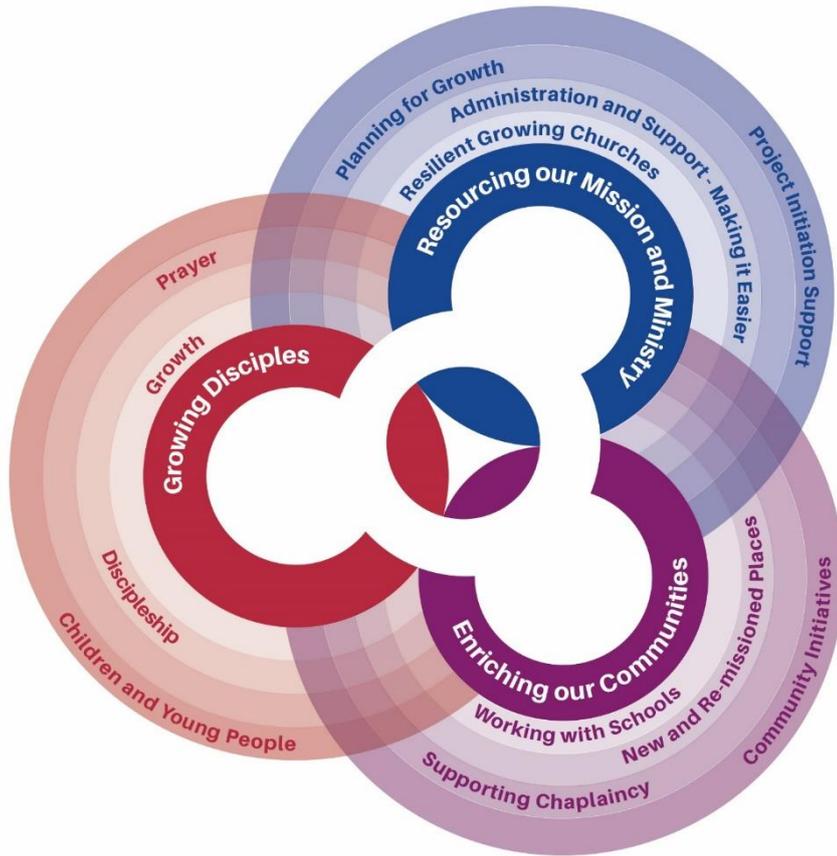


Called Together – Update 2018

Launched in November 2017, Called Together focuses on three core themes of Growing Disciples, Enriching our Communities, and Resourcing our Mission and Ministry.

The first full year of activity has seen progress across the Diocese as we seek to respond to God’s call to us. This is a summary of some key achievements.



Resource

We are committed to enabling parishes to run efficiently and sustainably, so that they can focus more on ministry and mission

The first full year of activity has seen progress across the Diocese as we seek to respond to God’s call to us. Here’s some of what has been achieved so far:

- **Planning for Growth**

The Planning for Growth working group have been working on an approach to encourage and enable every place to develop their Called to Grow plan.

This will be delivered through a toolkit with a standardised approach, and the appointment of Facilitators to help develop and implement the plans.

This workstream draws together many elements of other workstreams and is an investment in growth in every parish across the diocese.

More information on this will be shared early in 2019.

- **Resilient Growing Churches**

The [Missional Property Fund](#) (supported by Marshalls Charity with match funding from the Diocese) launched and had its first round of applications. Eight projects totalling £116k have been awarded funding. The applications for the fund far outweighed the resources available.

To build Financial Resilience we are working towards break-even in the budget. We have increased transparency in our expenditure, income and funds, and changed [our Annual Report](#) format to aid this.

We are rolling out a programme of Treasurer's training and aiming to make it available online.

The Communications Team have run successful Social Media training events for local churches with the national team. The [monthly e-newsletter](#) is now well established, and there is more activity on social media. [Together – the new magazine](#), launched this month (November 20189).

- **Administration and Support – Making it Easier**

We have launched [a GDPR toolkit](#) and training for parish reps and diocesan staff.

We have held a tendering process for our legal services.

We have promoted and held elections for the new Diocesan Synod and are currently in the same process for Bishop's Council and Committees. The first session of the new Synod (13 October) included a time of induction.

- **Project Initiation Support**

We are looking at how to support churches who are undertaking large projects.

The pilot work was to support the reclarification, re-design, and retendering of the church and church hall refurbishment and building works at Holy Redeemer, Lamorbey.

Much learning has been captured from this project and will be written up. As part of this work the project successfully applied for and secured an additional £150k of grant funding from London Marathon Charitable Trust.

Grow

We aim to better live out the Great Commission, share the Good News, and see more people find faith

Here is what has been achieved so far.

- **Growth:**

Three sessions were held in Tonbridge in the early summer, open to all and led by Revd Canon Mark Brown. Forty-plus people attended with some bringing teams from their parish. A session was held in Medway in November with 50 people attending. The sessions focused on setting a culture of evangelism that everyone can be a part of. Feedback has been good and there was excellent contribution from the floor.

The Bishops Leadership Team has asked the working group to consider digital and modern forms of evangelism.

- **Discipleship**

The working group have developed the idea of a Rhythm of Life – which has been shaped, and is currently piloting with 12+ groups, including local parishes, dispersed groups (Diocesan Youth Council, and LLM students) and thematic groups (Formation and Ministry Team). Initial feedback is positive, and certainly interest in the developing ideas was strong.

The frame for the Rhythm is based around obeying and abiding; small groups form and agree how together they will love God, love their neighbour, and love themselves. This intentionally pulls together learning with activity which puts that into practice.

The group on the national discipleship learning community for [Setting Gods People Free](#) have found the discussions about lay ministry and discipleship encouraging, especially as in this diocese we have already embraced and embedded many forms of licensed lay ministry. We have consciously decided to carry out activities under the Called Together framework rather than badging things as Setting Gods People Free. Our current aims include the pilot of the rhythm of life, and signposting resources that encourage whole life learning for disciples.

The [Jesus Shaped People](#) programme is being used in a small number of churches and initial feedback is very positive.

An event in 2019 to 'taste and see' discipleship resources is in the early planning stages

- **Prayer**

During [Thy Kingdom Come](#) prayer stations at the cathedral represented almost every Deanery and created a giant visual prayer for the Diocese. The prayer diary collated events across the Diocese (over 300), so people could pray for each other and get involved in activities beyond their own church.

It revealed activity across the Diocese and across the church traditions. We also featured in films for the national campaign. A Beacon Event is in the early planning stages for 8 June 2019 and we want to encourage churches to open for prayer for [Thy Kingdom Come](#) 2019.

The Prayer Festival at the Cathedral on 22 September attracted over 150 people, many of them lay people not in authorised or licensed ministry. It gave an opportunity to experience different workshops and spend time in prayer.

The Diocesan cycle of prayer is now available on the [PrayerMate](#) app.

- **Children and Young People**

The [Children & Young People](#) team have increased the number of training and events held this year, and engagement with local churches through PCCs, Deaneries, Parish Visits and enquiries. They have also increased collaboration with National & Local Networks.

The [Children and Young People \(CYP\) Fund](#) has been launched with a primary aim to enable small projects and ministry to start and be built upon. The CYP Fund has supported 16 new projects with a further four in the pipeline for approval with amendments. Overall funding of CYP Projects – £42,326.77. The awaiting 4 total approx. £18,000.

Enrich

Our vision encourages us to explore and support ways that mean we enrich every community through the activities of the local church.

Here is what has been achieved so far:

- **Community Initiatives**

This year a variety of courses have been delivered to fit with Hope 2018, including a CAP Money Course in Bromley Archdeaconry, Talking the Good News in Tonbridge Archdeaconry, Modern Slavery training across the Diocese, The Recovery Course, and highlighting Domestic Abuse. We have signed the Zero Tolerance To Loan Sharks Charter and made a series of [HOPE Stories That Need To Be Told films](#).

We continue to be concerned about homelessness. Many churches around the diocese support and host Winter Night Shelters. We take part in the Kent Winter Night Shelter group meeting, and supported Medway Winter Night Shelter to become a charity.

The Community Engagement Advisor offers support and guidance to churches seeking to enrich their communities.

- **New and Re-missioned Places**

Bishops Council is regularly updated on the progress of the Chatham, Ebbsfleet and Kings Hill projects as part of their oversight and governance.

Chatham

With the ending of the Local Ecumenical Partnership, mission in Chatham Town Centre has had a reset. Starting from developing a totally new team with a plant from Pip 'n Jim's, the St John's-on-Tap worshipping community gathering at the "Tap and Tin" nightclub have attendance of 20 or more.

The mission team's capacity was further extended by the appointment of Stephen Ramshaw (Church Army) as Lead Evangelist. The project has recently appointed a second evangelist (with a track record of working with young people), which will be funded by the Church Army who partner with us on this project.

The Conversation Café, established in 2017, continues to thrive and provide an important service to local residents who may not have English as a first language. Strong relationships with the Head, Senior Leadership Team, Governors and parents at St John's Primary school have resulted in the school inviting the Church to establish a plant (soft launched in September and attended by 19 adults and 8 children with monthly gathering to follow).

Termly Messy Church is over-subscribed with numbers constrained by physical space, circa 50 children. The church plant is the result of requests by the parents of the children attending the messy church, and as such the high attendance is not a surprise, but it is an excellent achievement. Together these worshipping communities total almost 100 people.

An application for Heritage England (HE) has been successful, providing over £80k of funding to allow urgent building works to be carried out. This is being used to match capital made available from the Church Commissioners through the major bid secured in 2016.

- **Ebbsfleet**

A Bishops Mission Order has been developed and submitted for review prior to consultation. A Youth and Community Engagement Officer was appointed in June. She has engaged with a broad range of stakeholders to understand the issues impacting community well-being and integration and is actively engaged in a number of community projects. This officer is based at St Mary's in Greenhithe.

- **Kings Hill**

Project Board members have engaged with key stakeholders and begun the work necessary to acquire the site for a new church building in Kings Hill. The growing church of [St Gabriel's Church](#) currently worship in a local school, and members continue to find new ways to reach and serve the community. Their impact and relationship building has begun to make real inroads with the community of Kings Hill.

- **Supporting Chaplaincy**

Canon Tim Mercer (Bishop's Adviser for Healthcare Chaplaincy) & Hospital Chaplain, has been appointed 'Dean of Chaplains', supported by Rev Gary Colville (Kent Workplace Mission) & Canon Rachael Knapp (Schools) to bring a Chaplaincy perspective and experience in to conversations with Area Deans. The working group are drafting a research brief to help us understand the full Chaplaincy picture and where support is required.