

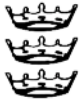
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Releasing the energy, the Diocesan Strategy 2010-2015, has been authored by the Diocesan Strategy & Policy Group:

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These documents supersede the consultation documents of the “Outline Diocesan Strategy, 2010-2015” (approved by Bishop’s Council, 23 September 2008), and its “Executive Summary”.



Our Diocesan Strategy 2010-2015 is shaped by a number of theological principles.

Our whole Strategy hinges on the amazing truth that God’s whole motivation in sending His Son into the world is his love for the world (John 3:16). Love governs God’s purposes for the world and also defines what Jesus called the Kingdom of God. And it was the Kingdom of God that Jesus came to usher in to the world. We believe that God has freely sown seeds full of “kingdom” potential in the world (Matt 13) and He wants to see these seeds flourish and grow – to see the energy released.

It is in the light of the Incarnation and God’s Kingdom that we think about the purpose of the Church. God’s love for the world is to be reflected amongst the new community of God’s people, the Church, as we participate in the mission of God. The greater calling of the Church is to realise God’s Kingdom in the world. We want to grow as churches in order to make the world a more whole place. This is a radical departure from the small-minded introversion which we know haunts some of the decision making groups in the Church.

For growth is not only the natural condition of the Kingdom of God, but of every believer and His Church. The Church must remind itself of this truth and encourage such growth in its life (Eph 4:15-16). Our call for greater commitment stems from this belief. We are called to be transformed, a process which will not be complete until that day when “we shall see Him face to face” (Rom 12:2). If one can speak of the genius of the Church it is that God in His wisdom decided that this process of discipleship was best done in community – the local church.

“Growth is not only the natural condition of the Kingdom of God, but of every believer and His Church.”

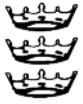
The local church has done this for centuries by recognising where God has gifted believers in different ways and encouraged that spiritual gifting to express itself in releasing the energy of the whole Body of Christ (Eph 4:7-13). The Church has historically recognised three orders of ministry – the diaconate, the priesthood and the episcopate. These callings each have a specific and important part to play in the life and purpose of the Church. We want to complement those orders by a proper recognition and releasing of the whole people of God. When Peter told the recipients of his

first epistle that they (the whole Church) were a royal priesthood (1 Pet 2:9), he didn’t mean literally that everybody is a priest, but he did mean that every baptised person has a ministry to offer. This Strategy aims to release the energy of those leaders who are called and gifted to release the energy of others.

It is in the light of the Incarnation also that we think about what it means to have a local mission – an engagement in our varying contexts. The resources that God has given us must be used to further that engagement, to release more energy into the local context.

However, recognising the importance of the local does not mean that local churches can simply exist in isolation and independence. We are called to be partners in mission (Phil 1:5). Our churches are grouped in deaneries and, in part, they are an expression of not only our local identity, but also our interconnected identity. Let us embrace our identity as one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

Rt Revd Mike Hill



The year is 2015. In communities across Swindon, North Wiltshire, South Gloucestershire and Bristol, people have been sensing a change.

They are noticing friends, family members or colleagues living differently – in their integrity and generosity, compassion and service. The marginalised and poorer members of their community are being cared for. Faith and community groups are working together with other organisations to address problems in our society. There is a renewed concern for the wider world, the environment and social injustice. And churches are not only attracting new members but gaining a reputation of meaning and purpose where all ages and kinds of people can come to know Jesus Christ as Lord.

These are some of the signs of the Kingdom of God being revealed in our local communities and culture today. This is what happens when the seeds of the Kingdom that God has sown in the world flourish and grow. The churches, church schools and faith communities that make up the Diocese of Bristol are full of these seeds. Over the next few years, this is the kind of impact they can have on their communities. It is time for the seeds to burst into growth – for the energy to be released.

“It is time for the seeds to burst into growth – for the energy to be released.”

This is what the Diocese of Bristol's Strategy for 2010-2015 is all about: releasing the energy that God has given to His Church to see His Kingdom come where we live and serve. That may look different from one place to another but will accord with our purpose as a Diocese of “creating communities of wholeness with Christ at the centre”. And it will be marked by the four components of the Diocesan Growth Programme: growing in commitment, partnership, influence and numbers.

If, as St Paul suggests, it is God who gives growth (1 Corinthians 3:6), what part do we have to play? In our communities, it is our mutual responsibility to create the conditions for spiritual growth in our own and each other's lives. But across the Diocese as a whole, a Diocesan Strategy helps create the conditions – the right kind of climate, structural context and direction – for the growth of the communities that make it up.

Releasing the energy, the Diocesan Strategy for 2010-2015, focuses on four primary ways of creating the conditions for releasing the energy of the Kingdom of God:

1. **Growth Programme**
2. **Leadership Development**
3. **Structures of oversight and support**
4. **Income generation**

“A Diocesan Strategy helps create the conditions – the right kind of climate, structural context and direction – for the communities that make up the Diocese.”

“If God gives growth, what part do we have to play? To create the conditions for spiritual growth in our own and each other's lives.”

1. Growth Programme

The Growth Programme continues to provide the *direction* for the life of the Diocese and the communities that make it up. It is also the lens through which we can assess our progress as a Diocese in fulfilling our aims.

The Growth Programme takes a holistic approach to growth, thinking in terms of growth in *commitment* to God, growth in *partnership* with others within and beyond the Church, growth in *influence* on the wider community and growth in *numbers*.

Since 2005, parishes have been encouraged to develop their own, locally shaped plans for growth. The Diocesan Strategy continues to support local communities as they engage with the Growth Programme and develop and implement their plans. Deaneries will be the context where the Growth Programme is encouraged and Growth Advisers will be made available to support parishes in this process.

“ The Growth Programme continues to provide the *direction* for the life of the Diocese and the communities that make it up. ”

See related documents >>

Bristol Diocesan Growth Programme
Delivering the Diocesan Strategy

2. Leadership development

Leadership development will *energise* the Diocesan Strategy. The most effective role that the central organisation of the Diocese can play in encouraging growth in the churches that make it up is by developing their leaders. Leaders empower other people by serving them. Developing leaders in the Church releases therefore not only their energy but also that of the whole people of God.

By focusing on leadership development, the Diocesan Strategy aims to release a greater level of indigenous, voluntary and collaborative ministry leadership in the Diocese. This will lead to ministry leadership teams of lay and ordained people, authorised to share “the cure of souls” with the Bishop and lead the church into mission and growth. Decisions around deployment of licensed ministers will be a Deanery responsibility.

“ Leaders empower other people by serving them. Developing leaders in the Church releases not only their energy but also that of the whole people of God. ”

The Diocesan Strategy aims both to further the development of existing leaders and to identify and equip new leaders locally for lay and ordained roles.

Vacancy leadership development will be directed at benefices during a vacancy because vacancies have proved to be a fruitful context for developmental work and change. Vacancy Leadership Advisers will work alongside those in parishes to identify and develop potential local leaders. Vacancy work is a strategic use of leadership advisers' time and skills.

RELEASE, a leadership development programme created and run by the Diocese of Bristol, will equip people to lead from a spiritual foundation. It will be equally appropriate for church leaders and those leading in the community or other work environments.

RELEASE will help people to discover the unique direction of their leadership borne out of their own experience, passions and gifts and exercise it more effectively in their own context. It will be available to those from Diocese of Bristol churches at member rates and the Diocese will invest in sending both clergy and lay leaders on RELEASE.

“RELEASE will equip people lead from a spiritual foundation.”

See related documents >>

Vacancy Leadership Development
RELEASE
Deployment guidelines

3. Structures of oversight and support

The Diocesan structures of oversight and support will focus on *delivering* the Diocesan Strategy.

For the Strategy to succeed and contribute to the growth of the Church and Kingdom of God, it must be properly resourced and effectively supported. The Strategy will not succeed if it is primarily introduced and supported through the current structures where decisions are made at a distance from local communities.

“The Strategy will not succeed if it is primarily introduced and supported through the current structures where decisions are made at a distance from local communities.”

Instead, a dedicated team will devote its attention to clearing the way for the Strategy. The Strategy can then be shaped and implemented by decisions made by those in deanery leadership so that they are taken “closer to the ground”.

To achieve this, a Strategy Delivery Team will be formed, drawn from members of the Bishop’s Staff, to ensure the Strategy takes hold and is delivered. Deanery Leadership Teams will take further responsibility for the Strategy locally and decision-making at that level. And small teams of diocesan advisers will be available to deliver strategy support services direct to parishes.

In addition, the governance structures of the Diocese (boards, committees etc) will be reviewed in line with the new support structures to provide more effective decision-making. The Diocese will look at bringing all Diocesan Board of Finance employees in the Bristol area into one office to enable better interdepartmental communication and potential cost savings.

See related documents >>

Delivering the Diocesan Strategy

4. Income generation

Any strategy must take account of the financial resources available to help *fuel* what it aims to achieve. But a Diocesan Strategy should ensure not only that the books are balanced but also that the balance is right between what the parishes give to support the Diocese's overall mission (through the provision of stipendiary ministers, support services and oversight) and what they retain to help implement their plans for growth. When the balance is right, then local churches feel released and equipped for ministry and mission that makes sense in their own context, and the structures of the Diocese can be better geared to support them in their work.

In the light of this, the Diocesan Strategy seeks to reduce the proportion of parochial income as a whole that is given in Share to the Diocese. Achieving this aim in the context of ongoing, steep rises in the costs of stipendiary ministers requires a number of complementary approaches.

First, supporting parishes as they encourage giving and generosity – both within the Church and beyond it – as part of spiritual growth and commitment to God. This will not only lead to a more spiritually vital Church, but also impact parochial income.

Second, asking parishes to make a prayerful decision about how much of their income they give to support the overall mission of the Diocese and creating a greater sense of partnership and interdependence by managing this at deanery level.

Third, generating more income from beyond the parishes, through trust and major donor fundraising, making better use of diocesan assets and forming a trading subsidiary of the Diocesan Board of Finance which will donate its profits to the Diocese. These streams will add to the 25% of diocesan income that already comes from non-parochial sources.

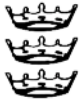
Fourth, ensuring that costs are well controlled in the Diocese both in terms of best use of stipendiary ministers and the streamlining of central support services.

See related documents >>
[Share Review](#)

To find out more about the background thinking to the Diocesan Strategy and the process that formed it, see >>
[Behind the Strategy](#)

If you would like to engage further with any aspect of the Diocesan Strategy, please contact the Area Dean in your deanery.

“When the financial balance is right, then local churches feel released and equipped for ministry and mission that makes sense in their context, and the structures of the Diocese can be better geared to support them in their work.”



A Aim and outcomes of Vacancy Leadership Development

- 1 **The aim** of Vacancy Leadership Development is to release a greater level of indigenous, voluntary and collaborative leadership in a benefice during a clerical vacancy to take responsibility for leading the church/es in fulfilling the Growth Programme in that local context into the future.
- 2 **The potential outcomes** of Vacancy Leadership Development are:
 - A ministry leadership team(s), well trained and authorised to share the “cure of souls” with the Bishop and lead the church into mission and growth;
 - Recruitment of ministers, lay and/or ordained, paid and/or unpaid, whose gifts complement or complete those of the team that has developed;
 - A church plant (graft or transplant) from another congregation;
 - Planned closure of a building.

The purpose of this development work is to empower the parishes. The development process (see below) is not something done *to* a parish, but something done *with* and *by* it.

B Process of Vacancy Leadership Development

When an incumbent, Priest-in-charge, Team Vicar or Team Rector resigns, the Diocesan Bishop will notify the Strategy Delivery Team, which will have the overview for all Vacancy Leadership Development. The Strategy Delivery Team will delegate the management and monitoring of the progress of the work in each benefice to the Deanery Leadership Teams and the developmental work in each vacancy to the Vacancy Leadership Advisers and hold both groups accountable accordingly. Therefore, for each vacancy, the Strategy Delivery Team will ask the Vacancy Leadership Advisers to deploy an appropriate person and the Deanery Leadership Team to manage the overall process. The following, two-stage Vacancy Leadership Development process will be used.

1 Stage 1 – Vacancy Preview

The first principle of the Vacancy Preview is that all benefices (parish/es, teams, partnerships, as appropriate) must start at the same point in the process, even if the first stage of Vacancy Leadership Development only lasts a very short time. This will enable each benefice to assess their current stage of development and then move on from it.

A Vacancy Preview should last between one and three months (maximum), with a strong expectation that it will be completed by the time the outgoing clergyperson leaves.

The Vacancy Preview consists of collecting a range of data and a sample of opinion about the situation in a benefice. The Deanery Leadership Team will request each PCC in the benefice to provide them with the following paperwork:

- Last three sets of PCC minutes;
- Annual accounts for last three years;
- Growth Plan;
- Share record for last three years;
- Attendance figures for last three years;
- Last available parish profile;
- Last available person and job specifications for outgoing clergyperson;

- Work agreements with SSMs, OLMs, LLMs and any employed persons;
- Latest Archdeacon's report;
- Any other written information or submission, decided by PCC.

In addition, the Deanery Leadership Team will request the Vacancy Leadership Adviser likely to be responsible for supporting the rest of the Vacancy Leadership Development process to conduct interviews with:

- The outgoing clergyperson (if possible);
- Members of the Deanery Leadership Team who can give an informed deanery view;
- Well placed lay leaders.

Confidentiality should be maintained at this stage.

The Deanery Leadership Team will then consider the paperwork and the findings of the interviews and, with the advice of the Vacancy Leadership Adviser, make a recommendation about which next step in the process the parish/es in the benefice will follow. There are three possible next steps:

- i) Leadership Initiative;
- ii) Vacancy Development Opportunity;
- iii) Moving straight to the possible outcome of a) receiving a church plant or b) closure of the building, after a viability assessment.

This recommendation will be discussed at the first meeting of the PCC/s (or a joint meeting of the PCCs) following the departure of the outgoing clergyperson with the Area Dean and/or Deanery Lay Chair and Vacancy Leadership Adviser present. The recommendation will then go via the Strategy Delivery Team to the Diocesan Bishop who will commission the work.

2 Stage Two

i) Leadership Initiative

A Leadership Initiative will be the most common next step and most benefices will move straight from the Vacancy Preview to this work. Here there is a well-ordered benefice with no particular serious, unresolved issues. Most parishes have what might be called "ordinary problems" but, like ordinary families, will not be in crisis or be so fragile that relationships, ministry or mission have broken down completely.

This work is primarily seen as **leadership development**. If a benefice is willing to set to work and be guided in order to develop, strengthen or encourage its lay leadership, some months of working with a Vacancy Leadership Adviser and their team should enable them to move forward on developing structures of responsibility sharing, ministry and service to the community. In this stage, it is not where the benefice begins on the way to sharing leadership and ministry that matters but its readiness to develop further from the point already reached.

The main activity will be **the discernment and development of gifts** for mission and ministry. The Vacancy Leadership Adviser responsible will concern her/himself with empowering the benefice to develop its lay ministry, identifying potential leaders and consulting with the Adviser for Licensed Ministry so that where appropriate individuals might follow a vocational discernment process for licensed ordained or lay ministry.

The Diocesan Bishop commissions the Leadership Initiative work to be done for an initial period of six months. At the end of the six months, each parish produces a self-assessment of their progress and outlines which of the outcomes they are aiming towards and by when. They present this self-assessment to the Deanery Leadership Team. On the basis of the self-assessment, and the advice of the Vacancy Leadership Adviser responsible, the Deanery Leadership Team decides whether a further period of Leadership Initiative is needed.

Depending on the outcomes agreed by the parish/es and the Deanery Leadership Team, if the work is judged to be a success, the Deanery Leadership Team can recommend to the Diocesan Bishop,

via the Strategy Delivery Team, one of the possible outcomes (see A 2 above) and move the process towards either authorising existing leaders, recruiting further ministers to complement or complete the team or embarking on a process of negotiating a church plant or closure of the building.

ii) Vacancy Development Opportunity

Vacancy Development Opportunity is the term chosen for the work to be undertaken in a **benefice with special difficulties** of any kind. A team will be brought together under a lead Vacancy Leadership Adviser to work in the benefice. The work is seen primarily as **pastoral development** and the aim of it is to help the benefice resolve their special difficulties.

The Diocesan Bishop commissions the work to be done for an initial period of six months. At the end of the six months, the parish/es produces a self-assessment of their progress and presents to the Deanery Leadership Team. On the basis of the self-assessment, and the advice of the Vacancy Leadership Adviser responsible, the Deanery Leadership Team decides whether a further six month period of Vacancy Development Opportunity is needed.

If at an assessment stage, progress is not being made and the work is judged not to be a success, then the possibility of closure or a church plant will arise (see iii) below). If the work is judged to be a success, then a new (or partly new) team would be introduced in order to pursue a Leadership Initiative.

Although the Vacancy Development Opportunity and the Leadership Initiative are presented as distinct options above, it is recognised that in reality every benefice will lie somewhere on a continuum between the two options. Careful agreement on working together will be needed by all concerned.

In both a Vacancy Development Opportunity and a Leadership Initiative, one of the Bishops will, if possible, preach in the benefice in order to encourage and further the work. The Bishops and Archdeacons will not be involved either in the decision-making around the assessments or the developmental work itself, unless invited to do so. It is the Deanery Leadership Team's responsibility to make the decisions and the Vacancy Leadership Adviser's responsibility to oversee the developmental work and the Bishop's Staff will support them in that.

The Deanery Leadership Team will report regularly to the Strategy Delivery Team on vacancies in their deanery and the Vacancy Leadership Advisers will report monthly to their team leader who will in turn report to the Strategy Delivery Team.

Throughout a vacancy, the Area Dean and the Churchwardens will continue to have the primary and legal responsibility for the maintenance of the parish and its worship.

iii) Receive a church plant or close a building

a) Receive a church plant

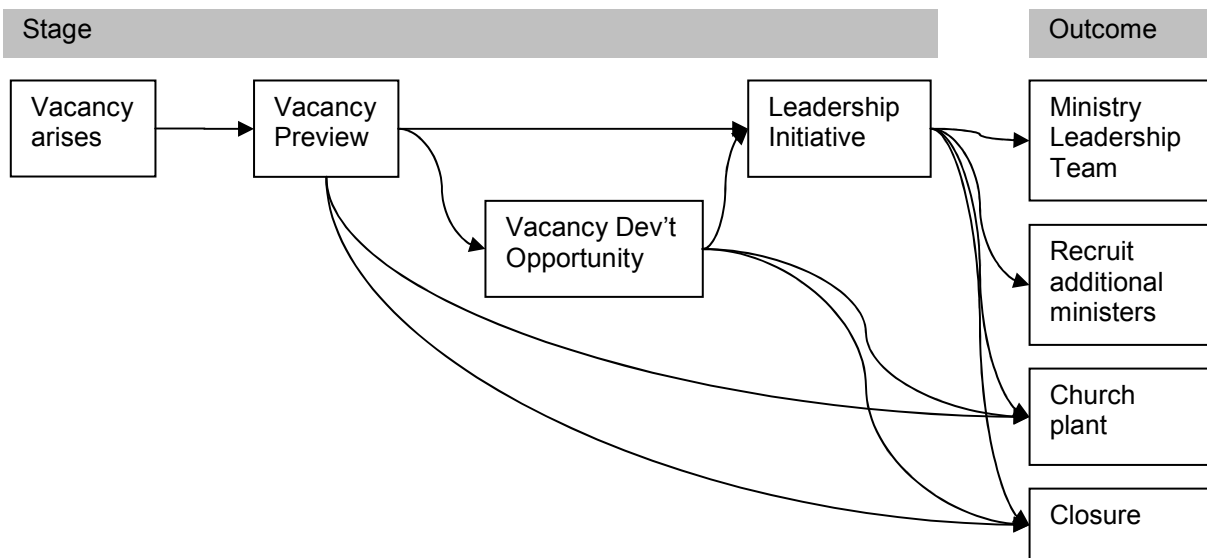
It may be that a benefice, or parish within it, does not have the resources within the church to sustain its own life but is a fertile context for mission. In that case, it may be possible to invite another church to plant into that benefice in order to renew the ministry there. If this was to happen, it would need to be brokered in the deanery and done in line with the Diocesan Church Planting Policy.

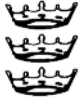
b) Closure

This is not expected to be a frequent choice as a result of the Vacancy Preview, Vacancy Development Opportunity or Leadership Initiative, but its possibility should be noted.

The parish lay leaders, with the Deanery Leadership Team and Vacancy Leadership Adviser responsible, may decide at any point to recommend to the Bishop that a church be closed. At the Vacancy Preview Stage, there would have been considerable pre-knowledge of the parish, and careful weighing of the paperwork, before any such decision could be made. It should be noted that any such decision is a decision to **recommend closure of a building**; it is not necessarily a decision to bring to an end the worshipping life of a community.

Vacancy Leadership Development process flow chart





True leadership matters. It helps create a virtuous cycle whereby more individuals become the people they have been created to be. But there is a leadership vacuum in our society. In business, politics, the public sector, charities and religion, we feel let down by those who have been elevated to positions of leadership.

Yet there are leaders with character, integrity and developing substance just waiting for further opportunities to lead, but they do not feel empowered to do so. RELEASE aims to help fill that leadership vacuum by empowering these kind of people to discover and exercise their own leadership and in turn to empower others.

RELEASE is a leadership development programme that realises the potential of leaders – it releases their energy. By engaging with RELEASE, participants will discover the unique direction of their leadership borne out of their own experience, passions and gifts and learn to exercise it more effectively in their own context. They will develop their desire to serve others and see them flourish and will recognise a greater purpose to their leadership. As they do so, they will learn their primary role as a leader is to serve and empower those who follow them to lead themselves – to release the energy of others.

RELEASE affirms and relies upon a spiritual foundation to leadership – its ultimate example of a leader is in the life and work of Jesus Christ. RELEASE is based upon the conviction that people will lead best if they recognise and build upon this foundation.

Who is RELEASE for?

RELEASE is for those who recognise there is a spiritual dimension to their leadership and want to discover and develop their own leadership from that base. This kind of leadership can be exercised in all environments but will include those in lead in the Church.

What does RELEASE involve?

RELEASE is an integrated programme for each leader's development. It is made up from a number of related components:

- An ongoing relationship with a leadership consultant;
- A menu of leadership learning opportunities appropriate to the individual;
- Setting goals for leadership development and reflecting on their leadership in practice;
- Creating further opportunities to empower other leaders.

There will be three levels of involvement in RELEASE:

RELEASE events – keynote leadership learning events;

Compass – a one year programme that helps you discover the spiritual foundation and the direction of your leadership;

Voyage – a two year programme that helps you develop further as a leader in your context.

Whatever level of involvement someone chooses to have, they will be able to start where they are as a leader and develop from that point.

RELEASE events

RELEASE events will be full and half-day conference venue events with speakers and seminar leaders of national renown. Those invited to speak will be experienced, respected leaders of character who have led from a spiritual foundation and can reflect on their leadership.

Compass

On Compass, leaders will commit to bimonthly, leadership consultancy sessions in small groups. These will provide the basis of the programme and a place to reflect on the learning opportunities that form part of the Compass programme and on each person's leadership context. The learning opportunities will be a combination of residential and weekend morning and weekday evening learning opportunities aimed to help each person discover their unique leadership direction and establish solid foundations. Compass will make use of ongoing developmental progress tools and in some cases would lead to someone moving onto the Voyage Programme.

Voyage

On Voyage, leaders will have quarterly, individual leadership consultancy sessions. As on Compass, these will provide the basis of the programme and will help determine which learning opportunities would be appropriate to the individual as well as a place to reflect on the learning opportunities that form part of the Voyage programme. The programme will be modular and holistic based around four areas [e.g. spiritual foundations, developing character, empowering relationships, ongoing direction]. Voyage will make use of ongoing developmental progress tools and relate strongly to the individual's own leadership context.

Why is the Diocese of Bristol providing RELEASE?

The Diocese of Bristol is committed to creating communities of wholeness with Christ at the centre. These communities will be marked by a growth in commitment to God, partnership with others, influence in the world and numbers.

The Diocese believes that Christ-like leadership plays a vital part in the development of these kinds of communities and that the greatest impact the Diocese can have on the life of the churches and communities that make it up is through developing their leaders. Leadership development is therefore a fundamental strand of the "Releasing the energy", Diocese of Bristol's 2010-2015 Strategy, and RELEASE is part of that strand.

However, the Diocese's vision extends beyond the life of the churches and communities that formally make it up to the environments where other Christians lead and resourcing them as they seek to bring the Kingdom of God where they are.

What does RELEASE cost?*

RELEASE costs are aimed to be kept low to enable the greatest possible access to those across the leadership spectrum.

2010-2011 prices	Normal rate	Member rate
RELEASE full day event	£ 45	£ 34 (25% discount)
RELEASE half-day event	£ 28	£ 21 (25% discount)
Compass programme	£750	£640 (15% discount)
Voyage programme (annual cost)	£950	£810 (15% discount)

2010-2011 Membership

Three levels of organisation membership:

A – Member rates for 10 people to attend any RELEASE event

B – Member rates for 10 places at any release event and 3 places on Compass or Voyage

C – Member rates for 20 places at any release event and 5 places on Compass or Voyage

	A	B	C
Diocese of Bristol church	Free (save £180)	Free (save £615)	£250 (save £835)
Church or charity	£85 (save £95)	£350 (save £265)	£600 (save £485)
Organisation	£110 (save £70)	£450 (save £165)	£775 (save £310)

Individual membership (member rates at any RELEASE event and on Compass or Voyage):
£100 (save up to £63)

* These costs are indicative and subject to change.

RELEASE FAQs

What is the timeframe for RELEASE?

RELEASE will have a two stage introduction.

In 2010, RELEASE will organise two key note events (in the spring and early summer) with nationally renowned speakers. This will build the profile of RELEASE in the area and generate income beyond the Diocese.

In September 2010, the Compass and Voyage Programmes will start, primarily marketed to those in Diocese of Bristol churches. This is in order to facilitate the transition from current IME, CME and lay training into the new mode of development and to build capacity, experience and expertise.

In 2011, the events will continue to run and the marketing of Compass and Voyage will be broadened.

How does RELEASE fit in with existing training and development provision for clergy, licensed lay ministers and churches?

As the primary stakeholder in RELEASE, the Diocese will make significant use of it in terms of its leadership development input for ministers and local churches.

All those in licensed ministry will be invited to participate in Compass or Voyage and the Diocese will fund the costs for a certain number of places on Compass and on Voyage each year for church leaders in the Diocese. Being a member of a Diocese of Bristol church will mean member rates for any RELEASE event or programme and parishes are encouraged to send their own leaders on events or programmes.

In addition, Initial Ministerial Education (IME1-7) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD – formally CME) will have access to individual RELEASE components as part of the ministerial development of those not fully engaged with Compass or Voyage. Leadership development offered in the Diocese will be under a diocesan sub-brand of RELEASE. However, IME and CPD will also provide required training for those in particular roles in order to help them fulfil their ministerial functions.

The Diocese will also resource Leadership Initiatives in vacancies (another part of the Leadership Development strand in “Releasing the energy”) which will encourage people to participate in RELEASE.

There is a new Ministerial Development Review (MDR) process for clergy. How does it fit with RELEASE?

The MDR aims to address the ministerial requirements of licensed ordained ministers. Leadership is an integral part of the role of ordained ministers so is addressed as part of it. However, the role of an ordained minister is not purely that of a leader so the MDR extends beyond leadership matters.

As a result of the MDR, a development plan is agreed with the minister that is followed up in the context of an Action Learning Set for six months. During this period, any ordained ministers participating in Compass or Voyage will have a break from working with their leadership consultant. Any development plan action point that can be provided by RELEASE will be so.

Who's going to pay for RELEASE?

RELEASE will form part of a trading subsidiary of the Diocesan Board of Finance (see below) and will be capitalised by the Diocese. The aim of RELEASE is to be a profit-making enterprise and it is likely to achieve this within the first three years of trading. Any profits made will be donated to the work of the Diocesan Board of Finance (i.e. the overall ministry of the Diocese).

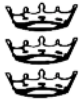
In order to fund sending clergy and lay leaders from the Diocese on RELEASE programmes, the Diocese will redirect some existing training and development budgets and raise charitable funds from outside the Diocese. RELEASE will therefore not draw further on existing parish giving unless parishes decide to pay for their members to be participants in appropriate levels of RELEASE.

What staffing levels will RELEASE?

RELEASE requires a Director (0.6 fte), responsible for overall delivery, financial management and marketing of the programme. In the first year, it will require the services of a Development Consultant to develop the curriculum and assess the leadership consultants, retained at a low level in the second year. An Admin and Data Manager (1.0 fte) will be required at an appropriate stage and extra admin support may be required as the programme grows. Accountancy, web and marketing support would be outsourced in the initial phase.

How will RELEASE fit in the Diocesan structures?

RELEASE will be part of a trading subsidiary of the DBF. The Diocese will outsource leadership development to the trading subsidiary and RELEASE will in turn buy in various aspects of its work from training and development providers. Charitable funds for leadership development will be processed by the DBF and then used to buy in RELEASE leadership development.



In order to support the delivery of the Diocesan Strategy 2010-15, major changes will need to be made to how the central diocesan support structures resource the Diocese as a whole. In November 2008, the Bishop's Council commissioned Pearce Mayfield to conduct an assessment of the central support structures' ability to support the Strategy, as outlined at that point. The recommendations of the "Review of Strategy Support" by Stewart Rapley were endorsed by the Bishop's Council and form the basis of the delivery structure outlined below.

Based on the belief that the Strategy will not succeed if introduced through the current structures, a new area of diocesan management will be established relating purely to the Diocesan Strategy which will focus on its delivery. This area will be led by a Strategy Delivery Team, managed locally by Deanery Leadership Teams and supported by designated Strategy Support Services (Growth Advisers, Vacancy Leadership Advisers, Giving Advisers and RELEASE).

Strategy Delivery Team

The Strategy Delivery Team will be responsible for ensuring the Strategy is delivered across the Diocese. It will create a future picture of the Diocese according to the aims of the Strategy, a road map for getting there in line with the Strategy and establish outcomes and manage them accordingly. It will take the lead on gaining ownership for the Strategy across the Diocese and provide support and best practice to Area Deans and Deanery Leadership Teams and to Strategy Support Services, as well as holding them accountable for their work. The Strategy Delivery Team will be accountable to the Diocesan Bishop and the Bishop's Council.

The Strategy Delivery Team will consist of four members of the Bishop's Staff, redeployed from their existing roles, to fulfil the following roles:

- *Team leader – Tim McClure*
Responsibilities: Overall accountability and leadership of strategy, line management of Area Deans and strategy support team leaders, resource allocation to deaneries.
- *Development Coach – Douglas Holt*
Responsibilities: Coaching support for strategy delivery, ensuring excellence of strategy support, sharing of best practice.
- *Strategy Architect – Oliver Home*
Responsibilities: Creating and maintaining a future Diocese picture and strategy road map, ensuring alignment of delivery with outcomes, written communications.
- *Strategy Support Manager – Lesley Farrall*
Responsibilities: Ensuring the provision of strategy information and availability of resource/finance.

Deanery Leadership Teams

Deanery Leadership Teams will be led by Area Deans. They will focus on strategic matters and encourage and manage the following aspects of strategy delivery in their deanery:

- *Growth Programme*
Encouraging growth plans and their implementation, deploying Growth Advisers.
- *Vacancy Leadership Development*
Managing Vacancy Leadership Development process and decision-making, working with Vacancy Leadership Advisers.
- *Deployment*
Decisions on deployment of licensed ministers.
- *Income generation from parishes*
Encouraging parishes to give to support the overall work of the Diocese, deployment of Giving Advisers.

Deanery Leadership Teams will be accountable to the Strategy Delivery Team who will in turn provide them with support and data to help them make informed decisions.

Strategy Support Services

These will be made available to each Deanery in the form of:

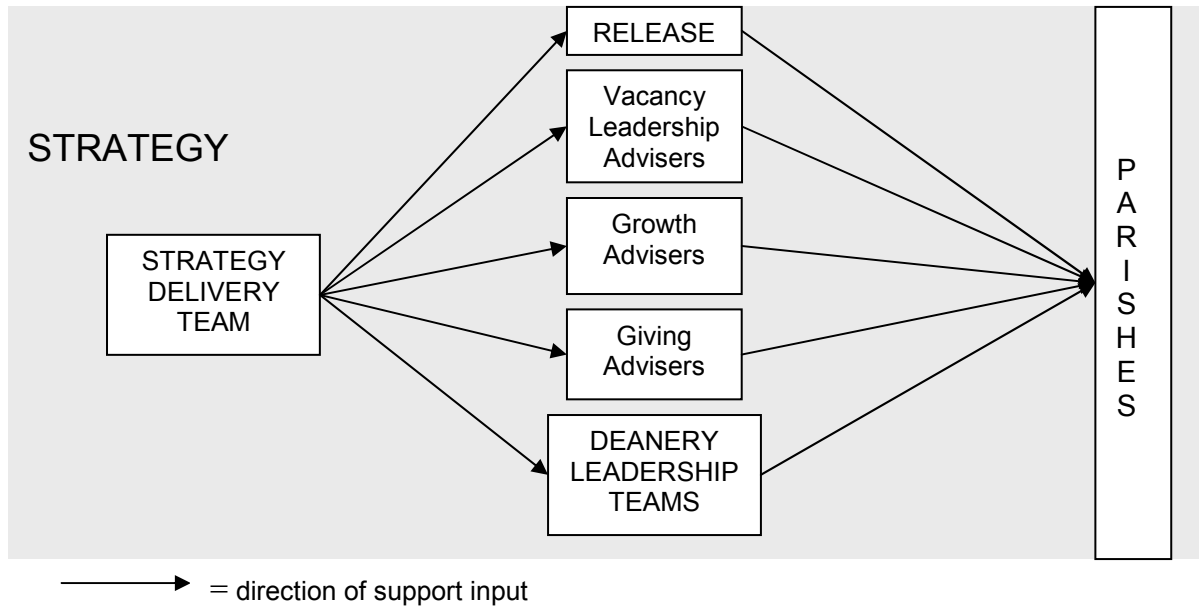
- *Growth Advisers*
- *Vacancy Leadership Advisers*
- *Giving Advisers*
- *RELEASE*

Deanery Leadership Teams will prioritise where these services are to be deployed (the services are limited) and be the broker between the needs of parishes and the support available. Each team in Strategy Support Services will have a leader and therefore accountability within the team but also be accountable to the Strategy Delivery Team.

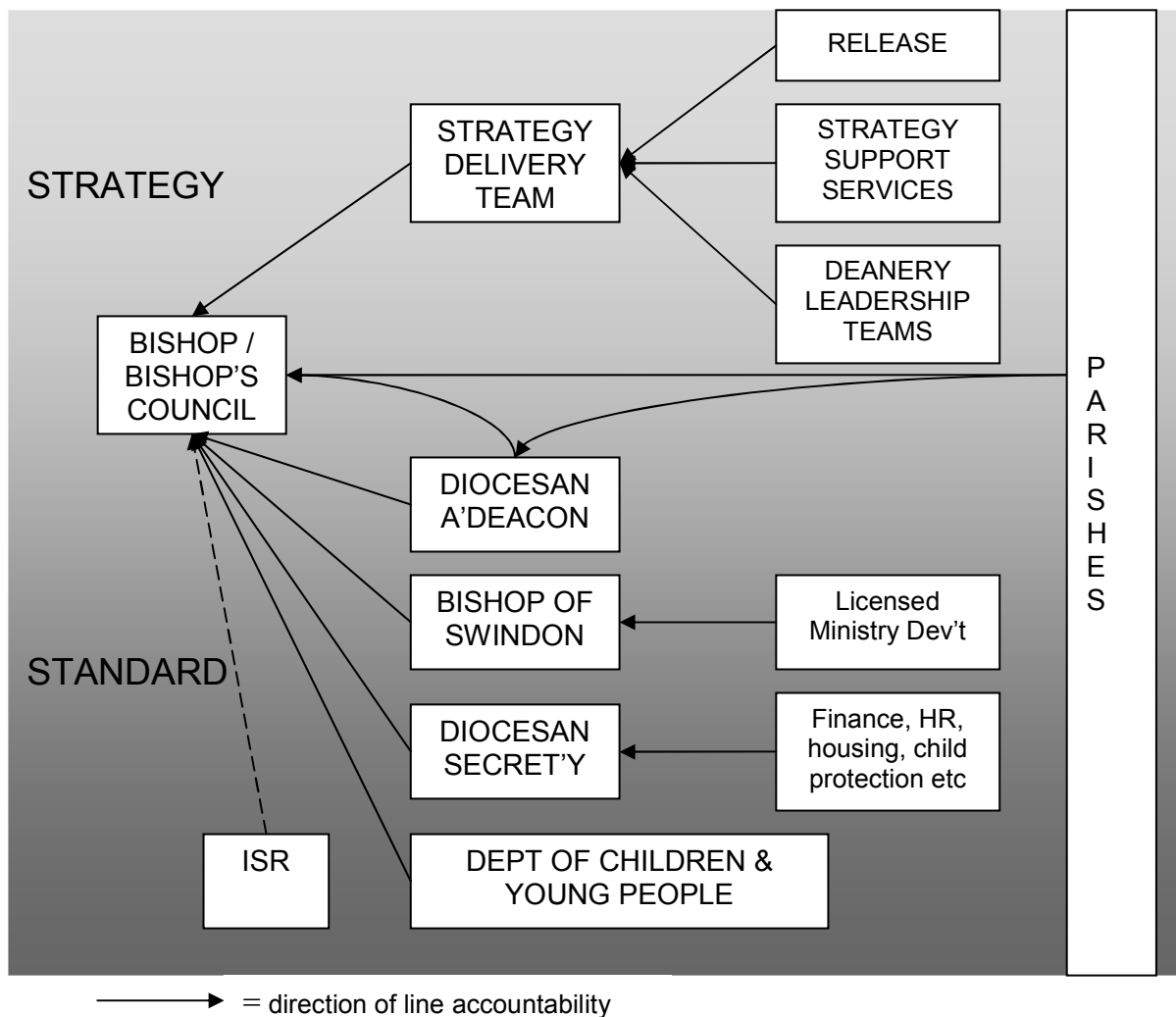
This new area of “Strategy” management and support will rely on and interplay with the “standard” diocesan management and support services. It is essential that the Strategy related and “standard” sides work together. The standard side will be impacted by the changes in structure and will also need to be streamlined.

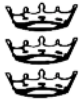
Archidiaconal responsibilities will be the responsibility of one Archdeacon across the Diocese. The Diocesan Secretary will continue to be responsible for matters such as housing, finance, HR and regulatory requirements such as child protection. The Bishop of Swindon will lead the Licensed Ministry Development team which will stand alone in order to support the ministerial development and requirements of those in licensed ministry. With many of MnM’s services either falling under Strategy Support Services or the Licensed Ministry Development team, there will be a reappraisal of support services across boards and councils of the Diocese to serve either the purposes of the Strategy or provide required standard support services.

2010-2015 Strategy Support



2010-2015 Line Accountability





1 Agreed principles

- 1.1 The future pattern of ministry leadership will consist of teams, mostly unpaid, lay and ordained, enabling local mission and ministry.
- 1.2 These guidelines necessarily take account of the increasing costs of stipendiary ministry. However, these rises have created an opportunity for a more biblical, holistic and effective model of ministry and mission in the 21st century.
- 1.3 Deaneries, through their Leadership Teams/Pastoral & Standing Committees, will be responsible for determining the composition and deployment of these ministry leadership teams having due regard to:
 - The number of stipendiary posts, including housing, which is available to a deanery;
 - Creating local contexts for growth which are sustainable in the medium term with respect to finance and personnel;
 - Developing a “multi-faceted” approach to ministry and mission involving inherited mode and emerging/fresh expressions/pioneer ministries;
 - The need for transitional arrangements which avoid overloading either paid ministers or volunteers.

2 Planning

- 2.1 Deaneries will forecast the numbers of ordained (Stipendiary Ministers, Self-supporting Ministers and Ordained Local Ministers), licensed lay (Licensed Lay Ministers, Youth Workers, Lay Evangelists) and commissioned ministers that are likely to be needed to resource each of their teams over the period 2010-2015, having due regard to:
 - The number of worship centres and geographical area that a team is serving;
 - The numbers of occasional offices – especially funerals and marriages;
 - The number currently in training for self-supporting ordained and licensed lay ministries who are within their deanery;
 - The profile of ministers in training in terms of how much time they are likely to be able to commit, their availability (eg weekday ministry), areas of possible gifting (eg pastoral care, teaching, evangelism) and whether they are open to being deployed;
 - The current ministerial profile of the deanery in terms of future availability, retirement and areas of gifting;
 - Resource implications of opportunities for ministry and mission beyond parochial structures;
 - The expected limits on the number of stipendiary ministers that will be available funded by the Diocese (figures will be set by the Bishop’s Staff);
 - Contexts in which curates (Stipendiary and Self-supporting, including Pioneers) may receive their training and supervision.

- 2.2 In doing their planning, deaneries will need to take account of:
- the statistics from churches (finance, numbers) over the past 5 years;
 - plans and possibilities for future growth;
 - issues of viability;
 - outcomes dictated by the Vacancy Leadership Development process;
 - and any special circumstances or opportunities (e.g. new housing areas).
- 2.3 The numbers of stipendiary posts funded by the Diocese available to a deanery will be forecast for a 5 year period. However, only the figures for the first 2 years can be considered to be reasonably accurate.
- 2.4 The planning should yield some clearer ideas of the competencies that will be required of the future ministers, especially ordained Stipendiary Ministers, and this should be fed back through the deanery to help selection, training and recruitment.
- 2.5 Stipendiary posts do not have to be filled by ordained ministers.

3 Steering and support from the Bishop's Staff and Diocesan officers

- 3.1 To support the deaneries in their forecasting, the officers of the Diocese will provide data on those in training, the current ministerial profile (including expected retirements) and church statistics.
- 3.2 Deaneries will work closely with the Strategy Delivery Team on their deployment plans. Appointments will be approved by the Bishop's Staff.



The majority of the Diocese of Bristol's income (approximately three quarters) is given by the parishes through Parish Share. In response to consistent shortfalls of over 5% against the amount that the Diocese requests of its parishes in Share, and as part of the Diocesan Strategy 2010-2015 planning process, a group was asked to review the Share system and make proposals. The proposals would aim to create a system that helped, first, to change both the perception of Share and the dynamics of financial relationships within the Diocese and, second, to generate more sustainable financial returns, in tandem with other financial strategies in the Diocese.

Aspects of a new Share system

The new Share system would be based on the principles of generosity and spiritual growth and of the interdependence of churches in the Diocese, and would highlight the true costs for supporting mission and ministry in the Diocese.

Generosity and spiritual growth

- To ask PCCs to decide how much they pledge to give in Share rather than it be a decision calculated and requested by the Diocese.
- To train a team of Giving Advisers in each deanery to provide teaching in parishes on the nature of giving as a catalyst for and result of spiritual growth.
- To encourage parishes to feel that their prayerful commitment to give in Share is an integral part of their plan for growth (as well as that of the Diocese as a whole) rather than feeling that if they grow they will get penalised.

Interdependence

- To structure the decision-making process at a deanery level, in the expectation of greater deanery – and inter-deanery – support for one-off parochial challenges and a greater sense of mutual support and interdependence.
- To reposition the Diocesan Finance Team as pure administrators of the system, with Deanery Leadership Teams taking responsibility for encouraging giving and pledges.
- To remain true to the ideal that deployment of diocesan resources (stipendiary ministers, support services etc) is not linked to the ability to “pay” for them, while moving away from a situation that leads to dependency and complacency.

Real costs

- To introduce information on ministerial costs and comparative giving rates to parishes as factors in their decision making process.

Introducing the new system

The new system will be introduced over three years.

For 2010:

- Share figures for each parish will not be rebased according to their “potential” but have flat inflation based changes from the previous year.
- The Diocesan Office will provide parishes and deaneries with information on their calculated “potential”; the cost of ministry across the Diocese; and giving rates across the Diocese and nationally.
- Parishes will be asked to consider this information and the PCC to make a prayerful commitment to give the amount requested or to give graciously a figure above it.

- At the same time, Giving Advisers will be increasingly available in the deaneries to help teach about the spiritual practice of giving as a response to God, both to the Church and beyond it, for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

For 2011:

- As above for 2010.
- Parishes will channel their prayerful commitments through their deanery leadership rather than direct to the Diocesan Office.

For 2012 and beyond:

- Parishes and deaneries will again be provided with information on their calculated “potential” (this will be done every three years); the current cost of ministry across the Diocese; and giving rates nationally and across the Diocese.
- Parishes will be asked to consider this information and the PCC to make a prayerful decision about how much they would be willing to commit for the next year in support of mission across the Diocese.
- Parish representatives will be asked to bring this pledge to a meeting with the members of the Deanery Leadership Team, and then confirm it in writing.
- Deanery Leadership Teams will be sent budgeted figures detailing how much their deanery would need to give to meet budgeted expenditure.
- If all the commitments from the parishes meet the budgeted figure, then the Deanery Leadership Team simply inform the Finance Team at the Diocesan Office who administer the reporting and set up any standing orders.
- If the total commitments fall short of the budgeted amount, then the Deanery Leadership Team could go back to the parishes across the deanery and ask them to reconsider their commitment.
- Once the parishes’ commitments have been finalised and passed back to the Diocesan Office, this information is reported by the Finance Team on a regular basis through the existing channels.
- If a particular parish appears to be falling short in meeting their commitment (for an exceptional reason), the Deanery Leadership Team can appeal to other parishes across the deanery or to another deanery to make an additional commitment to help out that parish.



31 Mar 2009	Final Strategy proposals presented to Bishop's Council for approval
Apr 2009	Initial formation of Strategy Delivery Team (subject to Diocesan Synod adoption of Strategy)
Apr 2009 –	Ongoing piloting of Vacancy Leadership Development Ongoing encouragement of Growth Programme at deanery level
Mar-Jun 2009	Budgeting process and deployment planning for 2010 in line with 2010-15 Strategy
May 2009	Governance structures review presented to Bishop's Council Bishop's Council approve in principle proposals to set up trading subsidiary of DBF Strategy offered to Diocesan Synod for adoption Subject to adoption, widespread communication of the Strategy begins Development phase of RELEASE begins
May-Oct 2009	Redeployment of existing officers to new roles and formation of new teams Recruitment of additional paid (funded externally) or volunteer advisers in Strategy Support Services
1 Jun 2009	Strategy Delivery Team formally established Area Dean licences reviewed and renewed for 2 years to complete 5 year term
Jul 2009	Governance structures review offered to Diocesan Synod for adoption
Sep 2009	Elections for new triennium of Diocesan Boards and Councils Growth Advisers available to deaneries Giving Advisers available
Sep-Oct 2009	Data available for parishes to consider prayerfully additional gifts in Share
Sep 2009	Trading Subsidiary of the DBF established
Nov 2009	Agreement of Strategy progress measurement and outcomes Budget for 2010 approved (annual)
1 Jan 2010	2005-10 Diocesan Strategy ends; 2010-2015 Strategy begins Vacancy Leadership Development begins.
Mar 2010	First RELEASE event (annual)
Mar-Jun 2010	Budgeting and deployment planning for 2011 (annual)
Sep 2010	Share pledges for 2011 channelled through Deanery Leadership Teams RELEASE programmes begin (annual)
Mar 2011	Bishop's Council conducts review of Strategy progress (annual)
Jun 2011	New appointment round for Area Deans for next 5 years
Sep 2011	New Share system in place to start giving in Jan 2012



Releasing the energy, the Diocese of Bristol's Strategy for 2010-2015, has been formed and developed by the Diocesan Strategy & Policy Group on behalf of the Bishop's Council.

Rationale

In developing this Strategy, the Strategy & Policy Group consistently sought to confront the reality of the situation facing the Diocese so that the Strategy might be robust in supporting the local faith communities in the Diocese in their ministry and mission through the circumstances they will face over the next five years.

This process has involved a great deal of prayer, soul-searching and many tough questions. It has also required the group devising the Strategy to be open to the considerable and rapid rate of change that they themselves, and the Diocese as a whole, are subject to. The kinds of issues that the Group considered were:

- the theology of ministry;
- the tradition and ecclesiology of the Church of England;
- the sociological context in which the Church of England, the Diocese of Bristol and the local communities that make it up find themselves during the early 21st Century;
- current thinking on missiology;
- the cultural and organisational dynamics of the Church;
- the ongoing progress of the 2005-2010 Strategy;
- trends in churchgoing and giving;
- trends in vocations in the Diocese;
- changes in legislation in the Church of England;
- changes in costs and alternative sources of income.

As a result, the Diocesan Strategy takes into account the following key factors.

Ministry

The activity of the Church of England has increasingly been oriented around the ministry of ordained ministers. The result has been twofold. First, the priesthood of all believers has been defined by the priesthood of ordained people rather than the other way round, leading to assumptions such as "the purpose of lay ministry is to help the vicar". Second, we have ended up overburdening ordained people rather than paying attention to allowing them to play their part in releasing the energy of the whole people of God.

A number of structural and cultural factors have colluded with this trend. However, the Church of England has a clear, biblical theology of gifting and ministry: all believers are "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God" (1 Peter 2:9). All God's people are equipped for works of service (ministry), are given gifts by God (they are distributed throughout the body of Christ and not concentrated in one person) and are ministers (it is baptism that is the commissioning for ministry). However, there are those within the body of Christ with the particular gifts to equip other believers (Ephesians 4:7-13) and the three orders of ministry have clear and distinctive parts to play in this respect.

Leadership that serves, equips and releases the potential of others is therefore integral to the life of the body of Christ and any Diocesan Strategy that seeks to serve it. But such leadership extends beyond the vicar/priest-in-charge to those in other forms of ordained and lay ministry.

Against this theological background, the Diocese of Bristol has seen an enormous increase of those offering themselves for Licensed Lay Ministry, ordained Self-Supporting Ministry and, more recently, Ordained Local Ministry. Between 2005 and 2009, over 140 people will have been ordained or licensed for these “volunteer” ministries in the Diocese with a further 60 people either in training or likely to be selected for training in the coming months.

Whilst an ordained stipendiary ministry continues to have a key role in the ministry of the Church, the dispersal of gifts and leadership as part of a ministry team is not only a theological priority but also something God seems to be highlighting to the Diocese of Bristol through His calling to individuals for varying kinds of ministry.

Costs and income

In recent years, it has been impossible to ignore the increasing costs to dioceses of stipendiary clergy. Between 1997 and 2007, direct costs of stipendiary clergy to the Diocese (stipend, National Insurance contributions, pension contributions, Council Tax and water rates) rose from £16,000 to £31,000. By 2011, these costs will have risen to over £40,000. (These costs do not include significant other indirect costs such as housing, training and pastoral support).

These increases are largely a result of the need to fund the clergy pension scheme and far outstrip either increases in people’s average salaries, out of whose giving most of the Diocese’s income originates, or the numerical growth of the church. In order to fund as many stipendiary clergy in 2011 as in 1997, people would need to give 70% more or there would need to be an equivalent increase in numbers of people giving at those rates.

As a result, and even with a rationalised number of stipendiary clergy, in 2008, the Diocese requested a Parish Share figure which amounted to 107% of the calculated net potential declared by parishes. It is increasingly clear that more parishes are struggling to give the full sum requested by the Diocese. Another effect is that a smaller proportion of parishes’ actual income is available for them to deploy in ways they choose for their local mission.

Both these factors were being considered as the global economy ran into unprecedented conditions leading to the UK economy facing a recession of unknown depth or length. It has also become abundantly clear that a reliance on stipendiary clergy is a financially unsustainable model for the future of the mission of the Church. A radical and immediate reappraisal of how diocesan income is raised and spent was clearly necessary.

Equally, it became clear that the Diocese needed to diversify its income streams away from a reliance on the current Share system, which has been generating shortfalls of 7-9% (almost £0.5m), investment income etc and to increase the proportion of income generated in other ways. The Diocese has a good recent track record in generating income from major donors external to the Diocese and from charitable trusts. For example, it recently was one of a minority of dioceses to receive a grant of £0.5m for work in new housing areas and a quarter of the Diocese’s income comes from non-parochial sources. In the current economic climate, these income streams may be more vulnerable, but diversification must be cultivated.

Centralisation and regulation

Over the course of the 20th century, the structure of the Church of England became more centralised than it had been in the past. There were many good reasons for this:

- to provide equity for clergy receiving stipends;
- to ensure better governance and advice for local parish churches;
- and to make more strategic use of the Church of England’s resources.

Furthermore, in recent years, with an increase in legislation, it was necessary to provide more, not less, central support to help local churches on matters such as child protection, for example.

To support this work and infrastructure, an enormous amount of time, energy and resource is expended in diocesan boards, councils, committees and synods. Although the outcomes of this work are important for the oversight and management of the Diocese, it became clear that:

- many areas and issues addressed by the central diocesan structures and personnel might be more fruitfully addressed by structures and personnel more local to the area or issue being addressed;
- our structures require more work, time and energy than is necessary to secure those outcomes;
- the balance of effort required at diocesan level created an unhelpful dynamic in the Diocese;
- with a new strategy, spending priorities will change and some central activity will need to be refocused or stopped.

In June 2006, a shift was made to highlight an increased role for deaneries in diocesan activity. It was recognised that a greater degree of strategic oversight needed to be given from the “balcony view” provided by deanery leadership in addition to the “helicopter view” provided by Bishops and Archdeacons. Further resources were directed to the deaneries to support Area Deans and Lay Chairs in leading this work.

The period since has been a time of transition, providing a level of fluidity and creating opportunities to learn what it means to share oversight in this way. It became clear that more strategic decision-making responsibilities needed to be at deanery level. However, it was also clear that specialist support resource was still required at diocesan level to provide both strategic and standard support across the Diocese.

Any increase in deanery decision-making responsibility will have an inevitable impact on the central, governance and executive structures of the Diocese. In addition, the Strategy & Policy Group recognised that:

- more meetings take place than are necessary at the expense of time, travel (with an environmental impact) and expense;
- there is a degree of confusion between governance and executive responsibilities in our structures;
- the level of responsibility in some of our committees means it is hard to attract members;
- a greater degree of interdepartmental communication may be possible in our Diocese.

Development process

During 2007 and 2008, the Strategy & Policy Group, who had responsibility for the implementation of the 2005-2010 Diocesan Strategy, gave regular attention at their fortnightly meetings to the task of developing a new five year strategy. Between May and July 2008, the Strategy & Policy Group presented a draft Outline Strategy to Area Deans, Lay Chairs and the Bishop’s Council for consultation.

On 23 September 2008, an Outline Strategy was proposed to Bishop’s Council for approval in order that the Strategy & Policy Group might conduct wider consultation and work on detailed proposals.

This Outline Strategy was approved along with a request that an assessment be carried out of the ability of the central structures of the Diocese to support the delivery of the Strategy. This work was carried out by Pearce Mayfield and consisted first of a “Scoping Report” that was presented to Bishop’s Council by Patrick Mayfield on 6 November 2008. This led to a Limited Objective Maturity Assessment being carried out, conducted by Stewart Rapley. To create his assessment, Stewart conducted 14 individual or group interviews and presented a “Review of Strategy Support” to the Bishop’s Council on 4 February 2009. The review was endorsed unanimously and the Strategy & Policy Group was asked to incorporate it into their detailed proposals. That Review forms the basis of the “Delivering the Strategy” component of the Strategy.

At the same time, over 700 copies of an Executive Summary of the Outline Strategy were circulated via Deanery Synods and to attendees of the Equipped to Grow conferences as well as being posted, along with the full Outline Strategy, on the Diocesan website. Comments were invited and a number of submissions were made. Discussion groups took place with members of Strategy & Policy Group about the Outline Strategy at the Equipped to Grow conferences. All these submissions were fed into the development process.

Working Groups

In order to work on the detailed proposals, the following working groups were formed:

Vacancy Leadership Development: Christine Froude, Alan Hawker, Douglas Holt

RELEASE: Derek Chedzey, Mike Hill, Douglas Holt, Oliver Home, Sam Rushton

Deployment: Lesley Farrall, Tim McClure, Lee Rayfield

Share review: Patrick O'Connor, David Froude, Aurea Hart, Gwyn Owen, with Lesley Farrall, Matthew Hall and David Hargrave