

# **‘LIVING CHRIST’S STORY’**

## **Selby Deanery Plan**

*Second draft presented to the Deanery Synod on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022  
with some minor additions as a result of feedback at the synod*

### **Background to the Deanery**

Selby Deanery is in the south-west corner of the Diocese of York and (with the exception of Aberford, Micklefield and Ledsham) falls within the County of North Yorkshire and District of Selby (from 2023 the latter will be abolished and the former will become a unitary authority). The Deanery is made up of two larger population centres – the town of Selby/village of Brayton in the east and the villages of Sherburn/South Milford in the west with approximately thirty other villages across the deanery with a growing population that is approaching 60,000. In recent years, significant housing development has taken place not only in and around these two larger population centres but in a number of the other villages (e.g. Thorpe Willoughby, Hambleton, Micklefield, Carlton) and looks likely to continue. Selby town and district is often ranked highly in national and regional polls of popular places to live, no doubt helped by relatively low house prices and good transport communications (by motorway and rail).

The facilities in Selby town serve a larger hinterland and to some extent the same can be said for the churches of Selby Abbey and St James, whereas most of the other deanery churches tend to serve more strictly local communities. There are areas in Selby town (and in Micklefield) which have relatively ‘high scores’ on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation and this is the particular focus of an ‘estate ministry’ led by the Church Army and St James’ Church on the Flaxley Road estate, the Edge Community.

Overall, however, the deanery is largely rural and the local economy includes a substantial element of agriculture and related-industries as well as other light (and some heavy) industry, retail, distribution depots and service sectors which again tend to be clustered in and around Selby and Sherburn (Drax Power being a notable exception). It is perhaps worth noting that the business rates contributed to North Yorkshire by the District of Selby as a whole (including Tadcaster) is by far the highest in the county. A significant proportion of the local population also commute to neighbouring cities such as York, Leeds, etc. Local links are often stronger to the more urban areas of West (and South) Yorkshire than to the rest of North Yorkshire.

There are at least 32 schools across the deanery (not including nurseries), of which five are High Schools (one Roman Catholic, one independent) and a Further Education College in Selby itself. Thirteen of these are Church of England schools (all primary) but there is significant engagement between most of the community schools and their local churches/clergy as well. Schools are key community meeting points particularly in the villages.

There are a wide range of other community groups including active parish councils and village halls in some areas, as well as particular support or interest groups especially in the town. Some churches are well connected with these networks, others less so.

From the ecclesiastical perspective, the deanery is served by twenty-four Anglican Churches or Worship Centres, two of which are Local Ecumenical Projects with the Methodists. There are at least a dozen other churches across the deanery, including Methodist, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army and

Independent and undoubtedly people resident in the deanery will also travel to worship in York, Leeds and other centres outside the deanery. Churches Together in Selby covers eight churches in Selby town/Brayton and although it is the only CT grouping in the deanery, informal cooperation takes place elsewhere too.

Eleven of the Anglican Church buildings are medieval Grade 1 buildings and as such are invariably the most significant architectural/historic buildings in their communities and (with the exception of Selby Abbey) are an underdeveloped resource for visitors as well as their local communities (Selby District has had an increasing focus on developing the Visitor Economy of the District in recent years and it is hoped that this will continue under North Yorkshire). Only half of these are generally open to casual visitors outside of service times.

In 2019 there were 194 baptisms, 68 weddings and 210 funerals conducted in or on behalf of the Church of England in the deanery (the number solely at the crematorium reflecting the downward trend across the diocese) representing particular points of contact with those from outside the regular worshipping communities, both in terms of the individuals/families involved and the congregations they attract. The average Sunday attendance in 2019 was 680 although this is inevitably less than the number of regular worshippers (an unknown figure) due to frequency of attendance. In that same year the combined Free Will Offer (FWO) was £307,000 and the fee income paid to the diocese around £38 with a lesser amount available to the diocese from Central Funds in respect of the areas of relative deprivation in the deanery. Responses which have come from most of the parishes in April 2022 indicate that these worshipping communities are generally of older people, although some of the larger churches also have a significant proportion of children and younger adults within them, and a few of the smaller churches are also experiencing some growth among younger age groups in regular services or other worship related activities.

Eleven years ago, there were ten incumbents or priests in charge serving the parishes of the deanery of whom two were 0.5 full-time equivalent 'FTE' (the vicar of Sherburn was/is also a part time House for Duty (HfD), although the post he inhabits remains essentially a whole FTE). This number has now reduced to seven of which two are vacant and not likely to be replaced, therefore in effect, the number of 'vicars' has halved in a decade. Even with the support of voluntary licensed and PTO ('permission to officiate' i.e. retired) clergy, as well as Readers, this inevitably has had an impact on the availability of that form of ministry to both the congregations and communities they serve.

With the launch of the diocesan strategy at the beginning of 2021, it became apparent that if Deaneries were expected to contribute up to £79,000 for each FTE post, Selby Deanery would need reduce to around 4.5 posts unless there were a significant increase in FWO. This started a process of consultation at deanery and parish level as to where re-organisation of parishes/benefices into fewer Ministry Units could happen most effectively not only in terms of serving existing churches and congregations but the communities around them. This has already led to the linking of Ledsham and Fairburn with Sherburn, Saxton and Barkston Ash, Aberford and Micklefield under the shared oversight of Canon Chris Wilton. Further proposals with respect to Ministry Units will be detailed later in this document.

There are already a variety of good examples of the ways in which churches are encouraging worship and discipleship within their congregations and seeking to engage with and serve their local communities across the deanery both in more traditional ways (e.g. through occasional offices, collective worship and governance in schools, children's and youth groups, providing space and support for community activities) as well as in more innovative ways. The latter includes the following (not exhaustive) examples of good and/or developing practice:

- ❖ pioneering church growth and community development work on an estate with relatively high levels of deprivation in Selby through a partnership between the Church Army and St James' Church over the last fifteen years (the Edge Community)
- ❖ pioneering church growth and community development work in the villages of Carlton and Drax including Café Church and Heritage Group
- ❖ men's groups to specifically encourage fellowship, discipleship and witness men (often under-represented in our congregations) such as 'Beer and Banter' at Brayton and South Milford
- ❖ ministry to young mum's ('Martha's House') developing from a parent and toddler's group at St James' led by a part-time Multiply Lay Pioneer initially for fellowship and support with the further aim of evangelism and discipleship
- ❖ a revised service pattern at Hambleton with more regular Sunday afternoon services (rather than mornings) aimed at attracting younger families
- ❖ a major re-ordering of the church building at Birkin to make it more welcoming, accessible and usable both for church activities and community events and meetings
- ❖ the particular 'Welcome, Worship and Witness' offered by Selby Abbey to a wider community of individuals, groups, civic occasions, visitors/tourists, arts & cultural engagement, schools and those seeking peace, prayer, support, companionship, etc. from the town, district, region and further afield
- ❖ a range of worship/discipleship opportunities at Brayton to engage different age groups – 'Inspire' monthly Sunday afternoon informal, contemporary café style service; 'Friday Fun Club' for pre-schoolers and parents/carers; 'Alive@5' fortnightly Sunday afternoon cafe style worship for unchurched families in the hall; 'Refresh' fortnightly women's Bible Study/faith exploration; 'Oasis' termly low/key worship/faith experience for women; 'Journeys' new fortnightly bible study and reflection

## **Deanery Priorities and Principles for 'Living Christ's Story' and...**

- **Becoming more like Christ (BMC)**
  - **Reaching those we currently don't (RCD)**
  - **Growing churches of missionary disciples (GMD)**
  - **Transforming finances and structures (TFS)**
- Create a wider range of opportunities for people to come together in parishes, Ministry Units and across the Deanery to study, pray and worship together within and outside current service times to develop the faith and discipleship of existing church members and to engage with others, including children and younger adults. [BMC/RCD/GMD]
  - Encourage every church to address its engagement with the community/communities it serves (including the newer estates/residents) through its pattern and style of worship, its opportunities for evangelism, its methods of communication, the use and usefulness of its building(s), its partnerships with local groups, identifying local needs and the innovations required to make the most of the particular opportunities each local context affords. [RCD/GMD/TFS]
  - Build on the contacts we already have (e.g. through schools, toddlers groups, occasional offices, seasonal services, etc.) to develop relationships and opportunities that will help people to find faith and grow in commitment to Christ. [BMC/RCD/GMD]

- Provide training and support for lay people in the parishes, both for those in existing roles and in developing new ministries by offering training that is as local, contextual and adaptable (to the needs, availability and experience of the individuals concerned) as possible, including those focussed on evangelism and faith development. [BMC/RCD/GMD]
- Streamline structures and provide more effective support for one another within and across parishes through pastoral re-organisation that reduces the number of PCCs and statutory roles and creates more opportunities for sharing ministries and training in discipleship. [BMC/GMD/TFS]
- Explore together and with the knowledge and expertise of those outside the deanery, how the particular needs, opportunities and challenges of ministry in a Rural context can be addressed to enable smaller churches in smaller communities to flourish. [BMC/RCD/GMD/TFS]

## Deanery Action Plan

### 1. Becoming more like Christ

- Building on the existing opportunities for clergy and others who meet together regularly (e.g. for Morning/Evening Prayer) by making some of these open and accessible to all on a regular basis (e.g. around 'hubs' at either end of the deanery) and exploring online opportunities.
- Providing opportunities each year for parishioners in the deanery to come together – e.g. an annual 'Away Day', 'Pilgrimage' and 'Social' led by local clergy/laity.
- Deanery Synod focus days 3x per year open to all on themes such as Children and Families, Environment, Discipleship, Racial Justice, Generous Giving, Evangelism, etc.
- At each Deanery Synod a focus for prayer given for Deanery to share over the period possibly linked to the above.
- For the Deanery Children of Light group to meet and work together on one larger and one smaller focus project per year (this year Christian Aid – Letters for the Climate campaign in lead up to a climate conference and possibly either FEAST-funded holiday club/Experience training).
- Exploring possibilities for shared sessions and courses throughout the year both within and between Ministry Units – START/Alpha Courses, Pilgrim Courses, Study Groups, Church Army resources (e.g. ENVOY, Faith-pictures/shared/empowered) and local personnel, Wedding/Baptism/ Confirmation preparations, bereavement support training.

### 2. Reimagining Mission and Ministry

#### a. The Shape of the Deanery

#### **Sherburn with Saxton and Barkston Ash, Aberford and Micklefield, Ledsham and Fairburn**

These parishes now form a single Ministry Unit under the oversight of a single vicar/priest in charge. They should be encouraged to consider whether more formal pastoral re-organisation which would lead to fewer separate parishes could lead to reduction in workload and a greater sharing of human resources. Also a review of the pattern of worship in Ledsham and Fairburn and of the buildings (e.g. new facilities and greater opportunities for community use in Ledsham and current duplication of church and hall in Fairburn) is underway.

Currently the 'vicar' post is HfD given the particular incumbent in post and there is an interim FTE post available for an extra person to be appointed with a particular focus on developing mission among those in the new housing estates (especially younger adults and families). This provision would probably be reversed if and when the current incumbent leaves.

At present there are also two curates in training (one stipendiary one self-supporting 'SSM'), one retired priest (PTO), one Distinctive Deacon (SSM) and one Reader (PTO) and a growing team of lay people at Sherburn who are involved in leading a monthly non-eucharistic service.

### **Monk Fryston with South Milford, Birkin**

The proposed amalgamation of these parishes into a single Ministry Unit continues to be pursued and in the meantime the ministry of Peter Roberts in providing ministry at Birkin as well as his 'own' parishes is being warmly welcomed.

The current provision is one FTE post whereas the 'contribution' from this Ministry Unit is equivalent to the direct costs of a HfD post, however the parishes are determined to engage in stewardship and growth over the next five years with the aim of covering the FWO necessary for this to remain a FTE post. Should this aim not be achieved then future provision will need to be reviewed accordingly.

At present there also is one licensed Reader and one Reader (PTO) in this Ministry Unit.

### **Brayton with Thorpe Willoughby, Hambleton, Haddlesey \* Note amendment**

The proposed amalgamation of these parishes into a single Ministry Unit continues to be pursued. Due to the difficulty of finding people to fill all the statutory roles in each of these parishes, as well as the potential for reducing in workload, they should also be encouraged to consider more formal pastoral re-organisation into a single parish unit. The Chapel of Ease at Temple Hirst (within the parish of Haddlesey) has recently been closed for worship and the sale of the building is being pursued.

The current provision of one FTE post should be augmented by an interim post focussed on enabling growth and discipleship – i.e. developing contacts with young families through baptism and wedding contacts; and new initiatives in the three smaller village churches to engage with the communities and schools.

At present there is also one retired priest (PTO) and one Reader (PTO) in this Ministry Unit.

### **Selby Abbey, Cawood with Ryther and Wistow**

The proposed amalgamation of these parishes into a single Ministry Unit continues to be pursued.

The current provision of one FTE post means that ministry will need to be shared with others among clergy and laity in voluntary roles including those at the Abbey as well as seeking to develop lay ministry in the village churches.

At present there is a curate in training (stipendiary), two priests (SSM), one retired priest (PTO), and a Reader in Training (PTO) in this Ministry Unit, as well as some paid part-time staff and a large team of volunteers focussed on work at the Abbey including its ministry to visitors and groups throughout the week.

## **St James and the Edge Community**

Within the deanery, this church has a distinctive evangelical and charismatic style of worship and ministry and as such gathers a congregation from further afield as well as within Selby. It is engaged in supporting ministry among 'hard to reach' communities in an area of deprivation in the part of this parish where the Edge Community is based (funded and supported by local means and by the Church Army rather than specifically the Diocesan Budget). It has a well-developed structure of 'cell groups' to enable prayer, bible study and fellowship among the worshipping community outside of services, and has one of the higher proportions of younger families among its regular congregation within the deanery. There is a particular focus on ministry among parents and toddlers and discipleship with young mums at the moment, enabled in part by a part-time Multiply Lay Pioneer. They are starting on a major project of repairs and improvements to their church building and hall to make them more fit for use in the future.

There would continue to be provision for one FTE post within this parish. The parish FWO currently more than covers the direct costs of this post. Their aim is to increase FWO over the next few years so that the 'shared costs of ministry' would also be covered.

At present there are 1.5 Church Army officers (one paid by the Church Army, one by the PCC), one priest (SSM), two retired priests (PTO), two licensed Readers and one Reader (PTO) in this Ministry Unit.

## **Carlton and Drax \* Note amendment**

The parish has recently had the input of additional ministry resource through a pioneer curate, and despite COVID and a relatively small core group of mainly older parishioners, is now beginning to see signs of growth. The parish manages a longstanding legacy fund (Elizabeth Fisher) which gives out grants to local children's organisations, and as a parish we are committed to welcoming and teaching children. The parish now hosts a youth club, two toddler groups and a family worship session called Café Church which is inclusive for children with additional needs. Under the PCC's leadership the parish intends to continue welcoming and including as broad a range of people as possible, to ensure we can remain fully at the heart of village life as the population grows and changes. Our core congregation is showing signs of growth and includes people from a wide range of church backgrounds as well as some people who are new to church.

Following the retirement of our incumbent, the parish is currently in vacancy, and we would hope to appoint a p/t interim ministry post in order to be able to continue developing our mission and ministry, particularly in providing outreach to the schools in the parish and the new housing developments. They would continue to collaborate with partners such as Read School at Drax and developing local ecumenical relationships.

Our second focus would be on developing our buildings as community assets, that can be used more frequently by the 6 villages and hamlets we serve. This has already begun happening in Carlton through a toddler group and singing group, and we would like to explore the development of our 'café' space to allow further worship and outreach. At Drax through a policy of the church being open for visitors we have begun considering resources for visitors or the 'silent congregation'. We aspire to reorder the Grade 1 listed church and share the historical assets we have with schools and visitors in a more accessible way. We also continue to offer popular 'festival' services, and partner with the village social committee, as well as serving a small and faithful congregation.

We would like to see this post linked to a ***p/t Rural Development post (together = one FTE post)*** that could serve the deanery more widely and link in with other Diocesan initiatives.

While many churches aspire to grow and reach more young people and their families, this is challenging in some smaller rural communities where the church has lost contact with certain generations. The focus of the Rural Development post would therefore be to link church and the villages they serve together through contextual approaches to mission that are appropriate for each context. This work would be led by lay members of the local churches and supported through the Rural Development post to access resources to enable mission such as grant funding, volunteers or support with setting up social media networks. The role would link parishes into the wider Diocesan strategy of 'Living Christ's Story' and other rural networks. The post-holder would be expected to work collaboratively with the local clergy chapter and use an enabling/coaching approach to mission that is scalable for smaller communities.

- **Amendment since approved – Carlton & Drax now with Hambleton & Haddlesey under new Priest in Charge – March 2024**

b. Encouraging Vocations

- 2x per year Deanery Vocations evening – one hosted by Central Diocese staff, one by deanery outlining different Vocations training options
- Lay Ministers (e.g. Readers, Readers in Training, Recognised Parish Assistants 'RPAs', Children & Youth Workers) in deanery to set up regular meetings to support/encourage each other and to invite others to explore.
- 'Children of Light' Children & Youth (CYP) group to meet monthly and plan regular events and to encourage others to join group.
- Invite Multiply/Mustard Seed Team and to speak at Deanery Synod and Chapter to explore potential within Selby Deanery including the possibility of more part-time Multiply Lay Pioneers
- Discussions between Deanery Leadership Team and new Central Diocesan Training Team to discuss how to make Vocational training more accessible and encourage the development of new lay ministers.

c. Re-energising Ministry

- Appointment of part-time Rural Ministry Pioneer within the Deanery to offer training and support for the particular opportunities and challenges of Rural Ministry.
- Building on the existing opportunities for clergy and others who meet together regularly (e.g. for Morning/Evening Prayer) by making some of these open and accessible to all on a regular basis (e.g. around 'hubs' at either end of the deanery) and ensuring that those in more isolated Ministry Units get the opportunity to meet and pray with others regularly.
- Encourage greater sharing of ministry across the deanery by holding more training courses, study groups, etc. (as in '1' above) in common between Ministry Units and meetings of 'like' ministers (as in '2b' above).

d. Growing Healthy Churches

- Use newly appointed part-time Rural Ministry Pioneer (Carlton and Drax) and Mission-enabling posts (Sherburn and Brayton) and existing Church Army officers to encourage new initiatives for mission and evangelism and new lay ministries in Ministry Units across the deanery as well as their own.
- Encourage all Ministry Units/parishes to undertake regular reviews/mission action planning through resources such as 'Leading Your Church into Growth' and using those from other Ministry Unit's in the deanery to lead/facilitate these.
- Develop ministry in schools and especially the opportunities afforded by Church Schools through the deanery Children of Light/CYP group, local expertise, DBE staff, and shared 'Open the Book'/Experience training – seeking to identify and involve members of school staff where possible.
- Use Deanery Synod to encourage all churches to undertake the Eco-Award survey and look at their carbon footprint.
- Encouraging shared baptism/wedding/confirmation, etc. ministry within and between Ministry Units (as in '1' and '2c' above).
- Identifying and exploring opportunities for chaplaincy to institutions across the deanery and seeking to develop chaplaincy teams the work across the Deanery to minister to these.

e. Growing Younger

- Children of Light CYP group to meet monthly and plan regular events and to encourage others to join group.
- To train and encourage larger churches to hold FEAST-funded holiday clubs working with local schools and North Yorkshire County Council.
- To encourage a more regular pattern of worship for CYP and their families – ensure each MU has at least one weekly session.
- Deanery Leadership Team (DLT) to have dialogue with Diocese regarding training and ministry opportunities to be more flexible and accessible to younger people with families, in full-time employment etc.
- To encourage engagement with local businesses/charities and communities by making buildings more open and accessible for use within Ministry units.

f. Using buildings and technology well

- Deanery 'open church' audit/plan to encourage churches to be as open and accessible to the wider community as possible.
- Encourage all churches to review their buildings and develop plans for improving facilities (including Wifi/AudioVisual technology, etc.) and space to better meet the needs for both the worshipping (including new forms of worship) and wider communities for more regular use (invite Diocesan Buildings Advisor to Synod and encourage parishes to invite him themselves).
- In partnership with Selby Abbey, Selby District Visitor & Tourism Officer (and others) explore opportunities for a local churches trail and information/interpretation materials (including online).



- Encourage all churches to undertake a sustainability survey and apply for an Eco-Award where applicable.
- To use new Diocese Technology advisor to help develop the Deanery on-line community

### **3. Transforming Structures and Finances**

#### **a. Deanery Leadership Team, Chapter and Deanery Synod**

- DLT will encourage membership from every Ministry Unit
- DLT/Deanery Synod will look to 'grow younger' and become more diverse and to look at the work of the Diocesan Racial Justice Group.
- DLT/Chapter/Deanery Synod will meet regularly for mutual support and prayer, sharing of ideas, training and resources and to encourage growth.

#### **b. Managing limited resources – people: their time energy and gifts**

- Encourage stream-lining PCC structures by exploring pastoral re-organisation to reducing the duplication of 'officers' and share limited resources.
- Establish regular opportunities for those with shared ministries/posts (including churchwardens, safeguarding officers, treasurers) to enable support and communication between and across Ministry Units.
- Draw on insights of newly appointed Rural Ministry post to address the particular challenges and opportunities for identifying and training new ministers in small rural churches.

#### **c. Managing limited resources – money**

- To encourage Treasurers to meet together 2x per year to discuss issues, encourage and support one another.
- Invite the Generous Giving Team to come to DLT/Chapter/Synod every other year to encourage giving in Diocese.
- Recruit, appoint and train a Deanery Financial Advisor.
- Explore opportunities for partnerships with other organisations and for external sources of funding and ensure information sharing between Ministry Units.
- Consider whether a particular focus on stewardship and generous giving at the same time each year across the deanery and within its constituent parishes would be beneficial?

**4. Implementation – a Draft Timetable - tbc**

<b>Action</b>	<b>What needs to happen to enable this</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>Becoming more like Christ</b>		
<b>Reimagining Mission &amp; Ministry</b>		
<b>Transforming Structures and Finances</b>		