

The Church of England is to work with a youth charity to equip parishes to reach more young people with the Christian message.

Youthscape
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A £1.29 million grant from the Archbishops' Council will fund work led by Youthscape to help parishes connect with young people and recruit and train church volunteers for youth work.

The Launchpad scheme, run by Youthscape, has already been successfully piloted in the Dioceses of Blackburn, London and St Albans. So far, the scheme has helped 140 Church of England priests to formulate plans to work with young people in their parishes.

Under the new funding arrangements, the scheme will be expanded to 450 churches across 18 dioceses over the next three years with the potential to engage with up to 4,000 young people.

The grant will also fund training produced by Youthscape for up to 2,500 church volunteers to do youth work and resources to support youth work in up to 2,000 churches or groups.

Chris Curtis, Chief Executive of Youthscape, said: "We're excited to be able to serve the Church of England in this way and we are looking forward to working with parishes and benefices in every context - from rural to suburban and urban.

"Young people have so much to bring to the life of the church and we hope our work will be part of our shared vision to grow younger."

Dave Male, the Church of England's Co Director for Vision and Strategy, said: "This is an exciting partnership with Youthscape.



their ability to equip priests and their churches to start youth work."

Dr Michael Beasley, who is now the Bishop of Bath and Wells, was involved with the pilot in his previous role in St Albans, where 10 clergy recently took part in the course.

“They reported a transformation from being ‘apprehensive to enthusiastic’ at the prospect of leading youth ministry as a result,” he said.

“Each of their parishes is now working on plans to turn learning into action – ranging from offering Ignatian Meditation for 10 year olds in a local Costa to offering a drop in café for youth who walk past one church’s door every day on the way home from school.

“The impact of Launchpad has been such that we have immediately booked Youthscape to lead the course for a second cohort this autumn and we look forward to more taking part next year.

“I commend Launchpad highly. As we seek to grow a church that is ‘younger and more diverse’, it is an approach that holds the possibility of generating significant change in dioceses across our land.”

- The Church of England aims to double the number of children and young active disciples in the Church of England by 2030 under its Vision and Strategy for the future.
- Youthscape is a Christian charity supporting the church to deepen and develop work with young people. The Archbishop of Canterbury is its patron.

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