

# Strategy for mission and growth

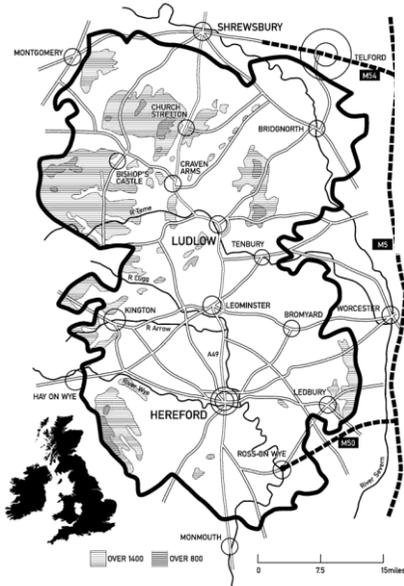


## Diocese of Hereford



**2015 - 2021**

**Kingdom first • follow • shine**



*Hereford Diocese: Proclaiming Christ, Growing Disciples*

*inspiring each generation to follow Jesus Christ*



**Sharing in God's mission in Hereford Diocese today:**

**Inspiring our generation**

*our friends, families, neighbours, colleagues, the people we meet*

**to follow Jesus Christ**

Inspiring prayer · Inspiring all ages · Inspiring schools · Inspiring churches  
Inspiring communities · Inspiring sacred spaces and church buildings

*Turn to Christ; Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father*

Diocese of Hereford  
[www.hereford.anglican.org](http://www.hereford.anglican.org)

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# Our Prayers

## As Jesus taught us

**Our Father in heaven,**  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.  
Amen.

## The Diocesan Follow! Prayer

God who in Jesus calls us – open hearts and  
minds to your invitation.

God of the pilgrim way – be our companion  
day by day.

God of the still, small voice – teach us to pray.

Grant that in our calling, our following, our  
pilgrimage we may see your kingdom of truth  
and peace – and delight to bring others to your  
love.

We make this prayer through Jesus, the Lord

Amen.

*“I long for my children and grandchildren to grow up knowing God’s love for them, I long for our church to be full of people of all ages and backgrounds, I long for us to be one body sharing and working together across the diocese, making a difference wherever we are in lives and communities”*

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## Introduction

Over the last year as a diocese, through our diocesan autumn Follow! 2015 conversations, through further conversations and listening in spring 2016, and through praying together across the diocese at Pentecost 2016, we've been asking:

***“What do we hear God calling us to be and to do  
at this time, in the places we are set, as followers of Jesus today  
—each disciple, church, parish, benefice, deanery, and as a diocese as a whole?”***

In small groups and bigger gatherings hundreds of people in the diocese shared dreams and longings, hopes and fears, in answer to that big question.

We heard:

***“I long for my children and grandchildren to grow up knowing God’s love for them”  
“I long for our church to be full of people of all ages and backgrounds”  
“I long for us to be one body sharing and working together across the diocese,  
making a difference wherever we are in lives and communities”***

Since the 2016 national referendum we've also heard from local people and from our Church of England Archbishops the call to help strengthen understanding, trust, inclusion, appreciation of diversity, in local communities and across our nation.

As we look towards the 2020s, we see that shaping significantly our mission and ministry as a national church and as a Church of England diocese: serving and inspiring all people and communities in Christ's name, for the well-being of all.

Summing up, we see we are called together to be:

Sharing in God's mission in Hereford Diocese today:

## Inspiring our generation

*our friends, families, neighbours, colleagues, the people we meet*

## to follow Jesus Christ

Inspiring prayer · Inspiring all ages · Inspiring schools · Inspiring churches  
Inspiring communities · Inspiring sacred spaces and church buildings

*Turn to Christ; Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father*

*Hereford Diocese: Proclaiming Christ, Growing Disciples*

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## 1 Our current context as a diocese – challenges and opportunities:

### Summary

Listening and analysis in Hereford Diocese through the Follow! process since autumn 2015 has revealed that we are reaching most strongly older generations (with 43% of our congregations aged over 70). We are also reaching most strongly our rural communities where church attendance still averages nearly 3% of our population. Our significant areas of growth in (monthly) attendance are through Messy Church, and in outreach, through Messy Church, Open the Book and chaplaincy (although we are not yet systematically building on this outreach).

We have strong average attendance (vs population) in our 420 churches compared to national averages and recognise the privilege in rural areas as being the only community building available. However, we have weak attendance in our Market Towns and in Hereford City where attendance falls as low in places as 1% of the population, and similarly in our poorest areas. (See attached statistics).

We have recently moved to an Offer Scheme and diocesan “Common Fund” to improve share income in attempt to change our position as the Diocese with the lowest level of giving per person. This has started more slowly than we had hoped which is limiting our available mission funding. We aim to grow our giving significantly to resource current and future mission and ministry.

## Our data

**Data Analysis** leads us to identify:

1 The urgent need to **grow spiritually and numerically for mission**

In particular:

- \* Grow younger” – to match more closely the ages and backgrounds of the communities we serve;
- \* To increase reach especially in our
  - market towns and poorest communities

2 The urgent need to **become financially sustainable to resource mission**

Linked with both of these as a huge area for strategic development in the short/medium term is **Education and Schools** in Hereford Diocese

## Key stats and findings headlines:

- 97 regular worshipping congregations have fewer than 10 members. 257 have less than 20 out of 333
- We currently invest clergy resources disproportionately more into smaller congregations
- Hereford has the most churches per Christian members of the population
- Since 2013 membership on the electoral has fallen 15% and average weekly attendance by 7%
- Analysis indicates that only 30% of parishes are classed as mission and financially strong
- Overall the costs of mission are greater than is offered in through parish giving
- Average giving is £6.65 per person which is the second lowest in the country. The average is £11.22

## 2 Future direction:

*“I long for my children and grandchildren to grow up knowing God’s love for them, I long for our church to be full of people of all ages and backgrounds, I long for us to be one body sharing and working together across the diocese, making a difference wherever we are in lives and communities”*

By 2021, our **shared vision** is that we will see a Hereford Diocese where:

- More disciples have been brought to an understanding of God through Jesus
- More lively churches providing inspirational homes for these new disciples
- A more representative church – ages and backgrounds – reflecting our whole society, connecting the generations
- More visible witness as disciples old and new proclaim the good news of God in Christ Jesus
- New forms of worship and new forms of ministry encourage the curious to explore the Kingdom of God
- A better heard church is listened to by believers and non-believers alike
- A more confident church lives and proclaims the life-giving values of God’s kingdom in every community
- A more generous church enables our part in God’s mission to grow in new ways and new places
- Better supported ministers are enabled to preach the word of God in new places to new listeners

Our **vision statement** is Proclaiming Christ, Growing Disciples

*Hereford Diocese: Proclaiming Christ, Growing Disciples  
inspiring each generation to follow Jesus Christ*



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Our **shared priorities** are shared not only across Hereford diocese but with the wider Church of England:

**Mission:**

- SP1 Growing Christian disciples of all ages and backgrounds - spiritually and numerically
- SP2 Serving the common good – transforming lives and communities

**Ministry for Mission**

- SP3 Reimagining, developing, and sharing ministry for mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

**Resources for Mission**

Shared commitment to: Focusing and growing our resources for mission – staff, time, money etc

Our **mission** will have been successful if we achieve our **Shared goals**:

- To reach younger generations as strongly as older ones – so that disciples and churches better reflect the ages and backgrounds of the communities we serve
- To lift areas of weaker attendance to match more closely our 3% rural attendance, and to maintain our 3% rural
- To grow a “mixed economy” of congregations – different styles, days/times, reach, in every deanery across the diocese

Through the **Follow!** process we are encouraging **scaled action** across the diocese:

- “**one degree shifts**” – small actions that cumulatively can make a big difference
- “**breaking new ground**” – something new for that context
- And “**bigger/bolder**” – most likely to be a focused collaboration to achieve

Our Shared values:

**Kingdom First**

**Follow**

**Shine**

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## Kingdom First:

- **Putting God's kingdom, God's mission, first;** God's mission of life in all its fullness – the life of Kingdom of God for all people and creation. God's kingdom of love, peace, justice, hope and new life for all “on earth as in heaven”. “Keeping the main thing the main thing.”
- **Grounded in prayer as Jesus taught us;** Rooting all we do in prayer. Committed to praying separately and together with one heart and mind. “Your kingdom come in our lives, communities, on earth, as in heaven.”
- **Attentive listening and discerning;** Listening deeply to God and one another. Exercising careful Christian discernment in making choices and (sometimes difficult) decisions.

## Follow

- **Following Christ; turning to Christ;** Allowing our steps to be guided by his steps – following him to the people and places he goes. Turning to him as our source of life, inspiration, courage for the journey.
- **All are called;** We all have a part to play and gifts to give. Our baptisms remind us that we are both beloved AND called. Our baptisms are “more than an event, but a way of life”, as we live, serve and grow and have our being in Christ, life-long.

## Shine

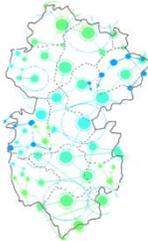
- **Collaboration;** God is ahead of us working in many people and places. We are called and better together – working collaboratively with each other, in partnership with other denominations, faiths, community groups and agencies. As a diocese we are one body - connected; mutually supportive, accountable, encouraging, challenging, sharing and learning together.
- **Shining as lights across Hereford Diocese and the wider world;** We are rooted in our communities, called to minister among the people and places of Hereford Diocese – all ages, all backgrounds, especially among those on the margins as Christ did. Baptised into Christ we are called to shine in the world to the glory of God the Father with joy and thanksgiving.

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We have 3 **shared guiding principles**: as a diocese we are committed together to:



**Aligning action:** All benefices, deaneries, central staff/boards are aligning action against the Shared Priorities (this began systematically in 2015). The Shared Priorities and Goals are now the format for Mission Action Planning 2016 onwards across the diocese as we “set our compasses together”.



**Networking:** We are proactively seeking to find and connect what is working in order to learn together and potentially to replicate/adapt and multiply what we find across the diocese.



**Focusing:** We are proactively looking for where the focused application of resources (attention, people, finance) can lead to breakthrough.

### **Shared processes:**

- **Mission Action Planning** – using the action/reflection cycle across parishes, benefices, deaneries, the diocese - with an **annual planning cycle** with common frameworks at **benefice, deanery, and diocesan** levels, timed to link with annual budgeting, offer, staff planning etc cycles.
- **Appreciative Inquiry** to review and learn from success
- **Pathways** – “little steps” – to support journeys to faith and in faith

### **3 Identifying and planning coherent strategic action:**

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## Mission and Growth strategy development

The Shared Priorities are our framework for coherent action - with Mission Action Planning for all also using the framework of the Shared Priorities. This links the “Inspiring” themes from our Shared Mission into the SPs.

### A planning framework for Coherent Action:

#### Focus action within the priorities against our shared mission

- 0.1 **Inspiring prayer:** Strengthen prayer to underpin mission and growth.
- 0.2 Mission Action Planning in benefices and deaneries
- 0.3 Foster the formation of networks and shared learning for growth

#### SP 1: Growing spiritually and numerically

#### MISSION

##### 1.1 **Inspiring all ages:**

Grow the confidence of existing churchgoers to be whole-life disciples  
Nurture explorers and grow new disciples – especially younger disciples – better to reflect ages and backgrounds of our communities

##### 1.2 **Inspiring Schools:**

Grow explorers and disciples through school communities, worship, ethos, religious education etc  
Grow church/school links including Open the Book, Chaplaincy, Church Governors etc  
Reach into non-church schools

##### 1.3 **Inspiring churches:**

Grow a mixed economy of congregations, Grow healthy disciple-making churches, Grow “intergenerational” churches

- 1.4 Targeting support for mission and growth where there is greatest need and opportunity – in 2016 this is among Market Towns, in Hereford city, and in our poorest communities.

#### SP 2: Contributing to the Common Good

#### MISSION

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- 2.1 **Inspiring communities:** Build on good will and impact of working in partnership at diocesan, deanery and benefice level with community agencies, schools, etc, for the well-being of all (kingdom growth) – to: care for people in need (Tend); stand up for peace, justice, reconciliation (Transform); and care for creation (Treasure).  
Prioritise this work within poorest communities
- 2.2 Network the growing range of paid and voluntary chaplains across the diocese.
- 2.3 **Inspiring sacred spaces and church buildings**  
Maximise the mission potential (SP 1 and SP2) of our church buildings as places of inspiration to and in faith as well as for wider community use

**In support of mission and growth:**

**SP 3: reimagining, developing, sharing ministry for mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

**MINISTRY FOR MISSION**

- 3.1 Vocations
- 3.2 School for Ministry
- 3.3 Collaboration for all - proactively develop through MAPping local collaborative leadership for mission
- 3.4 Support and development of ministers – lay and ordained – this will be stretching for some/many

**Shared Commitment (SC) to putting our resources where there is greatest need and opportunity**

**RESOURCES FOR MISSION**

- |                        |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| SC1 Finance and giving | SC2 Buildings      |
| SC3 Communication      | SC4 Simplification |

**4 Developing an aligned planning process across the diocese beginning 2016/17**

## 1 Parish/benefice planning

Simple standard template for annual MAP reporting of review/ plans / goals against the SPs. Accompanied by:

- MAP resources – online; MAP book
- MAP support – team led by CP of recommended Parish MAP Companions – list of lay and ordained willing and able to give local support

Feeding into deanery mission and growth planning and diocesan mission and growth planning and annual offer / budget cycle.

## 2 Deanery Planning

Simple standard template for annual MAP reporting of review/ plans / goals against the SPs. Accompanied by:

- Standard Shared Process for developing Deanery Mission and Pastoral Plans - including use of standard diocesan Implementation Planning Proforma. Who will do what, when, measures of success, timeframes etc
- Deanery MAP Companions working in pairs – pairing mission and finance expertise from a core team of diocesan staff/ Bishops Council/ DBFX etc.

- Networking for mutual accountability, sharing learning and replicating success through cycle of **Archdeaconry and Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committees (MPCs):**

### **November MPCs annually**

Prepare for reporting Stats for Mission and Finance

Focus on the particular emphases for shared planning for coming year – in 2017: Pathways to/in faith; Baptism and Confirmation

### **February MPCs annually** After 2017 Review action and stats from year past

Digest, learn from, request diocesan action in the light of updated deanery plans

### **June MPCs annually** Offer/mission planning

Diocesan shared Mission Action Plans, outcomes and implications to annual July Diocesan Synod.

## 3 Diocesan Planning

Align / network / focus the work of diocesan staff / support ministers / boards and committees / resource allocation in line with the SPs and with deanery / benefice planning.

**2017 onwards:** Annual May/June planning cycle in the light of local plans ready for July Diocesan Synod

**But, during 2016:** Major reconfiguration of roles, budgets, goals etc to bring all into line

Within the Diocese we are developing a financial plan for the life of this strategy. We also have a Multi-academy trust strategy and Education strategy that sit alongside this work.

Now we have set our compasses together we are clear about the direction we are travelling in. We have been testing this through prayer and discussion and it has already begun to shape a number of key projects, bring closure to others and generate new ideas we mission and growth. However we recognise there is more needed to shape the ‘how we will do this’ part of the strategy. This is deliberate in our attempt to ensure that this is a strategy that has a clear common direction but is owned and led locally by our parishes and benefices through the Deanery structure.

## 5 Church Commissioners – Bigger/bolder Bid 1

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## First proposal for a diocesan “bigger/ bolder/FOCUS project to CCs

### “Growing Intergenerational Church”

*The Church Commissioners are encouraging dioceses to identify where “the focused application of resources (attention, people, finance) can lead to breakthrough” and have allocated substantial match funding that we can bid for as dioceses to help to do that.*

**NOW:** Our strongest growth currently in Hereford Diocese is in “**intergenerational**” churches. We have 40 Messy Churches meeting monthly in the diocese. We also have ..... Open the Book teams.

**The strategy for growing intergenerational church is to place “intergenerational missioners”** in the settings below

Each Intergenerational Missioner will work as a full member of the ministry staff team of that place. Their particular role will be leading/supporting the host parish/church in:

- 1 **Reaching:** taking focused action to widen reach into the communities served by that parish/church (ages/backgrounds)
- 2 **Discipling:** putting in place “little steps” where those people reached have opportunities to be nurtured/explore/grow in faith
- 3 **Growing mixed economy worshipping congregations/communities** widening the expressions of church that new disciples can grow and be formed and nurtured within.
- 4 **Intentionally connect intergenerationally** all the elements so that the whole body connects the generations as one Christian community to celebrate from time to time together, to pray for and support one another, and to be part of God’s mission together.

Settings: Hereford, Ross, Bromyard, Madeley, Bridgenorth, Ludlow, Pontsbury, Leominster