

Selecting the next Bishop of Salisbury

The appointment of a new Diocesan Bishop in the Church of England is made by Her Majesty the Queen, on the advice of the Prime Minister.

The process starts with the Diocesan Vacancy in See Committee. This is a statutory body made up of lay people and clergy from across the Diocese. It includes the Bishops of Sherborne and Ramsbury, the Archdeacons of Dorset and Wilts, the Chairs of the Houses of Clergy and Laity, the elected members of the General Synod, and others.

The Bishop's Council has elected the Dean of Salisbury, Nick Papadopoulos, to chair the Committee. The Diocesan Secretary, David Pain, will act as its secretary.

The Committee's first task is to produce a 'Statement of Need' which sets out what it believes the Diocese is looking for in its next Bishop. This Statement could be compared to a parish profile document.

Because Diocesan Bishops have a role in the national Church their appointment is not just a matter for the Diocese concerned. So, alongside the Committee's deliberations over the Statement of Needs, the Archbishop's Appointments Secretary and the Prime Minister's Appointments Secretary will consult a wide range of Church and civic representatives from across the region. Their conclusions, and the Diocesan Statement of Needs, are then considered by the Crown Nominations Commission.

This body is chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury. It includes 6 members of the Vacancy in See Committee (the Committee's second task is to elect 6 of its members for this purpose). The Commission also includes 6 representatives of the General Synod, 3 clergy and 3 lay people as well as the Archbishop of York. The Appointments Secretaries are non-voting members. The Commission will draw up a role profile for the new Bishop and will interview candidates.

It is hoped that the name of the new Bishop of Salisbury will be known by the end of 2021 or early in 2022.