

THE SALISBURY DIOCESE

WELLBEING SURVEY

2020

REPORT

Part 2

THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE DIOCESAN CLERGY

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- S1. This report relates to that part of the 2020 Wellbeing questionnaire which addressed the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Diocesan clergy. It sets out the various points raised by the respondents, relates their responses to their wellbeing and morale and assesses the impact that the pandemic has had. It complements Part 1 of the report which presented the analysis of those parts of the questionnaire which were similar to earlier wellbeing surveys.
- S2. Throughout the report, it should be borne in mind that the survey was conducted between mid-October and early December 2020 as Covid-19 infection rates were beginning to increase, restrictions were increasingly being re-introduced after the summer easing, and the country was moving towards, or was in, the second general lockdown. Thus, the observations made by the respondents take no account of any developments since and may not fully reflect their views in February 2021.
- S3. The wellbeing of the Diocesan clergy who responded to the survey (54% of those eligible) has recovered from the dip seen in the 2016 survey, despite the Covid-19 pandemic, and is again similar to that seen in the 2008 and 2012 surveys. This does not necessarily imply that the pandemic has had no effect, since it is possible that wellbeing might have been even higher but for Covid-19, but it does suggest that any adverse effect has been no more than modest.
- S4. The average morale of the Diocesan clergy who responded has declined slightly over the course of the pandemic, with 58% indicating that their morale has gone down, but with 24% indicating that it has been unaffected and 18% that it has actually gone up. In particular, those with lower than average morale at the start of the pandemic have seen their morale rise on average.
- S5. The morale of clergy is generally unrelated to the respondent's role, gender, or stipendiary status, except that the morale of curates is higher both before and after the pandemic and has fallen less during the course of the pandemic.
- S6. Nearly 1600 separate citations have been made relating to factors that have influenced respondents adversely or positively during the course of the pandemic. Many of these have common underlying themes and these have been grouped according to the theme.
- The most frequently cited adverse themes are:
    - Health and the broader aspects of wellbeing.
    - The challenges of ministry, mission and worship, both spiritual and practical, including the closure of churches and conceptual issues of conducting services on the internet.
    - Pastoral concerns.
    - Constantly changing rules and guidance.
    - Workload.
    - The internet, particularly the technical challenges it poses, its inadequacies as a medium for meetings and excessive use.
    - Finance, both church and personal.
    - The attitudes and actions of those in authority.
    - Lack of support.
  - The most frequently cited positive themes are;
    - Having more time available.
    - The response of people to the challenges of the pandemic.

- The use of the internet as a mechanism for shared worship, training, meetings and keeping in touch.
- The support that has been received.
- Exercise.
- Prayer and spiritual nourishment.
- The opportunity for change.
- Hobbies and pastimes.
- The opportunities for outreach.
- Family and friends, which may also imply support.

S7. In most cases, the wellbeing and morale of those who cited the above themes is little different from that of those who did not. However, there is significant correlation in the following cases.

- Those who cited the challenges of ministry, mission and worship during the pandemic as an adverse influence have a significantly better wellbeing than those who did not. This does not necessarily imply that concern for ministry during the pandemic has prompted better wellbeing, or *vice versa*. It seems far more likely that a common cause lies elsewhere, perhaps within the personality and character of the individual, which has stimulated both positive wellbeing and concern for ministry quite separately, but this cannot be deduced from the survey data.
- Those who cited pastoral concerns as an adverse influence also have a significantly better wellbeing than those who did not. As for ministry, this does not necessarily imply that pastoral concerns engender better wellbeing.
- Those who cited workload as an adverse concern have a significantly lower wellbeing than those who did not. Their morale is also lower and deteriorated more during the pandemic. This finding is fully consistent with previous findings related to the impact of workload on wellbeing and with several respondents reporting an increase in workload during the pandemic. Note however that many other respondents reported an increase in free time during the pandemic, which implies a decrease in workload.
- Those who cited lack of support as an adverse influence also have a significantly lower wellbeing and morale than those who did not. This finding is also consistent with previous findings on the relative importance of support. However, other respondents reported positively on the support that they had received during the pandemic.
- Those who cited the opportunity for change have a significantly better wellbeing and morale than those who did not.

S8. Of the 140 respondents, 124 stated that they had had contact with a Bishop or Archdeacon during the pandemic. Of these, 60 stated that the contact had been helpful, with a further 4 stating that it had been of help but not sufficiently frequent; 26 stated that the contact had been appreciated, without indicating whether it had been helpful, though the tenor of the comment was positive, and a further 9 indicated that it had been appreciated, but had not really helped. The remaining 25 indicated that the contact had been of mixed or limited value, or had not helped. It is impossible to assess the impact of these contacts on wellbeing or morale owing to small sample sizes.

S9. Over 140 suggestions were made regarding things that the Diocese could do to support wellbeing in any future lockdown. These cover a very diverse range, with relatively few themes common to significant numbers of respondents, and many relate to specific personal issues. The more numerous common themes are:

- Better communication from the Diocese, particularly clearer and more timely communication as guidance changes.
- Continuing and regular direct pastoral contact.
- Nothing new.

- S10. The factors influencing the wellbeing and morale of the respondents who reported that they were very or extremely stressed are consistent with those identified in Part 1 of this report. The proportion and number of such respondents are similar to previous surveys. Thus there has been no increase that could be attributed to Covid-19.
- S11. Taking into account all aspects of the survey, it is concluded that the impact of the pandemic on the wellbeing and morale of the clergy as a whole has been modest. This does not imply that it has had no impact at all, or that no individuals have been seriously affected. A large number of adverse influences have been cited, but they rarely correlate with impaired wellbeing or morale, and can be offset to some extent by positive influences and the balance is more even. Whilst many of the positive influences relate to the resilience, generosity of spirit and support demonstrated by people, or simply making the best of a bad job during adversity, some do suggest genuine benefits stemming from developments during the pandemic. Ultimately, most of the Diocesan clergy have managed to keep going despite the adversity and have borne it well.

## INTRODUCTION

### The 2020 Wellbeing Survey

1. The 2020 survey questionnaire comprised two distinct parts. One part was similar in scope and nature to the previous surveys in 2012 and 2016, retaining essentially the same questions and format, thereby providing continuity in the assessment of wellbeing and its evolution. However, when the time came to send out the 2020 questionnaire the country was in the midst of the worst health crisis in living memory, caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. It was therefore desired to assess what impact this was having on the Diocesan clergy and, rather than send out a separate questionnaire, it was decided to include a new section in the existing questionnaire to address the impact of Covid-19.

### The Pandemic Section of the Questionnaire

2. The section of the questionnaire relating to the Covid-19 pandemic comprised six questions which gave the respondent the opportunity to comment on the impact of the pandemic. For the first four questions, up to three separate issues could be raised for each question. The specific questions were:
  - What are the three most pressing concerns (personal or ministerial) for you during the past couple of months?
  - What three positive things relating to the Covid-19 pandemic have encouraged you?
  - Please tell us up to three things you have found helpful to your wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic.
  - Please tell us up to three things you have found unhelpful to your wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic.
  - If you have had contact from your Archdeacons or Bishops during the Covid-19 pandemic, please comment and say how helpful/useful that was.
  - What one thing could the Diocese do to support your wellbeing in any future lockdown?
3. In addition to these six questions, respondents were asked to rate their morale, both before the pandemic and now (i.e. when completing the questionnaire in October/November/December 2020). An 11 point scale was to be used, from 0 to 10, where 0 means completely despairing and 10 means fully and positively engaged. It is important to bear this timescale in mind when interpreting the replies to the various questions; it corresponds to the period, after the summer relaxation of restrictions, when infection rates were increasing, new restrictions were increasingly being imposed and the country was heading towards, and then entering, a second general lockdown.

## THE INFLUENCE OF THE PANDEMIC ON WELLBEING AND MORALE

### Wellbeing of the Diocesan Clergy

4. As is described in Part 1 of this report, the wellbeing of the clergy in 2020 has recovered from the dip observed in 2016 and is comparable to that in 2012 and 2008, despite the pandemic. Although wellbeing has improved over the last four years, this does not necessarily mean that the pandemic has had no deleterious effect. It is of course possible that wellbeing would have been higher still but for Covid-19, but, as we have no way of knowing what the state was in 2019, we cannot say. Nevertheless, the fact that the results for 2020 are very similar to those for 2012 and 2008 suggests that the overall impact on wellbeing has been modest.

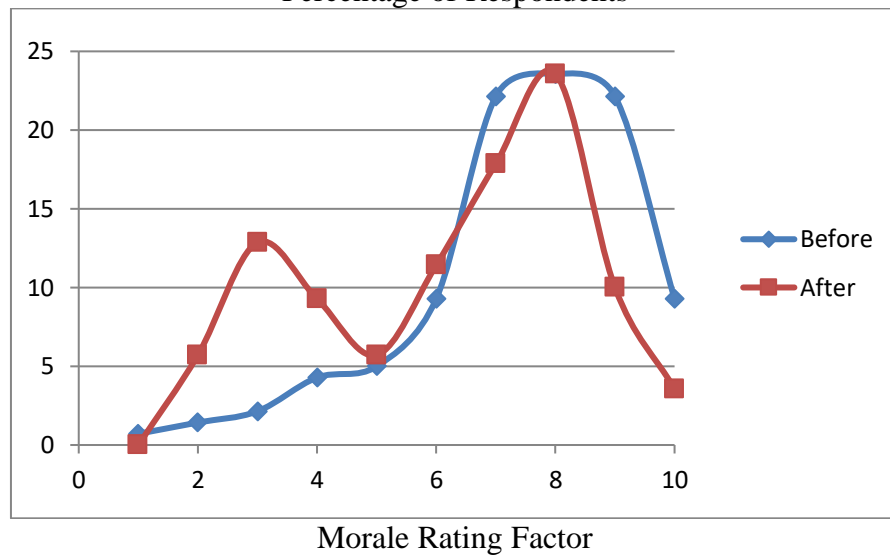
### Morale of the Diocesan Clergy

5. A more direct quantitative assessment of the impact can be made from the responses to the question relating to morale. The morale rating before the pandemic should, in principle, be independent of any

effects of the pandemic itself and reflect the morale state of the respondent under normal circumstances. The morale state when the questionnaire was completed will, of course, reflect the respondent's feelings at that point. In practice, the most important measure is probably the difference between the two since this will reflect the impact that the pandemic has had.

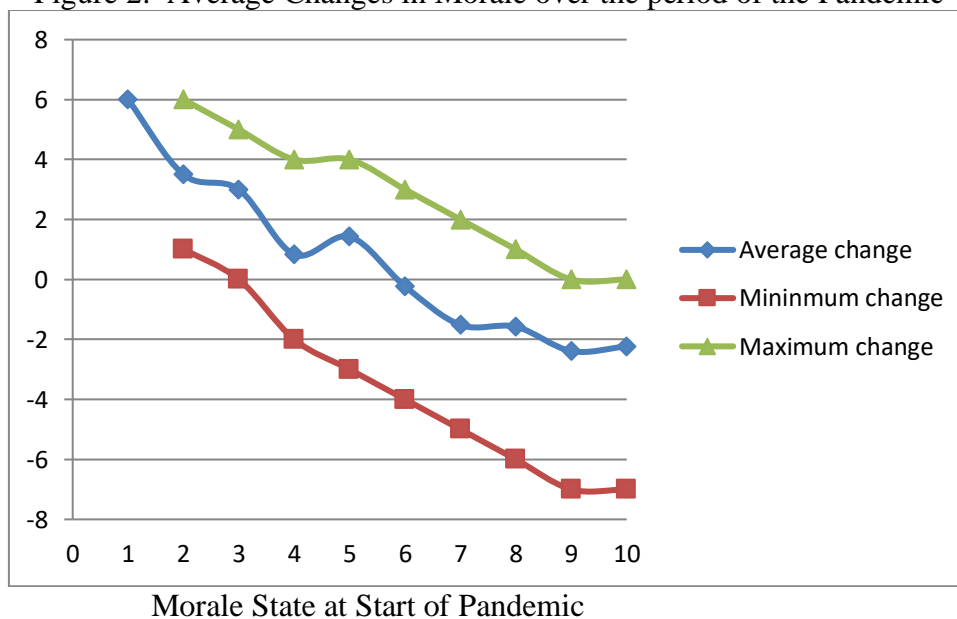
- Of the 140 respondents, 58% reported that their morale had gone down, by an average of 2.9 points on the 11 point scale; 24% reported that it was the same; and 18% reported that it had gone up, by an average of 2.5 points. The average rating before was 7.4, and after was 6.2, indicating an average drop of 1.2. Figure 1 shows the percentage of respondents reporting different morale states before and after the pandemic.

Figure 1: Morale States before and After the Pandemic  
Percentage of Respondents



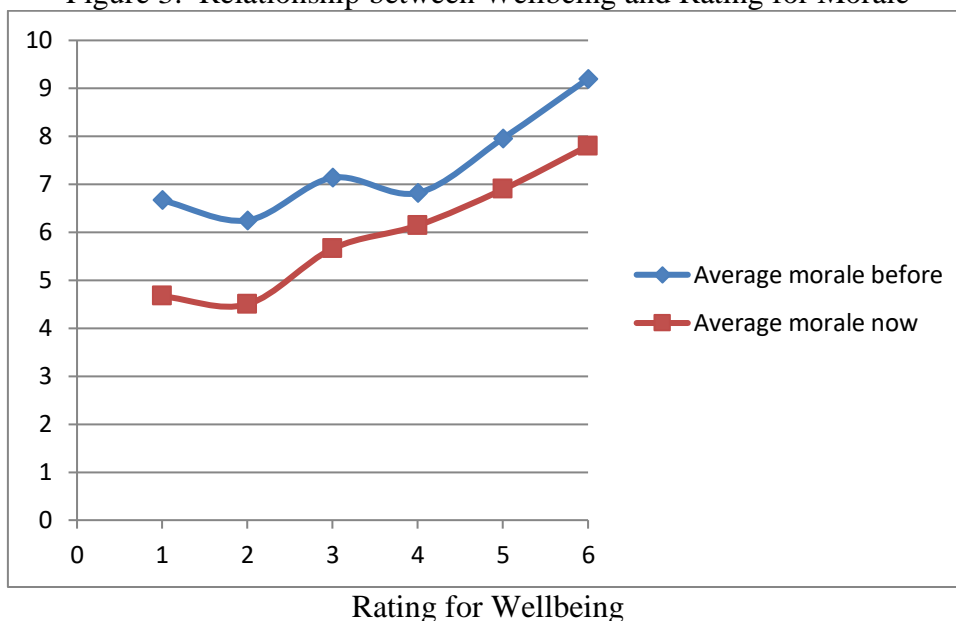
- Figure 2 shows how the average change in morale over the period related to the morale rating at the start, together with the maximum and minimum changes recorded.

Figure 2: Average Changes in Morale over the period of the Pandemic



8. It is, of course, inevitable, that those with a very high morale can only maintain that state or go down, whilst for those with a very low morale the reverse is true. Nevertheless, Figure 2 does demonstrate that the pandemic has not been universally bad for morale amongst the clergy and that for those whose initial state was no higher than about 6, morale has gone up on average.
9. Whilst it is recognized that wellbeing and morale are not the same thing, they are undoubtedly related to some extent and this is borne out in Figure 3, which shows the relationship between the rating assigned to wellbeing and the corresponding average rating for morale, both before the pandemic and now. Note that only three respondents recorded a wellbeing rating of 1, so the reliability of the left-hand point on the graph is low.

Figure 3: Relationship between Wellbeing and Rating for Morale



10. It is also interesting to note that respondents who reported a decline in wellbeing over the last four years also showed a strong tendency to report a decline in morale over the pandemic period. The morale of those who reported that their wellbeing was much the same also tended to decline, but to a much lesser extent, whilst the morale of those who reported an improvement in wellbeing also tended to improve, as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Correspondence between Change in Wellbeing and Change in Morale  
Number of Respondents

	Morale less	Morale the same	Morale better
Wellbeing less	41	5	6
Wellbeing the same	24	14	8
Wellbeing better	16	15	11

11. Table 1 implies that, if a respondent's morale has remained the same or improved during the course of the pandemic, then his or her wellbeing is likely to be the same or improved compared with 2016, whilst if his or her morale has gone down, then their wellbeing is equally likely to have gone down or not gone down. Given the proportions quoted in paragraph 6, this again suggests that the impact of the pandemic on wellbeing has been modest. Nevertheless, it may have had more subtle impacts that are not fully reflected in the gross wellbeing statistics.

### Morale of Clergy in Different Roles

12. Table 2 shows the average morale rating reported by clergy in different roles before the pandemic and at the time of the survey.



Table 2: Morale of Clergy in Different Roles

Role	Morale before	Morale at survey	Difference
Associate priest	7.4	6.3	1.1
Curates	7.8	7.2	0.6
Bishop's staff etc	7.3	5.7	1.6
Chaplain	7.4	6.4	1.0
Incumbent	7.1	6.0	1.1
Priest-in-charge	8.3	5.0	3.3
Team rector	7.1	5.9	1.2
Team vicar	8.0	5.9	2.1
All non-parish ministry	7.4	6.1	1.3
All parish priests	7.3	5.9	1.4
All clergy	7.4	6.2	1.2

13. Although there are a number of differences, generally they are not significant owing to the small sample sizes involved. The table therefore includes the same groupings of clergy roles as was done in Part 1 for wellbeing, with Bishop's Staff/Church House/cathedral staff and chaplains grouped as non-parish ministry and incumbents, priests-in-charge, team rectors and team vicars grouped as parish priests. Probably the only case to note is that of the curates, whose morale is not only higher than the rest both before and after the pandemic, substantially in the latter case, but has also fallen far less on average during the pandemic. There is no significant difference in morale between female and male clergy, or between stipendiary and non-stipendiary clergy. The morale of clergy who have been ordained less than three years, all curates, is higher than other clergy, which is fully consistent with the findings regarding wellbeing reported in Part 1, but there is no significant difference between other periods ordained.

## THE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS

### Analysis of the Responses

14. With the exception of the question of morale, the responses to all the questions relating to the pandemic are in free format text. In total, nearly 2000 responses have been generated. In many cases, the responses are explicit and it is straightforward to discern exactly what the respondent means, e.g. "I am concerned that my family may catch the virus". In other cases, however, the underlying concern is less obvious and a degree of interpretation is required to discern the full implications of the response for the respondent's wellbeing. Each response has been assessed and it has been concluded that most can be grouped into a relatively small number of different categories, each with a common theme, though there may be different emphasis between some answers within the category. This grouping is, of course, not a precise science and there is scope for alternative interpretations in some cases. Nevertheless, it is believed that it provides a useful and realistic assessment of the issues that have been of greatest concern to the Diocesan clergy.
15. In some cases, a respondent has raised more than one topic within the same theme in different answers, for example family health and health of the congregation. In other cases, a respondent has raised two different themes within the same answer, e.g. I am concerned about the lack of volunteers and about the church's finance. Therefore, the following listings state not only the number of times a topic was cited, but also the number of respondents involved, if different. The latter indicates the extent of that particular feeling amongst the clergy, whilst the number of citations provides some indication of the strength of feeling.

## Pressing Concerns

16. Only one of the 140 respondents did not cite any issues under the question relating to pressing concerns. Two more respondents noted only one concern, whilst a further three noted only two. The remainder all provided three as invited, though some included two separate themes in one answer. In total, 413 concerns were raised.
17. During the analysis of these responses, it rapidly became clear that, whilst many concerns were related directly to the impact of Covid-19, others, even with the same theme, were not, though they may have been exacerbated by the pandemic. The responses have therefore been divided into two main groups – pandemic specific and more general concerns. In addition a third group has been defined to include comments related to workload, primarily because it is often not easy to discern the specific impact of Covid-19, given that workload has already been identified as having a significant impact on wellbeing.
18. Covid Specific Concerns Of the 413 separate points raised, 187 can be classified as specific to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 20 citations merely state “Covid” without amplifying the particular context. This group is likely to include any or all of the more specific concerns described below.
  - 36 citations from 33 respondents relate to the challenges of conducting ministry, mission and worship during the pandemic, including the specific spiritual and practical challenges of closing and re-opening churches and of conducting worship online.
  - 32 citations from 28 respondents concern pastoral issues. This group includes the difficulties of maintaining contact with schools, members of the congregation and wider community, particularly the inability to have direct personal contact, including the elderly who may not be comfortable with information technology and the internet. Two of these citations refer specifically to concerns that church members may not return when the pandemic restrictions are ended.
  - 25 citations from 23 respondents relate to the difficulty and stress created by the constantly changing rules and guidance, both in terms of understanding what they are at any given time, implementing them and convincing reluctant parishioners that they need to be implemented. 9 of these citations refer specifically to the difficulties of planning ahead, given the fluidity of the rules and guidance.
  - 23 citations from 22 respondents relate to concerns over health: 9 to the church and community, 1 to colleagues, 1 to young people, 6 to family members, 4 to the respondent and 2 to a general concern. Of the 23, 4 refer explicitly or implicitly to mental health
  - 23 further citations from 19 respondents relate more broadly to the wellbeing of the individual respondent: 10 to feelings of inadequacy, guilt and lack of motivation in meeting the challenges of the pandemic; 5 to a sense of isolation; 3 to dealing with uncertainty; 3 to dealing with the expectations of others, including senior staff and congregations; and 2 to fulfilling their evolving role.
  - 13 citations from 12 respondents relate to the restrictions imposed on personal freedom: 5 refer to the challenges posed by lockdown, both of the individual and more generally; 4 to freedom to travel and/or visit family; and 4 to restrictions in general.
  - 4 citations concern the leadership at National and Diocesan level: lack of leadership and vision and a lack of understanding of the challenges faced by clergy in the front line.
  - 4 citations relate to the challenges of leading and managing a parish during the pandemic.
  - 3 citations refer to difficulties with the technology.
  - 2 citations refer to the difficulty of maintaining contact with colleagues.
  - 2 citations refer to changes at Church House.

19. General Concerns 188 of the citations concern issues broader than the pandemic and cover a wider spectrum. As noted above, some of the issues may well have been exacerbated by the pandemic, even if this is not made clear in the response, but they could apply at any time in the immediate past or future.

- 38 citations from 33 respondents concern health, other than those directly related to Covid-19. They include: 15 personal health, 18 health of family members, 2 health of colleagues and 3 unspecified concerns. 7 of these citations refer explicitly or implicitly to mental health.
- 38 citations from 34 respondents concern finance: 21 church or Diocesan finance, 4 personal finance, 2 both church and personal and 11 unspecified.
- 15 citations from 13 respondents relate to the future of the church, primarily to its sustainability in terms of membership and buildings, but also to the current trends.
- 3 further citations relate specifically to the church's stance, one way or the other, on inclusiveness.
- 15 citations from 13 respondents relate to the respondent's personal future, either settling into a new job, speculation as to what the next job might be, or approaching retirement.
- 12 citations from 11 respondents concern specific personal issues with which the respondent is grappling, including spiritual issues, house moves and changes in personal circumstances.
- 9 citations from 8 respondents relate to leadership and management issues facing the respondent, including managing during an interregnum, staff management and pastoral and worship management.
- 9 citations from 8 respondents relate to lack of support, primarily from laity in providing help to run churches, but also from senior and team clergy colleagues.
- 9 citations concern family issues.
- 8 citations concern relationships with colleagues.
- 7 citations relate to specific church issues, including church governance (2) and team ministry (2).
- 6 citations refer to failures in communications within benefices (4) and with bishops (2).
- 4 citations refer to bereavement: 2 consoling the bereaved and 2 personal bereavement.
- 3 citations refer to bullying by laity.
- 2 citations refer to safeguarding issues.
- 2 citations refer to technology issues.
- 2 citations refer to time management.
- 6 single citations relate to: an eviction, housing, infant baptism, performance management, NSMs and the state of the nation.

20. Workload Concerns 30 respondents included workload or work/life balance amongst their pressing concerns, though several cited workload more than once in different contexts so there were 38 citations in total.

- 12 citations relate to increased workload caused by the pandemic. Of these, 6 refer simply to the increase in workload, 4 specifically mention the need to conduct services both online and in person, whilst 2 more refer to the challenge of developing new skills.
- 3 citations refer to the volume of e-mails, without indicating whether this has increased during the pandemic.
- 11 citations simply mentioned workload, constant pressure of work, or constant fatigue, with no indication as to whether Covid-19 had contributed.
- 2 citations refer specifically to the amount of admin and red tape.
- 4 citations refer to work/life balance, again without any clear connection to the pandemic.
- 6 citations refer to the inability to take time off.

21. Considering all three groups together, the most frequently cited concerns are

- Health – 61 citations from 53 respondents, with a further 23 citations relating more broadly to the wellbeing of the individual respondent, which is perhaps not surprising under the circumstances, though nearly half of them are not Covid related.
- Finance – 38 citations from 34 respondents.
- Workload – 38 citations from 30 respondents.
- Challenges of ministry, mission and worship – 36 citations from 33 respondents.
- Pastoral issues – 32 citations from 28 respondents.
- Difficulties caused by changing rules and guidance – 25 citations from 23 respondents.

22. Although respondents were not asked to list their pressing concerns in priority order, it is perhaps not unreasonable to assume that the concerns listed first were at the forefront of their minds when completing the questionnaire. The most frequently cited initial concerns, other than the generic “Covid” are the same as those most frequently cited overall, though finance is less prominent in the ranking order:

- Health (23 citations), with a further 6 relating more broadly to wellbeing.
- Workload (14 citations)
- Challenge of ministry, mission and worship (10 citations)
- Pastoral issues (9 citations)
- Finance (6 citations)
- Changing rules and guidance (6 citations)

### What was Unhelpful

23. In addition to being asked what had been the pressing concerns during the pandemic, respondents were also asked what they had found unhelpful. Only one respondent recorded nothing as being unhelpful, the same respondent as recorded no pressing concerns. However, a further 6 recorded only one item and a further 18 recorded only two items, so the total number of citations was only 388, slightly fewer than for pressing concerns.

24. As in the previous section, the issues raised under this question have been grouped into themes.

- 44 citations from 38 respondents relate to the difficulties of maintaining contact with others. 31 of these may be described as pastoral concerns in that they refer to contact with congregations, parishes, chaplaincies and communities, most of which specifically refer to loss of face-to-face and physical contact. Other citations refer to family and friends.
- 39 citations from 32 respondents relate to the conduct of ministry, mission and worship during the pandemic. Of these, 16 refer specifically to the closure of churches and its impact; 7 to the prohibition on singing; 6 to liturgical aspects, particularly as regards communion; 5 to the challenges of producing new formats for worship in a constantly changing environment; 4 to the inadequacy of the internet as a medium for ministry; and 1 to the management of pastoral interactions.
- 38 citations from 35 respondents relate to use of the internet. Of these, 22 refer specifically to excessive use of the internet for e-mails and zoom meetings, whilst a further 6 refer to the inadequacy of the medium for communication, 9 to the practical challenges and 1 to the prospect of having to continue with both live and online services in the long term.
- 36 citations from 31 respondents concern the attitudes and actions of those in authority in Government, the National Church and the Diocese. 13 citations express concerns that the Government has not handled the pandemic satisfactorily; 11 consider that the National Church has been slow and confused in its response and are particularly unhappy with the decision to close churches; 13 complain of lack of communication from and contact with senior clergy, poor

communication and leadership from the Diocese; 2 further comments relate to a general lack of leadership from those in authority.

- 33 citations from 30 respondents refer to constant change, inconsistency, lack of clarity and poor timeliness in the rules and guidance that were promulgated by the Government and Church of England.
- 24 citations from 21 respondents relate to health – 14 personal, 5 family and 5 others, particularly colleagues and parishioners. Half the citations refer specifically to anxiety and fear in the respondent and others provoked by Covid-19, rather than simply to the medical consequences of catching it.
- 46 citations from 38 respondents relate to wellbeing in the broader sense: 20 express concerns over meeting expectations, either from others (10) or from the respondent (10); 11 refer to a sense of isolation and loneliness; 10 to feelings of uncertainty; and 5 to anxiety about the future.
- 16 citations refer to lack of support from the Diocese, clergy colleagues and laity.
- 15 citations from 13 respondents concern demands from parishioners, particularly to step beyond what is deemed to lie within the rules and guidance.
- 14 citations from 13 respondents refer to restrictions on lifestyle, including travel, recreational activity and the requirement to wear face covering.
- 13 citations from 12 respondents relate to workload. Of these, 6 were made by respondents who had also cited workload as a pressing concern. 6 of the citations specifically mention increased workload as a result of the pandemic.
- 9 citations concern the inability to take a holiday.
- 8 citations concern relationship issues with clergy and lay colleagues.
- 8 citations reflect constant and disheartening media coverage.
- 7 citations relate to the impact of the pandemic on the discharge of the respondent's role, including a loss of routine.
- 6 citations relate to family issues.
- 5 citations relate to finance, both church and personal.
- 4 citations refer to personal issues, specific to the respondent.
- 3 citations refer to a lack of time to rest and reflect.
- 3 citations relate to the behaviour of some elements of the public.
- 2 citations relate to concerns over health and safety.
- 2 citations refer to a general atmosphere of depression and fear.
- 2 citations refer to the difficulties of communication.
- The remaining 10 single citations cover a wide range of subjects, including home schooling, bereavement and a constant pressure to appear publically hopeful.

### Predominant Adverse Influences

25. The phrasing of the two questions relating to pressing concerns and unhelpfulness is different, but clearly both relate to the adverse impacts of various issues on wellbeing and morale. Although the difference is not defined in the questionnaire, a pressing concern seems to bear with it a force that is rather greater than something that is unhelpful, which may be no more than an irritation. Regardless of how individual respondents interpreted the two questions, the issues raised as being unhelpful have much in common with those raised as pressing concerns and some issues feature prominently under both headings. The issues raised by the two questions have therefore been combined and those most frequently cited are listed below. Note that a respondent who has cited a theme as both a pressing concern and as an unhelpful influence is counted only once, though the citation is counted under both headings.

- 85 citations from 65 respondents relate to health.
- 73 further citations from 50 respondents relate to wellbeing in the broader sense.

- 75 citations from 56 respondents relate to the challenges of ministry, mission and worship, both spiritual and practical.
- 63 citations from 44 respondents relate to pastoral concerns.
- 58 citations from 37 respondents relate to constantly changing rules and guidance.
- 50 citations from 35 respondents relate to workload.
- 42 citations from 35 respondents relate to the internet, particularly to the technical challenges it poses, its inadequacies as a medium for meetings and excessive use. (Conceptual issues relating to ministry and worship are included under ministry, mission and worship above.)
- 39 citations from 34 respondents refer to finance.
- 36 citations from 32 respondents relate to the attitudes and actions of those in authority.
- 25 citations from 22 respondents relate to lack of support.

### Positive Encouragements

26. Only three respondents recorded nothing that was encouraging, two of whom made the point that this meant that there was nothing, not that they could not think of anything, and the other did not record any adverse factors either. A further five recorded only one positive encouragement and a further 10 recorded only two. Allowing for multiple citations under a single heading, there is a total of 393 citations.

27. As for the adverse influences, the citations have been grouped into a number of distinct themes. However, in this case, nearly all the points raised are Covid-19 related.

- By far the largest single group concerns the response of people to the challenges of the pandemic: people within the church (35 citations), the community (59 citations) and individuals (14 citations) – 108 citations in total from 88 respondents. They can be broken down into sub-groups.
  - The mutual support witnessed in communities and congregations (58).
  - The inspirational adaptability (12) and resilience of people (10).
  - The church's support to the local communities and the latter's response on receiving it (10).
  - People remaining committed to their church and returning to it when it re-opened (8).
  - People becoming more interested in church and a growth in membership (7).
  - Specific instances of personal relationships (3).
- 67 citations from 58 respondents relate to use of the internet as a positive factor during the pandemic.
- 47 citations from 37 respondents relate to having more time available to spend at home, with family, for exercise, on hobbies, in prayer and contemplation, including 3 citations for reduced workload and a better work/life balance.
- 40 citations from 38 respondents refer to the opportunity for change created by the pandemic, particularly with regard to being more creative in worship.
- 30 citations from 27 respondents refer to outreach, particularly within the wider local community.
- 26 citations from 24 respondents refer to the level of support received from lay and clergy colleagues, from senior staff and from the community in general.
- 20 citations, all from different respondents, relate to personal development in the broadest sense. Most refer to the development of practical skills relating to information technology, but some relate to spiritual development.
- 12 citations from 11 respondents refer to prayer and an awareness of God at work in the community.
- 6 citations relate to the encouragement to reassess priorities in the respondent's life.
- 5 citations refer to improved relationships over the course of the pandemic.

- 5 citations refer to better communications between colleagues and with others.
- 5 citations applaud improvements in, and concern for, the environment during lockdown.
- 4 citations refer to there being fewer meetings, especially in the evening.
- 4 citations relate to a positive response to stewardship.
- 3 citations commend the creativity that has emerged during lockdown.
- 3 citations refer to deeper and more theological conversations.
- 2 citations refer to the reduced need to travel.
- 6 single citations refer positively to the Black Lives Matter movement, oil prices, the NHS, family, awareness of the need for pastoral support and the expectations of the Diocese.

### What was Helpful

28. Four respondents stated that nothing was helpful; a further 5 cited only one thing; and a further 13 cited only two, giving a total of 385 citations, including multiples under one heading. They have been grouped as follows.

- 67 citations from 54 respondents reported having more time available for rest and relaxation, for holidays, prayer and reflection, or a slowing down of the pace of life, including a better work/life balance.
- 58 citations from 54 respondents referred to exercise, particularly walking and cycling, but also playing sports.
- 40 citations from 35 respondents mention prayer and spiritual nourishment.
- 36 citations from 32 respondents mention use of the internet for shared worship, for training and for keeping in touch with people, often more frequently than had happened in the past.
- 33 citations from 25 respondents refer to the support that has been received from clergy colleagues, the laity, the Diocese and senior clergy, family and the community.
- 31 citations from 30 respondents cited family and, to a lesser extent, friends.
- 30 citations from 29 respondents refer to hobbies and pastimes.
- 23 citations from 22 respondents refer to the enjoyment of being outside, of the weather and the local environment.
- 10 citations, all from different respondents, refer simply to keeping in touch with family, friends, members of the congregation and the community.
- 10 citations refer to meetings, 9 to having fewer meetings, particularly in the evening, and 1 to having meetings whilst walking.
- 6 citations refer to fellowship with colleagues.
- 6 citations refer to the reduced need to travel.
- 5 citations refer to the benefits of having a routine.
- 4 citations relate to being part of a community.
- 4 citations relate to the help of the guidance that has come from the Diocese.
- 3 citations relate to having a project to work on.
- 3 citations relate to being creative.
- 3 citations refer to being able to help others.
- 3 citations refer to taking care of oneself.
- 2 citations relate to being able to work from home.
- 2 citations refer to alcohol.
- 10 further single citations refer to a wide variety of topics, including access to senior staff, coming out of lockdown, schools re-opening, learning in a new way and avoiding listening to the news.

## Predominant Positive Influences

29. As in the case of adverse influences, there is much common ground between positive encouragements and things that were helpful and they have therefore been combined together. The most frequently cited themes are listed below.

- 114 citations from 75 respondents relate to having more time available.
- 108 citations from 88 respondents relate to the response of people to the challenges of the pandemic.
- 103 citations from 76 respondents relate to the use of the internet as a mechanism for shared worship, training, meetings and keeping in touch.
- 59 citations from 44 respondents relate to the support that has been received.
- 58 citations from 54 respondents relate to exercise.
- 52 citations from 41 respondents relate prayer and spiritual nourishment.
- 40 citations from 38 respondents relate to the opportunity for change.
- 30 citations from 29 respondents relate to hobbies and pastimes.
- 30 citations from 27 respondents relate to the opportunities for outreach.
- 27 citations from 26 respondents refer simply to family and friends, which may also imply support.

## Conflicting Influences

30. Three themes appear as both adverse and positive substantial influences: workload, the internet and support.

31. Workload 35 respondents cited workload 50 times as either a pressing concern or as being unhelpful, over 40% of which imply either an increased workload, or reduced ability to take time off during the pandemic. In contrast, 75 respondents cited additional time off 114 times as a positive encouragement or as being helpful. It is, of course, possible to feel the burden of workload whilst enjoying more time off, but additional workload almost inevitably implies less time off and *vice versa*. Thus, it would appear that some respondents experienced an increase in workload, whilst about twice as many experienced a decrease. This is, of course, quite possible and depends on the personal circumstances of each individual and this borne out by there being only 16 respondents common to both groups. What is less obvious is why 6 of these respondents implied both an increase in workload and an increase in time off in their citations. However, it may well be that both were experienced at different times during the period. Indeed, a number of respondents refer specifically to an easing of workload, or more time off, during the early period whilst in lockdown, but that things deteriorated later.

32. The internet Information technology arises in several different contexts, which may be perceived as helpful or unhelpful, depending on the individual and the context. Amongst those on the positive side of the balance are:

- It provides the opportunity to continue with ministry, mission and worship whilst churches are closed, including outreach to people with whom the church does not normally connect (40 citations).
- It provides a means of keeping in contact with family, friends and colleagues, particularly during the pandemic restrictions (17 citations).
- It enables meetings to be held more efficiently, without having to travel (10 citations).
- It provides access to training and learning resources (10 citations).

Counter-balancing these positive aspects are:

- On-line ministry is a poor substitute for the real thing and poses some conceptual challenges for some clergy (20 citations, with a further 14 relating to the closure of churches).
- Use of the internet can become excessive, particularly for meetings (20 citations).



- It can be very stressful (9 citations).
  - It offers an unsatisfactory means of keeping in touch compared with live contact (4 citations).
33. Whilst the number of citations quoted in paragraph 32 should be considered as indicative, rather than definitive, since they involve a degree of interpretation of what has been written, often cryptically, it is considered that they do provide a good sense of the balance between the positive and negative attitudes. Thus, on balance, the use of the internet for meetings was welcomed, but there is a feeling amongst many that the use has become unnecessarily excessive. Similarly, the responses display a more positive than negative attitude towards the use of the internet for ministry, and this is supported implicitly by the 38 respondents who cited the opportunity for change created by the pandemic. Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that there is a substantial number of priests who do not feel comfortable with online ministry and were particularly distressed by having to close their churches.
34. Support Support is cited positively by 44 respondents and adversely by 22. In practice there is no conflict between the two, even though 10 respondents appear in both groups, since they refer to support from different sources, i.e. laity, clergy colleagues, senior staff.

## INFLUENCE OF PREDOMINANT THEMES ON WELLBEING AND MORALE

### Scope

35. The preceding paragraphs have set down the various factors that respondents feel have influenced them for good or ill over the period of the pandemic, but they do not indicate what impact these various factors have actually had. Therefore, each of the frequently cited themes identified above has been analysed to assess the extent to which the wellbeing and morale of those who cited the factor differs from that of those who did not. This analysis is described in Annex A and the key findings are set out below.

### Influence of Adverse Themes

36. Although there are certainly differences in both the wellbeing and morale of those who did, or did not cite the various themes, for the most part the differences are not statistically significant. With regard to adverse influences, only four themes show significant differences:
- The challenges of ministry, mission and worship.
  - Pastoral concerns.
  - Workload.
  - Lack of support.
37. Ministry, mission and worship Those who cited this theme have a significantly better wellbeing than those who did not, despite the fact that it was cited as a pressing concern, or as being unhelpful (average wellbeing of 4.2 compared with 3.8). This does not necessarily imply that concern for ministry during the pandemic has prompted better wellbeing, or *vice versa*; indeed, intuitively, this seems to be unlikely. It seems far more likely that a common cause lies elsewhere, perhaps within the personality and character of the individual, which has stimulated both positive wellbeing and concern for ministry quite separately, but this cannot be deduced from the survey data. There is little difference in the morale of those who did or did not cite this theme, either before the pandemic or when the survey was carried out.
38. Pastoral concerns The findings for those who cited pastoral concerns are very similar to those for ministry, mission and worship, though there are only 5 respondents common to both groups. Thus, those who cited pastoral concerns have a significantly better wellbeing than those who did not (average wellbeing of 4.4 compared 3.8). Again, this should not necessarily be taken as evidence of cause and

effect between the two, but may reflect a third factor affecting both. Again also, there is little difference in the morale of those who did or did not cite this theme, either before the pandemic or in the autumn.

39. Workload Those who cited workload have a significantly lower wellbeing than those who did not (average of 3.7 compared with 4.1), which is not surprising as workload has previously been demonstrated in Part 1 of this report to be strongly correlated with wellbeing. Although both reported similar morale before the pandemic, those who cited workload as a concern reported a larger drop during the pandemic and finished with somewhat lower morale than their colleagues (average of 7.3 dropping to 5.8, compared with 7.5 dropping to 6.4).
40. Lack of Support Those who cited lack of support have a significantly and substantially lower wellbeing than those who did not (average wellbeing of 3.3 compared with 4.1). They also reported somewhat lower morale before the pandemic and much lower morale at the end (average of 6.8 dropping to 5.0 compared with 7.6 dropping to 6.5).

### Influence of Positive Themes

41. The only theme for which there is a significant difference in wellbeing between those that did or did not cite the theme is opportunity for change.
42. Opportunity for Change Those who cited the opportunity for change have a significantly better wellbeing than those who did not (average wellbeing of 4.5 compared with 3.8). Their morale is also somewhat better (average of 7.7 dropping to 6.7, compared with 7.3 dropping to 6.1). Although it cannot be claimed that the opportunity for change presented by the pandemic necessarily engendered better wellbeing, it is certainly plausible that those willing to embrace that opportunity have survived the pandemic in better shape than those who did not.

## CONTACT WITH BISHOPS AND ARCHDEACONS

### Responses

43. Of the 140 respondents, 6 did not answer the question relating to contact with Bishops or Archdeacons and a further 3 stated that it was not applicable. Of the remainder, 7 stated that they had not had any contact, 2 of whom were content with that. Thus 124 had received contact of some form.
- 60 stated that it had helped.
  - 4 stated that it had helped, but that there had been insufficient contact (only once or twice).
  - 26 indicated that they had appreciated the contact, without stating explicitly that it had helped, though the tenor of the comments was positive.
  - 9 indicated that they had appreciated the contact, and whilst it may sometimes have been useful, it had not really helped and for some was not sufficiently frequent (only once or twice).
  - 7 reported a mixed reaction – some contact helpful, other less so.
  - 15 implied that the contact had been of limited pastoral value, either because it was primarily related to business, or because it was so infrequent.
  - 3 stated that it had not helped.
44. It is impossible to deduce any meaningful conclusions regarding the relationship with wellbeing or morale since the sample sizes are too small, or clearly driven by factors other than contact with Bishops and Archdeacons. For example, there is no significant difference in wellbeing between those who stated that the contact had been helpful and the rest. The group with the highest wellbeing are the 7 who reported no contact, but as this group includes 3 curates and 1 associate priest, who have been shown in Part 1 of the report to enjoy better wellbeing, together with 2 who stated that they were content to have no contact, it doesn't really help. It is also not statistically significant. The morale of the group

reporting no contact is also better than most after the pandemic, but not as high as the three who stated that the contact had not helped, all curates, whose morale had risen. Again, nothing meaningful can be deduced from this.

## FUTURE SUPPORT

### Responses

45. Respondents were asked what one thing the Diocese could do to support their wellbeing in any future lockdown, though some suggested more than one. The responses to this question constitute a very diverse mix with comparatively few major themes. Many of the suggestions clearly relate to personal issues confronting the respondent and do not help in formulating a more general strategy for the future. That is not to say that they are not important; rather that they are issues that should be taken up directly with the Diocese. Other suggestions equally clearly lie outside the competency of the Diocese. Yet others are more general issues which apply whether in lockdown or not. Nevertheless, a number of themes can be identified which relate, in part, to the themes that have already been discussed in preceding paragraphs.
46. Nothing New 24 respondents could not think of anything, or stated that the Diocese should continue with what it is already doing.
47. Communication 27 respondents ask for better communication from the Diocese, particularly clearer and more timely communication as guidance changes, but also the provision of best practice to avoid “re-inventing the wheel” and maintaining a sense of realism, including reducing the volume of communications as far as practicable.
48. Pastoral Contact 31 respondents ask for continuing and regular direct pastoral contact that addresses real issues.
49. Leadership 13 respondents seek practical and spiritual leadership that variously acknowledges reality, is timely and is clear with regard to expectations.
50. Internet 12 respondents mention the internet, primarily as a means of providing training and CMD, including for laity, but also for Diocesan collective worship, to provide resources for local collective worship and for support groups.
51. Access to Churches 5 respondents ask that churches should remain open in any future lockdown. 3 further respondents ask that decisions regarding closure should be delegated to the parish. (Note that these requests were made in late October 2020.)
52. Finance 3 respondents ask for a lifting of the pressure on parish share, with another asking that personal pay should not be cut.
53. Support 4 respondents mention support, 1 that it should be more accessible, 1 for support before counselling becomes necessary and 2 for support for incumbents, including from laity.
54. Others Other individual issues include: better access to Diocesan staff, activities for those without zoom, reducing the admin burden and management responsibility for clergy, sector ministry, safeguarding strategy, time off in lieu and work/life balance. 1 respondent questioned the relevance of senior staff and the Diocese in present circumstances, presumably implying that they should be abolished.

## CLERGY WITH LOW WELLBEING

### Characteristics of Clergy with Low Wellbeing

55. Eleven of the respondents reported their wellbeing state as extremely or very stressed. The characteristics of these eleven were examined in Part 1 of this report where it was found that they differed from other clergy in the following respects.
- They are far more likely to experience moderate to strong adverse influence of trends in the national church.
  - They are far more likely to experience adverse effects of relations with the Diocese, with lay colleagues, of workload and, to a lesser extent, follow up to ministry review.
  - They have lower satisfaction with their role, though whether this is a cause or consequence of low wellbeing is unclear.
  - They get substantially less support from clergy colleagues and, to some extent from family members.
  - They are less able to take a day off each week.
  - They are significantly more likely to experience insufficient access to Bishop's staff and, to a lesser extent, Diocesan staff.
  - They are rather more likely to make use of a work consultant/coach/mentor and spiritual director and substantially more likely to experience insufficient access to either.
56. A similar analysis has been carried out with regard to their responses to the various questions relating to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Their morale was lower than their colleagues before the pandemic (average 6.3 compared with 7.5), dropped to a greater extent during the pandemic (average 1.8 compared with 1.1) and therefore ended much lower (4.5 compared with 6.4).
  - They are far more likely to cite workload as a pressing concern and as being unhelpful.
  - They are far more likely to cite lack of support as being unhelpful and far less likely to cite the support they have received as being helpful.
  - They are far less likely to cite lack of contact with others as being unhelpful. Indeed, none of the eleven cited this, whereas there were 44 citations from the other 129.
  - They are less likely to cite the opportunity for change as a positive encouragement. Again, none of the eleven cited this compared with 40 citations from the others.
  - They are more likely to have had a mixed reaction to contact with a Bishop or archdeacon.
57. The findings regarding workload and support are fully consistent with the findings reported in Part 1, and the lack of concern over less contact with others is consistent with the adverse relations experienced with others. The finding regarding the opportunity for change is also broadly consistent with that regarding attitude towards trends in the national church, though they are expressed in rather different terms. There is also some commonality between the expressed lack of access to Bishop's Staff and the mixed reaction to contact with Bishops and Archdeacons during the pandemic. The lower morale is fully consistent with the lower wellbeing, as is the larger drop in morale since all but one of the 11 reported lower wellbeing than in 2012 (see paragraphs 10-11). Thus, the responses in the section of the questionnaire related to the Covid-19 pandemic reinforce the concern one feels for these sufferers.
58. The proportion of respondents recording low wellbeing (very or extremely stressed) had remained steady at between 7% and 10% across all three previous surveys (9 to 15 respondents). Thus, the number and

proportion in 2020 (11 respondents, 8%) is well within the normal range and, more particularly, shows no increase that could be attributed to Covid-19.

## THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

### Impact on Clergy Wellbeing and Morale

59. All of the evidence presented in this report leads to the conclusion that the Covid-19 pandemic has had only a modest impact on the wellbeing and morale of the Diocesan clergy. Wellbeing is very similar to that recorded in the surveys in 2008 and 2012, having recovered from the dip observed in 2016. Although 58% of respondents indicate that their morale has gone down during the pandemic, some by a substantial amount, and average morale has indeed fallen slightly, 24% indicate that it has been unaffected and 18% indicate that it has actually gone up. In particular, those with lower than average morale at the start of the pandemic have seen their morale rise on average.

### Wider Implications of the Pandemic

60. The modest impact on wellbeing and morale does not imply that the pandemic has had no impact on clergy in a broader sense. The scale of the response to the various questions gives the lie to any such suggestion. However, almost as many positive factors have been identified as negative and, whilst many of the former relate to the resilience, generosity of spirit and support demonstrated by people, or simply making the best of a bad job during adversity, some do suggest genuine benefits stemming from developments during the pandemic.

61. For example, over a quarter of all respondents have seen the period of the pandemic as a positive opportunity for change. On balance, the internet has been seen as a benefit in allowing activities to continue, despite its limitations and inadequacies, even for ministry, mission and worship. For every respondent who cited workload as a concern, at least two more applauded the additional time off that they have been able to enjoy. Similarly, twice as many respondents have commented favourably on the support that they have received as have complained about the lack of support.

62. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that for some clergy, 2020 has proved to be a challenging time, even if it is not fully reflected in the broad statistics of wellbeing and morale, and the causes are clearly set out in the responses they have made. In practice, most have managed to keep going despite the adversity and have borne it well. Perhaps the experience can best be summarised by one particular respondent who could see very little to be positive about and much to lament, but whose morale and wellbeing were high and had survived intact.

## CONCLUSIONS

63. The wellbeing of the Diocesan clergy who responded to the survey (54% of those eligible) has recovered from the dip seen in the 2016 survey, despite the Covid-19 pandemic, and is again similar to that seen in the 2008 and 2012 surveys. This does not necessarily imply that the pandemic has had no effect, since it is possible that wellbeing might have been even higher but for Covid-19, but it does suggest that any adverse effect is modest.

64. The average morale of the Diocesan clergy who responded has declined slightly over the course of the pandemic, with 58% indicating that their morale has gone down, but with 24% indicating that it has been unaffected and 18% that it has actually gone up. In particular, those with lower than average morale at the start of the pandemic have seen their morale rise on average.

65. The morale of clergy is generally unrelated to the priest's role, gender, or stipendiary status, except that the morale of curates is higher both before and after the pandemic and has fallen less during the course of the pandemic.
66. Nearly 1600 separate citations have been received relating to factors that have influenced respondents adversely or positively during the course of the pandemic. Many of these have common underlying themes and these have been grouped according to the theme.
- The most frequently cited adverse themes are:
    - Health and the broader aspects of wellbeing.
    - The challenges of ministry, mission and worship, both spiritual and practical, including the closure of churches.
    - Pastoral concerns.
    - Constantly changing rules and guidance.
    - Workload.
    - The internet, particularly the technical challenges it poses, its inadequacies as a medium for meetings and excessive use.
    - Finance, both church and personal.
    - The attitudes and actions of those in authority.
    - Lack of support.
  - The most frequently cited positive themes are;
    - Having more time available.
    - The response of people to the challenges of the pandemic.
    - The use of the internet as a mechanism for shared worship, training, meetings and keeping in touch.
    - The support that has been received.
    - Exercise.
    - Prayer and spiritual nourishment.
    - The opportunity for change.
    - Hobbies and pastimes.
    - The opportunities for outreach.
    - Family and friends, which may also imply support.
67. In most cases, the wellbeing and morale of those who cited the above themes is little different from that of those who did not. However, there is significant correlation in the following cases.
- Those who cited the challenges of ministry, mission and worship during the pandemic as an adverse influence have a significantly better wellbeing than those who did not. This does not necessarily imply that concern for ministry during the pandemic has prompted better wellbeing, or *vice versa*. It seems far more likely that a common cause lies elsewhere, perhaps within the personality and character of the individual, which has stimulated both positive wellbeing and concern for ministry quite separately, but this cannot be deduced from the survey data.
  - Those who cited pastoral concerns as an adverse influence also have a significantly better wellbeing than those who did not. As for ministry, this does not necessarily imply that pastoral concerns engender better wellbeing.
  - Those who cited workload as an adverse concern have a significantly lower wellbeing than those that did not. Their morale is also lower and fell more during the pandemic. This finding is fully consistent with previous findings related to the impact of workload on wellbeing.
  - Those who cited lack of support as an adverse influence also have a significantly lower wellbeing and morale than those who did not. This finding is also consistent with previous findings on the relative importance of support.

- Those who cited the opportunity for change have a significantly better wellbeing and morale than those who did not.
68. Of the 140 respondents, 124 stated that they had had contact with a Bishop or Archdeacon during the pandemic. Of these, 60 stated that the contact had been helpful, with a further 4 stating that it had been help but not sufficiently frequent; 26 stated that the contact had been appreciated, without indicating whether it had been helpful, though the tenor of the comment was positive, and a further 9 indicated that it had been appreciated, but had not really helped. The remaining 25 indicated that the contact had been of mixed or limited value, or had not helped. It is impossible to assess the impact of the contact on wellbeing or morale owing to small sample sizes.
69. Over 140 suggestions were made regarding things that the Diocese could do to support wellbeing in any future lockdown. These covered a very diverse range, with relatively few themes common to significant numbers of respondents, and many relating to specific personal issues. The more numerous common themes are:
- Better communication from the Diocese, particularly clearer and more timely communication as guidance changes.
  - Continuing and regular direct pastoral contact.
  - Nothing new.
70. The factors influencing the wellbeing and morale of the respondents who reported that they were very or extremely stressed are consistent with those identified in Part 1 of this report. The proportion and number of such respondents are similar to previous surveys. Thus, there has been no increase that could be attributed to Covid-19.
71. Taking into account all aspects of the survey, it is concluded that the impact of the pandemic on the wellbeing and morale of the clergy as a whole has been modest. This does not imply that it has had no impact at all, or that no individuals have been seriously affected. A large number of adverse influences have been cited, but they rarely correlate with impaired wellbeing or morale, and can be offset to some extent by positive influences and the balance is more even. Whilst many of the positive influences relate to the resilience, generosity of spirit and support demonstrated by people, or simply making the best of a bad job during adversity, some do suggest genuine benefits stemming from developments during the pandemic. Ultimately, most of the Diocesan clergy have managed to keep going despite the adversity and have borne it well.

## ADVERSE AND POSITIVE INFLUENCES ON WELLBEING AND MORALE

1. This report identifies a wide range of factors that have been cited by respondents as pressing concerns, or as being unhelpful to their wellbeing and morale during the pandemic, together with an equally diverse range of factors that have been positive encouragements or helpful. These various factors have been grouped into common themes under two headings as adverse or positive factors.
2. In order to assess the potential impact that these factors might have had, an analysis has been conducted to assess the differences in wellbeing and morale between those who cited a theme and those who did not. Only those themes cited by over 20 respondents have been considered as sample sizes rapidly become too small for meaningful statistical analysis.
3. Table A1 shows the wellbeing states of respondents who did or did not cite each of the 10 most frequently cited adverse themes.

Table A1: Wellbeing for Most Frequently Cited Adverse Themes

Adverse Themes	Cited or not	Average wellbeing rating	% Negative/positive wellbeing	% Very low wellbeing	% Very good wellbeing
Health	<b>Cited</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>45/55</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>35</b>
	Not cited	4.1	35/65	7	45
Broader wellbeing	Cited	3.9	36/64	8	34
	Not cited	4.0	41/59	8	44
Challenge of ministry	<b>Cited</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>34/66</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>52</b>
	Not cited	3.8	43/57	11	33
Pastoral issues	<b>Cited</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>20/80</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>59</b>
	Not cited	3.8	48/52	9	32
Rules and guidance	<b>Cited</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>43/57</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>38</b>
	Not cited	4.0	38/62	8	42
Workload	<b>Cited</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>54/46</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>37</b>
	Not cited	4.1	34/66	5	42
Use of internet	<b>Cited</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>37/63</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>46</b>
	Not cited	3.9	40/60	9	39
Finance	<b>Cited</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>50/50</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>29</b>
	Not cited	4.1	36/64	7	44
Actions of authority	<b>Cited</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>50/50</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>34</b>
	Not cited	4.1	36/64	7	43
Lack of support	<b>Cited</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>64/36</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>
	Not cited	4.1	35/65	6	45
<b>All respondents</b>		<b>4.0</b>	<b>39/61</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>41</b>

4. The Table A1 highlights some interesting differences in the relationship between the different themes and wellbeing.
  - Health and wellbeing. Whilst those who cited both health and broader aspects of wellbeing have a slightly lower wellbeing than those that did not, the difference is not statistically significant. This is a little surprising, given the nature of the pandemic and that they were cited by so many respondents as being an adverse influence. Personal and family health was also found to have a moderate to strong influence on wellbeing in the 2008 survey, the only survey in which this issue has been addressed specifically.
  - Challenge of ministry, mission and worship. Those who cited the challenges of ministry, mission and worship have reported significantly better wellbeing than those who did not. This correlation does not necessarily imply that concern for ministry during the pandemic prompts positive wellbeing, or *vice versa*; indeed, intuitively, this seems to be unlikely. It seems far more likely that a common cause lies elsewhere, perhaps within the personality and character of the



individual, which stimulates both wellbeing and concern for ministry, but this cannot be deduced from the survey data.

- Pastoral issues. As for the challenge of ministry, those who cited pastoral issues as an adverse influence have also reported significantly better wellbeing than those who did not. Again, it seems more likely that the correlation between positive wellbeing and concern for pastoral issues stems from some other common cause, rather than from a direct cause and effect between the two. Despite the similar wellbeing data of this and the previous group, there are only 5 respondents common to both, so the similarity is largely coincidental.
  - Changes in Rules and Guidance: Those who cited the constant changes in rules and guidance appear to have a slightly better wellbeing than those that did not, but the difference is not statistically significant.
  - Workload. Those who cited workload have a significantly lower wellbeing than those who did not, which is not surprising as workload has previously been demonstrated in Part 1 of this report to be strongly correlated with wellbeing.
  - Use of the internet. Those who cited the use of the internet as an adverse factor appear to have a slightly better wellbeing than those who did not, but the difference is not statistically significant.
  - Finance. Those who cited finance as a pressing concern appear to have a somewhat lower wellbeing than those who did not, but the difference is only marginally significant.
  - Actions and attitudes of those in authority. The wellbeing of those who cited the actions of those in authority appears to be lower than that of those who did not, but again the difference is not statistically significant.
  - Lack of support. The wellbeing of those who cited lack of support as an adverse influence is significantly much lower than that of those who did not.
5. A more direct quantitative assessment of the impact of the pandemic can be made from the responses to the question relating to morale. The morale rating before the pandemic should, in principle, be independent of any effects of the pandemic itself and reflect the morale state of the respondent under normal circumstances. The morale state when the questionnaire was completed in the autumn will, of course, reflect the respondent's feelings at that point. In practice, the most important measure is probably the difference between the two since this will reflect the impact that the pandemic has had. Table A2 compares the average morale ratings before the pandemic and at the time of the survey for those who cited, or did not cite, the ten most frequently cited adverse themes.

Table A2: Average Morale Ratings for Most Frequently Cited Adverse Themes

Adverse Themes	Cited or not	Before pandemic	At survey	Drop in rating
Health	<b>Cited</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>0.6</b>
	Not cited	7.9	6.2	1.7
General wellbeing	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>1.6</b>
	Not cited	7.4	6.5	1.1
Challenge of ministry	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>1.3</b>
	Not cited	7.3	6.2	1.1
Pastoral Issues	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>1.1</b>
	Not cited	7.3	6.1	1.2
Rules and Guidance	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>0.4</b>
	Not cited	7.5	6.1	1.4
Workload	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>1.5</b>
	Not cited	7.5	6.4	1.1
Use of the internet	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>1.1</b>
	Not cited	7.3	6.1	1.2
Finance	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>1.3</b>
	Not cited	7.5	6.3	1.2
Actions of authority	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>1.6</b>
	Not cited	7.4	6.3	1.1
Lack of support	<b>Cited</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>1.8</b>
	Not cited	7.6	6.5	1.1
<b>All respondents</b>		<b>7.4</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>1.2</b>

6. It is shown in the main text that the average morale of the respondents as a whole fell slightly during the course of the pandemic and Table A2 shows the same phenomenon for each of the 10 most frequently cited adverse themes, though the scale varies between them.
- Health. Those who cited health recorded lower than average morale before the pandemic, whereas the rest recorded higher than average morale. One possible explanation for this difference may lie in the numbers of respondents who cited health in relation to Covid-19 or more generally (22 and 33 respectively). Whilst the morale of the former is likely to have been influenced primarily by health only over the course of the pandemic, the morale of the latter may well have been influenced before the start, if the concern related to an ongoing situation. Furthermore, the total number of respondents who cited health represents 60% of all respondents. Thus, if this group recorded lower morale than the average across all respondents, then inevitably the average morale of the remainder must rise. However, this does not explain why those who did not cite health as a concern should have experienced a substantially larger than average drop in morale over the course of the pandemic, whilst those who did cite health experienced a smaller than average drop, with both groups ending at the same level. No explanation for this anomaly can be offered, though the end result is consistent with the deduction that concerns about health do not appear to have affected wellbeing significantly by the time the survey was carried out.
  - Wellbeing. Those who cited more general aspects of wellbeing display a slightly larger drop in morale over the course of the pandemic.
  - Challenge of Ministry. The slightly higher morale of those who cited the challenge of ministry is consistent with the higher wellbeing.
  - Pastoral issues. The higher morale of those who cited pastoral issues is fully consistent with the significantly better wellbeing of this group.
  - Changing Rules and Guidance. It is not clear why those who cited the difficulties generated by constantly changing rules and guidance should have recorded so small a drop in morale during the pandemic, such that they ended in a better morale state than most others.
  - Workload. Those who cited workload as a concern recorded slightly lower morale before the pandemic and a larger than average drop in morale over the course of the pandemic, resulting in a lower morale state at the end. This is fully consistent with previous findings regarding the impact of workload on wellbeing and that some respondents reported an increase in workload during the pandemic.
  - Use of the internet. The higher than average morale states of those citing use of the internet is not fully consistent with the wellbeing of this group, which is not significantly different from the average. However, it may reflect the fact that use of the internet has been cited both adversely and positively.
  - Finance. The morale of those who cited finance as a concern is, for practical purposes, the same as for the clergy as a whole. Finance does not, therefore, appear to have influenced morale one way or the other.
  - Actions and attitudes of those in authority. The morale of those who cited the actions and attitudes of those in authority fell by rather more than average during the pandemic so, having started slightly higher than average, it ended slightly lower.
  - Lack of Support. The morale state of those who cited lack of support was lower than other respondents at the start of the pandemic, fell by more than others during the pandemic and ended lower than any other group. The low morale of this group is consistent with the very low wellbeing noted in Table A1, but the low morale at the start of the pandemic suggests that this was a pre-existing problem, whilst the much larger than average drop in morale over the course of the pandemic suggests that things became much worse.
7. Table A3 shows the wellbeing states of respondents who did or did not cite each of the 10 most frequently cited adverse themes.

Table A3: Wellbeing for Most Frequently Cited Positive Themes

Positive Themes	Cited or not	Average wellbeing rating	% Negative/positive wellbeing	% Very low wellbeing	% Very good wellbeing
Response of people	<b>Cited</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>42/58</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>61</b>
	Not cited	4.1	35/65	8	56
Use of the internet	<b>Cited</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>46/54</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>36</b>
	Not cited	4.2	31/69	8	47
More time available	<b>Cited</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>39/61</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>37</b>
	Not cited	4.1	40/60	5	44
Exercise	<b>Cited</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>37/63</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>44</b>
	Not cited	3.9	41/59	9	38
Support received	<b>Cited</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>41/59</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>32</b>
	Not cited	4.0	39/61	9	45
Prayer & spiritual nourishment	<b>Cited</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>29/71</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>44</b>
	Not cited	3.9	43/57	8	39
Opportunity for change	<b>Cited</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>21/79</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>55</b>
	Not cited	3.8	46/54	11	35
Hobbies	<b>Cited</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>31/69</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>45</b>
	Not cited	3.9	41/59	8	40
Opportunity for outreach	<b>Cited</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>41/59</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>41</b>
	Not cited	4.0	39/61	8	41
Family & friends	<b>Cited</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>31/69</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>54</b>
	Not cited	3.9	41/59	8	38
<b>All respondents</b>		<b>4.0</b>	<b>39/61</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>41</b>

8. Despite small differences in the values for those who did or did not cite a theme, the only one of real significance is the opportunity for change, where those who cited this theme recorded a much better wellbeing than those who did not. As in the cases of the challenge of ministry and pastoral concerns discussed above, it cannot be claimed that the opportunity for change presented by the pandemic necessarily engendered better wellbeing, though it is certainly plausible that those willing to embrace that opportunity have survived the pandemic in better shape than those who did not.

9. Table A4 compares the average morale ratings before the pandemic and at the time of the survey for those who cited, or did not cite, the ten most frequently cited positive themes.

Table A4: Average Morale Ratings for Most Frequently Cited Positive Themes

Positive Themes	Cited or not	Before pandemic	At survey	Drop in rating
Response of people	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>1.3</b>
	Not cited	7.5	6.4	1.1
Use of the internet	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>1.4</b>
	Not cited	7.4	6.4	1.0
More time available	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>1.0</b>
	Not cited	7.6	6.2	1.4
Exercise	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>1.2</b>
	Not cited	7.5	6.2	1.3
Support received	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>1.5</b>
	Not cited	7.3	6.3	1.0
Prayer & spiritual nourishment	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>1.3</b>
	Not cited	7.3	6.1	1.2
Opportunity for change	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>1.0</b>
	Not cited	7.3	6.1	1.2
Hobbies	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>1.2</b>
	Not cited	7.5	6.3	1.2
Opportunity for outreach	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>0.4</b>
	Not cited	7.4	6.0	1.4
Family & friends	<b>Cited</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>2.0</b>
	Not cited	7.4	6.4	1.0
<b>All respondents</b>		<b>7.4</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>1.2</b>

10. In most cases, the values recorded for those who did or did not cite a theme are very similar to each other and to the overall average. The only cases that stand out as being different are:

- Prayer and spiritual nourishment. The morale ratings both before the pandemic and at the survey are somewhat higher for those who cited this theme. Although the wellbeing ratings for those who cited prayer and spiritual nourishment are also slightly higher, the difference is of marginal statistical significance.
- Opportunity for change. Again, the morale ratings both before the pandemic and at the survey are somewhat higher for those who cited this theme, which is consistent with the results for wellbeing.
- Opportunity for outreach. The morale of those who cited the opportunity for outreach is a little higher than average before the pandemic, but this group experienced a much smaller drop in morale during the course of the pandemic and ended with a much higher morale than average. This is not reflected in the wellbeing data as the wellbeing of those who cited this theme is essentially the same as that of those who did not. There is no obvious cause in the survey data to explain this apparent anomaly.
- Family and friends. The morale of those who cited family and friends began the pandemic a little higher than average, but suffered a much larger drop than average over the course of the pandemic and ended lower than average. The wellbeing of those who cited this theme is slightly better than those who did not, but the difference is not statistically significant and the reason for the large fall is not known.

11.