

## OXFORD DIOCESAN SYNOD

### Elected Lay Representation on Deanery Synods, 2023–26

#### Context

By 31 December in years preceding deanery synod elections, the Diocesan Synod must approve the formula by which elected lay representation from parishes on deanery synods is to be determined. (Clergy members of deanery synods are almost all ex-officio, as set out in rule 15 of the Church Representation Rules ('CRR'.) Deanery synod elections will next take place at the 2023 round of annual parochial church meetings.

The Diocese has used the same approach since the early 1990s. A detailed consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of this and alternative formulae was undertaken by Bishop's Council in 2013. In 2019 Bishop's Council considered whether to recommend any changes and after discussion the same formula was used for Elections to Deanery Synod in 2020. At its meeting on 5 October 2022 it proposed to continue to use the same for 2023.

#### Considerations

##### *Statutory*

According to the Church Representation Rules:

- 19(3) Numbers of elected lay representatives are to be determined by reference either to electoral roll size or to the number of parish churches or districts in each parish, or by some combination of these methods
- 21(1) So far as practicable, deanery synods should have 50 or more members (laity and clergy combined)
- 21(1) No deanery synod may have more than 150 members, except to "secure that the house of laity has at least as many members as the house of clergy".

Special provisions exist whereby the Diocesan Synod may depart from the statutory provisions; however, such departures require the consent of the General Synod.

##### *Consideration by Bishop's Council*

In 2019 Bishop's Council reflected on 2016 discussions around mixed rural/ urban deaneries and endorsed the recommendation that no change should be made in that regard. It was agreed to effect changes in respect of congregations which are Bishop's Mission Orders which are independent of PCCs in due course. We still have very few such BMOs and the

recommendation by Bishop's Council is that the existing formula should continue to be used. It is likely to be proposed soon that all BMOs do have a mission initiative roll with representation on a similar formula but we would want to consult existing BMOs before bringing any such proposal to Diocesan Synod for agreement.

Based on the formula, we will issue final figures for total numbers of members of each Deanery Synod in good time for 2023 APCMs.

**Mark Humphriss**  
**Diocesan Secretary**

20 October 2022

**Table 1: Current and proposed formula for elected lay representation on deanery synods**

Electoral roll size	Elected lay reps
up to 40	1
41–80	2
81–160	3
161–240	4
241–320	5
321–400	6
401–500	7
501–600	8
601–720	9
721–840	10
841–1000	11
>1000	12