

The Northampton District Development Plan

In our mission and ministry in the District here are 8 areas of work that the Executive feel should form our priorities for the next three Connexional years, from 2018-19 to 2020-21, but be subject to annual review. They are in no particular order of importance and are ranked alphabetically merely for administrative convenience.

➤ **Chaplaincy work**

There is a significant amount of chaplaincy work of varying types carried out across the district, some by ordained persons either on a full or part time appointed basis but much of the work is delivered by ordained staff in addition to their circuit appointments/responsibilities and with the support of a very significant lay volunteer resource.

Initially the district will carry out a mapping exercise to accurately identify all of the chaplaincy work being carried out across the district. It will then seek to provide suitable on going training to those undertaking the work and also training for those wishing to become part of the delivery of this work. This is with the aim of maximising the effectiveness of the work of evangelism carried out in our communities by chaplaincy workers.

Target 2018-19

- a. Carry out a mapping exercise to identify all current chaplaincy work of whatever type undertaken in the district.**
- b. Encourage chaplaincy as a model of ministry for every circuit minister and encourage all ministers to give at least one session (3 hours) per week to community presence and activity outside the church.**

➤ **Diversity and Inclusion**

This plan recognises that the Northampton district is made up of communities that are gloriously diverse. We seek in our District to become a truly welcoming and inclusive church – whatever that may mean in each locality. We invite and encourage each local church/circuit to identify the opportunities and needs within its local area and seek ways to befriend and engage with a broad range of peoples especially those who are marginal and who have less. We celebrate existing work in Food Banks and Winter Shelters for the Homeless, street pastors and mental ill health services.

Target 2018-19

- a. In line with our new EDI policy ensure that suitable training is provided to all ministers and other church leaders by our Equality Officer and Disability**

Advisor on how to become a welcoming church to those of differing abilities/background.

- b. To increase more diverse participation in our representatives to the Conference and Synod, in our membership of committees and those holding office.**

➤ **Ecumenical work**

It is recognised that the most effective ecumenical working is a helpful combination that takes place at a local level, supported by the ecumenical officers of the District and close collegiality with senior leaders in our District and our Connexional and national instruments of ecumenism. The District will through the Chair and the Ecumenical Officers do all it can to enable and support this work. The Ecumenical Officers through their representative submit a report to each meeting of the District Executive to enable this work to be monitored and supported and endorsed as necessary. It is noted that the Chair has been appointed an Ecumenical Canon of Peterborough Cathedral and the link with the Trichy Diocese, India is being re-focused.

Target 2018-19.

- a. To encourage every church and circuit to reflect together on the proposals of the *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* report and consider the implications in their context**
- b. To encourage all churches and circuits to reflect on the report with their Anglican colleagues and invite their ecumenical neighbours to discuss it in an evening of food and conversation.**
- c. Encourage all churches and circuits to engage with and cooperate with their local Churches Together or equivalent ecumenical grouping.**

➤ **Fellowship Groups and Language Groups**

It is recognised that this district has a great deal of diversity within its boundaries with a great many countries of origin represented amongst our communities and significant numbers of people from a wide range of nations. We regard this diversity as one of our greatest treasures. We wish to celebrate our diversity and ensure that our church structures, District committees and Synods reflect this diversity in both representation and leadership, candidates for ministry and local lay leadership.

The district will initially seek to map the differing language groups worshipping in their mother tongues within our churches – either as part of the regular congregation or as separate worshipping communities using our buildings for their own worship purposes.

Efforts will be made to update and complete the survey carried out initially in 2016.

The Chair meets regularly with a Reference Group of ministers of World Church heritage who serve in the District. Conversations with this group include planning an annual Service of Celebration for the fellowship groups and language congregations, considering a mentor

scheme for lay and ordained ministers to support and enable their wider representation and leadership development.

Target 2018-19.

a. To map, celebrate and encourage participation in each local church/circuit

➤ **Interfaith.**

The district exhibits significant diversity in number of ways, one of which being the very rich diversity in many parts of the district provided by the wide variety of faiths represented in our communities. In the times in which we find ourselves we need to ensure that we do all that we can to improve relationships with other faiths for the overall benefit of everyone in our communities.

Target 2018-19.

a. To map the extent of existing interfaith relationships (both formal and informal) within our churches and more particularly circuits.

b. To identify where there are areas of significant weakness in interfaith relationships and to investigate ways in which they can be improved working with colleagues such as St Philips Centre in Leicester

➤ **Schools work**

It is probable that over the next ten years a significant number of new schools will be required in parts of the district due to the number of major new housing developments (see Our Context above) planned to be built in the district.

The Executive agreed in December 2017 that a business plan be scoped out to enable a proposal be submitted to apply for a Connexional grant to fund work with schools including the sponsoring of one or more schools in the district.

It is recognised that this is an area of work that requires specific skills and also will require significant input of human resources to achieve any meaningful impact on the opportunity.

Target 2018-19.

a. Based on a business plan prepared in 2017-18, apply for Connexional grant.

b. Subject to grant funding appoint a district schools officer to lead this work.

➤ **Supporting Superintendents, ministers and lay workers**

The pastoral care of all ministers, both active and supernumerary, is one of the key duties of a District Chair. It is recognised that this is an extensive district geographically and the Chair

believes that her primary focus should be on care and support of Superintendents who in turn should care for their ministerial colleagues both active and supernumerary and also widows of ministers/supernumeraries. She is committed to meeting, visiting and caring for all in these groupings wherever possible. It is recognised that pressures upon ministers seem to increase inexorably as the level of lay support is decreasing in many areas due to a smaller and older membership. Training events for circuit and church stewards will be provided to help them support their ministerial and lay staff as effectively as possible.

Target 2018-19.

- a. The appointment of the District Vocations Officer and creation of the District Vocations Support Group**
- b. All Superintendents to have received an MDR in 2017/18 and to receive their supervision training in 2018/19 with a full roll out of supervision in 2019/20.**

➤ Training and Supporting local Preachers and Worship leaders

Much of the preaching and worship leading in our churches is heavily dependent upon our accredited and in training local preachers and worship leaders.

The district will work with the Learning Network staff to seek ways to support and endorse the loving service offered in preparing and leading worship week in and week out in our churches.

We will provide suitable training opportunities for these people to enable them to continue their personal development and learning and help to increase their effectiveness in their role and also their effectiveness in evangelism.

Target 2018-19.

- a. To recruit at least 44 (2 per circuit) local preachers and/or worship leaders, including some aged under 40.**
- b. To recruit extra and support existing tutors and mentors ensuring that there is at least one tutor and one mentor in each circuit**

Monitoring

This plan will be subject to formal annual review and revision as needed. Monitoring of performance against any and all agreed measurable targets that form part of this plan will be a standing item on the agenda of each meeting of the District Executive with reports being issued to the Spring and September Synods.