

Diocese of Exeter Growth Fund

Work in New Housing Areas

Substantial changes are projected in Devon's total population and in its distribution. This will lead to the development of around 100,000 new dwellings in the next 15 years, the significant majority of which will be within or on the edge of existing urban areas. In March 2015, Diocesan Synod considered the challenges and opportunities presented by the many large scale areas of new housing as one of the potential growth themes to be picked up through the proposed Diocesan Growth Fund. It also had the chance to hear first-hand from the Revd. Mark Gilborson, Minister for Cranbrook in East Devon, about what had been achieved in the first 3 years of that community's life.

The Growth Fund bid that follows arises out those discussions in the Diocesan Synod and the two consultation events (in Exeter and Bideford) held during the summer. A wide range of people attended the consultations, the significant majority of whom are facing large scale new housing developments in their own parishes or mission communities.

The Bid

The bid is for £420,000 relating to 'Scenario 2' projects. These are the numerous intermediate-sized developments that are not typically big enough to be an urban parish in their own right but that are too big for most parishes and mission communities to manage successfully from their existing resources. 'Scenario 1' projects are the largest development areas in the Diocese and arrangements for these will need to be made through the core diocesan budget in due course. However, the Scenario 2 new housing areas can be approached as a time-limited, stand-alone series of projects, making them suitable for financing through the Growth Fund, without anticipating one way or the other the discussion that will need to be had about the largest of the development areas.

Scenario 1: Larger Scale Development

The proposed threshold for Scenario 1 is 4,000 new and additional dwellings / 10,000 people. It relates to a single urban area (new community or large urban extension), though possibly involving multiple sites. Scenario 1 is likely to require very substantial re-organisation of the existing deployment of resources. Effectively, development of this scale equates to a full-sized urban parish and its resourcing should be commensurate. This may be open to ecumenical partnership and is, in practice, the model adopted for the first phase of Cranbrook.

New housing areas that might potentially meet the threshold in the next 10 years are as follows:

Single site: Cranbrook (phase 2 – solution needs to tie in with existing model), Sherford

Multiple sites: Bideford, Barnstaple, Newton Abbot, Central / Southern Plymouth (urban regeneration – may require alternative approach), Northern Plymouth and Exeter Pinhoe (including Monkerton and Blackhorse).

Marginal calls: Cullompton (over a longer timescale), Exeter Newcourt (solution needs to tie in with existing development model)

Scenario 2 – Smaller Scale Development

The proposed threshold for scenario 2 is 600 new and additional dwellings / 1500 people, although the need for it is context dependent particularly in the range up to around 1000 new and additional dwellings / 2500 people.

Resources need to be made available that will facilitate ministry that should be incarnational and identify /share with the daily lived experience of the resident population, that new growth is underpinned by the renewal of the existing body of Christ (in envisioning, prayer and personal discipleship) and that the commitment to the new population should be enduring and sustainable.

Parishes and mission communities should be the primary agents of change but they need resources and support. It is proposed that the most appropriate parishes / mission community should seek to call out ministers to live and work incarnationally in the new housing areas (in practice this would mean the person or group of people moving into a house within the development area to be the face of the church on the ground). In principle, the people called out could be lay or ordained and internal to the parish (/MC) or external (whether from another place or a different denomination). Unless the parish (/MC) had resources of its own to bring to the table, the likelihood is that they would be self-supporting. There could be a range of models to suit the context eg a relatively detached, self-contained, fresh expressions approach or a parochially structured outreach that sets out to provide a bridge to an existing provision.

The Diocesan Growth Fund bid is predicated on a plan to resource a total of 25 Scenario 2 developments across the next 15 years.

In order to enable the development of sustainable Christian ministry it is proposed that the Growth Fund should provide the following package of support in each case (this could either be a flat rate or a 'norm' that could be adapted to fit the particular circumstances of a given location):

Grant to the existing incumbent for the purchase of administrative support so that he / she can concentrate more fully on the additional preparatory work generated by the development	£2000
Removal / relocation package to facilitate the presence of clergy or lay volunteer minister resident in the new housing area	£3000
Grant to support operating costs and expenses over the first 5 years	£5000
Training budget for volunteer minister over the first 5 years (in addition to any core provision)	£2000
Total	£12000

In addition, in the current Central Services Plan, the agreed expectation is that each year one bid will be submitted to provide a new church school (normally a primary school) in an area whether there is under-provision in comparative terms and that is supportive of the Diocesan Schools Strategy. Although success is not certain and the development timescales may not align conveniently, the quantum of existing provision is approximately right to provide for the Scenario 1 new housing areas. However, many of the Scenario 2 developments will present

opportunities in strategically appropriate locations for new Church of England schools and, if secured, these would be highly beneficial to the work of the ministers operating in those areas. This strategy received clear support during the consultation process and therefore the bid includes provision for double the number of bids to be resourced over a 5 year period.

Training, networking, mentoring and specialist support

Training was the issue raised most consistently throughout the consultation. There is a need to identify and train lay and clergy leaders who have the interests, gifts, experience and skills that would enable them to operate effectively in the new housing area environment. The issues with the 'supply line' into and through initial training are beyond the scope of the bid. However, there is also a need to develop training opportunities (eg curacies and equivalent pathways for licensed lay ministries) in new housing areas as well as appropriate CMD or lay in-service training for those responsible for front line ministry. Possibilities include the development of a peer-led training group, mentoring arrangements (including funding the release of time of current and former practitioners), and access to training opportunities outside the diocese. National networks are already available but a local version could become increasingly useful as the number of practitioners rises.

The development of the bid also represents a step change in terms of the amount of work undertaken centrally. Whether this is in support of the diocesan working group (see below) or in advising a much wider range of parishes about issues to do with the planning process, the current central staff allocation (of about a day a week) is likely to be insufficient. The bid therefore includes the provision of additional staff time to support and co-ordinate the additional work being undertaken.

Monitoring, accountability and budget approvals

The diocesan working group on new housing areas will have oversight of the implementation of the programme. In turn it will report to the Bishop's Diocesan Council. The working group will ensure that a plan is developed with the parishes and mission communities involved and help to determine between Scenario 1 and Scenario 2 approaches where the context may be open to either. It will agree the allocation of funding and monitor the resulting expenditure sufficiently to ensure that it is being used for its allocated purpose. Exceptionally it may also agree to variations of approach better to respond to the specific circumstances of a given local context.

Additional resource for new school bids and to support delivery (5):	£50,000
Scenario 2 support packages (25):	£300,000
Additional co-ordination, support and monitoring:	£50,000
Core training package:	£20,000
Total anticipated cost:	<u>£420,000</u>

Anticipated outputs

For each of the development areas there will be an appropriate plan for the establishment of sustainable Christian mission and ministry. The plan will be being delivered in conjunction with the development timetable. There will be at least one person resident in the new housing area

who will be formally recognised and a clearly visible 'parson' for that community. Alongside the acts of practical service, opportunities for missional outreach will be identified and explored, creating pathways for members of the community to follow to find out more about the Christian faith and what it means for them.

Anticipated outcomes

For evidence to support the anticipated outcomes, see Appendix I. The evidence provided at earlier stages of the bid scrutiny process was more extensive, covering the experience gained in Cranbrook and Devonport, as well as Newcourt.

For each Scenario 2 context, it is anticipated that there will be around 20 – 40 new adult participants in the life of the local church at some point between year 5 and year 10 of the project. These participants may be located in existing neighbouring congregations to which they have been signposted, in small scale church plants and fresh expressions. Some of this will inevitably be transfer growth (from other Church of England churches and other denominations) and some will be new growth.

Indicatively, therefore, the Scenario 2 development areas might be expected to produce around 750 adult participants within a 10 year time frame. There would be some additional funding needed in years 5 – 10 but it should be lower than in years 1 – 5 as the network and training arrangements mature.

Appendix I: Evidence

Newcourt is a single site urban extension currently in construction of around 3500 dwellings that forms part of a relatively recently created parish with a similarly sized neighbouring development area (King's Heath) that was built during the last 2 decades. The total population of the parish once the Newcourt development has been built out will be around 15,000. The parish has an established incumbent and a regular congregation of around 100 based in a community school in King's Heath. There is no dedicated church building. The geography of the parish is such that separate congregations may be needed (and potentially would be viable) in both the King's Heath and Newcourt residential areas.

Work in the Newcourt area is resourced by the following:

- The incumbent of the parish
- A full time, salaried lay mission enabler grant funded by the national Church. The post commenced in early 2013 and is for a fixed term of 4 years. The post-holder had previously been employed directly by the parish and is resident in Newcourt (no house provided).
- A VA church primary school (to open in 2016)

The mission enabler reports the following in terms of church growth:

- The preparatory 'coffee & cake' group of mums became **Newcourt Babies and Toddlers**. It is run by a team associated with *Christians in Newcourt*, under the auspices of Trinity Church. Weekly attendance of 20 parents and 30 children.
- In **October 2014** Trinity started '**1st Sunday at 4**' in the new Community Centre. This is a 45 minute Sunday afternoon All-Age service followed by sandwiches and cakes. Attendance has averaged about 32 (=10 adult and 10 child members of Trinity who live on the NHA; 5 adults and 1 child from other Christian families on the NHA associated with *Christians in Newcourt*; and between 1-8 additional people from NHA)
- **Falling Plates distribution, May 2014**: 20 Christians, primarily Trinity members (11 living in the NHA) visited all 650 homes currently in the NHA, to offer residents a complimentary 4 minute DVD 'introduction' to the Christian faith ('Falling Plates'). Results: homes visited=533; DVDs accepted=120; refused=130; No answer=283.
- A **Circuit-training session** in the Community Centre for 'under-fit' men has been running for four months, with 16 participants, 4 of which are in *Christians in Newcourt*.
- **December 6th 2014; Thanksgiving Jazz/Supper Event**; This event included a 15-minute message about being thankful to God. 12-16 members of Trinity (within and outside the NHA) were proactively involved in inviting friends; 75 people attended (20 from the NHA), of whom 44 are perceived to have been un-churched / de-churched (14 from the NHA).
- Trinity launched its 2nd cycle of the CPAS **Growing Leaders** course in September 2014. All the committed members of Trinity who live in the NHA (together with four others) are participants in this course.
- '**Carols on the Green**' at Christmas, December 2014, with approximately 50 attenders. It followed a family-fun afternoon held in the Community Centre.
- Trinity Church organised a **parish-wide ADVENTure** running up to Christmas, where parishioners displayed a sort of 'live Advent Calendar card open door' at the front door of their homes – inviting neighbours and friends over to participate, sing a carol and share some refreshments. Five homes in the NHA took part.