

Renewing **HOPE**
Pray • Serve • Grow

Refreshing Our Vision in 2020

“I planted...but God gave the growth”

From 1 Corinthians 3:6

INTRODUCTION

This paper provides Diocesan Synod members with background information on the “Refreshing Our Vision” presentation and discussion which will take place at the February 2020 Synod. The paper aims to outline the purpose of Refreshing our Vision, the journey we have collectively embarked on; who and how we serve; our priorities for growth; how our ambitions need to be supported by a sustainable financial framework; and our Diocesan commitments.

Following the conclusion, the paper outlines the next steps and invites Synod to affirm this next stage of our life together.

Additional background reading can be found via these links:

[External Environment, Salisbury 2020](#)
[The Gladwin Report- feedback from Diocesan Synod](#)
[The Gladwin Report- consolidated feedback](#)
[Extract from 'Taking the next steps in Renewing Hope'](#)
[Environment Policy and Strategic Aims](#)

PURPOSE OF REFRESHING OUR VISION

Hope is a defining characteristic of the Christian Church, founded upon the saving work of God in Christ. This hope, for the renewal of all things in the coming Kingdom of Heaven, gives meaning and purpose to the life of each Christian community.

To renew hope, then, is to refresh our Christian vision, so we may see the Kingdom come.

Since the introduction of the Diocesan Vision in 2014, **Renewing Hope: Pray Serve Grow**, there has been a strong commitment across our Diocese to these aspirations, not least because they are not top-down and directive but allow for interpretation and application in a variety of ways. Our shared vision provides direction and inspiration as we grow in faith, number and impact.

Now, after 5 years, the Bishop’s Council believes it is time to refresh our Diocesan vision; while continuing to work with Renewing Hope: Pray Serve Grow, we are focusing in particular on the areas which will enable us to grow. In doing so, the Council seeks to:

- Identify and commit to diocesan priorities for growth that are the outworking of our ambition
- Invite churches and schools to interpret and live out the shared vision in ways relevant to the local context
- Provide diocesan-wide support from the DBF and DBE, and reshape our work so that it serves the needs of churches and schools in a changing context

- Answer a call for action on the climate crisis and, in everything we do, 'strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth'¹

Through this, we will continue to build a flourishing Christian presence in every community.

THE JOURNEY SO FAR

The independent review and subsequent findings of Bishop John Gladwin's report, based on survey results, interviews and focus groups, provided us with an outward focus and a proposed direction of travel and change. The Gladwin Report was shared and widely discussed in the Diocese between Easter and July 2019.

Through listening to the feedback gathered from our benefices, deaneries and schools as part of Bishop John's Review, we have heard what is working well and the many challenges we face.

At the June 2019 Diocesan Synod, Bishop Karen and David Pain briefed Synod on the next steps for Refreshing Our Vision. They were to:

- Attend to our priorities for growth as we take the next steps in Renewing Hope
- Undertake several internal reviews of our Ministry and Mission, our property and glebe portfolio, the diocesan Offices and IT systems, and how we communicate and engage across the diocese
- Continue the review of Fairer Share which started in 2018 and consider other approaches to giving
- Develop a sustainable five-year financial framework to remove our current annual operating deficit of just under £1m

The Bishop's Council tasked a sub-set of members to take these strands of work forward and to articulate our vision in a way that is succinct, understandable, and applicable to all levels of our life together - in our parishes and deaneries, the DBF and DBE - ensuring it is something we can all connect with.

Between April and November 2019, the ideas and opportunities arising from these reviews were widely discussed. This included discussions at the Bishop's Council in April, May, July, October, and November; the Rural Deans' Residential in May, the Rural Deans' and Lay Chairs' meeting in June, and Rural Deans' in October. The Mission and Ministry Council in May discussed priorities towards 2030. Joint meetings of the staff of the DBE and DBF in April and October. Bishop's Staff in June and October. Deanery synods and chapter meetings in some deaneries discussed the Gladwin Report and offered reflections. The Diocesan Secretary presented the draft priorities and discussed them with deanery synods in Weymouth, Stonehenge, Wimborne and Purbeck and led a workshop with the clergy chapter of North Bournemouth and Poole chapter. A day conference of younger clergy was hosted by Bishop Karen in November to share hopes and visions for the future. Working groups for each of the review areas met extensively and worked with a range of stakeholders including Rural Deans and Lay Chairs. Members of Diocesan Synod discussed the Gladwin Report in June and took note of the Diocesan Priorities outlined in the presentation at the Diocesan Synod in November.

¹ 5th mark of mission

OUR CONTEXT

Our diocese contains:

- A million people from the North Wessex Downs to the Jurassic Coast
- A decreasing and more aged rural population, but a growing and younger urban population along the coast
- A large food-producing area, seeing agriculture in decline, but tourism becoming increasingly important to the local economy
- A significant military presence concentrated around Salisbury Plain
- Localities that include some of the wealthiest people in the country, but also some of the most deprived. Younger people experience reduced access to training and jobs and specialist services outside education

We know that churches and schools are best placed to understand and respond to God's calling to serve in their local context. Therefore, our vision anticipates a genuinely localised strategy in which ministry resources and mission challenges can be mapped and matched.

OUR PRIORITIES FOR GROWTH

Prayer, Service and Growth are knit together in Renewing Hope. We are all called to love and serve God and our neighbours. We have choices in how best to share our gifts and resources and believe in creating space for innovation, so that new signs of God's Kingdom can emerge. We aim to adapt our structures in order to encourage creativity and flexibility, both centrally and at the local level.

In listening to the needs of the diocese over the last year, our priorities for growth will be to:

- Develop discipleship and evangelism
- Encourage dynamic and collaborative leadership
- Transform lives and communities

While naming these priorities hopefully encourages focus and identification, much of the work that lies behind them is already taking place in churches, schools and communities across our Diocese.

1) Discipleship and Evangelism

We want to grow **Faith** in order to renew **Hope** and live in **Love**. Therefore, we will develop our approach to discipleship and evangelism in churches, schools and households across all generations.

Discipleship and evangelism are at the heart of our mission. They begin by hearing the good news of Jesus Christ and responding to this in faithful witness. We want to see confident Christian communities, whose growing outreach and vocation overflows from their worship - and whose buildings are a gift to this common life.

Our focus for discipleship and evangelism will be on:

- Intentionally equipping all God's people for discipleship and evangelism
- Inspiring people of all ages to engage with their community and witness Jesus Christ within and beyond their church
- Embedding the Bishop's commitment to be a national Growing Faith trailblazer, embracing children and young people's passions, enthusing them and enabling them to explore and find faith
- Creating opportunities for spiritual encounter through the partnership between churches, schools and households and across all generations
- Extending opportunities that deepen life-long discipleship and lead to people, including children and young people, exploring their vocation and living out their Christian faith in all aspects of life

2) Dynamic and collaborative leadership

We want to enable a flourishing Christian presence in every community: therefore, we will need to develop dynamic and collaborative leadership. This must be leadership at all levels, inspiring people to work together across boundaries.

Our focus for dynamic and collaborative leadership will be on:

- Encouraging and enabling people to share their gifts and skills of leadership
- Encouraging and equipping children and young people in our churches and schools to become the leaders of today, as well as the future
- Sharing a common purpose among all God's people, of being Church and of building community
- Increasing the number of curates
- Embedding a genuinely localised strategy in which ministry resources and mission challenges can be mapped and matched
- Developing local hubs that re-imagine clergy and laity ministry and training
- Working in partnership, as the DBF and DBE, supporting the work of churches and schools

3) Transform lives and communities

We all want our Christian presence to transform lives and communities, as together we pursue all that makes for peace and builds up the common good.

The Church's mission follows God's own: who, by the Holy Spirit, leads us towards the renewal of all things. Its manifesto is that of Christ, who brings good news to the poor and freedom to the oppressed.

Central to our diocesan mission, then, is focussed action on issues of social justice and care for God's creation. In a time of climate crisis, we will grow an ecology of hope that pursues the healthy interrelation of communities with their local environment.

To this end, we will work collaboratively at all levels, developing our community hubs and allowing the local context to inform and guide our decisions about resourcing.

Our focus for transforming lives and communities will be on helping our communities in:

- Working through the most appropriate units as centres of mission: benefice, deanery and other groupings, enabling local decision making and resourcing
- Testing and learning including through community hubs where the local context shapes our response
- Encouraging and enabling participation across the diocese in issues of social justice to grow the Kingdom of God
- Being strong and courageous advocates, hearing and acting on the voices of children, young people and adults
- Opening of new church schools and planting new church communities within them
- The work of mission and ministry influencing and being a voice for the common good at local, regional and national levels

All three priorities and our ongoing work of mission and ministry are to be seen in the light of and engaging with the Fifth Mark of Mission – 'To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth'.

A SUSTAINABLE FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

Bishop Nicholas reminded us at the November 2019 Synod: “We need to ensure that ambition, expenditure and income are matched. It can be done in a number of ways – a strengthening of vision and purpose through our diocesan priorities, reducing expenditure, increasing income and in all likelihood a mix of all three.”

This balancing act requires us to consider choices in order to work within a sustainable financial framework. In November 2019, Bishop’s Council identified four areas to focus on in 2020, and delegated the governance oversight of this review work to the Bishop’s Council Review Implementation Group.

These four areas of focus are:

- Re-imagining patterns of ministry
- Identifying new sources of income and promoting stewardship across the diocese
- Investing in change
- Developing new ways of working

OUR COMMITMENTS

We have listened to the aspirations of the local churches and schools.

We commit that, as a whole Diocese, we will:

- Re-imagine patterns of ministry and how we measure growth
- Work collaboratively and locally
- Travel light and learn from experience to release resource and energy for mission
- Make our churches a safe and welcoming place for all

As Churches and Schools we will:

- Work in partnerships, relevant to the local context, and rooted in Jesus Christ
- Embrace the passions of children and young people, enabling them to grow in faith and leadership

And as Diocesan-wide support teams we will:

- Serve our local churches and schools
- Establish sustainable finances for our ministry and mission
- Invest in change and establish new ways of working

These priorities and our commitments made from them, aligned with our continuing vision of Renewing Hope: Pray Serve Grow, provide the road map for our future ministry and mission from 2020 onwards.

EVALUATION

As we embark on the next phase of Renewing Hope: Pray Serve Grow we will develop several methods to evaluate our success. The dialogue between churches, schools and diocese is vital, ensuring that we all have a part to play in the next phase of our life together.

It is fundamental that our work must be grounded in the gift of the places we serve. Our shared vision needs to give room for the ‘God of surprises’ to do new things and allow the local context to inform and guide our decisions about resourcing. With our priorities for growth, our embedding learnings from the Rural Hope programme, and the exciting opportunity as a trailblazer diocese with ‘Growing Faith’ in schools, we already have a good foundation on which to build.

NEXT STEPS

Bishop's Council now invites Synod to celebrate the journey we have been on with Renewing Hope and affirm the next stage of our life together, as we continue to Pray, Serve and Grow for the glory of God.

Working together, the DBE and DBF will now be planning their work in response to these priorities.

We invite churches, schools and communities to respond in ways relevant to their own context.

We will communicate this refreshed vision in a variety of ways to different audiences.

**God our Father, renew our hope.
By the Holy Spirit's power,
strengthen us to pray readily, serve joyfully
and grow abundantly
rejoicing in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen**

APPENDIX 1: ONE-PAGE SUMMARY

Our VISION:

Renewing Hope as we Pray, Serve and Grow

“I planted.... but God gave the growth”
from 1 Corinthians 3: 6

We PRAY:

- To underpin and resource all we do
- Whenever we meet
- To inspire us to create more opportunities to pray together

We SERVE:

- A million people from the North Wessex Downs to the Jurassic Coast
- By listening to and engaging with the needs and dreams of children, young people and adults
- God and all our neighbours, across social divides

Our PRIORITIES for Growth:

- DISCIPLESHIP and EVANGELISM
- DYNAMIC and COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP
- TRANSFORM LIVES and COMMUNITIES

Our COMMITMENTS:

As a whole Diocese we will:

- Re-imagine patterns of ministry and how we measure growth
- Work collaboratively and locally
- Travel light and learn from experience to release resource and energy for mission
- Make our churches and schools a safe and welcoming place for all

As Churches and Schools we will:

- Work in partnerships, relevant to the local context, and rooted in Jesus Christ
- Embrace the passions of children and young people, enabling them to grow in faith and leadership

As Diocesan-wide support teams we will:

- Serve our local Churches and Schools
- Establish sustainable finances for our ministry and mission
- Invest in change and establish new ways of working

Through this **we will GROW in faith, number and impact**, building a flourishing Christian presence in every community.

“There can be no renewal without prayer. It is the heartbeat of the Christian and the Christian Community.” *Bishop Nicholas Holtam*

APPENDIX 2: STORIES FROM AROUND OUR DIOCESE –

RENEWING HOPE: PRAY SERVE GROW

Here are some examples of work that is already taking place in our churches, schools and communities across our Diocese. We share stories through the weekly Grapevine.

“Refreshing Our Vision” is an invitation to engage with renewed imagination and continue to Pray, Serve and Grow for the glory of God.

We PRAY

One Weymouth church has appeared several times under our Prayer in Action section of Grapevine. <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/24-7-prayer>

Churches across our Diocese responded to Archbishop’s global call to prayer as more than 1,000 book for our beacon Thy Kingdom Come Cathedral event. <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/churches-pray-thy-kingdom-come>

But Thy Kingdom Come, wasn't just an event for churches, as one Wiltshire primary school demonstrated admirably. <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/schools/news/thy-kingdom-come-in-warminster>

The Rural Hope Prayer Space Kits, have opened up prayer. <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/one-just-isnt-enough>

Benefice prayer initiative inspires others. <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/collaborative-leadership-can-thrive>

We SERVE

Salisbury Conversation - the Cathedral partnered with BBC Wiltshire to tackle some of the big issues challenging society today. <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/listen-again-to-salisbury-conversations>

Bishop’s Breakfast –Bishop Karen host twice yearly breakfasts networking breakfasts that bring Dorset’s civic and community leaders together with Christian leaders from a variety of denominations. <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/bishops-breakfast-in-poole>

Messy Church values of creativity, hospitality and celebration have helped hundreds of families to encounter Jesus, families who wouldn’t otherwise go to church. <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/schools/news/a-messy-advent-in-semington>

Our fulltime Chaplain to the Deaf Community is working to include all in his work <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/the-dos-and-donts-of-communicating-with-those-who-cant-hear>

Serving everyone is part of our ethos and in that we follow Christ. <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/i-was-in-prison-and-you-came-to-visit-me>

WE GROW – THREE PRIORITIES

1) Discipleship and Evangelism

The 'Real Lives' week in Wimborne has proved a huge success with hundreds of people coming along to the special mission-orientated event.

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/real-lives-makes-an-impact>

Have you heard of a confirmation and baptism service with 30 candidates and 30 cakes?

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/confirmations-catering-and-cakes>

In the year that Open the Book celebrates 20 years of sharing Bible stories with primary school assemblies, our Diocese has been celebrating with them.

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/open-the-book-gets-on-the-float>

Youth groups can build on the success of their Sunday School.

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/cosmic-work>

2) Dynamic and collaborative leadership

A new training scheme aimed at equipping lay pioneer ministers is being launched in Warminster and Dorchester.

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/pioneering-ministry>

Whose great idea was this? It is just wonderful!" was the response of one young mum to the launch of a new Community Café in Salisbury's newest church school as part of a joint venture between the school and local churches

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/schools/news/followers-open-wonderful-community-cafe-in-school>

The annual LLM service saw a sea of blue scarves as the Diocese's lay ministers gathered together to celebrate the vital ministry they perform.

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/celebrating-lay-ministry>

There was a strong list of popular new initiatives and Mission Action Plans on the table when our first Dorset THRIVE group met up again.

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/collaborative-leadership-can-thrive>

St George's Primary School in Semington regularly opens up to its Wiltshire community in creative, engaging ways.

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/schools/news/a-messy-advent-in-semington>

3) Transforming lives and communities

Diocesan advisers have launched 3 Community Hubs as part of an outreach programme they hope to expand across the Diocese.

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/community-hubs-bring-outreach-and-a-listening-voice>

Thanks to the support of churches from the Chalke Valley Benefice, Veterans moving in to Entrain Space have been presented with 'Welcome Packs', providing them with everything they need from mugs to mattresses.

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/chalke-valley-churches-help-with-welcome-packs-for-veterans>

St George's Langton Matravers hosted a presentation and conversation to promote initiatives to enhance biodiversity within Purbeck.

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/biodiversity-in-purbeck>

St Denys Warminster youth group is organising a Pilgrimage to Glastonbury that hopes to encompass young and old alike.

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/a-different-and-exciting-pilgrimage>

Dorset churches opening their doors to rough sleepers as part of the annual Sleepsafe project.
<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/helping-the-homeless-to-sleepsafe>

A Weymouth parish has used the theme of 'darkness to light' to explore how they might bring light to the dark areas of Brexit and the climate crisis.

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/news/bringing-light-from-darkness>