



INVU IN ACTION:

A Lindenhouse Case Study

The Diocesan Administration Team Diocese of Ripon and Leeds

Headed by the Bishop of Ripon and Leeds, The Rt Revd John Packer, the Diocese of Ripon and Leeds is in name one of the Church of England's newest dioceses. Its present title was adopted as recently as 1999 for the former Diocese of Ripon, which had been created in 1836 from sections of the Dioceses of York and Chester. Leeds lies at the southern end of the diocese, which extends north and north-westwards to embrace, beyond Ripon itself, the country towns of Bedale, Hawes and Richmond and dozens of surrounding parishes.

The diocese has a well-structured organisation, including the Diocesan Administration Team led by Diocesan Secretary Philip Arundel. Based in a purpose-built Diocesan Office in Leeds, the team provides the necessary back-up for diocesan officials, clergy and parish-based organisations as well as conducting the central financial work of the diocese. Functions include administering the Diocesan Board of Finance, Diocesan Synod and Bishop's Council, synod elections, communications with clergy, diocesan property including redundant churches and all financial management issues.

Many of the team's responsibilities have always tended inevitably to generate large quantities of paper records and, by late 2006, the Diocesan Office seemed in danger of starting to drown in a sea of paperwork. A forward-looking management decided to explore the possible benefits of introducing a computerised document management system both to free up space and also provide more efficient and convenient access to a range of important diocesan records.

“We investigated a number of document management systems available in the marketplace, to establish which appeared to offer the best solution for us,” explains Diocesan Financial Secretary Norman Gardner. ***“Crucially, we needed a system that would integrate as seamlessly as possible with our accounting and property management systems and provide the flexibility to handle the variety of documents and tasks for which we are responsible on a day-to-day basis. We also required the freedom to set up our preferred structure of files, folders and filing cabinets within the system.”***



“Among the companies we invited to pitch for the contract to develop and install a bespoke system was Lindenhouse Software. Their consultant Gary Stewart not only explained to us here in Leeds just what the Invu document management system could achieve for us. He also enabled us to see how one of their existing clients was using Invu for purchase ledger work and other accounts management functions relevant to the needs of the diocese.”

Norman Gardner was satisfied that Invu from Lindenhouse compared favourably with competing systems in terms of delivering integrated solutions that would help to streamline the diocese’s working methods in all the key areas. Having seen Invu in action and been impressed by the support offered by Lindenhouse, including a user training package to ensure that staff would adapt to the system and benefit without any undue delay, he and his colleagues concluded that the package promised the best all-round solution at the right price. Future savings in space and in document accessing times also held out the prospect of a rapid return on investment.

“Installation of the Invu document management system from Lindenhouse was completed in December 2007,” Norman Gardner adds. ***“The system has more than lived up to our expectations, particularly as regards total integration with our accounts package and property management system. It appeared to us that some other document management providers could not offer a comparable level of expertise in systems integration, which was vital for us.***

“We received outstanding support and training from Lindenhouse before, during and after installation. This enabled us to get all relevant personnel up to speed in using the system. Each of our three user departments, Administration, Property and Accounts, has its own customized filing function, but may access common files to ensure coordination and continuity in dealing with, for example, a specific parish. Offsite access to files has also proved useful in situations such as external meetings at which sight of a particular document is required unexpectedly.

“Based on our experience in using the system, I think it likely that our counterparts in other dioceses would similarly enjoy relief from the burden of paperwork and benefit financially from the release of time and space. We now expect swifter payback from this investment than previously envisaged and we will be systematically shredding appropriate current and archive material to free up a tremendous amount of room. I would be glad to talk



through the practical and cost advantages with other dioceses who may be feeling that mountainous and sometimes inaccessible paper records are impeding their efficiency."

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About Lindenhouse

Lindenhouse provides quality IT products and services to a wide range of companies and, increasingly, to educational and ecclesiastical establishments. The company is a Premier Partner of Invu Services and is the world's largest reseller of Invu software.

For more information, see www.lindenhouse.co.uk

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