

## Rooted in the Church Appendix C: Qualitative discussion guide

### Sample construction

Young adults	Parents/carers
<p><b>Via quantitative random sample</b> 15-20 depth interviews principally by telephone. Mixture of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key life stage (college – uni – work) (Q39);</li> <li>• Gender;</li> <li>• Recall of early church life positive/neutral vs low enjoyment (Q20);</li> <li>• Attendance has fallen vs those which have increased or stayed stable (Q7);</li> <li>• Switchers and non-switchers (Q10, Q11).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Via quantitative random sample</b> 10 depths or paired depths with mother and father. Mixture of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family size;</li> <li>• Mums and dads;</li> <li>• With younger children vs older children (Q3);</li> <li>• Faith still important in their child’s life (Q34)</li> </ul> <p>Ideally mix of urban-rural</p>
<p><b>Case study visit</b> St Peter’s Brighton (young adult ministry) Aim for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 group and some depth interviews</li> </ul>	<p><b>Case study visit</b> St Peter’s Brighton (young adult ministry) Aim for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 parent group of Brighton adults/parents</li> </ul>

### Skeleton topic guide

*Approximately 45-50 mins (face to face or telephone)*

*Adapt wording as necessary – e.g. **young adult** / **parents***

### Introduction

My name is... and I work for Research by Design, an independent market research organisation.

We recently conducted a survey amongst (**young adult** / **parents**) to explore the factors that contribute towards young people developing long lasting relationships with the Church.

We are now following up with a small number of participants to understand in a little more detail why some young adults become ‘rooted’ in the church and others do not.

The project has been commissioned by the Education Office at the Church of England. Your answers will not be relayed back to either your local church or the national Church of England.

I intend to record the conversation to help me with report writing later. However, I would like to reassure you that we follow the Market Research Societies Code of Conduct and hence whatever you say will be kept confidential.

**Role of faith in your life (5-10 mins)** (**all young adults**)

*(Warm up purposes)* How do you like to spend your free time generally? What are you really passionate about?

What influences how you attend church nowadays? Do things like work or study influence how you express your faith? Who do you attend with?

Do you get involved with other church-related activities? Youth groups? Home groups? Some form of social action? Are there any linkages between these activities in your mind?

Are there other ways you prefer to express your faith nowadays? E.g. Camps, retreats, festivals, or online activity

*(Briefly - for those at university)* Have you (or do you) attend a university based church or chaplaincy? A chaplaincy or a student church? Are you involved in a Christian Union (non-denominational)? What role do these activities play for you in your Christian journey?

### **Role of faith in your life (5-10 mins)** (all parents)

*(Warm up purposes)* Do you have a small or large family? How much time do you get to spend together these days?

Do your children manage to attend church? Do they go on their own or with you? Is this on Sundays, in the week or both? Which do they prefer? Do they go more or less often than they used to?

What do you feel has contributed to the decline or rise of your child's attendance at church? To what extent is work or study an influence on your children's ability to express their faith?

Are there other ways your children prefer to express your faith nowadays? How so? Youth groups? Home groups? Some form of social action?

Do you still talk about your faith with your child?

*(Briefly - for those with children at university)* Do they attend a university based church or chaplaincy? A chaplaincy or a student church? Are they involved in a non-denominational Christian Union? What role do these activities appear to play in your child's faith?

### **Early church life (both) (10 mins)**

Please describe your family life when you (your children) were younger? Would you say you had a particularly religious household / upbringing? How so? What memories do you have of faith being talked about/lived at home?

What were the main influencers on your (your children's) early life as a Christian?

*Refer to questionnaire responses – you indicated that you (your children) did/didn't enjoy going to church when they were younger. What were the key reasons for this? If face to face, make a grid of likes and dislikes*

What types of activity did you (they) enjoy / not enjoy? Think: worship services vs clubs?

(For parents) What sorts of things did you do to pass on your faith and Christian teaching outside of the church?

(For parents) Did both parents take the children to church? Probe Did this influence your child's faith and their relationship with the church?

### **School (5 mins)**

*Refer to questionnaire responses* You indicated that you (your children) did/didn't attend a Church of England primary school / secondary school. To what extent was the Church active in either of these?

What were you (your children) taught? Can you give me some examples that stick in your mind? (e.g. any particular missions or visitors) Did the teachings at school strengthen or shape your relationship with the church?

In your view, how could church make a more active contribution into local school life?

### **Growing up / role models (5 mins)**

Were there any particular role models that had a significant influence in helping you (your children) develop your faith? Probe: could be inter-generational or friendship group

Why do you think some young adults become more 'rooted' in the church from a young age than others?

Was there always an appropriate age-specific activity/club/forum offered by your church?  
What were/are the gaps?

### **Youth services and youth worker (5 mins)**

Are separate youth services outside the wider congregation appropriate? Why do you say that?

Did your church always have a youth worker? If so, what sort of impact did this individual have on your (child's) faith?

How active is this role now? How should it evolve?

### **Main church (5-10 mins)**

To what extent do you feel a sense of 'belonging' to your main church? (Does your child still have a sense of belonging?)

How would you describe your church to a stranger? *Key words please*

This is how people described a 'perfect church' to us in our survey (*summarise Q34*). How close or otherwise would you say your main church is to this? Why do you say that? *Use proximity map in face to face interviews/groups*

Some people told us that they thought their church could be 'judgemental'? What do you think?

Does it 'listen'? Why do you say that? (Would your child have a different view?)

Do you volunteer or have a role in any church based activities / groups? What drives you to do this? (For parents) Do you think this influenced your child's relationship with the church too?

(Young adults) have there been adequate opportunities for you to lead or take responsibilities for activities throughout your church life? Would you have liked more / less freedom? How could this have been achieved?

Check for young person involvement in the PCC. How do you feel about younger people being involved in the PCC?

Confirmation – At what age do you think teens should be confirmed? Why? What are your thoughts about young people taking communion before they have been confirmed?

Confirmation – Have you been confirmed? Age what age? What are your thoughts about young people being allowed to take communion before they were confirmed?

Do you think that having the chance to volunteer or shape things actually influences a young person's church attendance?

### **Switching (5 mins)**

Have you (Has your child) ever 'switched' the main church or place of worship? *This may have been discussed earlier in relation to University*

(For parents) How did you feel about your child attending a different church to you?

(For young switchers) Tell me about the circumstances of this? In which ways, if at all, is your new church different to your original church? *Probe different worship style or denomination*

Use matrix for face to face Liberal<---->Conservative vs Traditional<----->Charismatic mapping

How did you select a new church? What was important to you? Has your new place of worship influenced how you express your faith? Do you attend more/less frequently? Why

### **Looking forward (5 mins)**

(Young adults) Refer to questionnaire responses You said that you use the following types of online tools to express your faith. To what extent do you engage with other Christians online? Does online activity replace or compliment physical church attendance for you?

1 in ten young people have told us that their participation in church activity is likely to decrease in the next 3-4 months? Would this be true for yourself? Why so? Is your engagement likely to return? (For parents) What do you think about this? Is this something you regularly observe yourself?

(Young people) If you eventually have children of your own, how important will it be for them to grow in the Christian faith?

What could churches do differently to help children and young people stay 'rooted' to the Christian faith? Is there anything else you would like to say on this topic?

## THANK & CLOSE

### Ask

Photography

(Young adults)

Seek interest in joining diary exercise (we will particularly explore elements that we don't have sufficient time in interviews). *Use as necessary:* This will take an online format and will commence in the next few weeks. It will involve you discussing with us and others interesting and thought-provoking topics around faith. Your answers will only be viewable to us and the other group members.