

**Episcopacy
in the Diocese of Truro:
See of St. Germans**

September 2019



DIOCESE OF TRURO
DISCOVERING GOD'S KINGDOM
GROWING THE CHURCH

I. Introduction: the Diocesan Vision

The over-arching vision for the Diocese of Truro is 'Discovering God's Kingdom; Growing the Church'. This has been enthusiastically embraced and promoted by the new Diocesan Bishop, the Rt. Revd. Philip Mounstephen, who was installed as the 16th Bishop of Truro in January 2019.

Within the broader context of this vision, Bishop Philip encourages the Diocese to see itself as part of an unfolding narrative: the story of what God has been doing, distinctively, in Cornwall over many centuries; of what he is still doing, and of what he will yet do:

We in Cornwall are inheritors of a remarkable and distinctive Christian heritage stretching back many centuries, possibly to the very earliest days of the Christian faith. This is a land where the gospel has been shared with passion and commitment, and at risk to life and limb, from the days of Piran and Petroc through to the days of John Wesley, Henry Martyn and Billy Bray, to name just a few. And just as the good news has been shared within Cornwall, so it has been shared far and wide beyond these shores. This too has been a place of imagination and creativity which has significantly shaped the wider world. We are happy inheritors of that heritage.

And above all else, this has been a place which God has blessed richly, in which he is still imparting his blessing, and where he will do so in the future. He is at work here already, before us and beyond us. The challenge to us is to join in with what he is already doing, and to play our part faithfully in the story that he is still shaping here in Cornwall.

Thus our prayer is simply this: that we become an ever more hopeful, confident church that seeks the mind, heart and will of God for Cornwall, for the communities he calls us to serve, and for the wider world beyond these shores.

To see us become such a church, +Philip has articulated five specific priorities for the Diocese of Truro, namely that we should be:

1. A church that conspicuously celebrates children and young people at its heart;
2. A church that unashamedly embraces an innovative and pioneering culture;
3. A church that is increasingly confident in its calling;
4. A church that rejoices in strong, warm and mutually encouraging international links; and
5. A church that rejoices in the generosity of God.

The desire to appoint a new Bishop of St. Germans (arising from the appointment of the Rt. Revd. Dr. Chris Goldsmith to lead Ministry Division) should be seen entirely within the context of these hopes and aspirations.

Bishop's Council¹ (BDC) considered the vacancy at its meeting on 1 August. It was unanimous that the necessary steps should be taken for the See to be filled. It subsequently agreed the composition of the Bishop's Advisory Group, and further consultation on this paper was then undertaken with BDC, senior staff, General Synod representatives, Rural Deans, Lay Chairs and ecumenical colleagues.

The Diocese is therefore looking to the Dioceses Commission to support the appointment of a new Bishop of St. Germans.

This paper sets out the specific case for this post, and the ways in which episcopal ministry has been exercised in the recent past and the ways in which the bishops together might lead into the future.

2. Diocese Overview and Statistics

The Diocese includes over 300 churches in more than 200 parishes across the whole of Cornwall (plus two in Devon) and the Isles of Scilly, an area of 1,370 square miles (making it the 16th largest diocese in the C of E by geographical area). It is divided into two archdeaconries, Bodmin and Cornwall, and 12 deaneries (divided equally between the archdeaconries).

Although a 'young' Church of England diocese, its roots go back much further. It was formed in 1876 from the Archdeaconry of Cornwall, part of the Diocese of Exeter. However, the Christian faith in the region can be traced back to at least the 4th century AD, and Cornwall had its own bishop at St. Germans until the latter part of the 10th century.

For many, the Diocese is best known as a holiday destination. Although 550,000 live in the Diocese permanently, that population rises significantly, especially in the summer, with more than 4,000,000 people coming to stay each year. With much development planned, the permanent population is expected to rise to c. 634,000 by 2041. While tourism and leisure are among the largest economic sectors in the Diocese, food production is significant (with 'Cornwall' seen as a distinctive brand). The 'Duchy' also attracts a

¹ The Diocesan Synod does not meet until 28th September

significant number of digital and other entrepreneurs, many attracted by the distinctive lifestyle it offers due to its exceptional beauty and coastline.

Some key diocesan statistics are as follows:

Geographical Area	3600 sq. km/1370 sq. miles
Population	550,000
Archdeaconries	2
Deaneries	12
Benefices	128
Parishes	220
Churches	307
Population per church	1790
Square miles per church	4.5
Stipendiary clergy (full-time equivalent, including curates)	82 stipendiary clergy *incl 14 curates; 77 FTE *incl curates
Self-supporting ministers	23
PTO clergy	171
Readers	107
Bishop's Mission Orders	1
Local Pastoral Ministers	306
Local Worship Leaders	343

In the context of this paper two key facts stand out:

1. There is a large number of small churches, reflecting the scattered nature of the population, with consequently small congregations. This creates a significant pastoral demand in terms of episcopal oversight.
2. The number of stipendiary clergy is relatively low, but the numbers of those engaged in other kinds of ministry is high. This creates significant demand for the oversight of a range of ministries and ministers. Many of those stipendiary clergy will themselves be engaged in supporting a significant number of ministers themselves and must be helped in their turn in that function.

3. Context and Plans for Change

Within the changing shape of mission and ministry in the Diocese of Truro, and in the context of the vision articulated above, there are several significant elements to highlight.

Transforming Mission (TM): SDF funding was secured in June 2017 for Phase 1 to establish a new worshipping community and community café and revitalise an existing church in Falmouth with significant progress to date. Further funding of £1.78m was secured in May this year for TM Phase 2, with new initiatives planned in Camborne, Truro, St. Austell and Liskeard. While the plans for each differ significantly, as do their contexts, in each the clear desire is to engage in holistic mission that is a source of blessing to surrounding parishes – so that the principle of a ‘resourcing church’ is taken seriously.

Accompanied Ministry Development (AMD): this is an intentional and home-grown programme designed to help churches and their leaders reflect on their sense of purpose and calling. Whilst initially focussed on incumbents, its direction of travel is clearly in a ‘whole church’ direction. Many have found it a significant source of energy and vision and it will continue to be a focus for investment in the future. Allied to this, the Diocese has just joined the fourth cohort of the ‘Setting God’s People Free’ discipleship learning communities.

Deaneries: the Diocese has intentionally devolved more responsibility to deaneries (and therefore to Rural Deans and Lay Chairs) with the deliberate intention of giving expression to the principle of subsidiarity. Thus responsibility for plans for deanery development and growth and the apportionment of Mission and Ministry Fund² contributions are taken at this level. While there have been some issues and challenges in ‘bedding in’ this approach, there is widespread agreement that the direction of travel is right.

Vocations and Theological Education: the Diocese of Truro has seen an encouraging upturn in the number of those offering and being selected for ordained ministry, with 11 deacons (a record in recent years) and 8 priests ordained this Petertide. This is not unrelated to the recent developments in theological education in the SW Peninsula. St. Mellitus SW has recently been established, as a joint partnership between Exeter and Truro Dioceses, providing full-time context-based IS training. The South West Ministry Training Course (SWMTC), another joint diocesan initiative, has recently undergone something of a renaissance, with an innovative approach to formation and study being developed, offering part-time AS & IS training.

Joint working: Exeter and Truro Dioceses are natural partners. The quality of the partnership in theological education is second to none in the Church of England. The senior teams meet together annually, and there are current plans

² Mission and Ministry Fund is the term used in the diocese for parish share

to explore further collaboration, particularly in 'back-office' functions, whilst honouring the cultural distinctiveness of Cornwall and Devon.

Ecumenical relations: Churches Together in Cornwall is well supported by the local partners. Creation Fest is a significant national Christian festival hosted in Cornwall, led by Sarah Yardley, an American mission partner soon to be made an Ecumenical Canon of Truro Cathedral. The relationship with the Methodist Church, and that between the Bishop of Truro and the Chair of the Methodist Church, is very strong and strategically very significant. Rural Deans and Superintendents meet regularly, and we are currently exploring the possibility of having a shared Church House.

Schools: although the Diocese has a proportionately small number of Church Schools the quality of Christian education and intentional discipleship offered in them is notably high. There is much to be gained from further strengthening the links between schools and churches. Truro is also an enthusiastic 'Trailblazer' diocese for the new national 'Growing Faith' initiative.

Community Engagement: Cornwall is perhaps unusual in that there is still a remarkable openness to the churches engaging positively with the local community at every level, along with an expectation that this should be so. This gives the Diocese a significant opportunity on which we must capitalise.

In particular Brexit (Cornwall voted 'leave' yet hosts many EU migrants and has received significant EU funding) and climate change (the Council recently declared a climate emergency) are sharp issues locally into which the Church can speak and be a change maker.

4. See of St. Germans: the case for filling the suffragan see

The See is named after the village of St. Germans in south-east Cornwall and forms a significant element of the ecclesiastical history of the Diocese, since before the Norman Conquest. The local church of St. Germanus is one of the finest, oldest and historic parish churches in the Duchy, and one of the oldest buildings still in use for its original purpose. An earlier building on the site was the cathedral for Cornwall before the area was absorbed into the Diocese of Exeter in 1050.

The See was revived briefly between 1905-18, and continuously occupied since 1974. Episcopal leadership is thus shared collegially in the Diocese between the diocesan bishop and the suffragan bishop. There is no area system in Truro,

and the Bishop of St. Germans, as sole suffragan, works right across the Diocese.

The case for appointing a successor to the current Bishop can be made under three principal headings, no one of which is mutually exclusive.

1) **Geography:**

- a) Cornwall has a very distinct sense of its own identity. This is a factor that can sometimes be overplayed - but should be never underplayed. St. Piran's flag, as a potent symbol of Cornish identity, is very visible both on flag-poles and car-boots. The Christian faith has played a very significant role in shaping Cornwall: a significant proportion of Cornish settlements are named after 'local' Cornish saints.

Consequently (and despite the historic strength of Methodism in Cornwall, now sadly in steep decline) the Church of England has a particularly prominent place in the life of the Duchy, as was evidenced in the public consultation for the recent appointment of the Diocesan Bishop. Alongside the Chair of the Methodist District, the most prominent public roles and Christian voices in Cornwall have been those of the Bishops of Truro and St. Germans. There is wide expectation that they should fulfil such a function.

- b) Geography is also a significant challenge in Cornwall. Apart from the main A30 (which can itself become congested in the summer), travel across the Diocese can be challenging. Distances are significant and journey times long: Bude in the north-east corner is some 100 miles from Land's End, depending on the route taken. The current suffragan travels around 20,000 miles per year in the course of participating in a multiplicity of events, services and visits across all of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Maintaining an effective episcopal presence with one bishop alone would be a formidable challenge³.
- c) But geography is more than a matter of distance. It's a matter of the mind. Cornwall can be very parochial with a suspicion of the 'centre' in Truro. Maintaining an episcopal presence is not just a matter of

³ In that light it is worth noting the comments of the Bishop of St. Germans on being acting Diocesan recently. "We had an 18 month 'dry run' of operating with one Bishop during the episcopal transition. During that time, I was able to keep the diocesan show on the road but only at the expense of pretty much any involvement beyond the Tamar and a reduction in the amount of wider community engagement within Cornwall. I did not attend General Synod for example. I also emerged from the period drained and exhausted, physically and spiritually. For me an extended period as the only Bishop was not sustainable."

officiating at licensings, confirmations etc., it is about developing a sense of connectedness and tackling some of the more negative attitudes that accompany geographical and mental isolation. In other words, it is about the episcopal calling to be an agent and focus of unity. Ironically, perhaps - and because of Cornwall's geography - two Bishops call fulfil this role more effectively than one.

- d) Another geographical factor that argues for a new Bishop of St. Germans being appointed relates to Cornwall's distance from London, coupled with the expectation that the Diocesan Bishop should play a national role. The new Diocesan frequently uses the sleeper to travel overnight to London; the daytime train journey is just short of five hours (the longest from any mainland cathedral city to the capital) and travel to York, for example for meetings of the General Synod, takes seven hours. In his first seven months in post he has undertaken, at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, a substantial piece of work into the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's support of persecuted Christians. This would have been impossible without the support of a suffragan colleague, and whilst such a project is unusual it might be expected that there will be continued demands on the Diocesan nationally, with eventually a role in the House of Lords. That will inevitably involve being out of the diocese for more than would be the case for a diocesan based nearer to London (in one recent year there were 89 days when the Bishop of St. Germans was the only episcopal presence in Cornwall). Thus, and with only one Honorary Assistant Bishop, extra episcopal cover in Cornwall will be very necessary – leaving aside the (albeit slight) possibility of a Diocesan Vacancy in See in the near future.

2) **Poverty:**

- a) Cornwall is on many measures one of the poorest parts of the UK and is indeed the second poorest area in northern Europe⁴. The Diocese has been a key beneficiary of funding from the Church Commissioners in the form of Lowest Income Communities Funding and Strategic Development Funding. In the context of significant financial challenges for the Diocese, the appointment of a new Bishop of St. Germans would

⁴ http://inequalitybriefing.org/graphics/briefing_43_UK_regions_poorest_North_Europe.pdf

be a significant but cost-effective way for the Church of England to invest in a genuinely poor diocese.

- b) However, as with geography, poverty is also a matter of the mind, and many communities and churches in Cornwall suffer not only from material poverty but from a poverty of *aspiration*: a simple lack of belief that things can be better and different. Indeed, there can be a pernicious narrative of decline – because that is what Cornwall has suffered from for decades. A key part of the episcopal role is to be an agent of hope and vision and to exercise such a ministry with appropriate episcopal authority. In a context of declining membership and aging, dispersed congregations, it is considerably easier to address such a widespread form of poverty with two episcopal voices rather than with one.
- c) In addition, in recent years the Diocese has lost (or will have lost) two bishops to national roles. Whilst both are evidently the call of God, this has had a destabilising effect, and creates a sense of impoverishment. It would be appropriate for the National Church to recognise that, and continue to invest in Cornwall, to help make up the consequent deficit. The church also needs to be sensitive to the strong Cornish narrative that this is ‘a place people leave’. It is strong because it’s true: Cornwall experienced significant emigration in the past, and still many of its young people go ‘up country’ for work and to pursue careers they cannot pursue locally.

Accordingly, the Diocese and the National Church need to attend to reputational issues around this proposed appointment. As noted above, the See of St. Germans is the ancient Cornish See, and for it to fall into abeyance would have considerable adverse consequences in Cornwall, where the sense of Cornish separateness and identity is significant.

3) **Strategy:**

- a) The Diocese is currently developing a ‘framework of engagement’ to help individuals, parishes, benefices, deaneries, and the Diocese overall to engage with the five strategic priorities outlined above.

The Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach adopted eschews a ‘top down’ strategy, preferring to encourage grassroots engagement. Groups of individuals from across the Diocese, with experience and energy in the five priority areas, are gathering together,

generating creative insights and articulating imaginative local solutions which will begin populating the ‘framework of engagement’.

This is fundamentally the approach that is already being taken in AMD and is reflected in the changing shape of ministry in the Diocese (largely shaped by the outgoing suffragan bishop) which consciously articulates ordained ministry in terms of oversight and *diakonia*, alongside priestly models, and which has promoted the identification of ‘focal’ ministries for particular churches and parishes.

- b) It is a clear episcopal function to authorise ministries. Encouraging churches and individual disciples to reimagine their ministry and indeed their calling and identity can be challenging for them. A suffragan bishop (exercising collaborative ministry with his or her Diocesan) can play a pivotal role in not only giving permission for new initiatives in mission and ministry at every level but in encouraging and blessing them too, so that the Diocese can continue to foster cultural change, in order that the diocesan commitment to ‘Discovering God’s Kingdom; Growing the Church’ can become a reality.

5. The Previous Appointment:

Before considering the proposed role description of the next Bishop of St. Germans (on the basis that the Dioceses Commission supports the case for the See to be filled), it is worth reflecting briefly on the effectiveness of the previous appointment and the extent to which it enabled the leverage of significant change in the Diocese of Truro. The following is relevant:

- a) Episcopal leadership was effectively modelled and demonstrated for the wider Diocese based on collegiality and collaboration (thus also mitigating against episcopal isolation);
- b) Both the culture and practice of ministry in the Diocese has been significantly reshaped by the Bishop of St. Germans’ championing and developing AMD, an initiative which has attracted the attention of other dioceses and the NCIs, and was the subject of independent academic research;
- c) He exercised considerable ministry in the public square as a trustee of several major Cornish charities and routinely represented the Diocese at many civic, media and community events;

- d) He oversaw significant change, growth and development in SWMTC through chairing the Board of Trustees;
- e) He championed lay ministry effectively and widely, particularly as Warden of Readers;
- f) Latterly he chaired the group overseeing TM which resulted in the granting of £1.7m of SDF funding;
- g) He took the lead in re-thinking the Diocese's approach to the contribution of parishes to its Mission and Ministry Fund and the financing of the Diocese generally; and
- h) He also took the lead on critical issues facing the Diocese internally, including several complex pastoral, disciplinary and reconciliation cases involving individuals and larger groups.

It is change of this order and significance that we hope to continue to see by maintaining the current Episcopal College, with the single suffragan Bishop of St. Germans working closely with the Diocesan and the senior leadership team.

6. Draft Role Description and Person Specification

This section sets out a summary of the challenges and leadership roles of the next Bishop of St. Germans, as well as a person specification, as agreed by the Advisory Group (following consultation) charged with advising the Bishop of Truro in making the nomination. As with any role profile it will need to be kept under review by the Bishop, and Ministerial Development Reviews will provide an opportunity for this.

The Role Description and Person Specification should not be considered in isolation but in the context of the vows and duties undertaken at ordination and consecration as a bishop, and the Canons of the Church of England.

ROLE:

Bishop of St. Germans

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE:

To provide inspiring episcopal leadership in the Diocese of Truro, in close collaboration with the Bishop of Truro, to enable the diocesan commitment to

‘Discovering God’s Kingdom; Growing the Church’ to become more of a visible, evident reality.

CHALLENGES /PRIORITIES OF THE ROLE

- To be a confident, hopeful and inspiring episcopal presence and voice for the people and churches of Cornwall;
- To take the lead in enabling churches, their people and leaders, to be more confident, as disciples, in engaging in the mission of God;
- To take the lead in the continuing development of appropriate patterns of ministry, lay and ordained, for the Cornish context.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ROLE

- To be a colleague and critical friend to the Bishop of Truro; playing a full part in the Episcopal College⁵ sharing in the leadership, oversight and development of the Diocese, deputising for the Diocesan when he is undertaking national responsibilities;
- To oversee the continuing development and shaping of AMD, enabling churches, their leaders and people to be more confident in their corporate calling, and more creative in pursuing it;
- To take the lead in overseeing the development of a plurality of ministry, lay and ordained, across the Diocese of Truro, to include being Chair of SWMTC and Warden of Readers, ‘to equip God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up’ (Ephesians 4:12).
- To share with Archdeacons and Rural Deans in developing Deanery Plans, making clergy appointments, offering pastoral care and support to lay and ordained ministers and engaging in the clergy MDR process;
- To take all such opportunities to engage in the public square as are offered, including chairing ‘Transformation Cornwall’ and continuing the historic connection between the See of St. Germans and St. Petroc’s Society, Cornwall’s leading homelessness charity;
- To exercise due responsibility as suffragan in Safeguarding, helping create a culture in which all will flourish and which is consistent with the Safeguarding policies of the Church of England;
- To exercise all usual episcopal functions such as pastoral visits to parishes, conducting confirmations, licensing and instituting priests;

⁵ ‘Episcopal College’ is the term used to describe the Senior Staff Meeting

- To undertake other appropriate lead functions as agreed with the Diocesan Bishop;
- To proclaim the Christian faith with confidence, in preaching, through media engagement and in any other appropriate ways;
- To assist in relating the local church to the national (and vice versa) through participation in the College of Bishops, regional bishops' meetings and ecumenical gatherings;
- To continue personal, professional, theological and ministerial development and formation;
- To uphold the Five Guiding Principles as set out in the House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Priests and Bishops, and to promote the flourishing of churches across the range of the theological breadth of the Church of England; and
- To discharge all other duties as set out in canon law.

Person Specification

We seek someone who, in the following areas...

Spiritual Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is confident in God, and grounded in their life of prayer; • is at home in their own church tradition but rejoices in the breadth of the Church of England;
Theology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is theologically literate; educated in theology at least to degree level; and is capable of creative and innovative theological reflection that is faithful to Christian tradition;
Vision for Mission and Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates evidence of engagement in innovative and fruitful mission and ministry; • has a track-record of change and growth in a significant area of church life;
Formation of Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delights in exercising positive creative influence over others that allows them to fulfil their potential in Christ;
Engagement in Community Life and Public Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is a confident articulator of the Christian faith; relates it well to issues of contemporary concern and can address a range of audiences with both charity and clarity;
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • takes safeguarding issues with the utmost seriousness which they warrant, understanding the role of a

	suffragan in this area working with his or her Diocesan and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team
Leadership and Oversight of Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is a leader who is comfortable with being so; • is patient, kind-hearted and resilient, able to deal positively but decisively with challenge and conflict; • is aware of the dynamics of power and their possible abuse and who always seeks the flourishing of others;
Working with Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is sufficiently self-aware to be able to form strong, purposeful and fruitful relationships with individuals, teams and ecumenical partners;
Management of Resources and Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is experienced in issues of organisational leadership and financial discipline, understanding due accountability and is confident in exercising 'cabinet' responsibility;