

# DIOCESAN PASTORAL STRATEGY

ST BENET BISCOP PARTNERSHIP  
SOUTH EAST NORTHUMBERLAND

Area of Parish Life	Goal and Key Objective	How this serves our Mission	Concrete steps	When we hope to begin each step	What/Who will be needed	Who will lead this and who we will work with to move forward
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<b>E1 Worship</b>						
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E1 Worship Our priests are too stretched	Explore ways and develop the means to enable the communities continue to worship.	Sustains the family of faith / consolidates discipleship and ensures the wellbeing of our priests.	Prepare our communities for the likelihood of change of mass times, amalgamation and closure of churches, noting the vulnerability of rural communities in our partnership and their sacramental needs.	Initially 1 - 3 years.	Good communications plan; Sharing this document and any future process; Regular prayer	Parish Partnership Diocese
E1 Worship Transport problems	Ensure that all people wishing to attend services outside of their normal area are able to do so and support parishes in facilitating that access.	It continues to build the family of faith and community worship.	Consider Sunday Mass times; weekday service times; sufficient lay leaders good IT provision			
E1 Worship Volunteers	Strengthen the volunteer base Support clergy and actively seek new volunteers.	Missionary discipleship supporting the numbers of priests, builds up a sense of community;	Identify, train, support and mentor willing and suitable volunteers; Potential mutual support.	0 - 2 years	Pro-active recruitment drive: marketing, consequences, induction	Partnership Led with Diocesan Dept of Faith & Mission

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<b>E2 Teach</b>						
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E2 Teach Lay training, formation and leadership	Develop & expand lay leadership and formation.  We need to encourage more young people, especially those between 11-18 years to interact with their churches.	This will enhance understanding, deepen faith and enrich participation.  It would enable catechists and lay leaders to lead services, prayer groups and faith workshops.  This will increase the number of people coming to church, enriching parish life and increased sustainability.	Identify people in the parish who are able to lead and engage with the programme.  Working with the department of Formation and Mission to plan and deliver programmes.  Priests (across the deanery) must commit to saying Mass at schools at least once a month.	0 - 3 years.	Liaison between schools and priests, governors and head teachers.	Deanery + Diocese.
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E2 Teach Reimagining Pastoral Councils	Strengthen governance and leadership within the parish and partnership.	Strengthen faith within a defined and locally driven liturgical framework.	Define a mission statement and terms of reference for the Partnership  Engage in training for Pastoral Parish Councils.	0-3 years	Priest identifies willing and capable volunteers	Parish and Partnership led with support from the diocese
E2 Volunteers	Increase the number of active volunteers	Parish life continues seamlessly, even when current volunteers cease to serve.  It opens up new ways of engaging with the community.	Nurture current volunteers, encourage role sharing and keep talking to parishioners.  Advertise volunteering roles.  Encourage diocesan and parish drive for volunteers.	0-3 years	Priests, current volunteers in order to support.  Diocesan training, eg lay leadership, eucharistic minister, OPAS.	Parish Priest and lay leaders and Diocese
E2 Finance	Training for continuity. Consider Parish Amalgamations.	Increases sustainability	Explore training opportunities	Immediately	Finance groups	Diocese & diocesan finance team; and Parishes.

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<b>E3 Serve</b>						

E3 Serve Priest workload	Identify tasks that could be done by others to reduce the priest's workload	Allow focus on spiritual welfare rather than buildings maintenance and administration.	Allocate roles to members of PPC and other lay leaders within the parish.	0-3 years	Priest, PPC and lay leaders	Parish and diocese
E3 Serve Reduced priesthood domicile	Acknowledge the fact that there will be fewer priests.	Reimagines the use of buildings for the common good	Dependent on diocesan review.	As and when	A decision from the diocese and then the pastoral council to take it up.	Diocese
E3 Serve Retired priests	Care and support for retired priests	Those priests will still have gifts they can share with the parish they are living in and strengthens ministry.	Diocese review use of presbyteries and liaise with affected parishes.	As and when	Funds and support for the priest and the parish location.	Diocese

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E3 Serve Volunteers	Increase the number of active volunteers	Parish life continues seamlessly, even when current volunteers cease to serve.  It opens up new ways of engaging with the community.  Discerning our Synodal Calling	Nurture current volunteers, encourage role sharing and keep talking to new parishioners.  Advertise volunteering roles.  Encourage diocesan and parish drive for volunteers.	0-3 years	Priests, current volunteers in order to support.  Diocesan training, eg lay leadership, eucharistic minister, OPAS.	Parish Priest and lay leaders and Diocese
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<b>E4 Community</b>						
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E4 Community Sustaining bonds of community  This Partnership is in an area of historic Christian heritage. It is a varied area of outlying rural villages and urban towns with diverse social status.	To inspire and equip the local church to reach all people with the gospel, enable them as followers of Jesus, and mobilise them in God's mission	Catholic communities will continue to grow whilst no one is left behind.	Update of parishioner's recorded details & if necessary, organise a census.	0 – 12 months	Diocese data collection advice. Parish councils will be required to assist and or admin volunteers.	Parishes Partnership Diocese
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E4 Community Sustaining bonds of community cont'd	To bring local churches into a closer relationship.	Aims to help us walk together with this shared framework.	Greater communication and Collaboration between ministries & Parishes	0 – 18 months	Partnership, Parish Councils	Partnership, Parish Councils
E4 Community Sustaining bonds of community cont'd	To support local communities as determined by local circumstances.	Addresses the spiritual needs of local communities	Develop Pastoral support groups	As necessary	Partnership, Parish Councils	Partnership, Parish Councils
E4 Community Sustaining bonds of community	To continue pastoral care of nursing homes and housebound	Addresses the needs of those unable to attend services. To avoid isolation and loneliness especially among elderly & those with mental health issues.	Develop and enrich Pastoral support groups	0 – 3 years then ongoing	Partnership, Parish Councils	Partnership, Parish Councils
E4 Community Sustaining bonds of community	To ensure that no one engages in possessive ministry.	Enables shared responsibilities.	Skills audits, shared ministries across partnership training for lay leadership roles.	6 months – 3 years then ongoing	Dedicated, volunteer base willing to serve in various ministries	Parishes Partnership Diocese

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E4 Community Transport difficulties	Ensure that all people who wish to attend services and receive the sacraments can do so	Enables continuation of faith and community worship	Car sharing and Supportive Lay ministries.	As soon as we know the outcome of the discernment process.	Willing & able volunteers.	Parish Councils & Partnership.
<i>E4 Community Transport difficulties</i>	To avoid parking problems causing neighbourhood tensions as well as accessibility issues.	Reduces conflict in neighbourhoods	Voluntary Car-sharing  Check public transport availability	0 -3 months then ongoing (due to changing Public services)	Parish Councils	Parish Councils
E4 Community School Partnership links	Continue with existing links and work to develop stronger links wherever possible	Families often disappear once the child's sacramental celebrations are over but this could become the beginning of a family's faith journey instead of the means to an end.	Develop relationships with school governors and head teachers.	0 -12 months then ongoing	Partnership chair Parish Priests	Partnership Parish Priests & Parish Councils Catechists
<i>E4 Community School Partnership links</i>	Continue with existing links and work to develop stronger links wherever possible	Inclusion and formation ensures strengthening of links with church and families.	Encourage integration of school/church masses & services.	Ongoing	Parish Priests	Partnership Parish Priests & Parish Councils Catechists

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<i>E4 Community School Partnership links</i>	Continue with existing links and work to develop stronger links wherever possible	Embraces opportunity for young people to explore their faith.	Chair of Partnership to begin process by contacting secondary school.	0 – 3 months	Partnership chair Parish Priests	Partnership chair. Parish Priests
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<b>F1 Stewardship</b>						
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F1 Stewardship Finances for Mission	Ensure all parishes have sufficient funds to support the mission & to enable the introduction of new technology where appropriate.	Ensures spread of the Gospel and enables continuity of outreach.	Regular finance meetings providing transparent accounts.	1 – 3 years	Volunteers or paid administrators to deal with finances & admin.	Parish finance committees  Partnership
F1 Stewardship Supporting isolated communities after closure	Enable & ensure IT possibilities are considered for 'streamed' Services and Masses for sick and housebound	Develops a renewed emphasis on outreach	People: well-formed and trained team skills in digital communication	6 – 12 months then ongoing	Support for church leaders and teams who need bespoke guidance from diocese, Partnership & Parish councils.	Partnership Parish councils

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<i>F1 Stewardship Supporting isolated communities after closure</i>	Create & generate sufficient Pastoral support groups/networks	Ensures support for lay Ministries	Develop Pastoral support groups.  Hold Networking events for people in lay ministry roles to share experience	6 – 12 months then ongoing	Partnership & diocese	Pastoral support groups. Partnership
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<i>F1 Stewardship Supporting isolated communities after closure</i>	Signposting to helpful resources.  Admin Hubs in the main locations to engage with isolated communities.	Enables communities to stay connected with wider community.	Develop Partnership working groups	1 year then ongoing  i.e. When outcome of discernment is known	Partnership & diocese	Partnership Diocese
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<b>F2 Stewardship</b>						
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F2 Stewardship – Buildings for Mission	Identify where priests could be located For example in scenarios A,B C and D (see Supplementary Table of Scenarios with fewer priests from Chris Myers)	Ensure there are Suitable Buildings to sustain sacramental provision	Identify which buildings are costing money now and in the future?  Which buildings could be put to alternative use?	Next 6 months – 1 year  1 -2 years	1. Informed Decisions 2. Community acceptance 3. Cost implications	This has to be Diocese and Partnership led with PPC / Parish involvement
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<b>F3 Stewardship</b>						
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F3 Stewardship- People for Mission	Recruit and sustain numbers of Deacons, lay leaders, eucharistic ministers and altar servers  Increase non-sacramental volunteers	Missionary discipleship supporting the numbers of priests  Embedding community identity  Enables parishioners to access worship and prayer - formation of parishioners	Map provision across the Partnership  Mutual support possibilities?  Begin campaign on their importance  Identify, train, support and mentor willing and suitable volunteers	Next twelve months  In line with reduction of priesthood  Immediately	Pro-active recruitment drive: Vocations Promotion across diocese; marketing induction  Volunteers, Trainers and mentors	Partnership led initiative OR Partnership driven inside a conscious Diocesan campaign . . . ?  In-house across the Partnership  Parish + Diocese.
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F3 Stewardship - Volunteers and succession	Promote Parish Groups, inc CWL, SVP, Catenians, Cafod, Justice and Peace, Live Simply, etc, etc  Youth Groups  Actively seek new volunteers.	Parish life continues seamlessly, even when current volunteers cease to serve	Nurture current volunteers, encourage role sharing and keep talking to new parishioners.  Advertise opportunities for volunteering.  Provide training opportunities.	0 – 3 years	Enthusiasm and a willingness to continue to serve  All people who are willing and able  Increased information of any training available	Partnership Leads, PPCs, Parish Priests,
F3 Stewardship - Volunteers and succession	Care for Creation	Enables people to look outwards to wider environmental issues and their impact	Promote and educate people in the values of Laudato Si	Continuing	Everyone is needed	Partnership / Diocesan Environmental Group
F3 Stewardship - Reimagining Pastoral Councils training	Review practice and protocols of the Partnership Council  Reinforce Parish PPCs via Pastoral Council videos	How does this service Mission? Provide discerning Pastoral Leadership	Coordinate response to individual Parish needs for efficiency and support	0-6 months to organise  6 months – 2 years	1. Expertise 2. Joint Planning 3. Parish and Communities buying 4. Bespoke Training	Partnership led with Vicariate of Faith and Mission Support / Involvement



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<b>F4 Stewardship</b>						
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<b>F4 Stewardship – sustainability of Mission</b>						
F4 Stewardship - Overstretched priests	Free the priest so he can focus on Priestly Ministry (To reduce the workload)	To ensure the sacraments & spiritual guidance & support are their main role	Review each priest's workload in order to meet key goal	Immediately	Clergy and a small lead group from Partnership Committee	Clergy and a small lead group from Partnership Committee with the support of PPCs
F4 Stewardship - Volunteers	Recruit and sustain numbers of Deacons, Lay leaders, Eucharistic Ministers and Altar Servers  Increase non-Sacramental Volunteers	Missionary Discipleship supporting Priesthood  Embedding community identity  Parishioner formation	Map provision across Partnership  Mutual Support Possibilities?  Begin campaign on their importance  Identify, train, support and mentor suitable volunteers	Next 12 months  In line with the reduction of priests  Immediately	Proactive recruitment drive: marketing, consequences, induction	Partnership led initiative, driven inside a conscious diocesan campaign    In-house across Partnership

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<p>F4 Stewardship Technology</p>	<p>Harness the potential of IT and digital media</p> <p>Be bold, but tread carefully.</p>	<p>Understand how technology could be used to help everyone survive the inevitable changes this Mission will bring</p>	<p>Compare and contrast use of technology across the Partnership &amp; use examples from our churches to develop a 'new Technology plan'</p>	<p>Immediately and ongoing</p>	<p>Knowledge, Skills, Wisdom, Advice</p> <p>Funds to purchase equipment.</p> <p>IT literate volunteers to help delivery basic training.</p>	<p>Partnership led / Diocese</p>
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