

Diocesan Plan for Change & Renewal FAQs

FINANCES & MMF

Q1. Why can't you divide that £22 million by the 12 deaneries and let us get on with it?

Most of the £22million is shared in exactly that way through mission funding and through support for parish ministry, without it the MMF call would be much higher. Some things are better done together, for instance rather than 12 teams to support our historic buildings we think that one program across the diocese, with national support and working with other dioceses, will be better use of our resources.

Q2. Why are you saying its £22 million when half is already committed?

Because £22million is the amount that we are proposing to use from our reserves over the next 10 years, we will consult on that over the summer and bring the proposals back to Synod later this year.

Q3. With the rising inflation, will this money last 10 years?

Diocesan reserves and national funding are not a magic wand, and inflation could become a serious problem. We are going to need to grow the church if we want to maintain the sort of ministry and coverage that we are accustomed to.

Q4. What happens after 10 years?

We want to avoid a "cliff edge" so we will keep "year 11" under review as we see how the shape of the diocese changes and what happens to our reserves, we would expect to be clearer on this about six years in.

Q5. What's the real terms value increase of assets in the last 20 years?

In 2001 the total value of assets on the balance sheet was about £33m, according to the Bank of England CPI calculator that would be worth about £50m in 2021 the actual figure was £113m.

Q6. Isn't CPI inflation running higher than capital appreciation: i.e. aren't these assets devaluing in real terms?

No, over the medium to long term the value of our assets has significantly outpaced CPI or any other main measure of inflation.

Q7. Why should we keep paying our MMF if you have all this money?

The church in Cornwall, locally and the Board of Finance, is funded through a partnership of parish, shared diocesan, and national income. Each plays its part. We are proposing that we should use more of our shared resources, the diocesan money, to fund parish ministry, but if parishes stopped paying MMF the diocesan funds would last about 18 months.

Q8. What happens if deaneries don't pay their MMF?

Deaneries have committed to their deanery plans, the level of MMF is part of that, so if MMF contributions don't match the plan then we will need to understand why. If the MMF figure was unrealistic or if things have changed so much that it has become unrealistic then we will need to work with deaneries and parishes to revise their plan so that it can be a plan for fruitfulness and sustainability.

Q9. Why reduce the MMF? Why not maintain its level and use increased funds to grow the clergy?

If we don't keep MMF within what is affordable by parishes (ie if MMF goes up a lot) then there will be fewer clergy - keeping MMF low helps to keep clergy numbers up

Q10. Why are we putting money, time and effort into all these new roles when we can pay for more stipendiary clergy, so every parish has one?

Most of the money will still go into stipendiary parish clergy roles, but we know that some work can be done well through lay roles, for instance supporting children & youth work. The deanery plans proposed a mixture of ordained and lay roles, we are honouring what the deanery plans proposed.

Q11. What's this money for "supporting deanery plans" spent on?

People to help parishes to plan and implement change.

Q12. What do you mean by money being used to provide people and resources to directly support PCCs in their work?

For instance, help with managing and fund raising for historic buildings, or promoting community use of buildings. Or support in engaging with local schools to provide holiday clubs or after school activities.

Q13. These proposals do not in themselves make further significant shifts of the DBF's own resources directly towards those experiencing poverty, why not?

The DBF is responsible and accountable for the use of LICF, that shifts more than £800K a year towards communities experiencing deprivation, in addition to this the DBF has allocated an additional £2m of mission funding to parishes and significant funds through the energy grant scheme.

Q14. If the diocese has £113 million in houses, why aren't we selling more to free up more money?

In total our houses are worth about £60million, the deanery plans tell us which houses we don't need for parish ministry, we will sell most of those extra houses but keep enough to give us some flexibility in case clergy numbers start to rise again. The extra houses that we plan to sell are worth roughly £14million.

MINISTRY

Q1. Why do you think oversight ministry is the best option?

One size does not fit everyone, but we know that the oversight / local ministry model can be effective. In Cornwall many of us remember Bishop Bill's "People of God" initiative, that planted seeds of local leadership - worship leaders and pastoral ministers - that still bear fruit today, sometimes the second or third generation of fruit. The oversight / local model grows out of that work, of all the church growth models around it is the one that most often feels right in our small sparse communities with deep roots but few people.

This model of ministry will help:

- make the role of priest more manageable.
- ensure priestly leadership and presence across the church.
- more churches have a local leader.
- parishes to develop new ways of connecting with people in their communities, especially people we don't currently see in church.
- support lay people to use their gifts and skills more widely.
- develop teams so leaders, both lay and ordained, are less isolated.

Q2. How do we know that a change in patterns of ministry will reverse decline?

We know that what we have been doing (adding the leadership of more and more churches to already very hard-pressed clergy) isn't working in most places. We know that there are things that we can do about decline, things that have worked in other places. We know that the oversight/local ministry model can be very effective and full-time rural deans can help to support local clergy and can help to lead change.

Q3. Why can't clergy do the work that is being proposed is done by others?

The deanery plans generally want clergy to focus on the sort of work that only ordained ministers can do.

Q4. Why reduce the MMF? Why not maintain its level and use increased funds to grow the clergy?

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Q5. Why are we putting money, time and effort into all these new roles when we can pay for more stipendiary clergy, so every parish has one?

Most of the money will still go into stipendiary parish clergy roles, but we know that some work can be done well through lay roles, for instance supporting children & youth work. The deanery plans proposed a mixture of ordained and lay roles, we are honouring what the deanery plans proposed.

Q6. Can these paid roles be taken by clergy?

Yes, on lay staff terms and conditions.

Q7. Why can't we have more stipendiary clergy and use the money that will be spent on extra central staff and consultants to help us with church buildings and change coaches?

If we are going to sustain nearly 300 church buildings in Cornwall, then we will need specialist support. Most clergy don't want to spend all their time on buildings, they are trained and called to work with people.

Q8. Why are we using clergy as managers rather than ministers?

We aren't. Oversight and leadership have always been part of the role of ordained ministry. These words come early in the service when priests are ordained, *'Priests share with the bishop in the oversight of the Church, delighting in its beauty and rejoicing in its well-being.'* Oversight isn't the same as management, and is all about people and communities, and particularly helping them discover what they're good at and what God is doing in their life.

Q9. I am a lay minister and I enjoy it, but I don't want to take on more responsibility. What does this mean for me?

Thank you for what you are doing and the way that you are working, it is good that you enjoy it. Many of us are being called to serve and work differently but at the same time many of us will need to continue in the ways that have sustained the church for generations, there will be room for both.

Q10. The deanery plans describe fewer than ten posts that might be genuinely innovative and pioneering, arguably far fewer than that number depending on the eventual job descriptions as posts are advertised and taken up. These proposals do not make a significant approach to that ambition. Why not? That sounds a bit disappointing, doesn't it?

Pioneering hasn't caught the imagination of deanery planning in every place although some deaneries are appointing new Pioneer Ministers, ordained and lay, and our first group of locally trained lay Pioneers were trained and commissioned this year - and there will be more and more in years to come.

Q11. You say you're planning to increase numbers of stipendiary clergy. By how much?

We want to at least halt the historic decline in numbers. If deanery plans are effective, then we think that we will probably see increasing numbers of clergy as congregations start to grow in numbers and in confidence.

Q12. Why so little resource being put into clergy recruitment - just two days a year?

It is much more than that, we will run more clergy recruitment this year than in any year in our memory.

CENTRAL TEAM & COSTS

Q1. If parishes are employing all these people, why do we still have so many at Church House?

The Church House team is one of the two or three smallest in the Church of England, we have reduced the core staff to the very minimum that is needed for us to continue to be a diocese, in some areas we already rely on other dioceses to support us or use 3rd party providers.

Q2. There are lots more people at Church House than mentioned in this plan, will cost savings be made there?

We are planning to move to smaller cheaper premises this year, adjacent to Truro Cathedral. The Review of Shared Services in 2020/21 reduced our core team to the essential statutory and compliance functions needed for a diocese and further savings are unlikely to be significant.

Q3. Is there going to be another new team centrally (Change coaches)? How much will this cost us?

The national church support what we're doing and wants to work with us. One way they do this is by funding posts that help churches and deaneries make the changes described in local plans. A small team is in place to do this.

Q4. Why can't we have more stipendiary clergy and use the money that will be spent on extra central staff and consultants to help us with church buildings and change coaches?

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CHURCHES, BUILDINGS & GLEBE

Q1. Why is there so little money going towards the church buildings?

Across the whole diocese, PCC and DBF budgets combined, we spend roughly £4million on buildings every year. Some dioceses provide support for parishes in maintaining, developing and renewing their church buildings, the proposals in the plan will allow us to do some of the work that we have seen work in other dioceses.

Q2. Why aren't you helping parishes with the maintenance costs of church buildings?

We have considered this, but with almost 300 churches and with legal limits on how we can use our assets we probably couldn't make much difference. Some dioceses run group maintenance schemes, and some have a diocesan trust arrangement that can look after some churches, we will explore these options.

Q3. Will these plans mean small or rural churches close?

The deanery plans do not include proposals to close churches and it is the deanery plans that we are trying to implement. We want to offer more support to small and rural churches and to make sure that we don't build all our expectations around town ministry or larger churches alone.

Q4. If the diocese has £113 million in houses, why aren't we selling more to free up more money?

In total our houses are worth about £60million, the deanery plans tell us which houses we don't need for parish ministry, we will sell most of those extra houses but keep enough to give us some flexibility in case clergy numbers start to rise again. The extra houses that we plan to sell are worth roughly £14million.

Q5. If we're selling clergy houses where will increased numbers of clergy live?

We aren't selling all the excess houses.

Q6. Will local parishes benefit financially from sales of local land and properties?

They are shared assets, so parishes across the diocese will benefit.

Q7. Assets 6.1: Why acquire more land and properties if you're selling land and properties?

Where and if there are opportunities to do good things with the land.

Q8. What will you do to keep small churches going?

We want to work with small churches to come up with a plan that makes sense to those of us who lead and serve small churches.

Q9. What about external funding sources for church buildings?

In dioceses with a Church Building Officer this has been an important part of their work.

DEANERIES & PARISHES

Q1. Will the DiT take over from the PCC?

No. The PCC is the core body for the governance and leadership of the church at a local level, PCC members are the trustees of the parish, their role is set out in the Church Representation Rules and other church law.

The Deanery Implementation Team has a specific role in supporting PCCs and deaneries to implement their own plans.

Q2. Can the DiT tell the PCC what to do?

No. PCC members as charity trustees have an obligation to act in the interests of the PCC, with the churchwardens they have a specific responsibility to work with the incumbent to promote the mission of the church. Deanery plans can only be carried forward when the different parts of church leadership and governance work together, the deanery plans, and the Deanery Implementation Teams are also committed to promoting the mission of the church.

Q3. Who will take the weddings, baptisms and funeral?

That will vary from place to place. In some places, the oversight minister will continue to take most of these services. In many places retired and self-supporting priests already take weddings, and Readers take funerals, and this will continue and increase. There may be other, creative solutions that we have yet to discover.

Q4. How does all this help my 77-year-old churchwarden who is also our treasurer and PCC secretary?

Quite a few ways, but three of them:

- On the Way trusts the local leadership of the church and will continue to do so, we want to hear and learn from the enduring faithfulness of those serving and leading fragile communities, we aren't pretending that the answers are going to come from somewhere else.
- Too many of our church leaders find themselves doing three jobs - we risk simply running out of people. These are plans to grow the church and to grow sustainable congregations and sustainable models of leadership.
- We want to spend time focussing on how to help small churches to be fruitful and sustainable, there is more work to come on that later this year.

Q5. What happens if parishes fail?

We want to give parishes and deaneries the best possible chance to make their plans work, that is why we are focussing on parish ministry and supporting the implementation of plans. In some places plans may need to evolve or change, that's fine. However good the plans and however faithful the people, sometimes churches struggle and sometimes they might even close. We want to make sure that parish leaders don't become isolated, that is why we think that we need to spend more on deanery leadership.

Q6. I am a lay minister and I enjoy it, but I don't want to take on more responsibility. What does this mean for me?

Thank you for what you are doing and the way that you are working, it is good that you enjoy it. Many of us are being called to serve and work differently but at the same time many of us will need to continue in the ways that have sustained the church for generations, there will be room for both.

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Q8. What do you mean by money being used to provide people and resources to directly support PCCs in their work?

For instance, help with managing and fund raising for historic buildings, or promoting community use of buildings. Or support in engaging with local schools to provide holiday clubs or after school activities.

Q9. Why should we be happy to be marginalized?

On the margins means being with those who are themselves on the margins, it is often where Jesus spent time, rather than with those at the centre of things.

OTHER QUESTIONS

Q1. Why didn't you do this before?

We needed to be sure that we could get our spending and income under control, that ministry is where we are called to be, not just where it used to be, and that the local church could have a say in those plans. On the Way has helped us to do that. On the Way has given us detailed plans in every deanery for the pattern of ministry, that tells us how many clergy there will be, and therefore how many houses we will need. The plans tell us that we have about 50 more houses than we need, we are proposing to sell about 30 of them to release funds to support parishes.

Q2. Will this make us more vulnerable in the future?

The Diocesan Plan for Change and Renewal is about faithfulness to God's calling, it is not always beside still waters that we are called to tread, so we shouldn't be surprised if sometimes the way is a bit bumpy. Overall, the plan is to help the church to be more sustainable, less reliant on historic assets and a dwindling number of people, so better able to withstand economic or societal shocks in the future.

Q3. Why are you using project management, we are a church not a business?

Experience tells us that coming up with ideas is rarely a problem in the church, but seeing our plans through can be a challenge. Project management helps us to learn from other professions and disciplines (in fact more from the NHS and government than from the world of commerce). Where project management offers helpful tools, we will use them to do good.

Q4. How can you say we should be more communal than organisational when you are using programme management?

Programme Management gives us useful tools for turning paper plans into reality, and to introduce the kinds of changes that will help us be more communal, pioneering and creative in our church communities.

Q5. How does all this help grow more children and young people? What are we doing for parents, grandparents, and families so that they help children and young people to get to us?

Firstly, we recognise that engaging with more younger people will be important and is part of our calling. Secondly the Growing Faith approach starts from making connections between family, church, and school, building on work like "Open the Book" and the sort of organic family ties that drew many of us into the church.