



Renewing our witness

One church in three is growing. At the moment this growth is not enough to make up for the decline in total church attendance, but we believe that can change, and we are learning from the churches where there is growth. Church growth cannot happen without the whole diocese showing Christ's active presence by encouraging people to flourish and by working for justice and peace. Thank you for all you do.

Why is **church growth** important? More church means more personal and community transformation through Christ. For our work is to tell the good news of Christ afresh in each generation and the fact that more than 5,000 children and adults are welcomed into the Christian faith through **baptism** every year and more than 800 through **confirmation** is a vital sign of Christ's activity. Another sign is the growing number of women and men in all walks of life being called to **ordained and lay ministry**. 51 students are training for ministry of both kinds at our theological college. 90 curates are in years 1-3 of curacy, the highest number in living memory.

The Diocese of Chelmsford is not complacent about the challenges that lie ahead but remains resolute in its commitment to **renewing our witness**. This means living out our Christian faith, sharing our faith, enjoying our service to God and growing our ministry.

Those principles are set out in in **Transforming Presence**, the strategic priorities for the diocese. This remains our direction of travel together. A 'Time to Talk' consultative conference held in 2015 was attended by more than 700 people from 24 deaneries. Sub-titled 'Mapping the territory' this conference took stock of the journey from the first Time to Talk three years previously and committed to church growth with renewed purpose and vigour.



500 children took part in 'The Big Sing' in Chelmsford Cathedral

The diocese is the largest **voluntary organisation** in our region. Our **Mission Opportunity Fund** has injected about £3.5 M into communities since it started seven years ago. A special appeal to help Syrian **refugees** on their arrival in the diocese raised nearly £100,000 in three months.

Attendance in church is not the only indicator of how the people of our region are being helped to encounter Christ because there is more than one way of being church. The number of **young people** the Church has contact with through **schools and youth groups** is substantially greater than the number of adults regularly attending church. An

estimated 100,000 young people share in **assemblies, chaplaincy, clubs and youth work** and help the Church to thrive. Nearly 30,000 children and young people attend our 141 **church schools**. Our Sparrows **children's nurseries** provided Christian childcare in five locations last year.

Our recording of activities such as Messy Church and Café Church needs to improve but we know that about 5,700 adults and children attend such **Fresh Expressions of Church** and we need to add these to our attendance figures. Diocesan Synod called for Fresh Expressions to be widespread and three videos on Fresh Expressions were among many YouTube videos which Bishop Stephen made during the year.

There is of course room for **further engagement with communities** in a region whose total population of nearly 3 million is set to grow by more than 300,000 just counting new houses already under construction or approved. Only about 15 per cent of the Christian population in London are in any kind of Christian church on a Sunday, and in Essex the figure is about 9 per cent. Our diocese has one of the lowest church memberships compared to the number of stipendiary clergy deployed. There is scope for growth to be more evenly spread.

Annual briefing for parishes

In support of **church schools** work began to bring together our two multi-academy trusts, which are committed to demonstrating school improvements, and to recruit a CEO to lead the next stage of development. School leadership is being developed in partnership with Anglia Ruskin University. Conferences were held on the topics

of school leadership and being good news in schools. Our diocese became a training partner in an initiative with the Department for Education and Stonewall to combat homophobia in schools. Our Board of Education was reconstituted with a smaller membership making it more focused and strategic.



Commissioning parish evangelists at Emmanuel Forest Gate

Online and face-to-face training was delivered in child and adult **safeguarding**. The total number of Disclosure and Barring Service checks was 1948, some 95 clergy were trained face to face, and 2171 people completed training online. Five external church organisations subscribed to our e-learning packages. There was strong demand for our new online application process to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

On the **international** front some 44 teachers benefited from school exchanges between Chelmsford and our Kenyan companion dioceses funded by the British Council. The Bishop's Lent Appeal raised nearly £30,000 towards the building and equipping of a hospital at Mount Kenya East. Visits were also made to Kenya and Karlstad diocese in Sweden by clergy as part of reciprocal arrangements.

Our first **Mission and Ministry Unit** was endorsed. A 'Simple Guide to Mission & Ministry Units' is available on our Transforming Presence website. Mission and Ministry Units are our way of ensuring every community is served, resources are deployed strategically and there is room for incentive and growth. Groups of parishes looking to form a Mission and Ministry Unit may now bid for grant funding for a project or activity on which they are working together.



Lay Ministry Eucharist and celebration service at Chelmsford Cathedral

Learning to lead

Our partner theological college, **St Mellitus**, has experienced substantial growth since it was founded in 2007. A pioneer in the use of distance learning in the Church, the college has grown its student numbers from 28 to 438. The College is training 27 of our students for ordained ministry and 24 students for licensed lay ministry. The overall decrease in stipendiary clergy due to retirements will start to be reversed in 10 years if the number of ordinands can keep on growing.



Participants on the Encounter residential programme

A total of 60 diocesan and regional **Clergy Ministerial Development (CMD)** events were administered and more than 150 days of face-to-face training were delivered by the CMD team last year. The diocese's **Clergy Leadership Programme** had 20 participants.

Growing numbers of lay people are taking part in the life of the diocese and theologically trained lay people are needed as trainers, encouragers and mentors. The first eleven **Licensed Lay Ministers (LLMs)** were licensed having completed a diploma in theology at St Mellitus. One in four Readers is already transferring to LLM status which provides training for a broader set of skills.

15 **Pastoral Assistants** were commissioned and five Pastoral Care Foundation courses were run with 82 people attending.

A lay **Pioneer Centre** for the diocese, called St Cedd's, was launched at the church of The Good Shepherd at Collier Row in partnership with the Church Mission Society.

More than 140 people were awarded our **Certificate in Christian Studies**

(CCS). 130 new students started CCS making a total of 245 current students at 22 local centres from Woodford in the London Borough of Redbridge to Halstead in Essex.

An estimated 500 people have been taking part in our **Holding On** course which accompanies the Chelmsford Holding Cross. Some 15,000 of these crosses are now in use. Our bishops have been presenting Holding Crosses as a gift to church schools.

Our **Encounter** scheme is supporting people under the age of 30 who are new to leadership and other young people who are already in the vocational discernment process. The scheme is also enabling young people to give a gap year to work experience in a parish while living in a residential community. A large event for **young people and youth leaders** was hosted by Bishop Stephen to recognise the good work being done among and by young people in the diocese.

32 people completed our **Certificate in Evangelism** and five completed the full course as Evangelism Enablers. Evangelists and ordained leaders joined the **Church Army** as covenant leaders. The **Mission Shaped Ministry** course attracted 22 participants.

We shared the learning from the 314 **local evangelism events** in 2014, our centenary year so that these activities will continue to be sustained.

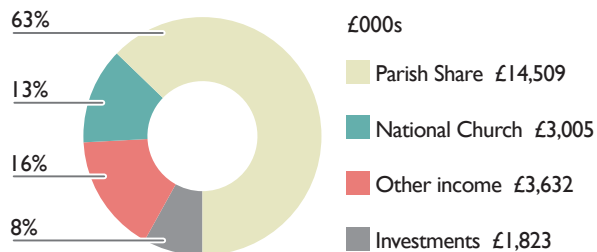
Our Bishop's senior staff was the first group among all in positions of responsibility who will undertake **diversity, inclusion and unconscious bias** training. Our Synod affirmed the commitment of the diocese to diversity and inclusion, to encouraging and developing Minority Ethnic Vocations, to promoting a more inclusive approach in all our communications and to the importance that leadership in the Diocese should reflect the diversity of the diocese and be more representative of the congregations.

Training sessions in **social media** were delivered to about 100 people during the year.

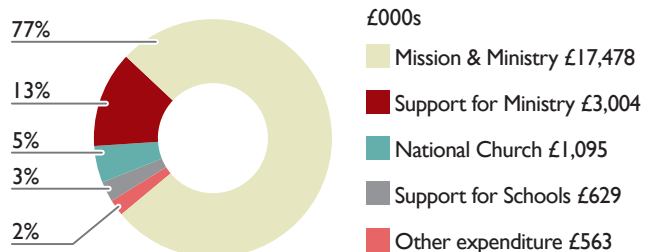
Your money, God's mission

The following figures had not been audited at the time of going to print.

Income 2015 £22,969,000



Expenditure 2015 £22,769,000



Overall income in 2015 exceeded costs by around £200,000 partly due to the clergy vacancy rate being higher than expected.

Savings were achieved by renegotiating suppliers' contacts, changing the way supplies are ordered and holding conference calls instead of meetings.

Nine more parishes joined the diocese's **Deanery Accounts Project** which provides a book keeping service to parishes. As well as the usual **Treasurers' training** days, three **Parish Giving**

Scheme presentations were given about this system that enables regular donations for parishes and 20 parishes are now taking part in the scheme. Evaluation of our **Parish Improvement Project**, which has seen the appointment of the first paid interim minister and is supported by strategic development funding from the Church Commissioners, got under way. Mortgage finance was secured to enable the purchase of **additional curates' housing**.

The **2016 budget** saw an overall Share increase of 0.77 per cent, the second lowest in recent years.

The regular income of Parochial Church Councils rose from about £28.9 M in 2013 to £29.86 M in 2014 (up 3.25 per cent) with one-off income adding £12.41 M mostly for building projects. Regular expenditure was about £29.15 M, split between Share payments and running expenses, with charitable giving of about £1.5 M and capital expenditure of £10.42 M.



Bishop's missionary journey sets out from Horndon

'**Faculty** applications (church planning law applications) were considered by our Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) and nine DAC **Design Awards** were presented for excellent work. Advisory work on church buildings has included consideration of sites with development potential. The development of a **rural ministry** centre of excellence was approved. A direction was made by our Chancellor regarding the sensitive delivery of **broadband** with the support of our technology partner, County Broadband in rural areas.

Ahead of the **General Election** the Bishops' Pastoral Letter to parishes was promoted, guidance was offered in holding local hustings and prayer events were held. Bishop Stephen took a leading part in two **national campaigns** #washday15 for Lent and #justpray for Advent which attracted 2.6 million online

Evidence-based '**Serving with Accountability**' parish reviews have been introduced as part of our Archdeacons' visitation process.

From 2017 the funding methodology used by the CofE to help dioceses provide ministry in every parish will be changing. There will be less emphasis on underpinning existing patterns of ministry and more on achieving church growth, for example through Fresh Expressions. Consultation started in the diocese on proposals for a **new Share scheme** under which the costs of stipendiary and lay ministry would be allocated to the Mission and Ministry Unit together with a proportion of shared services. A mutual support fund would be set up.

Many additional **improvements** and achievements were made. **New models** of LLM training and the Clergy Leadership Programme were offered and plans were made for a new model of incumbency and priesthood. 279



St Matthew's East Ham celebrated 'Unity in Diversity'

Annual briefing for parishes

prayers in a matter of days. A series of fortnightly and monthly columns in local **newspapers and magazines** by Bishop Stephen was started. Our



St Patrick's Barking has a Sunday evening service in Spanish

communications team was rated as 'highly effective' in an independent survey. The growing range of diocesan **communications platforms and channels** can be accessed through the diocesan website.

The Orangery extension to the **Retreat House** at Pleshey, our 'heartbeat of prayer,' was officially opened. The final part of the national **'Pilgrim'** nurture course, co-authored by Bishop Stephen, was launched. A



'**Spirit of Life**' event at the cathedral aimed at seekers was supported.

Our **Bookshop** sold 8,680 books last year and our **Print Unit** produced 16,565 publications in its busiest month. Together they made a surplus of £34,000 which went towards supporting the cost of ministry.

The Diocese of Chelmsford

The Bishop of Chelmsford is Stephen Cottrell. The Diocese comprises 462 parishes, 319 benefices, 594 churches, 89 Fresh Expressions of Church, 420 houses, 352 stipendiary clergy, and 168 Readers/Licensed Lay Ministers.

36 priests and 28 deacons were ordained in 2015.

There are 141 church schools in the diocese and 767 'Foundation' (church appointed) governors.

In 2014, the latest year for which official statistics are available:

- Average all age weekly attendance was down by 1.9 per cent.
- Child Sunday attendance was up by 1.2 per cent.
- Some 34 per cent of parishes showed growth in their monthly membership returns.
- Electoral rolls showed membership up by 2.2 per cent.
- The total number of people coming to Chelmsford Cathedral for all events increased by 7.5 per cent.

This Briefing presents edited highlights of the year 2015. Keep up to date with news about projects and people all year round through our newspaper, The Month.

Stay tuned!

- **Website** – www.chelmsford.anglican.org
- **The Month** – www.chelmsford.anglican.org/themonth
- **Twitter** – @chelmsdio
- **Facebook** – www.facebook.com/chelmsdio
- **Flickr** – flickr.com/Chelmsford-diocese
- **YouTube** – youtube.com/ChelmsfordDiocese

Diocesan people

The Diocese announced the appointment of Elizabeth Snowden as **Archdeacon of Chelmsford** in succession to David Lowman. Calvert Prentice was appointed as our second **Assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands**.

On **Diocesan Synod** Louise Williams was elected chair of the House of Clergy in succession to Martin Wood, and Robert Hammond was elected chair of the House of Laity in succession to Susan Atkin.

Percy Lomax was elected for a further term as chair of the **Chelmsford Diocesan Board of Finance** and Frank Hawkins was elected as Vice-Chair in succession to Anthony Nicolle.

Elections were held for Diocesan Synod and General Synod. The names of the successful candidates can be found on the diocesan website.

All our **Area Deans and Lay Chairs** were installed as Canons of Chelmsford Cathedral recognising the importance of their roles.

Contact us here