

Following a series of recent articles and blogs speculating about the direction of the Church of England's 'Vision and Strategy' discussions Dave Male, the Church of England's director of evangelism and discipleship, said:

"I am very aware that some recent commentary in media and social media purporting to set out the future direction of Church of England has caused real anxiety, hurt and pain to many.

"Some of this has been based on a fundamental confusion between the Church of England's own emerging Vision and Strategy for the 2020s and beyond, which we will be discussing at the upcoming meeting of General Synod, and a separate initiative called Myriad to create 10,000 new lay-led churches - which is not a national Church of England project.

"It has been claimed in some places that there is a plan to dissolve the parish system, sideline or even replace trained clergy, especially paid clergy, or to get rid of our beautiful, historic church buildings.

"So I want to make it abundantly clear that the Church of England is committed, now as always, to the ministry of the whole people of God including to ordained ministry in our parishes.

"The Church of England has been undergoing a listening exercise to develop the new Vision and Strategy for the 2020s. While that is still taking shape, it is already clear that it will be about spiritual renewal, rooted in theology and founded on prayer; renewing our commitment to being a church for everyone – for the people of England wherever they are - and a revitalised parish system.

"One suggestion floated in a [recent Synod paper](#) is that all of our dioceses and most of our 12,500 parishes will start something new in the next decade.

"We think this could result in perhaps 10,000 new groups of Christians meeting together in all spheres of their life – home and local community, work and education and even the social and digital realm.

"Most of the best new ideas in the past have arisen from parishes. Therefore, alongside parishes (and often flowing from them), we need to enable "the church" to form in the different networks in which we live our lives.

"Myriad is a self-funding initiative aiming to support the planting of 10,000 new, predominantly lay-led churches. It comes from the Gregory Centre for Church Multiplication which supports leaders, church teams and diocese across London, England and beyond as they multiply disciples, churches and networks. It is part of the CofE but works with many denominations and networks.

"If we can get this right; if we can come together, contribute to and play our part in a new shared vision for the Church of England in our time I am certain God will work through us to bring his good news to the people of England."

[Listen to Dave Male, Director of Evangelism and Discipleship for the Church of England, explain more about the Vision and Strategy discussions.](#)

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