**VISION IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY 2019-2021**

AGREED BY BISHOP’s LEADERSHIP TEAM – JANUARY 2019

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The Vision Implementation Strategy 2016-2020 was signed off by Bishop’s Council and Directors in January 2017. The document referenced the four priority contexts for the first triennium as: Outer Estates, The Cathedral, Presence and Engagement and turnaround parishes.

***INTRODUCTION***

The key ‘top down’ themes were:

2016 – Crossroads Mission

2017 – Open Churches linked to Thy Kingdom Come

2018 – Sharing the good news of Jesus through words and deeds

2019 – Diocesan conference – Believing/Living/Sharing

With a significant change to the composition of the Bishop’s Leadership Team in 2018, with David Banbury and Sue Penfold’s departure and the arrival of Bishop Jill and Nick McKee (as Director of Vocations), completion of the parish leadership and deployment strategy and good progress with the parish share and Whalley Abbey reviews there is an opportunity to produce an updated Vision Implementation Strategy covering the 2019-2021 triennium.

***PROGRESS 2016-2018***

During 2016-18 there have been strategic inputs under each of the Vision themes:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Vision Strand** | **Strategic Input** | **Year(s)** |
| Making disciples | Routes of Faith Course | 2017/2018 |
| Making disciples | Bishop’s Bible challenge for Key Stage 2 | 2016/2017 |
| Making disciples | Thy Kingdom Come | 2017/2018 |
| Making disciples | Creation of Director of Discipleship role | 2018 |
| Making disciples | Pilot diocese for Setting God’s People Free | 2018 |
| Making disciples | Planning for focus on discipleship starting in 2019 | 2017/18 |
| Making disciples | Decision to transition Whalley Abbey to a Centre for Christian Discipleship from a mixed-economy Retreat House/Conference Centre | 2018 |
| Being witnesses | Crossroads Mission | 2016 |
| Being witnesses | Open Churches | 2017 |
| Being witnesses | Being witnesses course | 2018 |
| Growing leaders | All Saints tie-up | 2017/2018 |
| Growing leaders | Appointment to new Director of Vocations role | 2018 |
| Growing leaders | Establishment of Outer Estates Leadership models | 2017/2018 |
| Enablers | Vision Champions commissioned | 2016 |
| Enablers | Clergy study days: Does Vision 2026 have a theology | 2017 |
| Enablers | New Contact Management System and website | 2017 |
| Enablers | Meetings with parishes about share deals | 2017/2018 |
| Enablers | +J visit to every Chapter | 2018 |
| Enablers | Diocesan Conference | 2018 |
| Enablers | Organisation of Clayton Ho. teams by Vision themes | 2018 |

Measurable outcomes during the period 2016-2018:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Measure** | **Timeframe** | **Data** | **National Comparison** |
| 3-year change in attendance | 2015-2017 | **-9%** | Bottom half of dioceses |
| Attendance per capita | 2017 | 1.7% | Bottom half of dioceses |
| Child attendance per capita | 2017 | 1.1% | Top quartile of dioceses |
| 2 year change in number of confirmations | 2016-2017 | +7% | Total number is in top quartile of dioceses |
| Clergy vacancy rate | 2018 | 8% | Top half of dioceses |
| Change in number of ordinands completing training | 2015-2020 | 0% | n/a |
| Average length of clergy vacancy | 2018 | <9 months | n/a |
| Change in number of lay readers completing training | 2018-2020 | +75% | n/a |
| Change in parish share £ amount collected | 2013-2017 | **-4.9%** | bottom quartile of dioceses (ranking being challenged) |
| DBF Reserves | 2017 | 5.89 mths | n/a |

Despite delivering significant strategic inputs, the headlines suggest that we are:

1. continuing to face a decline in regular weekly adult attendance and parish share collection, whilst
2. reaching significant numbers of infant/junior children up to, and including confirmations through our church schools and Messy Churches, and encouragingly
3. not facing a major issue in recruiting clergy

***CHALLENGES FACING LANCASHIRE and THE DIOCESE 2019-2021***

Over the next three years the following socio-economic changes are likely to have an impact in Lancashire:

1. Continuing ageing white population (as measured by average age) with impact on the provision and funding of health and social care (tax and individual contributions)
2. Continuing increase in proportion of Lancashire population with Asian heritage with impact on presence and engagement parishes
3. Continuing secularisation of society with impact on declining use of CoE churches for weddings/funerals
4. Continuing consumerisation of society, yet an increasing expectation of on-demand-free-at-the-point-of-use public services
5. Continuing increase in the age at which people can afford to retire with an impact on the availability of volunteers
6. Continuing increase in house prices above average wages negatively impacting disposable incomes
7. Continuing focus on multi-modal digital communications impacting on the way the diocese and individual churches interact with the general population
8. Unknown economic impact of Brexit in 2019-2020 on employment
9. Large number of Victorian church buildings built in times of relative prosperity now serving communities that have experienced profound socio-economic (coastal resorts) and demographic (East Lancashire mill towns) change and require increasing maintenance and refurbishment

All the above will have an impact to a greater or lesser extent on the communities in which our worship centres are located; some of which have a direct impact on the individuals who comprise our worshipping communities.

As a diocese we also face the following specific practical challenges:

1. Parish finances – utility costs increasing above inflation adding to the financial challenge
2. Church building repairs – c£8.5m of outstanding repairs from quinquennials in the next 5 years plus £1.5m beyond 5 years. Closure of the ringfenced Heritage Lottery Fund listed places of worship scheme
3. Parish administration and governance – reducing numbers of parishes with two wardens, full PCCs. Increasing requirements for training of volunteers, especially safeguarding
4. Diocesan governance – significant number of vacancies on Diocesan Synod following 2018 election
5. Unless there is a change by the Charity Commission, every PCC will need to be registered with them as a charity by 31st March 2021.

As well as an ongoing challenge in the lack of desire of some clergy and congregations to engage in mission and/or deepen their relationship with God.

Unlike some dioceses, we are not expecting a significant increase in the number of stipendiary clergy retiring in the next three years. That will be more of a challenge in the 2022-2025 triennium.

***OUR RESPONSE TO THESE CHALLENGES***

Faced with these challenges, one option is to actively plan for decline.

**HOWEVER**, as a diocese we are currently blessed with a number of God given gifts that lead us to a different approach of ‘going all in, going for growth’ for the next triennium at least:

1. DBF reserves at the top of the reserves policy at the end of 2017
2. Continuing national Lowest Income Communities Funding (12% of DBF budget)
3. New appointments to the Bishop’s Leadership Team/Director posts in 2018/19
4. SDF for Preston Resourcing Parish approved in December 2018
5. Setting God’s People Free national initiative supporting lay leadership and discipleship
6. Leadership and deployment strategy accepted by Diocesan Synod, committed to maintaining stipendiary clergy numbers, ten stipendiary curates per annum and developing lay leadership. NB this will require an investment of diocesan free reserves for the three year period (See appendix 1).

***WHAT WE PLAN TO DELIVER 2019-2021 – OUR TARGETS***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Measure** | **Date of measurement** | **Target** | **Change (since date)** |
| Attendance number | October 2021 RWA count | 17,000 | + 500 (2%) from 2017 data |
| Attendance per capita | October 2021 RWA count | 1.8% | +0.1% from 2017 data |
| Child (under 18) attendance per capita | 2022 Stats of Mission | 1.2% | +0.1% from 2017 data |
| Number of new congregations | End 2021 | 10 strategic  200 congregations |  |
| Number of confirmations | Early 2022 | 880 | +10% from 2017 data |
| Clergy vacancy rate | End 2021 | 8% | Same as 2018 |
| Number of ordinands completing training | Summer 2021 | 10 per year | Same as 2018 |
| Average length of clergy vacancy | End 2021 | <9 months | Same as 2018 |
| Number of lay readers completing training | Summer 2021 | 8 per year | Same as 2018 |
| Planned giving to parishes as a % of median Lancashire income | 2020 data | At least 5% |  |
| DBF Reserves | End 2021 | 3 months | Minus 2.6 months since end 2017 |

***HOW WE PLAN TO DELIVER THE TARGETS***

Our strategic response is to focus on the following over the three years 2019-2021:

1. Build on the good will generated at the diocesan conference. Start the focus

on making disciples

1. Continue focus on making disciples, introducing personal and parochial

response – eg a rule of life

2020 Establish a religious community based at Whalley Abbey

1. Focus on church planting/reinvigoration of inherited models of church?

As with the 2016-18 period, whilst there is a key focus in discipleship throughout the triennium, it doesn’t mean that there’s little or no action under the other Vision themes (see details under each year below).

During 2019 the following strategic inputs are planned specifically linked to the start of the focus on Making Disciples being led by Mark and the Director of Discipleship:

***2019***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Vision Strand** | **Strategic Input** | **Time** |
| Making disciples | Generosity, gift and grace course used in parishes | Lent |
| Making disciples | Clergy study mornings | Spring |
| Making disciples | Bishop Julian’s Bible Challenge for key stage 2 (7,500 packs distributed) | Autumn 2018-summer 2019 |
| Making disciples | Bishop’s Adult Bible Challenge | All year |
| Making disciples | Pathways of Prayer – March, July, Sept, Oct | Termly |
| Making disciples | Transition planning and recruitment of Warden for religious community based at Whalley Abbey | Summer |

Other strategic inputs:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Vision Strand** | **Strategic Input** | **Target area** | **Time** |
| Being witnesses (+Philip) | Launch of Preston Resourcing Parish | Attendance | Autumn |
| Being witnesses (+Philip) | Continuing development of Blackpool Centre of Mission | Attendance  Ordinands | All year |
| Being witnesses (+ Jill) | Development and piloting of Congregation planting | Attendance | All year |
| Growing Leaders (+Philip) | Changes to Ministerial Development Review process to increase accountability for mission and growth | Attendance | Autumn |
| Growing Leaders (+ Philip) | Pilot the process of encouraging vocations (10 from 7 parishes) | Vocations | All year |
| Growing Leaders (+Jill) | Continuing development of M:Power urban leadership hub | Attendance | All year |
| Growing Leaders (Mark) | Setting Gods’ People Free |  | All year |
| Growing Leaders (+Philip) | Training for lay small group leaders |  | All year |
| Growing Leaders (+Philip) | Establishment of an Anglo-Catholic ministry experience in Morecambe | Vocations | Summer |
| Enablers (Mark) | Completion of parish share review and communicate decision to parishes | Parish share collected | Autumn |
| Enablers (+Philip) | Progress dis-appointments in places with struggling ministry, coupled with Parish Support Programme | Attendance | All year |
| Enablers (+Julian) | Re-commission Vision Champions – Primary Visitations x 4 | Attendance | Summer |
| Enablers (Graeme) | Internal communications strategy |  | Spring |
| External (+Julian) | Expected to join the House of Lords |  | Summer |
| Enablers (Graeme) | Use of diocesan reserves to cushion the impact of increasing costs on parish share increases (especially if LICF is allocated to a smaller number of parishes). Continuing discussions with parishes about share collection and ‘deals with strings’ | Reserves | All year |
| Enablers (Archdeacons) | National DAC Conference in Blackburn on ‘transforming buildings for mission’ |  | September |
| Young People (Michael/bishops) | Use of Diocesan Vision Fund to support piloting of the model for developing local volunteer teams to support young people’s work and Bishops’ confirmation follow up | Attendance  Child attendance | All year |
| Young People  (Michael) | Respond to ‘Growing Faith’ College of Bishops’ paper | Child attendance | Spring |
| Priority Contexts (+Jill) | Support Rural Focus Group – especially development of strategy that aligns with delivering Vision 2026 in that context | Attendance | Spring/ Autumn |

During 2020 the following strategic inputs are planned, specifically linked to the ongoing focus on making disciples.

***2020***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Vision Strand** | **Strategic Input** | **Target Area** | **Time** |
| Making disciples | Bishop’s adult bible challenge concluding |  | spring |
| Making disciples | Setting Gods’ People Free continuing |  | All year |
| Making disciples | Rule of Life response for individuals/parishes |  | All year |
| Making disciples | Establishment of Whalley Abbey as a Centre for Discipleship |  | All year |
| Enabler | Continuing use of reserves to cushion the impact of increasing costs on parish share | Reserves | All year |
| Enabler | Continuing focus on local accountability for delivering growth in numbers and depth of discipleship | Attendance | All year |
| Enabler | Peer Review 2020? |  | Autumn |
| External | Engage with Lambeth 2020 including hosting |  | Summer |
| External | Response to Living in Love and Faith – human sexuality paper from the House of Bishops |  | TBC |
| Young people | Potential SDF application to upscale the volunteering model | Child attendance | Spring |
| Young people | Decision about continuing funding of university chaplaincy |  | Spring |

At the end of 2020 there will be a funding continuation review of the Outer Estates Leadership projects by the Strategic Investment Board.

During 2021, the first two planting curates will complete their training at the Preston Resourcing Parish, enabling a focus on church planting across the wider diocese as well as specifically in the north Preston new housing and Moor Nook (Ribbleton) Outer Estate.

***2021***

At the end of 2021 there will be a funding continuation review of the Preston Resourcing Parish by the Strategic Investment Board and the DBF Directors.