



The Church of England
in Essex and East London
Diocese of Chelmsford

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To Area Deans, Lay Chairs, and Diocesan Advisers

Dear Colleagues

For the last six years the Mission Opportunity Fund (MOF) has supported new mission initiatives across our Diocese. I am pleased to announce some changes in how the MOF will continue to support Mission and Ministry in this Diocese over the next year.

As you will all be aware, the parishes in this Diocese are working on proposals for 'Mission & Ministry Units'. In order to support these developing units, MOF has been refocused and a new stream, known as the *Unit Development Fund*, has been formed within the Fund. This change was approved by the Bishop's Council in July 2015.

The implication of this new stream is that the vast majority of the money that the MOF has to distribute will now be prioritised toward units and prospective units. This will ideally be for an area which has been mutually identified as helping life within the unit to grow and deepen. This could be for the funding of a Fresh Expression of Church which is owned by the Churches in the unit or for an administrator to help the unit to work more effectively together. A longer list of examples can be found in the attached guidance notes, but this is by no means an exhaustive list and I am sure there will be other worthy areas which we have not identified. It would also be possible to lodge an application for the sort of areas the MOF has funded before, but this would need to be a collaborative initiative aimed at a Mission Priority Area.

In terms of the release of this money there will be three opportunities over the next year to apply for a grant. Please check the guidance notes for full details on the timescales and process for applying. If you have any queries about the Unit Development Fund, please contact the Pastoral Secretary, Nathan Whitehead, in the first instance.

There will be a smaller pot available through the MOF for the types of initiatives which the Fund has previously supported. The money available for small grants, awarded by the Area Mission & Pastoral Committees, remains the same. The National Church funding system is changing so it is unlikely the MOF will operate on the same scale post 2016, Therefore this is an opportunity to share the benefit of the remaining funds more widely, not just with those good at writing applications.

I hope you will welcome this new development in the MOF. This is an adaption that is being made to meet a clear need for the future of our Diocese.

Yours in Christ,
+ Stephen

