

DIOCESE OF ST EDMUNDSBURY & IPSWICH GUIDANCE ON THE DRAWING UP OF DEANERY PLANS

Introduction

What follows is intended as an aid to creating or updating a deanery plan. All Deaneries are being asked to undertake this task in order that the Deaneries and the Diocese might make a strategic response to the rapidly changing ecclesial and sociological landscape.

In this landscape there is a need to encourage and strengthen the mission already taking place in our parishes, together with a need to encourage and equip where mission opportunities are not yet being used. Such mission needs people who are growing as disciples and responding to God's call in their lives. This will include, but is not limited to, those called to specific church-based ministries.

Thus, to supplement the work Deaneries have already been asked to do on the deployment of stipendiary clergy in the light of decreasing numbers, there is a need to plan for an increase in supporting lay discipleship and to encourage a vocational culture in our parishes. We are also aware in this Diocese that the present levels of Self-Supporting Ministry will not be sustained unless we actively encourage fresh vocations to this very special ministry.

It is hoped that the Deanery plans will help inform the future work of the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee and indeed all our thinking about the future shape of the ministry and mission of this diocese. Thank you for your help in this essential task.

Context

- Some Deaneries will be revising and updating a 'living document'; others may be starting again from scratch.
- The guidelines that follow are there to provide guidance as to the essential elements that are needed. Deaneries may well wish to include more.
- The plans should include a timeline with what is going to be done and by whom, and they should also indicate where help might be required in terms of knowledge of resources or personnel. They should also include an ongoing review of fruitfulness and further planning.
- Please have a time-scale of 3 to 5 years.
- Please send a draft or interim version of the plan to **Bishop Nigel** (with a copy to your **archdeacon**) by **15th April 2011** and a final version by **30th June 2011**.
- Further advice and help on Deanery plans in general can be sought from the archdeacons.
- In terms of specific areas or themes, the enclosed document give details of both people and other resources which may be helpful.

Each Deanery plan should address the following:

Discipleship

- a) How members of every parish can have easy access to a Discipleship programme (beyond Alpha, Confirmation *etc*) on an annual basis
- b) How children and young people from every parish can be helped to grow in discipleship (include the role of and involvement in schools)

Vocation

- a) How a vocational climate will be encouraged within the parishes and the Deanery
- b) What specific opportunities will be provided to help people from every parish to explore, discern and follow God's call to them

Mission

- a) Where parishes have discerned their mission focus for the next 3 to 5 years – brief details; where this has not been done – how parishes will be helped to do so
- b) An analysis of where parishes can co-operate together in areas which each has identified
- c) An assessment of whether or not the plans encompass all five marks of mission and, if need be, what other action will be taken to provide fuller involvement in all aspects

Resource issues

- a) Details of the plans for lay ministers and ordained SSMs (numbers and deployment) – related to discipleship and ministry above
- b) Details of stipendiary clergy numbers and deployment – already submitted
- c) How each parish is addressing the issues of financial health and sustainability
- d) Details of how the need for administrative support in benefices is being addressed
- e) Brief details of major plans for work on buildings, closure of buildings, or amalgamation of parishes