

The General Synod has, today, approved a draft reorganisation scheme that will see the creation of a new Diocese of Leeds, serving West Yorkshire and The Dales, and replacing the current Dioceses of Bradford, Ripon and Leeds, and Wakefield.

The new diocese will come into existence on a day to be set by the Archbishop of York after the scheme has been confirmed by Her Majesty the Queen through an Order in Council. Synod also approved a resolution establishing a Vacancy in See Committee for the new diocese so that the process for appointing the first Bishop of Leeds could begin.

Professor Michael Clarke, chair of the Dioceses Commission that prepared the scheme, welcomed the decision of the Synod. "Synod's historic decision confirms the Commission's judgement that the radical creation of a new diocese centred on Leeds offered the best way of meeting the mission challenges facing the Church in West Yorkshire."

In addition to the Bishop of Leeds, the new diocese will be served by four area bishops of Bradford, Huddersfield, Ripon and Wakefield (the latter two being renamed Sees currently occupied by the Bishops of Knaresborough and Pontefract).

The Cathedrals of Bradford, Ripon, and Wakefield will be the cathedrals of the new diocese. There is provision for Leeds Minster to become a pro-cathedral in the future if the Bishop of Leeds so directs.

So as to be more in sync with civic boundaries existing archdeacon and deaneries will be reorganised under the scheme and a small number of parishes will transfer to neighbouring dioceses. Detailed arrangements about the workings of the new diocese are still to be worked out, as these will be for local decision.

The scheme was drawn up to enhance the ability of the Church to respond to the challenges of mission in the West Yorkshire region.

Notes

[Read the detailed scheme](#)

Dr John Sentamu, the Archbishop of York's speech in the debate can be [read on his website](#)

[The Rt Rev Nick Baines, Bishop of Bradford's speech can be read on his blog](#)