Growing ministry on social estates and areas of income deprivation

**Estates Evangelism**
The Estates Evangelism Task Group (EETG) takes as its basis the words of Jesus in Luke Chapter 4, ‘I have come to proclaim good news to the poor.’

We contend that, unless we renew church life amongst income deprived communities and most especially on our nation’s social housing estates, we are not being faithful to the words of Jesus and the renewal we long for will never come.

In February 2019, the General Synod took a historic decision as it backed a motion that commits the Church of England to having a loving, serving, worshipping Christian community on every significant social housing estate in England.

Delivery of this aspiration will mean offering enhanced support to existing estates churches and finding ways of planting back onto the hundreds of estates from which we, and other ecumenical partners, are absent.

The EETG, chaired by Bishop Lynne Cullens (Bishop of Barking), whose members are estate practitioners and representatives of key partners, offers support to Dioceses and to the wider church as we respond to the challenges of implementing the 2019 decision through the following ways:
How we support dioceses and the wider church

The EETG, chaired by Bishop Lynne Cullens (Bishop of Barking), whose members are estate practitioners and representatives of key partners, offers support to Dioceses and to the wider church as we respond to the challenges of implementing the 2019 decision through the following ways:

**Strategy**

We support the delivery of the Church of England's six bold outcomes through the lens of the 20% most income deprived parishes in which over 22 million people live.

Learn more about our plan of action for estates evangelism.

**Research**

We have a detailed list of 'estate parishes' across the country (i.e., parishes with 500 or more social housing homes) and have mapped those areas where church life currently appears to be weak or non-existent. We are using this data to target where we can work with a range of partners at national, regional and local level to address the gaps. If you would like a copy of the data please contact dave.champness@blackburn.anglican.org.

We have worked with the National Estate Churches Network and Church Army Research Unit to review the lessons from four leadership identification/formation pathways from Birmingham, Blackburn, London and York specifically aimed at growing leaders from estates. The report was launched at a fringe event during February 2023 General Synod. Read more in the Growing Leaders on Urban Estates report.

Take a look at some of the fantastic work that's happening across the Mustard Seed Community by those who have completed the Diocese of York's Stepping Up Pathway.

**Partnership**

We have developed partnerships with diocesan focal leads across the mainland and organisations who share our commitment to renewing church life on estates. Partner organisations include mission agencies, resource and training providers, other denominations via the Churches Together in England Urban Mission Group.

A key partner is the National Estates Churches Network (NECN), an ecumenical charity that provides a support network and useful resources for estate leaders, both lay and ordained.

**Consultancy**

Dave Champness works as the EETG's part-time Project Officer. Part of his work is to collect examples of good practice in estates evangelism and share these with others. He is available to support dioceses and others engaged in this work and can be contacted via dave.champness@blackburn.anglican.org.

**Theology**
The Estates Theology Project brought together pairs of practitioners and theologians to ask the question, ‘Finding the treasure: What is the good news from the estates?’ You can listen to some of their findings in the mini-podcast series here.

‘The accompanying book, Finding the Treasure: Good News from the Estates by Al Barrett, was published in April 2023 by SPCK.

Innovation

In summer 2022, the Archbishops’ Council allocated a substantial amount of innovation funding for the EETG to distribute to dioceses, deaneries or individual parishes who have ideas that they wish to trial or replicate that plant or grow a loving, serving worshipping Christian community, of any tradition, on an estate or another income-deprived community. If you would like to know more about this funding, contact dave.champness@blackburn.anglican.org.

Estates Planting Conference 2023

Emmanuel Theological College and the Estates Evangelism Task Group hosted ‘Not Forgotten: Finding the Treasure’, a conference for pioneering urban practitioners to gather with curates, ordinands, key thinkers and leaders in the church to consider what God is doing in the often-forgotten places of the North of England.

Contributors included Bishop Lynne Cullens (Chair of Church of England’s Estates Evangelism Task Group & Chair of the National Estates Churches Network), Revd Canon Dr Mark Powley (Archbishop’s Mission Enabler for the North), Rev Canon Dr Michael Leyden (Principal of Emmanuel Theological College), Claire Cooke and Chris Lane (Emmanuel Theological College) and a panel of practitioners including Rev Hana Armer, a listening artist, drawn from a wide range of contexts and experiences.

Archbishop Stephen Cottrell, a great supporter of the conference, said: "I see the work being done to establish worshipping communities, in some of our most income deprived and challenging areas, as so important in our vision to be a Jesus-shaped church. I'm encouraged to see time being set aside to focus on this and to listen and learn from each others' experiences."

Rev Al Barrett along with co-contributors Rev Clare Turner and Rev Dr Carlton Turner also launched the book, Finding the Treasure: Good News from the Estates at the conference. Finding the Treasure is the fruit of two years of ‘deep listening' in five different estate neighbourhoods across England, bringing together local ministers and academic theologians to attend to the voices of estates residents. Questions posed included: ‘What do they love about the place they're in?’ 'What brings them joy as well as grief?' And ‘what does hope and good news look like?’ Rooted in the real-life contexts of these local communities, rich in theological insights and bold in the challenges, the book offers inspiration and practical guidance for those willing to engage in similar deep listening.

For more information on the conference, why not check out some of the moments from the conference via the National Estate Churches Network YouTube channel.

There is also a Not Forgotten podcast series that continues through the summer of 2023 exploring the themes covered in the conference in more depth.
Weekly Sunday Services from estate churches

2023

- **A Service for Low Sunday** (Church of the Cross, Thamesmead, Diocese of Southwark)

- **A Service for the Sixth Sunday of Easter** (St Luke's Church, Peckham, Diocese of Southwark)

- **A Service for the Seventh Sunday of Easter** (St Bartholomew's Church, Roby Diocese of Liverpool)

2022

- **A Service for the Third Sunday before Advent** (Sutton Hill Church, Telford, Diocese of Hereford)

- **A Service for the Fourth Sunday After Trinity** (St Christopher's Church, Hanwell, Diocese of London)

- **Learning to cherish** (All Saints, Kings Heath, Diocese of Birmingham)

- **Sunday before Lent** (Holy Nativity Church, Mixendin and Illingworth, North Halifax, Diocese of Leeds)
Estate Evangelism stories

- **New lease of life for parish in restored church**
  09/06/2023

- **Church’s social prescribing deal with NHS**
  04/04/2023

- **A life changed by Jesus**
  15/02/2023