Nine dioceses receive significant cash injection to support major growth and change projects under Renewal and Reform.
The Spending Plans Task Group of the Church Commissioners and Archbishops' Council has awarded £7.8m to projects from nine dioceses from the stream of Strategic Development Funding, which is to be expanded from 2017 as part of Renewal and Reform.

Carlisle, Derby, Durham, Exeter, Portsmouth, Rochester, Sodor and Man, Southwark and Southwell & Nottingham have all received grants for growth and change proposals in their dioceses (see below). This is the third tranche of Strategic Development Funding to be awarded in the 2014-16 triennium and now brings the total allocated through to just under of £15m.

The aim of the funding is to complement the formula-based funding distributed to dioceses each year, so they can benefit from additional resources to make a significant difference to their long-term mission and financial strength, by supporting major growth and change activity which fits with dioceses' strategic plans.

Proposals will be evaluated throughout to ensure that learning for the wider Church can be captured and disseminated, complementing the new process of diocesan Peer Review, which is also a key part of Renewal and Reform.

The funding was awarded after a competitive process, in which dioceses were invited to put forward initial applications to the Task Group. Those proposals which were judged to meet the criteria most strongly were invited to submit detailed project plans.

Thirteen applications were received in the first stage, of which eight were invited forward to the second stage, together with one which had undertaken further work on its project plan. All nine projects have subsequently been awarded funding, complementing the dioceses' own investment in the work being supported.

John Spence, chair of the Archbishops' Council Finance Committee, said: “I'm delighted that the Archbishops' Council and Church Commissioners have been able to support some exciting proposals, and help these dioceses turn their strategic plans into reality. We have a range of very different approaches here, but all of them are focused on strengthening mission and growth at grass-roots level.

"The new Resourcing the Future distribution arrangements give both the oxygen for more such schemes from 2017 and the obligation on us all to seek to utilise the funds being made available in a quality way."

**Further details on the projects awarded funding:**

Carlisle: £859,000 to help implement the diocese’s strategy for new Mission Communities, through developing Mission Community Leaders, Fresh Expressions, and Digital Evangelism.

Derby: £1.26m to help establish a City Centre Resource Church and Missional Community in Derby, to support outreach to young people and 14 deprived parishes.

Durham: £800,000 for the diocese's Missional Leadership for Growth Programme to over 150 key local leaders, accompanied by action learning and mission projects in parishes.

Exeter: £1m for the diocese's 'Growing the Rural Church' programme to help rural parishes develop mission and in particular develop the use of
their church buildings in a way which strengthens mission and evangelism.

Portsmouth: £929,000 to support an expansion of the diocese's Pioneer Project and to develop a City Centre Resource Church.

Rochester: £665,000 to re-establish mission in Chatham Town Centre, planting a new worshipping community alongside missional outreach.

Sodor and Man: £135,000 for a Pioneer Youth team to strengthen mission and evangelism for children and young people, through work in schools and selected parishes, in association with the Scripture Union Ministries Trust.

Southwark: £950,000 for Pioneer Ministry and a Resource Church in Nine Elms and development of Fresh Expressions across the diocese.

Southwell & Nottingham: £1.2m for the development of 25 strategic resource churches, a Younger Leadership College and a City Centre Resource Church in Nottingham.

Notes

The funding for new growth opportunities set out under the “Resourcing the Future” report will be delivered through Strategic Development Funding, which was established in 2014 for the purpose of supporting major change projects and which will lead to a significant difference to their mission and financial strength. £24m per annum will be available from 2017, with two opportunities for dioceses to apply a year.

The funding involves a two-stage application process: a light-touch first stage to assess what is proposed and the extent to which it is consistent with the diocese's wider strategy, followed in the second stage by a detailed project plan.

Staff from the Strategy & Development can offer support and guidance to those wishing to apply. Funding is also available to those dioceses wishing to build their capacity to develop and deliver their strategic plans.

The new process of Peer Review seeks to ensure mutual accountability over how resources are being used and facilitate shared learning between dioceses about their plans for mission, evangelism and discipleship. This will involve meetings between the senior leadership teams of dioceses and a peer review team. The team will comprise three members drawn from a wide pool of peer reviewers, nominated by dioceses and the Archbishops’ Council, on the basis of their skills and experience and trained for the task.

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