

Called Together

**Our shared diocesan vision
and its workstreams**



This guide introduces the Called Together vision for the Diocese of Rochester. It explains:

- The aims of Called Together and the programme of work to help deliver it
- What each workstream of the vision involves and how they connect to the objectives to grow **missional churches**, with **missional leaders** and **missional disciples**
- How everyone can engage and be a champion for the vision

The vision

Called Together is the vision and practical plan of work for the Diocese of Rochester as:

Seeking first the kingdom of God, we are called together to change, serve, and grow with compassion, courage, and creativity.

Seeking God's kingdom in this way means bringing about a Church where all can flourish and 'have life in all its fulness' as God intends (John10:10).

An exciting and ambitious nine-year programme of work has been developed to realise this shared vision which has the potential to benefit every parishes across the Diocese.

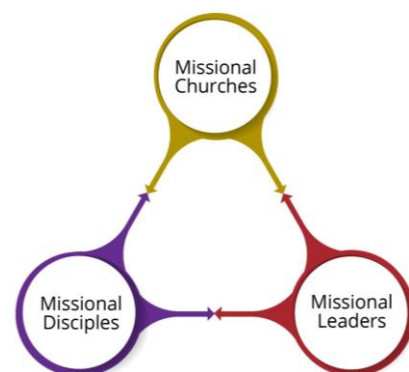
In March 2025, the Diocese was delighted to be awarded £11 million in support of the vision by the National Church's Diocesan Investment Programme (DIP) – a programme that is overseen by the Church of England's Strategic Mission and Ministry Development Board (SMMIB).

The award is the largest externally funded investment this Diocese has received for mission and growth. This is new external investment, not Parish Offer or diocesan reserves, and is investment directly into parishes.

Within the overall vision, our key objectives are to grow **missional churches**, with **missional leaders** and **missional disciples**, that are:

- Growing a safe and healthy culture for all
- Growing younger and more diverse
- Growing spiritually and numerically
- Impacting their communities
- Releasing financial resources for mission
- Planting and growing new missional churches

The three key objectives nurture, support and depend on the other.

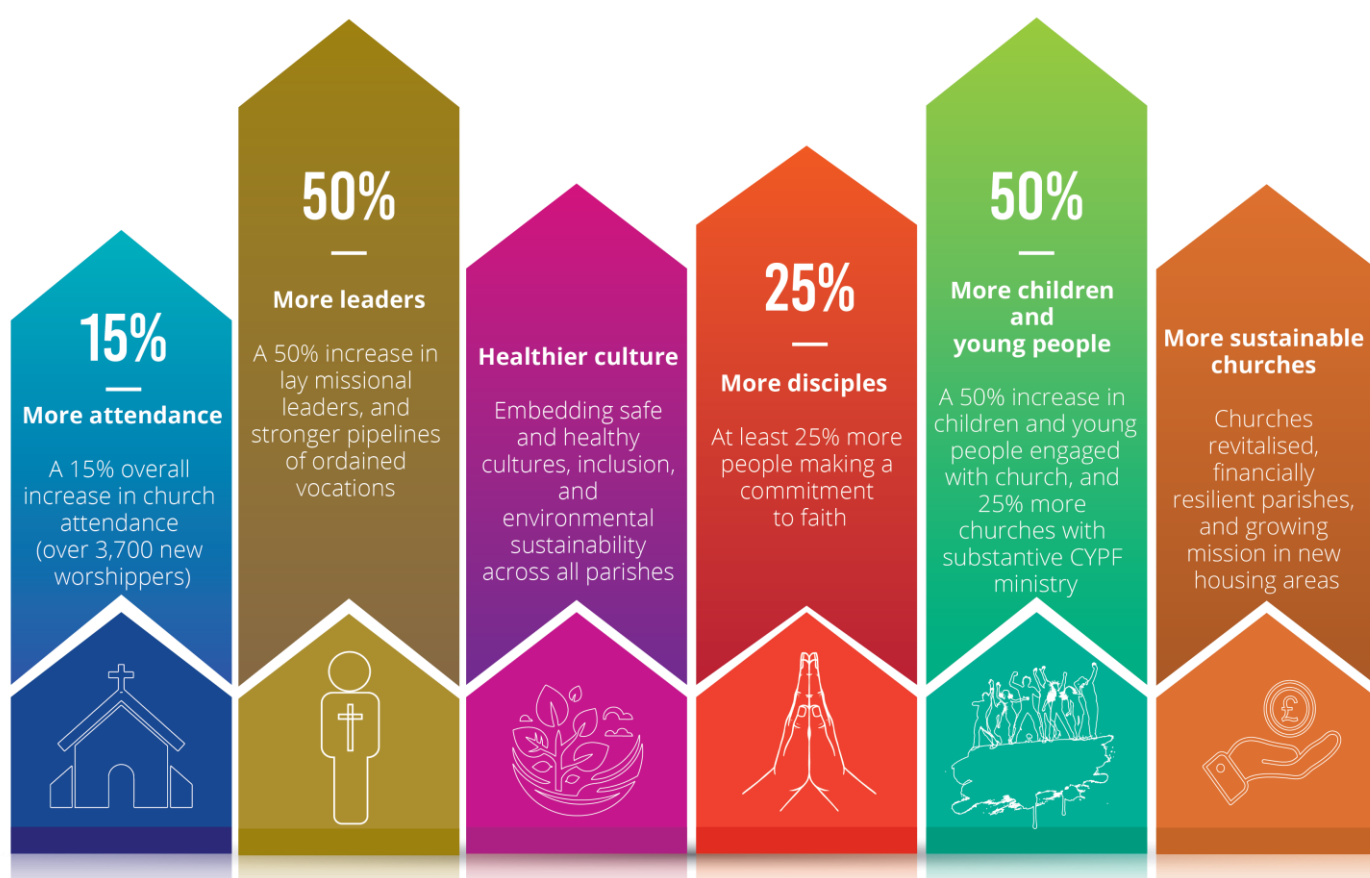


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At the heart of the vision is a commitment to creating and supporting a **flourishing and well-resourced parish system to grow God's kingdom** across Medway, north and west Kent, and the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley, where churches and communities are renewed in faith, hope, and love, and every person is equipped to live and share the gospel in daily life.

This ambition is reflected in the overall outcomes for Called Together, which are that by 2034, the programme will have delivered:

- **More leaders:** a 50% increase in lay missional leaders, and stronger pipelines of ordained vocations.
- **More children and young people:** a 50% increase in children and young people engaged with church, and 25% more churches with substantive CYPF ministry.
- **More disciples:** at least 25% more people making a commitment to faith.
- **More attendance:** a 15% overall increase in church attendance (over 3,700 new worshippers)
- **More sustainable churches:** churches revitalised, financially resilient parishes, and growing mission in new housing areas.
- **Healthier culture:** embedding safe and healthy cultures, inclusion, and environmental sustainability across all parishes



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The workstreams

Four main workstreams have been developed to help focus the work:

- **Missional Leadership Development (MLD):** Training, formation, wellbeing support, and targeted resourcing for lay and clergy.
- **Missional Development Places (MDP):** Recruitment and capital works in selected parishes to grow and sustain worshipping communities and share learning and missional models with others.
- **Children, Young People and Families (CYPF):** Resource hubs, community schools' engagement, training, apprenticeships, and leadership pathways.
- **Revitalise:** Focused support for parishes facing challenge, using targeted interventions to restore sustainability.

All are seen through the lens of growing **Safe and Healthy Cultures**, because if we are truly seeking God's kingdom, then we must reflect its values of righteousness, peace, wholeness, and fullness of life for all.

This means core commitments across each workstream to:

- **Diversity and inclusion:** Serving and equipping people across all ages, ethnicities, backgrounds and contexts, including urban, suburban, estates, rural, and new housing.
- **Safe and healthy cultures:** Ensuring all work projects model safeguarding, wellbeing, accountability, and good governance.
- **Net Zero:** Ensuring net zero and environmental stewardship is an integral part of mission and ministry and embedded within capital projects and parish support.

The programme of work

Each workstream has a fully costed, planned programme of work designed to bring long-term benefit across the whole Diocese, not just those that may receive direct funding.

Let's have a closer look at each one.



Missional Leadership Development (MLD)

Purpose

To grow and sustain confident, mission-focused leaders - lay and ordained - ensuring wellbeing, succession planning, and collaborative leadership across the Diocese.



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It will deliver:

- **Reviewed and reformed training and formation for all God's people**, including licensed lay ministers, unlicensed lay people, and clergy, through short courses, It's Your Calling Days, Initial Ministerial Education, Stage 2 (IME2), Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD), the Ministerial Development Review (MDR) process
- **Learning Communities** (The Gatherings) and developing a **Ministry Experience Scheme** for younger leaders.
- Providing **Wellbeing support** through a structured programme - called Cascade - co-produced with clergy, lay leaders and diocesan staff.
- Offering **targeted missional support** in specific contexts (new housing, estates, rural, Anglo-Catholic).

How this workstream supports the vision objectives

- **Missional churches** Supporting congregations through better-resourced leaders.
- **Missional leaders:** Directly equipping ordained, lay, and emerging leaders.
- **Missional disciples:** Healthier, more confident leaders lead to healthier, more confident congregations.



Missional Development Places (MDP)

Purpose:

To grow and multiply new worshipping communities, and through targeted investment in 15 priority places (across parishes, a school, and new housing areas), catalyse growth and resource other parishes through learning, outreach and models of sustainable mission.

It will deliver:

- Clergy, pioneer and lay posts to parishes with a clear plan for mission and growth.
- Capital investment in some parishes to make buildings fit for mission.
- Sustainability, by requiring parishes to plan for generosity, lay leadership, and long-term resourcing.

How this workstream supports the key objectives:

- **Missional churches:** Involving local congregations in new mission pathways.
- **Missional leaders:** Appointing and training new pioneers, clergy, and operations staff.
- **Missional disciples:** Establishing over 40 new worshipping communities and drawing people of all ages to faith.



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Children, Young People and Families (CYPF)

Purpose

To counter the decline in children and youth attendance by resourcing leaders, apprenticeships, resource hubs and school engagement, nurturing faith in the next generation.

It will deliver:

- **Resource Hubs** in three parishes that will both deliver locally, and train/equip neighbouring parishes and offer learning events that parishes more widely can access.
- A Community **Schools Engagement Adviser** to help parishes build mission relationships with schools.
- **Apprenticeships** (from 2027) for young adults to gain parish experience and theological training.
- **Training courses**, including *Children's Ministry Essentials* and *Youthscape Essentials*, providing structured teaching on theology, child/youth development, safeguarding, and practical tools for ministry.
- **Catalyst**, a locally delivered training, accredited by Ridley Theological College leadership programme, helping volunteers and emerging leaders explore their calling and develop skills for leading groups, worship, or new initiatives.

How this workstream supports the key objectives:

- **Missional churches:** Parents, volunteers, and congregations resourced for CYPF ministry.
- **Missional leaders:** Young adults trained through apprenticeships and existing leaders equipped through the enhanced learning pathway.
- **Missional disciples:** More children and families engaging with church, encountering the gospel, and growing in faith.



Revitalise

Purpose

To strengthen those parishes who are facing financial and missional challenge, to improve both spiritual life and financial sustainability through targeted support.

It will deliver:

- A **health and vitality process**, where 45 parishes receive dedicated support over 9 years.



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- **Targeted support** which may include leadership support, accompanied mission and financial planning, grafts from thriving parishes, or pastoral re-organisation.
- Additional support to parishes/benefices through a **Revitalise Churches Support Adviser** and **Finance Adviser**.

How this workstream supports the objectives:

- **Missional churches:** Engaging congregations in renewal and volunteer growth.
- **Missional leaders:** Supporting and resourcing clergy in challenging contexts.
- **Missional disciples:** Moving parishes from decline to growth, enabling new discipleship pathways.



Safe and healthy cultures

If we're serious about seeking first the Kingdom of God then we need to ensure that the culture in our parishes, schools, and other diocesan settings, is safe and healthy, reflecting God's loving purposes for the world.

This is not just about safeguarding, though that's an essential element. Rather our focus is on ensuring that our churches, parishes and schools have the kind of culture where everyone is supported and enabled to flourish.

Get on board with Called Together

Every person, parish, project, and diocesan team, has an important part to play in making the Called Together vision happen.

Everyone is a champion for Called Together - yes that means you too! Here are some headline messages to help you confidently talk about the vision within your different networks.

- **Called Together is the overarching vision and practical plan** for the Diocese of Rochester as, *seeking first the kingdom of God, we are called together to change, serve, and grow with compassion, courage, and creativity.*
- **Seeking God's kingdom means bringing about a Church where all can flourish** and enjoy life in all its fulness as God intends (Jn10:10) – where everyone, including children and young people, the vulnerable, and victims and survivors of abuse, are at the very heart of everything we do.



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- **£11 million of funding has been awarded by the National Church in support of the Called Together vision.** This is new external investment, not Parish Offer or diocesan reserves, and is investment directly into parishes.
- **Every workstream of the vision has elements that strengthen and support all parishes,** not only those that may receive direct funding.
- **This is not about just a few project parishes** it is about building capacity, sharing learning, and strengthening mission and ministry across the whole Diocese over time.
- The Called Together programme of work is designed to **bring long-term benefit across the whole Diocese**
- **This is about enabling and supporting what is already happening in parishes** – it believes growth is happening and do so further
- **All work undertaken is delivered within the framework of safe and healthy cultures.**
- **Called Together commits us to diversity and inclusion,** valuing ministry in estates, suburban, rural contexts, and across church traditions equally, and supporting our commitment to Net Zero and environmental sustainability.
- **Every person – lay and ordained has a part to play** in bringing about God's kingdom as expressed through Called Together, as only by working together will this ambitious and hope-filled plan be possible.
- **Prayer and attentiveness to the Spirit underpins everything** we do - any success is to be to the glory of God and to build his Kingdom.

THANK YOU

Want more? Please visit the diocesan website for more information, prayers, stories and other materials to help you engage with and share more about Called Together:

www.rochester.anglican.org/about-us/ourvision/