



STRATEGY OUTLINE

DIRECTION

OUR VISION → WHAT INSPIRES US

No one can encounter God and remain unchanged. From Moses at the burning bush to Jesus himself at his baptism; from fishermen leaving their nets, to the women who first witnessed the resurrection – the Christian story is a story of lives transformed. And the story goes on – we are called to partner with a generous God so that lives changed by an encounter with Christ overflow into families, homes and communities and will be changed for the better: *Changed Lives* → *Changing Lives*.

OUR VALUES → HOW WE WILL GO ABOUT OUR WORK TOGETHER

- **Listening: to God and one another**
Trusting that God guides us and that to do his work, we need each other.
- **Celebrating what is good**
Sharing stories of how God has been at work, in big and small ways, and investing in 'cross pollinating' what we're learning across the Diocese.
- **Risk-taking**
Valuing creativity and trying new approaches, even when we're not sure it will work. Encouraging supportive accountability with a focus on learning, rather than blame.
- **Every-member ministry**
Encouraging and supporting each to discern their calling and play their part, sharing leadership and working together at all levels.
- **Letting the edge shape the centre**
Being attentive to the voices of those on the edge of our communities, being ready to learn from them and letting their needs shape our mission.

OUR OBJECTIVES → WHERE WE'RE HEADING

- **Growing the Church, numerically & spiritually**
- **Re-imagining ministry for lay and ordained**
- **Building partnerships that enrich communities**

OUR GOALS, 2018-2022 → OUR SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

Over the next five years as a Diocesan family, we choose to:

- **become more connected and mission-focused in prayer.**
- **become more diverse: with more people from more communities in our congregations, especially young people and those from deprived areas.**
- **offer more courageous leadership: calling, equipping and supporting lay and ordained people to lead the Church in mission in a rapidly changing culture.**

PROJECTS — STRANDS OF WORK

REFLECT → MISSIONAL PRAYER NETWORK

Many people across our diocese are faithful in prayer and there is a wealth of prayer groups, resources and events across Canterbury Diocese and the Channel Islands. *Reflect* will build on this to help connect and deepen the prayer life of the Diocese in a more intentional way. Its purposes:

1. to help us as a diocesan family to listen for God's direction in prayer and for mission.
2. to connect people across the Diocese in creative prayer.
3. to better equip those who want to pray more and more deeply.

ENGAGING WITH AREAS OF DEPRIVATION

Ignite is a church for those on the edge of society, including homeless people and those with addictions. There are already three *Ignite* congregations in the Diocese and with support from the Church Commissioners we will plant 9 new communities over the next 5 years. *Ignite* offers a belong→believe→behave model, unlike many models of church which expect people to behave in a certain way and believe certain doctrines before it is possible for them to belong to the community. While *Ignite* is specifically targeted for deprived communities, the team will be working to capture what learning the model – and the process of getting there – may offer for other contexts.

PRIORITISING YOUNG PEOPLE

Building on our commitment to grow numerically and spiritually, as well as to re-imagine ministry, we will establish new youth ministry hubs which have as their key aims to increase the number of teenagers in our churches and to encourage and nurture teenagers as disciples. The first of these will be the planting of a new youth-focused church in Sittingbourne Deanery. This new ministry will focus on encouraging evangelism and discipleship with teenagers who have had little or no previous contact with Christianity and the Church. It will be based in St Mary's Sittingbourne and will engage, in particular, with the six surrounding secondary schools. A first stage bid is going to the Church Commissioners in October 2018 for this project. Our aim is that other youth initiatives, some similar to the Sittingbourne Deanery project, will emerge around the Diocese over the next 2-3 years. Deaneries and other groups will be invited to consider their local context and bid to host these new projects, whether urban, suburban or rural, and which have as their DNA new Christians teenagers. As we engage with these new initiatives we are aware, and celebrate, that a number of communities are engaged in flourishing ministry with teenagers. With the aim of supporting this ministry across the Diocese, a new Projects Board will consider how we can best support and resource the diversity of these diocesan ministries as part of the continued development of our commitment to 'Whole Church'.

ENRICHING LEADERSHIP

In everything we do, we will be more and more intentional in shaping the entire Diocese as a community of learning. We will build on our excellent clergy leadership training, integrating it with all that we do to develop creative mission. In particular, the Mission-Shaped Ministry programme will evolve not only to serve the *Ignite* projects, but also to equip teams of clergy and lay people to reach out in new ways in their communities. Our lay ministry training will be re-shaped under the new banner of Equipping for Ministry, with less emphasis on generic training of Authorised Lay Ministers, and more bespoke training of lay ministry, authorised in different ways. All this will hold a space for lay and ordained ministry to be genuinely re-imagined in the local

context. At the heart of all we do is the fundamental task to be energised disciples, more able to share the change God can bring within every aspect of our lives.

MISSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Missional Learning Communities enable us to find God's way forward as churches in mission in our changing contexts and changing world - their purpose is to help us to learn together in mission. This ethos is key to transforming our culture. We will work to establish context-based communities of learning across the Diocese. Five or six benefice groups will cluster together to form each Missional Learning Community, with a total of up to 40 people in each Community. The initial commitment is for three years and each year there will be four one-day meetings to:

- share active learning
- engage in spiritual practices
- enable culture change

RESOURCES

MINISTRY

Currently it is envisaged that within the next 5-10 years 46% of the clergy within the diocese will retire. Although Canterbury has the highest proportion of clergy due to retire the situation is similar across all other dioceses. Investment in ministry is therefore a critical requirement and as ordained ministry becomes an increasingly scarce resource the ability of dioceses to resource this through trained local people is also critical. Investment in the discernment of vocations both lay and ordained people is therefore a priority.

FINANCE

The Archbishop's Council approved in June 2016 a 5 year financial strategy through to 2021. This strategy foreshadows year on year increases of Parish Share of around 4% which is principally dominated by the need to increase vocations and training. The cost of ordinand training is in the region of £350k per person spread over a maximum of 10 years, so the financial pressures this investment need places upon the diocese are considerable. The strategy concludes: *"In the light of the current national financial and economic situation there must be a concern that over the period it will be increasingly difficult to recover an increasing level of Parish Share."*

Against this backdrop therefore the new diocesan strategy imposes some considerable diocesan challenges. The Church Commissioners will look for contributions from each diocese before it will agree to support any new strategic development. With the pressures of Parish Share therefore at the moment the diocese will look to its financial reserves and associated trusts for further funding. It is therefore really encouraging that the Appleton Trust has pledged £300k to the diocesan strategy over 3 years. The diocese will also look to utilise existing resources differently so that they can be targeted and assigned to the new strategic vision.

DIOCESAN HOUSE

The Archbishop's Council has agreed to look at the facilities offered at Diocesan House to ensure that it is fit for purpose. It is looking at a number of options including a potential relocation in the Canterbury area, but recognises this may take some time to come to fruition. In the meantime every effort is being made to ensure the effective use of existing space.