

# Bishops of Birkenhead and Stockport

## Information Pack



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# An introduction from Bishop Mark



I am grateful both to you and to God that you are willing to consider whether you are being called to join us in the Diocese of Chester as one of our bishops, and I want to assure you of my prayers and availability to talk if you would like to. The process of episcopal exploration is one of discernment, as we seek the mind and heart of Christ together and for the sake of the communities and people of this diocese and area. This is, and will always be our focus, as we seek to serve the 1.6 million people in our varied and diverse communities. We are divided by geography, wealth, education, ethnicity, but united in our need for Christ.

Chester Diocese seems to me to have a vocation to bridge gaps and make links. We stretch from Merseyside to Manchester and serve communities from Wallasey to Wilmslow to Whitewell. We engage communities aching in poverty and others in great security; the "Cheshire Set", Ellesmere Port, Jodrell Bank, and New Brighton... coast, hills, rurality, industrial creativity, academic and scientific excellence, farmers, commuters, and areas of significant poverty. We have no one overwhelming centre of population and so we stand together, united in Christ as we have been called to do for the last millennium. We cling to Him through the rather dramatically changing scenes of life, and

we are utterly committed to the communities we serve; as we proclaim faith in this generation so we experience the love of God bridging the gaps between us and with Him.

This information pack, and the discernment process we are following, includes both vacant suffragan posts. Whilst there are distinctives between the two sees, at this stage in the life of the diocese, these are malleable and will be further shaped by the new episcopal team and our colleagues. The opportunity to appoint both suffragan bishops together seems to me a kindness of God as we commit to collaborative and creative working across our traditions and locations.

**"I want to assure you of my prayers and availability to talk if you would like to."**

We are looking for two new bishops to join the team and help us "love Jesus and love others". We're not looking for heroes, we need people who walk simply and humbly with Christ and inspire others to do the same. We're looking for people who love the Church enough to keep us true to our calling. I am looking for colleagues, for me and the rest of my Staff Team. Will you come and pray with us, laugh with us, open the

scriptures with us, dream with us, cry with us, wrestle with us, and share Christian life with us? We want bishops who are as comfortable at a colouring table as they are at the Lord's Table, as ready to don PPE or wellies as vestments, to serve the privileged and the outcast without fear or favour. We want bishops who keep survivors central to our safeguarding work, the lost central to our missional work, and Christ central to all that we are.

The new bishops will be inspiring communicators, hospitable pastors, missionally focused, prayerful, imaginative, and humble disciples of Christ. They will need to be resilient, strategic, and collaborative as they join us at a time of considerable change in the diocese. They will also be much loved and regularly held in prayer.

## **† Mark Bishop of Chester**



# Role specification

This role description has been prepared on the basis of the requirements for the Bishops of Birkenhead and Stockport identified by the Bishop of Chester in conversation with the Bishop's Council and the Bishop's Staff Team and after consultation resulting in over 500 submissions.

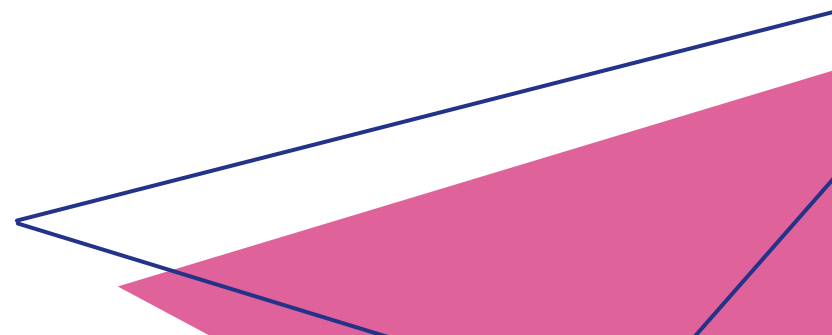
The Bishop of Chester is aware that women, those from Global Majority Ethnic backgrounds, and those with disabilities are currently under-represented amongst the diocese's (and the Church of England's) senior leaders and welcomes nominations from all cultural and ecclesiological backgrounds in his desire to enable a diverse ministry serving the whole diocese.

As with any role description, these descriptors will need to be kept under review. If there are any particular concerns after six months the suffragan bishop may wish to raise these with the diocesan bishop. The suffragan bishop will also wish to ensure that at their first Ministerial Development Review with the diocesan bishop this document is discussed and amended as appropriate.

As a result of COVID we know that there will need to be changes ahead though we don't as yet know what they will be or their scale. We want to be open to various possibilities through a prayerful discernment of God's call. Thus, the new bishops will need to be willing for aspects of this role description, including some areas of responsibility, to change.



This document should not be considered in isolation but in the context of the vows and duties undertaken at the ordination and consecration as a bishop and also the Canons of the Church of England.



## Purpose of the role(s)

The Diocese of Chester serves around 1.6 million people from the coast to the Pennines. Our vision has long been focussed around local, discipleship, evangelism, mission, and pastoral care.

This vision will be renewed over the next two years, but will continue to revolve around our commitment to see sustainable Christian communities in every place; to see the Church grow in numbers, service, and spiritual depth.

One key part of this vision will always be episcopal support, resourcing, and leadership. Bishops are foci of unity and mission, and catalysts for the life of Christ blossoming in others.

The diocese comprises two archdeaonries, Macclesfield and Chester, with a suffragan bishop located in each.

Suffragans will hold pan-diocesan responsibilities, and exercise primary pastoral care for the archdeaconry in which they are situated.

### **We are looking for bishops who are:**

- close enough to know people;
- real enough to love and be loved;
- biblically prayerful enough to lead and feed the sheep and enable them to thrive;
- transparent enough for Christ to be clearly visible;
- vibrant enough to inspire; and
- experienced, wise, and astute enough to lead strategically.

*Please note the "enough" in each statement. We refute the myth of episcopal perfectionism as clearly as we refute the unhealthy and unsustainable monarchic view of the bishop.*



## The suffragan bishops will each:

- **Share** with the Bishop of Chester and each other the oversight and leadership of the diocese, acting jointly as the episcopal focus of unity.
- **Be a visible and active presence** as a community leader in the Diocese of Chester, particularly in the archdeaconry in which they are situated. They will have a particular care, working with the archdeacon for that archdeaconry.
- **Be a leader** in mission, inspiring and fostering the five marks of mission across the diocese.
- **Teach** and advocate for the faith both in the church and in the public square.
- **Strengthen** the range, diversity, and level of experience of the Bishop's Staff Team, sharing with them, the rural deans and lay chairs, and the Bishop's Council and Diocesan Synod, in the strategic leadership of the diocese.
- **Foster vocations**, both lay and ordained, within and beyond the Church, with a particular bias to the young and the overlooked.
- **Ensure** provision of episcopal ministry.
- **Provide**, with the other bishop suffragan, the opportunity for mutual collegial support for episcopal ministry to the Bishop of Chester.





## Challenges / Priorities of the roles

There are a great many challenges for the Diocese of Chester, many of which are shared with the church nationally. None of us have clarity about when, where, and how we will emerge from this pandemic, and Chester is not immune from this. We have also been rocked, and rightly rocked, by profound historic safeguarding issues at the heart of the diocese. All of this means that we are in a time where we are rebuilding culture and discerning new vision for the diocese, and the new bishops need to be part of that process.

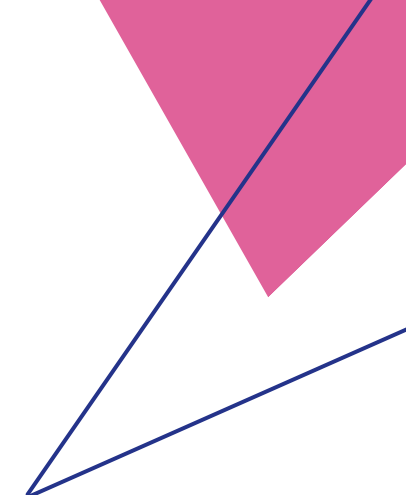
Together, the three bishops will share with each other and, where appropriate, with others such as the dean, archdeacons, rural deans, clergy and lay leaders, responsibility for:

- Evangelising, teaching, encouraging, nurturing, and growing confidence in the gospel, the "faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds", with particular recognition of the need to "proclaim afresh in this generation", not least among the young.
- Being culture-bearers, including fostering an atmosphere which feels Christ-like; one which is undefended, joyful, gracious, generous, prayerful, kind, confident, open to change, and mindful of the outsider and overlooked.

- Enabling the imagining and reimagining of church and ministry appropriate for each local context.
- Curating and communicating both vision and strategy.
- Leading worship, and fully participating in the worshipping community which is the Bishop's Staff Team.
- Conducting episcopal services including licensings, confirmations, and ordinations.
- Supporting and developing ministry, both lay and ordained, across the diocese, including work with IME2, vocations, MDRs, wellbeing, and CDM matters, acting as a focus for unity and mission.

- Offering proactive ministry in the public square(s).
- Overseeing strategic appointments.
- Linking with the Anglican Communion, especially the Church in Melanesia and the dioceses of Aru and Boga in DR Congo.
- Championing excellent safeguarding practice at all times.

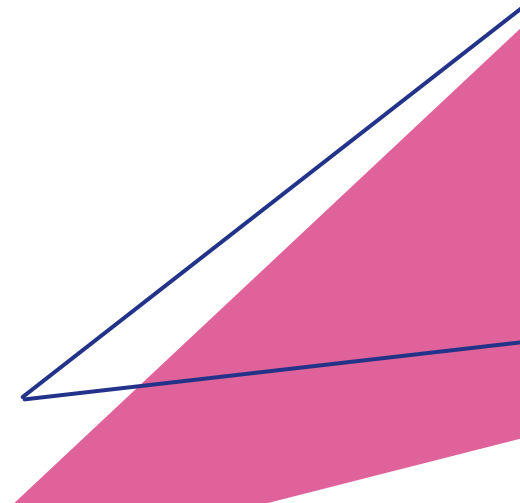
Within this, each bishop will carry specific portfolios, which will evolve over the years but which are described later in outline form. The balancing of shared episcopate, exercised together and individually, is crucial to the effectiveness of these roles. We will seek to embody, develop, and enact the care with which we are entrusted and our collegiality as bishops with the wider team.



## Main responsibilities of the roles

Mindful of the themes of the current quinquennium as identified by the House of Bishops namely i) to contribute to the common good ii) to facilitate the growth of the Church, and iii) to re-imagine ministry, the bishops will:

- Act as episcopal colleagues to the diocesan bishop and each other; playing a full part on the diocesan senior staff and sharing in the leadership and development of the diocese. Whilst each will relate particularly to the relevant archdeaconry, the bishops share episcopate for the whole diocese under the leadership of the Bishop of Chester.
- Work in partnership; building, serving, and enabling Christian collaboration even across difference. This will be evidenced in daily partnerships, for example with the archdeacons, in collaboration with organisations beyond the Church who serve the common good, and in ecumenical relationships.
- Exercise specific episcopal functions customary for a bishop, for example licensing and instituting priests, conducting confirmations, or pastoral visitations. They will work with our assistant bishops and each other to enable the most appropriate care for benefices with particular traditions.
- Work alongside colleagues in the development, adoption and local delivery of diocesan strategy. One urgent task will be the planned review of our diocesan structures.
- Foster vocations to lay, ordained, and religious life with a special care for minority groups, including acting as sponsoring bishops.
- Share with archdeacons and rural deans in making clergy appointments; giving pastoral care and support to clergy and their families; and engaging in ministerial development reviews of the clergy. There is a particular calling on bishops to attend to ministerial wellbeing with a special care for minority groups, and to offer hospitality.
- Help to relate the local church to the wider Church through membership of the College of Bishops, participation in its meetings, provincial episcopal confirmations, and our links with partner dioceses.
- Offer leadership in mission and ministry both in general and by serving on specific committees, such as those described below.
- Exercise responsibility for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, the provision of pastoral care of survivors, and creating a culture in which all will flourish and which is coherent with the safeguarding policies of the Church of England.
- Discharge all other duties as set out in canon law.



## Main responsibilities continued

There are areas of expertise that we are looking for in our episcopal team, to build on existing strengths and help others develop further. These include:

### Church growth and multiplication



### Community engagement and transformation



### Discipleship



### Issues around poverty



### Lay ministry



### Environment



In addition, the bishops will hold specific portfolios. These will evolve and develop, and indeed specific roles might be swapped between bishops depending on appointments, but our initial intention is to divide the work as follows:

Bishop of Birkenhead	Bishop of Stockport	Furthermore, bishops are required to attend various meetings, the main ones of which are set out below:
<b>Residence</b>		<b>Weekly</b>
The Bishop of Birkenhead will reside in the Archdeaconry of Chester and, whilst relating to the whole diocese will have particular relationship with that archdeaconry.	The Bishop of Stockport will reside in the Archdeaconry of Macclesfield and, whilst relating to the whole diocese will have particular relationship with that archdeaconry.	Bishops' Prayers and shared office day including bishops' meetings.
<b>Primary relationships with, and oversight of pastoral care for...</b>		<b>Monthly</b>
<p>...the Archdeaconry of Chester, working closely and collaboratively with the Archdeacon of Chester.</p> <p>...retired clergy.</p> <p>...chaplains.</p>	<p>...the Archdeaconry of Macclesfield, working closely and collaboratively with the Archdeacon of Macclesfield.</p> <p>...SSMs.</p> <p>...Readers and Pastoral Workers</p>	<p>Bishop's Staff Meeting</p> <p><b>Regular</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diocesan Synod</li> <li>• Bishop's Council</li> <li>• Rural Deans</li> <li>• Regional Bishops</li> <li>• College of Bishops</li> </ul>
<b>Particular portfolios for which the bishop serves as episcopal member...</b>		<b>Annual or occasional</b>
<p><i>Subject to review in the light of the interests and skills of the newly appointed bishops and episcopal colleagues.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding</li> <li>• CAMPC</li> <li>• Outreach Committee</li> <li>• MDR processes</li> <li>• MAMPC</li> <li>• DBE</li> <li>• Churches Together in Cheshire</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Northern Bishops' Retreat</li> <li>• College of Canons</li> <li>• Other office holders, eg Church Wardens, Chairs of Governors, Head Teachers, members of General Synod, etc.</li> </ul>

# Person specification

Bishops share in the privilege of loving and serving all the people of God, encouraging the faithful, whilst being a wise, kind and articulate advocate for change and growth.

Consistent with the Church of England Ordinal, it is expected that the bishops of the diocese will know themselves to be a dearly loved child of God and committed disciple of the Lord Jesus, dependent on the renewing power of the Holy Spirit and seeking to live daily in God's presence through prayer and the study of scripture.

Each will be a team player who is able to work independently and interdependently.

Safeguarding children and adults who may be at risk of harm is a fundamental aspect of mission. It is at the heart of the development of healthy churches and our service to the community. The Suffragan Bishops will each have a significant role in sharing and communicating the key safeguarding message across the diocese and in some of the complex pastoral issues that can arise.



Specifically, the new Bishops of Stockport and Birkenhead will each be a person who demonstrates the following qualities:

## Spiritual Life

- Is a joyful disciple of deep faith and prayer, able to attract and inspire others in a desire to grow in personal holiness.
- Exercises due discipline in her/his personal life, reflecting Christ in all types of relationship.
- Ensures that she/he maintains a routine which safeguards time for prayer, the Scriptures, worship, retreat and the seeking of wise counsel.
- A focus of unity, she/he is able to appreciate and engage in a breadth of Christian spiritual traditions.

## Theology

- Embodies generous and hospitable orthodoxy: rooted in Christ, she/he is able to rejoice in diversity, promote unity, and continue to learn personally.
- Supportive of all Church traditions, celebrating and valuing the richness that all the different traditions in the Church of England bring to its mission.
- Able to interpret the scriptures and the Christian tradition to the world and the world to the Church.
- Honours and promotes the Five Guiding Principles.
- Is a confident Anglican.

## Ministerial experience

- Is an inspirational preacher and leader of worship which is rich in content, intelligent, well produced and sensitive to a variety of settings, traditions and needs.
- Has parochial experience and an ability to relate to and love urban, market town and rural settings, and is aware of the differing and sometimes competing needs of each.

## Vision for mission and delivery

- Passionate about mission and pastoral care, with a special concern for the Anglican Communion's five marks of mission, skilfully interweaving evangelism and concern for social justice and the environment.
- Personally committed to sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ and bringing people to faith and who will lead others to do the same.
- Able to be a bishop in mission who can think strategically and get things done.

## Engagement in community life and public issues

- Eager for the transformation of both individuals and society for the Kingdom.
- Able to engage in a variety of settings including worship, education and civic life, and work with the full social spectrum from those living in real poverty to the wealthiest landowners.
- Can be an effective "public voice" of the Church in a manner that is engaging, attractive and compelling.

## Safeguarding

- Able to understand the importance of safeguarding in the life of the Church and can work with confidence in the context of the NCI and diocesan safeguarding policies.
- Committed to making the Church a safe place for all, taking seriously and responding appropriately to all allegations of abuse, working closely with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

## Working with others

- Deeply committed to working collaboratively, consulting with others and delegating as appropriate.
- Can manage day-to-day administrative tasks and effectively use and manage administrative support.
- Known to care for and support the clergy and be available for them, caring for their well-being. They will have excellent interpersonal skills and genuinely like other people.

## Formation of others

- Can encourage, motivate and guide others in ministerial formation and development.
- Has an infectious vision for the release of the gifts of all God's people in ministry.

## Leadership and oversight

- Is graciously confident when addressing disciplinary issues, dealing with them efficiently, effectively and with appropriate sensitivity.
- Resilient, trusted and of evident integrity, able to take tough decisions and not risk-averse.

## Management of resources and structures

- Efficient in planning, organising and prioritising work.
- Can identify and promote the best use of resources.
- Eager to play a full role on the Bishop's staff team.
- Able to manage local budgets effectively.
- Able to understand structures, the importance of efficient administration and the wise use of resources and act upon that understanding

## Personal / other

- Cheerfully demonstrates the ability to balance the demands of public life and family/personal life.
- Inclines towards working collaboratively whilst having the resources and spiritual resilience to work alone/independently when necessary.
- Is a first-rate communicator with excellent written and verbal skills and able to negotiate social media.
- Has a warm sense of fun as well as a passion for the gospel.
- Is a person of unity and a bridge builder who draws people together.
- Manifests the fruits of the Spirit and is both intellectually and emotionally intelligent. They will be able to combine both kindness and firmness.
- Subject to any consideration of necessary reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act, must be able to drive (or ride a motorcycle, of course) as it would not be possible to exercise this role solely using public transport.





# Our region

The Diocese of Chester is a vibrant part of the country with a significant history in the life of the Church of England and our nation. It is a diverse diocese with dynamic towns and cities and beautiful, picturesque countryside.

For many unfamiliar with the diocese, the prevalent narrative speaks of a leafy, rural diocese, home to wealthy footballers and rich business leaders. Whilst this is true, it is also home to some of the most deprived communities in England.

A varied local industry thrives in the Diocese of Chester and includes pharmaceutical and chemical companies in Wirral and Macclesfield;

Vauxhall and Bentley car manufacturing and development plants in Ellesmere Port and Crewe; a celebrated history of shipbuilding in Birkenhead; technology parks and business incubators; and, Manchester Airport, the biggest and busiest regional airport in the UK. And that's all before mentioning the ancient history of the Roman City of Chester, plus a notable history of cheese, salt and silk exportation.

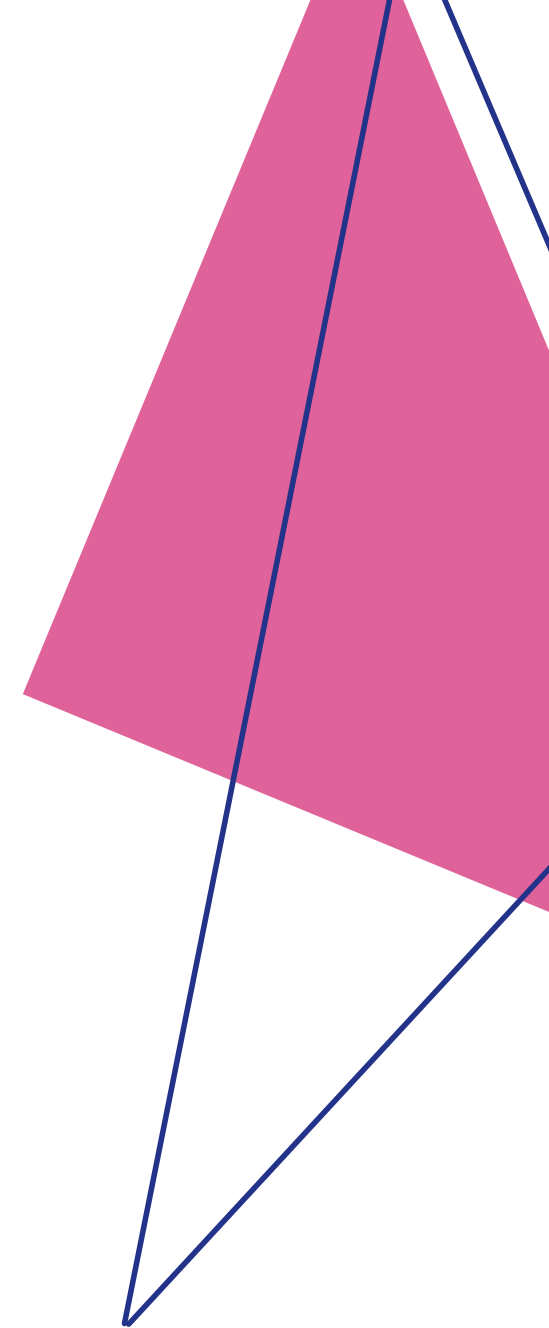
The diocese spans from Wirral and the Welsh border in the west to the limestone hills of the Derbyshire Peak District in the east. The north of the diocese reaches up to the rivers Mersey and Tame and the conurbations of south and east Manchester, and south to the towns of Crewe, Sandbach and Nantwich on the outskirts of Stoke-on-Trent and Shropshire.



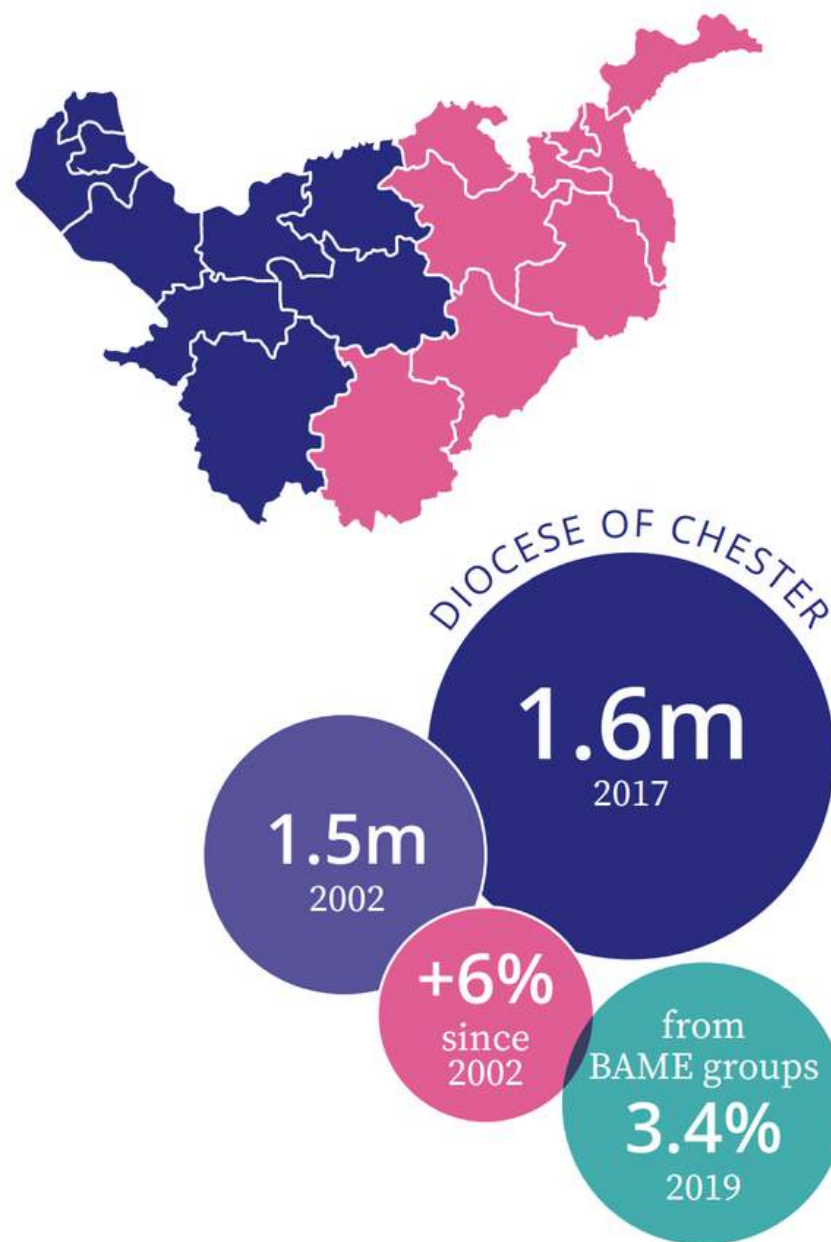
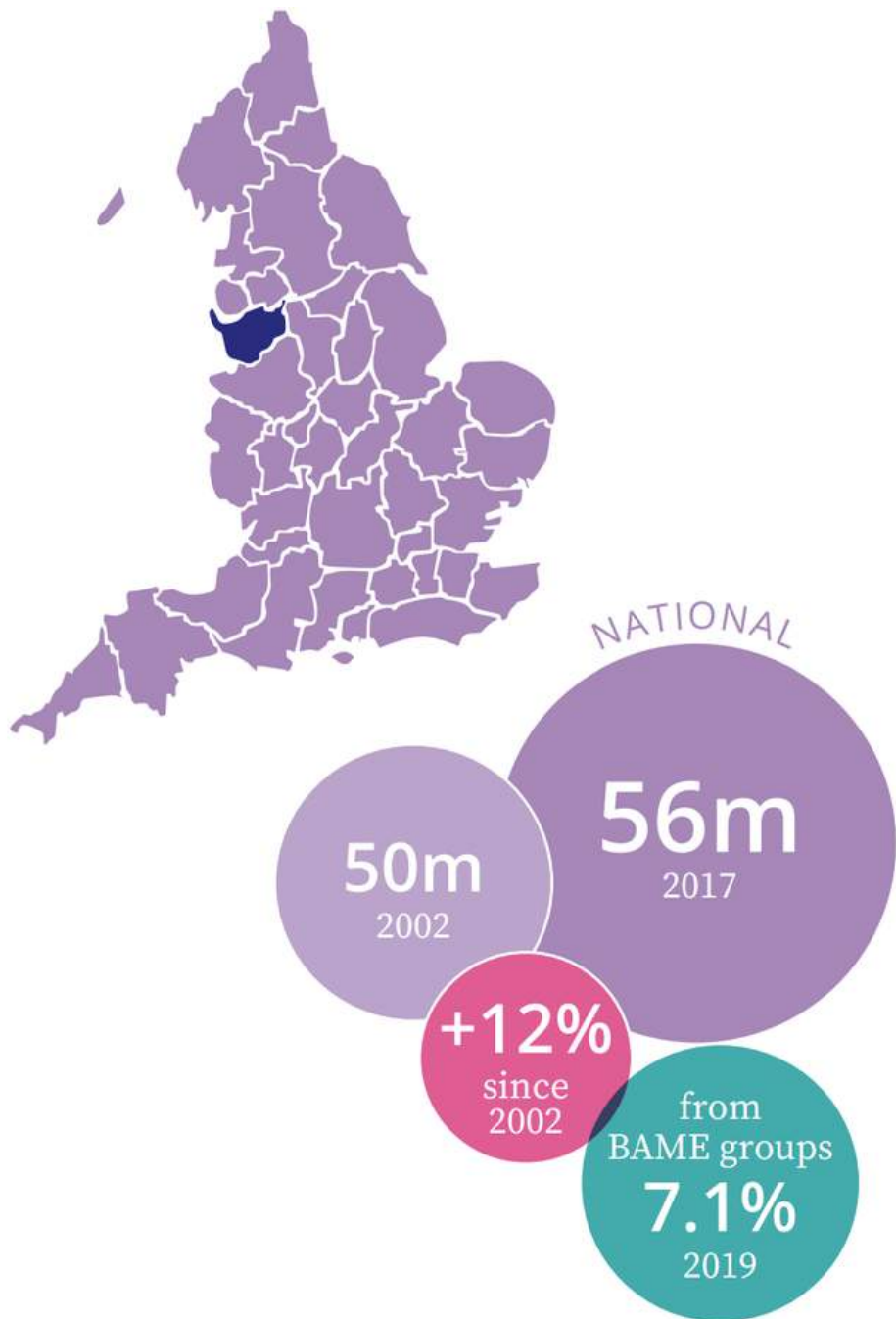
## A brief look at the diocese

The Diocese of Chester is...

- 1 home to some of the most deprived and least deprived communities in our nation.
- 2 the only diocese in the Northern Province currently not receiving allocations from the Church Commissioners.
- 3 accepting of its complex identity and mix of traditions, theological convictions, and cultural influences.
- 4 the diocese in which the first woman bishop in the Church of England was appointed.
- 5 parish-focused, enjoying a precious heritage of parishes as missional communities.
- 6 partner to vibrant overseas links with the Church of Melanesia made up of dioceses in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and New Caledonia and with the dioceses of Aru and Boga in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

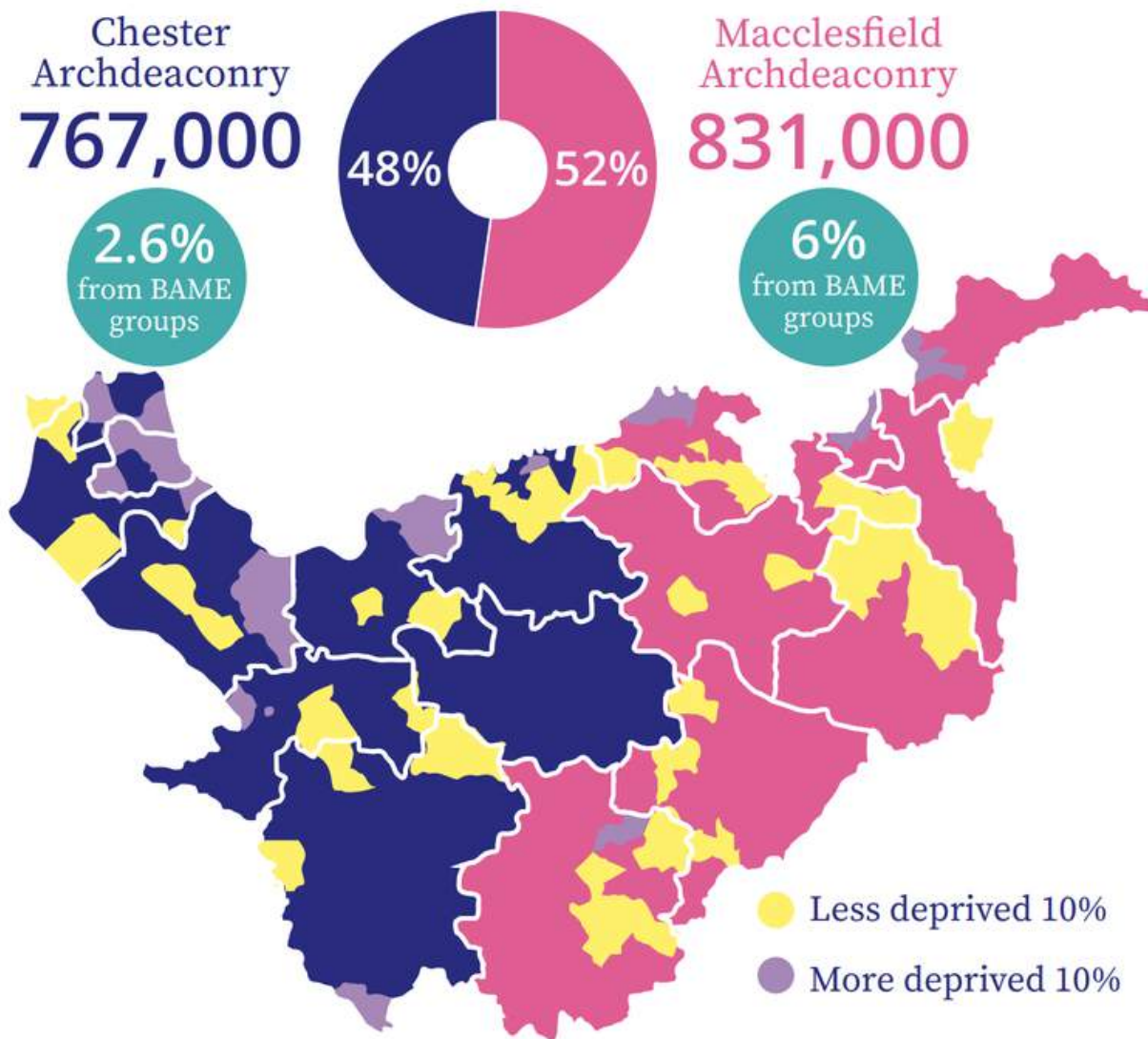


# Population



## Population of the archdeaonries

The archdeaonries of Chester and Macclesfield are roughly separated by the M6 which runs north and south through the heart of the diocese. Each archdeaconry has a broad mix of parishes and socio-cultural areas.



## Deprivation ranking

Parishes in our diocese include communities in the most and in the least deprived 0.1% of neighbourhoods. The disparity could not be clearer.



## Local authorities

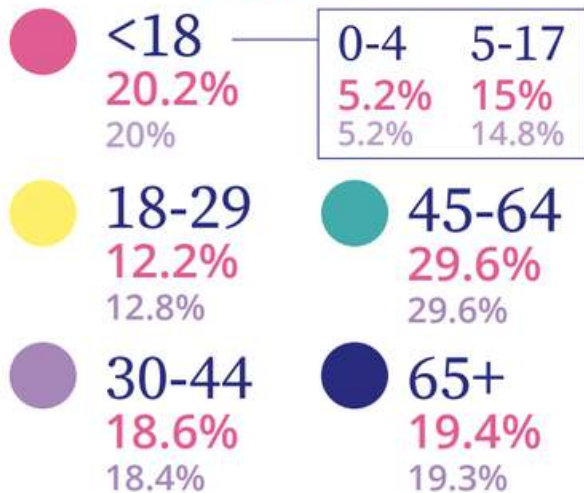
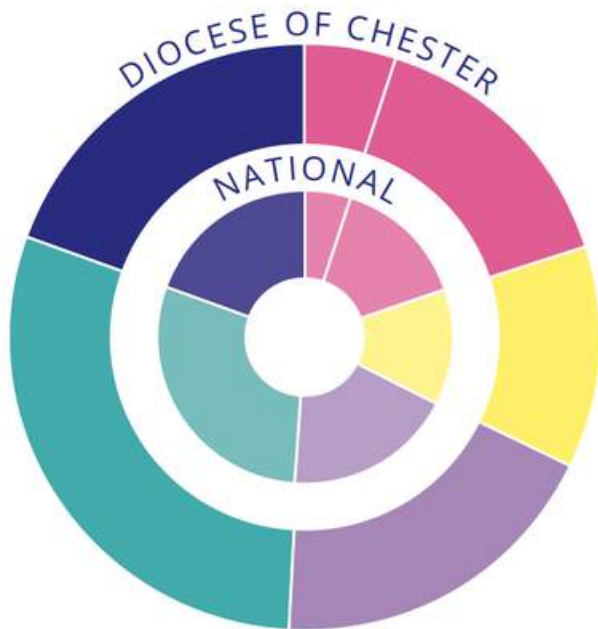
There are 11 local authorities within the boundaries of the Diocese of Chester, including two Welsh authorities.

The local authorities are:

- Cheshire East Council
- Cheshire West and Chester Council
- Flintshire County Council
- Halton Borough Council
- Manchester City Council
- Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
- Trafford Council
- Warrington Borough Council
- Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
- Wrexham County Borough Council

## Age

The Diocese of Chester follows almost exactly the national average in terms of the age profile of its population.



## Religion

DIOCESE OF CHESTER

**68%**  
identify as  
Christian

**1.11m**  
2017

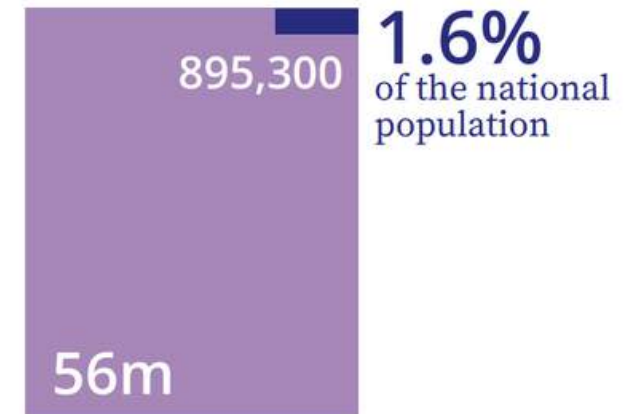
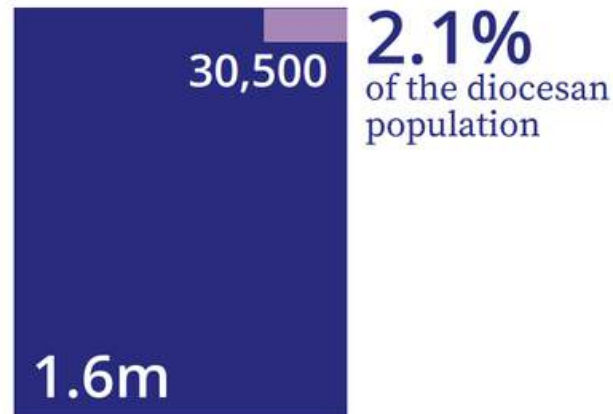
NATIONAL

**59%**  
identify as  
Christian

**33.06m**  
2017

## Church attendance

*(all age average weekly attendance)*



# Cultural and social landscape

The population of the diocese is spread across rural and urban areas, affluent and poor. There is a broadly urban perimeter and a central swathe containing smaller villages and towns. Given the mix of urban, town and village contexts in which we minister, there are variations in size and make up of congregations and benefices.

The Cheshire area lacks the strong metropolitan focus of our neighbours to the north in Manchester and Liverpool. The towns of Macclesfield and Crewe are more likely to look south to The Potteries, whilst Chester has strong links with Wirral and Wales. The Wirral peninsula looks to Liverpool, and the northern conurbations hugging the arterial link of the M56 steer towards Liverpool, Warrington and Manchester. Parishes to the east of Manchester are as much about the Pennine fells as they are the city and often have only a fleeting affinity with Cheshire's heartlands.

The Diocese of Chester is served predominantly by BBC Radio Merseyside and BBC Radio Manchester. Some parts of the diocese are technically served by BBC Shropshire, BBC Stoke and BBC Radio Wales and significant commercial radio stations, adding to the varied identity of the diocese. BBC North West Tonight is our primary local TV news outlet.



## Cultural highlights

There is a rich offering of cultural events found in the Diocese of Chester. The following is just a sample:



**The City of Chester** is the setting of the spectacular Chester Mystery Plays, performed every five years, mainly by members of the local community.



**Creamfields** is an electronic dance music festival attracting 75,000 people over August Bank Holiday every year.



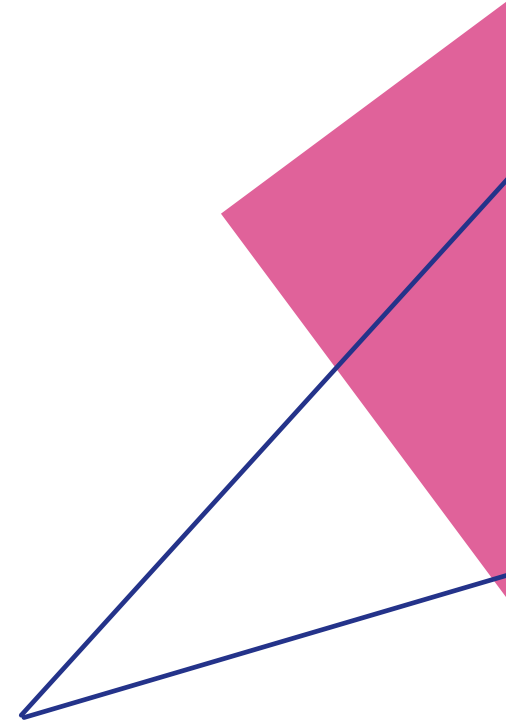
**Chester Cathedral** welcomes a million visitors from all over the world every year and is an important cultural hub for the city, as well as being the Mother church of the diocese.



**The Royal Cheshire Show** is described as the premier summertime agricultural event in the North West of England and will celebrate its 185th anniversary in 2023.



**RHS Flower Show** Tatton Park describes itself as a day out bursting with colourful gardening inspiration.







**Chester Racecourse** is known nationally and attracts over 300,000 visitors annually at raceday fixtures and non-raceday events.



**Chester Zoo** is the most visited zoo in the UK and a conservation and education charity committed to preventing extinction.



**Bluedot Festival** is a music, science and culture event held in July at Jodrell Bank Observatory.



Nantwich is home to the **International Cheese and Dairy Awards**, one of the biggest cheese festivals in the world.



The **University of Chester** offers an extensive range of single and combined honours courses to over 20,700 students across a number of specialist sites in Chester, Birkenhead, Warrington, and Shrewsbury.



The diocese is also home to an extensive canal network, the **Cheshire Ring**.

# Ministry and mission

Whilst there has been growth in school services, which is extremely encouraging, usual Sunday attendance among adults and children is down significantly, as is weekly average attendance.

Whilst there are encouragements, the overall picture is one of decline. In a recent survey, 76% of Christians said that they came to faith under the age of 18. This indicates the importance of focusing on how children and young people are helped to grow in their relationship with Jesus so that their faith is firmly rooted in the Christian community.

Over 50 youth and children's ministers are employed by parishes in the Diocese of Chester. We recognise that purposeful action and a redoubling of our efforts to inspire and enable every church to share the gospel with children, families and young people is of utmost importance.

## In the Diocese of Chester, statistics suggest that:



There has been a **10% decline** in children and young people attending church in one year.



**50%** of parishes have **five or fewer** under 16s attending a church service each Sunday.



**35%** of church members are **aged 70 or above** whilst 19.3% of the population of England is aged over 65.

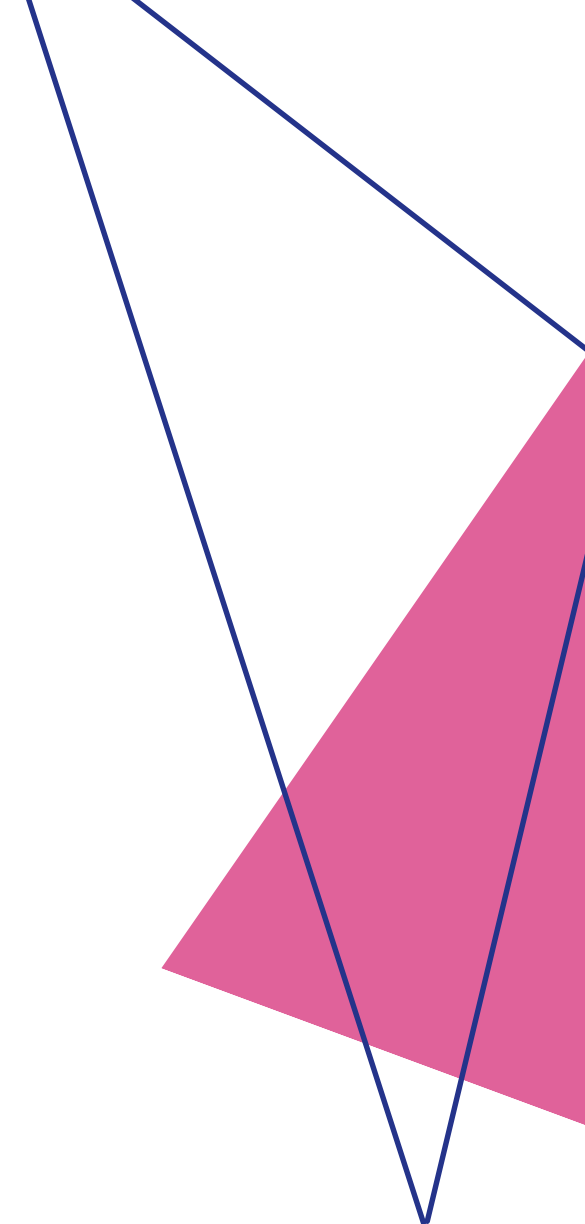
*Source: all figures cited from Statistics for Mission 2018*

## Church traditions

Church traditions in our parishes range widely, including evangelical, central, liberal, and Anglo-Catholic. Although no single strand of church identity dominates, different sorts of evangelical tradition - conservative, open and charismatic - represent the diocesan centre of gravity today.

An overall commitment to orthodox approaches to doctrine and ethics is an evident feature of the diocese. The priestly and episcopal ministry of women is widely accepted and welcomed. Where this is not possible, there is a notable commitment and respect for the Church of England's Five Guiding Principles as the basis for mutual flourishing across the traditions.

Similarly, the diocese does not have a single mind on other contested issues. Some people and parishes in the diocese hold more liberal views on matters such as human sexuality and marriage.

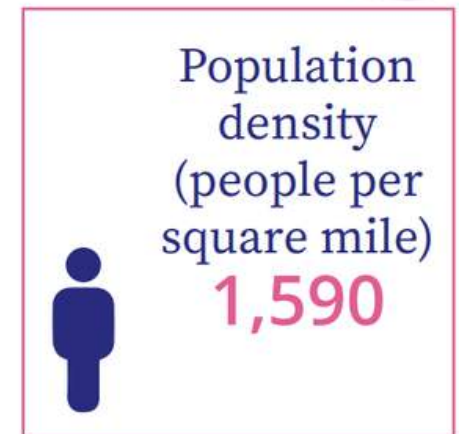
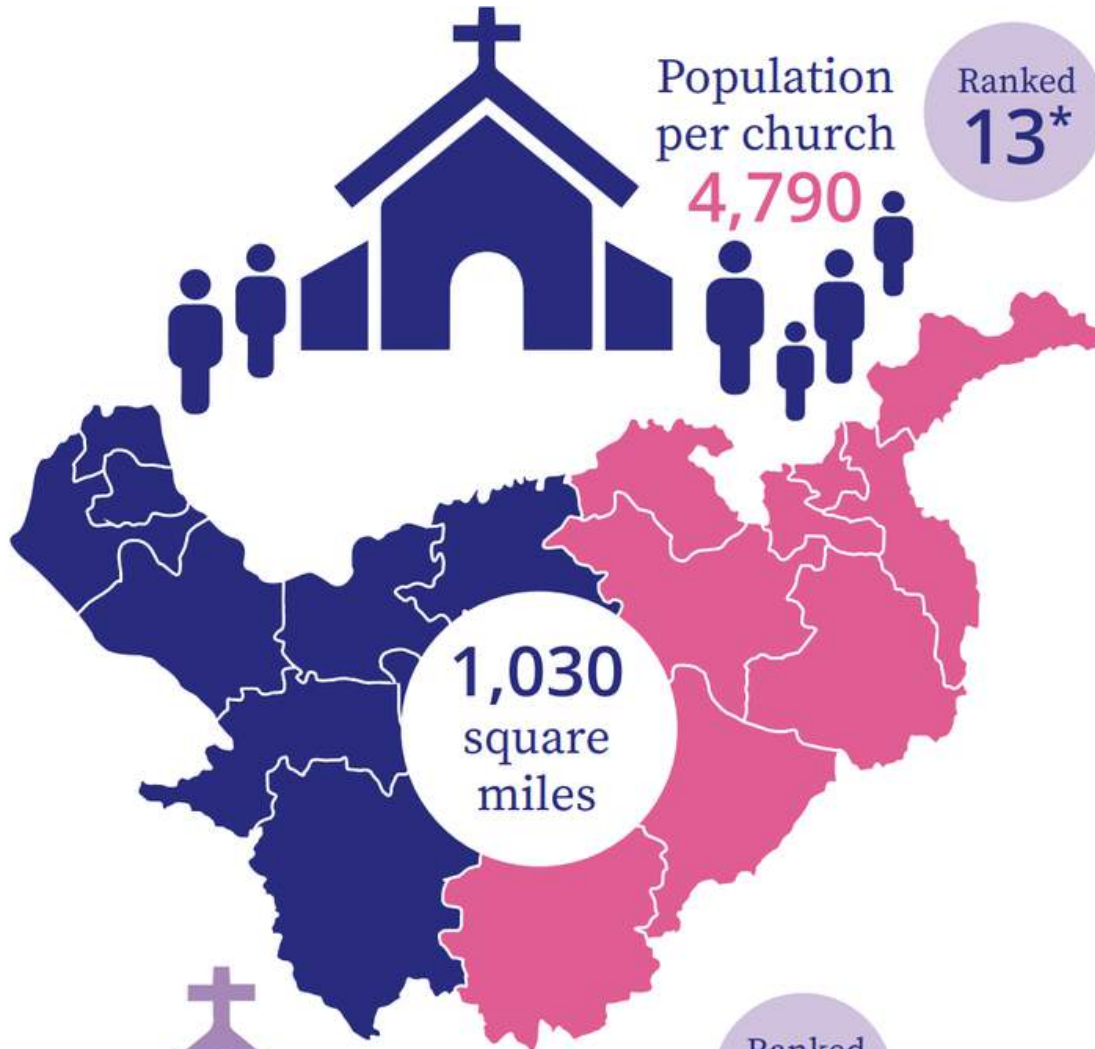




Population  
**1.6m**

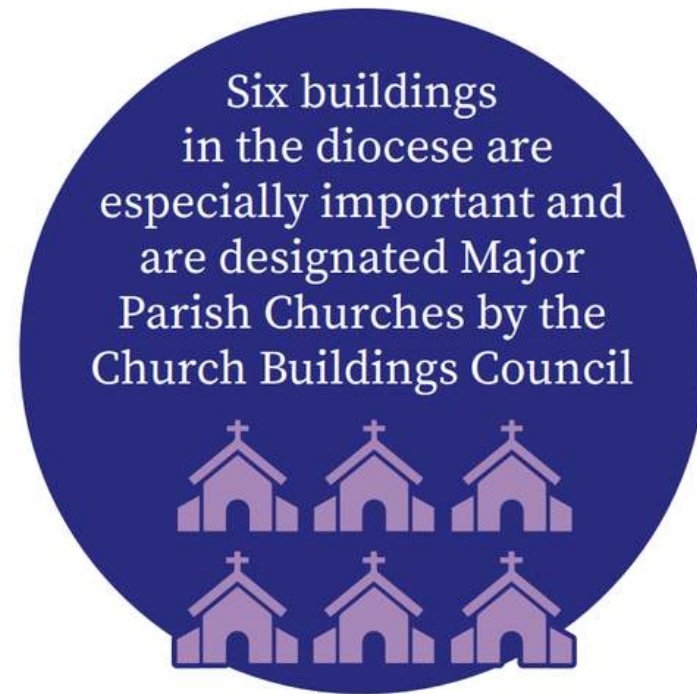
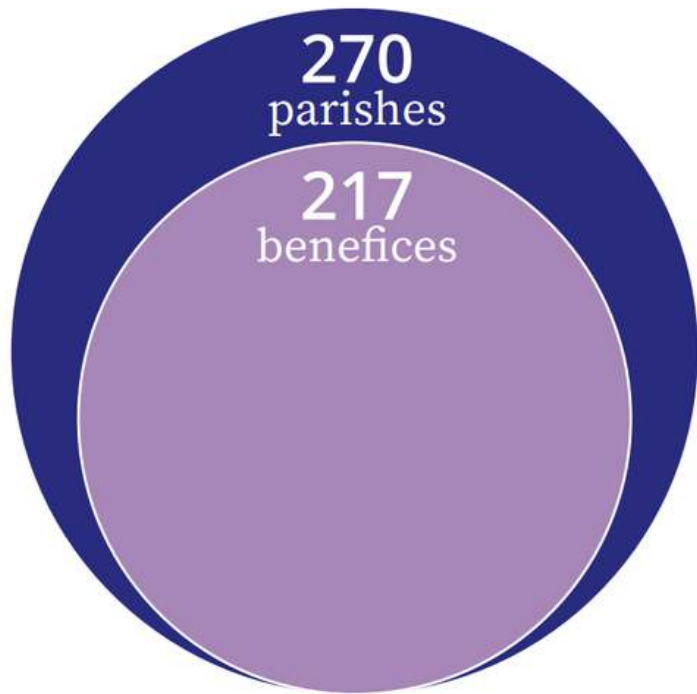


Christian  
population  
**1.1m**



\* the greater the number, the higher the ranking in a list of 41 dioceses.

Source: all figures cited from Statistics for Mission 2017



340 church buildings



Source: all figures cited from Statistics for Mission 2017

## Ministry training

Ministry training in this diocese is in good shape. The Foundations for Ministry programme continues to be a notable success. Now into its 24th year, over a thousand people have completed the training. Many have gone on to become our ordinands, Readers and Pastoral Workers and others have seen their faith enriched and have continued to witness more effectively in non-licensed ministry. The diocese has one of the highest proportions of licensed lay people in the country.



Nearly **100** licensed  
Pastoral Workers



**250** stipendiary  
clergy posts of which  
**47** are part-time  
but receive some  
stipendiary, and  
**70** are self-supporting



Over **200**  
licensed Readers

### Emmanuel Theological College

The Diocese of Chester will be a joint shareholder in Emmanuel Theological College, a shared venture of the six North Western dioceses: Chester, Carlisle, Liverpool, Manchester, Blackburn, and Sodor and Man.



## Education and youth ministry

The Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) has seen several changes and improvements both in terms of the central team of officers and the services available to schools through its Family of Schools.

The Church of England's vision for education provides the basis for the DBE's work as it looks to support schools in ensuring that all children and adults are enabled to live "life in all its fullness" (John 10:10).

Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT) is the diocesan multi-academy trust which is open to both church and community schools. Currently, there are ten schools in the Trust equating to over 3000 children and 500+ members of school staff.

The DBE has a close working relationship and partnership with CDAT, with all members being appointed by the DBE.

Our schools can be wellsprings of spirituality and complement our network of churches.



## Mission initiatives

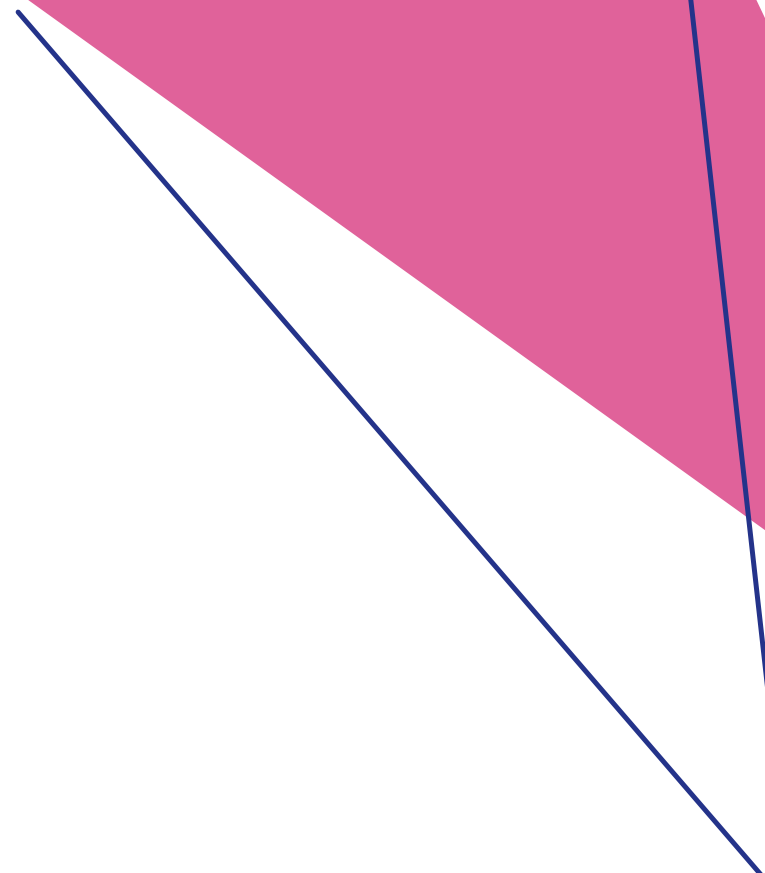
Transforming Lives Together (TLT) began as a joint venture between the Diocese of Chester and the Church Urban Fund (CUF). Initiatives include Places of Welcome and Filling the Gap. The link continues to evolve and TLT is hoping to work more closely with Chester Cathedral.

The Diocese of Chester has been an active participant in Thy Kingdom Come over the years and it continues to be an important mission activity in the life of the diocese.

The Diocese of Chester was one of the first pilot dioceses to take part in Setting God's People Free. A task group has been working with a cohort of parishes to develop practical tools and establish common challenges. It is developing content to help resource parishes.

The Diocese of Chester is beginning to explore Growing Faith and is committed to pursuing the House of Bishops' vision for dioceses to view mission and ministry through the lens of children, young people and households. A programme of activity is underway.

The Mothers' Union boasts 72 branches, affiliated with local parishes across the Diocese of Chester.





## Foxhill House and Woodlands

The Diocese of Chester enjoys the benefits of its centre for prayer, study and mission.

Foxhill is a wonderful venue set within 70 acres of mature woodland and lawns. It offers diocesan retreats, quiet days and training, as well as its own programme of events, and is considered a real blessing by all. An estimated 7,500 people visited Foxhill in 2018.



## Chester Cathedral

The Dean of Chester and the Chapter have agreed a five-year plan for the cathedral addressing its purpose statement that journeys from intrigue to insight:

Chester Cathedral's Strategic Plan is to follow Christ through:

- **Discovery**
- **Encounter; and**
- **Faith**



Alongside the Strategic Plan, the Cathedral has reshaped its staffing to ensure it remains sustainable, outward-facing, God-facing and church-facing. The Cathedral is home to a number of vibrant congregations and is supported by an able and ambitious choir. It is served by a large lay staff who are keen to share its story and make it a home for eye-catching installations that inspire godliness. It seeks to serve the diocese well, to be an exemplar of mission, and to be a place where the Bishop of Chester can confidently gather the Christian community.



## Safeguarding

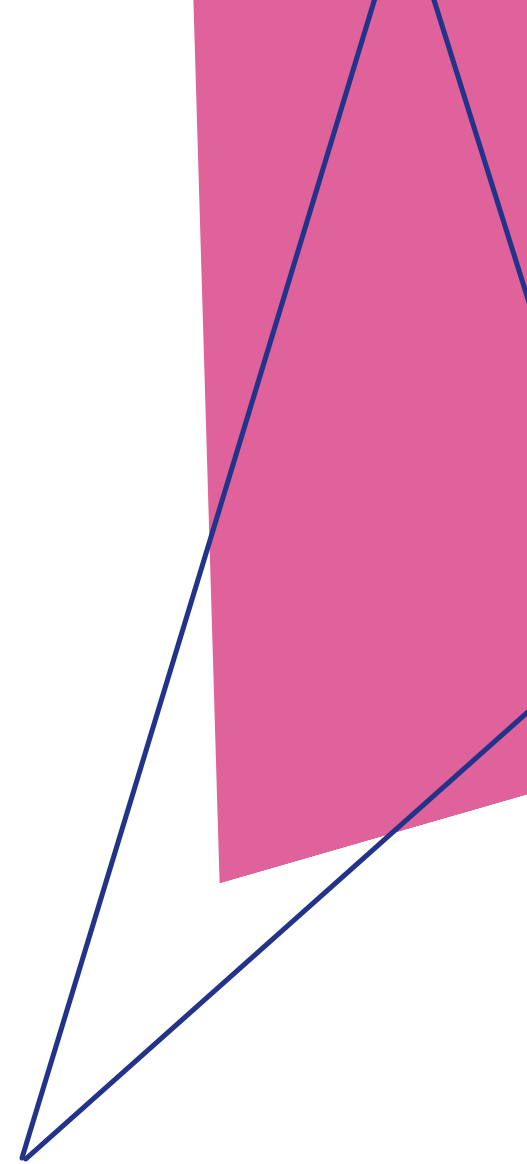
Safeguarding is an important part of our mission and ministry. This is true of all dioceses, but in Chester we feel it particularly in the light of the recent review undertaken by Judge David Pearl.

Safeguarding is not an additional task to our core work, neither is it simply a required pre-requisite. Safeguarding, and the wider work of wellbeing, is core to who we are called to be. We are made in the image of God and commissioned to "make disciples of all people, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." As bishops we are charged to "remember always with thanksgiving that God has entrusted to [our] care Christ's beloved bride, his own flock, bought by the shedding of his blood on the cross." We care because God cares more than we have yet grasped.

Our bishops must be champions of safeguarding best practice and build on the work already undertaken here to ensure our churches are safer spaces for all those who use them. Whilst we recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, the bishop plays a special role in setting the standard and needs to be seen to be a public advocate for safeguarding at all levels.

## Finance and resources

The Diocese of Chester is the only diocese in the Northern Province currently not receiving allocations from the Church Commissioners. The Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) has relatively low levels of historic investments and the vast majority of its income comes from parish share contributions. We give thanks to God that parishes have a strong commitment to meeting requests for parish share, in order to fund mission and ministry in their own parish and across the diocese. As a result of this commitment, the DBF is in a relatively stable financial position, but challenges remain as to how we maintain that position.



## Who's who

The Bishop of Chester has a Staff of senior clergy and lay officers. The Bishop's Staff Team has been committed to an ethos of overall collaboration, sharing decisions as far as possible. There has been a considerable emphasis on a co-operative and collaborative mode of working, which reflects a certain "family feel" in the diocese as a whole.

The Bishop's Staff Meeting currently takes place every three weeks.

### Senior staff

*\*Denotes that they are a member of the Bishop's Staff as it is currently configured.*



**\*George Colville**  
Diocesan Secretary



**\*Ian Bishop**  
Archdeacon of Macclesfield



**Nigel Strange**  
Head of Finance



**\*Christine Broad**  
Dean of Women in Ministry



**\*Liz Geddes**  
Director of HR



**Pauline Butterfield**  
Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor



**\*Tim Stratford**  
Dean of Chester



**Chris Penn**  
Director of Education



**Jim Butterworth**  
Director of Communications



**\*Mike Gilbertson**  
Archdeacon of Chester



**Christopher Burkett**  
Director of Ministry



**Peter Froggatt**  
Director of Outreach

The central administration of the diocese is conducted from Church House, a modern purpose-built building at Daresbury Park about 12 miles east of Chester. Satellite offices of the bishops of Birkenhead and Stockport are based in Prenton, Wirral, and Dunham Town, Altrincham, respectively.

Bishop's House is based at Abbey Square, Chester.



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  

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Diocese of Chester

The Diocese of Chester is the Church of England primarily in Cheshire – but also covers some areas outside the county. Chester Diocesan Board of Finance is a company limited by guarantee registered in England (no. 7826) and a registered charity (no. 248968) Chester Diocesan Board of Finance. Church House, 5500 Daresbury Park, Daresbury, Warrington WA4 4GE. Telephone: 01928 718834