



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Manchester

CHURCH
FOR A
DIFFERENT
WORLD

Area Dean of Manchester South & Stretford

Information for Applicants

May 2025

A Message from Bishop David

Welcome and thank you for your interest in the role of Area Dean of Manchester South and Stretford. Manchester Diocese has had full-time Area Deans in post for over three years and it is a role that is fully embedded in the life of our diocese. We are looking to appoint a committed and collaborative priest who can provide excellent support and leadership at this exciting time for our diocese.

Manchester Diocese has an inspiring vision for 2030 and we're making good progress towards achieving this with the development of a wide range of initiatives, all designed to release missional energy. The Area Dean of Manchester South and Stretford has a key role to play in leading these changes and supporting their implementation. We are looking for a priest with experience of the challenges of leading and managing change and who will be creative in encouraging new forms of mission and ministry.

Our diocese has a ten-year Transformation Programme, aligned with the national Vision and Strategy, for which we have recently achieved significant funding from the Church Commissioners. We are therefore well-resourced to take forward a wide range of initiatives to ensure the future missional health of parishes across our diocese. This recent support along with the rich history of and variety in our diocese, makes it a wonderful place to engage in Gospel ministry.

It's important to us that the new Area Dean of Manchester South and Stretford is committed to diversity, inclusion and racial justice. We are also looking for someone who is generous in working with a breadth of traditions and spirituality in the Church of England. In particular, we welcome women candidates and candidates of global majority heritage to help ensure the diversity of our senior clergy team.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming our new Area Dean to the diocese and supporting them with their work.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Walker', preceded by a small cross symbol.

The Rt Revd Dr David Walker,
Bishop of Manchester



About Us

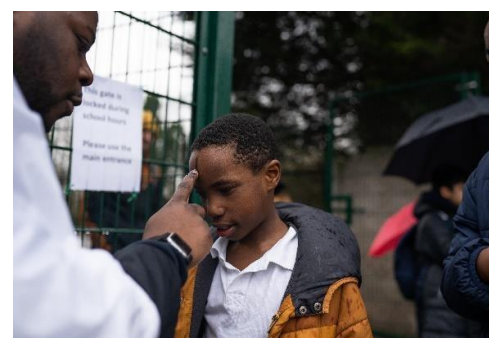
Manchester Diocese serves a vibrant, dynamic and creative community in the North West of England. It covers an area of 416 square miles and has a total population of 2.2 million. The diocese is divided into four archdeaconries, seven deaneries and 33 mission communities. There are more than 300 places of worship and chaplaincies, which are organised into 256 parishes and 175 benefices.

Geographically, the diocese takes in the two cities of Salford and Manchester and the metropolitan boroughs of Oldham, Rochdale, Bury and Bolton. Parts of the metropolitan boroughs of Wigan, Trafford, Stockport, Tameside and Blackburn with Darwen, and most of the borough of Rossendale in Lancashire, are also within the diocese. It has the fourth highest population density of any diocese in the Church of England.

While predominantly urban, a significant portion of the diocese is rural, although less than 3% of the diocese's population resides in these areas. 125 (48%) of our parishes fall within the 10% most deprived areas nationally. Additionally, 25% of the population in the diocese identifies as having a Global Majority Heritage background.

Parishes and chaplaincies across our diocese are supported by the Diocesan Board of Finance, based at St John's House in Bury town centre. This team works with churches and congregations across the diocese to achieve our strategy and our mission goals. It also provides support with clergy stipends and housing, finance, safeguarding and governance.

Across the diocese, 192 Church of England primary and secondary schools educate over 58,000 pupils. These schools are mostly funded by local authorities, with the diocese providing support with religious education and Christian ethos, governance, the recruitment of head teachers, admissions, and building projects. The team which supports these schools is also based at St John's House, as part of the Diocesan Board of Education.



Our Vision

Our work together grows out of Jesus's Great Commandment which is to 'love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...and love your neighbour as yourself'. (Matthew 22: 36-40)...

... and out of his Great Commission, 'to go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Matthew 28:19-20).

Much of what we are doing in Manchester Diocese is already contributing to a culture of hope and an expectation of growth. This includes many forms of inherited as well as fresh expressions of church.

However, we face significant challenges:

- Only 1% of the population attends the Church of England in our diocese – we are in the lowest 25% of dioceses nationally for church attendance.
- Church attendance in our most deprived parishes averages 0.7% of the population.
- Over half of our churches have an average adult weekly attendance of fewer than 35 people.
- We have a large number of church buildings in poor condition and which serve small populations because of demographic changes.

As a diocese, we are completely focused on reversing this decline.

We have made good progress since getting underway with our Transformation Programme, for which we have been awarded over £20m by the Church Commissioners since 2017. Many of us have experienced first-hand how things are changing for the better across the diocese in our parishes, schools and chaplaincies. This is helping us achieve our vision - to be a growing, worshipping transforming Christian presence at the heart of every community - and our mission goals which are to grow our churches, nurture new and existing disciples, and serve the vulnerable, deprived and excluded.

Our achievements include moving to our new deanery structures, the creation of our 33 mission communities, investing in our lay leaders, supporting children's ministry in each deanery, and increasing the practical support for parishes. Most of these changes have focused on new ways of working together which are becoming embedded in the life of our diocese.



Building on these successes, we are shifting to the next level in setting our priorities and working out what we want to achieve next. Given the excellent start that has been made, we now have the opportunity to be even more creative and ambitious with our plans for the future. Learning from our recent experience with the new projects and programmes that are underway, we are well-placed to develop the overall strategy and plans for our diocese based on the following distinct but interconnected themes:

- Growing Younger
- Church Planting and Revitalisation
- Developing missional leaders – lay and ordained
- Supporting parish renewal.

These priorities align with the Church of England's overall vision which is to create a church of missionary disciples, where mixed ecology is the norm, and whose membership is becoming younger and more diverse.

We have been doing great work in the area of ***growing younger***, trialling new approaches with the Children Changing Places programme in Bolton, and ManDio Growing Faith in the other deaneries. We are now bringing this experience and learning together to develop a comprehensive approach to engaging with children, young people, and their families across our diocese. Our particular focus is on how best to strengthen the links between our churches and our church schools.

We have had similar successes with ***church planting and revitalisation***. Over the last seven years, we have set up four new resource churches and over ten church plants. We now want to build on this learning, so that churches carrying a DNA of mission are established across our diocese particularly in communities where attendance is low.

Developing missional leaders is a key priority for us. We recognise the importance of investing in our clergy so they are equipped to grow our churches, especially given the number of newly ordained clergy who are being appointed to stipendiary roles. As a diocese we continue to focus on developing our lay people, particularly through our Authorised Lay Ministry, focal ministry and Reader programmes.



These developments will inform our future plans for lay ministry to which we remain fully committed. Supporting clergy and lay vocations so we develop a new, diverse generation of church leaders with the calling and skills to grow new faith communities, continues to be important to us.

Providing direct support to ensure **parish renewal** is central to our Transformation Programme. Our Area Deans and Lay Chairs are working closely with our parishes to understand the opportunities and challenges they face and make sure they have access to the support they need. Mission communities are key to this, enabling parishes to work together on mission and ministry. Clergy deployment, parochial reorganisation and supporting our most fragile churches are important strands of this work. We are also strengthening the support we provide to church officers with training, resources and new technology.

Supporting our international congregations is key to achieving **racial justice**, as is ensuring that our clergy and lay leaders represent the diversity of our diocese in their governance roles.

We will continue our work towards the 2030 **net zero carbon** goal set by General Synod, by supporting our churches and schools with measuring their energy use and taking simple, practical steps to reduce their carbon footprint.

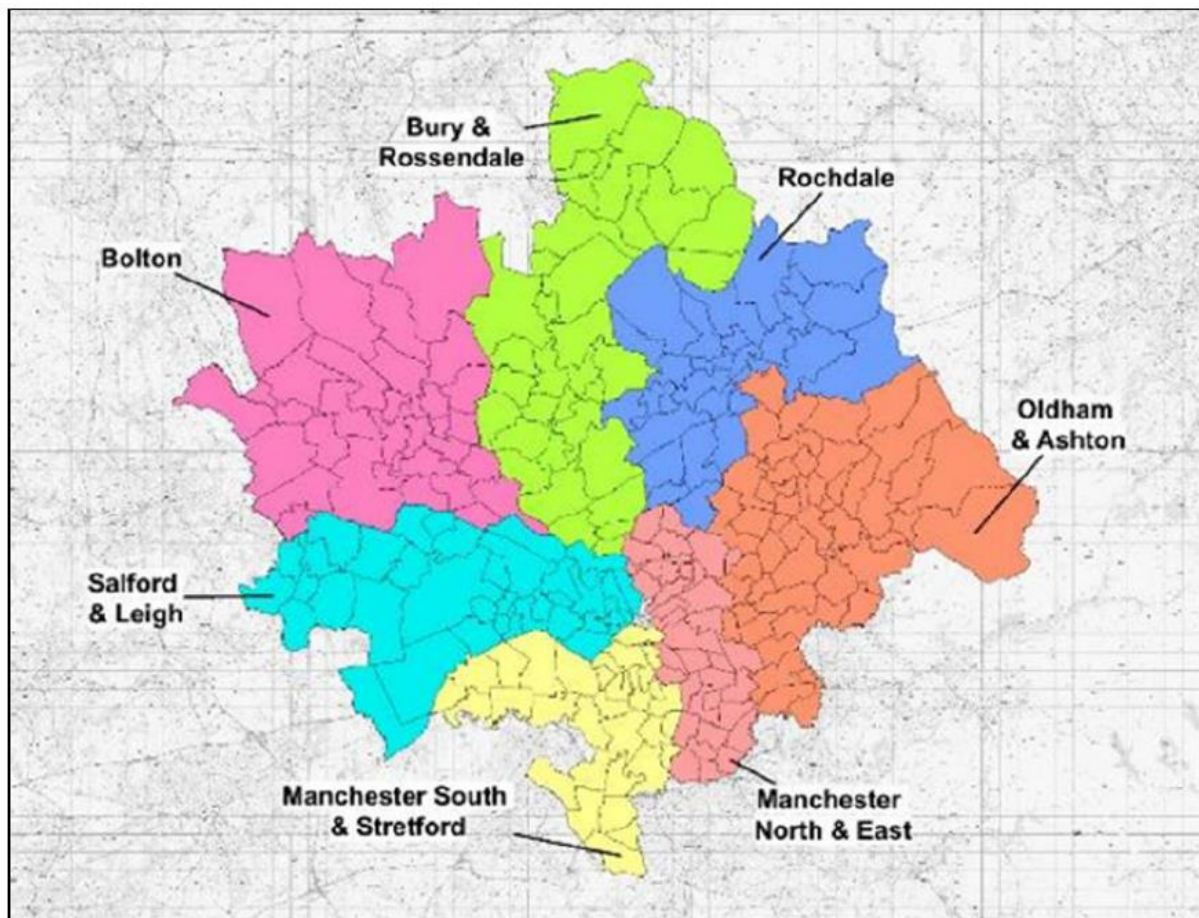
We continue to provide a safe environment for all by promoting effective **safeguarding**. Across our diocese, people hold diverse views and express their faith through **different traditions**, united in a passion for Jesus Christ and his Church. Our bishops honour these differences by inviting church communities from across our diocese to learn together, support one another and listen to God.

We are working to ensure that we are **financially sustainable** over the medium- to long-term as we recover from the challenges of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. This includes talking with parishes about mutual support and the need to pay Parish Share so that the current levels of stipendiary clergy – 175 - can be maintained. We are also paying close attention to the management of the diocese's assets to ensure optimal investment returns and capital growth.

Our emerging strategy is enabling us to bring together the key areas of opportunity and challenge in our diocese, so that we can support each other in a positive and co-ordinated way. We need to continue to work together to ensure that our Church thrives and grows, supporting even more people in their faith. Developing positive, inspiring and relevant plans for the future mean that we will be well placed to make a bid for significant further funding to the Church Commissioners for this vital work.

Our Deaneries

During our Transformation Programme, seven deaneries were formed to develop and establish new ways of working to achieve our vision for the diocese. This brought together twenty smaller deaneries to increase opportunities for mutual support, and crucially to allow each deanery to have an Area Dean whose full-time ministry would be focused on leading transformation at the local level. The Area Deans work with elected Lay Chairs and are supported by Deanery Transformation Support Officers.



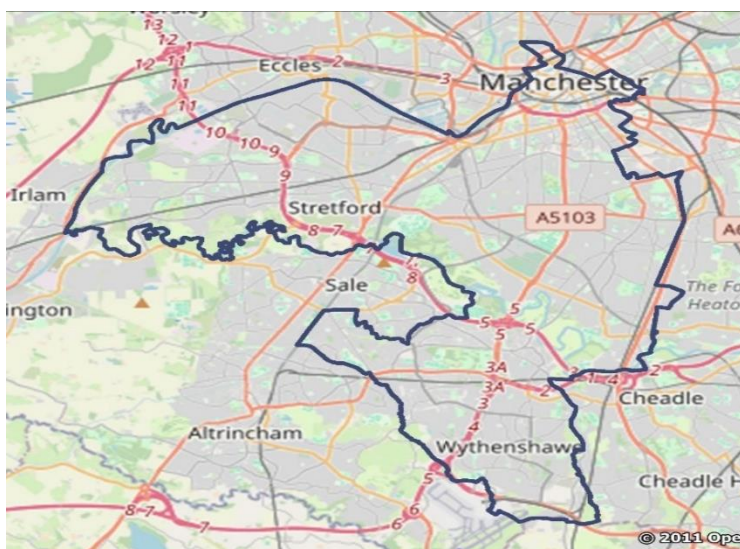
Manchester South and Stretford Deanery

Manchester South and Stretford Deanery covers an area of 35 square miles, it is mostly within the City of Manchester but also encompassing part of Trafford, the towns of Stretford and Urmston and Old Trafford, Trafford Park and Wythenshawe. There are more than 30 separately named urban areas including Chorlton, Didsbury, Flixton, Gorse Hill and Moss Side.

The deanery covers 34 parishes of a variety of traditions that work together across five mission communities.

Funding has been received from the Church Commissioners to carry out several projects in the deanery. This includes the revitalisation of St Werburgh's Chorlton, and a team from there is now preparing to move to their first plant at William Temple, Wythenshawe. Fabric Church, a resource church based in Ardwick Barracks is working to re-energise Christian witness in the city centre, serving students and young professionals. A project to bring choral singing to local churches is taking place at St Paul's Withington, aiming to attract local students. A ManDio Growing Faith Deanery Enabler is working within the deanery to support the engagement of children in worship.

Parishes across the deanery are engaged in intercultural mission work, eco commitments and in community outreach such as holiday clubs, Warm Spaces and Big Feeds.



Role Description

Stipend: £34,728 per annum

Hours of Work: Full-Time

Terms of Service: Common Tenure

Purpose

Full-time Area Deans in Manchester Diocese are leaders in mission in the deanery, working and praying to further the vision and strategy of the diocese.

Responsibilities

Area Deans have four key areas of responsibility:

- Strategic Implementation - with the Suffragan Bishop and Archdeacon, **leading** and **implementing** a clear strategy for the deanery;
- Change Management – **identifying** opportunities for growth in mission communities and **driving** the change, working closely with mission community leaders;
- Clergy Development and Support – **envisioning** and **empowering** clergy to be team leaders in local mission, through the ongoing mentoring of a number of key clergy leaders, including new incumbents;
- Deanery Leadership – **supporting** and **encouraging** the mission and ministry of the clergy in the deanery and supporting clergy with their **wellbeing**, through the deanery chapter and the wider work of the Deanery through the Deanery Synod.

Accountability

The Diocesan Bishop appoints and licenses Area Deans. They will work as a team with other Area Deans and Archdeacons under the leadership of the relevant Suffragan Bishop. They will be accountable to the relevant Archdeacon for their day-to-day ministry and the four areas of responsibility outlined above.

Key Relationships

The Area Dean of Manchester South and Stretford will work closely with the Bishop of Middleton and the Archdeacon of Manchester and also with the Lay Chair and mission community leaders in the deanery.

They will work in close co-operation with key lay and ordained church leaders in the Deanery of Manchester South and Stretford, in particular new incumbents, involving them in shaping the strategy for the deanery and supporting them with the implementation of agreed changes.

They will also work alongside and engage with lay leaders in the deanery including Church Wardens, Readers and Authorised Lay Ministers.

There will be close working with the other Area Deans to ensure the consistent development and implementation of the diocese's strategy for growth and mission.

Other key partners are Diocesan Board of Finance and Diocesan Board of Education staff, who will provide practical support with implementing the strategy for each deanery, in particular the Transformation Director and the Deanery Transformation Support Officers.

Key Tasks

Strategic Implementation

1. Working with the Suffragan Bishop, Archdeacon and DBF and DBE colleagues, co-ordinate the development of a five-year strategy for the deanery, identifying the key opportunities for growth and mission.

Change Management

2. Support mission communities with the development of proposals for growth and mission and the implementation of the deanery's five-year strategy.
3. Ensure that leadership and cover is provided during periods of vacancy and transition for individual parishes, and that there is a smooth transition to new structures and ways of working, as part of the wider change programme for the deanery.
4. Participate in the recruitment process for clergy and other staff in the deanery, attending pre-vacancy meetings and being part of the interview process as appropriate.

Clergy Development and Support

5. Ensure that all who hold the Bishop's license actively engage with personal and professional development opportunities, and to carry out MDRs in the deanery as required.
6. Provide mentoring and support for clergy who are new in post, particularly those in their first incumbencies.
7. Provide pastoral care and support for all those who hold the Bishop's license in the deanery.

Deanery Leadership

8. Convene the deanery chapter with the express aim of achieving the full and active participation of all stipendiary and non-stipendiary ministers, encouraging creative and supportive working relationships.
9. Ensure there is effective communication and dialogue between members of the deanery, and also between the deanery and the wider diocese.
10. Work closely with mission community leaders to support them in agreeing the vision for their mission community, developing new ways of working, and helping establish a culture of mutual accountability and support.
11. Work closely with the Borough Deans to ensure effective links with civic, ecumenical and inter-faith partners.
12. Provide visible leadership in promoting equality and diversity in all aspects of the life of the deanery, putting in place measures to ensure that our church leadership – lay and ordained – and our congregations, reflect the diversity of the deanery.

Statutory Responsibilities

13. Fulfil the statutory responsibilities of the role of Area Dean, specifically:
 - Act as joint chair of the Deanery Synod
 - Act as Returning Officer for lay elections of deanery representatives to Diocesan Synod and other committees
 - Act as the Archdeacon's representative with regard to any irregularities or breakdown of parochial systems and to conduct parish visitations as necessary
 - Act as sequestrator in a parochial vacancy.

Person Specification

Requirements	
Spirituality and Tradition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mature faith and spirituality ▪ A prayerful approach to life ▪ Generous in working with a breadth of traditions and spirituality in the Church of England
Experience and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An ordained priest in the Anglican church with experience as an incumbent ▪ A visionary and strategic thinker – someone who will be able to develop the deanery for future sustainability and growth ▪ Understanding and experience of the process of leading and managing change, including culture and structural change ▪ Experience of conflict management and mediation, and of moving complex situations towards transformation ▪ Experience of developing and leading effective teams
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowledge and experience of fruitful approaches to developing and growing the church ▪ Some understanding of the formal processes of the Church of England ▪ Knowledge of safeguarding best practice
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Able to hold and articulate vision and strategy ▪ Able to develop partnerships and networks ▪ Effective leader of people as an enabler, delegator and team player ▪ Effective in managing competing demands and finding practical solutions ▪ Able critically to appraise initiatives based on the available evidence and adapt and develop plans in the light of experience.

Candidates will not be expected to meet all the requirements below at the point of application, but to demonstrate the potential to learn and develop in all these areas. A comprehensive programme of development and training opportunities will be provided to the newly appointed Area Dean to support them with this.

Additional Information

Application timetable

The closing date for applications is Tuesday, 17th June 2025 at Midnight.

Shortlisted candidates will be informed by Friday, 27th June 2025.

The interviews are scheduled for Thursday, 10th July at St John's House, 155-163 The Rock, Bury BL9 0ND. Further details will be provided to shortlisted candidates.

Eligibility and pre-employment enquiries

The nominated candidates will need to have the right to live and work in the United Kingdom. They will need to complete an Enhanced DBS check and a pre-appointment occupational health clearance.

Safeguarding

Experience of your competence in managing safeguarding forms a key part of the discernment process, as well as enquiries to reassure the appointing panel that you are not a safeguarding risk.

You will be asked to complete a confidential declaration and your bishop will provide a Clergy Current Status Letter (CCSL), prior to interview, having examined your blue file.

Your referees are also asked to comment on your approach to managing safeguarding.

Stipend, housing and office space

The stipend is set at £34,728 and, in accordance with the usual provisions, a parsonage will be provided. The Area Dean of Manchester South and Stretford will be licensed as assistant curate to a benefice within the deanery.

Holidays and expenses are paid according to the diocese's guidelines for office holders.

The Area Dean of Manchester South and Stretford will be appointed on Common Tenure and is expected to comply with its associated terms of service.