

A Mixed Economy for Mission – the Journey so Far

Mission-Shaped Church: Follow Up

Foreword

Six years after General Synod debated the landmark report *Mission-shaped Church*, we have the opportunity to assess its impact on the Church's mission strategy and to consider our next steps in seeking to proclaim the faith afresh to each generation. No Synod report for many years has had such an impact, as *Mission-shaped Church* on the way the Church of England understands itself and its commitment to mission. The original report has sold over 27,000 copies. It has been distributed and widely used in a number of other parts of the Anglican Communion and beyond. A German edition has also been published. The report gave rise to a number of supplementary books and booklets which applied the "Mission-shaped...." concept to specific areas of church life, including some (for example rural mission, or fresh expressions among children) which the original report was not able to cover in full. It is not too much to say that the report identified and provoked a revolution in the church's understanding of its mission in a changing context.

The strategic implications of *Mission-shaped Church* were taken up enthusiastically, not least by the Archbishop of Canterbury in his support for the *Fresh Expressions* initiative which continues to flourish. Through *Fresh Expressions* the insights of the report have been taken up and applied by ecumenical partners, most notably the Methodist Church but also the URC, the Congregational Federation and others. Archbishop Rowan aptly coined the phrase "a mixed economy" to describe the kind of church which might emerge if the implications of *Mission-shaped Church* were taken to heart. This phrase emphasises that the new forms of church envisaged in the report are not a threat to established and familiar patterns of church life. Rather, they enable us, in the Archbishop's words, to "*recognise church where it appears and have the willingness and the skill to work with it*". *Mission-shaped Church* recognised, and the Church as a whole is coming to recognise, that in a complex and fast-moving cultural landscape, one size can no longer fit all contexts. New ways of being church are as necessary as tried and tested models. A commitment to mission means taking risks and facing failure as well as celebrating new growth and depth. Most of all, "inherited", or traditional, understandings of what it means to be Christ's church, and emerging fresh expressions of church are complementary aspects of a single, coherent ecclesiology. This understanding of church carries two ever-present dangers: the temptation to deify historical structures, on the one hand; and the snare of succumbing to every passing fashion on the other. Our divine vocation to mission requires that we learn from contemporary social analyses whilst holding to a world-view framed in the truths of scripture and the doctrines and experience of those who have gone before us.

Synod asked the Mission and Public Affairs Division, as sponsor of the original report, to monitor developments across the country and to bring back to Synod a report on progress toward the vision of a mixed economy church. The Division's mission and evangelism staff, Canon Paul Bayes and Dr Rachel Jordan, have been promoting the vision, nurturing new developments and liaising closely with the Fresh Expressions initiative (which will report separately to Synod in the current group of sessions). Dr Jordan's research into the extent to which the mixed economy has become a reality in our church life forms the heart of this report.

There is no doubting, from this report, the energising and enlivening impact of *Mission-shaped Church* on the church in the parishes and dioceses and on the mission orientation of the church as a whole. Nevertheless and not surprisingly, the picture across the country is not uniform. Final evaluations of complex, risky and imaginative ventures are not yet possible in many cases. But enough has been learned to demonstrate that, with the right kind of support, with motivated and inspired people (lay and ordained), given permission to take risks, the Church of England has been able to reorientate the face it presents to the world.

I am delighted to commend this new report to Synod. It is a snapshot of work in progress and not a final assessment – for our work of mission and evangelism will continue until the Lord returns. What we describe and analyse here is a period of rapid and imaginative change which shows that the Church of England’s commitment to mission in contemporary society is a great deal more than just words. We have become a different kind of church: one shaped for mission, moving – mostly confidently, but on occasions tentatively - towards the kind of mixed economy which can reflect and serve the immense and stimulating diversity of our nation. The best of what we have inherited, and a rich outpouring of new creative thinking, are indeed combining in the name of the gospel. For that we thank God.

But we need to look forward as well as back. The question for us now is how we can build on what we have learnt and whether, at a time when both human and financial resources are under great strain, we can make the strategic decisions needed to *prioritise* mission. An appendix to this report cites Tearfund’s finding that two-thirds of adults in Britain have no connection with church at present. We know that that proportion is even greater at the lower end of the adult age range. The challenge is both huge and urgent. But the resources of our God, and a people devoted to serving Him in a church shaped for His mission, are more than equal to it.

Philip Giddings

Chair, Mission and Public Affairs Council

1. Motion for 2010

1.1. That this Synod

- **affirm** the mixed economy of traditional churches and fresh expressions of church, working in partnership, as the most promising mission strategy in a fast changing culture;
- **encourage** those responsible for vocations and training in dioceses and parishes to promote the imaginative recruitment, training and deployment of ordained and lay pioneer ministers in and beyond title posts;
- **commend** the making of Bishops' Mission Orders to integrate suitable fresh expressions of church in the life of the dioceses; and
- **request** the Mission and Public Affairs Division and the Research and Statistics Unit to gather evidence on the spiritual and numerical growth of the mixed economy church in general and fresh expressions of church in particular, and to bring a further report or reports to Synod in the next quinquennium.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. The *Mission-shaped Church* (MSC) report¹, published in 2004, looked at church planting and fresh expressions of church in the context of the Church of England. The closing chapter contained recommendations, from the report's findings, to fit the Church of England (C of E) for the missionary task in today's changing society. A copy of the motion that was passed in February 2004 can be found in Appendix A; and a full copy of the original MSC report can be found at:
http://www.cofe.anglican.org/info/papers/mission_shaped_church.pdf
- 2.2. Six years on from MSC's adoption by the General Synod in February 2004, the current report seeks to ascertain how widely and effectively the recommendations of the MSC report have been implemented across the C of E. It is based on a questionnaire, sent at the beginning of 2009, to the 43 dioceses of the Church of England. The respondents to this questionnaire were all diocesan staff involved in the dioceses' response to MSC, and a substantial part of this report is based on their replies.
- 2.3. The findings from the diocesan questionnaires were supplemented by interviews with 32 people from 10 dioceses. These ten dioceses included examples from the north and the south; urban and rural settings; those known to have led the way in implementing the MSC recommendations and those where little progress on this agenda had been made. The interviewees included those involved in diocesan strategy and those involved in planting new churches or pioneering fresh expressions and those involved either in mission agencies or other organisations with a brief for fresh expressions. These interviews were conducted to supplement the diocesan questionnaire responses with direct accounts from pioneers who are in ministry. Their stories serve to illustrate and support this report. Alongside this, Anglican mission agencies and parts of the C of E central administration that were

¹ Mission-shaped Church "Church planting and fresh expressions of church in a changing context", *Church House Publishing* (2004)

directly affected by the recommendations have also been asked to contribute to this report.

- 2.4. This report has three parts. In the first we provide a brief overview of the impact of the MSC report so far, listing the recommendations followed by a short summary response to each one. In the second part of the report we provide a more detailed analysis of the main areas covered by the MSC recommendations; diocesan strategy, leadership and training and resourcing. In the third part, and addressing the additional points in the General Synod motion of February 2004, we provide some resources to inform and stimulate our thinking about the next stage of making the Mission-shaped church report a reality: an analysis (Appendix B) of Church Attendance from Tearfund, indicating that as many as two-thirds of UK adults have no connection with church; a selection of submissions on Fresh Expressions provided by three mission agencies, Church Army; Church Mission Society (CMS), Crosslinks and USPG [Appendix C]; a Note from CMEAC on the particular gifts and strengths minority ethnic Anglicans bring to bear on the mission agenda [Appendix D]; and a Note from CCU on Ecumenism and Fresh Expressions of Church [Appendix E].

3. Part 1

A Mixed Economy for Mission – The Journey so far Brief Responses to the MSC recommendations

The MSC Recommendations (MSC pp. 145 – 149)

Mission-shaped Church looks at church planting and fresh expressions of church. It has attempted to give an overview and assessment of developments in those areas during the last ten years, as well as look at the changing nature of our society, and at what it means for the Church to be missionary within those cultures and networks. A number of recommendations flow from these insights and experiences, and these are listed here under broad headings.

Diocesan Strategy

1. Mission-shaped Church should be studied in each diocese and at diocesan synods, with a view to helping shape diocesan, deanery and parish mission strategy.

- 3.1. Of the 38 dioceses that returned a questionnaire all had studied the MSC report in some way at diocesan level; addressing it at senior staff consultations, diocesan synods or diocesan conferences. How far this has shaped diocesan strategy will be discussed at length in the following report.

2. In each diocese there should be a strategy for the encouragement and resourcing of church planting and fresh expressions of church, reflecting the network and neighbourhood reality of society and of mission opportunity. This strategy should be developed with ecumenical collaboration.

- 3.2. Half of the 38 dioceses have created a strategy for the encouragement of fresh expressions of church and church planting.

- However there is still a strong bias to a neighbourhood understanding of society over network.
- There has been little strategic ecumenical work developed in the majority of diocesan strategies.²

3. In each diocese an appropriate member of the senior staff should be identified who will be responsible for encouraging, reviewing and supporting existing and developing church plants and fresh expressions of church, and for their integration into the ministry of the diocese as a whole

- 3.3. Almost all of the 43 dioceses have appointed a senior member of staff to be responsible for the diocesan response to the MSC report.

4. The four principles set out in Chapter 7 of this report, under the heading ‘how do we hold all this together?’ should be adopted in each diocese. Those recommendations are relevant in urban, rural and suburban settings, and are:

- *In any proposed mission where new churches beyond parish boundaries are in view, it is both right and necessary that the bishop act as the broker in discussions, with the ability to authorize a new venture or to deny it permission to proceed.*
- *Inherited ways of church and proposed fresh expressions of church need to work in ways that are complementary to each other.*
- *Existing ecclesiastical legal boundaries should be seen as permeable.*
- *An agreed process is needed to make these values credible.*

- 3.4. Provision for Bishop’s Mission Orders has encapsulated the suggestions made in this recommendation. The first 3 dioceses to use the bishop’s mission order to create new churches were Exeter, Canterbury and Leicester. There are a further 6 dioceses that are currently negotiating a Bishop’s Mission Order.

5. Deaneries have the potential to bring together a range of human and financial resources, to consider mission across parish boundaries, and to share prayer and encouragement (Chapter 7). Each diocese should consider whether its deanery arrangements are best organized and employed to encourage the mission of the Church, particularly among people in cultures and networks not currently connected with church.

- 3.5. 9 dioceses have used, or are working towards using, deaneries as mission units; in particular to enable the pooling of resources for the creation of fresh expressions.

6. Breaking New Ground in 1994 contained guidelines for a staged process of transition to maturity and legal recognition for church plants. The latest version of these guidelines and the good practice they reflect should be adopted and used by each diocese. The revised guidelines are available on www.encountersontheedge.org.uk.

- 3.6. These guidelines became the basis for the Bishop’s Mission Order which is now part of the legally recognized pattern for new churches.

² See Appendix... for a full report on ecumenical collaboration and mission-shaped church.

7. An appropriate process of record keeping should be established in each diocese, so that church plants and fresh expressions of church can be identified, supported and affirmed, and good practice and experience can easily be shared.

- 3.7. There are only 8 dioceses with a database of church plants and fresh expressions out of the 35 dioceses who answered this question. Another 8 dioceses told us they intend to start a database in the near future.

8. The National Adviser in Evangelism at the Archbishops' Council (or future equivalent) should serve as the focus person for the network of diocesan contacts (the member of senior staff in each diocese with responsibility for church planting and fresh expressions of church).

- 3.8. There is a working list of senior staff in each diocese responsible for church planting and fresh expressions held by the National Adviser at the Archbishops' Council.

Ecumenical

9. Local ecumenical cooperation is critical to the Church's mission. Churches need a light touch process that enables local mission experiments and partnerships between Christians of different denominations. A new category of 'locally-negotiated ecumenical partnership' (or equivalent terminology) should be created. The introduction of appropriate formal ecumenical arrangements should be delayed until the mission initiative has become established.

- 3.9. A measure of the ecumenical cooperation is the number of dioceses involved in a FEAST (Fresh Expression Area Strategy Team) or an equivalent.
- 34 dioceses answered a question about this
 - 14 are part of such a network
 - 20 are not
 - 4 do intend to be so soon.

Leadership and Training

10. The initial training of all ministers, lay and ordained, within the Church of England should include a focus on cross-cultural evangelism, church planting and fresh expressions of church. This should be a significant feature of Continuing Ministerial Education (CME) from ordination through to years 3 and 4.

- 3.10. Since the MSC report the Ministry Division of the Church of England has confirmed that all training colleges for ministers include mission and evangelism in their curriculum. This is monitored when the course curriculum is reviewed as part of the five-yearly inspection process. The Ministry Division has no tools to evaluate the inclusion of cross-cultural mission and evangelism in the continuing ministerial education now called IME, years 3 -7 as the curriculum for this is the responsibility of individual dioceses.

11. The Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council should actively seek to encourage the identification, selection and training of pioneer church planters, for both lay and ordained ministries, through its appropriate channels to bishops'

selectors, diocesan Readers Boards and training institutions. Specific selection criteria should be established. Patterns of training should be appropriate to the skills, gifting and experiences of those being trained. Those involved in selection need to be adequately equipped to identify and affirm pioneers and mission entrepreneurs.

- 3.11. The creation of an official ministry pathway for ordained pioneer ministers in the Church of England has been radically followed through. However, at present there is no recognized lay pioneer track within the Church of England which is the equivalent of that for Readers, a national network across all dioceses. Lay pioneers are selected and trained by the Church Army but this is only for fulltime employed ministry. CMS also offers pioneer training and is in conversation with Ministry Division as to how this might develop in the future.

12. First curacy posts should be established where church planting skills, gifting and experience can be nurtured, developed and employed. Incumbency or equivalent posts should be identified where the gifts of church planters can be valued and expressed.

- 3.12. Ministry Division is confident that in most cases there has been an appropriate placement found for the new pioneer curates with only a few exceptions. Pioneer posts have also been created in many dioceses at incumbency level for those gifted in church planting.

13. A course, college or other institution with specialist skills in cross-cultural mission should be identified within each region, to provide key training modules and facilitate cross-cultural mission experience and learning. The resources of other denominations will make an important contribution to the overall pattern of the provision of learning in church planting and cross-cultural mission.

- 3.13. No particular college has been singled out from amongst the theological colleges to specialize in the training of pioneers in cross cultural mission. However, many of the theological colleges have created a stream for pioneers alongside their normal training. The Church Army and the Church Mission Society are also focusing on training pioneers.

14. As part of a national policy, dioceses should develop vocational pathways for the identification, deployment, support and training of people with gifting in church planting, evangelism and fresh expressions of church.

- 3.14. The national introduction of ordained pioneer ministry has created one such pathway. The Church Army and CMS offer complementary lay pioneer pathways. The Fresh Expressions team has developed a year long part time course for the training of lay volunteer pioneers and others, and 18 Dioceses are currently involved in running this. Yet as mentioned in the response to recommendation 11 there is at present no nationally recognised pathway for volunteer local pioneer leaders' equivalent to that which is available for Reader training.

15. The Church of England should develop procedures that provisionally acknowledge the work and gifting of existing and future lay leaders in church plants and other expressions of church. A pattern should develop that provides training as part of a process of discernment-for- authorization, rather than training subsequent to discernment, or the removal of existing leaders for training elsewhere.

- *A pattern of training, mentoring and apprenticeship ‘on the job’ should be developed, rather than outside or apart from the mission situation where the leader (or potential leader) is exercising their ministry.*
- *Patterns of authorization for a specific task should be developed (for example, as leader of a church plant) rather than authorization with the assumption of a potentially lifelong ministry.*

3.15.

- 17 dioceses run the Mission Shaped Ministry (MSM) course to train lay pioneers in church planting and the development of fresh expressions “on the job.”
- 2 dioceses expect to begin MSM next year.
- 10 dioceses at present offer no training to lay leaders of fresh expressions and church planters.
- 3 other dioceses mention that they have Church Army lay pioneers who were trained for their ministry by the Church Army.
- 33 dioceses responded to a question about how many lay pioneers they knew of leading a fresh expression. The total for all 33 dioceses was 102, an average of 3 per diocese. The highest figure in any one diocese was 12.

3.16. There is still much that needs to be developed for the recognition and training of lay pioneer leaders and this is a forthcoming item for the Pioneer Ministry Working Party to discuss and action.

Resources

There is an urgent need to release resources to sustain mission initiatives to the non-churched. The resources of the Church of England are understandably but disproportionately invested in inherited and traditional styles of church, which alone are no longer adequate for mission to the whole nation. Strategies are needed to establish new resources and transfer some existing resources for new initiatives.

16. In each diocese there should be established a ‘mission growth and opportunity fund’ (or similar title) – a fund to support new ventures in cross-cultural mission, evangelism and church planting.

3.17.

- 12 of the diocesan respondents specifically mention their growth and mission fund created to fund new ventures in cross-cultural mission, evangelism and church planting.
- 9 of the respondents highlight this fund as key to the development of fresh expressions in their diocese.

17. In view of the Church Commissioners’ mandate to provide ‘additional provision for the cure of souls in parishes where such assistance is most required’, strategic decisions about future patterns of financial support should be made in partnership with dioceses so as to help actively resource church planting and fresh expressions of church. This might include support for diocesan ‘mission growth and opportunity’ funds, and short-term support for the transition of some diocesan resources from inherited modes to church planting and fresh expressions.

- 3.18. The Church Commissioners implemented recommendation 17 with their mission funding given to all dioceses from 2002-2007. The church commissioners' reported that initially 1/3 of the diocese used this money to credit the stipend account but that this proportion fell to 1/5 over this period.³

18. Mission-shaped Church has identified that shifts in the population of England, and the large-scale development of new areas of housing, require national, regional and diocesan thinking and resourcing. The Church Commissioners in partnership with the Archbishops' Council and relevant dioceses should consider how best to resource the planting of neighbourhood and network forms of church in new population areas. Similarly, the Church Commissioners in partnership with the Archbishops' Council and relevant dioceses should consider how best to resource missionary church in areas of diminishing or declining population.

- 3.19. The Church Commissioners have again fully supported new initiatives to fund church planting in the new housing area. It is however, unclear as to whether there has been any lessening of resources in areas of declining population.

The Pastoral Measure and Legislation

The subgroup reviewing the Pastoral Measure reported in 2002 that 'existing provisions in the [Pastoral] Measure cannot adequately or easily accommodate innovative church models'. The implications of this report and its conclusions should be incorporated into the legislation of the new (or amended) enabling Pastoral Measure. In particular, this applied to the recommendation from Chapter 7 concerning the retention of many of the existing rights of ministers, but the removal of the canonical right to exclude further Anglican churches, where their creation has been sanctioned by the bishop in line with procedures authorized by the new Pastoral measure.

- 3.20. The introduction of the Bishop's Mission Order in Canon Law has fully realized this recommendation. New Anglican churches can now be created even in existing parishes with the permission and oversight of the bishop. Three of these churches have been created, in the dioceses of Exeter, Canterbury and Leicester. A further 6 dioceses are in the process of using the BMO to create new churches.

4. Part 2

A Mixed Economy for Mission – The Journey so far Realising the Strategy

- 4.1. The MSC report proposed three main central initiatives to enable the effective realisation of the strategy in the dioceses. The first was the creation of the Fresh Expressions team to facilitate, encourage and take a lead in resourcing the Church of England and the Methodist church. The second was the introduction of a new pathway into ordained ministry for 21st Century missionaries to the un-churched of this nation; the creation of the Ordained Pioneer Minister. The third and final change was made to Canon Law to introduce the Bishop's Mission Order to permit the full integration and recognition of fresh expressions of church into the existing diocesan structures of the Church of England.

³ Investing in the Church's Growth: A Review of the Church of England's Mission Development Funding, (2002 to 2007)

The Fresh Expressions Team

- 4.2. A direct result of the Mission-shaped Church report was the appointment of an Archbishops' Missioner to head up a new team who would encourage and resource the implementation of the recommendations. Their primary purpose would be to spread the vision of the need for fresh expressions of church in the 21st Century and help train pioneers. The Fresh Expressions team, led initially by Rev Dr Steven Croft (now Bishop of Sheffield) for the first five years and thereafter by Bishop Graham Cray, has encouraged the spread of Mission-shaped Church thinking and practice largely by creating and leading 3 main types of training course.
- “Vision days”, a one day course that introduces the vision for fresh expressions of church. So far 66 vision days have been run with 5,115 attendees from both Anglican and Methodist churches.⁴
 - “Mission Shaped Intro”, a six part course that unpacks the changes in culture and the need for mission in today's context.⁵
 - “Mission Shaped Ministry”, a one year course to help those involved in starting a fresh expression. 18 dioceses said they were running MSM. In total 36 MSM courses have been run or are currently running with a total of 1,465 attendees.⁶
- 4.3. To complement these, the Fresh Expressions team and Church House Publishing have created books to spread Mission-shaped Church thinking, along with DVD's which have shared the stories of those involved in planting fresh expressions. The Fresh Expressions team also hosts two websites; one that is a hub of information and stories and another that shares good practice and theology creating a network of support for those involved in pioneering. Their main website can be found at: <http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/>

Ordained Pioneers

- 4.4. The MSC report recommended that a new pathway into ordained ministry be created to encourage pioneers or missionary leaders to plant and grow new churches; this has been implemented with the creation of Ordained Pioneer Ministers. Ministry Division has worked with a Pioneer Ministry Working Party to oversee their introduction. Specific selection criteria were drawn up to help bishops' panels identify the traits they were looking for in a pioneer. Due to some difficulties in the selection process the pioneer working group has recently recommended that pioneers should be selected centrally by a specialized panel. Those who are selected as pioneers would then go onto a further selection panel in their home dioceses to decide if they should carry out their pioneering ministry as ordained ministers or lay ministers. This will also accelerate the need for the development of various recognized pathways for lay pioneers to seek recognition and training. At present lay pioneers are selected and trained for ministry in the Church Army or in CMS but there is no other stream within the Church of England. In particular there is no centrally recognized official stream for lay pioneers within local diocesan settings.

⁴ See <http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/vision> for more information.

⁵ See <http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/missionshapedintro> for more information

⁶ See <http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/missionshapedministry> for more information.

- 4.5. It was recommended that a specialized college for the training of pioneers be created but this has not been possible due to the financial and geographical difficulties of such a scheme. Instead many of the existing theological colleges have created pathways for pioneers to train alongside their existing ordinands. There have been some questions about the adequacy of the training provided for pioneers and these will be addressed by a forthcoming review by Ministry Division.
- 4.6. Ministry Division is confident that appropriate first posts have been found for the ordained pioneers entering ministry. Ministry Division's records show that there have been 17 pioneers ordained to date with a further 70 in training.

The Bishop's Mission Order

- 4.7. The MSC report recommended changes in Canon Law that were subsequently passed and centrally implemented before being applied by dioceses. These legal changes were intended to make the central structures of the Church of England more malleable and mission-focussed for the 21st century. They included the recommendation for new legislation to enable the birth and growth of new church plants and fresh expressions within an Anglican framework and especially to allow diocesan bishops to authorise new initiatives across, as well as within, existing parish boundaries. These recommendations have been encapsulated in the Bishop's Mission Order, so that there is now an agreed process to enable the creation of a mixed economy within the church at a local level. Exeter diocese was the first to establish a new church using the BMO legislation in Nov 2009 - Exeter Network Church.⁷ Canterbury diocese followed, also in Nov 2009, establishing Harvest in Thanet.⁸ In December, Leicester diocese held an event to launch their network church in the city centre. A further 6 diocese are in the process of establishing new churches using the BMO legislation.

Implementation in the Dioceses

- 4.8. Of the 38 dioceses that responded to the questionnaire, half have made substantial progress in implementing the MSC recommendations. They have owned it to varying degrees by creating, resourcing and implementing a diocesan mission strategy that takes "due account of the report's proposals". Other dioceses are, at the present time, only at the beginning of this process and there are a few where the report and its proposals appear as yet to have had little impact on diocesan strategy. Even in the latter group of dioceses, however, there are individuals pioneering new mission initiatives and fresh expressions and others who are supportive of the vision of a mixed economy church. It appears that, in all the dioceses, the MSC report has had some impact, whether it has been owned and implemented centrally, given tacit acceptance and some encouragement, or where it has made little impression on the structures of the diocese.
- 4.9. Of all the dioceses that have made progress with the implementation of the MSC recommendations, three stand out; Exeter, Lincoln and Liverpool. They stand out for their commitment to a strategy for the implementation of MSC, for initiating and running training in MSC, for resourcing pioneer posts and mission initiatives, for networking pioneers and those involved in enabling fresh expressions and for promoting the vision for a mixed economy church. Exeter and Lincoln are

⁷ Follow this link for the full story: <http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/news/firstbmo>

⁸ Follow this link for the full story: <http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/news/bmothanet>

predominantly rural dioceses and Liverpool a northern urban diocese. This shows that geographic location, demography and wealth are not the determining factors for success with this agenda. Even in these dioceses there is still a way to go before it could be said that a mixed economy church has been established as irreversible and normative within the diocese, but they have made a very positive start. A further five dioceses have also made substantial progress with implementing the recommendations and therefore it could be said that in at least eight dioceses the recommendations have had a major impact on their life and mission.

Diocesan Strategy

- 4.10. It is through a diocesan strategy shaped for mission that these and other fresh expressions and mission initiatives that been encouraged by the dioceses. Of the 38 dioceses who replied to the questionnaire all have studied or engaged with the MSC report at a senior diocesan level. Two thirds of the diocesan respondents hold the view that their senior staff and Bishop's Council own the report's understanding of mission and share the vision of a mixed economy church. In many of these dioceses it is evident that the report has helped to shape diocesan mission strategy. The other third (although they know MSC has been acknowledged within the diocese) question what actual impact MSC has had: these respondents suggest it has been studied as an "academic idea" or seen as "relevant to other parts of the country."
- 4.11. Real ownership has led to a strategy which has been realised by allocating resources. As one respondent clearly explained; "support for this understanding of the mission of the church today is seen in the strategies, finance, resource material and appointments put in place by the bishop's staff and Bishop's Council". However, another respondent noted the opposite; that due to the "way that budget priorities are set" they would have to conclude "that while people understand the concepts they are not sufficiently owned to affect strategy."
- 4.12. The respondents described the various components that made for effective strategy and policy for the growth of a mission-shaped diocese; which included:
- a strong lead from the bishops and senior staff
 - key personnel appointed to encourage and train others in mission-shaped thinking and practice
 - changing structures to enable mission
 - a programme for the appointment and funding of key pioneers into specific areas or networks for the creation of fresh expressions
 - the use of Mission Action Planning in either parishes or deaneries
 - growth funds for mission initiatives in local parish contexts
 - experimentation and risk encouraged at a local level leading to fresh expression initiatives

These points will be expanded upon in this report.

- 4.13. 12 of the diocesan respondents to the questionnaire spoke of a clear diocesan strategy shaped around mission. 2 others talked of a diocesan vision and set of values shaped for mission, and another 2 dioceses mentioned forthcoming strategies for mission. The dioceses with clear strategy were (in all but one case) implementing the Mission-shaped Church recommendations more thoroughly than other dioceses resulting in more fresh expressions of church developing.

Owning the Strategy

- 4.14. Responses to our diocesan questionnaire suggest that the impact and effectiveness of a mission-shaped diocesan strategy is directly related to the level of ownership given to the report's recommendations by diocesan senior staff. The first step in such a strategy has often been the appointment of a senior staff member, as in Recommendation 3 of the MSC report, who is responsible for "encouraging, reviewing and supporting existing and developing church plants and fresh expressions of church, and for their integration into the ministry of the diocese as a whole". In most of the dioceses it was clear who had been appointed to this role and much of the impact of the MSC report within a diocese rested on their ownership of this task.
- 4.15. There is a direct correlation between the seniority of this member of staff and the impact of the MSC report on the diocese. Where the diocesan bishop took this role himself, church plants and fresh expressions of church have been encouraged from the top and successfully integrated into the ministry of the diocese as a whole. More generally, permission, and an atmosphere which has encouraged people to experiment, has led to the greatest growth of the mixed economy church. The converse is true in that, where the MSC report has not been owned by the senior staff of the diocese, there has been little progress, in particular with the encouragement of fresh expressions. When the respondents were asked what they thought had hindered the implementation of the MSC report in their diocese, the most common reply (in 11 cases) was a lack of leadership and ownership from senior staff. Conversely when asked what key influences had helped to spread the vision of MSC, bishops were listed by 12 respondents and other senior diocesan staff by 14.
- 4.16. This is not just a feature of the diocesan questionnaire. There was also a common theme of praise for bishops in the interviews with pioneers. One said "my bishop has been absolutely pivotal for me and for the church in our direction..... you know I've got a bishop who is more missional than I am!" Another said, "I'm really grateful to the bishops because the shift has been the permission giving from the diocesan leadership to explore these areas." One interviewee said "the bishops are really understanding and supportive of it, especially in my case, my bishop's been fantastic."

Realising the Strategy Locally

- 4.17. Where MSC is owned and part of the diocesan strategy it gives great freedom for those helping to roll out such a strategy to be positive encouragers and trainers when they visit deaneries and parishes and to spread the vision across the Church of England. This task of encouragement and training has frequently fallen to the diocesan missionary network in which there is a substantial level of commitment for implementing the MSC report's recommendations. Sometimes an extra post has been created to help in this task: several dioceses have appointed a diocesan fresh expressions enabler. Other dioceses have appointed parish priests, or others, with a part-time brief to encourage fresh expressions at deanery level to further localise the uptake of the vision of MSC.
- 4.18. Diocesan staff have used many methods to spread the vision; "mission mailings, training days, stories are frequently told in diocesan news" and many have adopted

or hosted Fresh Expression training courses to spread the vision amongst clergy and lay people in their diocese.

- 4.19. The diocesan missionaries and fresh expression enablers are also offering support and encouragement to pioneers and others involved in leadership in fresh expressions in the dioceses through the setting up of regional support groups. 11 dioceses have a group that meets regularly and several others are thinking of beginning one. The Fresh Expressions team are helping to facilitate these with the growth of Fresh Expressions Area Strategy Teams (FEASTS).
- 4.20. The most effective dioceses have worked to encourage understanding and ownership of the mixed economy church at a local level, including use of growth plans or specifically Mission Action Planning (MAP). One respondent explained that all “congregations, PCCs and parish clergy” were to write growth plans and that as part of this process they would “consider MSC and the creation of fresh expressions as an integral part” and that this is being followed up by the senior staff when they visit. 9 dioceses have taken serious note of recommendation 5 about deanery strategy and some have implemented deanery growth plans or funded deanery mission projects. These can be effective when parishes are small, pooling people and resources. Other dioceses are not necessarily working through a specific deanery strategy, but they are using the deanery as a helpful unit in which to offer support, training and discussion to generate mission initiatives.
- 4.21. One story from the interviews illustrates the strategic use of the deanery for the birth of a fresh expression, a youth church at St Laurence’s in Reading:

Chris Russell has been the vicar of St Laurence’s in the centre of Reading for eight years. He was appointed in response to the vision of the deanery and the sacrificial decision of the then eight remaining members. These church members had the foresight to realize that their needs could be met in one of the other churches in their deanery, which were all similar, traditional, inherited churches. The original church members and the deanery decided together to create a new post in the deanery for a youth church housed in St Laurence’s. Chris Russell was then appointed and arrived with a team 8 years ago with the mandate “to see young people come to faith and to build new models of church with them.” That is exactly what Chris and his team have done.

They have learnt to spend time with young people doing things that young people enjoy and thereby forming relationships and growing community. Chris explains that they then aim to “do certain things because we want to inject into those relationships, questions around faith or stimulate questions of who Jesus is, or provide a frame and a space where people will draw out those questions. And we’re quite intentional about that.” Over the years the central part of the journey and challenge has been how to disciple new young Christians so that the young people can discover how to “follow Jesus in this culture.” Chris Russell states that all fresh expressions should be “an attempt to engage with people who have no connection with church.

Diocesan Clergy and MSC

- 4.22. With clear ownership of the vision by bishops, and senior staff with a strategy for training and encouragement there is confidence in some dioceses that diocesan clergy understand the vision for a mixed economy church. In other dioceses respondents used words such as “patchy”, “in pockets” and “partial” to describe the spread of MSC thinking amongst their diocesan clergy. Equally many respondents point out that although the vision has been shared there are obviously those who have adopted and owned it and those who have not. As would be expected, there are clergy who support the vision, those who have misunderstood it and others who are closed to it. One diocese (Ely) puts the positive receivers of the vision amongst the clergy as high as 75%; another (Durham) rated it as low as 25%.
- 4.23. This is of particular importance for the acceptance of a mixed economy church including network churches that exist across parish boundaries. These fresh expressions started by pioneers in social networks, for example amongst people in their twenties and thirties, often require a physical base in an existing parish. This has sometimes caused angst among clergy especially when it is felt that parish boundaries have not been adequately respected.
- 4.24. Pioneers in these positions need support. Parish clergy working with more traditional or familiar models of ministry and mission need to be involved in consultation where new initiatives are planned so that the new is not seen as a threat to what already exists but as a way for different approaches to complement each other for the good of God’s Kingdom. So far 3 dioceses (Exeter, Canterbury and Leicester) have actually created new churches with BMOs, with another 6 dioceses looking to create a further 9 new churches in the coming months. These new churches are just that: they are separate from any existing parish church and are now part of their diocese in their own right. This should mean that within the next year at least 9 new churches will be recognised as part of the Church of England and the mixed economy will be turning from vision into permanent reality.
- 4.25. However, if we are to create a mixed economy church, can the responsibility of creating fresh expressions rest in clergy hands alone? Clergy do need to carry on the work of permission-giving and encouragement, as modelled by senior diocesan clergy. Clergy opposition, misunderstanding or ambivalence can sometimes stifle the creation of lay-led fresh expressions which are vital to the mixed economy church. One diocesan respondent explained that in some cases prospective lay leaders have caught the vision for a fresh expression initiative ahead of their clergy, which can lead to tension. Another explained “where clergy ‘get it’ there is more chance of fresh expressions appearing.” Another respondent explained that “in those churches where the clergy have caught the vision for mission-shaped church; there is evidence to show that the laity has too.” Clearly, the relationship between clergy attitudes and “buy-in”, and the releasing of lay energy for new initiatives is very important.
- 4.26. 33 dioceses replied to a question about numbers of ordained leaders of fresh expressions. In total across these 33 dioceses there were 89 ordained leaders of fresh expressions. The highest number was 10 in any one diocese. This number includes those who lead a fresh expression whilst leading an inherited church, and those who are solely working as pioneers.

- 4.27. One story from the interviews illustrates the role of a vicar in starting a fresh expression for the people on the fringe of the parish church:

Ian Silk has been the vicar at St George's Swallowback in the diocese of Lincoln for 16 years and is currently enjoying developing a mixed economy approach to parish life. This year he was delighted that all the different services and congregations that have developed at St Georges have grown. In particular, for the first time, they decided to count the regular members of the their newest congregation a fresh expression called, "tea time church". Recording those who attend tea time church made him realize that, "these really are regular worshipping members of the church."

Tea time church developed to respond to the growing number of families who were interested in coming to church but for whom Sunday morning was not a good time. It started with a small core group of a couple of families and has grown. The members of this new congregation have come through the contacts made in the church's preschool, through contacts made at the school gates and through people enquiring about baptisms and weddings and of course through friends of friends as word spread naturally.

The tea time service is held monthly in the church on Sunday afternoons. The format of the service is decided by the children rolling a big fluffy dice which lists the various components of the service e.g. prayer or a song. Each element is prepared in advance but the order is decided by the children, with a little help if the dice keeps landing on the same side! As a result of the growth of the congregation it is likely to need to incorporate baptisms. Also regular members of the tea time congregation have recently been confirmed and this is beginning to make the church think about how to include communion for those people for whom this has become their expression of church.

The Laity and MSC

- 4.28. Respondents to the diocesan questionnaire were far less confident when it came to an assessment of how the vision had been owned by lay people. There is a general perception that this is a centralised strategy and that the majority of lay people are unaware, or have only a very partial understanding of MSC and the mixed economy church. To turn the vision of a mixed economy church into reality will take many lay pioneers who will be able and willing to plant fresh expressions as volunteers. The task is too great to rely solely on those who will be called, trained and appointed as ordained pioneers.
- 4.29. Two of the diocesan respondents were more positive about the spread of the vision to church members because they were confident that their overall diocesan strategy had effectively included and empowered them. Many of the other diocesan respondents stated that sharing the vision of the mixed economy church more widely with church members would be a focus for the coming year.
- 4.30. The research reveals that some dioceses have not found an easy route to train lay leaders in their local setting; even the Mission Shaped Ministry Course is not always accessible to those who have already started leading a fresh expression as the costs and the time can be prohibitive. None of the dioceses have an official recognised lay pioneer ministry as yet but some are forming networks of those who

have trained on the MSM course for their continued support and encouragement. There are only 102 known lay leaders or lay pioneers of fresh expressions spread across 33 of the dioceses. The other dioceses did not have a record of lay pioneers. To secure a mixed economy church the future recognition, training and support of volunteer lay pioneers is essential.

- 4.31. The Church Mission Society (CMS) recognises and trains lay pioneers as does the Church Army. CMS is hoping to expand this remit and create an order of pioneers to serve the church in this missionary task. They are currently exploring with Ministry Division new pathways for the training of pioneers⁹. The Church Army pioneers are selected and trained for full time paid lay appointments through a centralised system leading to posts that fit easily within the existing diocesan structures.¹⁰
- 4.32. One story from the interviews illustrates the work of a Church Army pioneer planting a fresh expression in a deprived area. It is the story of Tim Hyde in Weston, Southampton, in Winchester diocese:

Tim Hyde was appointed as a Church Army pioneer to a church in a housing estate in Weston. The church is situated near a large council estate of 6,500 homes in tower blocks. The church members had the vision to reach those on the estate but were not sure how and looked to the Church Army for help.

Tim Hyde spent the initial period of his new role encouraging the church and explaining to them his understanding of a fresh expression so that they would own his work and join him in it. At the same time he began to consult the agencies working on the estate. He explained how crucial it was that both the church and the other agencies understood that he was there to serve them in the combined task of working on the estate.

The first need the agencies pointed out was for furnishing and finishing residents' homes. Many lived in inadequate homes that needed carpets, decorating and furniture. Tim soon enlisted volunteers to help him in what has become the Light House Project. They raise money from local churches to pay for the tools and items needed to re-decorate. They also store useful furniture and bric-a-brac in two garages on the estate to be given away whenever there is a need. They take their time working in residents' homes so that they can get to know them and when opportunity arises they can explain that it is God's love that motivates them to help. This has recently led to one young mother attending Alpha at the local church.

The agencies told Tim about the problems with drug and alcohol abuse on the estate. Other agencies had had trouble helping the residents overcome their addictions due to the underlying problem of boredom on the estate. The agency workers suggested an allotment might work and so Tim has rented two. The plan is to gather a team from the local community who will tend the allotments and all the produce will be given away to those in need on the estate.

Tim explains the challenge of growing a church amongst the residents is great as they have "no concept of God, no concept of what the church is other than

⁹ See <http://jonnybaker.blogs.com/jonnybaker/2009/10/changes-part-2-the-next-8-years.html>

¹⁰ See Appendix C for more details.

that building in their community, so we've actually got to start at grass roots." So far, as a result of the work of Tim and his team, one cell group of women residents meets regularly on the estate. Here the women can share their lives, be supported in their struggles and begin to discover God for themselves.

Resourcing the Strategy

- 4.33. The other key component in realising the recommendations of MSC has been sufficient financial resources. MSC recommended that each diocese should establish 'mission growth and opportunity funds' to support new ventures in cross-cultural mission, evangelism and church planting. This came out of concern that the resources of the Church of England "are understandably but disproportionately invested in inherited and traditional styles of church."¹¹ The Church Commissioners owned this recommendation and have greatly assisted dioceses by providing financial resources for mission in the mission development fund. A full report of the investment, the diocesan use of the funds and the results can be found in the Church Commissioners' report on this published in September 2008¹². This money has given dioceses the means to begin to realise their strategy for mission.
- 4.34. The Church Commissioners' report explained how initially a third of the dioceses used the funds to credit their stipend account, but this fell to only a fifth of the dioceses as more of them caught a vision for how they could use the fund to initiate and spark a vision for mission. The report explained that this change of emphasis was often due to the appointment of a new diocesan bishop or diocesan secretary, once again emphasising the impact of senior leadership.
- 4.35. 12 of the dioceses mentioned their growth fund in their answers about initiating mission. 9 of the dioceses saw the mission fund as key in the development of fresh expressions in the diocese. According to the Church Commissioners' report, over half of the specific mission development investment was used by dioceses to fund mission initiatives within existing structures. Many respondents to the questionnaire explained how their diocese had created a growth fund providing a plethora of small grants to local mission initiatives that they are certain would not have happened without the funding. The small grants tended to fund mission that was "focussed on current patterns of ministry, rather than more cutting edge, non-parochial projects". This indicates that new initiatives do not always require large sums of money to get started if they are working within the fringes of traditional parish churches, but that, often, small grants or limited additional resources can tip the balance between a venture taking off successfully or stalling before it launches.
- 4.36. The Church Commissioners' report explained that a further fifth of their funding went on mission initiatives that were independent of existing parish structures, which accounts for much of the funding into new fresh expressions in the dioceses. Some of the diocesan respondents explained that their diocese had chosen to fund a few projects that were "centrally discerned" as important. These were then initiated with the appointment of a pioneer to plant a fresh expression. These tended to be in areas that were more cutting edge, with a network focus, non-parochial and further away from the normal patterns of existing ministry. Without the Church Commissioners funding these appointments for the creation of fresh expressions

¹¹ MSC p.148.

¹² Investing in the Church's Growth: A review of the Church of England's Mission Development Funding (2002 to 2007)

further from the reaches of traditional parish life would not have been possible. Although they take substantial resourcing in comparison to smaller mission initiatives, they are necessary if the church is to fulfil its call to mission in the 21st century in our nation today.

- 4.37. The Church Commissioners' report explained that the remaining quarter of the funding went to support diocesan posts for mission development and services to promote mission or to "facilitate strategic change". These roles have been central to the implementation of the MSC recommendations within the dioceses.
- 4.38. Several dioceses mention mission and church planting in areas of new housing which was prompted by the money made available centrally by the Church Commissioners for this purpose. This once again demonstrates the connection between finance and stimulus for mission and fresh expressions. A whole area of mission in new housing will come into being because of the vision of the Church Commissioners to allocate funds to specific projects in these areas which is a direct response to the MSC report's recommendations.
- 4.39. Money alone is clearly not sufficient to establish the mixed economy, but it is an extremely pivotal factor. Without the investment of the Church Commissioners in the areas of new housing and the growth fund, there would be far less progress with the implementation of the recommendations of the MSC report. One story that demonstrates the connection between small grants and a fresh expression is that of Dianne Woolridge and "the Sanctuary" in Lichfield diocese:

Dianne Woolridge is a local church outreach leader and licensed local minister in a traditional Anglican church in a semi-rural setting in the diocese of Lichfield. In a few years her village grew from 500 to 5000 with many new families. However, Dianne explained that there was an obvious lack of connection between the church and the new villagers. "75% to 80% of the congregation (were) over 65" but "80 to 85% of the village (were) under 65". Lichfield diocese then introduced small grants for mission initiatives from their growth fund, this stimulated Dianne into thinking of developing new ways to connect with the village families. The obvious route was through the church school. The vicar already went in once a week to take an assembly and the school visited the church once a term for a service. Dianne went to the PCC and discussed what the church might do to develop and utilize both the connection with the school and the small grants being awarded by the diocese. Then in consultation with the school the idea for "the Sanctuary" was born.

The Sanctuary was a room made available by the school, but decorated by the church using money from the growth fund. It was to be used by both the school and the church. The teachers used the room for classroom worship. Dianne and her team from the church served tea and coffee once a week to parents in the Sanctuary. Then they offered relaxation classes to parents, but this was not so popular. The head teacher then asked if they would consider running meditation classes for children, especially those with behavioral problems. These were so successful that the staff asked if they could run relaxation classes for whole class groups. The meditation classes developed and the team decided to run "Kids Essence", a children's course in Christian spirituality, this was so popular that it developed into a "Kids @ Essence" after school club.

The school's team, from the Church, was then given responsibility for the Church's school assembly and developed a prayer station each week for the children. This proved popular and the children themselves have now started to design and create their own prayer corner. The team has gone on to develop a service to welcome new children to the school and relaxation classes for the children taking exams. Dianne explained how her own thinking developed around this question "What is going to be church for this group of people?" She was supported in her development of the fresh expression through attending her local Mission Shaped Ministry Course.

How many Fresh Expressions are there?

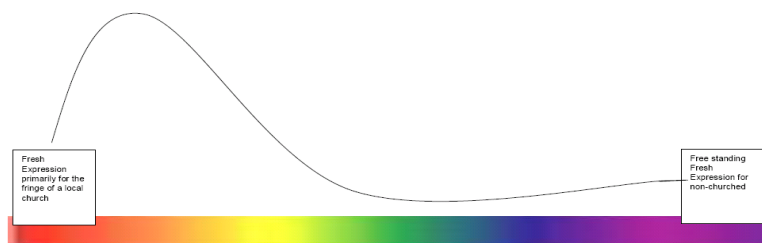
- 4.40. Part of the diocesan strategy envisioned by the MSC report was an appropriate form of record keeping in each diocese so that church plants and fresh expressions can be "identified, supported and affirmed and good practice can be shared." Several dioceses were able to produce a list of church plants and fresh expressions for this research, but many others were not in a position to do so. Attempts to gather this information nationally have also met with difficulties. When a question was included in the parish returns it became evident that there was some confusion as to what counted as a fresh expression. As one diocesan respondent explained; "In the archdeacon's articles of enquiry a couple of years ago 78 parishes claimed to have a FE. I phoned each parish who answered yes and it was obvious that many had little idea what they meant by a FE..." The respondent went on to give their own estimate of the number of fresh expressions in their diocese, "I have contacts with about 12 FEs. Somewhere between the two is a stab at an answer but anything more would be only a guess." The Fresh Expressions website and national database also met with problems as they relied on people choosing to self-register and assumed that they would be informed users. This has led to ambiguity. One respondent illustrated this when they said the number of fresh expressions in their diocese was "120 according to Churchwarden returns 2006, 11 according to the Fresh Expression website, 20 according to my calculation, of these 10 have started in the last year."
- 4.41. 27 of the dioceses were able to give an informed estimate of the number of fresh expressions in their diocese which gave a total of 515; an average of 20 per diocese. Others simply replied saying, "loads", "numerous", or "large numbers" which is extremely unclear. Eight dioceses have a reliable database leaving a further 27 dioceses without. Therefore it is difficult at present to produce a national figure for church plants and fresh expressions with any confidence or hard evidence. This is something that the Fresh Expressions research round table is discussing and various interested researchers are working towards a clearer picture.

Who are the Fresh Expressions Reaching?

- 4.42. Those dioceses which did have a database or similar record of fresh expressions were also able to answer more detailed questions about the spread and nature of the fresh expressions in their dioceses. There is a clear pattern emerging with many parish based initiatives appearing on the fringes of inherited churches. In many dioceses these are the majority. They are making an inherited church effective in mission by creating appropriate new church congregations shaped for mission. This is a logical pattern as it is easier and less risky to work nearer home and in cultures that already have some connection with church. This is an extremely valuable result

of the implementation of MSC. One diocesan respondent explained; “quite a few of the fresh expressions we know about aimed to reach the non-churched¹³ but have mainly succeeded in reaching the church fringe.” The vast majority of fresh expressions would be in this category; they are very valid forms of mission and have brought substantial growth to the church but are insufficient on their own to answer to the missionary task in the nation as a whole.

4.43. There are fewer ‘free-standing’ fresh expressions, focused further from the inherited church and working more often with those who are non-churched.¹⁴ This is probably due to the greater levels of resourcing these fresh expressions tend to require, both in the training of leaders and the financial resources required, as discussed earlier in this report. The following diagram shows the numbers of fresh expressions in relation to the distance from church of the people they are reaching.



- 25 of the dioceses were able to answer questions regarding the people their fresh expressions were reaching.
- 25 had some fresh expressions reaching those on the fringe of inherited church.
- 12 dioceses had some fresh expressions reaching the de-churched
- 23 had fresh expressions reaching the non-churched

Therefore the vast majority of all the Fresh Expressions are working amongst the fringes of the inherited church.

4.44. Many of these projects are working amongst young families, with the explosion of congregations based on Messy Church¹⁵, which are similar to “tea time church” as described earlier. Others are working amongst young people.

- 25 dioceses thought that their fresh expressions were addressing the imbalance in age amongst church members in the diocese.
- 16 of the dioceses also thought their fresh expressions were addressing the imbalance in social class
- 9 the imbalance in gender
- 2 the imbalance in ethnic origin¹⁶

¹³ See Appendix B for a definition of the word non-churched.

¹⁴ See Appendix B for a definition of the word de-churched.

¹⁵ A church created for young families by Lucy Moore which has led to a whole movement of messy churches reaching young families; see <http://www.messychurch.org.uk/>

¹⁶ See Appendix D.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. Since 2004 the Church of England has begun a journey towards becoming a mixed economy church. This report documents the first stages of the journey. We have come a long way and taken some key steps towards the future with the introduction of ordained pioneer ministers and Bishop's Mission Orders. From the outset the vision for the mixed economy has been articulated by Archbishop Rowan Williams and encouraged and nurtured by many bishops in the Church of England. Their ownership has released a wave of creativity and experimentation within the Church as it strives to re-shape itself in response to the call to mission. The vision has been nurtured by the work of the Fresh Expressions team in partnership with Church Army and CMS and ably supported by the investment of the Church Commissioners. The focus on the mixed economy church has, we believe, enabled these new and innovative developments to be understood as part of the same mission and the same Church as the more familiar approaches to church life. Change need not be seen as a threat, although there is still work to be done if the mixed economy is to mean real complementarity. A real journey begins when small teams or individuals decide to travel from the security of their familiar church life to be pioneers. Many have begun their journey but many more are needed if the non-churched are to be given the opportunity to follow Christ in their own language and culture today. Reflection on what has been achieved in the last six years, and the new opportunities and resources now available, will enable us to discern how we can together take forward Christ's mission to the whole of our society with its rapidly changing social structure and patterns of living. We have made a good beginning.

Mission-shaped Church: additional papers to inform the follow-up debate

Appendix A: The motion carried by General Synod in February 2004.

Appendix B: An analysis of Church Attendance from Tearfund.

Appendix C: Partnership for World Mission agencies and Fresh Expressions of Church.

A selection of submissions from PWM agencies, as part of the data-gathering and circulation requested by Synod in 2004. These reflect the diversity and richness of approach that mission agencies have brought to the mixed economy narrative.

Appendix D: Minority Ethnic Anglicans and Fresh Expressions of Church

A paper from Sonia Barron, based on a discussion at the Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns in 2009, and following up the Synod's 2004 request. CMEAC members and staff are ready to share their experience and advice at any time.

Appendix E: Ecumenism and Fresh Expressions of Church.

A paper from the Council for Christian Unity outlining some of the steps taken ecumenically in the light of "Mission-shaped Church".

Appendix A

The Motion carried by the General Synod in February 2004

‘That this Synod

(a) welcome the report *Mission-shaped Church* as a contribution to reflection and action about a “mixed economy church” and commend it to dioceses, deaneries and parishes for study and discussion;

(b) encourage all parishes to regard the area within their parish boundaries as areas of “responsibility” rather than areas of “ownership”;

(c) invite dioceses to take account of the report’s proposals in the development of their diocesan mission strategies;

(d) invite dioceses and Partnership for World Mission agencies to send examples of good practice in discovering fresh ways of engaging in mission with contemporary society to the Mission and Public Affairs Division for wider circulation;

(e) request the Mission and Public Affairs Council to consider how the contributions and needs of minority ethnic people relate to an inclusive theology in changing models of church; consider the growing contribution of minority ethnic people to mission and parish renewal; and draw upon the experience of minority ethnic clergy and laity at looking at new ways of being church;

(f) ask the Mission and Public Affairs Council to consider and take forward the recommendations and report back to General Synod in the next quinquennium;

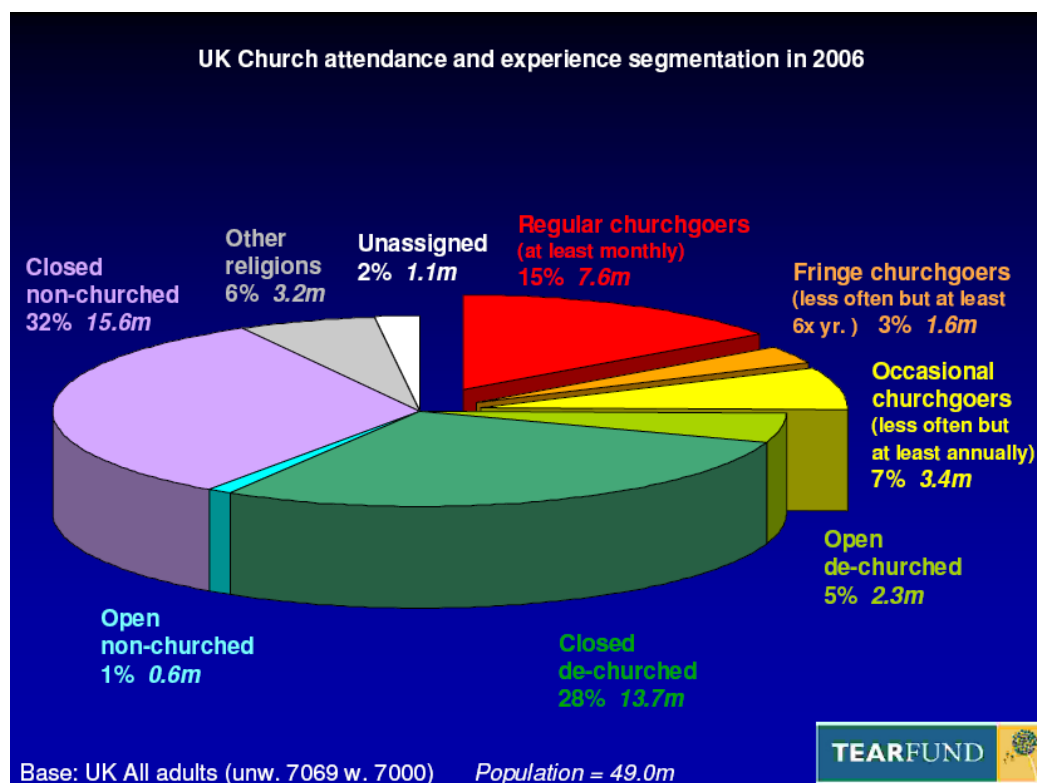
(g) ask the Mission and Public Affairs Council also to explore how current ministry restrictions relating to parish boundaries could be relaxed to enable all churches to respond more flexibly to the network culture in which we now live; and

(h) reaffirm the guidelines for bringing a church plant to maturity that appear in Appendix One of *Breaking New Ground*, already published and approved by General Synod, and recommend that they be adopted and used by each diocese.’

Appendix B

Church Attendance – Tearfund Research¹⁷

Figure 1a: Model of church attendance and experience in the UK



Key

- Regular churchgoers
15% of UK adults go to church at least once a month. This is equivalent to 7.6 million regular churchgoers in the UK.
- Fringe churchgoers
3% of UK adults go to church less than monthly but at least six times a year. This is equivalent to 1.6 million fringe churchgoers in the UK.
- Occasional churchgoers
7% of UK adults go to church less than six times a year but at least once a year. This is equivalent to 3.4 million occasional churchgoers in the UK.
- Open de-churched
5% of UK adults do not go to church* but they used to attend in the past and are very or fairly likely to go to church in future. This is equivalent to 2.3 million adults in the UK who are open de-churched.

¹⁷ See Church Going in the UK, <http://www.tearfund.org/webdocs/Website/News/TAM%20Final%20Version%208.5.07.pdf> pp.6-7.

- Closed de-churched
28% of UK adults do not go to church*, used to attend in the past but say they are not very or not at all likely to go to church in future. This is equivalent to 13.7 million adults in the UK who are closed de-churched.
* never attend or go less than once a year.
- Open non-churched
1% of UK adults have never been to church in their life, apart from weddings, baptisms or funerals yet say they are very or fairly likely to go to church in future. This is equivalent to 0.6 million adults in the UK who are open non-churched.
- Closed non-churched
32% of UK adults have never been to church in their life, apart from weddings, baptisms or funerals and are not very or not at all likely to go to church in future. This is equivalent to 15.6 million adults in the UK who are closed non-churched.
- Other religions
6% of UK adults, equivalent to 3.2 million people, belong to religions other than Christianity.
- Unassigned
Only 162 respondents (2%) were “unassigned” because they did not answer the question on prior church attendance, although none of these had been to church in the last 12 months. A third of them attended church less than once a year or never, whilst two thirds declined to state their frequency of attendance.

If we consider that attending church at least once a month is indicative of a commitment to regular churchgoing, then there are 15% of UK adults who are regular churchgoers, which projects to around 7.6 million people.

However there are just as many adults in the UK – 7.3 million or 15% - who are either fringe churchgoers, occasional churchgoers or open de-churched. These people have some sympathy or connection with church through infrequent or sporadic attendance, or they have attended in the past and are open to returning. Outside of current regular churchgoers, these are potentially the most receptive people to approaches aimed at encouraging greater or renewed commitment to churchgoing.

There are a further 600,000 adults who have no experience of church at all yet are open to going in future – the open non-churched. This small group of receptive people are likely to need different approaches to attract them into church because of their secular background and unfamiliarity with churchgoing but they may also have less pre-conceptions about what to expect.

Adding together the open de-churched (2.3 million) and the open non-churched (0.6 million) gives 2.9 million people (6% of UK adults) who say they are likely to go to church in future. Put another way, one in every seventeen UK adults are open to churchgoing, if only churches reach out to them.

A third (33%) of UK adults are de-churched (16 million people) and a third (33%) are non-churched (16.2 million). Therefore 32.2 million or two thirds (66%) of UK adults are secular in that they have no connection with church at present. The vast majority of these – 29.3 million – are ‘closed’ to attending church in future (equivalent to 60% of all adults). This highlights the ongoing challenge facing churches today in attracting new members from a secular audience, for most of whom churchgoing is simply not on their agenda.

APPENDIX C: PARTNERSHIP FOR WORLD MISSION AGENCIES AND FRESH EXPRESSIONS OF CHURCH

The insights of the world church continue to inform and guide much of the theology and practice of our fresh expressions of church. "Mission-shaped Church" itself pointed to the riches and creativity of inherited and emerging churches around the world. The mission agencies continue to channel this good news and to encourage and challenge English church planters with fresh stories and thinking, in particular from the global South and from the European mainland.

In the light of the 2004 Synod motion, and in particular of its paragraph (d), PWM agencies were invited to contribute to this report. An alphabetical selection of their responses follows.

1. Church Army

Since the publication of Mission-shaped Church, Church Army has established about thirty evangelists in fresh expression projects, mostly sharing the funding with dioceses, parishes or trusts.

The settings are very varied, from areas of poverty in which the social deprivation is evident, to areas of aspirational new housing where the spiritual deprivation is evident. Some have the intention of introducing the Good News to specific groups - homeless people, arts communities, men or older people. However, they all have two features. Firstly, they are not based inside churches announcing, 'Come to us,' but are taking all that is good and life-enhancing about faith in Jesus Christ out of the church to those who have never had reason to engage seriously with such things: 'We will go to you!' Secondly, they are seeking to create new Christian communities that are not clones of existing ones, but are shaped to be culturally appropriate to the group that needs to hear the Good News.

The criteria for releasing Church Army funding have been consciously shaped by the principles of Mission Shaped Church. Led by this, increasing numbers of Church Army evangelists have moved into jobs that are genuinely pioneering, spending most of their lives and ministries among people who are profoundly unchurched. There is, however, a large number of evangelists who, funded from other sources, continue to minister in more traditional roles, working within churches to make their life-giving message attractive to those who are drawn to them.

Through advisory groups, websites and conferences, Church Army has sought to monitor, analyse and share the reasons for success and the learning from failure. Significant points of learning for Church Army have been:

Ministries among profoundly unchurched people take a long time to create recognisably Christian groups - five years may be just the beginning.

Such ministries do not start with worship, but with relationships, shared activity and exploration of life's values. (If people didn't want to come to the old worship, why would they want to come to the new worship just because it involves a drum kit?!)

The gravitational pull of inherited church is huge on the fragile fresh expressions orbiting it. When pioneering evangelism is challenging, it is tempting to think, 'Let's do another church

course explaining Christian basics - at least we know what we're doing!' But that will not reach profoundly unchurched people.

Fresh expression is not a euphemism for extreme or wacky. It is ordinary, but focussed.

If evangelism such as this targets children or young people, it needs constantly to be evolving, so that children do not need to make a huge cultural leap to find ongoing Christian nurture when they reach the top end of what is provided. Project leaders need to be thinking, 'What will these children need in five, ten, fifteen years, so that their inner lives are still active in a Christian context?'

Some projects are giving Church Army great joy, while in others excellent evangelists keep working faithfully in locations where a sustainable Christian community still looks impossibly distant.

Sorted, in Bradford Diocese, began with one Christian man on a skateboard in a park, and has now grown to a project reaching scores of young people in schools and estates. When Bishop David baptised eight formerly unchurched teenage boys in November 2008 their sole disappointment was that foul weather prevented it happening in the River Wharfe where they could have made their new faith even more public.

Through CoffeeCraft, in Hereford Diocese, a woman with a love of traditional crafts has gathered people together in rural locations where churches find themselves stretched to exhaustion by the challenge of serving their communities. As they are creative together, she has found the perfect context to turn their attention to their Creator, and watched one group exploring craft and faith grow to four.

Through Church on the Bus, in Derby Diocese, one church, realising that homeless men and women could never engage with the culture of a traditional service, has literally taken the church to them. What might simply have been a place of charity handouts has grown into a true congregation of prayer and mutual support, culturally at home in a double-decker. Bishop Humphrey conducted the first confirmation service for new Christians there in November 2009.

When Church Army evangelists realise what fresh expressions actually involve - creating ways for people who have never encountered Jesus at all to discover their rights in God - they often respond with lifted spirits. They realise that it was for this (not preaching to the converted) that they were originally excited about committing their lives to evangelism through Church Army.

*Peter Graystone
National Development Officer for Fresh Expressions
Church Army*

2. Church Mission Society A Community of Mission Service CMS and Fresh Expressions – the 1st Five Years

Introduction

From the publication of the Mission Shaped Church Report, CMS has sought to be at the heart of the Fresh Expressions Movement, helping to shape the thinking and the brokering of mission back into the heart of the wider Church.

Two members of the CMS staff team, (Chris Neal and Gill Poole), were part of the original working party, and over the past 5 years there has been a growing connection between CMS and the F.E. Team. CMS has seen a major part of that connection as the part funding of Bob and Mary Hopkins as they have developed the Mission Shaped Ministry Course. There has also been the involvement of Mark Berry with the F.E. Movement, and more recently the work of Ian Adams as he has sought to release and encourage Small Missional Communities, and the exploration of an emerging and new expression of monasticism. Members of the CMS Team have also been involved in helping to plan, shape and deliver some of the courses – such as the work in Chelmsford and Sheffield Dioceses. This involvement with the Fresh Expressions Movement has also been part of the journey of the re-imagining of CMS over the past decade, as there has been a growing and deepening recognition of the huge cultural and therefore mission changes taking place, both in Britain and the wider continent of Europe, but also globally.

CMS – A Community of Mission Service

As mentioned above, the CMS involvement with Fresh Expressions has been part of its own re-imagining and re-founding. It is not appropriate to explore all the issues in this brief reflection, only to point out that CMS is now recognised by the wider Church as An Acknowledged Community. This means that it is seen as part of the Church, and is in itself an ecclesial expression, and not simply a ‘para-church’ agency. This gives immense potential for releasing new expressions of Christian Community and helping to shape discipleship by and with a mission spirituality. At the heart of this spirituality, and perhaps the particular gift which CMS brings to the whole, is the recognition of the global nature of Christ, his call to share in his mission to the whole of his creation, and the need to meet Christ in the disciple who is not like us, in order that we might know and follow the ‘bigger’ Jesus Christ. It is only in this way that we will understand and respond to the depth of the mission to which he calls us.

Small Missional Communities

The above needs to be expressed in physical form – the imperative of the Incarnation – and over the past 5 years CMS has been seeking to release and encourage Small Missional Communities, shaped in some way by Cell Church Principles, but also by the recognition of the central importance of the global perspective in local mission engagement. There were three main motivations for this development: -

- i) The Mission Shaped Church report had identified the need to recognise the emerging post-modern culture and the fundamental paradigm shift taking place, especially in Western Europe.
- ii) There was also a recognition that for many people, including many Church members, the received way of expressing Church no longer had integrity or authenticity.
- iii) The increasing globalisation and migration means that we are in a mission situation which has changed and continues to change with increasing rapidity, and many of the received ways of expressing Church and Mission will not be sufficient for the future.

The In 2004, Mark Berry was appointed jointly with Lichfield Diocese to set up a Small Missional Community in Telford. This was seen as a proto-type for other such Communities. Work has continued over the past 5 years, and in 2009 Ian Adams was appointed to head up the Small Missional Communities Network – this is now in touch with some 75 people either exploring or actually developing such communities.

Houses of Mission

Alongside Small Missional Communities, CMS has been instrumental in seeking to develop residential Houses of Mission. In many ways such a move takes CMS back to its roots – the Clapham Sect lived a communal life focused around a regular pattern of daily prayer, which led to a mission engagement which changed the face of this nation, and was responsible for much of what is now the Anglican Communion. The first such house was opened in Oxford in 2008, with 9 residents. Again, this has been seen as a proto-type, and work is underway with partners to establish other such Houses around the country. It is hoped the Houses of Mission might become resource centres for a missional network lived out thorough the Small Missional Communities.

A ‘spin off’ from the Houses of Mission and the acknowledgment by the Church of England, is that CMS has been asked to host and help facilitate a day conference for the old established Religious Orders to meet and share with the new emerging monastic movements

Discipleship and Pioneer Leadership

It is clear from the Mission Shaped Church Report, and the subsequent thinking of the Fresh Expressions Movement, that the focal point of God’s people has to be his Mission – the *Missio dei* needs to be lived out in every place and circumstance. The key challenge for the future development is how we release people into a missional discipleship, and how we identify, release, equip and resource the next generation of Church leadership, which can enable God’s people to navigate the very uncertain future, which we will be facing, and in this not to have a survival mentality, but be able to speak a word of hope.

CMS has re-shaped its team to encourage a community which expresses its life in and through Mission, for the transformation of lives and Communities. We are seeking to develop discipleship pathways. The new membership commitment is based around 7 promises which shape and encourage discipleship. It is also planned to develop a learning network for CMS supporting and Link Churches.

Alongside this the C of E has asked CMS to be one of the providers of Pioneer Leadership training, and it is hoped the pilot year will begin in September 2010.

Chris Neal

Director of Community Mission CMS

12th Jan.2010

3. Crosslinks: an outline of the working questions for Church Plants/Fresh Expressions seeking partnership.

- *How does what we are doing fit in with Crosslinks' goals and priorities?*
 - Crosslinks is a mission agency, committed to serve churches worldwide in their engagement in God's mission. We have two fundamental priorities: Evangelistic Opportunities and Training Trainers.
 - We are passionate about people coming to know God through Christ by the proclamation and teaching of God's Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - In the 21st Century Britain has become a land where few know of Christ and fewer know him.
 - Crosslinks has always been involved in home mission, initially through theological training (for mission overseas and recognised for service in mission in the Church of England) and other faiths work, as well as being committed to biblical reform (hence our involvement in the 1928 Prayer Book debate).

- *How would the relationship work in practice (issues of governance, exercise of oversight, what are the reasons which might bring the relationship to an end, what are the opportunities and/or expectations of participating in the wider Crosslinks family...)?*
 - Our biblical ecclesiology means that Mission Partners and Associates are always accountable to local churches in which they serve; this will involve local accountability as set up (Council, Eldership etc) and a wider form of external oversight.
 - Crosslinks is a voluntary agency (in other word not part of the official structures of the Church of England or the Church of Ireland) but our brokerage role in cases where regular oversight is withheld or disputed has been recognised by denominational bodies and office holders.
 - Crosslinks does not see itself as a new denomination and does not seek to exercise oversight as a Society nor through any of its paid employees. We will constantly seek to establish alternative oversight until such time as the situation can be regularised. Crosslinks' role is seen as provisional.
 - In line with our General Missiological Principles 'we will always seek to foster local church ownership of mission engagements, independent of Crosslinks'. In the case of this form of engagement we will seek to establish clear but flexible time parameters.
 - Crosslinks will seek to serve these new churches through its network, helping them and encouraging them to develop patterns of best practice and encouraging a commitment to God's worldwide mission.
 - The relationship would be ended by mutual consent, or by either party in cases (for example) of:
 - Gross misconduct.
 - Teaching contrary to the Crosslinks Ethos Statement.

- *We are not clear as to Crosslinks' relationship with the C of E (or C of I) and how a relationship with Crosslinks affects us (the enquirers for this type of engagement) and Crosslinks.*

- Crosslinks is a voluntary society of members, operating primarily but not exclusively within the worldwide Anglican Communion, and is recognised by and in relationship with the constituent churches of the Anglican Communion. We are not however part of the official structures of the denomination. This enables Crosslinks to sponsor mission activities around the world, both within and outside of the Anglican Communion.
 - A relationship with Crosslinks provides informal links and connection with the worldwide Anglican Communion as well as a powerful incentive to remain mission-focussed.
- *What role would Crosslinks place, and what stance would Crosslinks take, if we found ourselves in conflict with the local bishop?*
 - Crosslinks would always seek to broker good, constructive relationships with Anglican (or other) authorities.
 - Where there is a strained relationship with the authorities, Crosslinks will seek to ensure that the dispute has not arisen purely because of the insensitivity and intransigence of the planters, Crosslinks would seek to provide encouragement and support for the churches in the face of official inflexibility, doctrinal compromise and even bullying.
- *How would Crosslinks help with the bigger long-term vision?*
 - Through a network of people committed to such mission-focussed churches, Crosslinks would seek to facilitate the pooling of ideas and expertise as well as sharing experiences of failures and mistakes.
- *Tell us what characterises a healthy partnership with Crosslinks, and what doesn't?*
 - In line with Crosslinks' understanding of church we are not seeking a heavy-handed or authoritative role (of control and oversight) in partnership with churches. We are servants of the churches not authorities, seeking to enable the right environment for the plant to develop. Direct accountability should be to others, not to Crosslinks. Crosslinks' role is more one of advice and accompanying.
 - A healthy partnership will be characterised by common purpose based on:
 - Common belief
 - Shared gospel ambition
 - A healthy relationship will be expressed in mutual prayer, interest (expressed by the planters in such things as Membership, attendance at the Annual Meeting of Members, writing articles for the magazine or annual review when requested), giving and activity.

Andy Lines: CEO and Mission Director, Crosslinks

4. USPG Anglicans in World Mission

If we are serious about discovering new ways of engaging in mission with contemporary society, there are three fundamental points which have steered USPG as we have reformed ourselves into “Anglicans in World Mission”. If Mission is what God does, reflecting who God is, in the world, it follows that Mission must be holistic, as in the “Five Marks of Mission.” It cannot be primarily a church marketing and recruitment programme, although the Church is an integral part of God’s activity and our response. What the local church does must be part of the whole: mission has to be global.

USPG exists to help Anglicans in Britain and Ireland to be in supportive relationships with the rest of the Anglican Communion. So we provide worship and study resources for Lent, Harvest and Advent each year to help Sunday Worship and Parish Groups (especially those who use the Lent Course) to see the mission of the church in a global context, so that their own local mission is informed, inspired and challenged by what is happening elsewhere in the world. These resources also encourage parishes and individuals here to help fund the work and projects which dioceses around the Communion have nominated for USPG support, in tune with their own mission priorities.

Some examples would be:

(1) The fledgling Anglican Church of the Amazon, which is supporting communities sustain their traditional way of life seriously threatened by large fishing corporations depleting local fish stocks. The church here is also developing the severely under-resourced primary school and a women's literacy programme. For Duca, fisherman and community leader, church life and community action are inseparable. He says, "I think the Anglican Church can be a protagonist in this life project."

(2) Zululand has a long track record of engaged rural ministry. The church plan to develop a number of underused parish sites to create employment, food production, income generation, modeling of good farming and environmental practices. Some small projects are already running into a co-ordinated programme where they are learning from and supporting one another. This social development programme is called *Masinakekelane!* - "let's care for one another!"

(3) Myanmar, where a fish farm and agricultural training programme provides much-needed food and witnesses to the Gospel where open evangelism is difficult. The priest in charge states: "As a Christian, I have decided to dedicate myself to training the community and meeting their needs, whether it is a spiritual need or a need for training."

Perhaps our way of relationship-building and responding to our partners’ mission priorities could offer to churches here some insights into how they listen to their own constituencies – in the community, among the young, with families or whatever – to allow these groups to articulate their real concerns and needs – and then enable the churches to shape their mission agendas accordingly, and not just around a church-driven agenda.

There is more about USPG, including its resources and the new Projects Scheme, at <http://www.uspg.org.uk>

Rt Revd Michael Doe, General Secretary
USPG: Anglicans in World Mission

APPENDIX D: MINORITY ETHNIC ANGLICANS AND FRESH EXPRESSIONS OF CHURCH

The Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns (CMEAC) has held this matter under review. At a meeting of the Committee in March 2009 members were able to identify a number of churches and areas of work as examples of good practice in bringing the particular gifts and strengths of minority ethnic Anglicans to bear on the whole mission agenda.

Sonia Barron is Adviser to the Committee. She writes:

The latest national parish congregation diversity monitoring report (2007) from the Research and Statistics department of the Archbishops' Council found that minority ethnic people make up 4.7% of Church of England core adult congregations. However the report also shows that although minority ethnic people are present in significant numbers they are often not participating fully at all levels within the life of their parish where they are part of the 'core congregation'.

Making space for new forms of church provides the opportunity for minority ethnic Anglicans (MEA) to express their faith, however this can also raise issues and questions which might not have arisen had the status quo been maintained.

There are several ethno-linguistic congregations which have emerged in areas where there are large numbers of asylum seekers, usually united by a common language. In these situations Christians of all denominations meet and worship as a group. They form a 'fresh expression' in that place – quite often the meeting place is an Anglican church at a time when the building is not in use, perhaps on a Sunday afternoon. However these Christians are often perceived as 'clients' rather than brothers and sisters in Christ from whom the 'indigenous church' could learn, and where there is an opportunity for the whole church to grow together. These congregations provide ways for both the traditional and 'fresh expression' of church to find a way forward together, to find a new space which they can inhabit and worship together, in a genuinely mixed economy. Sustaining ecclesiastical apartheid is not what the mixed economy church is about; instead of simply co-existing, all Anglicans should learn from one another, even if that means moving outside their "comfort zone".

'Fresh expressions' such as these have an important part to play in the evangelistic mission and the wider life of any diocese which contains them. The new legislation on Bishop's Mission Orders is well suited to providing proper recognition and oversight for such communities, if they are not already part of the Anglican family. The diocese of London has been innovative in appointing a Chaplain of International churches with the remit of looking at ways in which such growing and working together can happen – maybe this is something other dioceses could emulate.

Fresh expressions of church can take many different forms and whilst examples such as the one above is replicated around the country, it is important there should not be a stereotyping of MEA into this particular 'fresh expression'. New forms of church involving minority ethnic Anglicans are as diverse as any other areas of 'fresh expressions' and the diversity monitoring of 2007 highlights the fact that churches are more successful in attracting younger minority ethnic congregation members. Many 'fresh expressions' appear to do no more than reflect the culture of the inherited church. This is particularly noticeable in Pioneer ministry and it is

important that those involved in the selection and training of Pioneer ministers should work hard and be open to a variety of possibilities beyond the “usual suspects”.

Expanding the Mission-shaped church agenda in this way will certainly progress the aims of CMEAC rather than hold it back. ‘Fresh expressions’, within the mixed economy has the potential to be as the early church in Acts 2 – the Church gathered in one place, learning and moving forward together, but also being open to the Holy Spirit to touch each of us in our own way and through our own language and culture. This would truly be a mission-shaped church.

To illustrate these points the Committee offered a number of examples from members’ own knowledge and experience: please contact the Committee directly for further details:
sonia.barron@c-of-e.org.uk

The examples include:

1. One member’s rich experience of working in the Midlands with a multicultural congregation to bring people together in a healthy and positive way, avoiding the provider/client relationship and helping all to grow in faith and love.
2. Another’s story of Korean Anglican nuns, offering a ministry of presence and witness especially to Korean people in the Midlands.
3. The story of Lorraine, who is planting church through her work as a DJ into the youth culture.
4. “Sanctuary”, a church-plant working mainly with British people of Asian descent in Birmingham.
5. A south London parish, standing for many others in the Committee’s experience, whose commitment over many years has been to affirm and welcome the widest diversity. This has produced a congregation ready to experiment and innovate in response to the Mission-shaped Church agenda.

Appendix E:

ECUMENISM AND FRESH EXPRESSIONS OF CHURCH

The Revd Roger Paul writes:

Mission Shaped Church: Report from CCU

*Mission Shaped Church*¹⁸ places a strong emphasis on the unity of the Church shaped for mission. The report states:

*No Christian group can legitimately think “we exist by ourselves, or for ourselves”.*¹⁹

Ecumenical co-operation in mission grows out of networks of trusting relationships between Christians, Churches and Church leaders of different traditions and cultural expressions. These networks are enriched by the involvement of new Churches, black majority and Pentecostal Churches, as well as the traditional denominations.

Energy, commitment and resources are needed to build up and nurture these networks, and to enable communication to take place within them. This is often dependent on committed individuals, but this work benefits if it is supported by Church leaders, and properly resourced, and is seen to be a crucial part of local mission strategy.

Networks - Example 1

In Milton Keynes, the Ecumenical Mission Partnership recognises that the network of Churches throughout the City is the essential seed bed for a wide variety of mission initiatives. It is committed to expanding the network, and commits the resource of the Ecumenical Moderator to make new contacts, and to nurture relationships. The six monthly *Who’s Who in the Churches of Milton Keynes* is sold out very quickly, and new groups are always queuing up to be included in it.

Recommendation 9

Flowing from this strong emphasis on unity, Recommendation 9 of *Mission Shaped Church* states:

*Local ecumenical co-operation is critical to the Church’s mission. Churches need a light touch process that enables local mission experiments and partnerships between Christians of different denominations. A new category of “locally negotiated ecumenical partnerships” (or equivalent terminology) should be created. The introduction of formal ecumenical arrangements should be delayed until the mission initiative has become established.*²⁰

Some important clarifications need to be made in responding to this recommendation. First is the distinction between what is regulated and what is not regulated in ecumenical partnerships. Shared ministry, sacramental life and worship come within the Ecumenical Relations Measure (1989). Other than these areas, ecumenical co-operation in mission at local

¹⁸ *Mission Shaped Church: Church Planting and Fresh Expressions of Church in a Changing Context*, Church House Publishing (London), 2004

¹⁹ Op. Cit. 1: p. 96

²⁰ Op. Cit. 1: p. 146

level lies within the delegated powers given to incumbents and Parochial Church Councils and requires no special authorisation.

Second is the distinction between that which is ecumenical and that which is a requirement of project management. There will be situations, whether ecumenical or not, where issues of charitable status, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, insurance, health and safety, employment and financial management need to be addressed. **Work is currently being done to provide a checklist for safeguarding in local ecumenical projects, and there is a wealth of other experience of ecumenical project management at local level.**

With these distinctions in mind it is possible to focus on the ecumenical issues, which are more to do with building up relationships, rather than on the growing complexity of secular legislation.

Local Ecumenical Partnerships

The Ecumenical Relations Measure (1989) (ERM) and Canons B43 and B44 were brought into effect in response to the vacuum created by the failure of the English Covenanting Proposals of 1982. Through the ERM, the identity of the Church of England is expressed in outward looking partnerships, rather than defensive isolation. **Extensive work has been done by the Council for Christianity Unity (CCU) to streamline the process for authorising shared ministry, sacraments and worship under Canons B43 and B44. Bishop's Mission Orders would equally benefit from a similar approach.**²¹

Churches Together in England designates six categories of Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs)²². *Mission Shaped Church* was critical of ecumenical church plants, although one of the authors subsequently wrote a paper giving a more positive assessment of single congregation LEPs in some circumstances²³. Preliminary findings of CCU research suggest that the presence of a single congregation LEP can act as a catalyst for ecumenical mission in a wider area, without the need for any further agreements.

LEPs - Example 1:

In a deprived urban area in Bradford Diocese, a circuit and diocese have recognised considerable scope for re-organising the parish structure and the Methodist minister's pastoral charge, so that those with ministerial responsibility can now make the area their top priority. The existence of the LEP has proved to be a resource in support of two congregations in an area where substantial new housing developments are planned, and neither the Methodist church nor the parish church is well located to serve them. Neither building has any great merit – a new shared building may be the answer.

LEPs - Example 2:

A new housing area is being built on the edge of an area served by an existing single congregation LEP in Suffolk. The ecumenical mission of the Church in the area of new housing is facilitated by agreements that are already in place.

LEPs - Example 3:

The Ecumenical Mission Partnership in Milton Keynes is encouraging the ecumenical team

²¹ Resources prepared by the Council for Christian Unity can be found at: http://www.anglican-methodist.org.uk/ddeo_home.htm

²² These include Single Congregation LEPs, Local Covenanted Partnerships, Sharing agreements, Ecumenical Chaplaincies, Mission and Educational Partnerships.

²³ George Lings, Encounters on the Edge No. 23: New Housing, New Partnerships, Sheffield Centre 2006?

parishes of the city to work on new mission strategies in the expansion areas. The Watling Valley team is developing a fully ecumenical mix of traditional congregations, fresh expressions and a church primary school. This second phase of ecumenical mission in the new town, which began with traditional church plants, has now moved on into a mixed economy strategy. The ecumenical agreements and commitments already in place are providing a firm basis for mission initiatives.

However, the research has also revealed that in single congregation LEPs:

- The stipendiary ministry is mainly or wholly provided by the Church of England in many cases;
- There is a lack of consistency concerning how single congregation LEPs should be constituted;
- There is often a lack of clarity about how the ecumenical canons are being applied;
- There is a tendency for congregations to lose touch with the parent denominations;
- They can become isolated in those areas where there are few LEPs;
- The stress of ministers is increased by having to relate to the bodies of each participating Church.

The Council for Christian Unity has embarked on a review of the Church of England's involvement in LEPs, and is expected to produce a report with recommendations for reshaping the Church of England's vision and commitment to Ecumenical Mission in Partnership by 2010.

The recommendations are likely to feature:

- Options for simpler structures of oversight;
- Proposals for support and development of ministers;
- Clarification of constitutional issues;
- Focussing on ecumenical structures as a means for Churches to engage together in mission.

Bishop's Mission Orders

The introduction of Bishop's Mission Orders (BMOs), through section 5 of the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure (2007) and the accompanying code of practice have released new opportunities for unity in mission. Cooperative mission initiatives are being explored in a number of places.

BMOs – Example 1:

In Sheffield, a congregation of adults with learning difficulties is seeking a more secure future. The project is a joint venture of a Parish Church, a free evangelical Church and a charitable trust, and is served by a Baptist Pastor, not nationally recognised by the Baptist Union. The partners are particularly attracted by the provision in the Bishop's Mission Order for an ecumenically appointed Bishop's Visitor to act as a critical friend, a focus of accountability and a link to the wider Church. For this congregation, the downside is the five year time limit on the order, which although it may be extended for a further five years, may not give them a sufficient sense of long term stability.

BMOs – Example 2:

In a cluster of villages near Cambridge, two youth projects, one Baptist and the other Church of England have come together, and a new youth congregation is emerging. The congregation

moves around the villages and so crosses over parish boundaries. A Cooperative Bishop's Mission Order is being sought to give this initiative greater flexibility in relation to the parishes, and also to link the initiative into the wider Church, through an ecumenically appointed Bishop's Visitor.

BMOs – Example 3:

In Devon, one of the areas of new housing is a significant development of 3,000 new homes near Plymouth. The Baptist Church and Church of England have been working closely together to draw up a mission strategy for the area. Having considered a number of other models, a local ecumenical partnership authorised through a Bishop's Mission order is most likely to meet the needs and aspirations of the initiative.

BMOs – Example 4:

In Yeovil, a number of Churches in the town are working closely together to respond to the challenge of new housing being developed in a number of areas of the town edge. Despite fears that the process of consultation required for setting up a co-operative mission initiative is rather complex, this route is being actively explored, because it would have the flexibility to operate across the whole of the area and not just in one parish.

These examples indicate that some of the principles of Bishop's Mission Orders: the value of consultation, the role of the Bishop's Visitor, and the flexibility offered to initiatives that do not relate directly to parish structures, offer appropriate support for ecumenical partnerships in mission. The first two of these principles can be applied even where a Bishop's Mission Order is inappropriate.

In response to the provisions in the measure for co-operative mission orders, **CCU has produced guidelines for working in partnership with Churches which are not designated under the Ecumenical Relations Measure (1989)**²⁴.

Independent and Black Majority Churches

Partnerships with independent Churches and Black Majority Churches offer a new and exciting area of ecumenical mission, which relies on the building up of friendship and trusting relationships. Where new independent Churches and Black Majority Churches join with the traditional Churches in local networks new possibilities for mission, common witness and sharing may present themselves. Hope '08, the Global Day of Prayer, Ministers' Prayer Breakfasts and the Street Pastors Movement all rely on the existence of good relationships and strengthen them. In some places, local Churches Together Groups can be revitalised, in others a wider network may exist alongside more traditional structures.

Churches Together Groups - Example 1

Churches Together in Deptford ceased to exist many years ago, but has been revived by an Anglican priest working closely with leaders of independent black majority churches in the neighbourhood. It is in its early days but the inaugural service was a time of great rejoicing, there is enthusiasm for the initiative, and topics for forthcoming meetings include plans for the development of Deptford and learning about what is going on ecumenically in other parts of South London.

Churches Together Groups - Example 2

Transform Southwark is a fellowship of many churches in the borough, including a large number of black majority congregations, meeting for regular prayer, engaging with local

²⁴ Follow this link to the document: <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/info/ccu/england/resources/guidelinesmi.pdf>

civic leaders to discuss issues relating to policing, health, education etc, and supporting the Global Day of Prayer, London.

In many areas Church of England parish churches offer hospitality to a wide variety of Black Majority Churches, and while it is important to proceed positively but cautiously, these arrangements can lead to new relationships that go beyond the tenant-landlord, and even the host-guest relationship. **Work is in progress in CCU to provide resources for dioceses and parishes to develop the mission opportunities of these relationships.**

Offering Hospitality – Example 1

A parish church in the Diocese of Southwark has hosted a predominantly African congregation belonging to the Cherubim and Seraphim tradition for over twenty years. The hiring agreement is clear and well-observed, relations between the ministers and members of the respective congregations are friendly, they have increasingly shared worship and preaching and have celebrated days like Racial Justice Sunday together. As both congregations are part of Churches named in the Sharing of Church Buildings Act (1969), they are now considering the possibility of a formal sharing agreement.

A contrast is often perceived between fluid and solid Church, or between the inherited structures of the tradition and emerging fresh expressions. It is not helpful to set up false dichotomies but to understand how fluid and solid Church interact. An ecclesiology needs to include how the Church responds flexibly to new situations, and how tradition develops. **The Faith and Order Advisory Group in collaboration with the Methodist Faith and Order Committee has initiated a working group to address ecclesiological issues in relation to fresh expressions. This work will be completed by 2011.**

The late Bishop Ian Cundy, formerly Chair of the Council for Christian Unity, spoke of the indissoluble Biblical connection between mission and unity, which is seen at its most explicit in the missiology of St John's Gospel. In St John 17.17-23, Jesus prays that all who believe in him may be one, as he and the Father are one, that the world may see and know the Father's love, and that being sent into the world, they may testify to the truth. This is not a two stage process: first unite the divided Church so that we may then engage more effectively in mission. It is rather that God's mission, in which we his Church are called to participate, includes being drawn into a spiritual, visible and missional unity. The Bible as a whole reveals God as the great reconciler, whose purpose in Christ is to reconcile all things in heaven and earth (Colossians 1.15-20). The Church is thus both an arena of his reconciling love and his co-worker in the work of reconciliation.