



The See of Willesden – consultation paper

What is this consultation about?

Bishop Pete has volunteered to stand down as Bishop of Willesden in September 2021, a year before his normal retirement date. I am exploring with him another role, which would see him facilitating some of the transition and implementation work for our 2030 Vision. This will enable the appointment of a new Bishop of Willesden and provide an opportunity for our team here in London to become more diverse.

Whenever a suffragan or Area see is likely to fall vacant, we are required to consult the Diocesan Synod/Bishop's Council, and then to notify the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Dioceses Commission. The Dioceses Commission may either indicate that they agree with the proposal to fill the See or notify me that they believe that the proposal requires further consideration. They may even suggest that I withdraw the proposal to fill the See. My provisional view is that Bishop Pete should be replaced and that we should move to appoint as soon as we can, but I wish to listen to the views of Willesden and the wider Diocese first.

The Measure which governs this process (the Dioceses, Mission and Pastoral Measure 2007) requires me to keep the provision of episcopal ministry and oversight in the Diocese under review – and to consult widely with “such persons and bodies as (I) think fit.”

This consultation paper is being sent to:

- Willesden Clergy and Parishes
- Willesden Area Council and Deanery Synods
- Senior Staff
- Deans of Women
- Deans of Cultural Diversity
- Area Deans across the Diocese (for consultation with Chapters)
- Senior Management Group
- Racial Justice Priority Group

Accordingly, I am asking you to respond, please, to two questions:

- 1. What are your views on whether or not the See of Willesden should be filled when Bishop Pete finishes?**
- 2. What are your views on the overall provision of episcopal care in the Diocese of London?**

I have appended background information (which is the draft of the background information we shall be supplying to Bishop's Council and the Dioceses Commission).

Please respond by 12th April by email to wao@london.anglican.org

Pray for me, as I for you, as we seek to discern the way forward.

+ Sarah London

The Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE

Background information

The Willesden Episcopal Area is the north-western area of the Diocese of London, coterminous with the Archdeaconry of Northolt. It contains four London Boroughs – Brent, Ealing, Harrow, and Hillingdon – with a total population of more than 1.2m people. This makes Willesden larger than 23 Dioceses of the Church of England (ranking 18th in size, just behind Winchester, Sheffield, and Blackburn). A majority of the population of each of the four boroughs are people of colour.

There are over 100 places of worship (including BMOs and plants), 91 benefices, 21 church schools, 10 hospitals, 2 universities, plus an RAF Chaplaincy and the major chaplaincy at Heathrow Airport. Eight parishes are under the oversight of the Bishop of Fulham under the arrangements contained in the London Plan.

We are served by 170 plus (FTE) clergy – 130 stipendiary or salaried, and 40 self-supporting – plus another 60 clergy who hold PTO. There are 48 LLMs/Readers and 100 Commissioned Ministers.

The Bishop works with a staff team of Archdeacon, 4 Area Deans, Director of Mission, Director of Ministry, Finance Adviser and a Dean of Women and a Dean of Cultural Diversity.

Significant population growth is predicted over the next decade, with major housing developments at Old Oak (the intersection of HS2 and Crossrail) and at other sites along the Crossrail route. Plans for a third runway at Heathrow continue to bring uncertainty and challenge to the communities in the south-west corner of the Willesden Area.

The current bishop, the Rt Revd Pete Broadbent, reaches mandatory retirement age on 31st July 2022. He has suggested that he might vacate the See of Willesden earlier and move to a new post.

The current senior leadership of the Diocese does not reflect the culturally diverse population of London, and this would enable us to look again at the episcopal team here in London and might well provide a potential opportunity to increase the diversity of the episcopate in the diocese – and to do so more expeditiously than would be the case if Bishop Pete were to carry on until his normal retirement date.

The proposal that we bring to the Bishop's Council, and thence to the Dioceses Commission and the Archbishop of Canterbury, is that we begin the recruitment process in September, with Bishop Pete moving to his new role at the end of that month. This would enable us to work towards a consecration date for a new bishop in January 2022.

Keeping Episcopal Provision Under Review

The London Area Scheme has been in existence since 1979 (though it operated informally from 1970). It has been reviewed periodically over the years, with the last review taking place in 2011. On each occasion, the conclusion has been that the Scheme is fit for purpose, that the delegation framework from the Diocesan Bishop to the Area Bishops works with clarity and ensures the right degree of flexibility without the creation of autonomous units, and that the size and geography of the Areas (which are defined by the boundaries of the various Archdeaconries) make good sense and enable good relationships with the Boroughs, the Police, and other civil authorities. There is no intention to revisit the Area Scheme at this juncture in the history of the Diocese.

The level of delegation afforded to Area Bishops in the Diocese of London is probably the most comprehensive in the country and leaves the Diocesan Bishop to be free to oversee the Two Cities Episcopal Area and to attend to her other major duties while still providing clarity that she is the Bishop of the whole Diocese.

All the London Bishops carry major portfolios alongside their role as leaders in mission and pastors to their clergy and parishes, as well as playing a part in the national College of Bishops.

A further aspect of provision relates to the arrangements for parishes under the *House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests*. In London, these arrangements are set out in *The London Plan*. The Bishops of Fulham and Maidstone operate within the Diocese (the Bishop of Fulham as a Suffragan Bishop; the Bishop of Maidstone as an Assistant Bishop). Again, these arrangements are reviewed regularly and fine-tuned in consultation with the two postholders.