

What is a Covenant?

Introducing 'Covenants' into our Parish Offer Process

A covenant will represent a three-year commitment between Mission Communities and the Diocese to work together in partnership, to commit to a certain level of finance and ministry and to provide local ministry in support your mission.

The Covenant commitment:

Mission Community side:

- Articulate an **aspiration** for level of Parish Offer in relation to costs (for example, this might mean by year three aiming to cover 90%, 100% or 110% of your costs of ministry – recognising that any giving above the costs of your local ministry will be used to support ministry in places that can otherwise not afford it)
- Set a three-year Parish Offer
- Have a plan for ministry and mission in the local context
- Think realistically about models of local ministry that achieve your ministry and mission aspirations *and* are consistent with your financial aspirations.

Diocesan side:

- To empower Mission Communities to achieve their plans for mission and ministry by encouraging local decision making in partnership with the Diocese.
- Where a Covenant is agreed, the Diocese commits to honouring local ministry plans for the duration of the Covenant period.
- To do everything in the Bishop's power to fill clergy vacancies as quickly as possible.
- Transparency: including, diocesan finances and deployment plans.

Benefits of the Covenant model:

- Mission Communities are empowered to make local, strategic decisions around resourcing, ministry and mission.
- Mission Communities can have a high degree of certainty in their deployment for the duration of the Covenant period – no more worrying whether posts may be under threat at the next vacancy.
- Diocese has more confidence about future levels of Parish Offer and therefore its ability to fund local ministry.
- Resourcing and deployment decisions are taken in a spirit of partnership and with complete transparency.