

Report to Diocesan Synod 11th March 2017

Members feedback at Nov 2016 Diocesan Synod Regarding the Strategic Focus for next two years

1) Equipping for Mission

29 inputs (14 specific Ipswich applications 14 Rural applications)

Develop Discipleship of existing members (8)

Deanery days on discipleship/vocation / Create hunger for discipleship via courses/Discipleship development, open and unpack the concept of discipleship by providing opportunities and promoting a range of Diocesan, Deanery & Benefice exploration day, events short courses./Cursillo has structures that would support discipleship development using existing resources./Resources for prayer and discipleship groups/Promote, facilitation of small groups as hubs of fellowship and learning./Gifts of the Spirit. "Call to Arms" to invite those wanting to be disciples of Christ from the Diocese/We are the stage of Hebrews 6, still requiring spiritual milk and many move to Maturity in Christ seek these Christians out.

(by days (2), small group (2) challenge (1) Cursillo (1) courses (1))

Encourage sharing of faith with others (7)

Resource to help existing members to share their faith/Build confidence in our calling - creating opportunities for people to get used to talking about their faith in a non-threatening way/Overview of resources on evangelism e.g. J John Natural Evangelism – The individual engaging with Jesus/ Listen to questions about faith in wider community where questions can be heard./ Sparking interest and talent both in and outside organised church in the informal groups/Learn how to invite and attract enquirers/move people from fringe to commitment. Living faith locally/Teaching how to share faith in all contexts & seasons.

Train all to discover vocation for life including some specific ministries (7)

Training and continuing development – continue with Bishop led study days – provide accessible information about training resources – opportunities – emphasis on discipleship as life long learning/training and learning through doing/ Discernment of God's call on each life (valued, grown etc) lay and ordained vocational discernment. Hold deanery led days on discipleship and vocation. Focus on exploration of possible ministries & make resources available / Give away power as clergy to encourage others to take it on (i.e. take on a range of ministry roles and responsibilities/recognising the gifts of those clergy lead./Reinvent & reinvigorate lay and ordained training for ministers./Growing the local ministry team./Train and learn through doing

Develop occasional offices as opportunities for further exploration (2)

Build on existing connections (Pastoral/occ offices) & ecumenical connection/Better training in using pastoral services as entry points to faith

Engage with community (2)

Seek ecumenical and community partners to ensure what happens is appreciated/understanding & engage with our communities to build relationships (e.g. social action) and other forms of engagement to provide supportive communities with trusted relationships

Communicate and share internally (2)

Ensure all members know of focus on Growing in God/ Sharing skills & experience e.g. better use of human resources, circulation of ideas? Urban & rural pairing.

Healing ministry (1)

Contextual Application re Equipping for Mission

Activity	Ipswich	Rural
Develop Discipleship of existing members	Needs to work cross culturally	Alleviate the mind-set and often reality of 'rural isolation'. Slow burn as often not meeting weekly
	Initially focus on deanery led initiative. Provide practical settings where discipleship can be applied in community e.g. schools, hospitals.	Focus on church ministry of prayer, sacred space, disciples offering prayer ministry in community Ascension – Pentecost 2017
	Training for leader	
		Promote small groups across parish boundaries
Encourage sharing of faith with others	Parish evangelists. Alpha/Christianity explored e.g. local prayer initiatives – Thy Kingdom Come	Open churches. Celebrating the church.
	The levels of engagement and how these are applied will be sensitively addressed in each benefice/deanery	
	Training	
	Resource others	Longer term deliberate teaching 'filling station'.
Train all to discover vocation for life including some specific ministries	Celebrate vocations. House groups. In services talk in pairs. Renewed use of Lent courses.	House Groups. In services space to talk in pairs. Variety of information e.g. film
	Deanery planned & led events 2 or 3 times a year. Well resourced	In dispersed geographical deaneries have two centres for deanery planned events initially followed by diocesan link.
	Complete a simple training needs audit interests at benefice level & offer match opportunities	As for Ipswich, include shorter course opportunities for development
	Build up tools, skills and materials for those who are 'doing'. Engage with other sectors to share mission & learning	Clergy learning to help them (those who learn through 'doing'). Hold up a mirror to help those doing to recognise what they are doing.
	'Give away power' via chapter learning & development	
	Working with other denominations	Local vocation days to encourage people
Develop occasional offices as opportunities for further exploration	Using lay people for preparation with baptism packs	Follow up & appropriate clergy involvement. Occasional offices still very important in rural context
	Better training for local lay follow up	

Engage with Community	Work on the churches together network. Links with Ipswich Central	Suffolk Community Foundation – links and information
	Sharing and learning from where it is already in place. Investing in developing new projects.	Same as Ipswich but recognise seasonality
Communicate internally	Needs to get communication beyond just internet. Many don't have access!	Communication
	Partnerships in sharing skills	
Healing Ministry	Sensitively addressed in each Benefice/Deanery	

2) Children , Young People & Schools

19 inputs

Local Congregation to intentionally engage and develop schools work (7)

Go to the children where they are e.g. in schools./Find ways of accessing more secondary schools. Use Bishop's influence? – speak at gatherings of Head Teachers/Help from Diocese on how to improve or gain access to schools especially secondary schools./Diocese to help e.g. provide audit on links we have and access can be improved./Help congregations to understand what they really want as connection with children, school, young people./Closer engagement socially & professionally with local schools – staff, head, parents & governors./Offer to schools e.g. Open the Book, 'Holiday Fund' for families under pressure.

Targeted events (6)

Occasional youth events at Deanery level – pooling expertise. Evenings. Once a month with a theme using social media (like Filling Station)/At least one benefice service café style, messy church once a month/Messy Church initiatives/Use experience Easter – Christmas – Harvest etc in wider context/Let young people know about diocesan initiatives – leaflets. Young Alpha/Scattered children-young people need to be brought together

Provide welcome & engaging environment in church services (4)

When families are there (e.g. Baptism, Christmas Services) make sure they have a really good experience. /Be flexible in timings of services (Sun pm/eve) and activities. Choirs and singing groups./Encouraging young people participating in church services/Congregation should examine the suitability of 'Family Service'

Community Engagement (2)

Encouraging older students to get involved in community projects & charity work/Engagement by members of congregation in their communities' activities & organisations e.g. football club

Contextual Application re Children, Young People and Schools

Activity	Ipswich	Rural
Local Congregation to intentionally engage and develop schools work	Music Director recruits' choristers. Ex Academy Lay Chaplain full time	Open the Book into local primary schools. Holiday Clubs
	Course on Christian basics for teachers as a starter	
Targeted events	Use social media to support 'planting' youth groups with guidance from Diocesan Youth Workers	Use social Media Deanery party, trips to Spring Harvest and the like
	Youth prayer time – across the Diocese	
	(Messy Church) once a month say between 4-6pm to include meal	(Messy Church) Working as a benefice with each church in town & help from all
	(Experience Easter etc) Open church so older young people can drop in and share. Advertise well. Banner	(Experience Easter etc) Invite primary schools and consult as to timings
	Get young people together to discern what THEY want. Make it accessible for them.	Find out what is going on – inform and offer lifts.
		Diocesan events – Gather. Deanery events
Provide welcome & engaging environment in church services	Amazing Choir. Quality technology. Baby changing area, children's corner.	Sharing resources – don't be parochial. Appropriate service sheets. Accessible worship
	Different styles of music/choirs	Families at 4.30 is attracting people & food
Community Engagement		

3) Finance and Buildings

21 inputs

Central Support (11)

Buildings

For buildings there needs to be a flow of information and support from the diocese to give parishes new ideas/ 'Festival Churches' to be in the care of a Diocesan trust./More flexibility from DAC. Financial assistance for schemes such as lighting which will save money in long run.

Finance

Money from Church Commissioners to fund big mission projects – Diocesan led./Parish giving scheme – like Diocese of Gloucester. Centralise Gift Aid/Make better use of corporate purchasing power etc for gas; IT, phone etc..../Diocesan Management/Oversight of bulk buying/Simplify process and support treasures in their work (too few people available or feel capable)/Corporate buying power – saving money for parishes/Giving education. Financial planning – longer term. Speaking to congregation about giving and encouragement of giving more than share.

Community involvement potential (5)

Improve community involvement & ownership – especially use of 'Friends Group'/unlock dormant & unutilised charities & bequests – reduces paperwork & provide resources/Realisation of the value of an open church policy, backed by insurers./The look and feel of our buildings needs to be much improved in a retail & customer led mind set./Make effort to use churches for outside activities – commercial approach. More Churches more attractive on entry – cleaning, signage, website (Churches Near You)

Mutual sharing (3)

Improve communication and sharing of best practice. PCC's to be encouraged to ask Diocese or look on website/Share and broader use of buildings/Share good news of stewardship, campaigns & strategies

Question number of buildings needed (2)

Think seriously about the number of buildings we have and the number of people they serve./Buildings Too many! Financial burden, close All surplus churches. Pubs that don't pay close so should we should we be surprised that churches go the same way. Wider use of buildings, 'Friends of the buildings needed. Fund raising – preventing all other activities as all time spent on building maintenance & share raising.

Contextual Application re Finance and Buildings

Activity	Ipswich	Rural
Central Support	Encourage use of community centres & schools if a church building is not available & House church	
	Parish giving scheme in areas of low income?	Stewardship scheme. Need to be Generous
	Bulk buying insurance/heating	Bulk Telecommunications. Broadband
		'Benefice' treasurers. Simplicity and reduce work.
	Planned- giving routine to be explained simply and clearly to (re) install weekly financing of parish ministry & mission, especially in multi-parish benefices without weekly services.	
	(Communicate that) no one solution fits all and villages are becoming commuter hubs.	
Community Involvement Potential	Increase use as a community centre or hiring	Making rural church buildings relevant to communities e.g. post office
	Cafes. Work hubs - wifi	
	Partner with another charity for fund raising event on a regular basis. (Hog roasts very effective, brings in non-church people in)	
	Advertising for major festivals in good time. Imaginative e.g. 'drop in publicity in hotels, all houses, shops.	
	Attracting casual visitors in Tourism e.g. Angels and Pinnacles. Also going out e.g. to pubs and doing things off piste.	
	The value of 'Marketing' our (parish) churches for the occasional offices, including on-site (and virtual) publicity.	
	Easing of legalities for qualifying connection (re weddings)	
Mutual Sharing	Depends – Good Thanks you letters! Helpful forms. Special events.	
Question Number of Buildings	Locating a church where people live not necessarily a building	Making community areas with church buildings
	Is another church not far away (alt uses)?	Is there an identifiable community? Would the congregation move?