# The Role of The Assistant Rural Dean

A rural dean may make a request to the archdeacon that a colleague becomes an assistant. The choice of assistant rural dean is subject to approval by the bishop and licensed by the bishop. It is not assumed that an assistant rural dean will automatically become rural dean.

# Appointment and Conditions of Service

* The appointment is for a set term.
* The Assistant Rural Dean will be commissioned by the Bishop or Archdeacon, usually in the context of a deanery event.
* Expenses for the work required in fulfilling the role of Assistant Rural Dean are met in full, in line with the guidelines for Rural Deans.
* Expenses are paid from the same fund as the Rural Dean; where a maximum permitted amount is set, this is to be divided between the Rural Dean and Assistant Rural Dean, by arrangement between them.

# Responsibilities of the Assistant Rural Dean

There is no template for the role of assistant rural dean and the assistant role is not the same as a ‘deputy’. Each deanery is different, and the skills and gifts of the rural dean and assistant rural dean will vary from deanery to deanery. In some places, having an assistant rural dean from a different part of the deanery or of a different theological emphasis will be very important.

Below is a set of questions, covering some of the issues that should be agreed between the rural dean and assistant rural dean and summarised in a working agreement, prior to licensing. The working agreement should be discussed and agreed with your archdeacon and a copy provided to them, when you have decided what is right for you.

‘Public’ tasks:

* How will chairing of the deanery synod be shared (together with the lay chair)?
* How will the chairing of chapter be shared?
* How will information from meetings with Bishops and Archdeacons be shared by the Rural Dean?
* How will the oversight of parishes in vacancy be shared? (One possibility may be a geographical split, taking half the deanery each.)
* Will the same criteria for involvement in appointments – parish profile, shortlisting, interviews, etc be used?
* How will the task of parish visitations be shared?
* How will you meet together to offer support for each other?
* When is it appropriate for the Assistant to deputise for the Rural Dean?