

OXFORD DIOCESAN SYNOD

October 2020

Elected Representation from Deaneries on Diocesan Synod, 2021-24

1. Under rules 37 and 42 of the Church Representation Rules ('CRR'), the Diocesan Synod is required to determine not later than 31 December 2020:
 - (i) the numbers of members of the diocesan houses of clergy and laity to be elected from deaneries in the 2021 Diocesan Synod elections; and
 - (ii) the method of election to be used in those elections.

Scheme of representation

2. Rule 37(2) and 37(3) of the CRRs specifies that the number to be elected from each deanery to the diocesan house of clergy is to be related to the size of that deanery's house of clergy, and the number to be elected to the house of laity to the aggregate electoral roll size for the deanery; furthermore, at least two members are to be elected by each house of every deanery synod.
3. The sizes of the deanery houses of clergy as at 31 May 2020, certified for this purpose by deaneries under rule 37(4) of the CRRs, were as follows:

Berkshire		Buckingham		Dorchester	
Bracknell	16	Amersham	31	Abingdon	29
Bradfield	17	Aylesbury	26	Aston & Cuddesdon	25
Maidenhead & Windsor	25	Buckingham	9	Bicester & Islip	26
Newbury	30	Burnham & Slough	26	Chipping Norton	15
Reading	49	Claydon	12	Deddington	25
Sonning	21	Milton Keynes	30	Henley	19
		Mursley	6	Vale of White Horse	10
		Newport	7	Wallingford	18
		Wendover	15	Wantage	8
		Wycombe	32	Witney	26
				Woodstock	15
Oxford					
Cowley	33				
Oxford	110				

4. Electoral roll figures aggregated by deanery (as certified under CRR rule 10) are as follows.

Given the exceptional circumstances of 2020, it has not yet been possible to receive the electoral roll figures from each deanery given delays to annual meetings and will not be for some time as annual meetings may not occur until 30 November 2020 (and it will take some time after that before we receive all the returns from them). In the absence of that 2020 data and given the need to determine the matters in paragraph 1 at the November Diocesan Synod, it is now proposed that the 2019 figures (being the most recent and complete data available), should be applied for these purposes. These figures were as follows:

Note: 2019 was an ER revision year and therefore this represents a significant decrease in numbers.

Berkshire		Buckingham		Dorchester	
Bracknell	2001	Amersham	3542	Abingdon	1666
Bradfield	1302	Aylesbury	1684	Aston & Cuddesdon	1996
Maidenhead & Windsor	2277	Buckingham	733	Bicester & Islip	1207
Newbury	2149	Burnham & Slough	1737	Chipping Norton	914
Reading	3149	Claydon	856	Deddington	1175
Sonning	2682	Milton Keynes	1341	Henley	1159
		Mursley	671	Vale of White Horse	821
Oxford		Newport	882	Wallingford	916
Cowley	1153	Wendover	1221	Wantage	639
Oxford	2691	Wycombe	2661	Witney	1571
				Woodstock	903

5. The scheme of representation adopted by the Diocesan Synod for use in the 2018 elections, and used previously for the 2009, 2012 and 2015 elections, is as follows:

Table 1

Lay representation		Clerical representation	
Deanery aggregate electoral roll	Number to be elected	Size of deanery house of clergy	Number to be elected (Starting 20 interval 10)
<1401	2	<21	2
1401–2100	3	21–30	3
2101–2800	4	31–40	4
2801–3500	5	41–50	5
3501–4200	6	>50	6
>4200	7		

In table 1, using current data the Scheme would result in a 2021-24 Diocesan Synod of 163 elected members, 82 clergy and 81 laity, plus General Synod members and other ex officio members, giving a total Synod of 105 clergy and 95 laity. This complies with the stipulation in CRR rule 37(5) that a diocesan synod must have no fewer than 100 members and no more than 270, to include co-options and bishop’s nominees. However, there is also a stipulation that the sizes of the houses of clergy and laity should be “approximately equal”.

6. In discussion, the Agenda sub-committee questioned whether 105 vs 95 can be considered to be ‘approximately equal’. (Moreover these figures exclude the House of Bishops, thus causing a further disparity between the clerical and lay voices.) Whilst electoral roll figures taken into account on the next occasion will hopefully be a little higher as they move further from the six-year low point, clergy numbers are clearly reducing at a slower rate than electoral roll numbers. It is proposed that a modest adjustment is made to the formula to mitigate this. This could be done by either reducing clergy representation or increasing lay representation in the formula: the former is recommended as the size of the Diocesan Synod is not small. A change to clerical representation being based on multiples of 11, rather than 10, produces 4 fewer clergy places. Coupled with an expectation that Bishop’s nominations might again be primarily lay (at present there are four Bishop’s nominations, all lay) this brings the relative sizes of the two houses back to ‘approximately equal’. The proposed approach for clerical representation now recommended by Bishop’s Council is as shown below:

Table 2

Lay representation		Clerical representation	
Deanery aggregate electoral roll	Number to be elected	Size of deanery house of clergy	Number to be elected (Starting 22 interval 11)
0-1400	2	0-22	2
1401-2100	3	23-33	3
2101-2800	4	34-44	4
2801-3500	5	45-55	5
3501-4200	6	>56	6
>4201	7		

7. Any reduction in numbers does raise the potential concern that diversity might suffer as a consequence. It is proposed that this is addressed by highlighting the importance of diversity in the elections process and that use is made if needed of Bishop’s nominations and then on the next occasion other changes could be considered if desired (such as a limit on the number of consecutive terms): no such changes are however being recommended at this time.
8. For reference, breakdowns by deanery of the numbers of elected members resulting from the scheme of representation above are given in Appendix 1, and full details of the non-elected membership of the Diocesan Synod are provided in Appendix 2.

Method of election

9. Under CRR rule 42(1), the Diocesan Synod must determine whether the 2021 elections should be conducted by the first past-the-post system, or by the single transferable vote (as used for elections to the General Synod). Diocesan Synod elections are conducted by deanery, under the supervision of volunteer presiding officers appointed by the Bishop under CRR rule 38(1). In that context the first past-the post system, which has been used on all previous occasions, has the significant advantage of being very much more straightforward to administer. Whichever method is chosen, rule 42(3) provides that it will also be used in any election to fill a casual vacancy arising during the 2021–24 triennium.

The Bishop's Council recommends to the Diocesan Synod,

'That this Synod approves the recommendations that:

- (i) the scheme of representation used in the 2021 elections should be adapted for the House of Clergy as proposed in this paper and shown in table 2 and for the House of Laity using 2019 electoral roll data; and**
- (ii) the 2021 elections should be conducted by the first-past-the-post system rather than by single transferable vote.**

**APPENDIX 1: BREAKDOWN BY DEANERY OF ELECTED MEMBERSHIP OF 2021-24 SYNOD
UNDER PROPOSED SCHEME OF REPRESENTATION**

DEANERY	2018–21 Synod		2021-24 Synod Table 1		Revised clergy Nos Table 2
	Laity	Clergy	Laity	Clergy	Clergy
Bracknell	5	2	3	2	2
Bradfield	3	2	2	2	2
Maidenhead & Windsor	4	3	4	3	3
Newbury	4	4	4	3	3
Reading	6	5	5	5	5
Sonning	5	3	4	3	2
<i>Berkshire Archdeaconry</i>	27	19	22	18	17
Amersham	6	4	6	4	3
Aylesbury	3	3	3	3	3
Buckingham	2	2	2	2	2
Burnham and Slough	3	3	3	3	3
Claydon	2	2	2	2	2
Milton Keynes	3	3	2	3	3
Mursley	2	2	2	2	2
Newport	2	2	2	2	2
Wendover	3	2	2	2	2
Wycombe	5	4	4	4	3
<i>Buckingham Archdeaconry</i>	31	27	28	27	25
Abingdon	3	4	3	3	3
Aston and Cuddesdon	4	3	3	3	3
Bicester and Islip	2	3	2	3	3
Chipping Norton	2	2	2	2	2
Deddington	2	3	2	3	3
Henley	2	2	2	2	2
Vale of White Horse	2	2	2	2	2
Wallingford	2	2	2	2	2
Wantage	2	2	2	2	2
Witney	3	3	3	3	3
Woodstock	2	2	2	2	2
<i>Dorchester Archdeaconry</i>	26	28	25	27	27
Cowley	2	3	2	4	3
Oxford	5	6	4	6	6
<i>Oxford Archdeaconry</i>	7	9	6	10	9
TOTALS	91	83	81	82	78

APPENDIX 2: EX-OFFICIO, NOMINATED AND CO-OPTED MEMBERSHIP

Ex-officio members:

	House of Clergy Table 1	House of Clergy Table 2	House of Laity Table 1
Deanery elected (<i>per Appendix 1</i>)	82	78	81
EX-OFFICIO, NOMINATED AND CO-OPTED Deans of Christ Church and St George's, Windsor (<i>not included as House of Bishops</i>)	1	1	0
Archdeacons (<i>Oxford, Buckingham, Dorchester & Berkshire</i>)	4	4	0
Chair of the Board of Finance (<i>Currently clergy but could be lay in 2021</i>)	1	1	0
Chair of the Board of Education (<i>Excluded as House of Bishops</i>)	0	0	0
Chair of the DAC (lay/clergy) – <i>currently clergy and elected to DAC for further 3 years so no change</i>	1	1	0
Co-options (<i>up to 5 per house</i>) [<i>none at present</i>]	5	5	5
General Synod members (<i>Note 1</i>) These would be ex-officio members (<i>allocation per 2020 GS elections – deferred</i>)	11	11	9
TOTAL	105	101	95
House of Bishops Bishops (<i>Oxford, Buckingham, Dorchester & Berkshire</i>) Dean of Windsor	5	5	0
REVISED TOTAL	110	106	95

Note 1: Those successfully elected in the next General Synod elections (*deferred to 2021*), would be assigned to deaneries at the discretion of the Synod Secretary (usually according to area of residence but ensuring each deanery has representation).

Note 2: Bishop's nominations: The current number of nominations is 4. This can be up to 10 nominations.