

John Preston

DIOCESAN SECRETARY

To: The Interested Parties

The Bishop of Dudley

The Archdeacon of Worcester

The Archdeacon of Dudley

All Licensed Clergy of the Diocese of Worcester

All PCCs in the Diocese of Worcester (sent via the PCC Secretary or First Named Churchwarden where no PCC Secretary is listed)

All Secretaries of the Deanery Synods

20th July 2020

MISSION AND PASTORAL MEASURE 2011 ALL DEANERIES IN THE DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

The Bishop of Worcester has asked me to consult with you about a proposal to reduce the number of deaneries in the diocese by way of a Bishop's Pastoral Order, and which would also see the termination of the Bowbrook and Wychebrook Group Ministry. This proposal, the rationale behind it and the draft Bishop's Pastoral Order is set out in the accompanying documentation.

If you wish to respond to this consultation, I should be grateful if you would let me have your views as soon as possible and not later than **Friday 4th December**. There are no rights of objection to the making of a Bishop's Pastoral Order but the Bishop will consider all points made in response to this consultation before deciding whether to make an Order, either in the form of the draft or incorporating amendments suggested by consultees (if these are within the scope of a Bishop's Pastoral Order).

Please also let me know if you would like any further information regarding the effect of these proposals or about the procedure for making the Order, or please do get in touch with your Archdeacon if a conversation would be helpful.

I will be in contact with you again in due course to provide you with either a copy of the made Order, or the Bishop's reasons for either amending or withdrawing it.



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Diocesan Secretary

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CONSULTATION ON DEANERY SIMPLIFICATION

This paper provides an explanation of what we are proposing and why. The draft Bishop's Pastoral Order is in Annex Three. The covering letter explains how you can respond to the consultation.

In summary:

The proposal is that we move from the current thirteen deaneries to six. Larger groupings offer a broader canvas for mission planning and offer more flexibility in deploying ministry to better meet pastoral and missional needs.

The thinking in more detail:

The rationale for simplifying deaneries is that...

- Our current deaneries are too small. The size of a deanery synod¹ should ideally be between 50 and 150 members. Annex One with details of the current deaneries show that only 4 of our 13 deaneries meet the minimum thresholds – if every place was filled, and no deanery is bigger than 59 (Worcester East).
- This is limiting our capability to change where stipendiary clergy are placed. Deaneries which are too small limit the potential for re-organisation and creative thinking in ministry deployment.
- Some current deanery boundaries don't permit easy mission planning. The Metropolitan borough of Dudley is spread across three deaneries, and the City of Worcester is divided across two. The new proposal addresses this.
- It is more sensible to carry out significant restructuring now, than to make a series of amendments over time, although it would still be possible to move parishes between deaneries later should that be needed.
- Why are six deaneries proposed rather than a different number? First, our churches currently elect 575 Deanery Synod members, and if you take 100 as the average recommended size of a deanery synod, then 6 would be the natural result. Second, this proposal largely unites existing deaneries to ease the change process, with only the current Droitwich deanery being pragmatically divided into different new deaneries. Going to a larger or smaller number would lead to more disruptive change.

What is a deanery for?

This is an important, but complex question with a number of strands:

- First, Deanery Synods form a part of the Church's legal governance processes – for example, they are the electorate for General Synod, and may be asked to discuss and report on issues passed out from General or Diocesan Synod.
- They tend to be the principal discussion forum for larger groupings of parishes, and have been the areas that have been used for clergy chapter groupings, although neither needs necessarily to be the case.
- They are a natural forum for parishes to discuss collaborative mission across a particular town or area.

¹ According to the Church Representation Rules, Rule 21(1)

- Conversations about clergy deployment and collaboration most naturally take place within a deanery, although it should not be limited by deanery boundaries.

The Detailed Proposal

It is proposed to move to six deaneries, on the premise of each having a mix of urban and rural, with a town (or towns) working in partnership with their rural outlying areas.

1. **GREATER DUDLEY DEANERY** uniting Dudley, Kingswinford & Stourbridge Deaneries. We examined establishing two smaller deaneries – Dudley North and Dudley South, but the natural dividing line ended up with too small a Dudley South.
2. **REDDITCH & BROMSGROVE DEANERY** which would be made up of the current Bromsgrove Deanery plus the Wychbrook benefice and the benefice of Elmley Lovett w Hampton Lovett & Elmbridge w Rushock and Hartlebury and Ombersley w Doverdale currently in Droitwich Deanery.
3. **KIDDERMINSTER & STOURPORT DEANERY** uniting the current Kidderminster and Stourport deaneries.
4. **WORCESTER DEANERY** uniting the Worcester East and Martley & Worcester West Deaneries, plus the Saltway Team Ministry from Droitwich Deanery.
5. **MALVERN & UPTON DEANERY** uniting the Malvern and Upton deaneries.
6. **PERSHORE & EVESHAM DEANERY** uniting the Pershore and Evesham deaneries plus the Bowbrook benefice from Droitwich Deanery.

As a result of the constituent benefices being in different deaneries, it is proposed to terminate the Bowbrook and Wychebrook group ministry.

The Deaneries of Greater Dudley and Redditch & Bromsgrove would form the Archdeaconry of Dudley, the other four the Archdeaconry of Worcester.

Annex One provides details of how this option would look in terms of numbers, and **Annex Two** provides a map showing the proposed deanery boundaries. **Annex Three** provides the draft Bishop's Pastoral Order.

Further points:

- This proposal has been shaped by discussion with the Rural Deans and Lay Chairs, and with the Diocesan Mission, Pastoral and Resources Committee. The concept of simplification was raised at the Open Conversations, where it was broadly supported.
- We believe now is the time to move to the title of Area Dean rather than Rural Dean given the range of contexts that we have.
- Feedback has suggested that the proposed Greater Dudley Deanery feels large. The proposed deanery would have 135 potential places on the Deanery synod if all vacancies were filled, and therefore be below the 150 maximum. The next two points explain how we might make a larger deanery work.
- Having larger deaneries doesn't prevent smaller mission areas meeting together, including with ecumenical colleagues. The Deanery Synod doesn't need to meet often (the current minimum is 2 meetings per year, but we could decide to reduce this to one). The preferred solution might be different in different deaneries.
For the largest deaneries, it might be that clergy preferred to meet in smaller chapters, and that a Sub-Dean could be appointed. We will also need to consider appropriate workload for Area Deans, and whether some administrative support is needed.

- We will take the opportunity to ensure that we support strong team-working within the deanery, including the lay roles of Lay Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Clear role descriptions would be drawn up for both lay and clerical officers and training provided.
- There could be endless debates as to where rural benefices and parishes best fit. Our aim would be for new deaneries to have very porous boundaries and work relationally so that future 'transfers' could happen more easily.
- Larger deaneries would not be disadvantaged in terms of representation at Diocesan Synod as the number of places available to a deanery is linked to the size of the deanery (number of clergy, total of electoral rolls).
- All parishes will continue to have representation on a Deanery Synod.

How is the change brought about?

Creating, amending or dissolving deaneries is now a much simpler process than previously. All of these can be done by a single 'Bishop's Pastoral Order' which would follow widespread consultation. Previously this would have required a "scheme" under the Mission and Pastoral Measure. A draft of the Bishop's Pastoral Order is at **Annex Three**.

ANNEX ONE

Current:

DEANERY	CLERGY	CHURCHES	Church Members	Population	Max Members
EVESHAM	6.0	23	581	44996	50
MALVERN	6.0	15	910	37884	46
MARTLEY & WW	5.0	22	414	41582	42
PERSHORE	7.0	35	762	26562	52
UPTON	4.0	20	376	16761	34
WORCESTER EAST	10.0	14	881	102339	59
BROMSGROVE	10.5	18	978	117470	53
DROITWICH	5.0	26	620	44018	34
DUDLEY	10.0	16	776	114019	44
KINGSWINFOR	11.0	17	768	151130	44
KIDDERMINSTER	8.8	25	801	76900	45
STOURBRIDGE	8.0	17	947	72713	47
STOURPORT	3.8	19	236	33166	25
TOTAL	95.1	267	9050	879540	575

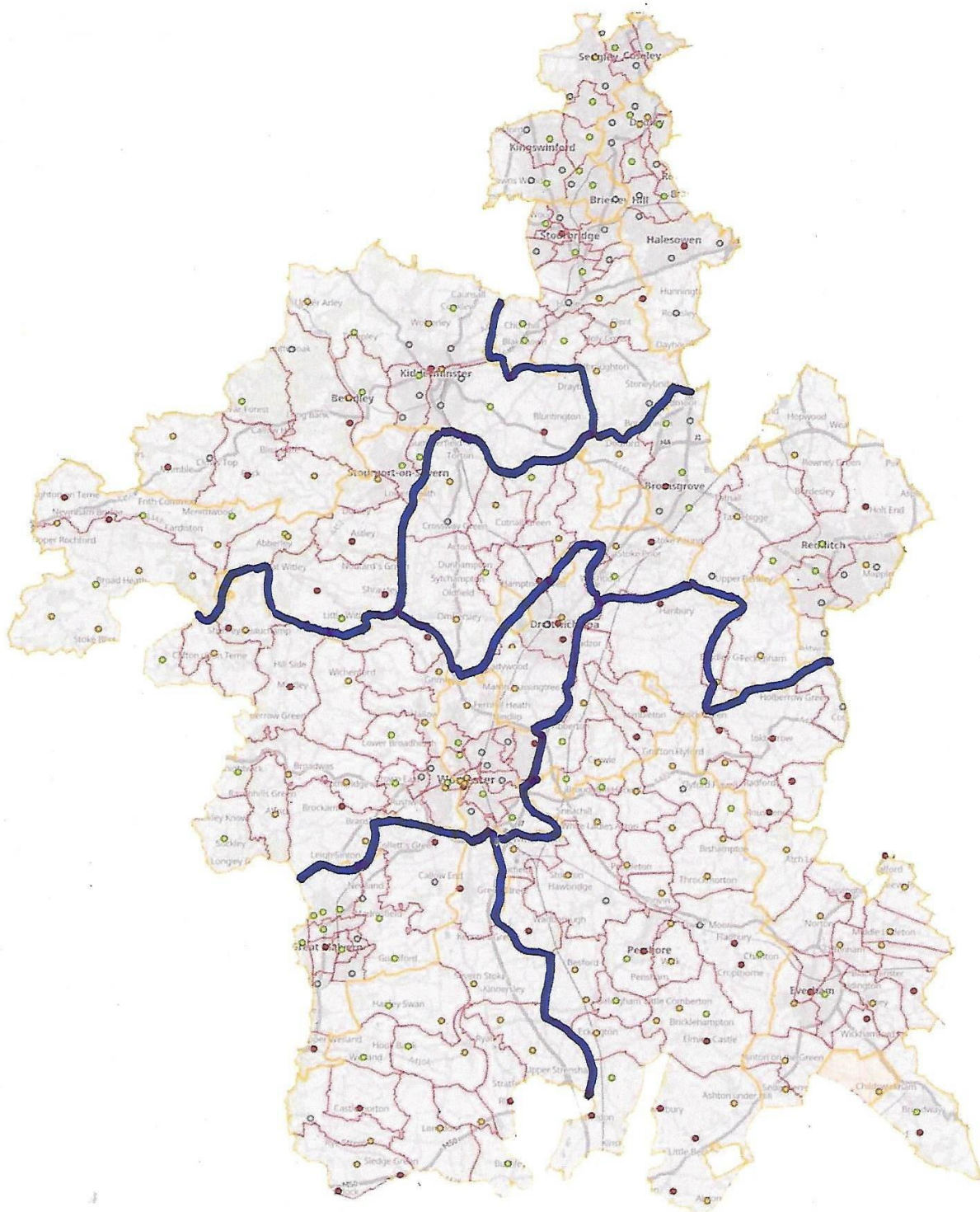
New Proposal

DEANERY	CLERGY	CHURCHES	Church Members	Population	Max Members
GREATER DUDLEY	29.0	50	2491	337862	135
REDDITCH & BROMSGROVE	12.5	31	1251	131520	74
WORCESTER	17.0	42	1515	169927	107
KIDDERMINSTER & STOURPORT	12.6	44	1037	110066	70
MALVERN & UPTON	10.0	35	1286	54645	80
PERSHORE & EVESHAM	14.0	65	1470	75520	109
TOTAL	95.1	267	9050	879540	575

In terms of Archdeaconry split:

DEANERY	CLERGY	CHURCHES	Church Members	Population
Archdeaconry of Dudley	41.5	81	3742	469382
Archdeaconry of Worcester	53.6	186	5308	410158
% in Archdeaconry of Dudley	43.6%	30.3%	41.3%	53.4%
TOTAL	95.1	267	9050	879540

ANNEX TWO – Map showing proposed deanery boundaries



ANNEX THREE

Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011
The Deaneries and Archdeaconries
in the Diocese of Worcester and termination
of the Bowbrook and Wychebrook Group Ministry

DRAFT - Bishop's Pastoral Order

Under Part 5A of the Measure

WHEREAS

I, JOHN, by Divine Permission, Lord Bishop of Worcester, after consultation with the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee of the diocese of Worcester and such other consultations as are required by Section 54A(4) of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011, am satisfied:

1. That the deanery of Dudley, the deanery of Kingswinford and the deanery of Stourbridge in the archdeaconry of Dudley shall be united to create a new deanery which shall be named 'The Deanery of Greater Dudley' and shall belong to the archdeaconry of Dudley;
2. That the benefice of Wychebrook and the benefice of Elmley Lovett w Hampton Lovett & Elmbridge w Rushock and Hartlebury and Ombersley w Doverdale in the deanery of Droitwich shall be transferred to the Deanery of Bromsgrove in the archdeaconry of Dudley, which shall be renamed the 'Deanery of Redditch and Bromsgrove' in the archdeaconry of Dudley;
3. That the deanery of Kidderminster and the deanery of Stourport in the archdeaconry of Dudley shall be united to create a new deanery which shall be named 'The Deanery of Kidderminster and Stourport' and shall belong to the archdeaconry of Worcester;
4. That the deanery of Worcester East and the Deanery of Martley and Worcester West in the archdeaconry of Worcester be united to create a new deanery which shall be named 'the Deanery of Worcester' and shall belong to the archdeaconry of Worcester;
5. That the benefice of The Saltway Team Ministry in the deanery of Droitwich shall be transferred to the Deanery of Worcester;
6. That the deanery of Malvern and the deanery of Upton in the archdeaconry of Worcester shall be united to create a new deanery which shall be named 'The Deanery of Malvern and Upton' and shall belong to the archdeaconry of Worcester;
7. That the deanery of Pershore and the deanery of Evesham in the archdeaconry of Worcester shall be united to create a new deanery which shall be named 'The Deanery of Pershore and Evesham' and shall belong to the archdeaconry of Worcester;
8. That the benefice of Bowbrook in the Deanery of Droitwich shall be transferred to the Deanery of Pershore and Evesham;
9. That the Bowbrook and Wychebrook Group Ministry be terminated;
10. And that the deanery of Droitwich shall be dissolved.

I, John, Lord Bishop of Worcester, do therefore make this Order under my seal this day of 2020. This order shall come into operation upon the first day of the month following the date of it being made by the Bishop.

SIGNED by)
JOHN, Lord Bishop of Worcester)
And SEALED with his Episcopal Seal)
In the presence of)