The Strategic Investment Board, on behalf of the Archbishops' Council, has awarded £10.5 million to eight dioceses to support major growth and change projects.

This is the fifth tranche of Strategic Development Funding which has so far provided £34.6 million to dioceses as part of Renewal and Reform.
The eight dioceses that will receive grants are Coventry, Guildford, Hereford, London, St Albans, Salisbury, Southwell and Nottingham and Truro (see below).

Speaking about a grant of £1.27 million for rural ministry and mission, the Bishop of Salisbury, Nicholas Holtam, said:

"I am delighted Salisbury has received such strong support. On an average Sunday 40% of those worshipping in the Church of England do so in a rural setting. Rural church has a different dynamic to suburban and urban contexts. Small groups of regular worshippers keep the heartbeat of prayer and worship alive for the whole community. It is communal religion.

"The needs and care of large rural multi-parish benefices need particular care. We are delighted that Salisbury is developing as a centre of excellence in which rural ministry and mission is developed and encouraged with imagination and flair."

Another rural area, Hereford Diocese, is aiming to stimulate and achieve spiritual and numerical intergenerational growth over the next five years. The Bishop of Hereford, Richard Frith, said:

"I am thrilled that our bid for Strategic Development Funding has been successful. The grant will be invaluable in enabling us to employ six new missioners to work with people who don't have a connection with church, focusing particularly on young people. It is also an encouraging affirmation of our praying, planning and working for spiritual and numerical growth."

In Cornwall funding will support Truro Diocese as it seeks to see the churches at the heart of Cornish towns renewed and equipped, engaged with their communities, growing in numbers and in faith and attracting younger generations, beginning with a project focusing on Falmouth. The Bishop of Truro, Tim Thornton, said:

"This funding enables us to shape and resource the church differently in Falmouth. We pray and hope that this will lead to a transformation of parochial life and we will be able to learn from this project so we can encourage other areas of the diocese to flourish and grow. There is a huge amount of energy and enthusiasm. Already many people are working together and are ambitious and excited for the future."

Director of Renewal and Reform, Mike Eastwood, said: "Renewal and Reform is about a growing church in and for all people and in and for all places. The hope that each of these projects gives for a positive future for mission and ministry at the local level is inspiring. The seeds of Renewal and Reform are now beginning to grow across the country as plans become reality."
Notes

Coventry (and Ebbsfleet) - Serving Christ - Empowering Christian Disciples for Spiritual and Numerical Growth - Strategic Development Funding grant of £1.77m awarded.

Guildford - New Opportunities - New Worshipping Communities - Strategic Development Funding grant of £1.08m awarded.

Hereford - Growing Intergenerational Mission - Strategic Development Funding grant of £525,000 awarded.

London - Capital Youth - a diocese where every parish is engaged in youth ministry - Strategic Development Funding grant of £1.88m awarded.

St Albans - Reaching New People in New Ways - Strategic Development Funding grant of £1.75m awarded.

Salisbury - Renewing Hope through Rural Ministry and Mission - Strategic Development Funding grant of £1.27m awarded.

Southwell and Nottingham - Mid-County Rural and Market Town Resource Churches - Strategic Development Funding grant of £1.06m awarded.

Truro - Transforming Mission - Strategic Development Funding grant of £1.20m awarded.