The Bishop of Leicester
The Rt Revd Martyn Snow

To the Churches in the A2 Area
St Edwards, Castle Donington
St Nicholas, Lockington cum Hemington
St Margarets, Blackfordby
St Stephen's, Woodville
St Helen, Ashby-de-la-Zouch
Holy Trinity, Ashby-de-la-Zouch
Breedon Priory, Breedon-on-the-Hill
Holy Trinity, Staunton Harold
St Mary the Virgin, Coleorton
All Saints, Isley Walton
St Matthews, Worthington
St Michael & All Angels, Appleby Magna
St Peters, Swepstone
Holy Trinity, Norton Juxta Twycross
St Bartholomews, Snarestone
Holy Rood, Packington
Holy Trinity, Normanton Le Heath
St Laurence, Measham
St John the Evangelist, Donisthorpe

Date: Tuesday 3rd November 2026
Our ref: MJS/cn-bp6528

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I hope as always this finds you well as we prepare for Advent. It's good to be united in service of our Lord in all our different places and contexts.

I am writing to update you on the continuing work to form Minster Communities across "Area A2" and in particular some possible changes regarding the grouping of parishes and benefices.

Firstly, I want to thank you for your continued engagement in this process. I know this has not been easy and there are still many questions unanswered. However, more widely in the diocese, we now have eight Minster Communities which have been commissioned with more nearing the stage of formal commissioning. In each of these, clergy, lay ministers and parish offices are exploring how they can support one another and partner in mission and ministry. There are many encouraging stories of how they are benefiting from this. If you would like to hear from them about their experiences, we would be happy to arrange this.

Within your own area, Castle Donington and Lockington have now asked to enter a period of discernment with the Beacon in the Forest Minster Community about the possibility of joining them. This is an established process, undertaken prayerfully and collaboratively

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by the local benefice, the Minster Community and the diocese. We expect the discernment to take approximately six weeks. The impact of this will potentially change the landscape of Minster Community formation in your area.

At the request of the Shaped by God Together steering group, the Woodfield Team is working with a facilitator, Nicky McGinty. The initial Minster Community conversations indicated that the Woodfield churches would benefit from some additional facilitation. The purpose of this work is to help the Woodfield Team become well placed to rejoin the Minster Community discussions in due course. This work is ongoing.

Woodville and Blackfordby PCC has been reviewing its governance practices as trustees in response to a Bishop's Citation. The parish has worked diligently and is adopting and strengthening good practice that will support its wider mission within the local community. It is hoped that the identified work will be completed by the end of 2026, after which the parish should also be well placed to rejoin the Minster Community discussions.

We recognise that these developments leave the Flagstaff Benefice in a period of uncertainty. Please be assured that you have not been forgotten or set aside. Your continuing ministry, mission and engagement matter, and we are grateful for your patience while the surrounding discernment and development work proceeds.

I want to thank you for the time, prayer, honest and constructive engagement that you have offered so far. For the present, we ask you to continue faithfully in your local worship, mission and shared life; to pray for all those involved in these discernment processes; and to remain open to the conversations that will follow as the position becomes clearer. We will provide a further update when there is substantive progress to share. We hope to recommence conversations with all the parishes in the area in due course.

Thank you again for your patience, commitment and partnership and I continued to hold you in prayer.

With every blessing,



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