



A toolkit for Deaneries

Ecumenical Borough Deans

The Ecumenical Borough Deans (EBDs) are as the name suggests a group in each London Borough, who meet as representatives of the range of Christian denominations that are present in the Borough.

The main function of the EBDs is to provide a communication forum between the Civic Authorities, and particularly the Local Authority, and the Christian Churches, so that there is a better understanding of how local policy impacts on ordinary people, and to explore ways in which good communication and/or shared initiatives can help to build up effective partnerships between the Civic Authorities and the faith communities.

The London Churches Group for Social Action prepared a Job Description in 2007, which can be found in “Ecumenical Borough Deans: Promoting Civic Engagement - A handbook for more effective practice” available at <http://www.londonchurches.org.uk>. *What follows has been expanded to reflect the experience of the Diocese of Southwark.*

Depending on local circumstances and experience, and particularly the preferred approach of the authority concerned, this may mean working through other existing Christian and/or Multi-Faith Forums rather than explicitly as Ecumenical Borough Deans, however the principles and aims should remain the same.

Job Description for Ecumenical Borough Deans

Responsible: to your own denominational leadership.

Mission: The EBDs’ Core Mission is to be the main point of contact between Statutory Authorities and the local churches in each London Borough.

Purpose: To work with the other EBDs as a group to devise an ecumenical work programme which ensures that Christian values are promoted, in co-operation with other faiths, at Local Authority and community levels.

Main tasks and duties

- To liaise with the Civic Authorities over issues of common concern. This would normally take the form of a meeting with the Chief Executive and/or Council Leader at least once a year, an annual meeting with the Borough Commander, and occasional meetings with such people as NHS administrators etc.
- To liaise with local churches so that good information flows exist. This may be achieved by the establishing of a quarterly forum to which any member of any church in the borough could come. The aims would be to pray together, to promote good communication, and to enable the churches to work together on joint projects.

- To liaise with other ecumenical groups in the area, such as Churches Together groups and black majority church groups and initiatives.
- To engage with multi-faith initiatives in the Borough.

Responsibilities

- To agree a Convenor from among the EBDs.
- To share the responsibility of being lead person on particular initiatives.
- To keep the local authority up-to-date on what the local churches are doing and expecting from the Council.
- To initiate (where appropriate), encourage and support local ecumenical Christian action. This may include initiatives such as police chaplaincy, food banks, street pastors, regular faith community leaders' meetings, etc.
- To elicit from the local authority news of initiatives and partnerships in which local churches might be invited to participate.
- To assist with planning Civic Worship Services.
- To manage the faith communities aspect of the borough's major incident plan.
- In some boroughs the EBDs manage the hustings for candidates at general elections.
- To ensure official church representation at forthcoming council events where appropriate.
- To establish reporting links to deaneries, synods, circuits and their equivalents.
- To let local churches know that the EBD group exists, how it sees its role, who its members are and what it is doing.
- To be aware of Church and multi-faith partnerships and initiatives.
- To consider producing a short Annual Report for all the churches in the borough and holding an Annual Public Meeting at which some issue of common concern can be explored.
- To liaise with your own denomination to ensure appropriate continuity, including handover, whenever a change of denominational representative occurs.

*Prepared for Diocese of Southwark's Deaneries Review Group, September 2013
by Rev. Paul Collier (Anglican EBD for LB Southwark)*

Revised by the Deaneries Advisory Group, May 2017

Ecumenical Borough Deans in the Diocese of Southwark (at 27th April 2017)

CROYDON EPISCOPAL AREA	The Revd Canon Trevor Mapstone The Revd Justine Middlemiss
KINGSTON EPISCOPAL AREA	The Venerable George Ansah The Revd Amanda Beck The Revd Peter Hart The Revd James McKinney The Revd Dr Stephen Sichel
WOOLWICH EPISCOPAL AREA	The Revd James Bryson The Revd Paul Collier The Venerable Alastair Cutting