

**An Application to the Dioceses Commission  
to revive the Suffragan See of the Isle of Wight**

*Inside front cover (from the Ordinal)*

*Bishops are ordained to be shepherds of Christ's flock and guardians of the faith of the apostles, proclaiming the gospel of God's kingdom and leading his people in mission. Obedient to the call of Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit, they are to gather God's people and celebrate with them the sacraments of the new covenant. Thus formed into a single communion of faith and love, the Church in each place and time is united with the Church in every place and time.*

*Inside back cover (from the ordination and consecration of bishops)*

*Receive this pastoral staff. Keep watch over the flock of which God has appointed you shepherd. Encourage the faithful, restore the lost, build up the body of Christ, for the sake of him who gave his life for the sheep, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## **1. Introduction**

To be written by Bishop Jonathan.

## **2. Context**

### Area, people, and communities

The Diocese of Portsmouth covers south-east Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, and is very varied, embracing a wide range of geography and demographics, including the village parishes of West Wight and the South Downs National Park, and the urban and suburban communities of Portsmouth, Fareham, and Gosport. The Royal Navy and University of Portsmouth are the biggest local employers, but other work ranges from farming to innovative businesses, with tourism being a significant sector. (Its seasonal nature, especially on the Isle of Wight, also contributes to significant deprivation.) The Solent forms a real, physical barrier between the Isle of Wight and the mainland, with cost, ferry timetables and weather affecting the ease of travel and communication.

There is a huge variation in deprivation levels in the diocese: from 58 to 12,973 in parish IMD rankings. Overall, 62% of the population would describe themselves as Christian, with 10% part of another faith group, and 28% describing themselves as having no religion.

The Diocese is divided into three archdeaconries: Portsmouth, which covers the deaneries of Portsmouth and Havant (currently 0.5 acting archdeacon), the Meon, which covers the deaneries of Fareham, Gosport, Petersfield and Bishop's Waltham (full-time archdeacon) and the Isle of Wight (0.5 archdeacon). For further diocesan statistics, see appendix x

## A diocese of Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking disciples: our priorities

The Bishop of Portsmouth is now three years into his role. He is an elected member of the Archbishops' Council, and as Chair of the National Society and Lead Bishop on Education, is able to make intentional links between the Church of England's national strategy and that of the Diocese.

From the beginning of his ministry here, +Jonathan has brought a new ethos to the diocese, working with deaneries to shape a vision and strategy with children and young people at its heart, and with older people valued and celebrated. Underpinning this vision and strategy development has been an intentional culture for growth, with a renewed sense of openness and accountability. This has included recruiting for growth through intentional appointments, enabling and equipping significantly more lay leaders, discerning and presenting Michaelmas cohorts for ordination, and training and commissioning nearly 70 Anna Chaplains, together with Anna Friends – all supported by better financial management and accountability. All of this has enabled a sense of common purpose, as reflected in our diocesan vision: we aspire to be *a rejuvenating community of Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking disciples*.

Our diocesan strategy is called a 'Strategy for Rejuvenation'. This reflects our intentional prioritising of children and youth, and our aim to create flourishing churches for all ages. Within our Rejuvenating strategy, there are three focus areas:

### *Revive: inspired leadership*

We want the faith of all in spiritual leadership in our diocese to be vibrant, growing, deep, and attractive. Therefore our key priorities will be: to support all clergy in deepening and refreshing their own faith, to develop a common vision throughout our diocese and invite deaneries and parishes to create their own strategies and plans for revival and revitalisation, and to recruit gifted and experienced Diocesan Ministry and Mission Leaders, to support parish leaders in doing this. In the coming year, we will be piloting nine networks of clergy and lay leaders which we are calling 'cairns', which we will support with encouragement, advice, finance and coaching training. Our plan is then to launch cairns across the diocese.

### *Revitalise: helping churches to develop and grow disciples*

Flowing from our *Revive* focus, through *Revitalise*, we will support churches to put credible discipleship pathways in place, where every leader and church member seeks to engage with the world in loving service and action, evangelise in words and deeds, establish disciples firmly centred in Jesus, and equip them for mission. We plan to initiate a range of projects to deliver growth, including Choir Church, and Youthscape LaunchPad and Essentials, and the development of a formal training route for children's and youth workers.

### *Renew: major growth*

This is the church-planting focus of our strategy, and consists of the continuation of existing church plants, and the creation of three new major plants, each projected to deliver 300 new worshippers, and an intra-parish plant, projected to deliver 100+ new worshippers, together with thriving children and youth communities in each case. We are a pilot diocese for Flourish worshipping communities in schools, we intend to set up 'Myriad' training to equip parish teams for further intra-parish planting, and we are developing plans for further major plants in the future, together with sustainable operating models for all plants.

## Collaboration

Portsmouth Diocese collaborates with Guildford and Winchester Dioceses on IT, with Guildford and Chichester on net zero carbon work, and with Winchester on finance. Portsmouth and Winchester Dioceses have the only joint Diocesan Board of Education in the country.

### **3. The need for a suffragan bishop**

#### Geography and demographics

The Diocese is ranked 34<sup>th</sup> in England, by population, as a diocese: though it is known as a small diocese, it is in reality a big diocese in a small area. Dioceses with considerably smaller populations (for example, St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich – 684,000; Truro – 573,000, as against Portsmouth – 790,000) have a suffragan bishop. The relatively small area is also deceptive, as the Solent presents a particular challenge in integrating the Isle of Wight with the rest of the Diocese. It is intended that the Bishop of the Isle of Wight would live on the Island, but exercise a whole-diocese ministry. They would therefore ensure much greater integration within the Diocese than is currently possible, strengthening links and bonds.

#### Relation to the Diocesan Bishop

As noted above, the Bishop of Portsmouth has significant national roles; in addition to holding the education portfolio for the Church of England – one of the largest briefs - and being a member of Archbishops' Council, he is currently second in line to enter the House of Lords. He wishes to commit himself wholeheartedly to these roles, without his position as brother and Bishop to the Diocese being undermined. Whilst therefore there is a synergy between these roles and his diocesan life, the magnitude of them, in addition to his significant diocesan responsibilities, argues for the appointment of a suffragan bishop alongside him, to allow him to exercise his additional ministries in a way which is fruitful for the Diocese of Portsmouth.

Additionally, Bishop Jonathan wishes to diffuse and disperse authority, and specifically to share episcopal ministry. The suffragan bishop would exercise a ministry of presence, and bring a different perspective from that of the diocesan bishop, and this would be of benefit to the whole diocese.

#### Episcopal development

From the perspective of the appointee, Portsmouth would be an excellent, varied diocese in which to be a suffragan bishop. Bishop Jonathan envisages this as a development post, and would be committed to his ministry of mentoring, supporting and encouraging his colleague, having for some years fulfilled this role nationally for suffragan bishops.

### **4. Priorities for the Bishop of the Isle of Wight**

Key priorities for the suffragan bishop would be:

- Exercising episcopal ministry alongside the diocesan bishop, and exercising leadership within a collaborative framework. Sharing those particular aspects of episcopal ministry which come

through consecration and ordination – enabling pastoral care, mission and ministry to flourish, and leading strategically.

- Enabling and strengthening the bonds between the Isle of Wight and the rest of the Diocese.
- Being aligned with, and bringing a different context and different theological outlook to, our diocesan vision and strategy.
- Holding oversight for a departmental responsibility and portfolio across the whole diocese.

## **5. The Portfolio: Ministry and Discipleship**

It is Bishop Jonathan’s intention that the Bishop of the Isle of Wight will oversee the leadership of the newly-formed Ministry and Discipleship Team for the Diocese.

[+Jonathan to write this section]

Organisational charts – see appendix y

### **Role description & person specification**

This section sets out a summary of the leadership roles of the Bishop of the Isle of Wight, as well as a person specification, as agreed by the Bishop’s Staff Team, Diocesan Synod, and Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee. As with any role profile, it will need to be kept under review, and it will be discussed with the Diocesan Bishop and amended as appropriate.

The Role Description and Person Specification should be considered in the context of the vows and duties undertaken at ordination and consecration as a bishop, and of the Canons of the Church of England.

### **Role**

Bishop of the Isle of Wight

### **Purpose of the role:**

To provide transformational episcopal leadership in the Diocese of Portsmouth, in close collaboration with the Diocesan Bishop, and to oversee the leadership and development of the Ministry and Discipleship Team.

### **Main responsibilities of the role:**

- To be an episcopal colleague and critical friend of the Bishop of Portsmouth, playing a full part in the collegial life of the Bishop’s Staff Team, and sharing in the leadership, oversight and development of the Diocese.
- To integrate more fully the life and witness of the Church on the Isle of Wight and the Church in the rest of the Diocese.

- To share in the collegiality of the Bishop’s Staff Team, in prayer and hospitality, in joy and lament, and in work.
- To oversee the work of the Director of the Ministry and Discipleship Team, who holds responsibility for the development of mission and ministry, lay and ordained, across the Diocese of Portsmouth.
- To ensure that the work of the of this Team aligns, and enables the Diocese to align, with the Church of England’s national priorities:
  - to be a church that is younger and more diverse;
  - to be a church where mixed ecology is the norm – where every person in England has access to an enriching and compelling community of faith by adding new churches and new forms of church to our parishes, schools and chaplaincies;
  - to become a church of missionary disciples where all God’s people are released to live the Christian life.
- To share with Archdeacons and Area Deans in making clergy appointments, offering pastoral care and support to lay and ordained ministers, and engaging diligently in the clergy MDR process.
- To exercise responsibility for safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and the provision of pastoral care for victims and survivors; to share in our Diocesan Safeguarding Vision and Strategy, and our creation of a culture which is coherent with the safeguarding policies of the Church of England, and in which all will flourish.
- To exercise all usual episcopal functions, such as making pastoral visits to parishes, conducting confirmations and ordinations, and instituting priests to new ministries.
- To undertake other appropriate lead functions as agreed with the Diocesan Bishop.
- To proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ with confidence, through word and action.
- To assist in relating the local church to the national and international Church (and vice versa) through participation in the College of Bishops, regional bishops’ meetings, ecumenical gatherings, and diocesan links.
- To continue personal, professional, theological, and ministerial development and formation.
- To uphold the Five Guiding Principles as set out in the House of Bishops’ Declaration on the Ministry of Priests and Bishops, and to promote the flourishing of churches across the range of the theological breadth of the Church of England.
- To discharge all other duties as set out in canon law.

## **Person Specification**

We seek someone who, in the following areas:

### **Spiritual life and personality**

- is confident in Christ, and grounded in their life of prayer, able to attend to their own spiritual needs, and to pastor others;
- is at home in their own church tradition but able to work and

relate well, respectfully, and with joy across the breadth of the Church of England;

- is approachable, empathic, and emotionally resilient;
- appreciates the pastoral implications of good administration, and is able to deliver on this;

## **Theology**

- is theologically literate, and is capable of creative and innovative theological reflection that is faithful to Christian tradition;
- can articulate a clear and compelling theology of Ministry and Discipleship;
- allows this theology to inform and shape their ministry;

## **Mission and worship**

- is able to preach, teach and share the Good News in a compelling, loving, inspiring, and contextually sensitive way;

## **Previous experience**

- has been ordained priest in the Church of England (or a church in full communion with it) for at least six years.
- Has substantial and varied ministry experience.
- Has a track-record of Christian discipleship and nurture across all ages, enabling others to

develop their vocations and to fulfil their potential.

### **Engagement in community life and public issues**

- is a confident articulator of the Christian faith in the public square, with a breadth of perspective stretching beyond the confines of the Church;
- is comfortable using a variety of media;
- is able to engage well with people and agencies from different sectors of society, and with public and civic life;

### **Safeguarding**

- takes safeguarding issues with the utmost seriousness, understanding the role of a suffragan bishop in this area, working with their diocesan bishop and safeguarding team;

### **Leadership, oversight, and working with others**

- is a self-aware and confident leader;
- is able to deal positively, sensitively, and decisively when required, with challenge and conflict;
- is aware of the dynamics of power, and confident in holding it whilst being mindful of its possible abuse;
- always seeks the flourishing of others;
- is emotionally intelligent and able to form strong, purposeful and

fruitful relationships both with individuals and teams;

### **Management of resources and structures**

- is experienced in issues of organisational leadership and financial discipline, understanding due accountability and is confident in exercising 'cabinet' responsibility;

### **Appendices**

- As in separate appendix document.