

NATIONAL ARCHDEACONS' FORUM

serving the Church of England and the Church in Wales

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Archdeacons' National Executive Officer

To the Diocesan Bishop and Diocesan Secretary with copy to the new archdeacon and archdeacon colleagues

Guidelines for the diocesan induction of your new archdeacon

For many years the National Archdeacons' Forum has been working on improving the support and training of archdeacons, and in particular considering how we might support the initial induction of new archdeacons when they take up their role. We are clear that a good induction process not only makes the transition to the role of archdeacon easier; it also means that the new archdeacon is better equipped to fulfil their role earlier and less likely to make avoidable mistakes.

In 2010 the Forum commissioned a report on the continuing ministerial development of archdeacons from the Oxford Centre for Ecclesiology and Practical Theology. *Sustaining Leaders in Mission and Change* was published at the end of 2011 and has led among other things, to the creation of a support, development and training role in the post of Archdeacons' National Executive Officer.

In relation to new archdeacons, the report noted that new archdeacons come from a wide variety of backgrounds and with a range of skills and past experiences, and that it is important to allow for transition issues. Some of these issues are around moving to a new place, some are around taking on the archdeacon's role, and some come from leaving parish ministry and the resulting bereavement. It noted that those interviewed who had not come from parish roles seemed to move more easily into the archdeacon's role.

Any induction process needs to acknowledge this variety as well as offering a good start for the archdeacon entering on the role.

Diocesan Induction Programme

From the research with archdeacons, diocesan bishops and others for the 2011 report, and from feedback received from those who work closely with archdeacons, we would like to suggest that the following be considered for inclusion in a diocesan induction programme. In May 2002 the House of Bishops of the Church of England agreed that this should be a three week programme during which time the new archdeacon's diary should be kept free from other demands. The other archdeacons in the diocese are a key resource in the induction, and can often deliver much of what is required.

We offer these guidelines well aware that each diocese will want to ensure that the induction reflects its own context and ethos. It is also important not to assume that someone knows anything, even if they have been appointed from within the diocese. With that in mind, these areas have been identified as particularly helpful for the various aspects of the new archdeacons' role:

a) To play a full role within the leadership of the diocese

- A briefing on the diocesan culture, structures and current vision and strategy;
- A one-to-one induction session with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser regarding national safeguarding policies, procedures and practice guidance, and how they are implemented in the diocese; and for information about past and current safeguarding issues in churches in his/her archdeaconry. This should be followed up with attendance at a safeguarding training for incumbents module in the diocese (for role modelling, and to be familiar with what their clergy are given);
- A briefing on how the Bishop's staff team and other committees on which the archdeacon will sit, actually work;
- Individual meetings with all members of bishop's staff team, including Bishop's Chaplain / Lay Assistant;
- An introduction to the Cathedral, Chapter and other key staff (esp vergers, administrators);
- Meeting early in post with the key people the archdeacon will be working with in relation to any particular portfolio roles;

b) To fulfil the legal and administrative responsibilities as archdeacon

- An introduction to Diocesan systems, policies and rules (eg appointment processes, Churchyard regulations, DAC and how the archdeacon is involved in all of these);
- One to one meetings with the Diocesan Registrar, Chancellor, DAC Chair and Secretary, and others with whom archdeacon will work closely;

c) To work with parishes and deaneries in bringing about change

- An introduction to the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 (or similar legislation in Wales) and how your diocese is using that in relation to pastoral re-organisation and new initiatives, in implementing the diocesan vision and strategy, and a meeting with the Pastoral Secretary;
- An early opportunity to meet with his/her area deans and lay chairs

d) To encourage and support clergy, lay ministers and church officers

- Meeting diocesan staff and touring diocesan office(s), with appropriate one-to-ones, especially time with the Director of Finance to learn about the parish share system and diocesan finances

- A chance to visit some parishes and sectors simply to become familiar with some of the area – driving around the patch and stopping to walk some parts of it gives both a feel for the area as well as learning its geography

e) To take responsibility for themselves and their own ministry and wellbeing

- An introduction to office procedures, expenses and administrative systems and policies
- An opportunity to meet with her/his PA and to discuss how they will work together
- A review of the expenses, budget and work base provided for the archdeacon and their PA to ensure that this is suitable.

As part of the induction it is suggested that there is agreement to regular one-to-one meetings with the diocesan bishop, or the bishop with whom the archdeacon will work most closely, and that there should be an opportunity to review the role description with the diocesan bishop six months after taking up the post.

The frequency of MDR with the diocesan bishop should also be agreed. The Forum has also produced material to assist with the MDR of Archdeacons. If you do not have a copy, it is available from the Archdeacons' National Executive Officer and from the Church of England website:

https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2438974/mdr_of_archdeacons_2016.01.doc

National Archdeacons' Forum role

To supplement the induction in the diocese, the Archdeacons' National Executive Officer sends each new archdeacon immediately after their appointment a copy of our induction booklet ***So you're going to be an archdeacon...*** This booklet contains useful information to assist the new archdeacon to prepare for the role. The Executive Officer will also offer a one-to-one meeting with the new archdeacon to discuss how they are finding the new role and explore what might be most useful to them. This meeting is usually about two to three months into post. As part of that conversation, there will be an exploration of the following and whether they might be useful to the new archdeacon:

- a mentor (an experienced archdeacon from a neighbouring diocese)
- a work consultant / coach
- a cell group – action learning set
- whether she/he might value some additional development around leadership, management skills, how systems work, and organisational theory and practice, exploring what is available from a variety of sources
- courses and events arranged by Bridgebuilders, the Ecclesiastical Law Society, 3D coaching, Ripon College Cuddesdon, Sarum College and others.

- support in continuing personal spiritual development for the archdeacon and their family (if the archdeacon is full-time, where to worship, the pattern of daily prayer, time for quiet days and retreats)
- how to ensure a healthy balance in ministry between work, prayer and worship, study and recreation
- how to live out with role with integrity and in a way which honours the person's passions and skills

It is clear that, where possible, some of the learning will better take place with other colleagues (e.g. bishops, diocesan secretaries, deans, chancellors, registrars) and within the life of the Bishop's Staff Team.

We will also invite your new archdeacon to *The New Archdeacons' Conference* which is a 54 hour induction event currently held once every nine months. This conference offers a chance to reflect on the new role and what it means in the light of the mission emphasis in the church today, encourages an exploration of the spiritual foundations for this ministry, and offers detailed advice *inter alia* on ecclesiastical and other law, making appointments, working as part of the Bishop's staff team, Clergy Discipline Measure, HR processes, faculties, developing church buildings and pastoral re-organisation.

We hope that this information is useful to you as you plan the induction programme for your new archdeacon, and that you find it helpful to be aware of the work of the forum and my own role in this process. If you have any suggestions about how we can improve our support both to new archdeacons themselves and to dioceses in their induction process, do please contact the Archdeacons' National Executive Officer.

Insurance cover for Archdeacons – a note to Diocesan Secretaries

It is crucial that archdeacons are covered by the diocesan insurance policy for any matters which may arise out of their role as archdeacon. Recent discussions have indicated that some dioceses may not have the full extent of cover which is now desirable. We are therefore asking Diocesan Secretaries kindly to check that the following are included in the diocesan insurance policy and that your archdeacons will be covered for these areas:

- *property cover for office equipment* cover for equipment such as laptops, computers and office furniture that is owned by the diocese and used by archdeacons in the course of their duties. Cover should be "all risks" for anywhere in the United Kingdom and include loss by fire, theft, malicious damage and accidental damage
- *employers' liability* an Archdeacon's Personal Assistant as an employee of the DBF should be fully covered for any legal liability for an injury or illness which may arise in the course of their employment
- *public liability* the DBF public liability cover should indemnify an archdeacon in the event of any legal liability for bodily injury or illness to a member of the public or damage to their property arising out of their role as archdeacon
- *libel and slander (defamation)* cover for any legal liability which may arise from the publication or utterance of a libel or slander whilst carrying out their role as

archdeacon. The cover will exclude any intentional or criminal libel or slander.

- *Errors and omissions* cover indemnifies an archdeacon if they are held legally liable for errors or omissions in the provision of advice given while acting in the role of archdeacon. This may be important in relation to their authority under list B of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015.
- *Trustee liability* as an ex officio member of the DBF.
- *Legal defence cover* for any action taken against an archdeacon which arises from their role as archdeacon.
- *Personal accident* the archdeacon is covered should they be personally injured or hurt through anything which occurs while exercising their role as archdeacon.

NB 30.11.2016