

Our plan for future is a true collaboration

Bishop Jonathan has shared the plan for mission, ministry and finance that will guide our diocese over the next three years

IT'S a plan that aims to guide our mission, ministry and finances – and you've helped to put it together.

Bishop Jonathan described the plan as a living document and a tool for those overseeing diocesan life for the next three years. It includes preliminary implementation plans drawn up by all seven of our deaneries, as well as key members of our diocese's executive team.

That means it's neither top-down, or bottom-up, but a genuine collaboration. And that dialogue will continue, as this working document continues to be used in practice over the next few months and years.

Bishop Jonathan said: "This is a working tool, which will enable our executive team to have an overview of the operation of the whole diocese. It reflects the voices of deaneries, as their entire deanery plans have been incorporated into it. It's genuinely the fruit of extensive collaboration.

"I hope its use in practice will build confidence, through enabling good, informed decisions to be made in a co-ordinated way. The Plan holds together vision and strategy, implementation and finance. It's a living document, with nothing fixed or set in stone."

The Mission, Ministry and Finance Plan 2022-25 was drawn together from March to November 2022,

using existing deanery plans as a starting point. Bishop Jonathan had asked our seven deaneries to revisit those plans through the prism of 'a vision and two priorities'. The vision is for a diocese with Jesus Christ at its centre, called to live, pray and serve the Kingdom, and the two strategic priorities are: growing faith among children and young people; and the spiritual care and nurture of older people through Anna Chaplaincy.

Each area dean and lay chair – latterly accompanied by deanery finance chairs – had meetings with Bishop Jonathan and their respective archdeacon to help to develop their ideas into a series of practical actions.

Among the plans that **Bishop's Waltham deanery** would like to implement are to recruit a deanery youth adviser, review the provision of church buildings, develop plans for transformational worship, and develop some pioneer work in the new Boorley Green housing development.

In **Fareham deanery**, a series of covenanted partnerships between parishes is being proposed. Leaders there are keen to move forward with a church plant and C of E school in the new Welborne development, learning lessons from what happened in Whiteley. They also see Hope Church, Whiteley, as a key mission opportunity, especially as it is now located within Cornerstone C of E Primary School.

And there's a desire for a deanery-wide mission priest and greater Christian presence in secondary schools.

The **Gosport deanery** plans include enhancing families, children and youth ministry across the deanery, and the development of school chaplaincy. Anna Chaplaincy will also be established at deanery level, to develop ministry to the elderly. They also want to grow ordained ministry provision in Alverstoke.

Leaders in **Havant deanery** have put forward plans to promote every-person ministry, to establish a new Christian community in Horndean, and to recruit a pioneer minister for the Berewood development, west of Waterlooville. The deanery's proposals on training and affirming various kinds of lay ministry have already been noted by Diocesan Synod. Parishes are exploring ways of working more closely together.

In the **Isle of Wight deanery**, there was a feasibility study in 2021 to examine the future shape of ministry in the north-east of the island. Although its focus was on Ryde, its prime purpose was to model for the deanery a way of developing strategies and plans that support the diocese's vision. It

demonstrated how this is working well in one of the study parishes.

Among the other ideas to emerge are to create a single plurality to serve the town of Ryde and to plant a new congregation with Harbour Church and the island's pioneering ministry, aimed at children, young people, families and young adults. As those plans come to fruition, other island parishes can be resourced to consider similar ways forward.

The **Petersfield deanery** is keen to create a deanery-wide strategy to reach children, teenagers and their parents, and wants to develop better links with schools. The deanery is keen on the 'ministry of presence', with church leaders living and visible in each parish, and are keen to develop lay ministry and Anna Chaplaincy. And they would like to see pioneer ministry developed in the Whitehill area.

And in the **Portsmouth deanery**, plans include the development of pioneer ministry in the south-east of the city, the development of work with schools and colleges, and the expansion of the Bridgeway pioneer project to help young adults who are in need. The plan includes the recruitment of a deanery children and youth adviser and a deanery co-ordinator for Anna Chaplaincy.

Those plans from each deanery have been put alongside plans from some central diocesan bodies and staff. The Diocesan Plan includes input from our cathedral, the Council for Social Responsibility and environmental advisory group, as well as those supporting



parishes and schools in church planting, communications, finance, discipleship, pioneering, education and stewardship.

Each deanery's leadership team will be invited to share their ideas with the Bishop's Staff Team over the next few months, and that dialogue will help to refine and focus the entire Diocesan Plan by Spring/Summer 2023.

One consequence of a necessary reduction in the number of stipendiary clergy posts across the diocese is a new emphasis on self-supporting and lay ministry. Bishop Jonathan told Diocesan Synod members in November that he plans to ordain a new 'Michaelmas cohort' of unpaid clergy, who could be deployed across the diocese, as needs be. They are currently being recruited, and the plan is to ordain them at Michaelmas 2023.

For more details, see: www.portsmouth.anglican.org/strategy