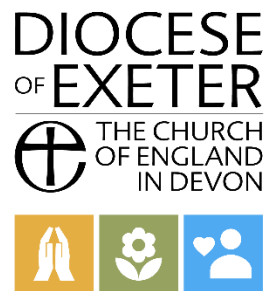




City Dean &  
Mission Development Leader  
Plymouth 2035

Role Information Pack



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## A message from Bishop James

Dear friends,

We stand at a pivotal moment in the life of the Church in Plymouth. The landscape of our city is changing—its communities shifting, its needs evolving, and its opportunities for mission growing ever more urgent. In this moment, we are called not to retreat, but to respond with courage, creativity, and faith.

**Plymouth 2035** is our shared vision for renewal: a bold, Spirit-led journey to reimagine what it means to be the Church in this city. It is a vision rooted in prayer, shaped by hope, and driven by a deep desire to see lives transformed by the love of Christ.

The role of **City Dean** is central to this vision. We are seeking a leader of spiritual depth and strategic insight—someone who can inspire others, navigate complexity, and hold fast to the Gospel in the midst of change. This is not a role for the faint-hearted. It is a calling for someone who believes that God is not finished with Plymouth, and who is ready to help shape the next chapter of its story.

If your heart stirs at the thought of leading a movement of renewal—of building partnerships, nurturing leaders, and planting seeds of faith across this city—then I invite you to pray, to listen, and to consider whether this might be your next step.

May God disturb us where we are too comfortable and embolden us to sail beyond familiar shores.

With every blessing,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ James".

Right Reverend James Grier, Bishop of Plymouth



## Plymouth 2035 Prayer

### **Disturb us, Lord,**

when we are too well pleased with ourselves,  
when our dreams have come true  
because we have dreamed too little,  
when we arrived safely  
because we sailed too close to the shore.

### **Disturb us, Lord,**

when with the abundance of things we possess  
we have lost our thirst  
for the waters of life;  
having fallen in love with life,  
we have ceased to dream of eternity  
and in our efforts to build a new earth,  
we have allowed our vision  
of the new Heaven to dim.

### **Disturb us, Lord,**

to dare more boldly,  
to venture on wider seas  
where storms will show your mastery;  
where losing sight of land,  
we shall find the stars.  
We ask You to push back  
the horizons of our hopes;  
and to push into the future  
in strength, courage, hope, and love.

This we ask in the name of our Captain, who is Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

*(Attr. Sir Francis Drake 1540-1596)*

## 2035 Bible Verse

"Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified... **we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'** When Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of them and prayed." Acts 20:32-36 – with 20:35 at the centre.

## Diocese of Exeter | Pray – Grow - Serve

As God's pilgrim people, we seek to share in the mission of God as revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ through praying; growing disciples and serving the people of Devon, with joy.

### Diocese of Exeter | Vision

Our vision is to be the living body of Christ, which is in every community and is **connected, contextual, credible, called to go** and pray, grow disciples and serve the people of Devon, with joy!

### Diocese of Exeter | Strategic Priorities

**Missional Leadership** | Leaders (lay and ordained) equipped and resourced to develop and grow new disciples

**Missional DNA** | outwardly looking churches actively hospitable and engaged with wider communities

**Vocations** | Everyone asking "what is God calling me/us to now?"

**Children, Young People, Families and schools** | placed at the heart of our life, mission and ministry.

**Mixed Ecology of Church** | we provide and value different ways of doing and being church

**Plymouth 2035** | every community embodying the diocesan vision and with 2035 new disciples worshipping in Plymouth churches.

### Diocese of Exeter | Funding

The Diocese of Exeter is preparing a major funding application to the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board (SMMIB) in autumn 2025 to support a bold, ten-year vision for growth and renewal. A significant part of this vision is *Plymouth 2035*—an ambitious programme to refresh the Church of England in Plymouth. Plymouth 2035 will focus on revitalising congregations, planting new churches, and launching Fresh Expressions of Church, all with the aim of growing new disciples and serving the city's various communities with renewed energy and hope.

## Plymouth City

Plymouth is a growing city. Recent years have seen significant changes in population, industry and economy. Infrastructure and expansion have changed the landscape of the city with communities divided by major roads and large housing developments. Smaller, urban centres have dwindled, causing isolation and decline. These recent changes have added to the war damage reconstruction and new estate development that has shaped the city over recent decades.

Throughout this changing landscape, the church has continued to serve local communities. The Church of England is dedicated to be a Christian presence in every community, committed to sharing Jesus in practical, life-giving ways. But we cannot ignore the fact that the communities our churches were built to serve have changed significantly. In effect this means that there are whole communities in the city that have *never* been reached by their parish church. This must change if we are to take mission seriously.

## Plymouth City Deanery

Plymouth City Deanery includes 23 benefices and four pioneer initiatives under the Plymouth Partnership in Mission, plus a separate pioneer project in Sherford, to the east of the city. Plymouth's unique geography—steep hills, rivers, and woodland—alongside a history of limited transport links, has shaped a patchwork of distinct and sometimes isolated communities, each with its own character and needs.

While there are real challenges here—like declining attendance, leadership gaps, and financial pressures—this is also a moment full of possibility. With ten vacancies across the Deanery, we have a rare opportunity to shape a new culture: one that's rooted in mission, built on collaboration, and open to growth. By rethinking how we work together, investing in key churches and pioneer initiatives, and strengthening our partnerships with schools and community groups, we believe we can help reset the city's missional direction.

At the heart of this renewal is a commitment to nurturing healthy church cultures, supporting both clergy and lay leaders, and building on the strengths already present in our churches and communities.

In this context of challenge and opportunity, we're looking for a visionary and collaborative leader to help shape the next chapter of Plymouth Deanery's story. This role will be key in guiding change, encouraging and equipping others, and helping the church thrive across the city's many and varied communities. We're looking for someone with spiritual depth, strategic insight, and a heart for renewal.

## Plymouth 2035

In order to address this mismatch, a review of the church in the city was conducted at the end of 2024. As a result of this review and as part of a larger piece of work that covers strategic mission across the diocese of Exeter, **Plymouth 2035** was born.

**Plymouth 2035** is an ambitious project to transform and revitalise the Anglican church in Plymouth. It will form a significant part of the diocesan SMMIB bid which will be submitted in the autumn of 2025.

## City Dean

The role of City Dean is a strategic part of realising the **Plymouth 2035** vision. It is a position of strategic importance and value, entrusted with helping to share the future of the church in this city. Working closely with the Bishop and Archdeacon of Plymouth, the City Dean will share oversight and implementation of **Plymouth 2035**.

The City Dean is appointed by the bishop for a period of five years followed by a review with the possibility of a further two years. They will be the lead for the Deanery Team consisting Assistant City Deans, the Lay Chair and Deanery Finance Chair.

### The Plymouth 2035 City Dean will need to:

- be an experienced member of clergy
- have a proven track record of producing missional growth
- have project and change management experience
- have strong people skills and high emotional intelligence
- be able to inspire and coordinate others
- be able to supervise and manage the large Plymouth 2035 staff team
- play a key part in recruiting a significant number of new clergy to the city.

## Key Responsibilities

### Strategic

- Be the strategic leader for Plymouth 2035, able to inspire clergy and laity to respond ambitiously to the challenges of church growth;
- Provide project management and missional direction for Plymouth 2035;
- Serve as the missional lead for Plymouth 2035, with the goal that by 2035, we will:
  - Meaningfully engage with 20,350 new people across the city (representing 8% of the population);
  - Enable 2,035 adults to explore faith;
  - Accompany 2,035 children and young people as they cross the threshold of faith;
  - Grow 2,035 new disciples;
  - Establish 35 new worshipping communities across diverse contexts.
- Help to communicate relevant information about Plymouth 2035 via social media and through diocesan communication channels;
- Be a member of the Strategic Programme Board.

### Pastoral and Prayer

- Be the first point of contact for clergy in need;
- Keep the Archdeacon and Bishop informed when the wellbeing of clergy or their family give cause for concern;
- Provide deanery clergy with regular opportunities to meet together, to share successes and failures, and to learn from one another;
- Ensure that SSOMs have at least two opportunities each year to meet with Chapter;
- Provide one or two meetings on Zoom each year so that chaplains and other non-parochial clergy are able to participate in Chapter meetings;
- Offer advice and support to clergy, especially those in first incumbencies and those who are new to the deanery.

### Oversight

- Oversee the use of SMMIB funding in Plymouth - monitor, evaluate and measure the impact of interventions against expected outcomes throughout the project;
- Provide line management for the Growing Faith Lead;
- Ensure all Plymouth 2035 volunteers are safer recruited and properly supervised;



- Ensure the future sustainability of the Plymouth 2035 project, particularly in the latter years of the funding;
- Ensure that the Assistant City Deans are clear about their roles, meeting with them frequently.

## Mission Enabling

- Champion growth in the church; acting as an advocate for the development of new congregations, fresh expressions of church and church plants. Find innovative ways of engaging people on a renewed journey of discipleship;
- Liaising with the Bishop and Archdeacon over the implementation of Plymouth 2035 project;
- Consult and implement a Deanery Mission Plan;
- Inspire and encourage clergy and churches across the breadth of church tradition
- Work with PCCs to advise and encourage them in their missional role;
- Encourage and support parishes to develop Mission Plans.

## Vacancy Support

- Support vacant parishes to plan for Mission Planning, including new, missional clergy;
- Ensure that parishes in vacancy are supported to cover worship, occasional offices, APCMs, providing general advice;
- A number of canons specify the pastoral role of the Area Dean during vacancies, these include B12 (Lay Administration of the Holy Communion), B43 (Relationship with other churches), E7 (Lay Workers), E4 (Readers), C11, 3 (Induction) B2 (Approval of Forms of Service), B65 (Language of Divine Service). In most of these the Area Dean fulfils the role of incumbent;
- Processing applications for churchyard memorial according to the Chancellor's direction.

## Administration and Governance

- Take a lead within the Plymouth Deanery (at Chapter, Deanery Synod, etc.);
- Chair Deanery Leadership Team meetings;
- Organise, with the Deanery Lay Chair, regular meetings of Deanery Synod;
- Develop a programme for Deanery Chapter meetings;
- Fulfilling all statutory responsibilities applying to Rural/Area Deans (see Canon C23);

- Conducting, with the Deanery Lay Chair, the Diocesan Synod elections from the Deanery every three years;
- Attending regular meetings of Rural Deans with the Archdeacon.

## Community and Ecumenical Engagement

- Advocate for the church in the city amongst ecumenical and community engagement, particularly in areas that are the hardest to reach or the most disadvantaged;
- Provide visible leadership on issues of social justice in Plymouth, including close working with Transforming Plymouth Together;
- Be key link person on behalf of the deanery in relating to ecumenical partners in the city.

## Change Management

- Lead and support culture change amongst clergy by articulating the Plymouth 2035 vision; encouraging and facilitating shared initiatives across parish boundaries; and encouraging clergy to develop as enablers of mission, with strong lay teams.

## Diocesan responsibilities

- Be a member of Plymouth Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee;
- Membership of the Strategic Programme Board;
- Attend other diocesan committees and Diocesan Synod as required.

## Person Specification: City Dean

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications and Training	Ordained priest in the Church of England. Theological training appropriate to the role.	Evidence of ongoing CMD. Training in leadership, change management, or project management.
Experience	Proven experience of leading mission and church growth in a parish or deanery. Experience of working collaboratively with clergy and lay leaders. Experience of managing or overseeing complex projects or initiatives. Experience of pastoral care and supporting clergy well-being.	Experience of working in urban or multi-parish contexts. Experience of engaging with ecumenical and community partners. Experience of managing budgets or overseeing funding streams.
Knowledge and Understanding	Understanding of the Church of England's structures, mission, and ministry. Awareness of the challenges and opportunities facing the urban Church. Understanding of safeguarding, safer recruitment, and good governance.	Familiarity with the Diocese of Exeter's vision and strategic priorities. Understanding of Fresh Expressions, church planting, and mixed ecology models.
Skills and Abilities	Strong leadership and strategic thinking skills. Ability to inspire, motivate, and equip others for mission across all church traditions. Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal. Ability to manage change and navigate complexity with wisdom and grace. Competence in using digital tools and social media for communication and engagement.	Skills in conflict resolution and team development. Ability to evaluate impact and measure outcomes effectively.
Personal Attributes	Spiritually mature and rooted in prayer. Collaborative, approachable, and emotionally intelligent. Resilient, adaptable, open to innovation. A heart for mission and a passion for the renewal of the Church.	
Other Requirements	Enhanced DBS clearance. Full driving licence and access to a car. Willingness to work flexibly, including evenings and weekends as required.	

# Terms and Conditions

## **Stipend**

This is a full-time stipendiary role.

## **Pension**

Membership of non-contributory Church of England Pension scheme.

## **Housing**

16 Southway Lane, Plymouth, PL6 6QB

## **Location**

Plymouth provides a comprehensive range of facilities including various local and national shops, businesses, restaurants, pubs, and sports facilities. There are a wide variety of schools. Plymouth railway station runs regular services to London's Paddington Station. Trains typically take 3 to 3.5 hours.

## **Tenure**

The City Dean's office will be held under Common Tenure as specified in the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure, 2009.

## **Office Provision**

A study at home and office space provided for the Plymouth 2035 team.

## **Working Expenses**

Monthly claims and mileage are reimbursed by the Diocesan Board of Finance.

## **Transport**

The post holder must have a current, full driving licence and access to a car.

## **DBS**

The appointment is subject to an Enhanced DBS

## Further information

For an informal conversation, please contact

The Ven. Jane Bakker, Archdeacon of Plymouth on 01752 858382

or [adp@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:adp@exeter.anglican.org)

The Right Revd James Grier, Bishop of Plymouth on 07825 610288

[bishop.of.plymouth@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:bishop.of.plymouth@exeter.anglican.org)

## Application

Closing date for applications: 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2025

Interview: 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2025