

Elected Representation from Deaneries on Diocesan Synod, 2024-27

1. Under rules 37 and 42 of the Church Representation Rules ('CRR'), the Diocesan Synod is required to determine not later than 31 December 2023:
 - (i) the numbers of members of the diocesan houses of clergy and laity to be elected from deaneries in the 2024 Diocesan Synod elections; and
 - (ii) which form of voting paper is to be used by the deaneries in the elections.

Scheme of representation

2. Rule 37(2) and 37(3) of the CRRs specifies that the number to be elected from each deanery to the diocesan house of clergy is to be related to the size of that deanery's house of clergy, and the number to be elected to the house of laity to the aggregate electoral roll size for the deanery; furthermore, at least two members are to be elected by each house of every deanery synod.
3. The sizes of the deanery houses of clergy as at 31 May 2023, certified for this purpose by deaneries under rule 37(4) of the CRRs, were as follows:

Berkshire		Buckingham		Dorchester	
Bracknell	15	Amersham	32	Abingdon	27
Bradfield	15	Aylesbury	29	Aston & Cuddesdon	27
Maidenhead & Windsor	23	Buckingham	9	Bicester & Islip	16
Newbury	25	Burnham & Slough	26	Chipping Norton	13
Reading	46	Claydon	9	Deddington	21
Sonning	25	Milton Keynes	28	Henley	18
Oxford		Mursley	5	Vale of White Horse	6
Cowley	31	Newport	9	Wallingford	14
Oxford	80	Wendover	13	Wantage	7
		Wycombe	32	Witney	18
				Woodstock	14

4. Electoral roll figures aggregated by deanery (as certified under CRR rule 10) are as follows. Some of the numbers have been updated since being taken to Bishop’s Council on 4 October 2023, following further collection and checking of electoral roll data.

Berkshire		Buckingham		Dorchester	
Bracknell	2204	Amersham	3297	Abingdon	1708
Bradfield	1217	Aylesbury	1605	Aston & Cuddesdon	1862
Maidenhead & Windsor	2224	Buckingham	738	Bicester & Islip	1201
Newbury	2120	Burnham & Slough	1622	Chipping Norton	926
Reading	3034	Claydon	751	Deddington	1196
Sonning	2508	Milton Keynes	1557	Henley	1140
Oxford		Mursley	629	Vale of White Horse	774
Cowley	1188	Newport	871	Wallingford	1050
Oxford	2761	Wendover	1271	Wantage	662
		Wycombe	2724	Witney	1554
				Woodstock	901

5. Bishop’s Council and Diocesan Synod agreed three years ago on a change to clerical representation being based on multiples of 11 rather than 10, which produced 4 fewer clergy places. Coupled with an expectation that Bishop’s nominations might again be primarily lay (at present there are four Bishop’s nominations all lay) this brought the relative sizes of the two houses back to ‘approximately equal’ using the revised formula, as set out below.

Lay representation		Clerical representation	
Deanery aggregate electoral roll	Number to be elected	Size of deanery house of clergy	Number to be elected (Starting 22 interval 11)
0-1400	2	0-22	2
1401-2100	3	23-33	3
2101-2800	4	34-44	4
2801-3500	5	45-55	5
3501-4200	6	>56	6
>4201	7		

6. Please see Appendix A for the breakdown by deanery of elected membership of the 2024-27 Synod based on the above formula. This results in an increase in lay places (from 81 in 2021-24 to 82) and a reduction in clergy places (from 78 in 2021-24 to 76). A small increase in lay places is not a surprise (but is encouraging) as the previous figures were based on electoral roll figures at the six-year low point. These

figures do result in fewer elected clergy places than elected lay places, but this is the desired result, given the stipulation that the Houses of Clergy and Laity should be ‘approximately equal’ in size, since it is always the case that a higher proportion of ex officio and co-opted places are clerical (in the current triennium it is 21 clergy to 13 laity). There is likely still to be a slightly larger number of clergy assuming that the associate archdeacons are again nominated to be members of Synod (which occurred part way through the last triennium). Appendix B sets out the total membership of Diocesan Synod if all elected places are filled (which has not been the case previously) and in advance of decisions being taken on nominated and co-opted places.

7. It is proposed to use the same formula in 2024 as in 2021 (having used an amended formula for clerical representation for the first time in 2021) and to only reconsider if a further change is required on the next occasion.

Method of election

8. Under CRR rule 42(1), the Diocesan Synod must determine whether the 2024 elections should be conducted by the first-past-the-post system, or by the single transferable vote (as used for elections to the General Synod). Diocesan Synod elections are conducted by deanery, under the supervision of volunteer presiding officers appointed by the Bishop under CRR rule 38(1). In that context the first-past-the-post system, which has been used on all previous occasions, has the significant advantage of being very much more straightforward to administer. Whichever method is chosen, rule 42(3) provides that it will also be used in any election to fill a casual vacancy arising during the 2024–27 triennium.

On the recommendation of Bishop’s Council, Diocesan Synod is invited to

- (i) **adopt the scheme of representation for the House of Clergy as proposed in this paper and shown in this paper and for the House of Laity using 2023 electoral roll data (or where not available, the latest available) and**
- (ii) **agrees that the 2024 elections should be conducted by the first-past-the-post system rather than by single transferable vote.**

Mark Humphriss

Diocesan Secretary

20 October 2023

APPENDIX A: BREAKDOWN BY DEANERY OF ELECTED MEMBERSHIP OF 2024-27 SYNOD UNDER PROPOSED SCHEME OF REPRESENTATION

DEANERY	2021–2024 Synod		2024-27 Synod	
	Laity	*Clergy	Laity	*Clergy
Bracknell	3	2	4	2
Bradfield	2	2	2	2
Maidenhead & Windsor	4	3	4	3
Newbury	4	3	4	3
Reading	5	5	5	5
Sonning	4	2	4	3
<i>Berkshire Archdeaconry</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>18</i>
Amersham	6	3	5	3
Aylesbury	3	3	3	3
Buckingham	2	2	2	2
Burnham and Slough	3	3	3	3
Claydon	2	2	2	2
Milton Keynes	2	3	3	3
Mursley	2	2	2	2
Newport	2	2	2	2
Wendover	2	2	2	2
Wycombe	4	3	4	3
<i>Buckingham Archdeaconry</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>25</i>
Abingdon	3	3	3	3
Aston and Cuddesdon	3	3	3	3
Bicester and Islip	2	3	2	2
Chipping Norton	2	2	2	2
Deddington	2	3	2	2
Henley	2	2	2	2
Vale of White Horse	2	2	2	2
Wallingford	2	2	2	2
Wantage	2	2	2	2
Witney	3	3	3	2
Woodstock	2	2	2	2
<i>Dorchester Archdeaconry</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>24</i>
Cowley	2	3	2	3
Oxford	4	6	4	6
<i>Oxford Archdeaconry</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>9</i>
TOTALS	81	78	82	76

*Clergy numbers calculated using the formula in the accompanying paper

APPENDIX B: EX-OFFICIO, NOMINATED AND CO-OPTED MEMBERSHIP

Ex-officio members:

	House of Clergy	House of Laity
Deanery elected (<i>per Appendix A</i>)	76	82
EX-OFFICIO, NOMINATED AND CO-OPTED		
Chancellor of the Diocese	0	1
Deans of Christ Church and St George's, Windsor	2	0
Archdeacons (<i>Oxford, Buckingham, Dorchester & Berkshire</i>)	4	0
Chair of the Board of Finance	0	1
Chair of the Board of Education (<i>Bishop of Buckingham is counted elsewhere</i>)	0	0
Chair of the DAC (lay/clergy)	0	1
Co-options (<i>up to 5 per house-currently 4 laity, 0 clergy</i>)	5	5
General Synod members These would be ex-officio members	10	9
TOTAL	97	99
House of Bishops Bishops (<i>Oxford, Buckingham, Dorchester & Reading</i>)	4	0
REVISED TOTAL	101	99