

Deanery records

A deanery is a group of parishes within an archdeaconry, led by a rural dean. In medieval times rural deans acted as officers of the diocesan bishop. Archdeacons gradually took over most of the duties of rural deans, but the office was revived in 1836 and the role of rural deans became more significant during the late 19th century.

Rural deans were responsible for reporting on the fabric of the parish churches within their deanery, for convening chapter meetings (of the clergy) and conferences (of clergy and laity, later replaced by the deanery synods), and have oversight of the clergy within the parishes.

Ruri-decanal records include chapter, conference and synod minutes and reports, church inspection registers, visitation reports, financial records, correspondence and magazines

Where to find records

The records for the Oxfordshire deaneries of Aston and Cuddesdon, 1864-1993, Bicester, 1832-1978, Chipping Norton, 1883-1993, Deddington, 1918-1966, Henley, 1932-1972, Islip, 1848-1978, Witney, 1847-1969, Woodstock, 1832-1939 are at the Oxfordshire History Centre.

Catalogue

The deanery records' catalogue is only available in hard-copy form. You will need to visit the History Centre to use it.

[Visiting and contacting Oxfordshire History Centre.](#)