

Diocesan peer review: pre-review self-assessment

DIOCESE: ELY

Please complete and return this self-assessment form to the Strategy & Development Unit at least two weeks before your peer review meeting.

Leadership & strategy	
<input type="checkbox"/> This is an area of relative strength (tick if applies) <input type="checkbox"/> This is an area of some concern (tick if applies)	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From a position of not having a formal vision or strategy in 2006, strong episcopal leadership has sponsored a shared process including a diocesan-wide consultation undertaken by Judge Business School leading to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a clear vision - launch of the well-disseminated “People Fully Alive” ELY2025 Strategy (September 2015) - with clear imperatives (Deepen – Grow – Engage) now widely embedded in diocesan messaging and services (e.g. Licensing service rewritten around them) - and 5 “Levers of Change” driving budget and synod business (strong buy in especially to lever 1, Nurturing a Confident People of God) - underpinned by a five year rolling delivery plan and a three year rolling budgetary process - itself underpinned by a strong financial position built on 20 years of strong leadership in finance and asset management, with a commitment and adherence to the principle of a balanced budget • Implementation is being led by good quality senior teams (Strategy Group, Bishop’s Senior Staff including Archdeacons and Directors, Board of Education/Academy Trust) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - supported by a strong committed and newly refreshed Diocesan Office team aligned with the Strategy - with increasing Cathedral engagement - and ready to innovate & take risks 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downstream implementation of ELY2025 is, however, currently patchy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - greater clarity needed on decision making (who makes which decisions, and how) - more work to do in the alignment of our resources to delivery plans - using a cascade of meetings more strongly focused on delivering strategic objectives, facing prioritisation issues properly - with greater use of clear output targets (rather than input ones) - with stronger system-wide monitoring - using the now improving data analytics • Episcopal presence stretched but more visibility requested; all senior staff at capacity. • Low levels of resilience in the Diocesan Office team, especially at senior level • The role of Rural Deans in the delivery of the strategy needs to be defined and agreed – a key lever or blockage point • Parish “Development Action Plan” seen as a key stepping stone to cascade strategic action but are not deliverable until APCMs 2018: need to keep focus on this. • Supporting communications channels which would increase dissemination of strategy actions and outcomes are relatively weak. Social media presence improving, but at a very elementary level. • Strategy for DBE Schools (and its delivery) requires improvement. Restructuring underway. Overdue for re-focus • “Change” is not sufficiently embedded and decisions can be made on an insufficient evidential basis

Promoting spiritual and numerical growth	<input type="checkbox"/> This is an area of relative strength (tick if applies) <input type="checkbox"/> This is an area of some concern (tick if applies)
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission Action Planning (now Development Action Planning focussed on strategic levers) in place since 2005. • The language of growth has become normalised, and is embedded in our key messaging (“Engage, Grow, Deepen”) • Building confident disciples has wide acceptance as a top priority (Lever 1; good Synod discussion) and is being backed by an extra appointment in the Department of Ministry to drive it • Diocesan Mission and Ministry departmental activity has grown, with a serious strategy-linked vetting and budgetting process in place • A strong capital position has allowed us to establish a new Growth Fund of £500k to support local growth projects with clear objectives • We have made a solid response to the opportunity of new housing areas (Cambourne, Hampton, Loves Farm - all showing strong growth, Alconbury coming on-stream) with proceeds of land sales earmarked to endow new posts in them (Northstowe) • Strong growth (organic more than planned) in Fresh Expressions/Messy Church especially in rural areas: stretch target of 50/50 inherited/Fresh Expressions economy in place. • New congregations have been planted in struggling parishes (e.g. St Matthews Cambridge) with good growth following. 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite decline in many categories mirroring national picture, there is no real sense of urgency. • Reliable Statistics for Mission are only just in place and analysis of them only just started. Systematic feedback into strategic activity (e.g. targeted support where strong growth/decline) is not yet in place. • Departmental work with Children and Youth has struggled to work to strategy-related measurable outcomes (remains driven by worthy inputs) • Demands of increased vocations, training and ministry activity stretching us to/beyond capacity: reduces capacity for strategic reflection and intervention • ELY2025 Growth Fund take up slower than hoped though it has been well communicated: need to “go upstream” and facilitate bids • Funding is not presently for available for further church buildings in new housing areas • Our Fresh Expressions are weak in Cambridge and the south and generally slow in growing into full marks of Church with real church growth • We have maintained a positive relationship with Conservative Evangelical churches on planting but wish we could persuade churches of other churchmanships to plant...
Serving individuals and transforming communities	<input type="checkbox"/> This is an area of relative strength (tick if applies) <input type="checkbox"/> This is an area of some concern (tick if applies)
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Towns stand out as the key under-performing communities (in secular terms as well as ecclesiastical) in the Diocese who also have the potential to transform other places if they are transformed themselves. Our “Changing Market Towns” project is under way using newly targetted resources to revitalise the Church of England 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The data shows a clear “deprivation tide-line” dividing the north and south of the Diocese. But there is no strategic response to this and current deployment reflects rather than responds to it. • The Social Responsibility offer of the Diocese is weak (just a very limited engagement with foodbanks and credit unions) and response to disability issues is

<p>presence in ten locations (25% of diocesan population). SDF bid in preparation to extend/enhance this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a good understanding of demographic deprivation data. Integrated parish dashboards being delivered using this and other social and mission data. • Our schools including a high performing Academies Trust are an effective presence across the Diocese combining Christian distinctiveness and education/service for all. • Plans are in place to fund 12 new stipendiary posts (ordained or lay) in new-build communities (a significant feature of our landscape) from within existing projected investment income • Chaplaincy is well developed in the Diocese especially but not only to educational institutions. • At parish level, there is a strong texture of community engagement 	<p>a black hole beyond basic building adaptation. No strategy, targets or impact measures are in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic engagement is episodic with a few significant exceptions (e.g. County Council Chief Executive). Need to build on times when it is happening (such as Cambridge City on Faiths Council, South Cambs on rural isolation) • We need to invest more in promoting & supporting church school identity and ethos • Engagement with Rural Affairs has also struggled to find capacity • The significant engagement at parish level is often invisible at the centre • A major debate has to be expected on issues of sexuality and inclusion, for which we are probably not as prepared as we ought to be
<p>Re-imagining ministry <input type="checkbox"/> This is an area of relative strength (tick if applies) <input type="checkbox"/> This is an area of some concern (tick if applies)</p>	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a strong shared narrative about increasing deployed posts but using these in new ways (not all will be clergy): e.g. LLM ministry being widened to include professional family workers, pioneers etc.; new LLM vocations emerging • There is a keen interest in pioneer ministry among younger ministers, some now coming into significant posts, supported by a culture of permission giving and experimentation (e.g. Pioneer Partners) • The vocations challenge has been accepted and a new f/t Vocations Adviser appointed who has presented a structured vision for growth to Bishop's Council. • We are a pilot diocese for "Setting God's People Free" with a real commitment to developing the programme as a key component of ELY2025. A good discussion at Bishop's 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the direction of travel is there, the delivery of change lacks pace and new developments are not yet norms. • Older patterns of thinking about ministry are still well established and can provide passively aggressive resistance to change (among both disengaged "submariner" clergy and laity). • "Club church" is alive and well in some parts of the Diocese, run for cliques by cliques. • As a consequence, it is proving hard to move to a strong agreed deployment strategy, and resource investment decisions are open to a keep-the-money-local challenge (Ely parishes keep a larger % of their income than our neighbours). • Actual ordinand numbers are not in fact rising. Only a half-time DDO is in post. • Clergy vocations are currently skewed by the "Cambridge factor". (Most ordinands are selected from a few major Cambridge churches.) There is significant selection bias, which is academically focussed.

<p>Council identified “local lens” practical actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clergy training and support is strong from IME to MDR to CME with a multiplicity of developmental programmes (e.g. Riverside leadership courses) backed by aligned diocesan resources. • Clergy Wellbeing/Support has been refreshed with two clergy surveys and an array of interventions • Ely has the highest national ratio of women (45 out of 112 in 2016) serving as full time incumbents • There is senior determination to make provision for a Supported Clergy Exit from post for a number of clergy who are no longer in the right job. 	<p>There has only been one ordinand in ten years from outside Cambridge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our training offer is good, but not could be tied more closely to our strategy in a delivery plan with aimed-for outcomes beyond completion of the courses. • BME and diversity engagement (other than male/female) in our ministry development reflects our weakness in this area generally. • Appointing the right people to the right jobs where they can make a strategic difference remains a major challenge.
<p>Resources: finance & buildings <input type="checkbox"/> This is an area of relative strength (tick if applies) <input type="checkbox"/> This is an area of some concern (tick if applies)</p>	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a strong, well-husbanded inheritance of both capital and culture with mature financial behaviours, including balanced budgeting which has been zero based since 2016 and is overseen by an Audit Committee. • Reformed Ministry Share arrangements are in place from 2015 and deliver a 98.5% payment rate against assessment • Giving is marginally above national levels at £14.95 per week and the number of givers is steady (7105 vs AWA 21,050). • The Parish Giving Scheme is being rolled out enthusiastically as part of a wider programme of renewing giving • The DAC has been totally refreshed to align it with ELY2025 aims. • Plans are advanced for a joint venture with the Judge Business School to audit the “social utility” of our estate (aligned with ELY2025 Levers) 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The investment portfolio has been managed for high return and will now need rebalancing to maintain long-term value. • £2.2m of our income is spent in maintaining a parish share below ministry cost. The nature and spread of this subsidy (from which all parishes benefit) has not as yet been analysed and debated or aligned to strategic objectives. • The demographic cliff edge approaches: 80% of outstanding standing order givers are over 60. But there is little evidence available to say when and how it will meet us, so little planning for it. • “Stewardship” had gained a bad name and teaching and resourcing of generous giving been almost totally neglected. Present activity is making up the ground but there is a way to go. Legacy giving for instance has not yet been addressed.

Culture, governance, structure & processes	<input type="checkbox"/> This is an area of relative strength (tick if applies) <input type="checkbox"/> This is an area of some concern (tick if applies)
Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is clear episcopally led understanding that “culture eats strategy for breakfast” and the senior team is constantly reflecting on this (e.g. recent report on diocesan “personality”) • Strong senior team relationships are in place with established patterns of accountability • Financial prudence is well understood by budget holders and departmental spend is subject to an annual budget scrutiny • Refreshed externally validated internal controls are in place with response to suppliers and contractors. • Diocesan staff now have a transparent appraisal system directly related to remuneration. • A vibrant and challenging Audit Committee has been in place from 2016, with the ability to order internal audit investigations • New safeguarding arrangements have been established embracing non-Church leadership from the social care sector. Our SCIE inspection was very satisfactory. • An externally and independently constructed Risk Register (copy provided – confidential, please protect) is now embedded in the bi-annual consideration by Directors and reviewed annually by Bishop’s Council. 	Weaknesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing and modelling clear shared values are understood as an imperative but not fully developed. Some beginnings have been made in looking at these for deployment and giving and “Dwelling in the Word” is starting to affect the overall cultural inheritance that has kept faith and governance separate. • Inherited and new structures and posts sit alongside each other with unclear boundaries and responsibilities: e.g. can we be clearer about the respective roles of Synod - Bishop’s Council - Bishop’s Staff or Bishops – Archdeacons – Diocesan Secretary - Directors in our strategic governance • Bishop’s Council is increasingly framed as the place where governance is focussed (being both BC, EDBF, DM&PC etc.) and is growing into the responsibility, but still feels more of a meeting than a motor. • The newer “Directors” positions need further definition in terms of not just role: e.g is the Director of Mission responsible for our missional outcomes? • Although we are diligently putting safeguarding systems in place, we are aware of pockets of collusive culture that continue to pose significant risks.
Self-assessment process	
This document was produced by the Strategy Group (Bishops, Archdeacons, Diocesan Secretary)	
Preparation for the peer review meeting	
How could the peer review meeting be of most benefit to you and your diocese? <i>By holding a frank mirror up to us which will affirm what is good, help us to see more clearly what is not, and encourage and inspire us to do something about the difference as a senior team.</i>	