combined with a HfD post) for 5 years. 2015/16 start

To assist those parishes/benefices which have large new housing areas being built out to work proactively on community development and formation of new Christian communities:

- ❖ Two new communities mission enablers (minister with a pioneer/community development experience), each to work across half of the archdeaconry, being based in large new developments. These posts should start in 2016 and we are currently envisaging them being based in Wokingham and Greenham.

### *Housing needs and sales*

In the past 4 years, we have disposed of 8 properties with a total receipt of £3,346,650. We have two further vicarages on the market which should bring in a further £1.65m. We have no more houses earmarked for disposal. An analysis of future housing needs in relation to new housing developments is in Appendix 3.

We would like to acquire:

- ❖ Greenham Racecourse development: House to be bought to provide ministry base for community minister/mission enabler (see above)
- ❖ South Wokingham: House to be bought or part-funded for minister working with ecumenical partnership/ mission enabler (see above)





<b>Building deanery capacity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Deanery skills audits</li> <li>❖ Encouragement to PCCs to put forward good people on to Deanery Synods</li> <li>❖ Careful thought given to membership of deanery pastoral committees (model ToR in appendix 1)</li> <li>❖ Support and assistance in resolving difficult parish share issues</li> </ul>	<p><b>Area Deans Lay Chairs</b></p> <p><b>Archdeacon Diocesan staff</b></p>	<p><b>2016 2017</b></p> <p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p><b>As needed</b></p>
<b>Resourcing churchwardens</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Informal evenings for churchwardens by deanery with the archdeacon in the autumn</li> <li>❖ Churchwarden training with input from diocesan officers at least annually</li> <li>❖ Quiet days for churchwardens twice a year</li> </ul>	<p><b>Archdeacon PDA</b></p> <p><b>Diocesan staff Archdeacon &amp; Lay Chairs</b></p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p><b>2016</b></p>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Inviting the clergy of relevant parishes to the regular Bishop's meetings with the Berkshire education team.</li> <li>❖ Annual Deanery meetings for incumbents and school heads, facilitated by the Berkshire education team</li> <li>❖ Involving the School community in parochial appointments: profile, interview day etc</li> <li>❖ Bishop's visitation at School AGMs</li> <li>❖ Explore the possibility of employing chaplains in Church secondary schools</li> <li>❖ Closer liaison with DBE so all understand significance of changes in education/new schools/governance issues</li> </ul>	<p><b>Bishop's office Berkshire Education team</b></p> <p>?</p>	<p><b>2016</b></p> <p><b>Ongoing</b></p>
<b>Funeral ministry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Encourage deanery 'champions' to help all to engage better with funeral ministry and improve pastoral care</li> </ul>	<p><b>Area Deans PDA All ministers</b></p>	<p><b>2015 onwards</b></p>
<b>New communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Form an archdeaconry new communities group to meet regularly and update knowledge, share information and ideas</li> <li>❖ Identify an archdeaconry resource team</li> <li>❖ Recruit to paid community development posts to bring community building/church planting skills to new housing areas across the area</li> <li>❖ Locate good information about the location and likely timing of developments of &lt;1000 houses</li> </ul>	<p><b>Area leadership team</b></p> <p><b>Archdeacon</b></p> <p><b>Archdeacon &amp; NC Officer &amp; local information</b></p>	<p><b>2015</b></p> <p><b>2016</b></p> <p><b>2015</b></p>
<b>Appointments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Exit interviews with out-going incumbents to inform the profile and appointment process.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Bishop Archdeacon</b></p>	<p><b>Immediate</b></p>



**Berkshire Archdeaconry**  
**Resources/assistance/action requested from central services of**

<b>Diocese</b>		
Leadership	Leadership training for all in church leadership to be contextual and inclusive of lay leaders.	<b>CMD Team</b>
New communities	Training and resources for clergy who are engaging with local authorities and developments e.g. seminars, online resources	<b>DoM/ New Communities officer</b>
	Information which is as accurate as possible on the size and location of developments of less than 1000 units which are being planned	<b>New Communities officer</b>
Lay ministry	Diocesan policy on authorised lay ministry	<b>BSM/Bishop's Council</b>
	Diocesan scheme	<b>DoM</b>
	Training provision which is flexible enough to be able to respond to requests for deanery level training.	<b>DoM</b>
Churchwardens	Annual training with involvement from diocesan officers	<b>PDA, HR, Diocesan Sec, Archdeacon</b>
Education	Input from Schools Dept into new communities strategic planning at archdeaconry level. Attendance at NC area meetings.	<b>Education</b>
	Prompt response from Board of Education to operational enquiries about acquiring new schools. Clear communication.	<b>Education</b>
Vocations	Urgent consideration of the issues raised in Appendix 5, possibly by a small diocesan working party. Assistance with developing proactive vocations strategy	<b>DoM</b>  <b>DDO team</b>
	Integration of VAs into archdeaconry vocations strategy, to include working proactively	<b>DDO team</b>
Capital projects	Advice on large scale fundraising (e.g. new church in Finchampstead parish)	<b>??</b>
Clergy wellbeing	Workshops which focus on helping clergy to identify and hold boundaries and gain clarity on their roles in a fast changing ministry environment. Providers have been identified.	<b>PDA CMD team</b>

## **ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEANERY MISSION AND PASTORAL COMMITTEE**

The Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee ('MPC') is a subcommittee of and reports to the Deanery Synod. Its overall role is to consider all aspects of mission planning, and in particular to look critically at issues around the availability and deployment of clergy and other authorised ministers.

In fulfilling this role, the Deanery MPC needs to hold a number of factors in tension. These include:

- the mission thinking and needs of the deanery as a whole, as expressed in the Deanery Mission Action Plan;
- the aspirations, interests and strengths of individual parishes/benefices/clusters;
- opportunities to explore fresh expressions of Church appropriate to a changing culture, so as to promote a genuinely 'mixed economy' of new and inherited forms of Church;
- the need to remain faithful to the calling of the Church of England to sustain a worshipping and witnessing presence in every community.

### **Responsibilities of the Deanery MPC**

The basic responsibilities of a Deanery MPC are thus:

1. To facilitate the development of a holistic mission strategy for the deanery, and its implementation through the Deanery Mission Action Plan.
2. To formulate a deanery view to guide decisions of the Archdeaconry MPC on matters of pastoral reorganisation.
3. To maintain close liaison with PCCs/DCCs.
4. To report regularly to the Deanery Synod.

### **Commitment of members**

The commitment of Deanery MPC members is as follows:

1. To attend meetings (generally quarterly) to look at current and emerging pastoral reorganisation and clergy deployment issues.
2. To take an open, realistic and informed view of the mission of the deanery so as to best support the ongoing development of the Deanery Mission Action Plan.
3. To be good advocates for deanery mission planning and thinking.

4. To pray about God's mission in the deanery.

### **Membership of the Deanery MPC**

The Deanery MPC could be made up of the following members:

- Area Dean
- Lay Chair
- Deanery Secretary
- Deanery Treasurer
- 2 members elected from the Deanery House of Clergy
- 2 members elected from the Deanery House of Laity

The committee may also co-opt additional members. Meetings should be chaired by the Area Dean or Lay Chair.

## Appendix 2

### **Partnership for Missional Church – a one page introduction**

(see also [www.churchinnovations.org](http://www.churchinnovations.org) )

#### **Partnership?**

It's a Partnership in that it involves 12-15 congregations working together in a 'cluster' supported by experienced trainers, consultants and students and staff of St John's, Nottingham. This partnership is strategic and spiritual, including times of prayer, worship, sharing and learning (three per year) which strengthen the common journey into mission.

#### **Missional?**

It is Missional in that the focus is on equipping each church to join together in God's mission of reconciling, restoring and redeeming the world. Being missional is more than just doing more social service activities or increasing the membership numbers. A missional church looks for how God is at work in the world today. A missional church chooses to join God in that mission in the world, to let God call and send it in that mission.

#### **Church?**

The focus is on Church because we believe that people who 'see' the Church should be able to 'see' the gospel - the good news of Jesus Christ lived out. The PMC process therefore builds on the traditions and strengths of each congregation.

#### **How does it work?**

To change from seeing mission as something that the Church does (a 'programme'), to seeing mission as underlying the very 'being' of the church, is no easy task. This is why Partnership for Missional Church proposes a three to five year process to enable the change to take root in the ongoing culture of a congregation. The process has three initial phases:

##### **Phase 1 Discovery**

Phase 1 could best be described as a time of learning to listen. We listen to Scripture, our congregations and our communities – and most of all we listen to God and allow ourselves to be shaped and formed for sending into the world. We also learn to listen to our partners, those who help us understand ourselves and the context in which we live and work. A number of inventories, self-studies and evaluations will be used to take the pulse of each congregation, which will aid in the second phase of the project.

##### **Phase 2: Experimenting**

After learning about who we are, where we live and who we are sent to, the next logical step is to take action.

The information uncovered during the first step will hopefully lead us into developing plans for taking action through missional experiments. This involves some risk taking, and while not

every risk will be rewarded, there is as much to learn from the mistakes as from the successes.

### **Phase 3: Embodiment**

In Phase 3 congregations will begin moving toward living into God's preferred and promised future. After discovering and learning from the successes and failures of the experimenting phase, churches and their leaders will develop their own vision, strategy and plans for congregational transformation, and will better know how to focus attention and energy toward attaining those goals. The end result will be a culture change in the congregation.

### **Spiritual Disciplines**

One of the distinctive features of the PMC approach is that it recognises the need for a deepening spirituality to accompany enhanced strategic planning for mission within local churches. On the journey of this three-phase process congregations will be taught and learn six Spiritual Practices or what we call "holy habits": Dwelling in the Word, Dwelling in the World, Hospitality, Announcing the Kingdom, Corporate Spiritual Discernment (finding out together what God is up to) and Focus for Missional Action (doing what God desires of us and not all the things we could do).

### **What are the criteria for participating?**

The basic criterion is a deeply held desire to see the local church used by God to "be the change it wants to see" in the community. Additionally, churches considering the PMC process should have:

- An awareness that something different needs to be done to meet the rapid changes in society today
- A willingness to take some risks and to 'go deeper'
- Commitment by the leadership of the church to the three-year process.
- Ability to meet some of the costs of the process (between £320 and £500 per year per benefice/group)

Site	Progress	Church response	Resource needs
Newbury Racecourse	400 houses already built 1100 under construction	Youth worker actively engaged and working with Sovereign new communities development officer. Bus of Hope. Visiting underway.	Need to get someone moving onto the estate. Provision of house.
Newbury Sandleford	Land allocated for 2000 homes. No planning application received yet		2 primary schools are planned for a possibly a secondary school. Help with thinking about how to connect with the planning/allocation process.
Arborfield Garrison	Planning application for 3000 homes but details still fluid. Multi-developers.	Straddles Finchampstead & California and Arborfield & Barkham parishes. WBC not keen on a church being built. New sec. school will be built regardless of development. Prob. a free school	Finch/Calif thinking about buying a light industrial unit in Hogwood Park if WBC would approve a change of use. For use as community and worship centre. Finance and planning help needed?
Shinfield, 3 Mile Cross, Spencers Wood	2500 houses. 3 Mile Cross mostly built.	Methodists selling redundant chapel will have finance, and are keen on partnership.	Loddon Reach benefice needs to talk to the University via Haslams. David Mason to broker conversation
N & S Wokingham	3820 houses planned, of which over 1000 houses already built. South will be larger than north.	Wokingham churches working ecumenically. Baptists have bought a manse opposite entrance to s. site.	Money for primary school is there, invitation for bids is out. David Hodgson needs response from Board of Education. Provision of a house on new build in South Wokingham
Warfield	2200 houses to be built in 2016-17.	Agreement obtained for a church school. Parish in conversation with parish council about possibly running a new-build community centre	Resources adequate.
Crowthorne TRL	1000 houses to be built on land which is currently in Easthampstead parish		Boundary change needed
Amen Corner	1200 houses to be built		

## Appendix 4

**Dwelling in the Word**

'Dwelling in the word' is a tool used by Dr Patrick Keiffert, as part of the culture-change process he believes is crucial to church growth. In many ways similar to *lectio divina*, it allows us to listen to scripture, to each other and to God.

Keiffert strongly recommends that groups use the same passage, [Luke 10: 1-12](#) each time they meet over the course of a year because, over time, it encourages the behaviours in the text: working closely together, trusting God's leading, developing our missional vocation and ordering our priorities. That is what we are doing and what we would like to commend to you.

Unlike some Bible study, which applies texts to key subjects, or the controversies that divide, 'Dwelling in the word' allows groups of Christians to form a shared sense of the challenge facing them.

Pat Ellison and Patrick Keiffert write 'When trust is built in a community, that community can withstand risks and entrances and exits and big change.' [Ellison, P. and Keiffert, P. *Dwelling in the word: a pocket handbook*, Church innovations 2011]

We feel sure that by living inside this story, it will shape our collective imagination and that a clear sense of shared culture will emerge. The Area Deans in Berkshire, who started doing this each time they meet a year ago, have found that it has helped them feel like a real community: it is building trust, shaping their imagination and cultivating their missional vocation.

It should be made clear that 'Dwelling in the word' is deliberately not about sharing information, or seeking scholarly answers or even the right answers to the issues raised in the text, but is about listening each other into free speech and discerning what God is up to amongst us.

1. Start with prayer inviting the Spirit to guide our attending to the Word of God.
2. Turn to Luke 10: 1-12. Have bibles or copies available at every meeting so that the story can be read by different people each time you meet. Set aside, without apology, at least 20 minutes for this activity.
3. When everyone is ready, begin your meeting with one person reading the passage out loud to the group. Then let some silence unfold as people let the words have their impact.
4. Next, encourage people to find someone they know less well [Keiffert describes this person as a 'reasonably friendly stranger']. Listen that person into free speech as he or she tells you what they heard in the passage. Listen that person into answering one of two questions: 1.) what captured your imagination in the passage? And 2.) what would you like to find out more about? Listen well, because your job will be to report to the

rest of the group what your *partner* said, not what you yourself said. Some take notes to help them remember.

5. Turn people loose with their partners for 6-10 minutes. Notice how they are paying attention to one another. When you draw them back together as a group, ask them to tell what they learned from their partners.
6. Then wrestle together as a group with what God might be up to in the passage for your group on that day. It can be helpful for the facilitator to make a brief note of what she or he hears from the group and to capture that in a short prayer at the end.
7. Finally, let people know that as your conversation on other matters continues, anyone at any time may call for the Gospel and the group will return to the passage.

This discipline is far from magical or formulaic; it won't solve all the problems or answer all the questions, difficulties and issues your group, council or committee has to address. However, over time, this discipline forms a community of the Holy Spirit, where the Spirit is welcome and expected a presence as anyone else there.

Keiffert writes, 'The Spirit uses whatever space we give to create an environment of spiritual discernment. Just when you feel that there is nothing more that can be said about Luke 10, someone will say something completely new about Luke 10.' Like all disciplines, this shapes us and our behaviour. It is not magical or formulaic, it is holy and 'creates the community of good will that opens time and space for spiritual discernment for the sake of God's mission.'

## Appendix 5

### **Berkshire Vocations Think Tank**

On 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014, eleven of us met to continue our thinking about vocations in its broadest sense, to imagine a church in which expressing a vocation is normal, not extraordinary, and to think about what would need to be in place for this to happen.

In Oxford Diocese we have, for quite a while, had a narrative of certainty about the fact that with stipendiary clergy numbers decreasing the local church will need to depend more and more on both non-stipendiary ministers (lay and ordained) and lay people. What we have not done is to wholeheartedly endorse a range of locally authorised lay ministries. We believe it is now time to revisit this question.

Our diocesan ministry policy has been clear about the need for a mixed economy of ministry. We now need some work to be done on looking at what this means, what ministry areas need to be identified and encouraged and training might be provided.

#### **We believe that:**

- ✚ Christianity is a verb not a noun
- ✚ The Holy Spirit is stirring a calling in each of us
- ✚ That discipleship is of vital importance to the life of our church. Everyone has a calling to be a **disciple of Christ** – for some this will involve a ‘ministry’. We all have gifts that can be used in God's service and people of all ages and backgrounds have something important to contribute
- ✚ That spirituality is present in everyone just below the surface
- ✚ We should create an environment in which people can discover their gifts and calling
- ✚ 'Vocation' is a key part of the church environment, not something that's in a dark corner
- ✚ There is something elegant about all Christians being called to embody the Kingdom
- ✚ We know at a local level what is needed and possible in our local communities and God gives us all that we need
- ✚ Vocation is the responsibility of all, not the few

#### **Priorities**

We identified 3 priorities

- **Visibility**
- **Discipleship**
- **Discovery/encouragement**

#### **Visibility**

We think that we need to work at creating an environment in which

- It's really easy to find out how to take the first (and subsequent steps) towards exploring a calling; information is accessible not only in church but outside of it (e.g. careers advice); conversation about vocation is 'normal' and it is talked about everywhere, all the time, in different contexts. We take advantage of existing opportunities to talk about it (e.g. Vocations Sunday) and create new ones.
- It's easy to find people who are also discussing their next step in these terms; nobody says 'people like me don't do this'
- There isn't a hierarchy of vocation with the Vicar at the top, and the Vicar doesn't act as a gatekeeper

In order for this to happen, we think it is important that

- We use expert help to increase visibility, drawing on the expertise we have in our churches and using peoples' gifts appropriately
- Lay people in churches are behind this concept of visible vocation and working to make it a reality
- A sermon is preached about vocation in every church every six months
- We have a team who are passionate about it and go out to preach/teach
- There's really good information available and easy to find (e.g. web, social media)
- The Diocese has put resources behind this (people, time, finance, encouragements)
- There is a good mentoring system in place.
- We have good publicity so that people can find information/groups/encouragement

Actions

- Identify a team of 25 people in the archdeaconry to go out and talk about vocation (all ages and stages)
- Re-inventing our VA system to encourage/discern/resource all vocations (a SpiDir type list of who is out there?)
- Encourage incumbents, youth leaders, pastoral care leaders to feel confident in supporting/mentoring people who have the first stirrings of vocation

## **Discipleship**

We think that we need to work at creating an environment in which

- There is empowerment at parish level; development of a team approach including laity and clergy with goals or aims that are clear to everyone
- Discipleship is understood as the way every believer lives their Christian life and it implies growth and development
- Discipleship is recognised as unique - as every individual is unique - and the contribution of every disciple is valued and celebrated
- Discipleship is seen to involve integrity of living
- Flexibility in training has been developed with more local focus on training for authorised ministries
- Each church would have a lay-leadership team
- A higher proportion of people are actively involved in their church communities and there is an increased sense discipleship leading to a rise in vocations to various ministries
- Parishes are active in supporting people in their daily Christian living and there is diversity of role models
- There is a sense of vision in each parish

In order for this to happen, we think it is important that

- Clergy deliberately encourage and empower lay people and there is an explicit recognition of diverse contributions to church life
- There is a focus on daily Christian living
- Pathways to authorised ministry are simplified and localised
- Training is made available to churches in encouraging/supporting discipleship

- There is an adaptable training programme to resource parishes
- There is prayer
- There is Liturgical recognition/support/blessing of the communities' giftings

### **Discovery**

We think that we need to work at creating an environment in which

- We have lay leaders and clergy who are skilled in recognising and encouraging vocation
- Everybody who comes to church receives the message that they are gifted people who are frequently called to keep on reassessing what their gifting is
- Every church has the conviction that God has given them all the people they need to take the next steps towards the mission God has for them
- Every deanery has a vocations promoter/discoverer
- There is a consistent message coming from Diocesan Leadership that vocations are a priority
- There is a mentoring and buddying system
- There is an environment where stepping out is encouraged and mistakes are ok

In order for this to happen, we think it is important that

- There is intentional 'raising of the temperature'
- There is provision of range of resources to back this up
- Every church is invited to make something of Vocations Sunday in the coming years and that theological colleges/courses are a part of that
- We set up a network of deanery vocations promoters - not necessarily a big commitment

### **Actions**

We would ask the Dept of Mission to look urgently at these questions and for a small working party to be formed early in 2015 to take them forward into a plan for promoting vocations.

## Appendix 6

### Berkshire Clergy (Stipendiary and HfD, not including curates) As at 18/9/14

#### Out of 100 clergy

- 11 are aged 65+
- 25 are aged 60+
- 44 are aged 55+
- 62 are aged 50+
- 82 are aged 45+
  
- 1 is under 30
- 2 are under 35
- 10 are under 40
- 18 are under 45

#### Average age is 53 (both mean and medial)

- 9 have been in post for 15+ years
- 19 have been in post for 10+ years
- 49 have been in post for 5+ years

### Berkshire Clergy (SSM – Associate priests) As at 12/05/14

#### Out of 20 SSM Associate Priests

- 1 is aged 70+
- 6 are aged 65+
- 14 are aged 60+
- 16 are aged 55+
- 18 are aged 50+
- 20 are aged 45+
  
- 1 has been in post 15+ years
- 4 have been in post 10+ years
- 8 have been in post 5+ years
- 12 have been in post under 5 years

### Berkshire Clergy (SSM – Curates in training)

#### Out of 14 SSM Curates in training

- 3 are aged 65+
- 7 are aged 60+
- 10 are aged 55+

- 13 are aged 50+
- 14 is aged 45+

Appendix 7

## Funerals and Marriages in the Archdeaconry of Berkshire, 2009-2013

### Marriages

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Bracknell	101	97	96	79	74
Bradfield	98	70	128	128	118
Maidenhead & Windsor	200	175	186	117	130
Newbury	124	174	133	144	139
Reading	110	112	113	97	111
Sonning	166	164	132	146	128
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>700</b>

### Services of prayer and dedication after a civil marriage

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Bracknell	2	4	4	4	4
Bradfield	1	5	13	13	16
Maidenhead & Windsor	7	11	4	8	6
Newbury	4	7	10	4	4
Reading	13	8	5	5	2
Sonning	10	10	3	7	4
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>36</b>

### Funerals

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Bracknell	63	59	59	39	39
Bradfield	96	65	80	95	65
Maidenhead & Windsor	178	193	188	123	157
Newbury	187	221	212	197	187
Reading	171	152	157	128	175
Sonning	147	147	115	111	105
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>837</b>	<b>811</b>	<b>693</b>	<b>728</b>

### Services held in crematoria/cemeteries

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Bracknell	145	151	155	136	141
Bradfield	37	40	38	32	51
Maidenhead & Windsor	365	314	379	232	266
Newbury	88	89	76	97	88
Reading	338	375	332	282	363
Sonning	161	156	165	191	165
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,134</b>	<b>1,125</b>	<b>1,145</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>1,074</b>