

## SDF Bid 4

# “Growing Younger & More Diverse”

### PURPOSE

This document provides background and summary regarding the Strategic Development Funding (SDF) bid 4, “Growing Younger and more diverse”.

### BACKGROUND

Strategic Development Funding is national Church of England funding to support major change projects which lead to a significant difference in dioceses’ mission and financial strength.

The Church Commissioners have released the money which is used for Strategic Development Funding. The Archbishops’ Council is responsible for deciding the principles for its use. The Council has created the Strategic Investment Board to decide on grant applications among other things.

### PROGRESS

There is a two-stage application process and work on this fourth SDF bid has been progressing over the past year. The first stage was approved mid-December 2020. A detailed second stage application was submitted in September 2021 and approved at the Strategic Investment Board which met at the end of October 2021.

There has been considerable consultation with a wider variety of stakeholders including local churches.

### SUMMARY

This project seeks to achieve a step change in the children & families and youth ministries across the diocese.

It acknowledges the considerable challenges faced nationally by the Church of England and aligns with the current national vision and strategy, especially the strategic priority of ‘younger and more diverse’. This project will contribute towards the national outcome of seeing up to 3,000 churches across England become worshipping hubs for children and young people, with the aim of more than 25 young people worshipping in each.

To deliver this, we are praying for a move of the Spirit and are planning two aspects for the project – one focusing on **children and families (3-11yrs)** and another focusing on **youth (12-18yrs)**. With that in mind we will develop two tiers of churches that will contribute equally to the planned outcomes for growth in numbers of children and youth disciples across the diocese.

Within the first tier we are planning to establish **10 flagship churches** for children and families ministry, and **5 youth hubs**. These will flourish as centres of strength in their respective ministries and will support and enable other churches to develop their children and families or youth ministries.

The 10 flagship children and families churches will be of two types, existing and new:

- Churches with an existing children and families team leader of equivalent that can, with additional central support and investment, establish a New Worshipping Community (NWC) focused on reaching children and families in fresh ways.
- Churches that with the appointment of a new children and families team leader and wider investment can develop a thriving children and families ministry and establish a NWC focused on this area.

The 5 youth hubs will each develop up to 3 mid-sized missional outreach and discipleship groups in a variety of settings.

The second tier of up to **25 churches** have the potential to be flagship children and families churches or youth hubs in the future and will develop their own children and family and / or youth ministries but will work to a different set of expectations, not necessarily involving establishing a NWC or being expected to resource other churches during the lifetime of the project.

Across the project we will commission **25 Local Missional Leaders (LMLs)**. These are lay leaders who receive centrally provided support and training to lead or support the NWCs established by the flagship churches and mid-sized missional outreach and discipleship groups established by the youth hubs. They will contribute to the raising up of volunteer leaders and could also support new initiatives that may develop in tier 2 churches.

In addition, we will support, equip and commission **250 children & families / youth volunteers**. These volunteer teams will support delivery and implementation and help ensure not just sustainability but provide the capacity for replication and multiplication.

Investment is focused primarily on areas of deprivation including **people resource** for the relevant tier 1 churches and financial investment through grants from the **Youth and Children Fund**. In addition, there is significant **capital / re-ordering investment** to ensure buildings are fit for purpose as well as building capacity for growth and providing an effective enabler for development across both tier 1 and tier 2 churches.

To best support and enable local churches to deliver the required outcomes we will be providing central support including the following new roles:

- Children & Youth Work Trainer and Enabler
- Church Growth Project Officer

This project will be strengths based – building on what we know already works. It seeks to establish a step change with a view to seeing multiplication of successful flagship churches and youth hubs across the diocese beyond the period of investment by SDF.