



Overview of the Diocese, County and City

Founded in 1926, Leicester is one of the youngest dioceses in England. The present Bishop, the Rt Revd Martyn Snow, was welcomed in May 2016.



The boundary of the Diocese is almost co-terminus with the county of Leicestershire. The Diocese itself is divided into two Archdeaconries, broadly covering the west and east of the county. It serves around one million people through 250 parishes, 120 stipendiary clergy and around 50 non-stipendiary ministers. There are also 97 Church of England Schools and academies.

The Bishop is supported in his ministry by an Assistant Bishop, two Archdeacons, the Chief Executive and others in the Bishop's Staff Team, who work collaboratively to develop strategy, ensure its implementation, foster cultural change and release gifts for mission.

Shaped by God: the Diocesan Vision, Purpose, Values and Strategy

In 2006, the diocese developed a statement of purpose called 'Shaped by God' to guide our ministry and mission to meet the challenges of the future.

Shaped by God in our lives and communities we seek the growth of His Kingdom in:

- the depth of discipleship,
- the number of disciples of Jesus,
- loving service of the world.

This central focus on Christian discipleship is now being worked out in a number of key areas. We have set ourselves the goal of having as many fresh expressions of church as inherited churches by 2030 and this ambitious vision is being supported over a 5 year period by a team of Pioneer Development Workers funded by a grant from the Church Commissioners. We have also set aside £5 million in grant funds to support local churches' initiatives for growth.

We have plans for a new monastic community in Leicester (linked to Launde Abbey, the Diocesan retreat centre) which we hope will be an international community of young adults.

We are also focusing intentionally on discipleship and vocations among black, Asian and minority ethnic Christians.

The Diocese of Leicester has identified ten 'marks of mission' which are in effect a statement of our values. We have articulated these values in the hope that they will shape our culture (the way we do things here) and infuse all our actions:



- *noticing God at work among us*, and continually asking: what are we learning, and how do we join in with God's activity? **(discerning)**
- *lives and communities transformed*, through the Good News of Jesus Christ; **(transformational)**
- *worship in a way that renews and inspires*, echoing the praise of heaven; **(inspirational)**
- *self-giving service to the community*, because the Church is called to be local and outward looking; **(self-giving)**
- *being rooted in prayer*, because prayer is part of our loving response to the needs of the world; **(prayerful)**
- *confident and sensitive evangelism*, responding to Jesus' call to share our faith in word and deed; **(confident)**
- *lifelong Christian nurture*, because our mission overflows from our own discipleship; **(nurturing)**
- *the welcome of newcomers*, helping those who come close to the church to feel cherished by God; **(hospitable)**
- *becoming child friendly*, following our Lord's example of putting children at a central place in His ministry; **(child-friendly)**
- *celebration of people and places*, because godly celebration is at the heart of the gospel. **(celebratory)**



In 2014, a new way of funding the diocese's ministry and mission through parish contributions was introduced, with a focus on generosity and mutual support rather than demands from the centre. However, although the diocesan finances are relatively sound at present, we know that many parishes are struggling. Individual giving to the Church, as to charity generally, is

comparatively low in Leicestershire and a Generous Giving Director has been appointed to lead the Diocese in developing a culture of generosity.

The City and County

The City of Leicester is Britain's most multi-cultural, multi-faith city. Over 50% of the population have ethnicities other than white British. There are significant communities of other faiths. Nearly half of the children in the city's schools have a language other than English as their 'preferred' language. The Diocese was instrumental in setting up the ecumenical St Philip's Centre for faith and engagement in a multi-faith society, which has gained a national and international reputation for excellence.



Leicester is proud of its social cohesion and this is reflected in the strap line 'One Leicester'. The contribution of the Church to this was recognised in March 2012 when the Queen chose Leicester as the first destination on her Diamond Jubilee tour, with a service in the Cathedral as its centrepiece.

The city of Leicester is home to two of the country's leading universities (Loughborough has another), the recently-opened Curve theatre (which has quickly gained national acclaim) and Britain's longest-running and best annual comedy festival. The hugely successful Tigers rugby team enjoys a large following and Leicester City Football Club became a global phenomenon in 2016 by winning the Premier League at odds of 5,000-1.

Leicester is well served by the road and rail networks and is within easy reach of East Midlands and Birmingham airports.



Beyond the city and its expanding suburban communities are many rural villages and numerous medieval churches around market towns such as Lutterworth, Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray as well as areas with an industrial and manufacturing heritage such as Loughborough, Coalville and Hinckley.

Many people are employed in the leisure and food and drink industries with increasing numbers of professional people moving in and choosing to work from home. Village identity, old family estates and large modern

farms are significant factors in rural east Leicestershire, whereas many places in the west of the county are discovering a new future following the decline of mining and other traditional industries.

The Cathedral and St Martins House



The Cathedral is located in the heritage quarter of the city and works closely with the Bishop and the Diocesan Boards of Finance and Education, notably through the neighbouring St Martins House. This award-winning centre was opened in 2011 in a refurbished former school building as a focus for mission and administration for the diocese, with the guiding principles of attentiveness to God, generous hospitality and transforming relationships.

The area outside the Cathedral and St Martins House is the centrepiece of a major new public gardens development, largely funded by the City Council and the European Regional Development Fund, a sign of the growing partnership between Church, Local Government and the University of Leicester. This partnership has been strengthened since the discovery of the remains of King Richard III under a car park just a few yards from the Cathedral where the King was reinterred with dignity and honour in March 2015.



Launde Abbey



Launde Abbey, the retreat house serving the Dioceses of Leicester and Peterborough, is located on the eastern edge of the Diocese. Re-opened following extensive refurbishment in 2011, Launde Abbey is one of the Church of England's finest retreat houses, with a history dating back to the 12th century and set in 450 acres of rolling countryside. Learn more about the Diocese of Leicester at our website: www.leicester.anglican.org