

The Church Development Tool

Helping the Church of England to build back better

Diocesan communications pack

What is the Church Development Tool?

The Church Development Tool is designed to help dioceses and churches reflect on how their communities are living out their faith in the everyday, while also providing them with valuable information so they can plan for the future.

The tool will provide specific insight into not only how a church congregation practices their faith (e.g. how often people read their Bible) but also how they are feeling about their own individual discipleship journey. Are they confident sharing their faith with others? Do they feel that being a Christian is an important aspect of their identity? Or are they lacking in confidence in their knowledge of the Christian faith?

Why is the Church Development Tool important?

Dioceses and churches have found themselves in extraordinary circumstances over the past 18 months. Churches have had to navigate their way through a series of government lockdowns, sickness and fatigue, all while providing pastoral care for their communities and engaging with new worshippers online. As the vaccination programme is rolled out across the country churches are beginning to turn their attention to what life might look like post Covid-19.

It is our hope that the Church Development Tool and resources will make planning for the future a little bit easier as it will provide:

1. Detailed data on the demographic mix of each participating church
2. Previously unavailable information on the discipleship journey of the congregation
3. Links to resources to help church leaders respond to this learning

How does the Church Development Tool fit with the Church of England's Vision and Strategy journey?

Over the last year, the Church has been engaged in a process of discernment leading to a freshly articulated vision for the next decade. We seek to be a church which is **Christ-centred and Jesus-shaped**. The priorities identified for the next 10 years are to become:

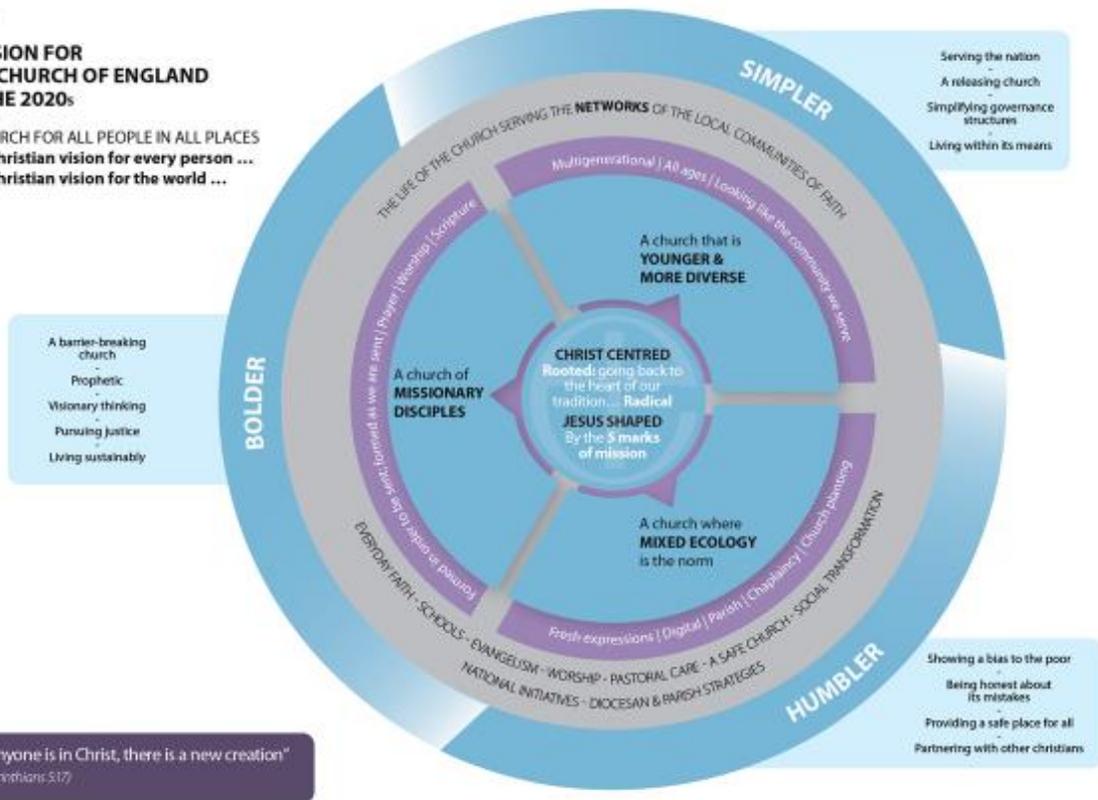
- A church of missionary disciples
- A church where mixed ecology is the norm
- A church that is younger and more diverse.

Additionally, we seek to become bolder, humbler, and simpler in all that we do.



A VISION FOR THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN THE 2020s

A CHURCH FOR ALL PEOPLE IN ALL PLACES
... a Christian vision for every person ...
... a Christian vision for the world ...



The Church Development Tool will be an invaluable resource to the whole Church of England, helping us to understand where we are in these priorities and then to track our progress.

How could the Church Development Tool work in your diocese?

Using the Church Development Tool is voluntary, but we are encouraging all dioceses and churches to participate.

- Many dioceses will already have in place a vision or some strategic priorities that they are working towards. Other dioceses will be developing these. These may well overlap in themes with those expressed in the national Vision and Strategy work mentioned above.
- The Church Development Tool can provide a valuable way of assessing areas of relative strength and weakness across a diocese, enabling data-rich discussions about priorities and resource allocation.
- Ideally the Church Development Tool should be used in each church every year or so, allowing dioceses to measure progress.
- Additionally, the Church Development Tool provides a means of dioceses, churches, and the National Church Institutions being in conversation together, contributing to the shaping of strategy at every level.
- It will be very helpful if diocesan leadership teams can give profile to the Church Development Tool locally and encourage participation.