



to expand its work spreading the Christian faith to people with

The grant to the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich in Suffolk will help promote Christian communities in Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds and Felixstowe, and in up to 12 market towns and five rural areas.

The new funding will support churches to develop their work with children, young people and their families – particularly in deprived areas – and offer training to people in parish churches across the diocese.

It is hoped that the project will provide a blue print for mission in rural areas across the country.

More than 30 ‘Lightwave’ groups of small, informal church gatherings, working alongside parishes, have already been formed, meeting as youth cafes, toddler groups and even walking groups in rural areas. So far the Lightwave groups have attracted more than 300 people to the Christian faith since their launch in 2019.

In Ipswich, three new churches have been created since 2019 as well as social action projects providing surplus food from supermarkets, based in nine churches.

The Bishop of Dunwich, Dr Mike Harrison, said: “This funding is a huge boost to the Church of England in Suffolk as we continue to build our Christian presence in our communities. We have learned a lot during the pandemic, as we focused on serving our communities and we want to continue to grow in whatever ways we can”.

## More information

- The Church of England has also awarded a Strategic Development Funding (SDF) grant of £2.3 million to the Diocese of Birmingham for church planting in the city, including support for mission from St John the Baptist Church in Longbridge and a pilot scheme with five Anglo Catholic parishes.
- The Church of England's Vision and Strategy for the 2020s is helping us to be a Church which proclaims and lives out the Good News of Jesus Christ afresh in every generation.

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