Annual Reports to Diocesan Synod 2014
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The set of reports has been loosely based on the nine principles agreed by the Diocesan Synod under ‘Serving with Accountability’. Each contributor was asked to prepare their report with these nine principles in mind, where possible. Many of the reports cover multiple headings but each contribution has been allocated loosely to one of the principles.

1. Worship  What are you doing to make worship the central focus of the life of the Church?
2. Spirituality  What are you doing to teach people to pray?
3. Nurture  What are you doing to teach people the faith and help them in their discipleship?
4. Evangelism  What are you doing to share the faith with others and what have the results been in the past year? Does your Church have a place of nurture?
5. Vocation  What are you doing to nurture and develop the ministry of the whole people of God including enabling people to come forward for authorised lay and ordained ministry?
6. Service  How is your Church a blessing to the community you serve? And how is it witnessing to God’s kingdom of justice and peace?
7. Hospitality  What are you doing to ensure that your church is a place of safety and welcome for all ages and for people of all backgrounds.
8. Interdependence  How are you working in partnership with other Christian communities in your locality and at diocesan, national and global levels?
9. Generosity  What are you doing to ensure that your Church is showing signs of generosity towards the wider church and community as well as becoming financially secure?
Foreword from the Bishop of Chelmsford

In 2014 we celebrated the centenary of the Chelmsford diocese. We did it in style. It was an exhausting and exhilarating year.

At the opening service in January a huge image of Christ was projected onto the back wall of the Cathedral. It was made up of hundreds of individual images of those of us attending the service. We were all photographed as we came in. Within the image we therefore found ourselves gathered together and re-created in Christ. It was an image of the new creation, that great work of renewal and restoration which is Christ’s mission, and the work we share,

Inspired by this vision we were sent out for a year of mission. And what a year it was! Buoyed along by visits from Her Majesty the Queen at the beginning of May and then, two weeks later, the Archbishop of Canterbury, we tried to make the focus of our centenary a vast number of local events where we could serve our communities and share the gospel. No one knows for sure how many of these Mission Weekends took place across the Chelmsford diocese in 2014,(let alone how many individual mission events), but we know it was at least 400. I spoke at many in places as varied as Stratford, Harlow, Seven Kings, Dengie, Witham and Wrabness. I also walked around much of the diocese on ten hugely enjoyable missionary journeys. I must record my thanks to Nick Ellis and Robin Stevens. Without their support and organisation these walks wouldn’t have happened. But I found them a great way to get out and about and meet people, both in the church and in the community. I am planning more.

I have a few other personal standout memories from 2014: the day those who shared a 100th birthday with the diocese came to tea at Bishopscourt; welcoming a whole community of Bulgarian Christian into the Church of England in Stratford; hearing stories of what was happening at mission events; a tremendous Easter Eve confirmation at the Cathedral with a record 73 candidates; our celebration of lay ministry in October and licensing 18 evangelism enablers from the Newham deanery and authorising children and youth ministers for the first time; and then the biggest number of ordinations for years – 36 new deacons in 2014.
2014 also saw the arrival of a new Dean and two new bishops. It is great to have Nicholas Henshall, Peter Hill and Roger Morris as colleagues. I am enormously blessed by a wonderfully talented and supportive team, not least Bishop John for whom we continue to pray, and whose example of faithfulness through illness and treatment has been an inspiration. I am also humbled to know that out in the parishes there are thousands of people working for the gospel and seeking to make Christ known. Our centenary year brought us back to these basics of worship, service and proclamation. I think we grew in confidence that we have a faith to share and that the world is still hungry for the message of the gospel. My hope and prayer for the future is that what we learned in 2014 about how to do evangelism will continue. Without it there will be no church.

Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell, Bishop of Chelmsford

**Worship**

**Mission & Ministry**

This section covers the activity of the diocesan Mission and Ministry staff team. Within the scope of Transforming Presence, our work aims to enable life-long ministerial formation and practice and so develop the contribution of all God’s people to God’s mission, and I am delighted to pay tribute to my talented and dedicated colleagues.

The team has contributed to the various events held during the Diocesan Centenary year for the whole diocese and in individual parishes. Of particular note was the Celebration of Lay Ministry that was held in the Cathedral and hosted by our Readers. In addition to welcoming two Readers from other dioceses, a record number of 47 people received certificates from the Bishop having completed training courses in evangelism, pastoral care or youth work. Two provocative messages stood out from the day: the Dean described all ministry as being “from the church, for the world”.

Dr Jane Williams emphasised that all our work, and especially that of lay people, must face outwards and remarked that clergy are “clerical assistants” to enable that to happen!

Work has continued to assist deaneries and archdeaconries with the implementation of Reimagining Ministry and the formation of Mission and Ministry Units. There is a creative tension between the need for diocesan-wide consistency and local flexibility. Three consultation meetings involving representatives from every deanery with members of the Mission and Ministry team, Bishop’s Staff and Council have continued the process of mutual learning and support that is vital during this major change process.

An important aspect of our work in Continuing Ministerial Development concerns the well-being and resilience of clergy. The take-up of coaching and work-consultancy continues to grow and is increasingly valued. Membership of our Clergy Well-Being Groups has again
declined and with the retirement of a group facilitator and the professional supervisor, we commissioned an external review, the results of which are now being considered.

The CMD team continue to work in partnership with both the Eastern Region of dioceses, the Diocese of London and St Mellitus College which maximises the range and quality of our provision. Our work with curates has expanded both in terms of numbers and because of the demanding assessment processes. A group of 10 curates joined the 2014 educational visit to Kenya to experience theological education, mission and ministry in another culture.

The training and support of our Evangelism Enablers is developing, with more local training hubs and the option to become Covenant Members of the Church Army giving the benefit of access to further support, resources, training and networking. We continue to have very good numbers registering for the Course in Christian Studies, with 157 people booked in 12 local centres.

During the year staff members have contributed to developments in Mission and Ministry through national and regional consultations and have been involved in teaching, facilitation and consultancy for theological courses, conferences and in deaneries and parishes in the diocese.

Revd Canon Dr Roger Matthews, Dean of Mission & Ministry

Chelmsford Cathedral

It has been an extraordinary year. And I say that knowing full well that this has nothing to do with the fact that I arrived as Dean near the beginning of it. The diocesan centenary, the Queen's Visit, the Bishop's Visitations, the Archbishop's Visit - these are just a fraction of the events, celebrations and services that the cathedral has hosted through 2014. And it has been brilliant to see how volunteers and staff have risen to the challenges and the opportunities.

The year has changed our profile in very significant ways. It is as if the Queen's visit in particular has really put us on the map. I have heard people in Chelmsford say "we are a city now, so we have a cathedral." We have had a cathedral for 100 years, but even in the secular networks there is a sense that we now have a cathedral fit for purpose for the city and for the region. That's a story also told in our statistics for 2014: for the first time the number of attendances and visits topped 100,000. And one of the most interesting figures for the year is that we know we had at least 18,000 casual walk in visits - people who didn't come for a service or event, but who simply came in to light a candle, say a prayer, share in the silence.

And there's more. The new Dean was given a very clear task: to re-connect the cathedral with the city, the diocese and the bishop's ministry. And that is very clearly what we are
doing. You may have heard me quote this before, but here are some important lines from part of my role description: “The main challenge for the next dean is to stretch the vision of what a parish church cathedral might be, to encourage people to reach out from an existing comfort zone to explore a wider role as cathedral for diocese and community and to have the courage to move forward with this vision. This, in summary, is the role of the next dean.”

And what I’d like to say loud and clear is how delighted I am that people have responded so brilliantly to this. Of course I realise that there are people who have felt hurt and confused by some of the changes - not simply the seating, but this emphasis on a new direction. But it has been seriously impressive to see how open people are to change and embracing a new future as a cathedral for a diocese.

Let me assure you that I am clear that the reason we can do this is precisely because being a "parish church cathedral" is basic to our DNA. We are discovering what it means to respond to these overlapping callings as cathedral and parish church. We couldn't be a cathedral for a diocese if we didn't already know what it meant to be a thriving, outward facing community.

Canon Ivor Moody noted two particular ground-breaking weekends this year. One was the weekend before Christmas when a new informal carol service and Indian dancing at Sunday Evensong saw over 1,000 people celebrate the presence of God in new ways.

The other was the weekend of 12 October - three days which featured diocesan events and crucially the Mission Event when people went out to worship in churches across the diocese in their hundreds. There was a deep sense that we learnt something that we are only just beginning to understand - that our fundamental calling is to be a SENT community (the word for “sent” in Greek is "apostolic", the word we use Sunday by Sunday in the Creed).

It is very much the working out of this that we are currently exploring through the Round Table discussions which will frame the work of the Chapter and the whole of the Cathedral community for the coming years.

Very Revd Nicholas Henshall, Dean of Chelmsford
Spirituality

Retreat House of Pleshey

In *Transforming Presence*, a challenge is laid for our diocesan retreat house to become a centre for the development of the prayer and spiritual life of the diocese. This is a commission the Retreat House embraces and is responding to.

In 2014 the House was busy welcoming parish and deanery groups for quiet days, planning days, retreats and other activities. It was a joy to be overflowing with ordinands on the eve of their ordination. It was a blessing to have community and charity groups come and use our facilities, enjoying the ‘safe space’ and hospitality we offer. The programme of the House explored different aspects of faith and spirituality. We remain grateful to the hard work of our staff and network of friends who organised an excellent open day in May for over 600 visitors.

This last year was busy for another reason too: phase 1 of the refurbishment and renewal of our Retreat House is complete. Seven bedrooms are now fully en-suite, including the fully accessible St Francis suite. In the new Orangery we have a further meeting room and breakout space providing more flexibility for groups and more capacity for the House as a whole. The gatehouse, which is fully en-suite and can be used independently of the main House, is ideal for cell groups and small retreats.

The completion of phase 1 means we are half way to our funding target, and in 2015 we will be planning the next phase of improvements, and further developing our offering, to support the whole diocese in being a transforming presence in every community.

‘Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter: all are welcome in this place’

Ven David Lowman, Chair of Pleshey

St Peter’s Chapel

The highlight of the year for us at the chapel was the visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury in May to celebrate an early morning communion.

The chapel continues to have visitors every day. It is a place where people come closer to God. A place of quiet, filled with the peace of the Lord. The ministry of the chapel is to maintain that atmosphere of peace and prayer. The summer services were on the theme of ‘creating with the creator’ and we were able to find God through art, poetry, storytelling, film, puppetry and song.
Over 600 people attended the annual pilgrimage. Revd Kate Coleman was the inspirational speaker and reminded us that the baton had been passed on to us and that we were being sent out with God’s message into Great Britain.

Over 50 people attended Quiet Days at the chapel where they had the opportunity to spend some time apart with God in a place where we can be touched by God and then recognise that touch elsewhere.

The Othona Community is very much part of the life of the chapel and join us regularly at the mid-week communion.

The need to raise funds for the roof repair has led to the setting up of a committee to look at the wider implications caring for an important place in our Christian heritage.

The chapel website has been renewed and will be developed as a spiritual space. [www.bradwellchapel.org](http://www.bradwellchapel.org) We also now have a Facebook page – The Chapel of St Peter on the Wall, Bradwell on Sea

Nurture

Education

Much of the work of the Education Department is accountable to the public at large as well as the people we work with and the wider Church. This is because our schools are publicly funded and subject to the external scrutiny of Ofsted as well as national Church of England frameworks: ‘If Church of England is on the signboard, the Church of England is accountable’. Three new advisers joined our Schools Team in 2014 and are working hard to help schools raise their standards; in Ofsted terms as well as with their Church school character.

We established two Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) in 2013, the Sower and the Vine, with four schools. In 2014 two more schools joined, two more applied to join and there are others exploring membership. In all these schools, standards are improving and one, St James, Harlow, went from Special Measures (Grade 4) to Good (Grade 2). The Church of England’s new report, ‘Working Together: The Future of Rural CofE Schools’ encourages more collaboration between schools and commends our MAT model as a way of securing excellence into the future.

Government has raised its expectations of school Governing Bodies. In three schools this led to Interim Executive Boards taking over from struggling Governing Bodies. All three have been chaired by diocesan nominees and have made excellent progress. Our two new
Governance Advisers have offered new training opportunities and worked with individual governing bodies, helping them develop their effectiveness.

The diocesan Centenary was celebrated with great gusto and provided a chance to focus on Christian character and practical service. Every school was sent a giant poster, with 100 ‘Centenary Challenges’; by the end of 2014 several schools reported they had completed all or most of the Challenge. Schools exchanged ‘shoeboxes’ of artefacts and wrote prayers for each other. Every school received a commemorative plate for its entrance hall – as a reminder to every visitor that the school belongs to our diocesan family. Every pupil received a bookmark which included a prayer written by Bishop Stephen. Governors celebrated a Festal Dinner in the Cathedral with the Dean of Westminster. In October, in the Nave of the Cathedral, 200 pupils re-enacted the biblical narrative – from Passover to Pentecost; this is an event we hope to turn into an annual fixture.

It was a privilege for me to go to Kenya with Bishop Stephen in March and visit churches and schools. Our annual school exchange was slightly hampered by security fears in 2014, but went ahead largely as planned. It is a real blessing to schools at both ends and is one of the largest and longest running such schemes in the country.

Communication is always a challenge since ‘if it isn’t heard, it hasn’t been said’. Our Schools e-Bulletin sent 2-3 times each term keeps schools, governors, clergy and interested parties in touch with what is going on. Schools also use it to showcase what they are up to. For many people, their only contact with the diocese is through the life of a particular school. We identified the need to have a ‘public face’ through which they could get the information and news they needed attractively and directly. So we commissioned a new diocesan Education website (www.cdbe.org.uk), to be launched in early 2015. We also have bespoke logo to more easily identify education work in the diocese.

Revd Tim Elbourne, Director of Education
Youth Ministry

Rachel Brett (Colchester), Alice Smith (Bradwell) and Andy Poultnery (Barking) began 2014 by launching, with other colleagues, the Authorisation Scheme for youth, children’s and families workers. Aiming to offer recognition and accountability, the scheme requires a parish to pledge, through demonstrable actions, their support of ministry with under 18’s as well as the worker themselves being required to demonstrate competency and character in their service to young people. On 11th October 2014, 16 youth workers and their parishes were authorised in the Cathedral by Bishop Stephen alongside Pastoral Assistants and Evangelism Enablers.

Following on from the Time to Talk Conference in 2012, a group of young people have been meeting regularly to further the aims of enabling young people’s voices to be heard in the Church and the diocese. A presentation was made at Diocesan Synod in late 2014 and one of the members is now a CEYC representative on General Synod.

The Colchester Area youth event, ‘Joy’, hosted the Archbishop of Canterbury during his visit to the diocese in May. The evening included a Q&A, a talk on prayer and a jousting competition between Bishop Stephen and Archbishop Justin.

Six Young People embarked on the Growing Young Leaders programme in the Bradwell Area in 2014, undertaking six sessions around discipleship, character, evangelism and spiritual growth and attending the OneLife leaders conference in Sheffield.

Youth Advisers were present at Area Vocations Days, Clergy Study Days and at Area Conferences on rural ministry, schools work and supporting Centenary Mission events.

The Engage course, run in the Diocese as a Level 2 qualification for Youth Support Workers through the Institute for Children, Youth and Mission, had 15 candidates during 2014. Other training courses including Essentials (a 2 hour session); Innovate (a 12 hour programme) and more specialist events (Understanding Radicalisation, Groundwork for Youth Ministry, Learning Community Taster Day) were also offered in parishes and deaneries across the diocese.
The Deanery Youth Champions Network continues to grow, with most deaneries now having appointed a volunteer advocate to raise the profile of youth ministry and offer more immediate and tailored support and local connections. Area Youth Advisers gathered locally with employed youth workers (known as Kairos Community in Barking and The Hub in Bradwell) for training, prayer and professional development and hosted an annual 48 hours Breathing Space residential in March.

There is a vast and varied amount of youth ministry going on across the diocese in a plethora of settings. As Advisers, we’re privileged to accompany leaders, clergy, parishes & workers and enable them to grow their outreach & nurture to young people. As the Anecdote to Evidence report showed us, Churches are thriving and growing where there is high importance placed on actively engaging children and young people – something which affirms and underpins our purpose and passion in the Youth Advisory Team. Following Andy’s move to lead the diocese’s work on young vocations, we look forward to a new appointment to the team in 2015 and the ongoing growth in depth, quantity and quality of youth ministry in the diocese.

Alice Smith and Rachel Brett, Area Youth Advisers

Children’s Ministry

There are an estimated 330,000 children aged 0-11 in our diocese. We know, from recent surveys, that our parishes serve approximately 8,700 children (under 16s) on Sundays, double this number through midweek activities, and have regular contact with more than 100,000 children and young people through church-based activities and through school visits. We have more than 4,500 volunteers serving children and young people through church-based activities. We are doing lots and have the desire to do lots more. Alongside the growth in the range of ministries with children and families across the diocese, there is a growing awareness of the value of children and families in their own right.

Key words in my job description include; raising awareness, training, resourcing, supporting, modelling good practice, pastoral support, strategic development, leadership, sharing and promoting examples of good practice, mediation, networking and collaborative ministry. There’s plenty to do and a wide area in which to serve.

In my role as Adviser for Children’s and Families Ministry I have fulfilled requests for support and resources on issues including evangelism, employment, developing and
supporting volunteers, all-age worship, festivals, Messy Church, working in schools and children and Holy Communion. I have also increased the range of communications, supporting workers through email, social media and providing specific resources around festival times.

Training is a vital component of my role and I have led sessions in parishes, clusters of parishes, deaneries, Episcopal Areas and diocesan-wide, in addition to several sessions in theological training for St Mellitus and Cuddeston.

Specific projects include working on the National Christenings Project, working with the Diocesan Safeguarding Reference Group, assisting with the planning of Episcopal Area events and mentoring of employed workers. One new area we are developing is the “Have Your Say” cards, where we listen to the views of children, young people and adults around four basic questions:

- When do you feel close to God?
- I think God is ……….. because ……………
- I think Church is ……….. because ……………
- Is there anything more you would like to tell us?

These cards are available in print format and online and are currently being used in parishes and in schools.

Having my base in the Education Department means that I have quick access to support and resources and, in turn, I am able to assist my school-based colleagues in areas such as communications, planning centenary events and the production of resources.

Parish visits remain central to my role and I have visited many parishes, with increasing numbers of visits on Sundays.

When looking back over the past year it feels like there is increasing desire, with volunteers more ready and able to have a go, try something new and think creatively in reaching new people. However, there are significant issues to overcome. Whilst there is so much more new work being done in parishes we are aware that we are only scratching the surface. Our diocese is huge, diverse and complex. At times there is unease when increased ministry in our communities might not necessarily result in significantly increased numbers in regular Sunday worship. However, there is great optimism and enthusiasm for the future and we are becoming stronger in our base from which we serve our many and varied communities.

Steve Kersys, Children’s and Families Ministry Adviser
Lay Ministry

The aim of my work as Lay Development Adviser is to strengthen the provision of resources and support for developing lay discipleship and ministry. This is not so as to support the work of clergy, but to enable lay people to minister as partners with ordained leaders in the mission of the Church.

As people learn to pray, read the Bible, live and worship together and share their faith they will grow in Christ-like discipleship. There have been a number of significant and encouraging signs of growth. The Course in Christian Studies, now revised to focus on the twin questions of how we lead distinctively Christian lives and how we evangelise effectively, had 50% more students in 2014 than in 2013. Last year I participated in two Vocations Days and was delighted to see many CCS students. Beverley Duncan, as Pastoral Care Training Co-ordinator, and Charlie Kosla have succeeded in arranging training in venues around the diocese. The Pastoral Assistant course is now in two semesters, the first semester being widely available, while the second leads to local authorisation. In 2013/14 eighty people completed the first semester, a dramatic increase. At the Celebration of Lay Ministry Day in October 2014 eleven people were commissioned as Pastoral Assistants, four people as Evangelism Enablers, fifteen as youth ministers, and seventeen as parish evangelists in Newham deanery. 400 people filled the Cathedral.

The diocesan desire to develop lay people as leaders in the Church has resulted in a re-imaging of Reader ministry. During 2014 seven people were selected for training as Licensed Lay Ministers, joining the twelve currently in training. There has been considerable work this year, with the staff of St Mellitus, to adapt the modules supplied by Durham University who are the new accrediting body for all ministerial training. These modules must equip the licensed ministers for their role in the future, not the past patterns of ministry. The credibility of the diocese’s stated aim will be proved as laity are given, and paid for, significant posts of responsibility and this will encourage further vocation to lay ministry.

The process of transfer from Reader to LLM has continued to be painful for many existing Readers. I was not able to give due attention to them and though I have visited LARC groups and deanery synods, I consider there remains much to do in the area of Readers’ Continuing Ministerial Development.

I am delighted, though, that considerable numbers of people continue to be authorised as Local Preachers, many of whom will be embarking on a fourth year in 2015. They will be taking the Hermeneutics study course, H+, developed by the Bible Society, in groups led by Readers who have received the facilitator’s training.

During 2014 I continued with study for a professional doctorate which I hope to complete this year. I am looking at means of developing good relationships between lay and ordained leaders of local churches.

Revd Elizabeth Jordan, Lay Discipleship Adviser
Evangelism

Fresh Expressions

The Centenary Year of mission presented our parishes with opportunities not just for evangelism but to try something new to connect with their community.

Focusing specifically on fresh expressions of church, the key event of 2014 was the presentation to Synod from Canon Dr George Lings of the Church Army Research Unit. This presentation included a marketplace presentation of fresh expressions followed by debate and a unanimous vote supporting fresh expressions across the diocese as we look forward to developing Mission & Ministry Units in the future.

The sixth mission-shaped ministry course in our diocese commenced in Stanford Le Hope with participants from the Anglican, Baptist and Salvation Army participating.

Two innovative Lay Pioneer Training hubs were independently proposed and subsequently generously funded by MOF, both centres planning to be operational in 2015. By working together they will ensure a strategic approach to resourcing and supporting pioneer ministry across the diocese.

Data collection of fresh expressions from Statistics of Mission returns will become more identifiable to give a clearer picture across the diocese.

Revd Charlie Kosla, Mission & Evangelism Adviser

Vocations

Ordinands

We are delighted to report that the numbers of men and women being ordained in this Diocese continue to increase. In 2014 there were 36 ordained deacon (27 in 2013) – 32 at Petertide and 4 at Advent, and there has been an increase in the number of those offering for selection, which continues. The DDO is currently seeing 83 potential ordinands and hopes to send 50 candidates to BAPs this year in order to commence training in September 2015.

During 2014 there were 31 candidates (29 in 2013) recommended for training. We currently have 59 (61) candidates in training. These include 13 (12) candidates who will be serving as Locally Deployed SSMs, the majority of which have significant experience in Reader ministry and are doing a one year course at St Mellitus College. Some have trained on an Internal Training Course organised by the Diocese.
In 2015 we anticipate that 30 people will be ordained deacon and we hope to take our full complement of 15 stipendiary deacons. Suitable training parishes for stipendiary deacons are now identified in a more strategic way working with the Bishop's Staff, although the placing of deacons becomes more difficult as individuals' situations and training needs are, seemingly, more complex.

The DDO was fully involved in the Area Vocations Days during 2014 and also worked with Chelmsford Cathedral, in the Centenary Year, to host a Young Vocations Day in November which was attended by over 37 18 – 30 year olds.

Remembering that worship is the central focus of all our work and that we need to offer all our plans and hopes to God as we seek to discern vocations, a “Day of Prayer for Priests” was held at St Peter’s Chapel at Bradwell in June. This was attended by over fifty people.

In 2014 we said farewell to Stuart Batten who was Assistant DDO for eight years and we look forward to welcoming Hilary Le Seve as she takes up that post. It is hoped, as we plan for even greater numbers of vocations in line with our commitment to Transforming Presence, that more Assistant DDO capacity will be available and we are looking at some creative ways of achieving this.

We are also grateful to the Archdeacon of Chelmsford who has chaired a Review of the Discernment Process. The work of the Area Wardens of Ordinands is of vital importance as we seek to make ministry more relevant and available for tomorrow’s church and some new guidelines and pointers for their work, and the building up of our candidates’ confidence and awareness, will be published early in 2015.

Revd Canon Philip Need, Diocesan Director of Ordinands (DDO)

**Encounter – Young Vocations**

Following many months of planning and preparation steered by Bishop John, the Diocese took some significant steps in 2014 to engage with issues surrounding young people and vocations.

In July, Rev Andy Poultney was appointed as Young Vocations Champion. Andy's role is to increase the number of young people (under the age of 30) in the Diocese exploring God’s calling, especially to ordained ministry. The appointment is part of a response to a national picture in which there is a renewed desire and need to see an increase in those under 30 exploring ministry in the Church of England.

A significant part of Andy's role is to develop a Ministry Experience Scheme in which up to four young people participate in a Gap Year with the Diocese. To that end, Encounter began in autumn 2014 with four 'Out-turns' living in community with Andy and his family, and placed in local Churches to encounter the joys and challenges of parish ministry first
hand. This is proving to be a great success, with one of the Out-turns wondering how any young person could possibly begin exploring ordained ministry without such a scheme. Both living in community and engaging in varied aspects of mission and ministry are contributing to each young person growing significantly in their gifts and skills, and relationship with God. The second year of Encounter will begin in September 2015.

In addition, 2015 will also see the task of raising young vocations continue via various other new initiatives.

Revd Andy Poultney, Young Vocations Champion

Service

Diocesan Advisory Committee

In 2014 the parishes in the Diocese generated nearly 600 applications for a Faculty and related enquiries. These, along with other related matters, were considered during the course of the 9 meetings of the DAC held in 2014. Much of this workload was related to works of essential maintenance or repair but, as always, there was a significant proportion where important changes were being proposed to churches and their churchyards. Many of these had been the subject of earlier site visits from the DAC and in 2014 members made 73 site visits as part of the DAC’s continuing role to assist parishes with planning changes to the fabric of their churches to enhance their mission and outreach.

The DAC continued to promote the Chelmsford Diocesan Gutter Clearance Scheme which, with the grateful assistance of grants from the Friends of Essex Churches Trust, has shown a steady increase of participants in the important work of regular and necessary maintenance to the fabric of our churches.

Preliminary work began on planning the next ‘Caring For Churches’ conference which is to be held on Thursday 8 October 2015: The venue will again be The Central Baptist Church in Chelmsford. In the meantime, the DAC got to grips with the new Faculty Jurisdiction Rules that were introduced from 1 January and, as part of this process, organised a training day on 2 July for Churchwardens that was led by the DAC Secretary and the Archdeacon of Harlow.

The Committee thanked Richard Lindsey for his help as the DAC’s Heating Adviser and welcomed Oliver Clarke who took over this post in April. However, the Committee was greatly saddened by the sudden death of Melvyn Crow whose tenure as the DAC’s Arboricultural Adviser had been all too brief.
Finally, at the December meeting, James Bettley, Chairman for the past 10 years, announced that he was standing down. The Committee extended warm thanks to James for his expert help and guidance over the years and welcomed the fact that he would continue to serve as a valued member of the DAC.

Malcolm Woods, Chair of the DAC

**Diocesan Environment Group**

The Diocesan Environment Group achieved the following in 2014:

- **10 August 2014** – Appointed Environment Champion
- **9 September 2014** - Set priorities for Environment Champion based on ‘It is possible to live differently’
  - Reduction of carbon footprint for church buildings and reduction of fossil fuel use;
  - Stewardship – including schools and churchyards;
  - Climate Justice support – to include Tearfund and Christian Aid;
  - Education – Promote responsibility and stewardship amongst family and community
- **5 November 2014** – It was decided to re-structure the group with the original DEG as a reference group and make a Steering Group, potentially with smaller project groups that would be plugged in to the Diocese organisation.
- **25 November 2014** - The DEG agreed to the re-structure.

The Environment Champion made progress on the following priorities:

- Reduction of carbon footprint for church buildings and reduction of fossil fuel use – The outline of a project to run a pilot study with small group of Churches to inform the production of a toolkit to be rolled out diocese wide. Work is currently underway with Buttsbury, St Mary; Panfield, St Mary; West Ham, St Matthew and Moulsham, St John. A mock up toolkit for parishes being developed.
- Stewardship – including schools and churchyards – We have identified 81 out of 142 Diocese schools as having Eco-school status, which equates to 57%. There has also been engagement of schools through a drawing competition to design a front cover for the tool kit. We are working with Roydon, St Peter on the creation of wildlife area which will include a contemplation area and outdoor schoolroom. This will also provide a case study for other Churches.
- Education – Promote responsibility and stewardship amongst family and community. A community Facebook page has been set up. We have contributed regular articles in The Month and NB. Other strategies are in development e.g. Green Collar Week and Faith in Nature Conference for 2016.
The diocesan document ‘It is possible to Live Differently’ set some targets and tasks for parishes to undertake i.e. energy audits and carbon footprint calculations. As far as can be ascertained, there has been no progress on this. A failure to see our environment and how we live in it as a significant part of mission and ministry, coupled with a lack of communication may well be factors here.

Encouraging, developing and promoting Christian life as stewardship of creation and therefore an ongoing conversation with God, marks Christians as distinctive from others. We care because God made it for us and to sustain us, ‘is in all and living through all’ (Ephesians 4:6). Stewardship is an open doorway to share our love of God’s creation with others and so effectively evangelise. Churches are in a unique position within their communities to do this. Caring about the effects climate change will have on social justice is one of the many ways Christians live out Jesus’ instruction to love our neighbours as ourselves. A recent Environment Agency survey asked people who needed to be responsible in acting on climate change: one of the top four answers was the Church/Faith communities.

Going forward into 2015 the Diocese Environment Group will seek to fully uphold the 5th Mark Of Mission “to strive to safeguard the integrity of Creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth”, through various initiatives and promotions to parishes.

Ven Martin Webster, Chair of the Diocesan Environment Group
Susan Latchford, Diocesan Environment Champion

Rural Issues

The Rural Officer’s role is to bring rural issues to the Church, and to represent the Church to the rural community. A key need continues to be raising the profile of the rural Church within the Diocese, and encouraging and strengthening rural ministry. One opportunity to do this is the annual ‘rural’ day for Chelmsford One Year Pathway students. It has not so far been possible to contribute significantly to rural ministry training for other St Mellitus students, other colleges and courses, or our own curates, and this remains an important aspiration for the future.

A very successful Bradwell Area conference in January 2014, ‘Fifty Shades of Rural’, was followed up with a popular ‘Tour of Rural Churches’, exploring different ways in which churches have been adapted for wider community use. Sharing ideas and examples of good practice across the whole diocese proved an effective method for encouraging and energising lay church members.

The Rural Officer has continued to engage with the farming community, by supporting Farming Community Network and attending county shows and other farming-related events. The Church’s presence and care is much appreciated. A recently formed diocesan
‘Church on Show’ group is now exploring how better to resource church tents at county and country shows. The Rural Officer has also continued to represent the diocese at Essex Rural Partnership meetings, highlighting the Church’s commitment to the whole rural community and bringing an important faith perspective to rural issues.

Revd Dr Julie Nelson, Diocesan Rural Officer

**Mothers’ Union**

Mothers’ Union continue to support families around the diocese through contact centres, the visits centre at HMP Chelmsford, Food Banks and Women’s Refuges and within our parishes, assisting with wedding and baptism preparation, organising toddler/pram groups and Messy Church. Travelling cribs are becoming increasingly popular as are knitted items for seafarers.

Our members are very talented and there is insufficient space to report everything they do.

In July we held our Prayer and Spirituality day entitled ‘Living Distinctively as a People of Prayer’. We welcomed Bishop Stephen in the morning and Revd Canon Edward Carter explained the origins of the ’Chelmsford Holding Cross’ during the afternoon.

In November 2014 the Mothers’ Union Relief Fund was able to contribute to the co-ordinated efforts of the network of Kurdish churches in Iraq to bring refuge and safety to displaced families and refugees from towns that have become war-zones due to IS aggression - Mosul, Qaraquash, and more.

The money and resources we have given through The Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf have helped the local church to make a huge difference to these families. Without the presence of international relief agencies in the most desperate of areas the Church network has enabled families to have shelter, fresh water, food, clothing and medicine.

Our members are generous in their financial support of the Relief Fund which exists to help ‘to those whose family life has met with adversity’ both in the UK and overseas.

Marion Ketley, President of the Diocesan Mothers’ Union
Hospitality

CMEAC

Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns

It is with great pleasure to say that the Chelmsford CMEAC is again up and running. In September of this year we had our re-launch meeting. Invitations were extended to CMEAC members of old to come and be part of the re-launch and to hear of the direction of travel intended for our newly formed group. Sadly there are some who have been actively engaged in the struggle for equality who have lost hope.

However we now have a strong and committed group of committee members for CMEAC. For now I am Chair, but I would hope that very soon that will not be necessary. Our Vice Chair is Revd Chigor Chike. Very soon we will have our own page on the Diocesan Website.

In January we had our first CMEAC residential at High Leigh. There were a number of Bishops and Archdeacons from the diocese eager to hear about the key priorities for change set by the committee. One of the main aims of the conference was to allow minority ethnic clergy to share the struggle they may have faced, but also to celebrate that Chelmsford is working toward a more equal and diverse representation in its clergy and leadership.

At the conference I circulated this paper below which I hope gives some insight in the way forward for us as a Church.

‘Where do we go from Here?’

On Sunday 15th September 2013 a new chapter in history of the Church of England was made in the Chelmsford diocese two ME Archdeacons were collated. Some may say too little too late, I say better late than never! This message does not just come from me but all my Archdeacon colleagues and if my welcome to the team has been anything to go by, the entire Bishop’s Staff Team.

So what exactly is that message? The Chelmsford Diocese is committed to the MEAC cause both locally and nationally. There’s recognition that the Church has not been active enough in the past to encourage, equip and enable the development and further development of ME vocations in the Church, whether this was through deliberate or unintentional acts is now irrelevant. What is needed now is positive action to redress the balance, to set up
intentional pathways of progression and support for both lay and ordained minority ethnic church members. There are many who have lost faith in the system because they have heard too many times that things were going to change, but change never really came. There’s no criticism in me for those who feel this way, in fact, it gives me more reason to lead on action for change.

+Stephen and all his senior team are committed to ensuring that we achieve equality across the diocese - for those who are ordained as well as laity and all who are employed by the diocese. It is my hope that Chelmsford will take the lead on the MEAC front nationally, and will become the diocese that is truly representative and inclusive of all.

We already owe a debt of gratitude to Dr Elizabeth Henry who is the National Adviser for CMEAC, she has given of her time to support the work we are doing in and will be doing in Chelmsford.

‘Where do WE go from here?’ The clue is in the title. Progression and change is not something that will be achieved by a handful of MEAC committee members. Progression and change is something we will all have to do together. We must all be committed to challenge and not collude with discrimination. I have one caveat; this is, this is not a time for pointing fingers or a time for a witch-hunt, as we do not want to create a culture of guilt or blame. On the contrary, it’s a time to draw a line under the past and to move forward together in love, honesty and truth. Only then might we find true healing and reconciliation.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28)

Ven Mina Smallman, Chair of CMEAC

Diocese of Chelmsford Deaf Church

Deaf Ministry

In 2014 as well as continuing with its application for a Bishop's Mission Order the Deaf chaplaincy team particularly focussed on the following:

Discipleship

In 2014, through the medium of Sign Language, we ran a short course for Deaf people. The topic was the “I AM” sayings from John’s gospel. At the end of each session we encouraged those present to sign extempore prayers. None attending had prayed in this way before but at the end of the course most had done so and now feel less embarrassed about praying in other contexts and situations.

We also held an event over a weekend to enable Deaf people to explore their faith in a different way. Revd Hannah Lewis, a Deaf priest from the diocese of Liverpool, held
workshops for just over 30 Deaf people to help them compose worship songs in Sign Language. These worship songs were not English worship songs translated into Sign Language but original compositions which did not rely on a musical rhythm or rhyming lines as songs in English do, but on the rhythm and flow and the visual patterns of the signs. It was an opportunity to think about what worship songs were for and about the most appropriate signs to use in order to communicate accurately the gospel message in them. Four worship songs were composed and subsequently used in worship in place of signed English songs.

Evangelism

As part of the centenary year of mission we took a group of Deaf people to the British Museum for a signed tour looking at artefacts from biblical times. Half the group were church members while the other half were not. Led by an expert, stories from the Old Testament and of Jesus life and ministry were told using objects on display. During the meal after the tour there was intense discussion with some of the non-church people about Christianity. Although as yet none have come to a service we do hope that a seed has been sown.

Service

It is important to join with Deaf people where they meet and to engage with their hopes and fears. To this end wherever possible the chaplains have attended local Deaf clubs and Deaf lunch clubs. Sometimes this has provided the opportunity for interesting conversations! As a Deaf church we welcome all to our services and some who have attended over the year have other conditions such as Ushers Syndrome to which some Deaf people are prone. As many who attend our services would find it difficult to access worship in a hearing church we tried to ensure that all who did attend felt welcomed and accepted and were able to join in the worship.

Interdependence

Members of the Deaf congregations have given generously to appeals. Amongst gifts given recently were to the Bishop's Lent appeal for a Deaf school in Kenya. The donations for this appeal came not only from the Deaf congregations but also from the wider Deaf community. The chaplaincy team and Deaf church congregations continued to support the work of Deaf Anglicans Together (DAT) a Deaf led charity who organize training and offer other resources for all involved in ministry among Deaf people. A member of the chaplaincy team and one Deaf person attended their conference weekend in May. I continued to regularly attend meetings of the Committee for Ministry of and among Deaf and Disabled People (CMDDP), part of the Division of Ministry and a subcommittee of the Archbishops’ Council.

Revd Dennis Huntley, Lead Minister in the Deaf Community
Hospital and Healthcare Chaplaincy

As one chaplain expressed it, healthcare chaplains 'continue in our ministry of being 'salt and light', and hopefully we can serve by Transforming Presence with the love of God in compassionate caring for staff, patients, families and the Trust’s Community.' NHS Trusts and hospices within the Chelmsford diocese have provided spiritual, pastoral and religious care during this year, often in challenging circumstances. The Colchester University Foundation Trust continues in ‘special measures’, whilst the team in the Mid Essex Trust managed to maintain the 24/7 on call service despite three of the five Trust chaplains being on extended sick or compassionate leave at various times.

Provision of facilities and support for those of all faiths wanting to pray continues. A new chapel opened in Colchester General Hospital this year. Communion services are held in chapels and at the bedside, whilst some occasions – such as the Basildon Hospital Carol Service in the restaurant, and the Act of Remembrance in the new Atrium at Broomfield – take place in more public settings.

Chaplaincy teams link with large numbers of people. For example, over 10,000 patients and staff had contact with Chaplaincy in Newham and Whipps Cross Hospitals during 2014. This is achieved by a combination of paid chaplains, associate parish clergy and teams of trained and dedicated volunteers – an example of ministry ‘re-imagined’. Three members of hospital and hospice chaplaincy teams were ordained deacon this year.

Chaplains are managed within their employing organisations, in addition to the usual denominational arrangements for accountability. For instance, in Basildon, the department’s Manager, the Head of Patient Experience, is currently guiding the Chaplaincy Department through a period of service review. Healthcare chaplains report to Churches Together in Essex and East London each year.

Examples of chaplaincy work beyond that with individual patients, includes one of the Barking, Havering and Redbridge chaplains sitting on the Organ Donation Committee and establishing contacts between BHR clinicians and two additional local faith fora (linked to very low donation consent in minority faith communities). In Mid Essex, chaplaincy has been included on the new end of life steering group and the dementia care team, and spiritual care is now part of staff training in both areas. Little Havens ran their first holiday club, while it is hoped that a community choir at Farleigh will be launched in April 2015. One of the strategic objectives of St Helena Hospice is to ‘promote open attitudes in our community towards death and dying and provide bereavement support to all that need it.’

During this year, Revd Chris Hawkins has moved on from the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow, and Revd Katy Hacker-Hughes from Farleigh Hospice, where we welcome Revd Lucyann Ashdown as the new chaplain. We wish Revd David Flowers (Colchester NHS Trust) well as he moves to a new NHS post at the end of April.
Following a review of portfolios among the Bishop’s Staff, this year has also seen the Ven Annette Cooper step down as Bishop’s Adviser on Healthcare Chaplains. Her depth of knowledge and relationships and her wisdom will be much missed.

I should be pleased to provide the full reports from healthcare chaplains on request.

Revd Canon Jenny Tomlinson, Bishop’s Adviser on Healthcare Chaplains

Workplace Chaplaincy

This is why we Workplace Chaplains (WPC) Essex & East London continue our apostolic engagement with countless people at every level of retail park/town centre, local government, airport, Crown Court, leisure facility, emergency service and wherever we are invited to represent Christ’s Church in the world of work. One unusual example this year was when WPC responded to a request from Tilbury Power Station and Revd Andy Hudson supported its 300 or so workers up to and including the switching-off of its plant.

I cannot tell you if we have helped Churches to grow. But I can tell you 15 Core Team Workplace Chaplains, 3 Associate Chaplains (two in Universities & one in Writtle Agricultural College) plus 41 Volunteer Chaplains have had countless, meaningful encounters with people who’ve appreciated our intentional presence – our pastoral care – and our prophetic voice.

I cannot tell you if we have taught people to pray or nurtured them in their faith or discipleship. But I can give you one example of a Romford Town Centre Chaplain who was told by someone on their rounds, “When I see you, you remind me to pray”.

I cannot tell you if Workplace Chaplains have shared the faith with others or what the results have been. But I can tell you that we have conducted countless acts of worship in a variety of work-spaces and not just at key points in the year, such as Remembrance or Christmas.

I can also tell you that:

- WPC has provided teaching input to St Mellitus, the Diocesan CMD Training Programme and the Pastoral Assistants Training Programme; has featured at Vocation Days, and Core Chaplains have provided a variety of placements for a variety of people in different modes of training.

- WPC has benefited from the services of a 3rd Year Curate (Revd Kim Lepley) who has acted as WPC Administrator and who in turn has benefited from a placement at

1 WPC Essex & East London is ecumenical: its chaplains are predominantly Anglican, others are Methodists, Baptists, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army. Full details of WPC ministry and locations can be found on our website: www.workplacechaplains.org.uk
Stansted Airport. (An opportunity exists for another Curate to succeed Kim: anyone interested, please contact Carol)

At present, WPC is financially secure thanks to the contributions from supporting Churches, which covers ministry and training expenses. As most of us provide our chaplaincy services on a voluntary basis, we are showing generosity towards the wider Church and community without being a burden upon those we serve.

Revd Canon Carol Smith, Workplace Chaplaincy Team Leader

Interdependence

Barking Episcopal Area

Many exciting events have taken place in the Barking Episcopal Area during 2014. One occurred at 10am on the 2nd of May in St Margaret’s Barking with the announcement of our new Area Bishop, the Rt. Revd Peter Hill. The main focus has been the Mission events held across the Episcopal Area during 2014. During the centenary year, the vast majority of parishes in the Barking area hosted a mission weekend/event, the range of events put on during the year was amazingly varied, and here are two examples.

Stratford – St Paul’s
We held a 150th birthday party with a large service and the following Friday we held a children’s party to which over 150 children came. We worked with all the churches that either hire or are part of our church. We held a large lunch at the end to celebrate the Bulgarian Church joining us, where 14 adults were baptised and 46 people joined the Church of England. We held our first children’s summer club this August and will continue this work.
Revd Jeremy Fraser

Barking – St Patrick’s
We held a Holiday Club week (Sunday – Sunday) in July. This was a two hours a day club for local children between 7-11 years old based on ‘Space Academy’ Scripture Union material. Our team consisted of St Patrick church members, including teenagers and a group of teenagers from Fri-Kirken Church in Bergen, Norway. Then we held an evening café with teenagers and early twenties. We also held a Family BBQ. This increased the profile of the Church locally and encouraged increased attendance at monthly All Age Service. It raised ‘team spirit’ within church community who contributed accommodation, catering, funds, prayer or were team members. It also had a major impact on teenagers (in church) spiritual maturity, led to the start of a ‘small group’ for them and possibility of two studying drums/guitar to augment sung worship in church.
Revd Graham Dowling
The area ran a series of events ranging from training days that looked at 3 elements of Mission, these were Effective Evangelism, Community Engagement and Discipleship. In addition at several centres across the area, ‘the prayerful and effective evangelism course’ was run over a 6 week period.

To develop vocations work, each archdeaconry held a vocations day; a CCS centre has been set up in Harlow Deanery; Epping Forest & Ongar deanery are planning towards a lay training hub in the deanery. Each deanery has a Vocations Advisor and vocations are high on the priority list for Area Deans and Dean Teams. In addition, a Lay Pioneer Training Hub is being set up at Collier Row, Romford. The Newham Evangelism training course continues to have a positive impact, and is a good example of a local initiative.

Work on Re-imagining Ministry has continued, with each deanery in the Episcopal Area producing a plan for proposed Mission and Ministry Units, the Area Mission and Pastoral Committee has supported MOF fund applications and helped to oversee deanery plans on Mission and Ministry Units. Encouragingly the Barking Area is now training 31 out of the 76 diocesan curates in the diocese at present, with 17 in the current first year.

The generosity and commitment of people in the Area resulted in a Share payment rate of 94.0% which is an improvement over 2013.

The Area Team has met regularly which has enabled the Bishop’s Staff, Area Deans and Area Advisors to work collaboratively, to hold one another accountable for our work and to give and receive support and encouragement.

Revd Vernon Ross, Barking Area Mission and Ministry Adviser
In the Bradwell Area, the diocesan centenary year was one of celebration, hope and new ventures. It was also a year in which our prayers were (and are) very much with Bishop John as he was diagnosed with myeloma in the summer, and when he went on extended sick leave at the end of the year for more intensive treatment.

When Archbishop Justin came to celebrate the centenary, he began his day with an early-morning Eucharist at the Bradwell Chapel. Bishop Stephen completed four of his missionary walks in our Area. The picture shows the start of the one in Basildon.

Across the Area, initiatives to mark the centenary included over 200 mission events. In response to Reimagining Ministry, seven of our nine deaneries reported on their progress towards potential units for mission and ministry, recognising our interdependence as we seek to be an effective Christian witness in our parishes. Many of our parishes ordered holding crosses after the Cathedral service in May, using this resource to deepen their spirituality and worship. For instance, in Canvey Island parish they were launched on Holy Cross Day with everyone who took one being encouraged to take a second at no cost (subsidised by a legacy) to give to someone who needed it. Over 400 crosses are now in circulation in that one parish. The holding crosses were also a focus for prayer at the Bradwell pilgrimage where 700 people heard Revd Kate Coleman (currently Chair of the Evangelical Alliance Council) speak on the theme "Sent". They were joined by partners from Sweden and Kenya who took part in the service.

The centenary year was, above all, about evangelism. At the November diocesan synod, Revd Terry Brown told us of a mission initiative among those who tend graves in Sandon churchyard. Other examples included the Southend deanery mission “Hope on Sea”; an event involving a riding school around the First World War centenary at Creeksea; an event around the Tour de France at St Andrew, Chelmsford; and a deanery stand at the Orsett Country Show, which is also planned for 2015. Parishes were also encouraged to begin or continue with nurture courses. At least thirty decided to use the new Pilgrim course. Others that are popular include Alpha, Christianity Explored, Table Talk and Emmaus. At least twenty parishes have designed their own course. Many parishes have also told us that they are planning further mission weekends for 2015.

In the Bradwell Area, we began the year with a conference for our rural parishes, which was attended by over 100 people. We also held major events for children, young people and our
Messy Churches. At our Area study day, Revd Prof Wilkinson spoke to 155 clergy and readers on the topic of ‘Equipping Christian Leaders in an Age of Science’.

We are most grateful for the financial generosity of our parishes. In 2014, the parishes of Chelmsford Archdeaconry increased their share collection rate by over a percentage point on 2013 to 87.03% of what was requested; while the parishes of Southend Archdeaconry managed a narrow increase on 2013 to 94.28% of what was requested. Many people gave most generously, and between them, our parishes gave £4.72million of the diocesan total of £14.22million.

Many of our churches sought to love and serve the communities among which they are set; from major projects like food banks, debt advice and night shelters for the homeless; to numerous smaller acts of care. In Southminster, they had an event to celebrate these, and were surprised by the range and extent of this valuable activity. In doing all this, we are mindful of our duty to protect children and vulnerable adults and, accordingly, 105 people completed the online Adult Safeguarding training course; and 315 people completed the online Child Protection training course.

53 people attended the Vocations Day in March, of whom 32 went on to explore a variety of ministries and courses. At least a dozen parishes ran a SHAPE course. Eight ordinands were recommended at their BAP and entered training in September. Eleven candidates were made deacon and nine deacons were ordained as priest. At the Celebration of Lay Ministry in October; we had 5 people commissioned as Pastoral Assistants, 2 as Evangelism Enablers and 4 as youth ministers. We had 131 students on the Course in Christian Studies – 52 second years at 4 venues and 79 first years at 6 venues. We also had 6 young people through the Young Leaders programme. Finally, 339 adults and young people were presented for Confirmation.

Revd Canon Martin Wood, Bradwell Area Mission & Ministry Adviser

Colchester Episcopal Area

Among the highlights of the year was the arrival of our new Area Bishop, the Rt. Revd Roger Morris, who was welcomed at a service at St John’s Colchester on 14th September.

During the centenary year, over 90% of parishes in the Colchester Area responded to the challenge of Evangelising Effectively, and put on mission events of some kind. This initiative was reviewed and evaluated by mission and evangelism advisers at a diocesan-wide meeting in September.

Clergy and lay people attended the Go for Growth conference at the Cathedral, as well as deanery workshops run by the Area team to follow up Bishop Stephen’s training evenings.
59 nurture courses were planned at the time of the Archdeacons’ Visitations, in addition to the usual range of Bible study, Lent and Advent courses.

To develop the vital vocations work, additional Vocations Advisers were appointed and over 30 people took part in the Vocations day. The Celebration of Lay Ministry Service at the Cathedral in October saw two Pastoral Assistants, an Evangelism Enabler and three Youth Ministers commissioned for the Colchester Area, and we were delighted to welcome two existing Readers from other dioceses. Two new Courses in Christians Studies began in the autumn (in Colchester and Saffron Walden) with 18 students embarking on this next step in discipleship. The ordinations at Petertide and Advent saw a total of nine new deacons starting their new phase of ministry in the Area, five of whom are locally deployed, and ten new priests.

Work on Re-imagining Ministry continued, with reports to the Area Mission and Pastoral Committee, and focussed meetings held of Area Deans, Lay Chairs, Archdeacons and Area Bishop. Two formal Pastoral Schemes were completed during the year - the creation of the Witham & Villages Team Ministry and the closure of Parkeston St Paul.

The generosity and commitment of people in the Area resulted in 96.9% of the share request being achieved, although financial challenges remain a real issue in many places.

Work with children and young people spans all the priorities in Transforming Presence. In particular, the support offered by the Area Youth Adviser to youth and children’s workers, and the diocesan authorisation scheme introduced in 2014 provide a framework for best practice to be understood and shared. Training for both employed and volunteer youth workers has continued this year. Bishop Roger has drawn together a group of young people Youth A Part from across the Area whose focus will be on accountability and support for him.

Regular meetings of the Area Team enable us to work collaboratively, to hold one another accountable for our work and to give and receive support and encouragement.

Revd Jenny Tomlinson, Colchester Area Mission & Ministry Adviser
International

During our Centenary Year, the majority of our international activity has focussed on Kenya and Sweden. Our relationships with Trinidad & Tobago and Romania continue but there has been little public activity beyond the usual – and very valuable - exchange of Romanian theology students funded by EU grants.

Kenya – In March, Bishop Stephen and I visited Kenya with Revd Tim Elbourne and Archdeacon Elwin. We had a day with each partner diocese and bishop; we visited various schools and projects and explored ways of strengthening our relationship. In parallel, a group of curates spent 2 weeks immersed in the culture and life of the Kenyan Church.

During this visit we met and prepared the 20 Kenyans from our five companion dioceses due to arrive in Chelmsford in June to work alongside parishes with their Mission Weekends. Sadly the ordinands from St Andrew’s College and a lay person were refused visas and so only 14 people, led by Bishop Moses of Mbeere and Canon Moses from St Andrew’s, were able to travel.

Their visit was a great success with much learning all-round. Highlights of the visit included two day conferences, with clergy and lay people from Chelmsford and Sweden, when we explored issues of Development and the use of the Bible in the life of the Church. The opportunity to visit the UK was highly appreciated by our visitors and has strengthened our links. The publicity and letter-writing campaign to MPs about the unjust visa refusals had led to some new guidelines from the National Church and the UK Border Agency that may help to prevent a recurrence.

In November, Bishop Henry Kathii of Embu Diocese retired and in December, Bishop Peter, Dean Nicholas and I were present for the consecration of his successor, David Muriithi Ireri. In addition, various schools and parish exchange visits have also taken place during the year including a new clergy exchange program with Mbeere Diocese.

Sweden – Bishop Stephen and Bishop Esbjörn have exchanged visits to attend each diocese’s ordination services. Bishop Stephen and I were invited to speak at “Världens fest” (Feast of the World) – a weekend gathering of 2000 people from across the Church in Sweden with visitors representing at least 15 other nations. And during the year, we welcomed visits to Chelmsford from Bishop Esbjörn with his Area Deans and a group of Bishop’s Chaplains. Some of our Karlstad link committee went to Sweden in April to explore areas of church life where future co-operation may be beneficial.

Bishop’s Lent Appeal – the 2014 Appeal raised funds to support the construction of a new secondary school for deaf pupils. The school is in Mbeere and will be the first such secondary school to serve the Mount Kenya East region. The Appeal raised £20,971 and we are very grateful for the generosity of parishes, schools and individuals. During December’s visit, we were able to see at first hand the fruits of the appeal with the first phase of building nearly complete.
Christmas Gift Fund – the Bishop continues to send small gifts to those from this diocese serving as mission partners abroad.

**Developing the impact of International relationships** – The Revd Lee Batson has taken on the new role of World Church Partnership and Development Adviser. This is an honorary, beyond-the-parish role which will enable us to better resource the development of our international work and align it with the priorities of *Transforming Presence*.

Revd Canon Dr Roger Matthews, Dean of Mission & Ministry

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**Generosity**

**London Over the Border**

The LOB Council distributes grants from the City Church Fund and the LOB Fund in the five London Boroughs that make up the Archdeaconries of West Ham and Barking. In doing so, the LOB Council seeks to support the mission of local Churches in keeping with the priorities of Transforming Presence.

In 2014, LOB made 43 grants totalling just over £490,000 to a range of small and medium-sized projects, with a particular emphasis on areas of significant deprivation. Awards ranged from a few hundred pounds for vicarage security in a challenging inner city parish to £45,000 towards setting up the diocese’s innovative intern scheme, based in Romford, and supporting it through its first three years. Most grants were for £10,000 or less.

A key decision of the LOB Council was to ring-fence £500,000 to be used over the next three years to support youth ministry, with £100,000 going to each of the five deaneries in 2015-2017.

Ven Elwin Cockett, Archdeacon West Ham

**Mission Opportunity Fund**

In the centenary year, the Fund had £600,000 available to support new mission initiatives across the Diocese. The Mission Opportunity Fund Assessment Committee (MOFAC) met in January to consider applications that have successfully passed through the discernment process.

The successful applicants this year were, in the main, focused around working with children, young people and families in this diocese. Applications were approved for the new diocesan role of Young Vocations Champion and to support the work of a new network of Deanery Youth Champions. Alongside these the MOF gave four awards to locally based workers in
Frinton, Clacton and two based in Colchester. MOFAC is also exploring a Further Education based project in South Essex.

Another key decision in 2014 was a grant to support the creation of a Pioneer Minister post which would serve the new housing developments on the Olympic Park.

There were also some awards based on social action which our parishes are engaged in. The MOF made grants to a Christians Against Poverty Job Club in Harold Hill and to a joint Church and Citizens Advice Bureau initiative in Galleywood, Chelmsford.

There was also a high demand for small grants in the year. Many of these supported Mission Events being held in parishes to mark the Year of Mission. The most popular type of application was to establish a Messy Church (5 awards in total). There have been further applications for youth and children based initiatives. Awards have also supported larger mission events such as the opportunity provided by the Tour de France in Woodford, Hope on Sea in Southend and the Two Rivers Mission in Colchester and Harwich.

Nathan Whitehead, Pastoral Secretary