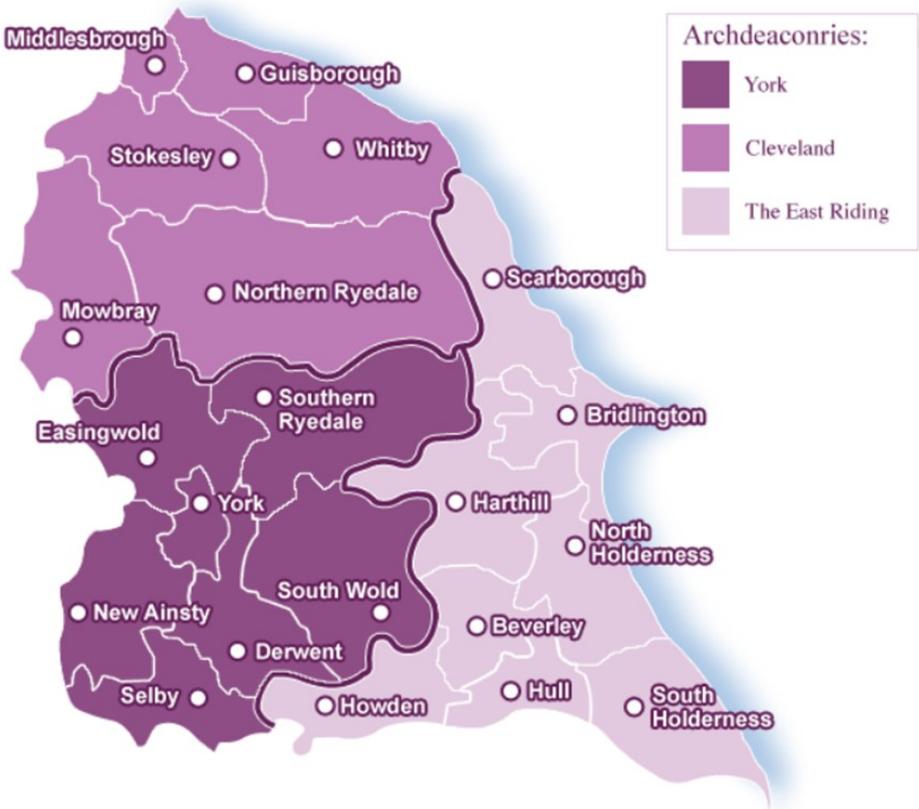


Welcome to your

DEANERY SYNOD



DIOCESE OF
YORK

Welcome to the Deanery Synod

Maybe you are an experienced Deanery Synod member or maybe you are coming to this role for the first time.

Whichever it is, you are very welcome as we come together, representing our churches and seeking God's will for our community.

Serving on Synod is one way in which we can give service to God. That might sound obvious, but it is easy to forget.

But Synod is not just about service. It is also a means of promoting mutual support and encouragement across the Deanery.

While we may have some 'organisational' business and decisions to take, these must always be a means to an end, not the end itself.

Our vision for deaneries is that they become **"a local network of churches, inspiring, influencing and leading mission and ministry."** In this, they will be characterised by three overlapping and complementary purposes – **Enabling Mission, Resourcing Ministry, and Supporting Relationships.**

This booklet has been prepared to help you to make the most of your role as a member of the Deanery Synod. It contains:

- An introduction to Synods
- A diagram of how the Synods are linked
- The functions of the Deanery
- What do I bring to the Synod?
- Responsibilities of the members of the Deanery Synod
- Frequently asked questions
- An explanation of some common terms
- Some useful addresses

There may also be some information specific to your Deanery, such as:

- A map showing all the churches in the deanery
- A list of members with contact details
- A Prayer Diary for the Deanery
- *A resumé of recent Deanery Synod meetings and decisions*

Please ask if there is any more information that would help you to take part more effectively.

Synods

What is a synod?

A synod is a formal meeting of Christians by which the Church is governed.

These have taken place from the Council of Jerusalem (described in Acts 15) onwards and such General Councils have regulated doctrine and discipline. More locally, synods meet in the various provinces of the Church to govern its affairs. The Church of England is 'episcopally led and synodically governed', and has three tiers of Synods.

The General Synod

The General Synod consists of bishops, clergy and laity who meet two or three times a year to make decisions on the doctrine and practice of the Church of England, and to make ecclesiastical law. As well as matters of worship and discipline, it also addresses wider concerns, national and international, and seeks to articulate a Christian approach to the issues of the day. Elected members serve for 5 years.

Diocesan Synods

Each of the dioceses has its own Diocesan Synod which consists of the bishops and elected laity and clergy.

The Diocesan Synod considers matters sent to it from General Synod and from deaneries, formulates diocesan policy on a wide range of issues, advises the bishop as appropriate, and votes on the funding of stipends and administration. Elected members serve for 3 years.

Deanery Synods

Each deanery has its own Deanery Synod which consists of lay members, elected every third year at Annual Parochial Church meetings, and the clergy of the deanery. The synod is jointly chaired by the Area Dean and an elected Lay Dean (formerly the Lay Chair). The Deanery Synod is a body which reflects on issues of concern to the church and community at the local level. Its primary task in our Diocese now is to be actively involved in creating the Mission and Ministry Plan for the deanery and seeking to fulfil the vision of deaneries being a 'local network of churches inspiring, influencing and leading mission and ministry. Matters can be sent to them from PCCs or from the Diocesan and General Synods. Resolutions passed by a Deanery Synod can be sent up for discussion at the higher levels. Importantly, members are the voters in elections for Diocesan Synod and General Synod.

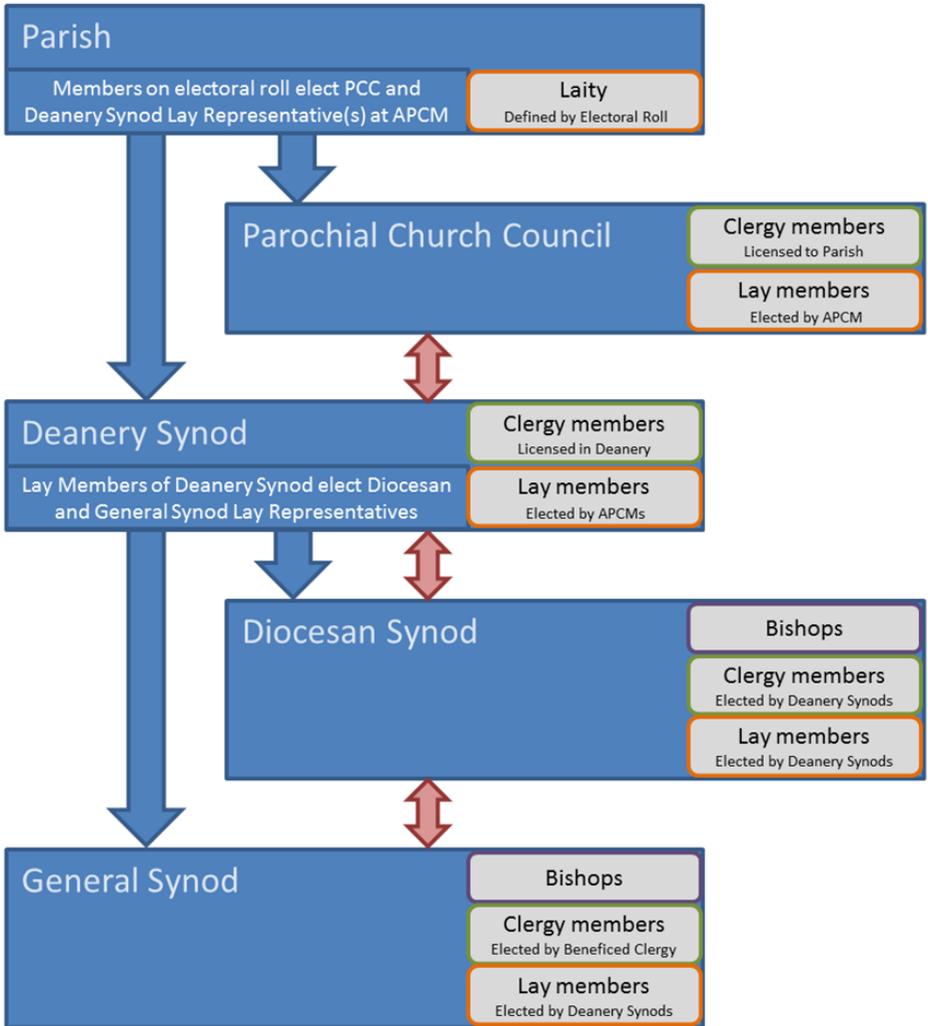
Who is on a Deanery Synod?

All of the incumbents of the Parishes in the deanery are members of the Deanery Synod. In addition, each church elects lay representatives, the number of which is determined by the size of the parish electoral roll. Members of Deanery Synod must be on the electoral roll of their own church, and are automatically members of their church's PCC.

Other facts about synods

Members of synods automatically have a seat on the tiers below them. All synod meetings are open and public (unless, very rarely, members decide to meet in closed session for a specific item), but only members of the synod are entitled to speak and vote. However, in our diocese we are encouraging non-members to attend, and they will be given permission to participate as fully as possible, though not to take part in formal votes. Dates, times and places of meeting are publicised and members of the church and public should be encouraged to come and listen to the proceedings – at General, Diocesan, and Deanery levels.

Opposite is a simplified diagram showing how the Synods relate to each other:



Functions of the Deanery Synod

In York Diocese, the primary task of our Deanery Synods is to be involved in the creation of the Deanery's Mission and Ministry Plan and to work for the fulfilling of the vision of deaneries being a 'local network of churches inspiring, influencing and leading mission and ministry'.

The Synodical Government Measure 1969, and published in the Church Representation Rules sets out these five functions of a Deanery Synod. Note that a Measure (as passed by General Synod) is equivalent to, and can amend or even repeal, an Act of Parliament relating to the Church of England.

1. To consider matters concerning the Church of England and the making of provision for such matters in relation to the Deanery; and to consider and express opinions on any other matters of religious or public interest, but not to declare the doctrine of the Church on any question.
2. To bring together the views of the parishes of the deanery on common problems, the discussion and formulation of common policies on those problems; to foster a sense of community and inter-

dependence among those parishes; and, generally, to promote in the Deanery the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

3. To make known, and so far as appropriate, put into effect any provision made by the Diocesan Synod.
4. To consider the business of Diocesan Synod, particularly any matters referred to that synod by the General Synod; and to sound out parochial opinion whenever it is required or considered appropriate to do so.
5. To raise such matters as the Deanery Synod considers appropriate with the Diocesan Synod.

In addition, each Deanery Synod is to exercise such functions as the Diocesan Synod may delegate to Deanery Synods in relation to the parishes of its Deaneries. In York Diocese, the way that Deaneries and Deanery Synods should function is set out in the Deanery Standing Orders as approved by the York Diocesan Synod.

It is planned to make these available via the Diocesan Website.

The recently approved Diocesan paper 'Developing Our Deaneries' focusses very much on the second of these 5 functions. In effect, it calls on every deanery to engage responsibly in the growth of the Church of England within in our local communities. Thus the diocesan vision for deaneries is that they become "**a local network of churches, inspiring, influencing and leading mission and ministry.**" In this, they will be char-

acterised by three overlapping and complementary purposes – **Enabling Mission, Resourcing Ministry, and Supporting Relationships.** It is acknowledged that to fulfil this vision and develop the potential of deaneries is a demanding task, which may need changes in how our deaneries function and may also need us to find new ways of working together.



Indicative outcomes from each purpose are indicated overleaf, and other possible outcomes can be seen in the models described in the paper, which can be downloaded at www.dioceseofyork/deanerydev.

Enabling Mission

- Engaging with groups and organisations which are wider than benefices, such as schools, chaplaincies in key church and secular bodies, and local councils
- Connecting with people who relate to local networks and not to places
- Identifying and facilitating partnerships among churches
- Developing specific initiatives and projects – both one off events and ongoing commitments, including the formation of new worshipping communities
- Addressing social issues across the deanery
- Working ecumenically across larger local areas

Resourcing Ministry

- Encouraging locally accessible training events for laity and clergy
- Identifying people to enable mission initiatives and offer expertise
- Sharing stories and vision which encourage change
- Assisting the Freewill Offering process through the 'Deanery Financial Partnerships'
- Finding the funds to enable deanery initiatives

Supporting Relationships

- Encouraging prayer, worship and other joint activities across the deanery
- Hosting healthy forums for different groups, including Clergy, Readers, RPAs, churchwardens, PCC treasurers and secretaries, and Parish Safeguarding Representatives
- Developing mutual support and encouragement for churches, ecumenically wherever possible. Mutual support is of particular importance during vacancies, and when significant changes or major events are being planned.
- Encouraging the sharing of expertise, including administrative support
- Encouraging benefices in making the most of the '*Leading your Church into Growth*' (LYCIG) process.

Synod meetings usually begin and conclude with prayers, where we are reminded of the things we have been discussing, and ask God to bless our work and words. In the past there has usually been a business section on the agenda giving notices, points of information and a financial update on freewill offerings.

At each meeting there is usually a focus for the main section of the meeting – speakers and/or debate and discussion. The aim is that members should leave the meeting more informed, having had an opportunity to contribute their views, and be affirmed and energised for God’s work back in their parish.

Remember that the synod belongs to its members, and its success or otherwise depends on members’ contributions. You should take time to prepare yourself for each meeting, and the Deanery Secretary will provide the agenda and minutes of meetings and other current information beforehand. But to do this, whoever is managing the deanery administration must have members’ current contact details – including e-mail address, postal address, and phone number. So remember, if any of these change, please let the Deanery Secretary know!

The Great Commission

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the very end of the age”.

Matthew 28:19-20

What do I bring to the Synod?

All members have a part to play and different gifts, abilities and experience to contribute.

The Synod will work at its best and encourage everyone's participation if these are shared.

Ability

- What I can do

Experience and Knowledge

- What I've done
- What I know about

Passion and Representation

- What I care about
- What groups I speak for e.g. a particular church tradition or position,
- my congregation and its needs, my parish and its needs, a minority view, e.g. young people, black people.

Responsibilities as a Member of the Deanery Synod

Every Lay Deanery Synod member is elected as a parish 'representative' rather than a 'delegate'.

So synod members do not carry some sort of 'block vote' or 'parish' voice, but have been selected by those who respect them in matters of faith and church practice. This means that all members of the Synod are there to represent their own views and opinions rather than hav-

ing been delegated to represent the views of others.

Note that if you wish Synod to discuss anything, first raise the matter through your PCC. The PCC can then pass a motion or refer the matter to the Deanery Leadership Team to consider it for Synod agenda and that it can be dealt with in the most appropriate way.

As a member of the Deanery Synod, you have been entrusted with some responsibilities by your parish. These include:

- Supporting the development and implementation of the mission of the deanery, under the guidance of the Area Dean and Lay Dean.
- Acting as an effective communication channel between Deanery Synod and the parish you have been elected to represent. This includes giving a report back to your PCC following each Deanery Synod meeting.
- Promoting the development and outworking of the mission of God in the parish that you represent, and using your experience in your parish as a means of encouraging and supporting other parishes in the Deanery.
- Reading any papers before meetings, attending and making an active contribution to Deanery Synod meetings.
- Establishing and maintaining links with members from other parts of the Deanery, for mutual encouragement and to improve understanding of the challenges and needs facing the church in different places.
- Considering representing the Deanery on Diocesan Synod or on one of its major committees

that require Deanery representation.

You have also been entrusted with some responsibilities, in relation to the Synod and the Deanery as a whole. In particular, as members of the Synod we are seeking to:

1. Serve the local fellowship, by which we mean:

- Always seeking the good of each parish
- Focusing on people and right relationships, not buildings or structures
- Acting in a collaborative and mutually supportive way

We therefore aim to:

- Listen before speaking
- Value and nurture the identity of each church, seeking unity in diversity
- Identify ways to support each church
 - * Individually – e.g. during vacancy or other need
 - * Together – e.g. by sharing best practice
- Support all the leaders of each parish, bringing prayer, encouragement and challenge as needed. This includes Clergy, Licensed Ministers, Readers, Wardens, Treasurers, Secretaries, Youth Workers, and others.

2. Shape the Deanery future, by which we mean:

- Taking responsibility for the future of the Deanery, which is in our own hands under God
- Making bold yet realistic plans for short / medium-term sustainability
- Undertaking proactive long-term planning for growth

3. Spurring on our friends, by which we mean:

- Exploring new ways to grow in love and in our calling
- Enabling parishes to work better together
- Learning from each other and identifying partnerships
- Supporting, unifying and inspiring

We therefore aim to:

- Make Chapter and Synod places where we spur one another on as friends
- Seek to understand better the nature of the Deanery as a team
- Identify ways of working better together
- Excel in Deanery communication



Frequently asked questions

How frequently does the Deanery Synod meet? There should be at least two meetings every year. The dates for the coming year should normally be set at the last meeting of the previous year. If dates have not been set in advance, or a date needs to be changed then one month's notice of the date or change of date of the next meeting should be given.

What is the Quorum for a Meeting? At least one third of each of the houses of Clergy and Laity must be present. However, the quorum is only really relevant when there is a need to take a vote.

Who do I tell if I cannot attend? Apologies for absence should be given to the Deanery Secretary, ideally before the meeting.

How are vacancies on the Synod filled? Every three years, lay Deanery Synod representatives are elected by their parish APCM. Vacancies which arise can be filled by a vote at any PCC meeting. The Deanery Secretary should immediately be informed of such a vote, so that the new member can be kept informed of Synod meetings etc.

Who chairs the meetings? Meetings are chaired jointly by the Area Dean and the elected Lay Dean.

Who takes the minutes of each meeting? Meetings are minuted by the Deanery Secretary, and minutes should be circulated to all Synod members prior to the next Synod meeting.

How do I get the Agenda for each meeting? All minutes, agendas and accompanying papers should be dispatched by e-mail or by post at least 7 days before each meeting.

What is the Deanery Leadership Team? The Deanery Leadership Team fulfils the statutory role of the Standing Committee. It meets regularly to set the agenda prior to Synod meetings, and to conduct other business relevant to the Deanery between Synod meetings. It is led by the Area Dean and Lay Dean, and undertakes the following key tasks:

- Sharing in the creation, implementation and review of Deanery Plans for Mission and Ministry with the Bishop, Archdeacon, and the Deanery Synod in the light of diocesan strategies
- Identifying and encouraging new projects and initiatives

- Identifying and encouraging partnership across parishes
- Functioning as the Deanery Standing Committee, and the Mission and Pastoral Committee

The Leadership Team will normally consist of between 6 and 12 members, to include the four key roles of Area Dean, Lay Dean, Deanery Financial Adviser and Deanery Secretary/Administrator. Other members may be included to represent the variety of ministries in the deanery.

How can I get an item on the agenda? A motion can be passed by a PCC for debate at the next Deanery Synod. If that happens, the minutes of the PCC meeting should be sent as soon as possible to the Deanery Secretary, for the matter to be included in the agenda for the next Deanery Synod. Alternatively, items for discussion may be suggested to a member of the Deanery Leadership Team, for consideration when setting the agenda for the next Deanery Synod.

Some Common Terms

What is a Diocese?

A diocese is a territorial unit of administration, under the oversight of a bishop (or in the case of Canterbury and York, an Archbishop), which is divided into parishes under the care of priests. Our diocese, the Diocese of York, is a family of 607 churches and 127 schools in 470 parishes. These parishes are grouped into 21 Deaneries, which are further grouped into 3 Archdeaconries. In our diocese, the Archbishop is supported in his work by 4 suffragan bishops.

What is a Deanery?

A deanery is a formally linked group of parishes within a particular area of the diocese. Parishes seek to work together on common aspects of parish ministry and church life in general, including finance. Each deanery is led by an Area Dean and a Lay Dean. The deanery has the role of fostering mutual support between its parishes, joint planning of key elements of pastoral life and mission, and sharing of resources. In leading the implementation of the Church's mission, the Area and Lay Deans provide a link with the archdeacon.

What is a Parish?

A defined area of a local community within the diocese comprising all those who live within it, whether they are religious or not. Most parishes are formed on a geographical basis. The word 'parish' is used both in this sense and in the sense of those who see themselves as belonging to the local church. A parish has its own church building or buildings and is under the oversight of a Rector, a Vicar or a Priest-in-Charge. Such priests are responsible for anyone who lives within the parish, and for providing the congregation with Sunday services, other occasional services – for example, marriages and funerals - and ensuring that pastoral care is offered to all.

What is a Benefice?

Strictly speaking this is the living itself, an ecclesiastical office held by a priest - the incumbent - and for which a stipend is paid, but the word benefice normally defines one or more parishes served by an incumbent.

What is a Local Ecumenical Partnership?

A local community of Christians, which may have its own church premises and is usually formed on a geographical basis. Its ministerial team consists of clergy from other denominations as well as the Church of England. Some parishes have been re-organised to work on this basis.

What is a Chapter?

The term chapter comes from the monastic tradition when all the brothers or sisters of a religious community would gather daily to read a chapter of their rule. In doing this, they built up their common life and deepened their common commitment to following Jesus. In the Deanery, the Chapter is made up of all the clergy in deanery, and now lay ministers often meet with them as a 'Greater Chapter'. They all meet under the guidance of the Area Dean for mutual support and encouragement, and for theological reflection, and this is separate to the running of the Deanery.

Useful Addresses

York Diocesan Office: Amy Johnson Way, Clifton Moor, York YO30 4XT
01904 699500; office@yorkdiocese.org

Diocese of York website:
www.dioceseofyork.org.uk

Deaneries Development Group:
The Ven Andy Broom 01482 881659; ader@yorkdiocese.org

York Diocese Mission and Pastoral and Synodical Matters Team:
Shirley Davies 01904 699507; shirley.davies@yorkdiocese.org
Kim Phillips 01904 699508; kim.phillips@yorkdiocese.org

York Diocese Communications Manager:
Martin Sheppard 01904 699530; comms@yorkdiocese.org

The Church of England Website: www.cofe.anglican.org

The General Synod Office: Church House, Great Smith St, London,
SW1P 3NZ, synod@c-of-e.org.uk

Church House Bookshop: 31 Great Smith St, London SW1P 3NZ