**Minster Community Formation Process – Minster Community Groupings – FAQs**

**You asked us for an order of preference. What does this mean?**

We would like you to indicate which of the options you prefer. To do this, we ask that you consider your local church mission and ministry, as well as the wider area mission and ministry. There are some questions and resources you may find helpful to guide your thinking that combine your local perspective with a wider diocesan perspective. We do not require detailed feedback of those questions.

**What will happen with our preferences?**

We will collate your preferences and, as facilitators, consider the whole response. We are seeking to identify a community response that can feed into your discernment day, that will ultimately result in 1 proposal being sent to all PCC’s in the Area for your consideration.

At **that stage** we are asking for a 2/3 majority formal vote.

At **this stage** we are asking for a simple expression of preferences, and as it is not a formal vote a 2/3 majority is not required.

**What happens if we do not like any of the options on offer?**

If we all choose to reject the options, then we will return to the data, the conversation prompts, our storyboards, our diocesan priorities, and look again for possibilities for grouping. This may delay the next meeting, but will not derail the process of the formation of Minster Communities.

**What happens if we refuse to join in at all?**

If you choose not to engage at any level, you effectively delegate the discernment and process of the formation of Minster Communities to others in your Area. We are part of the Church of England, and we are rooted in our locality, our diocese and our nation. In the Church of England we are led through our governance bodies and our Bishops and are part of a body of churches that are an ordered community within which the whole body of Christ shares responsibility for its life and mission. As part of the Anglican church we are more than a local congregation. We need each other. A refusal to join in is partly a refusal to acknowledge the relational and governance structure of our church.

A refusal to join in is not a vote to stay the same as you currently are, as for [reasons which have been given before](https://thehub.leicester.anglican.org/learning-resources/why-minster-communities/) staying the same is no longer possible. It will initiate further conversations around how you participate in the life of our diocese, and how you live out your identity as a local expression of a wider church.

Your PCC will still be consulted about the MC proposal that will be considered by the Joint Archdeacons Mission Committee (JAMC), and Bishops Council. If you choose to vote ‘No’ to the proposal itself then that vote will be considered, along with all other responses, by the JAMC / Council. It is difficult to say what the practical impact of a no vote will be, as it depends upon the proposal itself, which currently you have a voice in crafting. No church can be forced to join a Minster Community, but if you choose not to you will miss out on the opportunities for mission and support that working together with other parishes will provide. Any church seeking to opt out of the framework will be invited to consider the implications of their decision in conversation with diocesan leadership and support staff.

Based on the vote at the October 2021 Synod, we (as a whole diocese) have committed to implementing this framework. We have also agreed, as a diocese, to focus our resources on our diocesan priorities, and to do so within our Minster Communities as they are formed. Thus, a refusal to participate will mean a reduced level of resource being available to your individual parish.

**What if we are not able to join in at all?**

If you currently don’t have the capacity to take part, then we ask that you let us know, so that we can understand your situation better. We will then work out how your voice can effectively be heard in the process, and how we can communicate the outcomes and decisions to you in due course. You will not be holding up the process by doing this. You will still be consulted about the final proposal.

**We are geographically to one side of the proposals, and therefore don’t have a choice. What good will our preference be?**

We are a part of a diocese that exists in relationship to one another, gathered round our Bishops. Your voice in the discernment is therefore still important, as you may be able to perceive some things others cannot see.