

A Local Mission and Ministry Covenant 2015

Lichfield Diocese has a long track record of 'shared' ministries, that is ordained and lay people working together to pursue their calling within the wider mission and ministry of Christ. In the past the bishop issued a Mandate which affirmed the best way of co-ordinating local shared working. In 2011 the language was changed from Mandate to Covenant, which was a formally recognised agreement made between the local parish (or group of parishes) and the bishop. In 2013 this was further modified to become normal recommended practice for all churches without the formal recognition, except in the case of there being an OLM in the parish in which case some formal documentation needs to be agreed.

Lichfield Diocese is committed to encourage all churches to follow the six key principles which form the 'covenant' which are:

- An agreed vision
- Evidence of ownership
- Partnership
- Every-member ministry
- Helpful structures
- A learning environment

A fuller explanation of these criteria for Shared Leadership can be found in the separate document entitled, 'Criteria for Recognition as a Covenanted Parish in Shared Leadership'. A more detailed history of the development from Mandates to Covenants can be found in 'Shared Ministry in Lichfield Diocese'.

Where there are existing Mandates, these will be treated as Covenants until the time for their review comes and then they will translate into Covenants. For this translation and for any new Covenants, the Director of Mission is available to advise and help parishes understand and move towards fulfilling the criteria. It is expected that each parish will describe on approximately three sides of A4 the way in which they fulfil the criteria and once this is presented and accepted they will be recognised as a Covenanted parish.

The PCCs will oversee and initiate this process. They have legal responsibility for all that occurs as 'church' locally, but may delegate some of this to a separate Parish Development Team.

If you wish to explore a Covenant, contact the Director of Mission

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