

Our strategy backed by major investment

OUR diocese will receive a major investment of around £1m a year for the next five years, to support delivery of its rejuvenate strategy.

The national Church will inject the cash into our strategic plans to employ the people and revamp the buildings needed to help our parishes and church schools to thrive. The aim is to enable new generations to experience a life-transforming encounter with Jesus Christ.

The Church of England's Strategic Mission and Ministry (SMMI) board approved the entire £5.3m investment our diocese applied for, as part of our £8.75m rejuvenate strategy. The diocesan contribution to this includes clergy stipends that would have been spent on resourcing ministry in any case.

The diocesan-level vision provides a framework for the life and ministry of parishes and deaneries. It speaks of a diocese longing to be "a rejuvenating community of Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking disciples".

Bishop Jonathan said: "As a diocese we have been inspired by a vision of Christ's Body, the Church. A prayerful community which seeks God's Kingdom in and for the world.

"A community where older people are treasured as the Church of *today* (rather than yesterday) and younger people find their place and



Families are a central part of this church plant in Christ Church, Gosport

voice as the Church of *today* (rather than of tomorrow).

"The past two years have seen the extraordinary growth of Anna Chaplaincy within our diocese,

providing spiritual support for the elderly. Our rejuvenate strategy applies our focus and energy to the challenge of connecting with younger generations - that they might discover Jesus Christ and the Kingdom for themselves.

"Our diocese seeks to double the number of children and young disciples in our churches and ensure there is a thriving ministry to children and young people within reach of every household across south-east Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. We also want to reverse the decline in attendance and equip and encourage clergy and lay leaders in prayer and discipleship."

Our rejuvenate strategy for delivering this vision includes three main elements:

- to **REVIVE** the spiritual leadership of our diocese,

helping lay and clergy leaders to be vibrant disciples equipped to deliver revitalisation plans;

- to **REVITALISE** our churches, so they can create pathways by which those unconnected to church are reached with the Christian message and supported in their journey to become committed disciples.
- to **RENEW** the Church in areas where it currently has little presence, including the planting of brand new congregations and worshipping communities.

Some of this work has already begun, with churches planted across the diocese over the past eight years. Hundreds of children, teenagers and young adults have joined new congregations at Harbour Church in Portsmouth, St Margaret's in Southsea, St Mary's in Rowner, and All Saints, Ryde.

And a church plant into Christ Church, Gosport, in 2021 - where a handful of planters joined a traditional parish - now sees 190 attending Sunday worship, plus 50 at Lego Church, 50 at its toddlers group and between 50 and 70 at its Kitchen Table outreach to vulnerable families.

This new investment will allow us to expand this work, and to start new projects that aim to rejuvenate our diocese, including:

- **Cairns**, a network of sustaining and inspirational little communities meeting regularly to pray, break bread and to encourage one another in ministry;
- **Pathways to discipleship**, in which parishes will be given funding to create ways of engaging their communities and equipping brand new disciples for mission;
- **Choir Church**, a way that churches can use a love of singing to create new worshipping communities;
- **Flourish**, the creation of midweek, voluntary worshipping



Part of the current children's group on a Sunday at St Michael's, Paulsgrove

'We want to share God's love in this special place'

MORE THAN £600,000 of the national Church's investment will be spent in Paulsgrove, one of the more deprived parts of our diocese.

St Michael's Church will employ a new minister engaging with families and young people, develop four brand new congregations, repair its roof and revamp its heating system.

The vicar, the Rev Hugo Deadman, said: "Paulsgrove is a great place, full of wonderful people. We know God has a special care for communities like this.

"So we want to do more to introduce people to the love of God. We've got a growing, loving and supportive church family. We treasure it and the much-loved traditional ways in which we

worship. But we want to grow it more - and offer much more to the many young families in Paulsgrove.

"We've already got good links - but we want to help them explore faith and grow our church family in ways that work for them, while still within St Michael's Catholic tradition. We've hit the ground running with our Friday after-school club, Choir Church - and now we can look forward to doing much more.

"That means building a team - a new minister and new people to add to the excellent volunteers already doing so much. And it means tackling issues with our building, so it's the asset it should be for the whole of Paulsgrove. It's an exciting time to serve God and Paulsgrove."

communities for children and families, based in their schools;

- **Mission projects in Paulsgrove and Leigh Park**, to create new worshipping communities with young people and families as the heartbeat of each congregation;
- **Church plants**, both in urban Portsmouth and suburban Fareham, moving towards a brand new church in the new major development of Welborne; and
- **Training in youthwork from Youthscape**, establishing expertise and new leaders to work with children, families and young people.

We are now recruiting individuals who can lead our work to Revive, Revitalise and Renew, funded by the national C of E. You can apply via www.portsmouth.anglican.org/jobs.

The Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board was created to enable the C of E's vision and strategy to be implemented. It is distributing funding from the Archbishops' Council from 2023 to 2031, mostly to support frontline mission and ministry in dioceses.

For more details about our diocese's vision and strategy, see: www.portsmouth.anglican.org/strategy

