

Underlining its commitment to renewing the Church across England, over £9.1million has been awarded by the Archbishops' Council to seven dioceses for projects from East London to Worcestershire and Sussex to Liverpool.

The grants are part of the [strategic development funding](#) stream that began in 2014 and from which 20 dioceses have now benefitted. The funding is a core element of [Renewal and Reform](#), the Church of England's initiative to promote growth in the church in every community in England.

The largest award of £2.5 million goes to the Diocese of Birmingham, working with younger people in proclaiming the Christian faith in Birmingham's diverse multi-cultural contexts. The plan is by 2022 to plant 15 new churches, revitalise 15 existing church communities, encourage 15 new fresh expressions of Church, make over a 1000 new disciples, train up to 1000 missional leaders and increase ordained vocations by more than 50%. The Bishop of Birmingham, the Rt Revd David Urquhart said: 'A huge amount of work across the diocese has gone in to putting together our plan to bring Christ to young people in our communities so we are absolutely thrilled to receive funding to bring this to life. Society is going through massive cultural changes and in Birmingham we are meeting these head on with confidence and a real sense that we are all in this together.'

Funding of £750,000 goes to the Diocese of Worcester to recruit up to ten children and young people's mission enablers to support and train parishes. The Bishop of Worcester, the Rt Revd Dr John Inge, said: 'Our Calling Young Disciples project is a very exciting one which has the potential to enable many young people to learn of Jesus' great love for them. We are enormously grateful for the funding both as an encouragement and the substantial practical boost it gives to our plans.'

The Diocese of Chelmsford has been awarded £2 million to support the planting of churches in vast new housing areas in its first four strategic mission priority areas together with a new congregation in Forest Gate. The Bishop of Chelmsford, the Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell, said: 'I am proud to be serving an expanding diocese that continues to support new communities as much as established ones. The Church has always been there to support people wherever they have settled. Now it is our turn to invest in new communities as well as in older settlements. New housing areas should be neighbourhoods people choose to call home and raise a family, with churches and schools they love, sharing the good news of Christ and helping to build stable communities.'

Programme Director, Mike Eastwood said, 'Renewal and Reform is having a real impact around the country. The Church has a hopeful future and the sense of energy that these dioceses are putting into making this happen is really exciting.'

Other dioceses that have received awards are: Bristol (£950,000 to develop three existing parish churches to become the 'resource churches' for specific Mission Areas); [Chichester](#) (£825, 000 to continue the diocese's on-going programme of church planting); Leicester (£1million funding for developing leadership and vocations amongst Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic Christians in order to grow new and existing congregations amongst people from those backgrounds); [Liverpool](#) (£1m to develop a low-cost model to multiply congregations to complement conventional church planting).

Download a summary of projects funded by the Strategic Development Funding.

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