



THE  
**PEOPLE  
&  
PLACES**  
FRAMEWORK

 THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  
BIRMINGHAM

Growing churches  
at the heart of  
each community  
**TRANSFORMING  
CHURCH**



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*Cover photograph and on p6-7 by Verity Milligan*



# INTRODUCTION

In every generation we are called to live and proclaim the good news of Jesus in new ways, as we pray for more, and more confident, Christians. People and Places (P&P) is our expression of this for today's generation. Although there are presenting challenges (such as finance and vocations) P&P seeks to help us to be faithful to God's constant call to reach and serve individuals and communities with Jesus' saving love.

We expect that all of Church of England – Birmingham will be involved in P&P.

Growth in and beyond the Church needs the whole of God's people to be creative and vibrant. We need parishes that are places of reimagined and courageous forms of mission and ministry, whether in homes, schools, work places, streets or leisure centres. We need greater wisdom in stewarding the resources God gives us. We need greater partnership and generosity between churches and those of goodwill across our city region. We need our parish services teams and leaders to offer creative support in drawing in more prayer, people and pounds for God's Mission through the Church of England – Birmingham.

We will all feel challenged by P&P in many different ways. As we focus on personal and local challenges we

must also lift our eyes to the wider sweep of God's vision for the transformation of people and places through Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit.

For over 110 years our expression of Church in Birmingham and the region has responded to rapidly changing economic, social and religious circumstances. We understand that change can be difficult and unsettling, with all of us sharing heightened anxiety. Therefore it is more important than ever that our endeavours are surrounded and supported with prayer. The P&P Prayer on page 19 of this booklet is one which we hope will be in regular use as we join our hearts with God's purposes.

Be assured that as P&P conversations and actions develop we your Bishops continue with you in prayer and partnership. We and our colleagues have much to listen to and learn from in the days ahead and we remain confident in God's presence, call and faithfulness in all things.

*+ David Birmingham*

*+ Anne Aston*

# WHAT IS PEOPLE & PLACES?

## LOCAL POWER TO MAKE LOCAL MINISTRY HAPPEN

### **People & Places (P&P) is a new framework for church leadership, ministry and mission.**

The traditional Church of England model is that every parish has a church led by a paid (stipendiary) minister. However, each of our 187 churches with its own stipendiary minister across the Church of England – Birmingham has never been a reality. More than that, this traditional Church of England model is no longer sustainable, fair, or a good fit for our diverse city region.

Over the last 18 months we have been listening, talking, praying and working across the diocese to discern the right way forward. We want to:

- Grow a vibrant church.
- Help Christians become more confident in their faith and mission.
- Be sustainable.
- Make sure resources are shared more fairly.

Instead of our current 125 stipendiary ministers, our new P&P framework suggests:

- 36 locally funded ministers, who would provide local focus and lead teams of lay and ordained people in a parish church, much as parish priests currently do.
- 72 paid oversight ministers, who would work across two

or three parish churches, leading on strategy, vision, mission, accountability and support.

- 28 paid context ministers, who would also work across a small number of parishes offering specialist support in particular contexts, such as interfaith practitioners, education chaplains, leaders of Fresh Expressions of church, etc.

Alongside this, there will be other forms of church leadership and ministry such as self-supporting ministers, Readers and other lay leaders, retired clergy or new Christian communities emerging to complement mission and ministry.

Under the P&P framework every Christian community will have a leader. However, that ministry may be different to your current church leadership. A church leader won't necessarily be paid, ordained or full time. They will work with context and oversight ministers as well as lay leaders though. So with the right support and training this should mean more ministry, not less.

The nature of oversight and context ministry will look different in every place, so P&P is a great opportunity for churches to have a good look at the community around them, think about how best to serve them and what resources are needed for that. It's also a great opportunity for churches to work together in partnership, sharing ministry and resources.



# OUR CONTEXT

## A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY CHURCH FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

The New Testament does not set out any one, singular way of organising ministry. Over hundreds of years, the Church has always responded to the changing needs and opportunities around us, in order to proclaim the Gospel afresh for each generation.

For the last thousand years, the main model of Anglican presence has been a paid, ordained minister in each parish church. But one size can no longer fit all in our superdiverse, constantly changing city region.

- 20% of our parishes have a population of fewer than 5,000 people, another 20% have more than 15,000 people.
- 44% of our parishes are in the most deprived 10% in the country, 13% are in the most affluent 20%.
- 50% of our parishes have fewer than 10% other faiths, 12% have more than 50% other faiths.

With such disparity between parishes, we need to look at a new model of ministry which shares resources more fairly, is a better fit with diverse, local contexts and is more sustainable in the long term. Under P&P, ministry will be shared more fairly on the basis of population size rather than historical models of parish boundaries.

Financial resources will be shared more fairly with a new Common Fund system. A separate booklet on Common Fund is available to explain it in detail.

**“It is time to invest in the new while treasuring the old... to change and to remain faithful.”**

Structures and patterns of ministry may change, but our core character and calling remain unchanged. The principles of P&P are true to our Anglican calling and our Transforming Church vision: the importance of the local and being a Church for all people. In fact, we hope and pray that the P&P framework will help us do that better.



Many key elements of the P&P framework have actually been happening for years. We already have a few churches led by lay leaders. Much context ministry already exists through e.g. Children's and Families' Missioners, Interfaith ministry or Mission Apprentices. The practice of oversight ministry already takes place in a third of our parishes through e.g. multi-parish benefices, team ministries or multiple congregations. Churches already share resources through formal or informal partnerships or localities. On pages 12 to 15 of this booklet you can read about where these ideas are already in practice across our diocese.

## **"Everyone has a part to play."**

Reducing the number of paid, ordained ministers does not reduce the level of ministry across our city region. In the Church of England across the world, ministry is becoming a partnership between lay & ordained people more and more. Raising up lay leaders and encouraging all disciples are important elements of our Transforming Church vision. The P&P framework offers opportunities for *all* God's people to play a part in growing churches.



# MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

## LOOKING AFTER THE FUTURE

Our mission and ministry need to be sustainable and they currently aren't. Significant cuts and changes to our funding, added to other serious financial pressures mean that projections show large, increasing deficits. We have consulted widely across the diocese and it has been agreed that having fewer stipendiary clergy is the only solution to long-term financial issues.

So there is an urgent financial motivation, but P&P is not only a response to financial pressures. It has also been

developed as a more suitable ministry framework for our Transforming Church vision.

Your PCC treasurer will have received further information about the new Common Fund system, so you can ask them about that element of P&P. Have a look at our FAQs on finances too.

[www.cofe.io/PandP](http://www.cofe.io/PandP)





# A FAIRER SHARE OF RESOURCES

## 'THE EYE CANNOT SAY TO THE HAND: "I DON'T NEED YOU!"'

Across our city region, resources are not currently evenly spread in terms of people or money. For example, a parish with a population of over 15,000 people may have the same amount of church ministers as a parish with a population of less than 5,000. The P&P framework organises ministry more fairly according to populations.

Similarly, with an extreme disparity of wealth between parishes, the new Common Fund system that will support the P&P framework will ensure a more just spread of financial resource.

P&P will be an opportunity for churches to think innovatively about how resources can be shared with

other churches. Oversight and context ministry will be shared between churches. Churches who are better off under the new Common Fund system will be encouraged to share their wealth with less well-off churches. Congregations with skills and expertise in certain areas can share their skills with other churches lacking in these areas.

As well as systemic changes such as the Common Fund overhaul or church leadership distribution, we hope that P&P will, over time, promote a culture of radical generosity and unity as churches look beyond their own four walls to share ministry, finances, skills, property, knowledge and learning.



# HOW DOES THIS FIT IN WITH TRANSFORMING CHURCH?

## NEW CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

REACHING NEW PEOPLE IN NEW PLACES IN NEW WAYS

### *How will P&P help us do this?*

- New patterns of ministry will naturally open up new possibilities for reaching people in new ways.
- Context ministry may include those involved in Fresh Expressions of church or other new Christian communities.
- Existing parish churches may partner with a Fresh Expression, church plant or other new community; sharing resources and learning.



## CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

PASSING ON OUR LOVE OF GOD TO THE NEXT GENERATION

### *How will P&P help us do this?*

- Ministry to children, families and young people is already an important context ministry within the Church of England—Birmingham.
- The new P&P Common Fund system will allow the ministry of Children's and Families' Missioners to continue; funded by parishes.
- Younger people are often attracted to fresh expressions of church. Parishes can be more purposely resourced by lay and ordained leaders in these areas through shared context or oversight ministry.



# GROWING CHURCHES AT THE HEART OF EACH COMMUNITY

P&P is a better framework to support our Transforming Church vision than the traditional Anglican model of ministry and church leadership. In our current phase of Transforming Church, called **Shaping the Future**, we are committed together to four key areas of growth, listed below.

## MISSION & EVANGELISM IN DIVERSE CULTURES

SHARING OUR FAITH WITH THE DIVERSE CULTURES AROUND US

### *How will P&P help us do this?*

- P&P is a direct response to the fact that every parish church's context is different and we cannot justly maintain a 'one size fits all' approach for mission and ministry.
- Context ministry provides a stronger, more intentional framework for ministry among particular groups of people in our super-diverse city region, e.g. interfaith practitioners, Estates Network.
- P&P allocates ministry to populations rather than historical, geographical parish boundaries.



## DISCIPLESHIP & LEADERSHIP

RECOGNISING THAT EVERYONE HAS A PART TO PLAY

### *How will P&P help us do this?*

- P&P demonstrates a broader understanding of 'ministry' and leadership than the traditional Anglican model of full time paid, ordained ministers.
- Raising up and supporting lay leaders is a key element of P&P.



# REAL LIFE OVERSIGHT MINISTRY

**THE REVD BECKY STEPHENS ■ RECTOR OF THE WHITACRES, LEA MARSTON AND SHUSTOKE, BISHOP'S ADVISER FOR WOMEN'S MINISTRY ■ CO-AREA DEAN OF COLESHILL DEANERY**

“ I'm the rector of four churches in seven villages brought together as one parish a few years ago.

This has caused me to be very purposeful about the times I spend in each church and their surrounding area. The people here are fully aware that they have a vicar who is trying to manage four churches. Actually, it empowers them. They do a lot that they wouldn't do necessarily if there was a vicar of one church. Releasing their gifts is part of a vicar's calling.

The churches work together as one, so we decide on service pattern changes or accounts together and then follow that same model in our individual churches. When we meet together we do pray about how we're working together to build the Kingdom.

Some people have been very hurt by the fact that we've had to cut services in their churches but when only four or five people are attending it needed to be done. That's been a huge challenge and still remains a challenge.

Hazel and Keith, our parish wardens, are immensely supportive and together we're a great team. They've lived in the area for decades, so they know all the little intricacies and they have a real passion for bringing the churches together.

We have some villages where we have people who know about finances and other areas where we have amazing cake bakers and party planners, so together we can pull off quite an amazing event and get a very good, structured PCC.

I love watching people's gifts be released, watching the joy in what they do. At our weekly playgroup, people who've never done anything to help the church come and make tea and make relationships with families.

We've set up morning prayer on a Tuesday and people who've never been to church come along and pray and have coffee. I enjoy seeing people grow in faith who haven't really thought about faith before, just because we are part of the community. ”



# REAL LIFE LAY LEADERSHIP

IAN CROCKFORD ■ MINISTER IN CHARGE, ST MICHAEL'S, HALL GREEN (PARISH)

“ Twelve years ago, I started looking at ministry of some description and what seemed to fit was Reader ministry. All the vicars at the time in Hall Green were very supportive, particularly Canon Richard Wharton, who guided me through the Reader selection and the training.

By trade I'm an industrial paint chemist. I worked for thirty-six years in the same company. In 2014 the factory closed and I was given redundancy pay for five plus years.

During that time, I was the Reader at St Michael's and was more and more the person responsible for the church. There was a vacancy and I was hugely honoured to be asked to become the Minister in Charge.

One of the joys of being a non-ordained minister is I can sit alongside the congregation more. When we have a job that requires doing I can identify someone to do it. It's easy to get alongside that person because you're one of them.

At the beginning I got quite agitated when people called me vicar. But talking to proper vicars – they said, “Don't worry about it”. People will say, “Can I speak to you, vicar?” and I just smile and nod. They do work out eventually that I'm not a reverend, but it stops the conversation dead if I say I'm not a vicar.

I love sharing something of God's story with the people I meet each day. The thing about Hall Green is that it hasn't got a natural centre for people to meet and talk so the churches have become the centres.

I receive no payments for leading St Michael's. I am self-employed and occasionally do consulting work within the paint industry, but my redundancy money will run out, so the PCC will need to find some money, if they wish to keep my role!

My hope is to work myself out of a job here – to see a functioning, successful Christ-driven community centre and church. There's so much more we could achieve if we had more people, however we've got to go at God's speed and that's something we're learnt over the last “



# REAL LIFE UNDERSTANDING P&P

THE REVD CLAIRE TURNER ■ VICAR AT ST CHAD, RUBERY

“ We are a church on the very outskirts of Birmingham diocese. The border between Worcestershire and Birmingham runs through the parish. We're still small but we have seen significant growth in the last few years. Part of that's around re-connecting with the community, developing Messy Church, hiring out the building, partly so we can say to people this is your space too.

I was impressed that the Diocesan Officers working on People & Places were honest in naming the reality and I wasn't surprised that the finances meant a new solution was needed.

For us there isn't a massive change financially. However, in terms of oversight ministry, this congregation is used

to 100% of a vicar and the suggestion is that in the future for the same amount of money you're going to have somewhere between half and three quarters of a vicar.

Building a team requires an extraordinary amount of energy, on top of the fifty funerals a year that I do. You can only enable a team of lay people if you know them, if you have the time to spend listening and praying with them and for them. As an oversight minister for a number of different congregations, you can't do that.

I served my curacy in a different diocese where the 'one vicar, one church' model had long gone. So, my personal anxiety, and sadness really, that we may lose something is tempered by the reality that if we, as a diocese, carry on as we are, we will simply not be able to pay the stipends of the people we have or be able to replace people that go. I get it, I'm just feeling that I need to be allowed to be sad at the same time.

I would love us to be more proactive and more vocal about saying to our ecumenical partners, "Let our local ministry team be a joint endeavour!" We can't see ourselves in isolation. We can't just develop what we think is the right answer, and then tell everybody else to come join us. We need to be inviting them to be part of this conversation now because we know many of them are struggling too.”



# REAL LIFE SHARING RESOURCES

THE REVD MIKE HARMON ■ VICAR AT ST ANDREW, CHELMSLEY WOOD (PARISH)

“ The vicar at Knowle had this vision of a partnership between the south and the less leafy north of the borough. They tried doing things through the early 2000s, which didn't build those relationships he aspired to. When I came to Chelmsley Wood we wanted to increase the level of connection.

In CofE parishes, certain offices need to be filled which assumes a certain level of literacy and financial awareness. In many inner city or outer estate churches we don't have that skillset so before I arrived here they worked without a treasurer. Simon Heathfield heard about this and asked Knowle if they'd put a notice in their notice sheet: “Does anybody have time to spare, maybe two or three hours a week with some accountancy experience?” This delightful retired guy called Chris Scott has been our treasurer now for four years. I think Chris is energised by coming here. It's actually enriched his faith and given him a sense of doing something that he wouldn't ordinarily engaged with.

It's easy to feel that it's like overseas aid and we are the recipient and if you look at cash flow, it is one way, but it's also about sharing skills and other kinds of resources.

For example, Open the Book is an initiative, in which you present Bible stories at school assemblies. Someone at Knowle had tried it in the Cotswolds and said it would be so good to do this in Chelmsley Wood so I said it would be lovely if *you* would come and do this in Chelmsley Wood. We didn't have enough people here to run it independently and interestingly neither did Knowle. I said, “Why don't we do it in partnership?”

So, we have four people from here and four from Knowle, and a couple of people from St Philips in Dorridge, who joined our happy band. We rehearse, we do an assembly here at Bishop Wilson CE Primary and an assembly at Knowle Primary Academy. It's really positive work together.”





# WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

P&P is a framework not a formula. This booklet can only introduce the ideas behind P&P rather than putting forward a detailed plan as to how it will be worked out in every parish. This will be up to every church to work out in prayer and conversation, with support from the diocesan staff. But the immediate next steps include:

- This booklet being sent to every parish with accompanying material to help churches think through their response and action in 2018/19.
- Joining in prayer for P&P.
- Talking with churches to refine and discern pathways ahead.
- Working with PCCs to overhaul the Common Fund system – this has already begun.

We are very much at the beginning of shaping and implementing the P&P framework, so there is still plenty to iron out and learn about together. It will work itself out differently in every parish and will take years to fully implement.

You'll see from the stories on pages 12-15 that even in places where elements of P&P are already happening there are still difficulties, challenges and compromises. We understand that change affects us all differently, but we hope that we can work these things through together; with honesty, generosity and understanding.



# ANY QUESTIONS?

You may have a lot of questions about P&P. If you would like to discuss these with someone please contact Simon Heathfield, Archdeacon of Aston. [SimonH@cofebirmingham.com](mailto:SimonH@cofebirmingham.com) ■ 0121 426 0428

You will also find FAQs and other resources on our website at [www.cofe.io/PandP](http://www.cofe.io/PandP)

Your church leader/ Treasurer will have received specific information from diocesan staff about P&P with more details relating to their areas of responsibility, so they may also be able to answer any queries you may have.

More FAQs at  
[www.cofe.io/PandP](http://www.cofe.io/PandP)

Will my parish still get a vicar?

*Does P&P rely on lots of mucking about with parish boundaries?*

Will churches close under P&P?

*Can you explain how the calculation of ministry and Common Fund works?*

Has anything like P&P been tried elsewhere?

How will oversight work if local parishes have different traditions?

Can lay ministry training become less onerous?

*Will P&P help us to 'Grow Younger'?*

How do Self-Supporting Ministers (SSMs) fit into P&P?

Can local funding be for oversight, context or local ministry?

Does 'lay' mean 'unpaid'?

*Where will context ministry be deployed and who decides what it is in a particular context?*

*Are there enough potential lay disciples who want to lead local ministry?*





# PRAYER

Most of all we would love to encourage you to hold P&P in your prayers. Look out for P&P prayer requests in our Praying Together booklets and please pray the **P&P Prayer** with us (see opposite).

Everyone has a part to play, so perhaps you could also prayerfully consider whether you have a particular part to play in our vision for ministry and leadership.

# LAY LEADERSHIP

Developing lay leaders and disciples is a key element of the P&P framework and our Transforming Church vision. If you feel like God may be calling you to explore a lay ministry, or you just want to find out more about this, please speak to your church leader.

# STAY IN TOUCH

This is just the beginning of the process, so we will soon have more news, resources and information to share with you. We're also looking forward to sharing in conversation with you about P&P. For the time being, see **Any Questions** on page 16 for how to ask questions you may have.

You can also go to [www.cofe.io/stayintouch](http://www.cofe.io/stayintouch) or send an email to [comms@cofebirmingham.com](mailto:comms@cofebirmingham.com) for info on how you can find out more.

# PEOPLE & PLACES PRAYER

Gracious and merciful God,  
as we pray for the future of the  
Church of England - Birmingham,  
we thank you that the whole earth,  
its people and places,  
are equally precious to you.

By your Spirit,  
equip us to meet the challenges of these  
times with generosity and courage;  
hold our fears and uncertainties  
in your love,  
and grant us the needful gifts of grace  
to share your love and reflect your light  
throughout our communities:

in the name of our Saviour, Jesus Christ,  
Amen.



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