

Strategic Programme Report Canterbury Diocesan Synod

15 March 2025



Diocese of Canterbury
CHANGED LIVES ⇨ CHANGING LIVES

Introduction

This highlight report is designed to provide a summary of the status of our strategic programmes for Archbishop’s Council and Diocesan Synod.

Our three bold outcomes for 2030:



Adopted by Diocesan Synod Jul-23



Resourcing Churches

No significant concerns

A long-term plan to see resourcing churches established in all major urban areas of the diocese focussing on rapid growth, young people and families and making new disciples. Resourcing churches supporting revitalisation in neighbouring parishes and potential new church plants e.g. estates.

- ### Highlights
- **Margate:** Attendance at HTM growing. Successful Christmas events. Gav Cutler appointed as Priest in Charge St. Paul's
 - **Maidstone:** Successful Change Request to SMMIB to cover additional refurbishment costs. St. Faith's encouraging work with about 20 young people.
 - **Ashford:** Project team in place. Working on funding request.
 - **Rural Strategy Group:** In place and meeting held.
 - **Focal Ministry:** c10 benefices engaged. Looking to launch first cohort post Easter.

- ### Concerns
- Finding a suitable new clergy house for St. Faith's – no suitable properties found yet.

- ### Next Steps
- Develop a strategy to support growth in rural and semi-rural parts of the diocese. [*In progress*]
 - Church planting officer recruitment. Critical role to oversee current and future programme. [*Funding from SMMIB already in place.*]
 - Progress with funding request for Ashford Resourcing Church.

- ### Future
- Further work required to determine where the next most appropriate location might be for a Resourcing Church.



Youth Ministry

Some concerns

An initial tranche of seven youth ministers to be located in churches with the largest number of young people to support the growth and development of youth ministry. Part of the role is also to encourage nearby parishes with their youth work. Grants are provided towards cost on a reducing basis over five years to encourage sustainability. Also running Youthscape LaunchPad & Ministry Experience Scheme.

Highlights

- Youth Ministers at All Saints Loose and St. Peter’s Aylesham recruited and in post.
- St. Luke’s Maidstone youth minister left in January.
- Measurement framework agreed in principle.
- “Canterbury Diet” for youth ministers launched.
- Young people’s pathways to ministry reviewed.
- Some encouraging signs of in early analysis of 2024 October count data by Bob Jackson showing 14% growth in children & youth

Concerns

- National shortage of youth ministers. Exploring additional ways to grow our own youth leaders of the future.
- Some churches expressing concerns about the grant tapering in later years which could affect financial sustainability which has deterred some churches from taking the opportunity up.
- Look at youth minister retention issues.

Next Steps

- Parishes to recruit to the three current vacancies
- Work with local Flourish leaders on pilot project delivery
- Explore funding for a second Children & Youth Ministry officer to support the many churches asking for advice with children and youth work.
- Review other locations that would benefit from additional resource and explore potential for funding.

Future

- Develop models that might work in other contexts, especially rural e.g. Ospringe model, Bapchild and Tonge model, Flourish
- Develop business case for future SMMIB DIP grant funding request(s)
- Explore any flexibility with grant tapering.



Ignite



No significant concerns

A model initially developed at St. Paul’s Cliftonville to help reach disadvantaged communities now replicated in 7 other locations. “It’s church but not as we know it” creating new Christian communities in places that are normally hard to reach. The model has also been successfully used with families and youth.

Highlights

- Ignite Enabler recruited for All Saints Canterbury.
- Ignite Enabler recruited for St. Peter’s Aylesham.
- Bible Reading Fellowship “Ignite” book will be published in March – see next slide

Concerns

- Work is ongoing to try to ensure that Sittingbourne Ignite will be self-sustaining now that the Enabler has completed their contract.

Next Steps

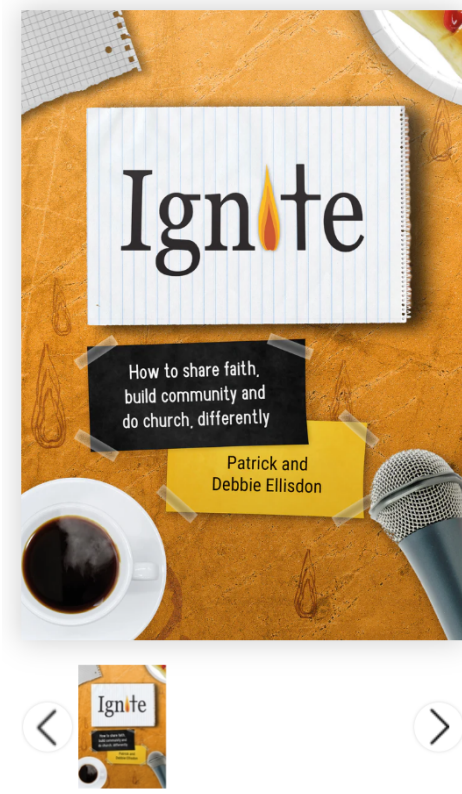
- Continue to work with interested parishes to build proposals for inclusion in a Phase 2.

Future

- Prepare an Ignite Phase 2 business case for inclusion in a future SMMIB DIP funding request [2025].



Ignite Book



Ignite: How to share faith, build community and do church, differently

Author : [Debbie Ellison](#) and [Patrick Ellison](#)

£9.99

Pioneering café-style church for those on the margins

God loves to bring people into community, into a knowledge of being loved and valued. Many people, especially those living in marginalised and socially deprived communities, struggle with mainstream church. The Ignite café-church model, pioneered in Canterbury Diocese, is designed to build relationships and share faith with people where they are, in their own communities. Through eating and exploring faith together, Ignite shares the gospel in both word and action, while also supporting people’s essential needs. This book sets out how to plan and run Ignite in your context. It covers building and supporting a team, how best to set up for Ignite and the style in which it should be delivered. Pre-planned ‘running orders’ provide two years’ worth of weekly material including video clips, table discussions, quizzes, short talks, craft activities, drama and prayer responses.

This product will be available as soon as it’s published on
21 March 2025



Parish & Deanery Planning

Significant concerns

All deaneries to develop a plan for growth with their benefices and parishes that will help them to work towards achieving the Three Bold Outcomes. A focus on what might be the game changers and what support will be needed.

Highlights

- Based on feedback, process re-imagined to focus on:
 - **“Empowering the local church to deliver God’s mission”**
 - Resources for parishes from Diocesan House, deaneries
 - Certain wider projects driven at diocesan level
- Toolkits available to support parishes and deaneries
- LyCiG first conference follow-up ongoing.

Concerns

- Need to monitor impact of the re-imagined process and continue to make adjustments and improvements as necessary.

Next Steps

- Second LyCiG conference [May-25].
- Arrange third LyCiG conference.
- Encourage and support parishes with Mission Action Planning.
- Equip deaneries with better access to attendance and other information.
- Health & Vitality review.
- Explore avenues to help fund parish initiatives.

Future

- SMMIB DIP funding will be essential to accelerate scale and pace and help us to achieve the three Bold Outcomes.



Key Risks

New elements in blue

Risk	Current Risk	Actions	Residual Risk
Lack of capacity within deanery leadership to develop plans for growth	High	Regular meetings with Archdeacon & diocesan staff to support Explore how to re-imagine the process and provide more support Possible funding request for more local resource	Medium
Insufficient scale and pace to make a significant difference	High	Emphasise the importance of every parish and benefice being engaged Encourage parish Mission Action Plans Leading your Church into Growth course Engagement through media channels (Comms) Health & Vitality review tool to help inform discussion.	Medium
Insufficient investment available	High	Plan for future DIP (SMMIB) requests Explore other funding opportunities Raise profile of Canterbury with national church	Medium
Lack of capacity within diocesan support to add sufficient momentum	Medium	Programme Management Office funded through DIP (SMMIB) Recruit Church Planting Officer Possible funding request for more (local) resource	Low
Insufficient credibility with national church/ SMMIB delays future DIP funding requests	High	Tighten delivery of existing DIP projects to demonstrate clear progress. Establish measurement frameworks for key projects. Annual DIP funding review with national church. Submit DIP Change Requests where necessary.	Medium

Extract from the Strategy Risk Register maintained by the Programme Office



External Funding Applications Summary

Application	Date	Amount	Status	Notes
DIP (SMMIB) 1	May-23	£1m	Awarded	Conditions to be met
DIP (SMMIB) 2	Feb-24	£3.2m	Awarded	Conditions met
Flourish	Apr-24	£92k	Unsuccessful	Scheme was oversubscribed.
DIP (SMMIB) 2a	Dec-24	£452k	Awarded	To cover significant building cost increase.

