

GENERAL SYNOD

REPORT OF THE DIOCESES COMMISSION

DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

THE PROPOSAL

- 1 With the consent (given in September 2001) of the Archbishops' Council (successor to the Standing Committee named in clause 2 of the Dioceses Measure 1978) the Bishop of Worcester has submitted to us a draft Scheme under section 11 of the 1978 Measure for rescinding the Area Scheme which was made (with the consent of the Worcester Diocesan Synod and the General Synod) in 1993.
- 2 As is made clear in the Bishop of Worcester's submission (Annex 2 to this report), proposals for rescinding this Area Scheme were unanimously requested by the Worcester Diocesan Synod in June 2001, after it had received a report from Worcester Diocesan Pastoral Committee reviewing the operation of the Area Scheme in the light of current circumstances. The proposed Scheme for rescinding the Area Scheme is attached as Annex 1.
- 3 In considering the Bishop's proposal, the Commission was aware that the circumstances of the Worcester Area Scheme have been unusual among area schemes made under section 11 of the 1978 Measure. There is only one suffragan bishop in the diocese, the two areas in the Scheme are assigned to the Diocesan Bishop and the Suffragan Bishop, but the Suffragan Bishop's area is less than one Archdeaconry in extent. The evidence of the Pastoral Committee's review clearly showed that the Bishop of Dudley had come to relate more widely to parishes and benefices across the diocese, and the Diocesan Bishop exercises his overall *episcopé* within the Himley Deanery, which comprises the Dudley area under the 1993 Scheme.

- 4 In the light of the circumstances disclosed in the Worcester Diocesan Pastoral Committee's review, and noting the unanimous endorsement of the conclusions of that review by the Worcester Diocesan Synod, the Commission has taken the view that it should lend support to the Bishop of Worcester's proposal. In accordance with the provisions of the 1978 Measure this report and the attached Financial Statement from the Church Commissioners (Annex 3) are made available to accompany the Bishop's proposed Scheme if it comes to be laid before the Worcester Diocesan Synod and, subsequently, the General Synod.

On behalf of the Commission

DAVID McCLEAN

Chairman

April 2002

DIOCESES MEASURE 1978

AREA SCHEME FOR THE DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

Made by the Bishop of the Diocese of Worcester under sections 11 and 13 of the Dioceses Measure 1978

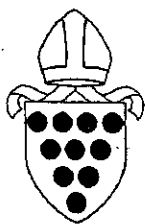
Whereas a scheme for the division of the diocese of Worcester into areas under section 11 of the Dioceses Measure 1978 (hereinafter referred to as "the Diocese of Worcester Area Scheme 1993") came into operation on 1st October 1993;

And whereas the Scheme to revoke the Diocese of Worcester Area Scheme 1993 in the terms of this Scheme has been submitted to the Dioceses Commission and approved by the diocesan synod of the diocese of Worcester;

And whereas the draft Scheme, as so approved, was laid before the General Synod at the group of sessions held in and no resolution was tabled before the end of that group of sessions that the scheme be not made;

Now, therefore, we, Peter, by divine permission Lord Bishop of Worcester, in pursuance of sections 11 and 13(1) of the Dioceses Measure 1978, hereby make the following Scheme:-

1. This Scheme may be cited as the Diocese of Worcester Area (Revocation) Scheme 2002.
2. The Diocese of Worcester Area Scheme 1993 is hereby revoked.
3. Without prejudice to section 16 of the Interpretation Act 1978, where, on the date of the coming into operation of this Scheme, the Area Bishop has begun to exercise any function delegated to him under section 4 of and Schedule 1 to the Diocese of Worcester Area Scheme 1993 in relation to any matter, he may continue to exercise that function in relation to that matter, unless the Bishop of the Diocese decides to exercise that function in relation to that matter in his place.
4. This Scheme shall come into operation on the day after the day on which it is made.



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

DIOCESE OF
WORCESTER

THE BISHOP OF WORCESTER
The Rt Revd Dr Peter Selby

Mr David Hebblethwaite OBE
Secretary
The Dioceses Commission
Church House
Great Smith Street
LONDON
SW1P 3NZ

20th June 2001

Dear David,

Further to your letter of 18th June I write to request that a Scheme be prepared under the Dioceses Measure of 1978 which will have the effect of revoking the Area Scheme for the Diocese of Worcester which was passed in 1993.

In view of the fact that such Schemes are created with the express purpose of preventing a situation where a new diocesan bishop over-rides a well-established way of working in the diocese, the Commission will be very properly concerned to know why this revocation is being proposed. A review of the background is therefore appropriate.

Members of the Commission may be aware that the Area Scheme for this diocese was produced in the aftermath of the rejection by the Synods of Lichfield, Hereford and Worcester dioceses of a proposal for a Black Country diocese. Bishop Anthony Dumper as Bishop of Dudley had established, with the agreement of the Bishop of Lichfield, a role throughout the Black Country, and in particular had the care of one of the deaneries of the Lichfield Diocese (Himley) which covered part of the area of the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley. The rest of that Borough formed the deaneries of Dudley and Stourbridge which were in the Diocese of Worcester.

Following the rejection of the Black Country diocese proposal it was decided after a good deal of careful discussion that the deanery of Himley should be part of the Diocese of Worcester, with the understanding that the three Black Country deaneries that were now in this diocese would form an Episcopal Area under the particular care of the Bishop of Dudley. Bishop Rupert Hoare came to the diocese as Bishop of Dudley on that understanding and his ministry in that part of the diocese was very warmly received, like that of his predecessor.

There is no doubt that Himley deanery would not have joined this diocese without such an Area Scheme which gave them the security of knowing that they would receive sustained episcopal care from somebody who would root himself deeply in the concerns of the Black Country. It has, however, to be acknowledged that from the outset there were aspects of the Scheme which never really worked. The most important of these is that the Scheme proposed necessarily the creation of two episcopal areas, the Worcester Episcopal Area being the remainder of the diocese under the

direct care of the diocesan. This asymmetrical arrangement has never really caught on and it is extremely rare to find anybody in the "Worcester Episcopal Area" who has any consciousness of being part of it. The position in which it places the Bishop of Worcester as Area Bishop of part of the diocese and Diocesan Bishop of the whole is to say the least strange and there is an equal problem for the Bishop of Dudley who is also Suffragan Bishop of the diocese as a whole. When Bishop Philip Goodrich retired and Bishop Rupert Hoare looked after the whole diocese during the vacancy, both he and the southern parishes were very grateful that he could have more of a ministry throughout the diocese.

It was always envisaged that there would be a review of the Scheme and I enclose a copy of a very careful piece of work undertaken under the chairmanship of Bishop John Gibbs who, as you know, had substantial experience as both an Area and a Diocesan Bishop. The report said in essence that the Area Scheme had now done its job and that steps should be taken to rescind it. I received this report as the cogent document it is but with the hesitation that I had no wish to give the northern deaneries, and particularly Himley, a sense that they were being deprived of their proper and promised episcopal care. I have, therefore, held a joint meeting of the three deanery synods following which they were asked to decide in my absence whether they were happy that I should accept the recommendations of the review. In all three cases they have done so almost unanimously. My new colleague, Bishop David Walker, who is exercising the ministry of the Bishop of Dudley, is also happy that I should proceed in this way.

Accordingly, I presented this proposal to the diocesan synod on 11th June, and a resolution in the following terms was passed unanimously:

"Following the recommendation of the Episcopal Area Review Working Party, this Synod supports the Bishop of Worcester's proposals to seek the approval of the Standing Committee of the General Synod to submit to the Dioceses Commission a draft Scheme which would have the effect of fully revoking the Diocese of Worcester Area Scheme 1993. This Synod notes that in due course a Scheme will be laid before it for approval under section 12 of the Dioceses Measure 1978."

I wish to conclude my request by making it clear that this action on my part contains no hint of criticism of the decision to create the Area Scheme under which my predecessor and Bishops of Dudley have worked, and which I have valued since arriving here. I think in the circumstances of 1993 the decision was absolutely right and the Scheme gave a measure of confidence, the fruits of which are precisely that the Scheme itself has now done its work and its disadvantages can be overcome by simply rescinding it. I believe we have arrived at precisely the situation which my late predecessor would have wished, namely the full integration of the Himley deanery into the diocese and the giving to the northern part of the diocese the assurance of sustained care by both the bishops of the diocese and a primary point of pastoral contact with the Bishop of Dudley.

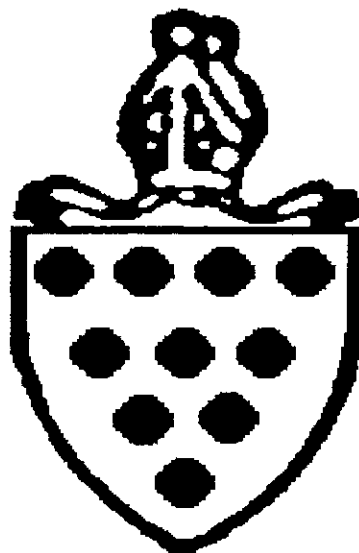
Please do not hesitate to indicate to me if any further information would be helpful.

Yours ever

Pen.

Copies to: The Bishop of Dudley
The Diocesan Secretary

CONFIDENTIAL



WORCESTER DIOCESAN PASTORAL COMMITTEE

**DIOCESE OF WORCESTER
EPISCOPAL AREA SCHEME REVIEW**

FINAL REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY

June 2000

WORCESTER DIOCESAN PASTORAL COMMITTEE

DIOCESE OF WORCESTER EPISCOPAL AREA SCHEME REVIEW

FINAL REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY

(with clarifications agreed at the
Diocesan Pastoral Committee on 14th June 2000)

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June 2000

WORCESTER DIOCESAN PASTORAL COMMITTEE

REVIEW OF THE DIOCESE OF WORCESTER EPISCOPAL AREA SCHEME

FINAL REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Diocese of Worcester Area Scheme came into force on 30 September 1993, a copy is included at Appendix A of this report. The Deaneries Working Party had recommended that the workings of the Episcopal Area Scheme, particularly in the Dudley Episcopal Area and its relationship to the Dudley Archdeaconry should be reviewed. This was accepted by the Bishop's Council on 8 October 1998, and the Diocesan Pastoral Committee commissioned the assignment at their meeting on 21 October 1998 and agreed the composition of the working party. The detailed brief is set out in Appendix B and the membership of the working party led by Bishop John Gibbs set out in Appendix C.

1.2. The working party began its work in July 1999 with the anticipation of reporting to the Diocesan Pastoral Committee in June 2000.

1.3. Shortly after the working party began its task the Bishop of Dudley, the Rt. Revd. Dr. Rupert Hoare, was appointed to be Dean of Liverpool, a post he took up in February 2000. It was recognised that the timing of the process to appoint his successor was clearly linked to the progress of the review of the Episcopal Area Scheme and the working party were asked to accelerate their report.

1.4. The Diocesan Pastoral Committee on 8 February 2000 agreed that they were content that this report be released to the Bishop of Worcester before consideration by the Diocesan Pastoral Committee in June 2000 in order that the processes for the appointment of the next Bishop of Dudley be put in hand at the earliest reasonable opportunity.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. At the outset the Working Party identified that while the Episcopal Area Scheme relates to the whole diocese, its operation was only generally recognised in relation to the Dudley Episcopal Area. Indeed it had been established in 1993 to address issues in that area rather than the diocese as a whole. Much of the working party's efforts were therefore focused on the northern part of the diocese and the Dudley Episcopal Area in particular.

2.2. The working party undertook to collect a wide range of views involving:

- The Chairman conducting interviews with
 - the Bishop of Worcester
 - the Bishop of Dudley
 - the Archdeacon of Dudley
 - the former Archdeacon of Worcester

- members conducting interviews with the Rural Deans and Lay Joint Chairpersons for all the deaneries in the Dudley Archdeaconry.
- reflections being invited from the Rt. Revd. Philip Goodrich and the Rt. Revd. Tony Dumper as the bishops at the time the scheme was established.
- the Chairman consulting the following bodies in the Dudley Episcopal Area
 - Dudley MBC
 - Mr. Geoff Thomas (Head of Support Services) and Ms. Jean Brashier (SRB Officer)
 - Dudley Health Authority
 - Mr. Henry Foster (Chief Executive) and Mr. Chris Potter (Deputy Chief Executive)
 - Dudley Racial Equality Council
 - Mr. Kurshid Ahmed (Chair)
 - Dudley TEC
 - Mr. John Woodhall (Chief Executive)
- inviting written submissions across the whole diocese from all
 - PCCs
 - Deanery Synods
 - Clergy
 - Members of the House of Laity of the Diocesan Synod
 - Diocesan Officers
 (views invited from mid October to the end of November 1999 and summarised at Appendix D)

2.3. The working party decided to supplement its membership by inviting the Rural Dean of Himley to nominate a representative, Mr M Freeman, who joined the Working Party in January 2000.

2.4. The Himley Deanery Synod invited the Chairman and members of the working party to meet with them in December 1999.

2.5. The Chairman and the Diocesan Secretary met with the Rt. Revd. Michael Bourke (Bishop of Wolverhampton), his secretary and Captain David Brown, (the Bishop of Lichfield's Assistant) to compare/contrast the operation of the Diocese of Lichfield Area Scheme with that of Worcester. In particular discussion compared arrangements in the Wolverhampton Episcopal Area to that in Dudley.

2.6. The working party are most thankful to all those who so helpfully assisted the working party in this way with their time, experiences, thoughts for the future and their prayers.

3. REASONS FOR INAUGURATING THE AREA SCHEME

3.1. The main reason for adopting the Worcester Area Scheme was to give formal and legal expression to the achievements of Bishop Tony Dumper's ministry in the northern parishes of the Diocese as Suffragan Bishop over a period of sixteen years. Most of the densely populated area of Dudley shares a culture with the Black Country formed through some three hundred years of industrial development and is markedly different from the rest of the Diocese of Worcester. The creation of the See of Dudley was originally a response to meet the needs of those northern parishes as well as to strengthen episcopal ministry throughout the Diocese. The County of the West Midlands was created in 1974 and, within it, the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley. In order to meet the needs of the Borough it was desirable that the ecclesiastical boundaries should be made co-terminous with the Borough boundaries. At that time the parishes of the Himley Deanery within the Borough were in the Diocese of Lichfield. To ensure that the Diocese of Worcester could collaborate with and minister to the whole Borough of Dudley the Bishop of Lichfield agreed to an arrangement which allowed the Bishop of Dudley to exercise episcopal care over the Himley parishes. So, for example, Bishop Dumper conducted most of the Confirmations and some of the Institutions in Himley, thus enabling him to exercise an episcopal ministry over the whole of the Borough parishes. This informal arrangement existed for ten years before the inauguration of the Worcester Area Scheme.

3.2. In the Report of the West Midlands Bishops' Commission entitled *Episcopal Care in the West Midlands* (1987) one of the recommendations was the creation of a new Diocese of Wolverhampton which would include the Dudley Area. The brief given to the Commission was in the context of the whole of the West Midlands with its five dioceses, which is a very different brief from the consideration of a single diocese. The reason given in that Report for the detachment of the Dudley Area from the Diocese of Worcester was that the densely urban nature of that Area was more akin in character and culture to Wolverhampton than to Worcestershire. The complete detachment of Dudley is no longer under consideration, but the fact that in sociological terms the Area identifies if anything more to the north than to the south does constitute a difficulty.

3.3. The inclusion of the Dudley Area in the Diocese of Worcester is important when considering the balance of the Diocese. While there are significant urban areas in the Diocese of Worcester other than the Dudley Area nevertheless Worcester is a predominantly rural Diocese. Dudley therefore enriches the composition of the Diocese by the experience of the Dudley parishes. If, however, a proper balance is to be achieved and the full contribution of the Dudley Area ensured, then interpreting north and south to each other is an important task, and one which the Bishop of Dudley is clearly in a position to fulfil. The logic of some of the suggestions made to us, which would give a much stronger ecclesiastical identity to the Dudley Area, would tend to isolate the Area from the rest of the Diocese, and, indeed, to give it its own diocesan status. Although the merits of smaller dioceses are often advocated, especially in terms of a theology of episcopacy and based on the premiss of each bishop holding a territorial jurisdiction, such a move would require a decision on the part of the whole Church which is very unlikely in the foreseeable future. The isolation of Dudley, either by removal or by granting it an autonomous life, would have serious consequences for the Worcester Diocese. It would question the viability of the Diocese administratively, and to reduce the Diocese to the size of an Archdeaconry with a large medieval Cathedral is not likely to be acceptable to most people.

4. RESULTS OF THE AREA SCHEME

4.1. In making the ecclesiastical and civic boundaries co-terminous and by transferring the Himley Deanery from Lichfield to Worcester and giving delegated episcopal functions to the Bishop of Dudley; the continuation of an effective ministry was made possible for Bishop Dumper and his successor. In the course of the Review Group's consultations a number of Dudley Metropolitan Borough officers were interviewed and all, without exception, said how much they valued the links with the Church. Pressed to describe more precisely how they valued them the responses could be summed up by saying that the presence and the involvement of the Bishop in the many facets of the life and work of the community inspires confidence since (especially where he is chairman) he has no axe to grind, no party political or ideological vested interest to parade, and therefore that it is out of genuine concern for the community and the quality of its life that he, as a representative of the Church, is involved. It means that he is free to hold the reins without suspicion and able to exercise a reconciling and unifying role. Asked whether this value was attributable to the Office of Bishop or to the personal qualities of the holder of the Office, generous tributes were paid to the personal qualities of the successive Bishops of Dudley, but it was also emphasised that the Office indicated the measure of the seriousness of the Church's concern for local government. If one of the intentions of the Scheme was to enable the Church to collaborate with and minister to the Borough of Dudley then in that respect the Scheme must be seen as successful.

4.2. It should also be noted that the Scheme itself is only concerned with relations within the Church of England and says nothing about the kind of frontier ministry which has been the valuable contribution of the successive Bishops of Dudley

4.3. An important factor in the Church's mission and ministry in the Dudley Area is its ecumenical dimension with a new focus in the recently formed ecumenical body representing Black Country Churches called 'Black Country Churches Engaged' As one non-Anglican correspondent wrote: "(The Bishop of Dudley).....has been widely accepted by the non-Anglicans in the Borough as a representative figure for all the Churches.....which reflects his considerable work within the public life of the Borough which he has always seen as ecumenical.....I have been impressed by an openness to the Churches on the part of the civil authorities but recognise that it is a delicate flower which could soon wither if we do not respond effectively. The present appointment has been extremely beneficial in making the point that the Church is not (or shouldn't be!) simply self-centred and maintenance minded, but sees the community and mission as a clear priority."

4.4. We were also appraised of the key role played by the Bishop of Dudley in the Black Country Urban Industrial Mission which crosses secular, ecclesiastical and denominational boundaries in the Black Country. We were told that the office of Bishop lent credibility to the seriousness of the Church's commitment to the industrial sector and that a lesser ranked Church person would not carry the same weight or credibility.

4.5. A very similar response was made concerning the Bishop of Dudley's part in the work of the Dudley Racial Equality Council.

4.6. One criticism of the Scheme we received was that in the Dudley Area where the Bishop of Dudley is 'the first point of reference' 'the attraction of purple' saps the initiative of senior clergy. Consequently it is assumed that the Bishop will do whatever has to be done and not enough use is made of parochial clergy.

4.7. We are in no doubt that the effect of the Scheme concerning the Church's public ministry to the Metropolitan Borough is beneficial and that in that sense the Scheme has been successful. We feel that the Diocese must ensure the continuation of that ministry. On the negative side, however, the effect of the Scheme in the ordering of the rest of the Diocese has led to a certain amount of incoherence and ambiguity. We think it of some significance that the Scheme is often referred to as 'The Dudley Area Scheme' and not as 'The Worcester Area Scheme' which suggests that it is about the needs of the Dudley Area only and not about the needs of the whole Diocese. It is in the structure of the Diocese that the anxieties are apparent.

4.8. A very good illustration of ambiguity and incoherence is in the appointments process. The Bishop of Dudley has responsibility for appointments in his Area (see A7 of The First Schedule of the Scheme). The Archdeacon of Dudley, however, continues to be a member of the Deanery Pastoral Committee (ex officio), to be Chairman of the Archdeaconry Pastoral Committee, a working member of the Diocesan Pastoral Committee, and is a key person in the work of the Parsonages Committee. Pastoral reorganisation is an important item on the agenda of these committees which in turn has a direct bearing on appointments. The Bishop, however, is the person meeting the Parochial Church Councils for the processing of appointments in his Area. This is in contrast to the arrangements throughout the rest of the diocese where the Archdeacons undertake this role on behalf of the Bishop of Worcester. Clearly it would not be the best use of the Bishop's time to attend Deanery, Archdiaconal and Diocesan Pastoral Committees, yet without such attendance the potential for breakdown is obvious and the task of keeping everyone informed is both difficult and time consuming.

4.9. Another ambiguity is the role of the Diocesan as an Area Bishop. The Report of the Dioceses Commission in 1992, when the Scheme was first proposed, obviously had this ambiguity in mind and was anxious that the proposed Worcester Scheme should not be thought to establish a precedent for other dioceses with only one Suffragan Bishop. "Although the provisions of the Dioceses Measure 1978 make it clear that even when an Area Scheme is in force the diocesan bishop retains an overall responsibility for his whole diocese, it could in some circumstances be thought that a diocesan bishop entering into an Area system with only one Suffragan was in effect foreclosing a part of his diocese from his own oversight." (Para 4) From our discussions with people from the Dudley Area it is clear that for them one of the values (some would say the chief value) is the proximity of their Area Bishop and their direct access to him. It would be unrealistic to expect the Diocesan Bishop in his role as Area Bishop to be in the same proximity to the clergy and congregations of his Area as that of the Bishop of Dudley is to his Area, which means there is an imbalance between the two Areas. Also, while the Diocesan retains overall responsibility for the whole Diocese there is bound to be ambiguity in a situation in which most of his responsibilities have been delegated to his Suffragan for a part of his Diocese. Conversely, the concentration of the Suffragan's attention on the Dudley Area must mean that the exercise of his Suffragan duties throughout the rest of the Diocese is limited.

4.10. It would not be too much of an exaggeration to say that as far as the South of the Diocese is concerned the Scheme has made little impact and that most people are unaware of it, and indeed some were surprised when told they were within an Area.

5. THE ISSUES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS.

5.1. After estimating the results of the Area Scheme and considering the many responses through interviews and submissions from all parts of the Diocese, the key issue became clear. The Area Scheme had achieved its main aim in effecting the transfer of the Himley Deanery from the Lichfield Diocese to Worcester thus making the ecclesiastical and civic boundaries co-terminous. This in turn had enabled the Bishop of Dudley to collaborate with the whole Metropolitan Borough of Dudley so that he and his successor, on behalf of the whole Church in the Worcester Diocese, could identify with the hopes and needs of a social area somewhat different from the rest of the Diocese. However, the success of the Scheme for the Dudley Area had created certain difficulties for the rest of the Diocese (cf 4.7-9) The key issue, therefore, is how to retain the positive benefits of the Scheme and at the same time solve those problems of ambiguity and incoherence. In addressing that issue we considered many suggestions that had been offered and we detailed possible solutions.

5.2. Option 1. To terminate the scheme. It might be argued that the Scheme had achieved its end and had now created a new situation which calls for a fresh start. The Scheme was necessary as a contextual mechanism for the transfer of the Himley Deanery thus enabling the valued ministry of the Bishop of Dudley. That very success however makes necessary a fresh look at the needs of the Diocese beyond the confines of the Scheme. If this solution were adopted it would be essential to safeguard the benefits of the Scheme and assure the parishes of the Dudley Area of their continuing episcopal oversight.

5.3. Option 2. The Scheme has been successful but has created difficulties and in order to address those difficulties adjustments need to be made in working practices. The Scheme should therefore be retained but when the necessary adjustments are defined they should be written into the Bishop of Dudley's job description.

5.4. Option 3. This option is similar to the second but is precise about one major adjustment, namely, to create three instead of two Areas. The major advantage of such a move would be to solve the ambiguity caused by the overlap in the work of the Archdeacon and the Bishop of Dudley. It was further suggested that there might be an additional appointment of a bishop or an archdeacon or a senior priest carrying out archdiaconal duties. We quickly rejected the suggestion of a third episcopal appointment which we felt could not be justified for a diocese the size of Worcester, and which, we felt sure, would not be countenanced at the national level. Similarly we thought a third archdeacon for a diocese the size of Worcester would not find favour in the present financial climate since the additional cost would have to be found by the Diocese. A senior priest with archdiaconal responsibilities might be possible and two of the suggestions considered were an Area Dean or a senior priest in a strategic parish, attention being drawn to developments in the Dudley area and the future significance of Brierley Hill. Such an appointment could resolve the boundary discrepancy between the episcopal and archdiaconal area. It could also provide an administrative focus for the Area and relieve the Bishop of Dudley of some of his civic involvement, thus freeing him to exercise a wider Suffragan role in the rest of the Diocese.

5.5. Option 4. Another suggestion made to us was that if the next Archdeacon of Dudley were housed within the Dudley Area he would be more accessible to the Dudley parishes and could possibly share some of the Bishop's involvement and thus lighten his workload.

5.6. Option 5. It transpired from interviews with Officers of the Metropolitan Borough that they were not averse to looking at possible ways of streamlining the Bishop of Dudley's civic involvement, If this were done then ways might be found which would reduce his personal involvement without reducing the value of this ministry to the Borough or to the Church. Freeing some of the Bishop's time might then allow for a greater Suffragan role across the Diocese using urban/civic skills in mission to other urban areas outside Dudley.

5.7. Option 6. Enlarge the Dudley Episcopal Area to be co-terminous with the Dudley Archdeaconry. This would make for consistency of parings between Bishops and Archdeacons across the Diocese but it is difficult to see how this would of itself enable a wider Suffragan role for the Bishop of Dudley.

5.8. Option 7. For the sake of completeness we include this option which is to relocate and rename the Diocesan See to Dudley. Whatever merits this option might have we felt it would be unacceptable to the Diocese as a whole.

6. THE PREFERRED SOLUTION

6.1. Our basic proposal is the adoption of Option I (5.2) and we so recommend. We are anxious however that this recommendation is seen in a positive light and not negatively as simply scrapping the Scheme. We believe the Scheme has achieved those aims and hopes which brought it into being, and while we have been concerned to address the problems it has caused we have always been mindful also to safeguard its benefits.

6.2. By achieving the integration of the Himley Deanery into the Diocese of Worcester, and with it the contiguity of the ecclesiastical and civic boundaries, the valuable ministry of successive Bishops of Dudley has been secured. Any initial reluctance we felt about the adoption of Option 1 was due to a fear that such a recommendation might be interpreted as a betrayal of the Scheme and the purpose for which it was designed. We wish to emphasise therefore that it is because the Scheme has enabled progress that we feel a fresh look is needed, building on its achievements as well as dealing with the problems it has raised.

6.3. To allay any fears our recommendation may raise, especially in the Dudley Area, we suggest that there is full discussion with concerned parishes and adequate assurances given which would make clear the honouring of the original intent of the Scheme

6.4. Included in the brief given to the Review Group was a review of the Bishop of Dudley's job description. Apart from the list of delegated functions contained in the First Schedule of the Scheme we have not found such a description but we think one drawn up by the two Bishops could be a means of conveying any necessary assurance and bring certainty to transitional arrangements.

6.5. To safeguard the benefits of the Scheme and address the weaknesses of recent working arrangements the description might include the following provisions:

6.5.a. Consultation with the Officers of the Dudley Metropolitan Borough and other concerned people could produce ways of streamlining the Bishop of Dudley's involvement in such a manner that would not diminish the value of his involvement either to the Church or the Civic bodies.

6.5.b. A similar exercise could be carried out with regard to leadership in the Bishop's ecumenical endeavour.

6.5.c. Parallel to these consultations, ways of engaging clergy and laity in work with secular, ecumenical and inter-faith bodies in the Dudley Area should also be explored.

6.5.d. There are certain disparities due to the fact that the archdeaconry and episcopal area of Dudley are not co-terminous. For example, the recent practice regarding parochial vacancies in the Dudley Area has involved the Bishop in processes which are dealt with by Archdeacons throughout the rest of the Diocese. To work for consistency of relationships and procedures between bishops/archdeacons/parishes and also between boards/committees/officers across the whole Diocese could free some of the Bishop of Dudley's time. Since the Archdeacon is already involved in all matters of pastoral reorganisation this would not dramatically increase his workload.

6.5.e. As part of this same exercise attention could be given to the definition of a clear role for the Suffragan Bishop with responsibilities across the whole Diocese.

6.6. Some anxiety was expressed to us about the Archdeacon of Dudley's workload. If such anxiety continues then perhaps a review of areas and duties could be undertaken. Two suggestions made to us might be relevant here. The first is to increase the Worcester Archdeaconry by one or two Deaneries, and the second is to consider the possible delegation of some duties to a senior priest.

6.7. It might be argued that Option 2 (5.3) could achieve these results without the upheaval of legal procedures which Option I will necessitate, which amounts to changing working practices and ignoring the Scheme. In our view it would be highly unsatisfactory to retain a Scheme which is in practice ignored. There is no doubt that some of the ambiguity the Scheme has created is due to the designation of the Diocesan Bishop as an Area Bishop, and that ambiguity is likely to remain as long as the Scheme is in being. Moreover, the retention of a Scheme which is ignored runs the risk of even greater ambiguity in the future if, in changed circumstances and with different personnel, working practices are seen to conflict with the provisions of the Scheme.

In presenting our report we express our gratitude to all who have helped us in our task and we hope and pray that our recommendations will help the Diocese of Worcester so to order its life under God that it may be the better enabled to fulfil its mission.

DIOCESES MEASURE 1978
AREA SCHEME FOR THE DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

Prepared by the Bishop of the Diocese under Section 11 of the Dioceses Measure 1978 for making permanent provision with respect to the discharge of episcopal functions in the Diocese and submitted to the Dioceses Commission.

THE EPISCOPAL AREAS AND OVERSIGHT OF THE DIOCESE

1. The following Episcopal Areas shall be created in the Diocese of Worcester:

The area for the time being comprising the Archdeaconry of Worcester with the Deaneries of Bromsgrove, Droitwich, Kidderminster, and Stourport, which shall be known as "the Worcester Area".

The area for the time being comprising the Deaneries of Dudley, Himley and Stourbridge, which shall be known as "the Dudley Area".

2. The episcopal oversight of each area shall be as follows:
The Bishop of the Diocese - the Worcester area.
The Suffragan Bishop of Dudley - the Dudley area.
3. The Bishop of the Diocese shall retain to himself all the functions of his office except those specifically delegated in the First Schedule hereto.
4. The Suffragan Bishop (hereinafter called "the Area Bishop") shall exercise in his area the episcopal functions specified in the First Schedule delegated to him by the Bishop of the Diocese.
5. The Bishop of the Diocese and the Area Bishop shall meet together periodically (and not less than six times in each calendar year) as an episcopal chapter. Meetings of the episcopal chapter shall be convened by the Bishop of the Diocese.

6. Where the Area Bishop is unable by reason of illness or absence abroad to exercise his functions under this Scheme or where there is a vacancy in the see of the Area Bishop the functions exercisable by him in accordance with this Scheme shall be exercisable by the Bishop of the Diocese or by such person being a person in episcopal orders as the Bishop of the Diocese may appoint.

ARCHDEACONS

7. The Archdeacon of Dudley whose archdeaconry falls into both episcopal areas shall perform all the functions proper to his office, within the Dudley episcopal area working with the Area Bishop and within the remainder of his archdeaconry working with the Bishop of the Diocese. The Archdeacon of Worcester will perform all the functions proper to his office within his archdeaconry within the episcopal area of Worcester.
8. The Archdeacons will meet with their respective Bishops on a regular basis concerning pastoral and other matters and will continue to function in the Diocese in accordance with their office and customary practice.

REVOCATION AND AMENDMENT

9. The Bishop of the Diocese shall have power to revoke, amend or add to the functions set out in the Schedules hereto subject to the consent of the Diocesan Synod.

DIOCESAN ADMINISTRATION

10. The Diocesan Officers and staff shall be responsible for servicing the whole of the Diocese.

COMMENCEMENT AND CITATION

11. This Scheme shall come into force on a date to be determined by the Bishop of the Diocese.
12. This Scheme may be cited as the Diocese of Worcester Area Scheme 1993.

THE FIRST SCHEDULE

EPISCOPAL FUNCTIONS DELEGATED UNDER SECTION 3 OF THE SCHEME

Part A : Functions delegated subject to consultation with the Diocesan prior to exercise

1. Functions under the Sequestration Act 1871.
2. Functions under the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1987.
3. Determination of issues in connection with the use of forms of service or of variations made by the ministers in such forms.
4. Designation of a building as a parish centre of worship and the revocation of such designation.
5. Licensing of a building or part thereof for public worship subject to faculty jurisdiction and the revocation of such order.
6. Order making a building licensed for public worship subject to faculty jurisdiction and the revocation of such order.
7. Appointment, admission and institution to any benefice being vacant of a person in Priest's Orders who is qualified to be admitted and instituted in accordance with the Canons in that behalf and has been duly presented thereto; and the collation or institution to any benefice of which the Diocesan Bishop is for the time being the patron or to which he is by lapse or otherwise entitled to the right of collation of a clerk nominated by him in writing under his hand.

Part B : Other Delegated Functions

1. The licensing of assistant curates, deaconesses, lay workers and readers to their respective offices.
2. The granting of permissions to officiate.
3. The granting of licences to engage in occupations.
4. The granting of licences for non-residence.
5. Issuing of authorisation to lay persons to take services, preach or distribute Holy Communion.

6. Functions under the Churchwardens (Appointment and Resignation) Measure 1964.
7. Approving forms of occasional services for parishes and deaneries.
8. Issuing of directions as to the services which are to be held or are not required to be held in churches, other than parish churches or in buildings licensed for public worship.
9. Authorising a minister to dispense with the reading of services in the parish church or parish centre of worship.
10. Determination of disputes as to changes in forms of vesture in use in church or chapel.
11. Licensing a public chapel for publication of banns and solemnization of marriages.
12. Consecration of churchyard or burial ground.
13. Issuing of directions as to use of church or chapel for play, concert or exhibition.
14. Functions arising during vacancies in benefices.
15. Issuing of directions to, or entering into agreements with, the pastoral committee with respect to review of arrangements for pastoral supervision.
16. Issuing of directions concerning the Marriage of unbaptised persons.
17. Issuing of directions concerning services of prayer after the civil marriage of divorced persons in accordance with diocesan policy.
18. Dealing with requests to receive into communion members of other Churches, in accordance with Canon Law.
19. Powers under rule 43 (i) of the Church Representation Rules as amended (other than powers affecting membership of the Diocesan Synod or of the General Synod).
20. Giving consents under the Parsonages Measure 1938.
21. Functions under the Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978.
22. Consultation or delegation as is appropriate under the Ecumenical Relations Canons (B 43 and B 44).
23. Confirmations in the area except those services where the Diocesan Bishop notifies the Area Bishop of his desire to officiate.

THE SECOND SCHEDULE

Functions reserved to the Diocesan Bishop on which he will consult with the Area Bishop

1. Appointment of Honorary Canons.
2. Appointment of Archdeacons.
3. Appointment of Rural Deans.
4. Admission into Holy Orders.
5. Admission of young children to Holy Communion.

+ Philip Worcester

30th September
1993

WORCESTER DIOCESAN PASTORAL COMMITTEE

REVIEW OF THE EPISCOPAL AREA SCHEME

The Diocese of Worcester Area Scheme came into force on 30 September 1993. The Deaneries Working Party had recommended that the workings of the Episcopal Area Scheme, particularly in the Dudley Episcopal Area and its relationship to the Dudley Archdeaconry should be reviewed. This was accepted by the Bishop's Council on 8 October 1998, and the Diocesan Pastoral Committee was asked to oversee the assignment.

The brief for the review is:-

- to consider and comment on the provisions of the area scheme.
- To consider the extent to which the arrangements contained in the scheme are being implemented.
- To consider and comment, in the context of the area scheme, on the working relationships between
 - the Bishop of Worcester and the Bishop of Dudley
 - a) in the Dudley Episcopal Area
 - b) in the Worcester Episcopal Area
 - the Bishop of Dudley and the Archdeacon of Dudley within the Dudley Episcopal Area
 and to contrast/compare the working relationships between the Bishop of Worcester and the Archdeacon of Dudley in the deaneries of Bromsgrove, Droitwich, Kidderminster and Stourport, and the Bishop of Worcester and the Archdeacon of Worcester in the Worcester Archdeaconry.
- To consider the three deaneries within the Dudley Episcopal area and endeavour to assess the benefits/disbenefits to them of the Dudley Episcopal area scheme.
- To investigate the content and operation of an Episcopal Area scheme in at least one other diocese, and to compare/contrast with the Worcester Area Scheme.
- To give such advice for improving the operation of the area scheme as may appear appropriate.
- To review the job description of the Bishop of Dudley.

9 October 1998
 John G Stanbury
 Diocesan Secretary

REVIEW OF THE DIOCESE OF WORCESTER AREA SCHEME 1993

Membership of Review Group

Appointed by the Chairman of the Diocesan Pastoral Committee
The Very Revd. Peter Marshall, Dean of Worcester

Chairman

The Rt. Revd. John Gibbs

Rural Dean from Dudley Episcopal Area

The Revd. Matthew Baynham, Rural Dean of Dudley

Lay Chairperson from Dudley Episcopal Area

Mrs Pauline Jones, Lay Chairperson of Stourbridge Deanery

Lay Representative from Himley Deanery (from Jan 2000)

Mr. Michael Freeman

Rural Dean from Dudley Archdeaconry (South)

The Revd. Barry Gilbert, Rural Dean of Stourport

Lay Chairperson from Dudley Archdeaconry (South)

Mr. John Nixon, Lay Chairperson of Droitwich Deanery

Rural Dean from Worcester Archdeaconry

Revd. Dr. Michael Nott, Rural Dean of Martley and Worcester West

Lay Chairperson from Worcester Archdeaconry

Mr. Lionel Hall, Lay Chairperson of Pershore Deanery

Representatives from the Diocesan Pastoral Committee

Canon Michael Lewis until December 1999

The Revd. Canon David Salt

Consultant to Working Party

Canon Keith Lamdin, Oxford Diocese

Secretary to Working Party

Mr. Robert Higham, Diocesan Secretary

EPISCOPAL AREA REVIEW

ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO A CONSULTATION ON THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background.

The following groups were invited to comment on the working group's terms of reference:

- Deanery Synods
- Parochial Church Councils
- Clergy
- Members of the House of Laity of the Diocesan Synod
- Diocesan Officers

Views were invited over the period from mid October to the end of November 1999.

The source of responses .

There were only 28 responses received by the 'deadline' of 30.11.99 and one late submission. They came from the following parts of the diocese:

	Dudley Episcopal Area	Dudley Archdeaconry South	Worcester Archdeaconry
Deanery Synods	1	1	
PCCs	9	4	4
Clergy	1	1	5
Members of House of Laity of Diocesan Synod		2	
Diocesan Officers			1

Note: PCC responses include DCCs and Standing Committees

One Deanery Response was from a Standing Committee

Eight of the eleven responses from the Dudley Episcopal Area came from the Himley Deanery and two of the clergy responses from elsewhere in the diocese were from clergy whose observations included experience from serving in the Himley Deanery at the time of the transfer from the Diocese of Lichfield.

Key Themes.

In response to the open-ended invitation to comment on the matters contained in the Working Party's Terms of Reference the following themes / points were present (in some cases more than one point in a response).

	Dudley Episcopal Area	Dudley Archdeaconry South	Worcester Archdeaconry
The Scheme should be kept / reinforced (in the Dudley Episcopal Area)	7		1
The current role of the Bishop of Dudley is very important for the church to be effective with secular bodies	7	1	1
The scheme was a promise to the Himley Deanery which must not be abandoned	3	1	1
The lack of coincidence of episcopal and archidiaconal areas needs resolving	2	1	1
The workload of the Archdeacon of Dudley is too high, and / or the senior clergy team needs reinforcing		3	1
The current role of the Bishop of Dudley is important ecumenically	2		1
There should be greater delegation of function to (the) Area Bishop		1	2
The Bishop of Dudley should not spend time on the governing bodies of local projects	2		
The current area scheme is confusing and needs simplifying			2
The Diocesan Office is geographically remote	1	1	
The current role of the Bishop of Dudley de-skills other clergy with regard to civic roles	1		
The Dudley Episcopal Area receives a disproportionately high level of episcopal effort	1		
The promise to Himley should not be seen as determinative	1		
Happy with current definitions of areas		1	
The current scheme is divisive between the urban north and the rest of the diocese		1	
The Scheme should be scrapped, revert to the Bishop of Dudley only having a suffragan role		1	
Felt unable to comment		1	
A Bishop of Dudley is good for PR in the Dudley MBC area			1

There were a number of specific proposals with regard to issues surrounding the workload of the Archdeacon of Dudley and the definition of episcopal areas compared to archdeaconries.

- A. There should be 2 bishops and 3 archdeacons (one suggestion included that an archdeacon based in Dudley could be combined with a parochial incumbency)
- B. There should be 1 bishop and 3 archdeacons
- C. There should be 3 bishops (who also fulfil the archdeacons duties)

Summary of Themes / Points:

The weight of responses came from the Dudley Episcopal Area (and Himley Deanery in particular) where there was strong concern to see that the immediacy of the role of the Bishop of Dudley was not lost. This civic and secular aspects of this role are generally seen as important elements of relationship to Dudley MBC. There was lesser recognition of the ecumenical role.

The workload of the Archdeacon of Dudley is seen as too heavy, this perception comes from the part of the archdeaconry outside the Dudley Episcopal Area. The lack of coincidence of these boundaries leads some to call for rationalisation by creating a third archdeaconry (or Bishop with archideaconal duties) or adjustment to the boundaries between:

- The two current archdeaconries, or
- The two current episcopal areas.

The perception is that the geographical responsibilities of the Archdeacon of Worcester and Bishop of Dudley should be increased and those of the Archdeacon of Dudley decreased.

There was emphasis on the special character of the Black Country which, plus the undertakings given to the Himley Deanery, justified the focus of the Bishop of Dudley.

The delegation arrangements in the scheme were questioned and greater delegation urged by three respondents.

Main Conclusions:

The limited number of responses (28 across the diocese) could be open to various interpretations. It could be that there is broad contentment with the current arrangements, or that they are not perceived to be important or affect everyday parish life, or that people had other priorities than responding, etc.

The weight of responses within the Himley Deanery is significant. There is anxiety that promises could be broken and the (special?) level of episcopal care diminished.

The balance of workload between the bishops and archdeacons (with consequences for the level of local involvement each is able to offer) drew comment. There is a contrast between the Dudley Episcopal Area and the rest of the diocese with some concern coming from the part of the Dudley Archdeaconry outside that episcopal area.

WORCESTER DIOCESAN PASTORAL COMMITTEE
EPISCOPAL AREA REVIEW

STATISTICS

	Dudley Episcopal Area	Dudley Archdeaconry South	Worcester Archdeaconry
Deaneries	3	4	6
Benefices	38	32	52 + Cathedral
Parishes	42	53	100 + Cathedral
Church Buildings	54	94	133 + Cathedral
Population (1991 census figures)	319,951	259,223	202,542

WORCESTER DIOCESAN PASTORAL COMMITTEE
EPISCOPAL AREA REVIEW

LEGAL PROCEDURE TO CLOSE THE SCHEME

The Diocesan Registrar has provided a very short synopsis of the procedures to revoke the scheme:

Although there is provision in the Area Scheme for revocation, amendment or addition to the functions set out in the Schedules to the Scheme I do not think this is the proper way forward if the whole Scheme is to be revoked. By Section 13 of the Dioceses Measure 1978 another Scheme is needed to revoke the old one and therefore Sections 11 and 12 of the 1978 Measure come into play. The Bishop, with the consent of the Standing Committee of General Synod, will need to prepare a draft Scheme and submit it to the Dioceses Commission for it to report on it. When this has been accomplished further amendments may be made with the approval of the Commission and the finally agreed draft Scheme must be layed before the Diocesan Synod for its approval and subject to this it has to be layed before General Synod.



THE CHURCH
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COMMISSIONERS

David Hebblethwaite Esq, OBE, BA
Secretary to the Dioceses Commission
Church House
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3NZ

Secretary

26 February 2002

Dear Mr Hebblethwaite,

Rescinding the Worcester Area Scheme

As required by section 11 of the Dioceses Measure 1978, the Commissioners have been asked to supply an estimate of the financial effects of rescinding the Area Scheme currently in force in the Diocese of Worcester under the provisions of section 11 of the 1978 Measure.

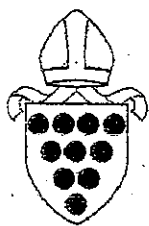
Having made enquiry, it appears to the Commissioners that rescinding the Area Scheme currently in operation will have no appreciable financial consequences since the Bishop of Worcester and the Bishop of Dudley already minister in ways which will continue to be appropriate if the Scheme is rescinded and their financial support will need to continue as at present. In support of this view, extracts of a letter received from the Bishop of Worcester are attached to this letter.

Yours sincerely

Howell Harris Hughes

Howell Harris Hughes

Enc



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

THE BISHOP OF WORCESTER
and BISHOP TO HM
PRISONS
The Rt Revd Dr Peter Selby

Miss Carol Pym
Bishoprics and Cathedrals Department
Church Commissioners
Elizabeth House
39 York Road
LONDON
SE1 7NQ

2nd November 2001

Dear Carol,

Dioceses Commission

..... The first point to be made here is that the Bishop of Worcester (both my predecessor and myself) have always retained a concern for the whole diocese, and in matters of travel and hospitality have really not been constrained within what was called the Worcester Episcopal Area, a concept which nobody ever really took on board. I therefore think it very unlikely that there will be appreciable additional travel to the Black Country or entertainment involving people from the Black Country for the Bishop of Worcester as a result of ending the Area Scheme. We are in any case preserving the closer relationship of the Bishop of Dudley with the Black Country institutions and to that extent his location in that part of the diocese does save the Bishop of Worcester travel and other costs (as well as having the more important merit of offering a better service to that part of the diocese). With regard to the Bishop of Dudley's costs, I do not think that the Suffragan Bishop will in effect do any more travelling to the south, or extend any more hospitality to that part of the diocese than has been the case hitherto. The two bishops have always shared confirmations and institutions without regard to the Area Scheme, and towards the end of Rupert Hoare's time when there was a vacancy in the See of Worcester he began a practice, which his successor has continued, of concerning himself with the whole diocese. I therefore think it unlikely that there will be any additional costs to the Bishop of Dudley.

The same really applies to the question of the transfer of costs. The aspects which you identify have already been shared on a cross-diocesan basis and although the Bishop of Dudley is playing the major role in parochial appointments, he is not bearing any appreciable patronage costs.

Before sending this letter to you I consulted both the Bishop of Dudley and the Diocesan Secretary and my comments have their full support.

Yours ever

Peter

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