

CHELMSFORD DIOCESAN SYNOD

Title: **TRANSFORMING PRESENCE AND DISCIPLESHIP**

Sponsor: **BISHOP OF CHELMSFORD**

Date: **14 NOVEMBER 2015**

1. INTRODUCTION

In November 2011 the Diocesan Synod agreed the first edition of *Transforming Presence* which set out some strategic priorities for the diocese, and asked a number of questions. In the last four years we have made considerable progress, we have answered many of those questions and found some more to consider. At this first meeting of the new Synod, members are invited to be part of the continuing development of an updated *Transforming Presence* document.

2. CONTEXT OF DISCIPLESHIP

This item, and indeed the CMEAC item also on the agenda for 14 November, are set in the context of the General Synod paper on Developing Discipleship (GSI977).

Members should review the General Synod paper for the purposes of additional background. The ideas in this paper have shaped our thinking and Synod is asked to commit itself to these aspirations even though the precise outworking will be part of our ongoing strategic development.

GSI977 can be found on the Church of England website or via this link:
<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2144200/gs%201977%20-%20developing%20discipleship.pdf>¹

3. TOWARDS AN UPDATED TRANSFORMING PRESENCE DOCUMENT

Attached is a draft of the new *Transforming Presence* document. Its aim is to chart the progress we have made over the past three years and begin to discern and refine priorities for what lies ahead. It has been written in the light of various consultations that have taken place this year, particularly the *Time to Talk* conference in Brentwood that Synod members attended.

This is a draft document. It has been discussed at a joint meeting of the Bishop's Council, Area Deans and Lay Chairs and will be updated to reflect the feedback from that meeting, together with points from the Synod discussion. We need your help to improve it.

¹ Hardcopies may be requested from Nathan Whitehead

As you read the draft could you please ask yourself the following questions –

- How could this document be improved?
- What other stories should we be telling?
- What other key indicators or actions should we include?

This is quite a long document. We don't anticipate it being read by everyone in the diocese, nor do we think this matters. It is a comprehensive summary of what we have done through *Transforming Presence* and the particular steps we think we need to take next. It will be widely available and we hope PCCs will look at it. But we are also preparing a much shorter document, together with versions in film strips and other media, which can be distributed to every member of our Church. We are working to publish this in the Spring of next year, allowing good time to reflect on the feedback given.

4. MOTION

“This Synod celebrate the progress of Churches throughout the diocese on Transforming Presence, commit to developing discipleship in the way it is outlined in the General Synod paper GS1977, and continue to affirm the four strategic priorities set out in Transforming Presence”