

Transform North West



Archdeacon Roger Preece

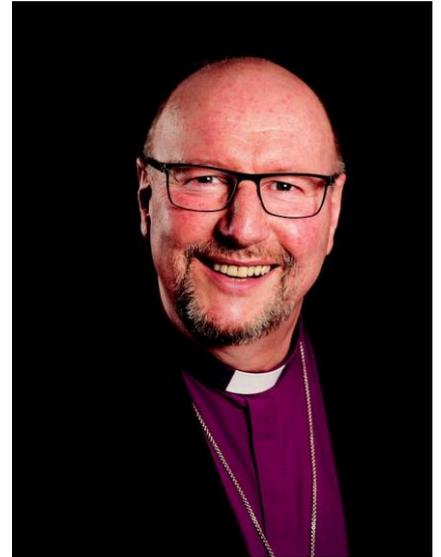
joinus@transformnorthwest.org.uk

www.transformnorthwest.org.uk

Preface from the Bishop of Liverpool

Here in the Diocese of Liverpool we are asking God for a bigger church so that we can make a bigger difference, and we say: “more people knowing Jesus, more justice in the world”.

We are wholly committed to the aims and thrust of Renewal and Reform as a primary vehicle for delivering our purpose. I have therefore been delighted to see and to share in the progress of this bid in the last year, as the team under Archdeacon Roger’s leadership has envisioned major missional developments at the heart of three of our most important towns.



This fresh approach to using the Resource-Church model of mission in industrial towns and areas of deprivation builds on our existing projects in Transforming Wigan and in the Joshua Centre for congregational multiplication. The present development, over the next five years, will develop this work in three major strategic locations and will then plant out six new churches with the same “planting to plant” vision.

I and my colleagues on the Diocesan Oversight Team are wholly committed to doing all we can to support this project in the coming years as a key part of our Diocesan purpose. We share the dream and we pray for the reality – to see 800 new disciples of Jesus in these towns, making a bigger difference across our region.

+ Paul Liverpool.

Paul Bayes, Bishop of Liverpool, October 2017

Transform North West summary

The vision of the Liverpool Diocese is to make a “bigger church to make a bigger difference” so that more people come to know Jesus and in so doing, that there is more justice in the world. It has been implementing this vision with a focus on:

- developing leaders
- growing congregations
- deepening discipleship.

This bid complements projects already supported with SDF funding:

Transforming Wigan, launched in 2015, is producing much learning around imagining new ways of behaving and being as church. There is a focus on multiplying congregations within a Hub and Spoke model. Fresh worship communities are being created and existing ones are being refreshed. Discipleship is being renewed and prayer is at the centre, as is the desire to revive the spiritual heart of Wigan.

The Joshua Centre for “Multiplying Congregations” is the focus of a recent successful bid that will see an explicit strategic approach to identifying where new congregations might be founded, financing their start up, providing mentorship for pioneer teams, and development support for new emerging leaders.

Our bid focuses on three strategic towns in the north west where we need more capacity to apply the learning from these earlier bids. Once established the Resource Church would apply lessons learned from Transforming Wigan about the renewal of inherited church, particularly in terms of governance and leadership development, and from the Joshua Centre in respect of multiplying congregations.

How Transform fits in with Diocesan strategy

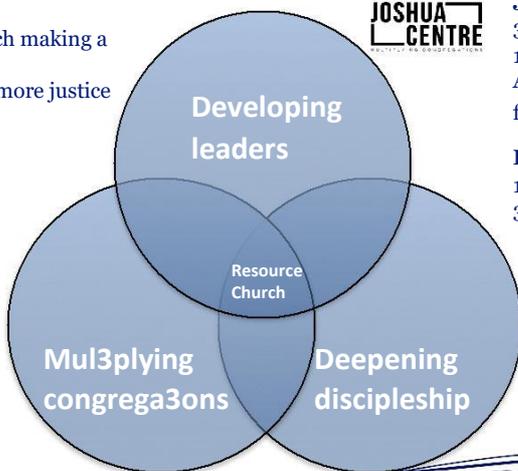
How the bid fits in

Diocesan Vision and Aims

We want to see a bigger church making a bigger difference, more people knowing Jesus, more justice in the world.

We aim to have:

- 10,000 new disciples
- 1,000 new leaders
- 100 new congregations
- 10 acts of service per person
- 1 person brought to church by every existing member



Transforming Wigan

1 church with several hubs and many worshipping communities



Joshua Centre

30 new congregations: 30 networked leaders
10 new ordinands
A resource hub and sustainable model for multiplying congregations

Resource Church

1 Resource Church in 3 places
3 congregations with 400 worshippers in each town
1 plant from each hub with 3 years (2 within 5)
9 new congregations within 5 years
800 new followers of Jesus



Objectives

We propose to:

- create a Resource Church Network (RCN) – one church with three locations accessible to a million people in the surrounding area
- bring afresh the knowledge and love of Jesus to Warrington, Widnes and St Helens
- through loving service help transform the culture of our towns towards Kingdom values.

The new church will serve three of our most strategic towns in the Diocese where we currently lack the presence of a Resource Church and where we have a crisis in respect to youth and young adult engagement. These are towns with some significant deprivation and lower levels of education and expectation than affluent university towns where the Resource Church model has worked well. We will learn how a Resource Church can flourish in this context.

We will develop a church-planting culture so that each Resource Church centre starts a new church plant within three years, and a second within five years.

We will develop a discipling culture such that at the end of five years there are 800

new disciples with 1,200 worshippers across the nine churches spread across the generations, but with a focus on youth and young adults.

We will develop a leadership culture such that at least one new ordinand or missional leader is raised up each year. And that home-grown leaders are raised up to lead worship, small groups, pastoral care, and so on.

We will have a focus on social justice which is the “Bigger Difference” agenda of the Diocese, with social action being an integral part of the offering, working in partnership with statutory agencies as appropriate.

The central team: A Senior Leader, Bigger Difference (social justice) Lead, Operations Lead and Admin Assistants will act as a resource for all three sites. Each site will have its own local team and within each ministry one person will act as the network lead for all three sites to maximise shared learning, training and resource usage.

Local Teams will comprise a:

- Local Leader
- Worship Leader
- Youth Leader
- Children’s and Families Leader.

The admin roles may be focused in the central team or devolved to the location level as needed. Rather than a single person being employed as a central Communications lead, we will use the funding as a central budget to employ a range of contractors/agencies for specialist work.

The motto for Warrington is *Deus dat incrementum...* and so “may God give the increase”.

The value of the project will be seen not just in the growth in the five years, but in the long-term missional capacity built into the region. The original vision for the project came out of a prophetic sense reflecting on the economic Northern Powerhouse idea of building economic links across the North West – and in particular developments from Manchester to Liverpool. This project is a Northern Spiritual Powerhouse strategy linking the three major towns that join Manchester to Liverpool.

Local context

St Helens, Warrington and Widnes are each about 15 minutes' travel time apart with good communications. Each has a long and proud history as part of the engine of the industrial revolution.

St Helens

With a population of 177,000, St Helens is a former coal-mining and glassmaking (Pilkingtons) town. Beechams also had its home in the town. The industrial base has all but gone and the town is looking for its new identity. With very significant local authority budget cuts over the past few years, the town is undergoing considerable reshaping. St Helens is ranked as the 36th most deprived local authority in England out of 326. There are 12,500 (20.9%) workless households compared to 15.3% in Great Britain. The percentage of children in low income families is 24.2% compared to 19.9% in England, and in the Town Centre Ward it is 37.5%.

A number of schools in St Helens have more than half their children qualifying for pupil premium payments.

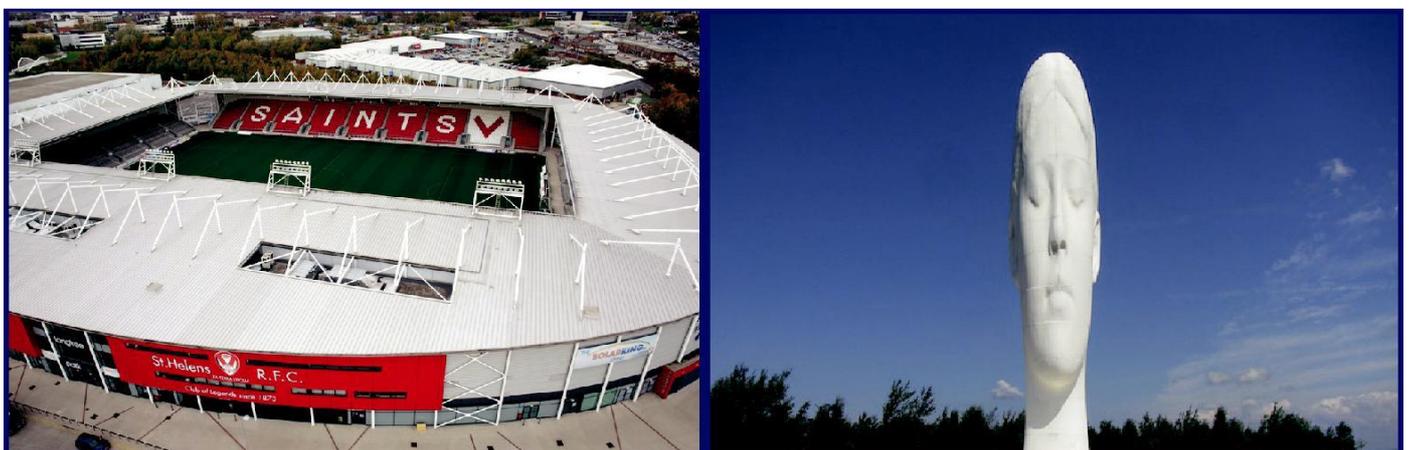
Across the 18 churches the weekly attendance is relatively low with few young adults or youth worshipping regularly. With some congregations being mainly with elderly (70 years plus) the next 5–10 years are critical.



However, there are signs of hope and opportunity. The local authority is considering a major redevelopment of the town centre, and St Helens Parish Church (a building that can seat 750 people) is located in the very centre and heart of the town. St Helens College of Further Education is located close to the St Helens Parish Church. They provide courses and training to around 8,000 students across two main sites, the Town Centre Campus and the STEM Centre, Technology Campus. Street Pastors has been recently launched, supported by St Helens Parish Church, and the town has an active food bank. The "Mission in the Economy" charity is also based at the Parish Church supporting local businesses. There is a strong civic link between the Parish Church and the local authority. The Rector is a Deputy Lieutenant for the region and well-respected in the county and in the borough.

Four years ago, a journey was begun to transition the church into a missional discipleship church, building a discipling culture by raising up missional leaders to make disciples and to lead missional communities. There are now between 15 and 20 missional leaders with more in the pipeline. A Young Adults Leader is about to be appointed. There is a part-time worship leader who leads contemporary worship gatherings each week, helping to embed the culture and support the missional activities during the week.

Within the wider deanery a new team is emerging who are ready for change with seven recent clergy appointments. It is also developing its vision, mission and strategy with help from the Wigan experience.





Warrington

Formerly a manufacturing/engineering town and also a military base until the end of national service, Warrington is designated a new town and now has the third fastest growing economy in the country. Situated at the heart of a regional motorway network, which has been a key factor in making Warrington an important distribution hub, it is readily accessible to the wider catchment via excellent road connections, two train stations and an extensive bus network. Major employers in scientific and technical sectors have led to significant employment and thousands of new-build houses.

Warrington Borough Council is currently in the process of redeveloping the town centre. A £107 million mixed-use development is to revitalise the traditional retail and leisure heart of Warrington town centre. On completion in 2019, the scheme will create a family-friendly shopping area with restaurants and leisure facilities. There are also plans for a new purpose-built £6m Youth Zone to be built in the town centre.

Right at the centre of all this development is Holy Trinity. The church has a small and ageing inherited congregation who are open to new possibilities for the gospel. Currently the building is open every day and offers (alongside traditional Sunday worship) mid-week church services, a morning coffee bar, a regular meeting place for various agencies including bereavement services and an alternative, neutral meeting place for others, for example Pathways to Recovery (Warrington Addiction Treatment Centre). It is also home to the Latvian Church in Warrington, and Holy Trinity also hosts free Saturday lunchtime concerts for WACIDOM (Warrington Arts Council Initiative for the Development of Music).

Street Pastors were introduced to the town centre in September 2016 and they have their base at Holy Trinity. They meet at 10.30pm each Friday, going out into the town centre to engage with the night-time economy until 5am when the clubs

close. In its first six months the local police have reported a 26% reduction in antisocial behaviour in the town centre. The Street Pastors return to Holy Trinity for their break at some point during the patrol but there is a strong desire to see the building as offering more – for instance a safe place to wait.

All of this demonstrates a willingness to be open and available. However, there is a recognition that worship as is, and current activities, are not meeting the needs of young people and families. The congregation are eager to have their building used in new and different ways to engage with the thousands of people who walk past their doors every day of the week. They are also keen to be involved in new and different things but recognise that they need leadership, training and support to do this. They wholeheartedly support the idea of launching a brand new mission to Warrington in the form of a Resource Church.

Change is also happening across the deanery which has tilled the ground for new possibilities and transformation. The majority of the clergy chapter have come in the last three years and are starting to lead the development for mission using the learning from Transforming Wigan. Exciting conversations are beginning to look at where resources, both lay and ordained, might be deployed outside of traditional parish boundaries so as to have a greater impact. A new 0.5 appointment has been made for a Warrington deanery lead for discipleship and churches are actively looking at possible new worshipping communities. There is a willingness to try new and different things in order to take mission forward.



Widnes

Once a national centre for the chemical industry, Widnes has a population of 60,000 which is pretty static and largely white. There are rural areas of affluence but the urban centre is significantly deprived. Central and South Widnes are particularly marked by poor health and poverty. For example, you are more likely to die prematurely of cancer in Widnes than in any other part of the country;

1 in 6 are depressed and the number of hospitalisations due to mental illness are the highest in the UK.



The challenges that these conditions bring have attracted positive community leaders; the council are clear on their strategic goals; local schools are graded good to outstanding and the College of Further Education is highly ranked nationally. The town has bottomed out and is on an upward turn.

Although the figures show that there are only 566 worshipers out of a population of 63,900 of which 23 are teenagers and 27 young adults, there is some positivity. At St Paul's there are 100 people who would be classed as unchurched that are now part of a weekly, worshipping community. There are leaders pursuing vocation in the Church of England, who were also unchurched. Every couple of weeks stories of new people coming to faith are celebrated. There are patterns of discipleship emerging which are appropriate for the different demographics. However, there are key strategic opportunities which can only be taken as the church's capacity increases. The development of a Resource Church in Widnes would build upon these early signs of transformation and spiritual revival. An injection of staff and skills at this point would be catalytic, speeding up the journey that St Paul's has already started.

Why a Resource Church?

It should be clear from reading the local context that there is a sense that we are on the edge of a precipice and unless we take new and radical action the Church of England in each of these three towns is under considerable risk. The good work being done at the heart of these towns is fragile but could be the seed bed for a new missional movement.

As stated earlier, the Diocese has a clear strategy for growth that has been recognised nationally with support to the significant program of transformation in Wigan, and to the development of the Joshua Centre, supporting the “Multiplying Congregations” initiative. However, when considering the critical position in St Helens, Warrington and Widnes we need a fresh approach if we are to reach and engage with young people, young adults and families.

We also want to be able to invest resources in the heart of each town so that they can each be a catalyst to develop learning and be able to plant new congregations across that town. The Joshua Centre has significant experience and resources available to help congregations on this journey, but many of them are struggling and find it hard to think beyond sustaining their Sunday morning worship. The Resource Church will be another champion to support this work.

Over the last thirty years, based on the work started by HTB (Holy Trinity Brompton), there is now considerable experience of planting and developing Resource Churches that contribute to the wider mission of a Diocese. Our towns do not reflect the demographics of many of the places where Resource Churches have previously been established – there are no universities, for instance – but we believe the principles can be applied to our

specific context. If we can learn how the Resource Church model can flourish in areas of significant deprivation and in areas with substantial youth, but with lower levels of education and expectations, we can share this with similar towns around the country. We understand that Blackburn Diocese is looking at Resource Church possibilities for the heart of Preston and maybe in the future, Blackburn. We want to share lessons learned with these and similar projects. We also think our model of a networked Resource Church with three sites will be able to demonstrate economies of scale and efficiency in creating this new model of church development.

“... our model of a networked Resource Church with three sites will be able to demonstrate economies of scale and efficiency in creating this new model of church development”

Our vision

To:

- create a Resource Church Network: one church with three locations
- bring afresh the knowledge and love of Jesus to Warrington, Widnes and St Helens;
- transform the culture of the towns towards Kingdom values.

Our values

The project group have identified a set of underpinning values to inform all elements of the project. We would anticipate that those appointed to deliver the project will want to revisit these to ensure that they continue to be resonant:

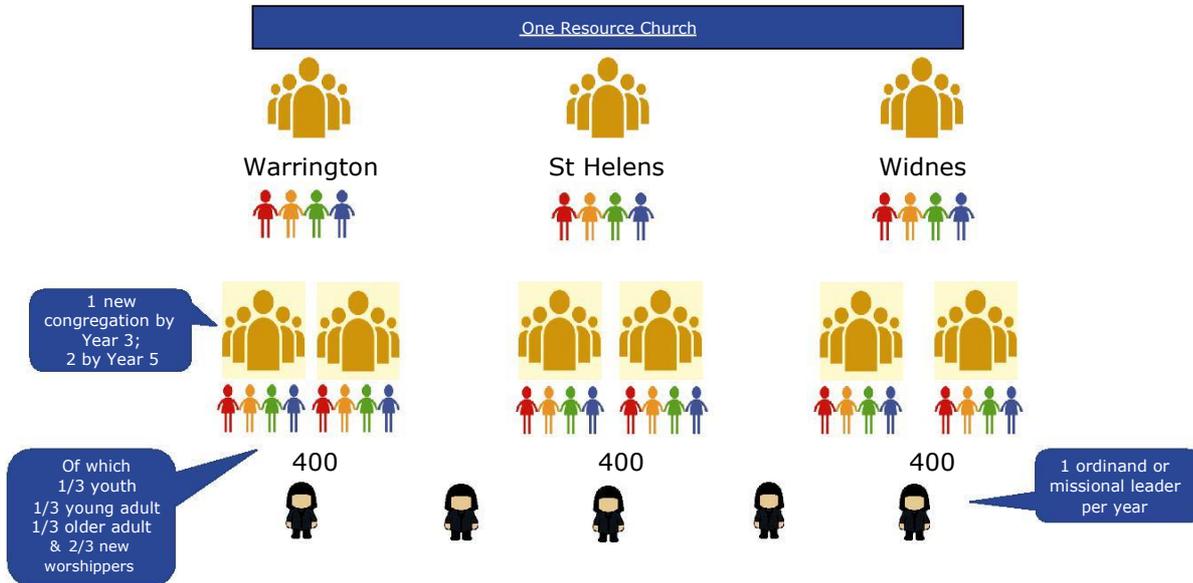


What will “great” look like in St Helens, Warrington and Widnes in 2022?

- There is a flourishing, vibrant, growing, welcoming, modern church community open seven days a week, embracing the new, yet valuing the traditional, with missional communities throughout the towns, disciples making disciples, helping to transform the towns themselves.
- Sunday gatherings are known for their quality, welcome, contemporary music, powerful preaching and prayer ministry, supporting the midweek activities and missional communities.
- Being located at the very heart of the three towns, the Resource Churches are held in high regard for their work and presence in the community.
- The social justice programmes work hand in hand with the statutory agencies and local community.
- The substantial re-ordering of the buildings coinciding with major local authority town centre development has seen them identified as places where large numbers of youth and young adults want to belong.
- There is a recognised and respected intern programme running each year for raising up young adult leaders, so creating a pipeline of missional leaders.
- The high quality and contemporary cafés in the buildings open seven days a week are utilised by the young and the community at large. They have become the café of choice in the town centre, with a reputation for excellence.
- The RCN has become recognised and valued as a resource for each town and deanery, helping to revitalise and refresh the town and churches.
- Six new church plants around the three deaneries now share the same DNA, and are beginning to become established and experience growth.
- Over 800 people now know and follow Jesus that did not do so five years earlier; another 400 have had their faith revitalised and are becoming whole-of-life disciples.

Our hopeful numbers

We have developed a clear set of headline objectives against which to measure our results in the next five years:



Supporting this are some other key measures further detailed in the evaluation section:

- 35% of membership actively engaged in small group settings
- 35% of membership actively involved in social action
- 60% of membership involved in missional communities
- 700 regular monthly givers
- £10,500 average giving every week.

How will we deliver it?

The RCN will be one team with one vision and agreed values but working across, in the first instance, three sites. They will share resources and build a common discipling culture of relationships that model mutual respect, entrepreneurship, support, learning, accountability, generosity and encouragement across the team. Key characteristics of this culture would be:

- an understanding that the purpose of a Resource Church is to plant other churches; the concept of multiplication informing everything the team do
- leadership/discipleship/apprenticeship – each leader always training another to follow in their steps
- openness
- inclusivity
- extravagant generosity – the Resource Church being developed and growing only in order to “give away” of its best to others
- aiming high with a God-shaped vision – excellence in everything
- enjoying it together – fun and unity in how the team work together
- humility – the Resource Church team are there to serve the whole town, the deanery and other ministers.

The Resource Church will create communities of disciples (missional leaders), who learn how to make more disciples (producers, not consumers) – a community of extended spiritual families who live out the mission of God beyond the walls of the church in their homes, schools, colleges, universities, pubs, leisure activities and places of work. The development of this pipeline of missional leaders by multiplication, will be crucial for future church planting. In his *The Great Omission*, Dallas Willard explains it this way:

The greatest issue facing the world today, with all its heart-breaking needs, is whether those who by profession, or culture, are identified as “Christians” will become disciples (students, apprentices, practitioners) of Jesus Christ, steadily learning from him how to live the life of the kingdom of the Heavens into every corner of human existence.

The Resource Church will offer weekly, high quality, contemporary worship which will support midweek missional communities of disciples, making disciples, evangelising the towns and transforming society. As language creates culture, there will be a common discipling language that everyone understands and uses. An example of this is the use of UP (relationship with God), IN (relationship with one another) and OUT (missional purpose).

From the very beginning we will:

- emphasise the importance of developing an outward-looking, generous, mission-focused, multiplying culture from the outset (for a fuller description of the culture see Appendix 2)
- have Alpha sessions running every term

- have in place excellent processes for administration, welcome, joining small groups, etc.
- have a well-structured small group process ready to be rolled out
- have at least one clear programme of social action at each site.

The outward generous culture will lead the RCN to act as a reservoir to the wider church “giving away” people, skills and resources. This will take various forms, some of which will include:

- The planting of a new congregation – in partnership with a local inherited church, and the Multiplying Congregations Project – every 3–5 years.
- Giving intentional leadership/mentorship training and support to designated churches on a sustained basis, to enable them to do what is necessary to grow.
- Providing volunteers/staff support to help churches in each deanery transition to a new missional model.
- Providing and facilitating high-quality worship resources.
- Training and learning in all aspects of church life to develop theologically aware disciples and lay leaders.
- Producing a regular supply of ordinands and missional leaders.
- Being a strategic partner and investor in community partnerships around the “bigger difference” agenda of the Diocese.
- Support the “bigger difference” agenda by being connected to key initiatives that are a blessing to each town.
- Providing a high-quality venue for town-wide gatherings for worship or mission events.

The culture of generosity and service will evidence itself through a focus on social justice with social action being an integral part of the service of each church working in partnership with statutory agencies as appropriate. The existing work such as Street Pastors, the Homeless Café, Food Bank and Community Café will be further developed in line with our “making a bigger difference” strategy.

The new church plants would be developed as part of the Strategic Deanery Mission plans that are being developed for each of the towns. This is giving us a picture of where the first church plant in each deanery should be. This work will continue so that once the RCN is ready to plant there will be at least one site identified, with preparatory work having already been undertaken, in each deanery. In addition, the deaneries are identifying where support from the RCN may be used to rekindle an existing congregation.

Who will be involved?

Leadership

The nature and style of leadership will be critical. We would be looking for a Senior Leader and team members who can embody these characteristics:

- discipleship as a way of life
- generous/hospitality
- role model – who sets an example of key action and behaviour
- can generate a vision for future development of organisations and individuals
- undefended
- able to identify and develop gifts in others
- expertise/competence in some areas (and aware of areas that are not particularly strong)
- willing to be taught, to learn, test, adapt – based on feedback
- authenticity/integrity in all
- fun/humour/not taking oneself too seriously
- risk-taking/entrepreneurial
- relational with ability to create a sense of family/belonging
- able to demonstrate calling based on aspects of the fivefold ministry
- heart and energy to reach those outside the church
- ability to relate to young adult/youth 16–30 Gen Y Millennials
- wanting accountability – rather than independent operator
- able to cope with change and to encourage others
- prayerful/open to spiritual discernment.

The **Senior Leader** would be a critical role, holding the vision for the whole RCN, setting the tone and culture, leading by example and providing oversight to other team members. In addition, they would have key responsibility for developing the church-planting strategy, in discussion with deanery and diocesan colleagues, and leaders of other local growing churches.

The **Operational/Finance Lead** would be responsible for leading the development of good processes to support the implementation and delivery of the project at initiation and into the future.

A **Bigger Difference Lead** with a heart for the transforming work of Christian service who can inspire hundreds of volunteers serving in different areas. An encourager who can build trust and links with other social agencies for nurturing partnerships.

Good administrative support would be crucial. Admin staff would be recruited to work as part of the central support team but deployed as determined by the needs of the team.

Each of the **Local Leaders** would be responsible for overseeing the missional activity, worship and discipleship development at their local site. However, they will work together across the whole network leaning into their key skills and giftings. For example, sharing:

- leadership development and training
- access to common evangelistic events such as Alpha
- expertise in social action, e.g. Street Pastors, foodbanks, work with the homeless and supporting addiction
- hosting large attractational events
- communications support
- personnel management.

In addition, we would work with colleagues in Transforming Wigan and the Joshua Centre in the areas previously identified to gain maximum synergy, wherever possible. The work in lay leadership development being piloted in Transforming Wigan is a resource that could be rolled out throughout the Resource Church. The Joshua Centre's expertise in multiplying congregations will help the Resource Church launch new congregations, some of which would have the potential to become the Resource Team for future church plants.

We would encourage a matrix-style working within the Network. For example, one Local Leader, in addition to their local congregation responsibilities, as above, might also lead on social action development and training across the whole network. We would also be explicit about who, within the team, had Pioneering skills and who was more gifted for ongoing nurture and support. Our desire is for new disciples and for growth and formation in Christian character and service.

As new disciples are made and congregations grow there will be an increasing pool of gifts and skills from which to draw to enhance the initial network teams.

We will also have access to best practice on evangelism and mission, looking at how people move through a journey of *belonging* and to the development of

faith in *believing* with a hope that people move through to a sense of whole-of-life discipleship.

Staffing and structure

The central leadership team: Senior Leader, Bigger Difference Lead, Operations Lead and Admin Assistants will act as a resource for all three sites. Each site will have its own local team and within each ministry stream one person will act as the network lead for all three sites to maximise shared learning, training and resource usage.

The curates and ordinands will be expected to be leading new church plants as they complete their training and are deployed across the area. This will need to be considered in discerning who will come to the Resource Church as part of their development. The St Mellitus model of training will allow ordinands to be trained in a range of mission and pioneering work alongside rigorous academic study.

The Operational Lead will have a communications budget with which to commission discrete projects from expert agencies/contractors as they are required. This will allow us to be up to date with developments in social media platforms. In addition, one of the administrative posts will include a Communications responsibility.

The recruitment schedule is ambitious but we are keen to identify the critical Senior Leader as soon as possible. We also believe that the Operations Lead is vital to the effective delivery of the early stages of the project. The precise nature and composition of each local team will be developed having assessed current inherited resources against the new needs to avoid duplication and to maximise synergy. For example, where Youth for Christ are already active it would make sense to work with them when recruiting youth leaders. We will also identify volunteer leaders with specific skills to serve across the network.

Developing Leaders

We are fortunate in that we have a strong leadership pipeline for curates and ordinands from which future church-planters may emerge. Liverpool Diocese has introduced an exciting approach to curacy that allows for a shorter curacy period and wider experience and training in the core aspects of mission and ministry. The model has a training co-ordinator working in the local area providing placements across a range of different ministries and locations. The curate is seen as a deanery resource, rather than the traditional one training incumbent model. This will allow the RCN team to give training and experience to a number of curates across the five years and thus broaden and deepen the available pool of people with church-planting skills.

The availability of ordinands is less easy to predict, but we already have people in place who may have the appropriate skills to be deployed to the RCN, and are aware of some coming through in 2018 who may be very interested.

Information about the Resource Church will be a standard part of communications about training and deployment within the Diocese. In addition, it will be included in events for our vocations courses.

We would look to Worship Central for help and support with worship leaders, and already have a strong partnership with Youth for Christ for Youth Work leads as mentioned above.

Main areas of work

We are working towards a public launch of Transform in September 2018.

The main priorities in early 2018 are to develop the governance models and to formalise the relationships with the PCCs and the RCN Charitable Company.

The hiring of the new staff and moving existing staff to work in a new way of working will be priorities during the first quarter of 2018. Depending on notice periods, the full team should be in place towards the end of Q2 2018.

Towards the end of Q1, the recruitment in each location of a Founders Team made up of up to 30 people per location who will be the core launch team will be key. They will be part of the research, piloting and design of the new ministry to be launched in September 2018. The RCN will be working in a low-key way, trying ideas and refining the missional capacity and operations so that all the strands are in place when the more public launch takes place in September. These founders, along with the staff team, will form the first 100 members who will be trained towards forming the culture that will be at the heart of the movement.

The work on upgrading the premises will take place in parallel along with the communications strategy and implementation.

Prayer

We have asked everyone who is supportive of this project to commit to pray each day at 12 noon – for the mission to engage youth and young adults with the wonderful news of the gospel and for a fruitful result for investment in this new missional opportunity. We held a week of prayer and fasting last September to gather groups of people to pray for our towns. We have a What's App group and produce a weekly Prayer Point bulletin.

Governance

We are one RCN working in three separate towns. Licensed clergy will be cross-licensed across the three parishes that are the initial base for Resource Church as a formal sign of their working together.

A Charitable Company limited by guarantee will be used as the vehicle for employing all the staff who are not already employed by PCCs/or stipendiary under common tenure. This will ensure legal governance across all the three sites with agreements set in place with each founding PCC.

Communication

Marketing and project communications

A strong brand and excellent delivery across all media will be crucial. Social media and the effective use of digital platforms will be a key component of contacting, engaging and communicating with our target audience. We recognise the need for expert input to help us identify the audience, create appropriate messages and use the best channels.

We will:

- use best practice in use of social media
- access a range of different creative inputs from a team
- use video to tell stories and communicate values/experience
- implement branding, awareness raising and communication through lots of different channels
- develop and train the importance of ongoing communication as part of the role of all team members.

We will be carrying out specific research in our towns around the needs that Resource Church will connect to. We will also seek to connect to National Church research that looks at changing social trends amongst Generation Y and Generation Z (those born around the millennium).

In addition, one of the administrative posts will have communications as part of its responsibilities, keeping organisation calendars up to date, website refreshing, ensuring regular blogs and Twitter feeds and so on are updated.

Additionally, as we will be building new knowledge in church marketing and digital presence, members of the Diocesan Communications team will work alongside project team members for mutual learning, acting as critical friends to project team members whilst themselves learning new skills. We will also be accessing any learning being produced by the new Digital Communications team for the Church of England.

Appendix 1: Working paper – Our understanding of the culture needed

We recognise that the most crucial element for project success is the right culture, a common DNA supported by Bishop Paul, encouraged and enabled by the Bishop's Senior Team and led and developed on the ground by a Senior Leader and leadership team with clarity and consistency. All involved should embody the same vision and values and hold each other accountable.

Culture trumps vision every time

We recognise that the greatest changes rarely come through corporate declarations, but find their momentum in the groundswell of cultural transformation.

Culture is powerful. Culture carries and communicates values instinctively. Culture drives change or resists it. Culture promotes, includes and establishes ideas. It equally rejects and excludes counter-cultural ideologies. Culture is contagious when people engage with it.

In his book *By Design or Default* Kevin Gerald observes that if we want to live differently we must choose our culture – or everyone else, and everything else, will choose it for us. If the culture we have is not delivering the objectives we desire, we must create a new culture within which our dreams can flourish.

Resource Churches must establish and defend a strong culture from the outset, one that is rooted in our purpose to pioneer new church plants that replicate across the region.

Purpose comes first

Everything starts with WHY. Our purpose must always define our culture and inform our strategies. Every plan, implementation and change should be measured against our purpose.

We exist to model, equip, release and resource new church plants. However, if church-planting simply reorganises Christians into new groups, we've failed. New churches mean new people. We must reach into our unchurched, post-Christian, multi-cultural generation and bring people to an encounter with Jesus Christ. How we do that depends upon the skills available and the demographic of the community we're endeavouring to reach.

Communicating with a new generation

Communication must be tailored to our target.

This should never mean that we change our message or core beliefs, but rather we must communicate these via language that our target group understands and listens to. Consider Paul at Mars Hill. He doesn't rebuke the people for their pantheism, but uses that as a platform to instruct them in the nature of the God they did not know. How we communicate is as important as what we say.

What we communicate must be real. This generation wants to know if we're genuine. They're tired of rhetoric and empty promises and they can smell a fake. Do our actions line up with our words? Do we live what we believe?

Someone once said, "Preach the gospel always. If necessary, use words" (often attributed to St Francis). We communicate at many levels, and in our modern age, on many platforms. Communicating with this generation requires us to master new platforms and walk what we talk.

Culture by design

The following fundamentals should be in the foundational DNA to grow an organism that is self-governing and that reproduces after its kind, just like any other organism. It starts with leaders who carry and reproduce it through personal discipleship.

Genuine love

Love that serves, includes, protects, feeds and disciplines.

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

John 13:34–35, NIV

Sound doctrine

Truth that can be trusted. Foundations that can be built upon. Facts, not fashions.

"You... must teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine."

Titus 2:1, NIV

Real faith

Growing depth of relationship with Jesus that leads to godly living, passionate worship and unwavering trust. Faith that results in personal devotion not religious observance.

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."

Acts 2:42, NIV

Consistent encouragement

People grow best in the light of your encouragement. They are more likely to risk, change, grow and hold course when surrounded by encouraging voices that champion their successes and lift them when they fall.

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."

1 Thessalonians 5:11, NIV

Soul winning

To win a soul is to win the mind, will and emotions. In so doing we build bridges for the gospel.

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise."

Proverbs 11:30, NIV

Excellence

Not perfection. Excellence is doing the best with what we have. And aiming higher each time.

Hospitality

Biblical hospitality is to love or welcome strangers; to make them feel at home, to give them our very best, to make them comfortable. This view of generous hospitality should define everything from our signage, environment, hosting and cafe to our ministry, worship and follow-up.

Generosity

One definition of generosity is "to be of noble birth". Our nobility in Jesus must make us the most generous in word and deed, in money, time and wisdom.

"The world of the generous gets larger and larger; the world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller."

Proverbs 11:24, MSG

Inclusion

Inclusion should not mean anything goes, but everyone's welcome: if the gospel works for one, it works for all. When we include people we bring them near to the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. Someone once said we should get these three words in this right order: belong, believe, behave.

Connection

Jesus didn't say wait till they come. He said "Go". Church is not in the building, it's in the world 24/7.

Media

In our meetings, effective use of quality video, sound, decor and light to create environments that engage the senses and enhance the worship experience.

In our communication, effective use of contemporary platforms to reach deep into our communities.

Music

Music has been a cultural metric for generations and often the vehicle for radical change. Our music should be on trend and regularly updated. The power of Wesley's hymns gives way to the global impact of Hillsong, et al. In short, if people want tradition, there's already a church for them. Our music is for those who would not connect with tradition. Although even the new becomes the new tradition that needs to be refreshed in the light of the changing culture around us. The fundamentals of the good news of Jesus Christ are unchanging, but the cultural envelope for communicating needs to be dynamic and responsive to the local.

Preaching

Theologically sound, inspiring, encouraging, relevant to the room, able to be applied by all who hear and which leads people to Jesus.

Teaching and discipleship

A program of theological and practical equipping and mentoring according to age and maturity.

Community

People need to belong. People often feel intimidated by large churches, feeling lost in the crowd. The truth is, in a large church you're more likely to find others you relate to. As church grows larger it must also grow smaller, through small groups.

Continual change

One definition of death is a body that does not change.

In his book *Live, Love, Lead*, Brian Houston illustrates a problem with church transitions, writing of two sons who each inherited successful churches from their fathers. One son builds on his father's legacy by moving the church forward in a new generation. The church is flourishing and growing. The other son seeks to honour his father by changing nothing he'd established. The church is stagnating.

Our culture must stay tuned to our rapidly changing communities if we are to remain relevant and effective.

Our heart must be missional. Our meetings should be attractional.

Appendix 2: 2018 Project Team biographies

The Venerable Roger Preece, Archdeacon St Helens and Warrington

Roger is Archdeacon of St Helens and Warrington in the Liverpool Diocese. He has also recently taken on the voluntary role of Chair of St Rocco's Hospice in Warrington. As Vicar of Bowdon in Chester Diocese, he led a large church that launched multiple congregations over time and which released significant resources for new youth and schools ministries. Prior to ordination, he held various board level roles at a number of banks and consulting firms. This included being a founding Managing Director at Capco, the financial consulting and solutions business, and prior to that a Managing Director role at a Japanese bank overseeing finance, technology, operations and administration. He has previously been Chair of a student mission in London and also Chair of Springboard for children, a Christian-inspired project to link volunteers with schools to improve literacy and numeracy.

Rev Pete Atkinson, Pioneer Curate, West Warrington Team

Pete is currently a Church of England pioneer curate based in Warrington having moved with his wife and two children from Southampton to follow God's call into ministry. Pete's passion is to reach the unchurched and dechurched and to see lives transformed by encountering the living God. His desire is to see individuals equipped and empowered to step into all that God intends for them. He brings with him experience of working in public and third sector organisations with some of the most vulnerable in society, particularly engaging in the areas of drug misuse, mental health, offending and unemployment.

Rev Shirley Cowan, Vicar, Warrington Holy Trinity and Assistant Area Dean, Warrington

Shirley is Vicar at both Holy Trinity and St Ann's in Warrington, and is Assistant Area Dean for Warrington. Prior to ordination in 2012, Shirley was a teacher in Anfield, Liverpool, and had a leadership role in Inclusion and Special Educational Needs with a special responsibility for developing the Nurture Group (based on attachment theory). She is a committed school governor combining the links between St Ann's Church of England School with St Ann's Church and the wider community.

Shirley has a passion to serve those who are disadvantaged in society: the homeless and the oppressed. She longs to see a break in the cycle that both poverty and deprivation thrive on. She is a Street Pastor in both Warrington (based at Holy Trinity) and in Liverpool city centre.

She is married to Dave and they have three grown-up children: twins Tom and Emma who are 23, and 19-year-old James. They also have three dogs: a cocker spaniel and two cockapoos who somehow have become the "kids" of the family.

Rev Canon David Eastwood, Vicar, St Helen's Parish Church and Area Dean, St Helen's

David Eastwood is Team Rector, based at St Helens Parish Church, St Helens. Prior to being ordained, he had over 25 years' experience as a lawyer and was managing partner of a firm of solicitors in Northampton and Milton Keynes, employing 250 people and with a turnover of £12m.

In 2008, after theological training at Ridley Hall, Cambridge, he moved to the North West and he is now a Deputy Lieutenant for Merseyside.

In building a discipling culture, he is committed to making the church younger and relevant, by raising up a pipeline of leaders through intentional discipleship – disciples making disciples whose vision and purpose is to evangelise the region and see society transformed.

He is married to Monica and they have two daughters and one grandchild. In his spare time he enjoys golf, curry and Cornwall in equal measure

Mike McMahon, Lead Pastor, Oasis Church Warrington

Mike is the founder and Lead Pastor of Oasis Warrington. With over 30 years' experience in ministry, church planting and church leadership in the UK and Europe, Mike moved to Warrington to establish a new, youth-focused work in 2009. Oasis Warrington has become a model that others look to for insights into establishing new works quickly and reaching a young, dechurched demographic, mentoring and empowering them to take ownership of the 21st-century church.

Rev Greg Sharples, Vicar, St Paul's, Widnes

Greg's experience of Widnes St Paul, having been based there for three years, is of varied ministry with incredible opportunities to reach out to people who want to see whether or not God can make a difference in their lives. The afternoon service at St Paul's has between 40 and 60 people, who, when surveyed by the Church Army, came out as 100% unchurched. He believes that in Widnes there is an incredible hunger for Jesus and a desire to know a God who can minister love and hope to people who've experienced repetitive rejection and despair.

A regular speaker at New Wine national conferences, Greg has lectured at St Mellitus College, is currently the civic link for the Faith Community in Halton and is School Governor of Widnes Academy, West Bank. He is passionate about mission, helping form disciples who make disciples and churches that plant churches.

Greg has been married to Sophie for 10 years, and they have three children, Seb (4), Bea (nearly 2) and Josiah (0).

