

TOGETHER IN CHRIST, SHARING HOPE

Diversity Analysis of Governance Officers

Introduction

Between February and March 2025, we surveyed those holding governance positions (General Synod, Diocesan Synod, Deanery Synod, Parish Safeguarding Officers and Parish Treasurers) to collect consistent information about the age, sex, gender identity, ethnic group or background, disability information, and socioeconomic background of people in these roles. While those surveyed included people who hold the role of Churchwarden in addition to another role, many Churchwardens have not yet been included. We intend to explicitly survey the remaining Churchwardens once the APCM season is finished.

We want to use this data for equality, accessibility and diversity monitoring, and to enable us to target communications.

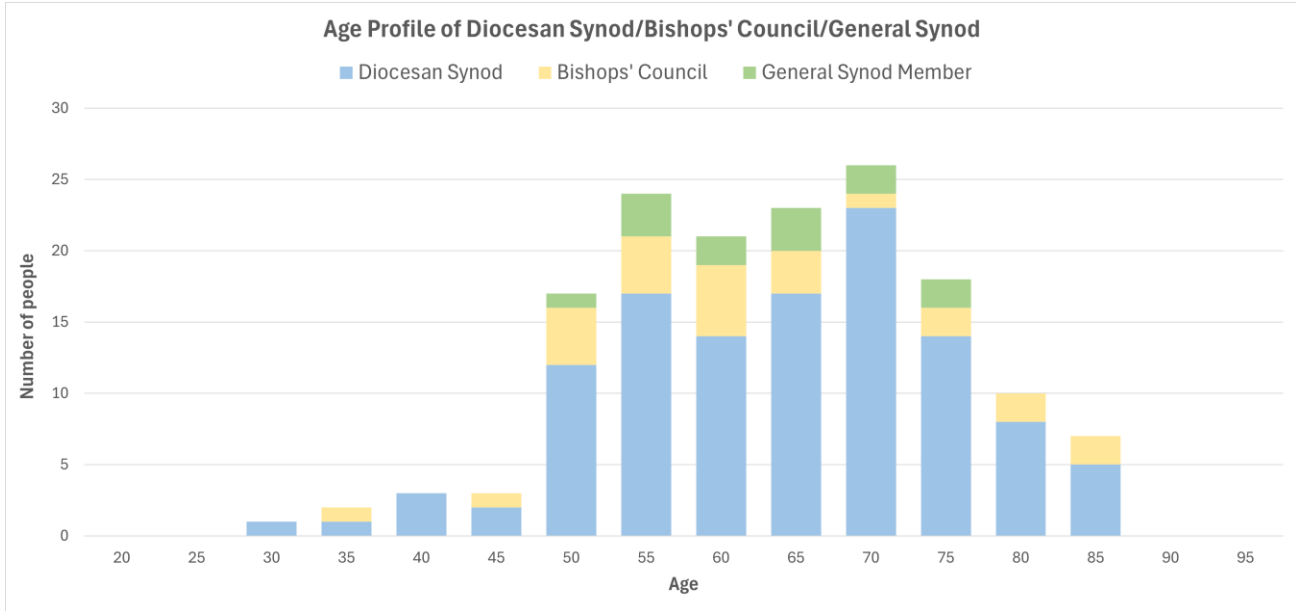
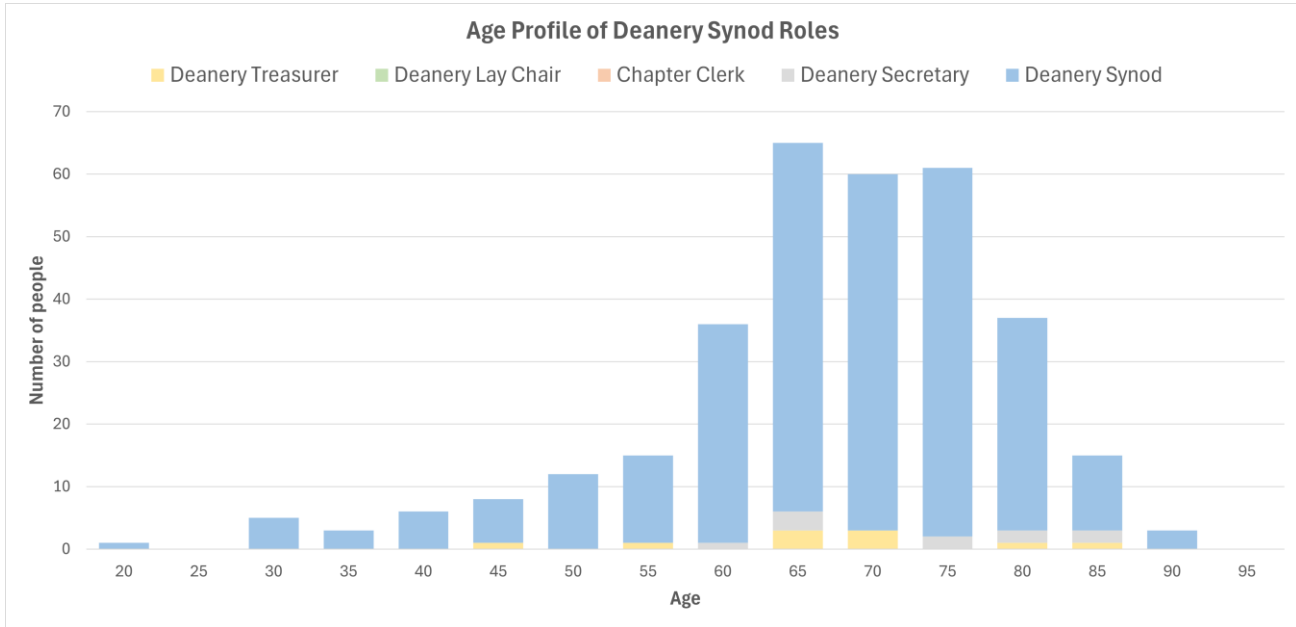
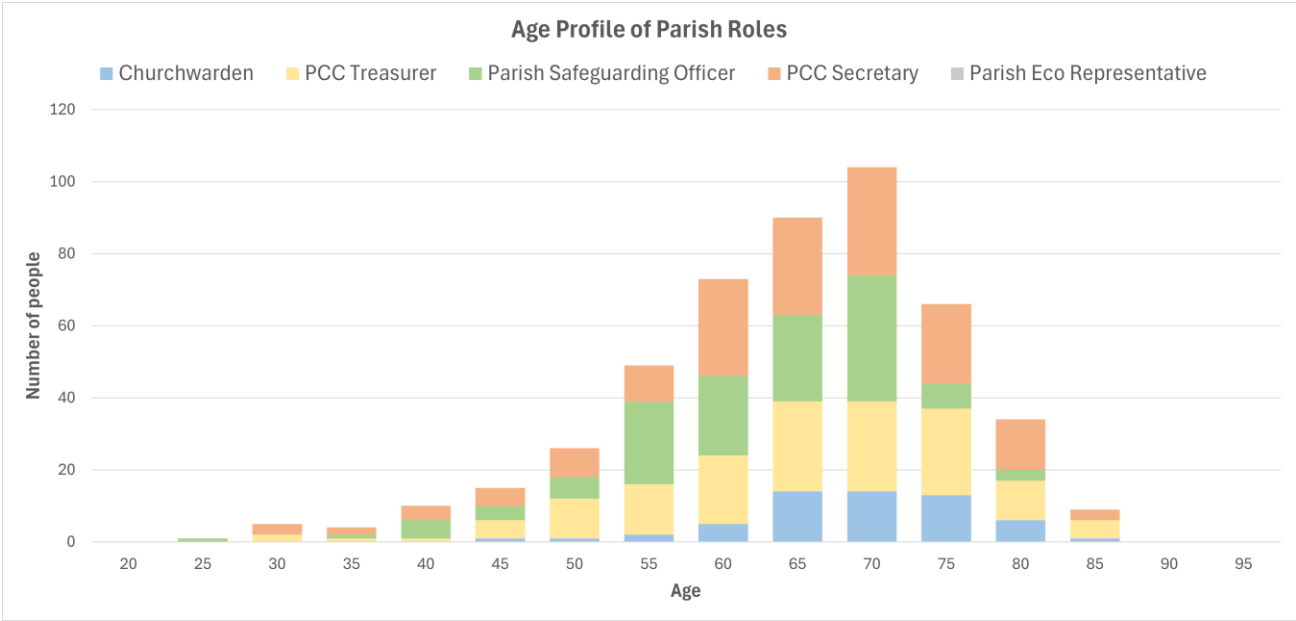
The data we collected is considered sensitive personal data under Data Protection Act (GDPR) legislation and is being held securely within our existing Contact Management System (CMS) system in line with these requirements.

Of 1066 people surveyed, 607 people responded with their data.

We have used the data to build age, ethnicity, disability and socioeconomic profiles of governance officers in the diocese. On the next four pages you can find some interesting summaries of the profiles created.

There is still time to contribute to this research, if you wish. Please drop an email to sarah.jones@chester.anglican.org and we can provide you with a fresh link to the survey.

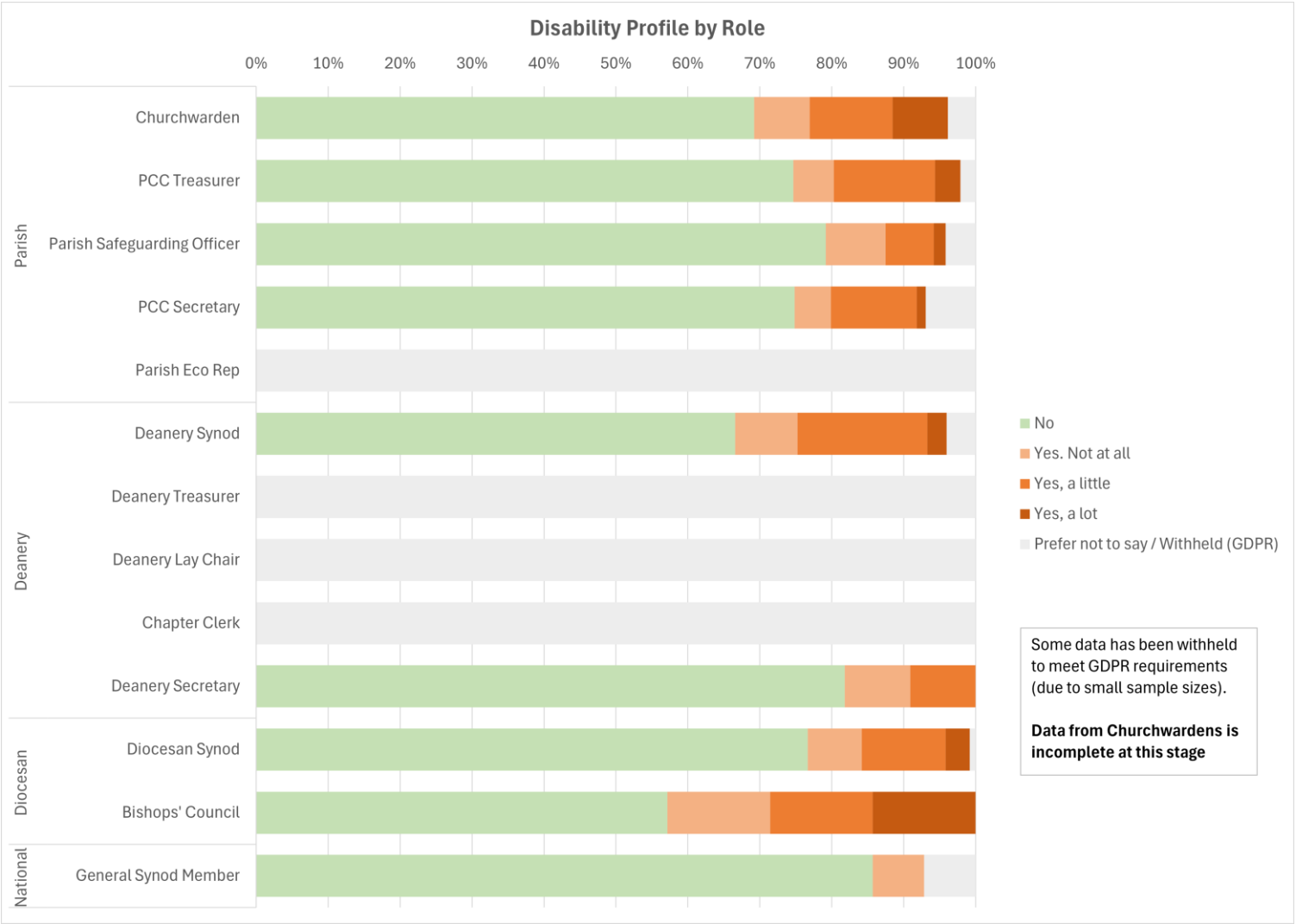
Age



The age profile of those serving in parish, deanery, diocesan and general governance roles shows that most are approaching, or over, retirement age. We suspect that this is representative of the age profiles in our parishes.

Growing younger, by engaging with children, young people and young adults is one of our strategic priorities. This age profile highlights that we also need to focus on identifying and recruiting younger people into governance roles. We hope to increase central support and local skill sharing to empower individuals to step into these roles.

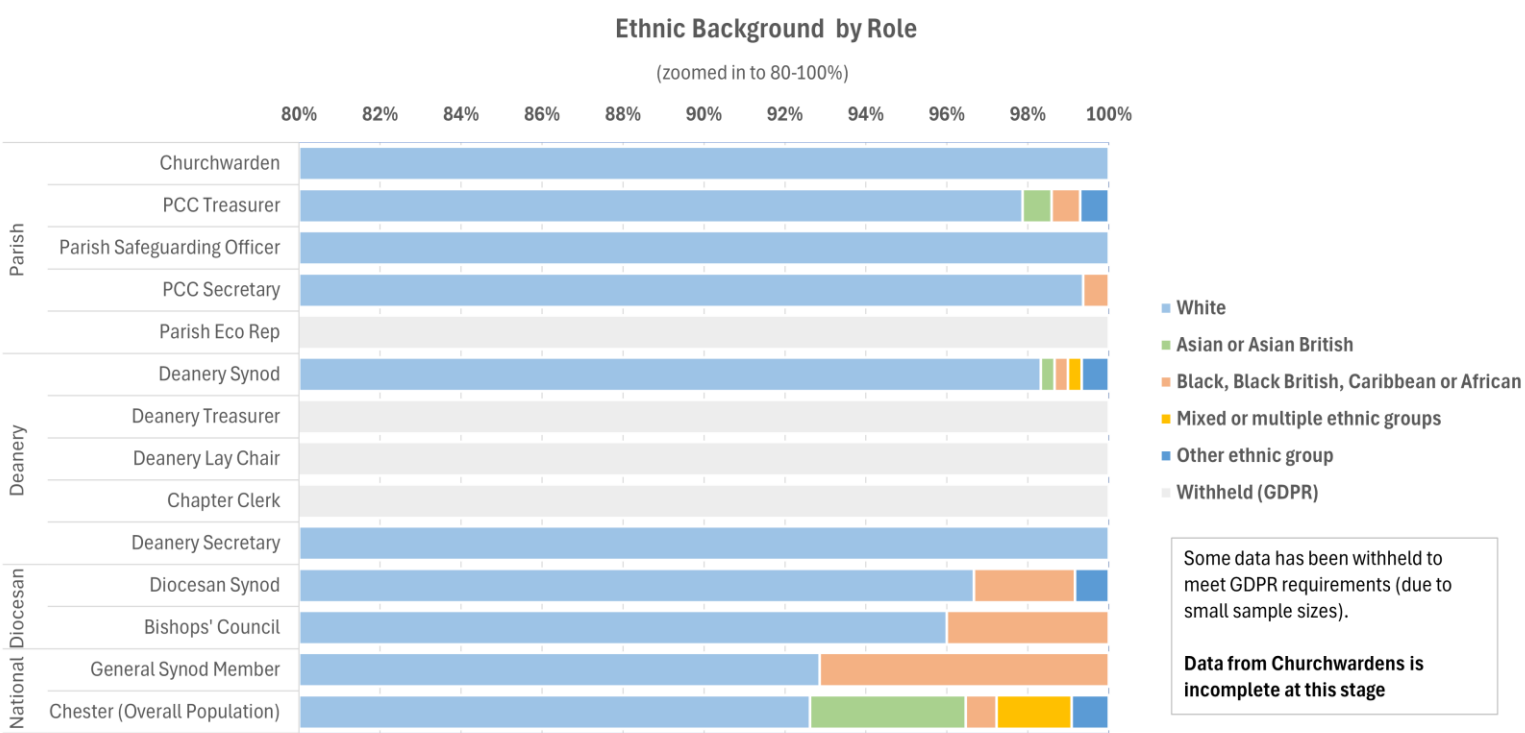
Disability



The data collected reveals that 24% of people in governance roles report having a disability, but only 3% report that their disability significantly impacts them.

As we develop the strategy, it is important that we continue to place a strong emphasis on access and inclusion within the governance roles in our parishes and diocese.

Ethnicity

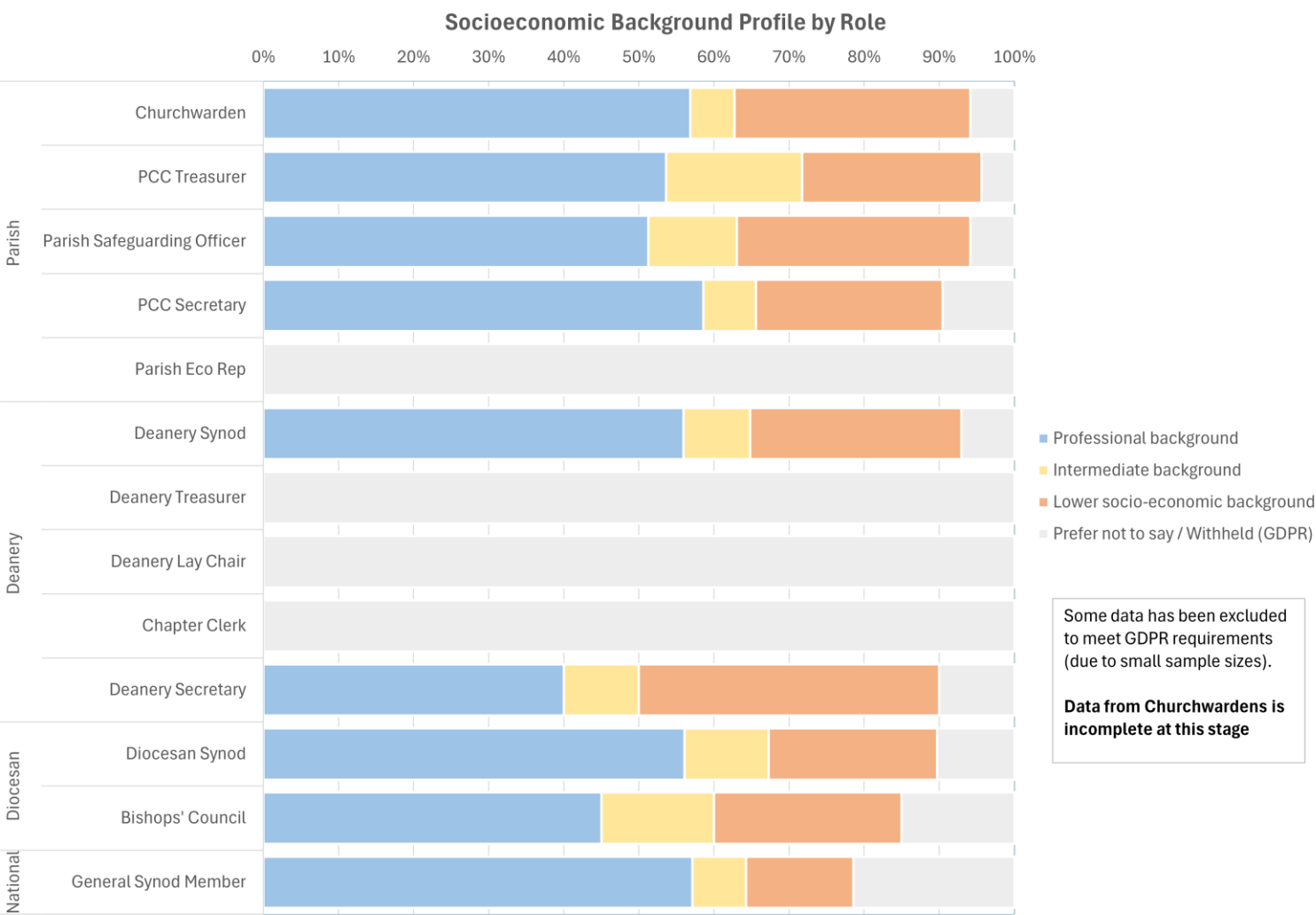


The demographic profile of governance roles in parish and deaneries is currently far less diverse than that of the overall population, with little representation of different ethnic backgrounds. Again, we suspect that this is mainly due to the limited ethnic mix in our congregations as a whole.

We have, however, taken steps to encourage better representation of people from UKME/GMH on Diocesan and General Synods, which is reflected in this chart.

We will continue to work towards increasing representation and participation of people from UKME/GMH backgrounds to at least 15% at all levels of governance structures by 2030, which is a goal set by the National Church’s ‘From Lament to Action’ report.

Socioeconomic Background



The data indicates that many of those holding parish, deanery, diocesan and national governance roles in the diocese are individuals from a professional socioeconomic background. Although there is some representation of those from intermediate or lower socioeconomic backgrounds, this data highlights a need to focus on inclusivity and accessibility in this area.

We want to ensure that those in governance roles are more reflective of the socioeconomic diversity of the diocese and need to consider how we support and encourage those from different socioeconomic backgrounds to thrive in these roles.