



Appointment of Chancellor for the Diocese of Bath and Wells



DIOCESE OF
Bath & Wells

Living and telling the story of Jesus

‘In response to God’s immense love for us, we seek to be God’s people, living and telling the story of Jesus.’

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A message from Bishop Michael

Here in the Diocese of Bath and Wells, we have appreciated enormously the ministry of our outgoing Chancellor, Timothy Briden. Timothy has been to us a wise counsellor, a faithful friend in times both calm and troubled, and a constant source of support, encouragement and confidence.

We now look forward to appointing a new Chancellor. What are we looking for? The person specification for the role details the professional qualifications and abilities that a Chancellor of a diocese would be expected to have. As much of these, our hope for our new Chancellor is that they will bring to us a number of particular qualities that are important to us. We're looking for someone with a pastoral and balanced approach, a clear understanding of parish realities, a commitment to the mission of the Church, a sensitive yet robust stewardship of ecclesiastical exemption, and an ability to cut through Gordian knots when called for! Our hope is that our new Chancellor will be measured, well informed, attentive to context and a strong encourager of the work of our Diocesan Advisory Committee. A twenty-first century approach to digital communication would be welcomed. Overall, our ideal candidate would combine pastoral sensitivity with legal expertise, clarity with authority.

Thank you for taking the time to read this pack and for considering joining us. If you'd like to know more, our Registrar, Christopher Jones would be the first person to follow up with. If you'd appreciate a conversation with me, please do be in touch at bishop@bathwells.anglican.org.

Yours sincerely,

+ Michael Bath & Wells.

The Diocese of Bath and Wells

The Diocese of Bath and Wells broadly encompasses the historic county of Somerset, extending to include a small part of the county of Dorset. It is a diverse region with more than 500 settlements across the county, many of them small and rural which account for 43 per cent of the population. Although two thirds of Somerset is rural, more than half the population lives in urban areas.

The diocese loves and serves in the region of one million people who live here through its family of 466 parishes and 182 church schools and more than 170 chaplaincies. This family works for the good of local communities in a range of practical and pastoral ways, caring for the vulnerable, supporting families and encouraging children and young people.

The Bishop of Bath and Wells has overall responsibility for the diocese. He is assisted by a suffragan bishop, the Bishop of Taunton.

There are three archdeacons in our diocese, serving the archdeaconries of Bath, Wells and Taunton. There are 160 stipendiary clergy posts, 42 self-supporting licensed clergy, over 300 clergy with Permission to Officiate and nearly 150 licensed Readers.

Everything the diocese does is underpinned by prayer and worship and we are driven by our vision that: 'In response to God's immense love for us, we seek to be God's people, living and telling the story of Jesus.' We seek to live this story as disciples of Jesus Christ in the world and to tell it, both in sharing the good news and by the way in which our lives speak about Him.

Further information can be found online at bathandwells.org.uk.

Further information about the Diocesan Registry can be found at bathandwells.org.uk/diocesan-registry.



Living and telling the story of Jesus

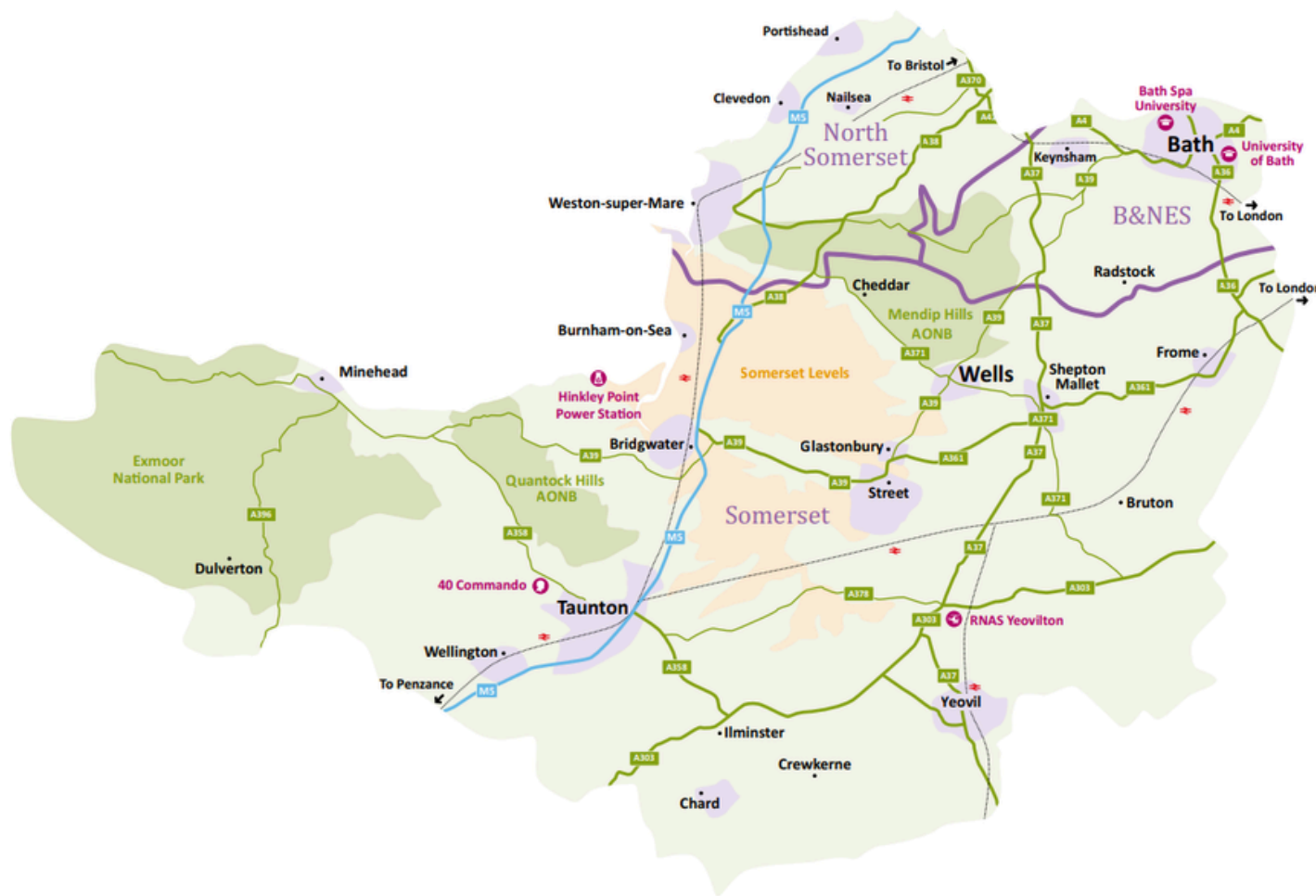
Our vision and strategy speaks to the story of Jesus; his life, teaching and work, his death and resurrection; the story which is the context of our faith and the content of our message. In the Diocese of Bath and Wells we strive to be a growing church. We are committed to witnessing and to living out the Gospel of Jesus as we seek to transform and be at the heart of our local communities, bringing love and care for our neighbours, and service to those in need.

We are seeking to bring our vision to life by being prayerful, authentic, courageous, joyful, asset-based and generous, and are working together to achieve this by:

- Valuing and cherishing the people and resources we already have
- Developing new Christian worshipping communities
- Sharing in leadership and ministry
- Deepening and growing faith
- Transforming communities



The Diocese of Bath and Wells



Ministry

Stipendiary clergy posts 169

Self-supporting clergy 56

All licensed clergy 228

Licensed chaplains 83

Clergy with permission to officiate 340

Readers 158

Lay Worship Assistants 142

Lay Pastoral Assistants 90





Principle duties and responsibilities

- The Diocesan Chancellor will act as the independent Judge of the Diocesan Consistory Court. As such he/she will oversee legal issues across the Diocese, especially those which relate to the use of and reordering of church buildings and land, applications for grave reservations, exhumations and other legal matters. He/she will work closely with the Diocesan Registry, the Archdeacons and the Diocesan Advisory Committee.
- The appointment is for a named individual, but it is anticipated that the person appointed will wish to appoint a Deputy Chancellor to assist him/her in the performance of his/her duties, subject to the approval of the Bishop.
- The Diocesan Chancellor is expected to provide the professional services set out in The Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order 2026. The annual retainer for this work from 1 January 2026 is £22,470. The retainer covers the remuneration for the Chancellor, any Deputy, secretarial and assistant support as well as all office overheads.
- There may be exceptional circumstances, particularly when the Bishop or senior staff or the Registrar may need urgent response to business. Evening and weekend work may be required on rare occasions.
- The Chancellor will be an ex officio member of the Diocesan Synod.
- A Chancellor's appointment ceases on resignation in writing to the Bishop, or upon attaining the age of 70, as is more fully set out in the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018.



Person specification

- The Diocesan Chancellor is appointed by the Diocesan Bishop and will be a person who holds or has held High Judicial office, or who holds or has held the Office of Circuit Judge or is a barrister or solicitor who has the qualifications required for holding that office.
- It is anticipated that the Chancellor may have held the role of Chancellor of another diocese or will have acted as a Deputy Chancellor.
- If a Lay person is to be appointed, the Bishop must be satisfied that that person is a communicant member of the Church of England.
- The Chancellor will:
 - (a) Have expertise in Ecclesiastical Law
 - (b) Have judicial experience or similar experience
 - (c) Be familiar with the online faculty system of the Church of England
 - (d) Be a wise advisor to the Bishop, senior diocesan staff and to the Diocesan Registrar
 - (e) Be able to deliver to tight timescales and be highly responsive to correspondence. Ideally we would hope that our registrar would receive a response within 7 days of paperwork being sent.
 - (f) Have the ability to think creatively and pastorally
 - (g) Have sensitivity, wisdom, patience and sound judgement
 - (h) Be able to discharge his or her Judicial duties conscientiously and independently, adjudicating on matters in the Consistory Court.
 - (i) Be required to take and subscribe the prescribed Oath of Allegiance and the Judicial Oath and (if a Lay person) a Declaration of Assent.

The successful applicant will be recruited under relevant Safer Recruitment procedures. This appointment is subject to proof of the right to residency in the UK under UK Visa and Immigration regulations.

The Diocese of Bath and Wells is committed to being a truly representative and inclusive community, where everyone is respected, valued, and supported in contributing their skills, experience, and perspectives. We recognise that there is more work to do to ensure our diocese fully reflects the rich diversity of the communities we serve. We are actively learning, growing, and taking steps to address these gaps.

As part of our ongoing commitment to nurturing a diverse and inclusive community, we warmly welcome and encourage applications from individuals and groups who are currently under-represented within the Diocese of Bath and Wells.

For an informal conversation about the position please contact the Diocesan Registrar, Christopher Jones of Stone King LLP, Upper Borough Court (UBC), Upper Borough Walls, Bath BA1 1RG. Tel: 01225 485723 or email christopherdjones@stoneking.co.uk



Terms and conditions

The annual retainer for the role of Chancellor will be paid through the diocesan payroll on the last working day of the month. The retainer is reviewed annually and will be adjusted from 1 January 2027.

How to apply

- Closing date is 5pm on Tuesday, 30 June 2026
- A CV and a covering letter outlining your reasons for applying should be sent to Sarah Minns, Senior Executive Assistant to the Bishop of Bath and Wells, The Bishop's Office, The Bishop's Palace, Wells BA5 2PD or submitted by email to sarah.minns@bathwells.anglican.org.
- Interviews will be held on Wednesday, 15 July 2026.

For an informal discussion and for factual enquiries please contact the Diocesan Registrar, Christopher Jones of Stone King LLP, Upper Borough Court (UBC), Upper Borough Walls, Bath BA1 1RG. Tel: [01225 485723](tel:01225485723) or email christopherdjones@stoneking.co.uk

Equality, diversity and inclusion

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