

C10 THE ROLE OF THE DEANERY LAY CHAIR

Background

The role of Deanery Lay Chair has grown by default rather than design. Today as the leading elected representative of the laity in a deanery the Lay Chair shares with the Rural Dean the leadership of the deanery. Essential to the development of the deanery is the relationship between the Lay Chair and the Rural Dean and the way in which they understand and interpret the concept of shared leadership and models of the church in the deanery.

The following Job Description sets out the role of the Lay Chair.

Deanery Synod

- To be joint chair, with the Rural Dean, of the Deanery Synod and Standing Committee.
- Involvement in pastoral and financial planning.
- To chair the House of Laity of the Synod.
- To be Returning Officer for the election of clergy representatives on Diocesan Synod.

These roles will involve:

- Consulting with the Rural Dean and being actively involved in the process of policy making and planning
- setting agendas in the deanery, within the framework set by the Synodical Government Measure

These are on-going tasks which the Lay Chair will share with the Rural Dean and members of the Standing Committee but lay leadership here is possibly the most important contribution a Lay Chair can make.

As leader of the lay members of the Deanery Synod, the Chair should also aim to encourage their sense of responsibility, not only within the Synod but outwards into the parishes. He should look out for potential and encourage people to stand for election to Diocesan Synod and diocesan and deanery committees. The majority of Lay Chairs are also elected members of the Diocesan Synod.

In the Deanery

There are a number of tasks which can be undertaken by a Lay Chair but there will be other lay people in the deanery who have particular skills which should be used. Lay Chairs should think carefully about what tasks they take on from the list below and may feel that some tasks are better done by others.

The tasks usually performed by the Lay Chair are:

- To be an official representative at deanery and parish functions e.g. Institutions and deanery days.
- To be an official representative at ecumenical functions and meetings.
- To represent the deanery at non-church events in the deanery area.

Tasks in which the Lay Chair may sometimes be involved:

- Attending and/or being involved in Archdeacons Visitations and Admission of Churchwardens.
- Accompanying the Rural Dean on Parish Visitations.
- Accompanying the Rural Dean to parish meetings relating to interregna
- Financial matters relating to the apportionment and payment of Quota within the deanery.

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