

Memorandum: To Churchwardens and PCC Secretaries in the Redditch Area of the Deanery of Redditch and Bromsgrove

9 March 2021

Archdeacon Nikki and Paul your Area Dean will have told you that they planned to find an external facilitator to help the consultation process set up to consider how the Redditch Area of your new Deanery might be structured in such a way that the mission and ministry of God's Church may flourish.

My primary purpose in writing to you all is simply to introduce myself, for I've been asked to work with Paul in this role! For those of you who may be members of Deanery Synod, I hope to attend part of your next meeting on **Wednesday 10 March** and we'll 'meet' one another online then!

My name is Andy Piggott. I now live in Kidderminster with my wife Ruth, having served most recently as Archdeacon of Bath from 2005 to 2017. We have two grown up daughters and two grandsons, and notwithstanding the challenges Covid has brought, we are in the process of settling into retirement and are enjoying it. Over the years we have served in parishes in the Dioceses of Birmingham, Worcester, Lichfield and Bath and Wells, and for a time I was with the Church Pastoral Aid Society (CPAS), an Anglican Mission Agency, serving in various roles at their head office which was then in Warwick. Prior to ordination I taught Economics.

Over the course of the last few weeks, I've begun to have online meetings with each of the clergy in your part of the deanery. Although it would have been great to come over to meet you all 'face to face' and to attend a meeting of each of your Church Councils, I fear Covid makes that impossible at the moment. However, Paul and I have talked through an alternative approach which we hope will be acceptable to you.

In addition to writing to you to introduce myself, I also wanted to explain what we have in mind and invite you and your Church Council to begin to think about your involvement in the process we want to propose.

Although Zoom is a great gift to us, larger groups do not work particularly well when it is important for there to be good listening and engagement with fairly complex ideas. Paul and I would like to suggest that we meet, online, and probably in May, with **up to five** members of your church.

It will be entirely up to you as to whom you choose. Some churches will automatically assume that their warden(s) or LLM(s) 'should' fulfil this role - others might take the view that because of their involvement in many other aspects of church life, these are the last people who should be approached. You might find it helpful to consider who is good at looking at 'big picture', strategic issues, who is concerned to see the whole church flourish and grow, and perhaps also who can both listen well and communicate clearly the thoughts of your Church Council **and** the wider church.

As you will know far more than me, one of the key planks to the Diocesan Transformation Programme is the simplification of deaneries and it is this that Paul and I will want to focus on when we do meet. We are very keen to hear **your ideas** as to how the current teams and benefices might best be configured for the future in a way that will best further the mission and ministry of God's Church in fulfilment of the Diocesan Transformation Programme.

The kind of things about which I'm particularly keen to know your perspectives are:

- what will be best for your parish and the centres of worship you're currently involved with? With which parish(es) might you be linked?
- what structure / linkage will best help your church(es)/worship centres to flourish and grow?
- what do you think might be best for other churches in your current team and Redditch?
- how might the deanery best support, enable and equip your church as you seek to further the mission of God in Redditch?
- why? I'll be interested in finding out the rationale for all the ideas you may come up with and **how** you think they might enable mission and ministry to flourish.
- ... I'll also be interested to hear about other ideas you may have about mission and ministry which you feel would be helpful to me in this consultation process

Archdeacon Nikki has been very clear that this is the only 'agenda' and there are no 'hidden' ones. We are encouraged to be as creative and imaginative as we like and **not** to be constrained in our thinking about the current team or benefice structure, nor by 'history'. She has also reassured me that there are no further plans to save clergy posts and so we can assume the current total number of clergy posts is available to be deployed.

In summary, I am asking you to do a number of things please:

- begin a conversation together as a Church Council about the matters I've outlined above
- invite up to 5 people from your church who would be willing and able to meet with Paul and me online to talk about them. We think it is right that at least 4 of your 5 should be members of your Council.
- give their names and contact details to Paul **by 30 April**

I look forward very much to seeing some of you at Deanery Synod, and to 'meeting' others online in a couple of months' time. For now, thank you for reading this memo and for all you do in the service of Christ.

May God bless and encourage us as we journey on through Lent and equip us for all that lies ahead.

With my prayers and good wishes

Andy

The Venerable Andy Piggott