



People Fully Alive:

ely2025

The Resource Manual



## People Fully Alive: Ely 2025 A strategy for growth: **The Resource Manual**

### Foreword by Bishop Stephen

*People Fully Alive* is a document which has been prepared with great care and in consultation with the people of this diocese and I commend it to you. I hope it will inspire you to look closely at the urgent questions raised by the three imperatives:

- How to engage fully and courageously with the needs of our communities, locally and globally?
- How to grow God's church by finding disciples and nurturing leaders?
- How to deepen our commitment to God through word, worship and prayer?

This Resource Manual has been written to complement *People Fully Alive* by setting out each of the five Levers of Change with some accompanying exercises and tools. These are designed to help you work through the strategy for growth and to decide what you will do to address the questions which it poses: how will we engage with the needs of our community, grow God's church and deepen our commitment to Him?

The Resource Manual will be distributed to Incumbents and to one Churchwarden in each parish. I suggest that those recipients meet together initially to decide which levers to address, which methods they favour and whom they will call together as a wider group to start on the process of evaluation and imagination which will be necessary to take their church

through the process of change which the strategy proposes. I am delighted that training will be offered in Appreciative Inquiry (see p26ff) and that Rural Deans will be given additional help in working alongside you.

The way in which you approach this process, including your decisions as to which levers may be relevant to your church and which methods and tools for change you decide to use is however a matter for you to decide locally. This may be accomplished by the PCC or another group drawn from the congregation, but you should consider whether other members of your local community are to be consulted, and I am sure you will also take every opportunity to involve local ecumenical partners in your work.

The way you use this Resource Manual is a matter for you, but within the strategy the Archdeacons will be expecting you to produce annual Development Action Plans setting out your vision for the years ahead. This is the part of the process which I want us all to share and I am asking you to use the form of Development Action Plan which has been provided in this Manual. Your Development Action Plans will be taken into consideration when new budgetary arrangements come into effect in 2017.

Lastly, on behalf of those who prepared this manual I would like to stress that this is not designed to be prescriptive or limiting but is offered to assist you and to engage you in some of the many possible ways of approaching the challenges which we have identified together in *People fully Alive*. Bless you in your efforts; may they be fruitful and life giving and help us to become ever more *visible and generous people of Jesus Christ*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Chy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

# People Fully Alive: The Resource Manual

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## Introduction to the Resource Manual

The strategy is about responding to the challenges facing us all in the Diocese of Ely and then envisioning and managing change by naming what works, what doesn't, what to keep and what to give up (Eccl 3:5). This Resource Manual proposes a playful use of management tools and it is our sincere wish that you will join us in their use or find your own ways to engage joyfully in the work of review and renewal (Lk 7:32).

These tools are not designed to supplant the action of the Holy Spirit, the teachings of the Gospel or the wisdom of the church militant but are offered to support our efforts to understand how we are being called to 'preach the gospel afresh' and to be the church in this generation. We urge you to look at them with curiosity (if they are new to you) with a critical eye (if you are familiar with the management of change) or with an open mind (if such ideas normally leave you cold).

You will however be expected, in time, to produce Development Action Plans (p57ff). Your Rural Dean and Lay Chair, your Archdeacon, the Diocesan Secretary, and your Bishops need to know what you are doing to address the significant challenges which face us all so that they can offer you help and encouragement and so that they can decide how to allocate our common resources to the best use for the mission of the church and the Glory of God.

As a first step, you may wish to convene a small group to work through this Resource Manual. Your choice of the people to be a part of this group is critical as they will be providing the insights, generating the ideas and running or brokering any new initiatives which you decide to carry forward. We recommend you make this decision your starting point.

Secondly, you may wish to decide, as a preliminary matter, whether you are going to use Appreciative Inquiry (p29ff) as a general approach to identifying areas for change and renewal. If so, there will be some preparatory work to be done before embarking on a wider consultation, but we are confident this will be time and effort well spent.

This Resource Manual is not designed to be a 'quick fix' but aims to be the way into a long, detailed and staged process of self-evaluation and development.

People Fully Alive is subtitled Ely 2025: A Strategy for Growth because it is anticipated that the process of renewal and growth will take place over the next ten years. Please start the journey soon but prepare for a long voyage. The Vision Strategy Group and the Directors of Mission and Ministry are available to help you with this Resource Manual and our contact details are provided in the resources section at the end of the publication. We commend it to you and wish you well in your endeavours. (Mt 7:7).

The Strategy Group  
September 2015

## Working with Lever 1: Nurture

In praying to be visible and generous people of Jesus Christ we aim to *nurture* a confident people of God

1. *Read this Bible passage and take time to 'dwell in the Word' using the suggested method in the Tool Box (p37)*

Ephesians 4.1-16

Paul is in prison. He is bound hand and foot but his mind is free. He recalls the times and places where through his preaching a church was founded. He writes to one of those congregations and reminds them of what Christ has done v4-10.

As he thinks of them he sees their faces, the family groups and the individuals, people born and brought up in the town, some from the countryside; many from further afield. They are a diverse group, in background, culture, experience and in the gifts God has given them. Yet all have the same purpose, *to build up the Body of Christ* so that God's people may grow together in truth and love.

*Text from 'People Fully Alive':*

At the heart of our strategy is an expectation that God is at work in our midst. Only a renewed confidence in God will free us to risk innovation, experiment and change. By 2025 we aim to 'raise the spiritual temperature' of the diocese. We therefore propose to develop a diocesan 'Rule of Life', setting out the core elements of a living Christian faith, which everyone will be invited to live out in their own way.

2. *Now consider the challenge this lever sets us in the context of the three strategy imperatives:*

*To **engage** fully and courageously with the needs of our communities, locally and globally. To **grow** God's church by finding disciples and nurturing leaders. To **deepen** our commitment to God through word worship and prayer.*

## **Engage**

Christ's first followers were both called *and* sent: they were disciples *and* apostles (e.g. Luke 10:1-12). People grow as Christians partly by being drawn into patterns of prayer, worship and fellowship, but also by having their minds, hearts and wills reshaped through service to the world. The church has often seen service as secondary, flowing out from the supposedly more essential inner life of faith, but our strategy sets both elements side by side. As Christians we are citizens of the kingdom, in which the causes of justice and peace are inseparable from a right relationship with God. In support of this we will provide advice on community engagement, schools work, training in evangelism, sharing faith and apologetics, resources for Christians in the workplace.

## **Grow**

Nothing we do can ever replace the need for a greater openness to the Holy Spirit, since church growth is ultimately God's work; but experience and research suggest that there are things we can do to help the church flourish. Research has shown that the majority of growing churches provide space for people to discover faith and explore life's deeper questions. We wish to see more congregations offer courses such as Pilgrim, Alpha or Christianity Explored, and provide innovative ways to encourage exploration of faith.

## **Deepen**

Central to our strategy is ensuring that all our activities are framed by attention to God. There should not be a sharp distinction between the 'business life' and the 'prayer life' of the diocese. We want to explore patterns of prayer (such as 'Dwelling in the Word') which will support the tasks of governance, management and planning, so that the whole of diocesan life, not just individual Christians, may become more transparent to the presence and activity of God. And we want to encourage spiritual growth in traditional ways too, such as Bible study, fellowship groups, discipleship programmes, Advent and Lent courses.



3. *Take time to pray before moving on with the discussion*

**Prayer:** O God, our very breath,  
our only hope,  
in every age you take pity on us  
and bring forth life from death.  
Visit your people and raise your Church to new life,  
that we may join with all generations  
in voicing our wonder and praise,  
we make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
your Son, who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.  
**Amen**

4. *Try to imagine the areas of your church context which applying this lever might improve, perhaps by*

- a) ...using the 'Ely Box' (p38), to decide which parts of your efforts to 'nurture a confident people of God' are really reaping dividends
- b) ...using the Prophet Priest and King Triangle chart (p.42) to assess individual components of the work you do in your parish or ministry context and to decide how much impact they make or whether they are suitably targeted.

5. *Now start to explore the question more deeply by considering 'what might be'*

Using Appreciative Inquiry (see p29ff) you might be asking the following questions:

'What is it that makes you confident Christians?'

'At what times in your faith journeys have you experienced excitement?'

'What events/people/circumstances have encouraged you to want to learn more about Jesus Christ?'

'What feeds you as a Christian?'

***N.B.*** *These tools are there to promote discussion and encourage ideas. You may have other better ways of answering the questions asked by the lever.*

6. *Now try some objective setting by using the Development Action Planner (p57ff); remember to make your objectives S.M.A.R.T. (Simple, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-limited)*
  
7. *Use your reflections about this lever and the ideas you are using to fill in your Development Action Plan to consider how your proposals might affect where you are on the Missional Strength Cross (p50)*
  
8. *You are starting a project to address an area of ministry or mission which you want to change over time. Be clear about the criteria for success and build in firm review dates with those identified as having responsibility for key areas of work. Use the Change Management Cycle to ponder this process (p56).*

## Working with Lever 2: Develop healthy churches and leaders

In praying to be visible and generous people of Jesus Christ we aim to *develop* healthy churches and leaders

1. Read this Bible passage and take time to 'dwell in the Word' using the suggested method in the Tool Box (p37)

### Acts 2.43-47

For many, the picture painted in this passage and a parallel passage at the end of Acts 4, is an inspiration. The Church is growing, indeed it is flourishing. People are coming to faith, lives are being changed, and the evidence for this is the way in which people are giving generously. They have experienced God's mercy and grace and it has touched their pockets. They meet regularly, they share things in common. These were all signs that God was at work, and the church continued to grow so rapidly that new leaders had to be found (Acts 6).

Later in Acts we see how the young church moved out of Jerusalem and new congregations were founded. Sometimes this was from necessity: the persecution in Jerusalem meant people had to move. At other times it was in response to a call from God. The book of Acts paints a picture of a dynamic, flourishing and responsive church.

### *Text from 'People Fully Alive':*

The main focus of our strategy is the life of the local church (parishes, chaplaincies, religious communities, *Fresh Expressions*, etc.). Whether people are drawn together by geography or network, the quality of each manifestation of the Body of Christ will make a huge difference to the ministry and mission of the church in every place. The strategy assumes that people generally join churches that are worth joining. This is not a concession to consumerism, but a belief that we are custodians of something infinitely precious and attractive, which is best disclosed by churches that exhibit a hunger and thirst for God, expressed in deep prayer, passionate worship, rich fellowship and committed service.

By 2025 we want to help every willing local church to display these qualities in ways appropriate to their tradition and context.

### **Lay and ordained leadership**

We aim for growth in the number of people exploring vocations to the caring professions, teaching, and the like, as well as people offering themselves for lay and ordained ministry and the Religious Life. We want to promote good and godly leadership of every kind, and to nurture the God-given gifts of all. We want to develop greater collaboration and teamwork within and between parishes. We want to refresh leadership so that both clergy and laity feel energised, empowered and liberated to grow in their ministry. Therefore we need to invest in ministerial training and development as well as define manageable roles for clergy (and others).

### **Structured review**

The strategy aims to make structured self-evaluation, review and planning standard practice across the diocese. This would normally involve using the Resource Manual to create Development Action Plans, and/or drawing on the wide variety of readily available tools, such as the 'Healthy Churches Handbook'. We foresee that vacancies will be an important time for reviews, and the resulting Parish Profiles will play a part in helping to (re-)shape church life for the future.

### **Fresh Expressions and traditional church**

When he was Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams talked about creating a mixed economy of Church life. He recognised and advocated the need for traditional and new forms of church to flourish. As a diocese we have seen the impact that *Fresh Expressions* can have and we therefore want to see our own mixed economy developing. We want leaders to invest their time in growing traditional and developing new forms of church for all generations, particularly children and youth.

The strategy anticipates an equal number of fresh expressions and traditional forms of church by 2025. The key to this will be to develop a culture of godly risk and experimentation. To assist in that desire we hope that a number of parish teams will attend programmes such as the 'Mission-Shaped Ministry Course' or 'Leading Your Church into Growth'. The strategy also recognises that many *Fresh Expressions* will be lay-led or led by self-supporting ministers.

The diocese is open to proposals for new Bishop's Mission Orders to assist in the development and review of new forms of church. Alongside *Fresh Expressions* we also see the need to encourage various kinds of 'church plant', not just in Cambridge but across the diocese.

2. *Take time to pray before moving on with the discussion*

**Prayer:** From our earliest days, O God,  
you call us by name.  
Make our ears attentive to your voice,  
our spirits eager to respond,  
that, having heard you in Jesus your anointed one,  
we may draw others to be his disciples.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
Who lives and reigns in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
One God, now and for ever.  
Amen

3. *Try to imagine the areas of your church context which applying this lever might improve, perhaps by*

- a) ...using the 'Ely Box' (p38) to decide which parts of your efforts to 'develop healthy churches and leaders' are really reaping dividends
- b) ...using the Prophet Priest and King Triangle chart (p42) to assess individual components of the work you do in your parish or ministry context and to decide how much impact they make or whether they are suitably targeted.

4. *Now start to explore the question more deeply by considering 'what might be'*

Using Appreciative Inquiry (see p29ff) you might be asking the following questions:

'What is it for you that makes your church 'worth joining'?'

'What are the 'networks' you enjoy belonging to?'

'Can you describe a positive experience of collaborative working?'

'When have you been thrilled by doing something novel or risky in a church context?'

'When have you enjoyed engaging with new people/people who are not members of your congregation?'

***N.B.*** *These tools are there to promote discussion and encourage ideas. You may have other better ways of answering the questions asked by the lever.*

5. *Before you continue, make sure you have factored into your discussions reflections about clergy numbers, recruitment (lay and ordained workers) funding, team working and deanery planning*

6. *Now try some objective setting by using the Development Action Planner (p66ff); remember to make your objectives S.M.A.R.T. (Simple, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-limited)*

7. *Use your reflections about this lever and the ideas you are using to fill in your Development Action Plan to consider how your proposals might affect where you are on the Missional Strength Cross (p50)*

8. *You are starting a project to address an area of ministry or mission which you want to change over time. Be clear about the criteria for success and build in firm review dates with those identified as having responsibility for key areas of work. Use the Change Management Cycle to ponder this process (p56).*

## **Working with Lever 3: Serve the community**

**In praying to be visible and generous people of Jesus Christ we aim to *serve* the community**

*Read this Bible passage and take time to 'dwell in the Word' using the suggested method in the Tool Box (p37)*

### **Matthew 5.13-16**

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus calls those gathered around him to live distinctive lives – being salt and light in the world. In the rest of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus explains what that means.

Salt not only preserves, it also draws out flavours and seasons food. Jesus tells the gathered crowd that they, individually and collectively, are salt on earth. They are to enhance, to draw out all that is good. They are to engage in and with the world around them and make a difference. Salt is also an irritant, of course, which is a reminder of the Church's prophetic voice.

Jesus' followers are also the light of the world: a light which makes darkness retreat; a light that attracts others. Christian people are to shine brightly in the world, to help others find a way through the darkness.

Salt is not very helpful if it remains in the salt cellar. A light hidden away is pointless. We are to be involved in the world where we live and work. We are to make difference.

*Text from 'People Fully Alive':*

Serving communities for the sake of God's kingdom is a central aspiration within our vision to be 'generous and visible people of Jesus Christ', and one of our three imperatives is to engage with our communities, local and global. Communities and community engagement are central to the Church's mission and strategy.

### **Supporting the marginalised**

There are already many examples across the diocese of churches engaging with their local community, being both salt and light. There is good collaboration with foodbanks, debt counselling and credit unions. The

Mothers' Union works with prisoners and their families. Schemes such as Besom support the poorest in our society, and there are projects to help the homeless. Our strategy sees this kind of engagement as 'core' Christian activity, not an optional 'add-on'.

A great deal of good and dedicated work in the community is already being carried out by many members of our churches. This is often not recognised as part of God's mission, either by those participating or by others around them. We will work, at local and at diocesan level, to enable Christians to see the significance of what they already do, and to affirm them in this.

### **Working with schools**

Our work with schools remains a high priority – both designated Church Schools and non-church schools. Many in our congregations are already involved as school governors and visitors, or go in to take school assemblies. We will support school governors by providing better training, so that they are able to contribute to school improvement and help to develop the distinctive Christian ethos in our Church Schools. We also recognise that some clergy and lay people would serve better as school chaplains, so will invest in support for this type of schools ministry too.

Part of our strategy for responding to new housing developments is to seek to create new Church Schools.

For a number of years the church has been very good at providing pre-school care and meeting places for parents/carers with small children. Part of our strategy is to encourage more such groups, and to complement them with relationship courses, parenting groups and the like.

### **Contributing to the Common Good**

Churches play a vital role in fostering inclusive communities. Our strategy aims to build confidence among Christians to join in public debate and take on civic duties and political responsibilities, in order to press for a more reconciled, just and peaceful society, and a sustainable environment.



## **Working in partnership**

In Luke 10 Jesus commends his disciples to work with men and women of peace. Our strategy proposes to work with people of peace in our culture in order to be salt and light in, and for, the world. Before looking outside the churches of our diocese, however, we will consider how our diocesan structures, practices and processes could be adapted and improved to enable local churches to cooperate and support each other.

There are already many projects working with Christians of other denominations, which the strategy will seek to encourage and strengthen, while also looking beyond the traditional ecumenical partnerships to build bonds of friendship and shared working with the new churches springing up across the diocese (eg community churches and black-majority churches). Likewise we will continue to work with a variety of Christian agencies operating in particular areas, such as Christians Against Poverty. Our concern to work with other Christians does not, of course, deflect our interest in cooperating with all those agencies and individuals who seek to contribute positively to the quality of public life.

### *1. Take time to pray before moving on with the discussion*

**Prayer:** God our Father,  
in love you sent your Son  
that the world may have life:  
lead us to seek him among the outcast  
and to find him in those in need,  
for Jesus Christ's sake.  
Amen

2. *Try to imagine the areas of your church context which applying this lever might improve, perhaps by*
  - a) ...using the 'Ely Box' (p38), to decide which parts of your efforts to 'serve the community' are really reaping dividends.
  - b) ...using the Prophet Priest and King Triangle chart (p42) to assess individual components of the work you do in your parish or ministry context and to decide how much impact they make or whether they are suitably targeted.

3. *Now start to explore the question more deeply by considering 'what might be'*

Using Appreciative Inquiry (see p29ff) you might be asking the following questions.

- 'Give an example of good and dedicated work in your community which has inspired you'
- 'What do you identify locally as the pressing social needs?'
- 'When has working with the children at your local school meant to you?'
- 'Have you ever protested for Christ?'
- 'Whom do you see as your church's ally for justice?'

***N.B.*** *These tools are there to promote discussion and encourage ideas. You may have other better ways of answering the questions asked by the lever.*

4. *Before you continue, make sure your discussions have covered the value and effectiveness of 'the occasional offices' (baptisms, weddings and funerals) as a way in which the church is seen as connecting with and serving the community.*
5. *Now try some objective setting by using the Development Action Planner (p6ff); remember to make your objectives S.M.A.R.T.  
(Simple, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-limited)*

6. *Use your reflections about this lever and the ideas you are using to fill in your Development Action Plan to consider how your proposals might affect where you are on the Missional Strength Cross graph (p50)*
7. *You are starting a project to address an area of ministry or mission which you want to change over time. Be clear about the criteria for success and build in firm review dates with those identified as having responsibility for key areas of work. Use the Change Management Cycle to ponder this process (p56)*

## Working with Lever 4: Re-imagine our buildings

**In praying to be visible and generous people of Jesus Christ we aim to *re-imagine* our buildings**

1. *Read this Bible passage and take time to 'dwell in the Word' using the suggested method in the Tool Box (p37)*

Genesis 28.10-22

Jacob is on the road. Stopping for the night he sets up camp and after a while he falls asleep. God meets him in a dream.

In the morning Jacob wakes and realises that the place he chose to rest was a special place, a place where the Lord became real to him in a way that he hadn't known before. He says, 'Surely the Lord is in this place. How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven'.

It's a wonderful, vivid picture. Gates always lead somewhere. This gate led into the very presence of God.

Our church buildings can be gateways into God's presence. Celtic Christians talked about 'thin places' – places where heaven and earth seem very close. Many of our church buildings have this numinous quality. But, as the story of Jacob reminds us, the experience of God's nearer presence isn't limited to houses made with human hands. God is free to reveal himself to anyone, anywhere.

*Text from 'People Fully Alive':*

Our strategy recognises that church buildings continue to draw and inspire people, even those of little or no explicit religious faith. It also recognises that some of our buildings are an insupportable burden to the 'church' in the proper sense of the word – the Body of Christ. There is often a tension between the desire to maintain a building, the needs and limitations of the church community, and ambitions for wider mission and ministry. There is no one-size-fits-all answer to this dilemma; but it cannot be ignored. What we

need is greater clarity about the current options and resources available to us; and perhaps we need to create some new ones.

By 2025 our church buildings must be more than monuments to our Christian heritage; they must serve the needs of the church today. We cannot afford to let them become 'toxic assets', draining the church of badly needed time, energy and resources.

### **Development and modernisation**

Over the years church buildings have been extended, adapted, reshaped and re-imagined. This process continues today with the introduction of kitchens, toilets and other facilities designed to make them suitable for contemporary use, as well as internal reordering to give greater flexibility. Projects like these are not only about opening up our buildings for greater use, they are also about maintaining them as 'thin places' – places of encounter, with one another and with the divine. Our strategy recognises the importance of helping parishes to develop and modernise their buildings, working in partnership with ecumenical friends and other community bodies.

### **Sustainability and changing use**

The future of many of our buildings depends on finding new ways to fund maintenance and development. Our strategy is to help parishes explore new partnerships, set up 'Friends Schemes', etc., and to engage fully and robustly with national initiatives concerning the future of church buildings. We will also ask deaneries and parishes to conduct an audit of all their buildings and to adopt a planned approach to their future (taking account of facilities provided elsewhere in the community too). The audit may confirm the need to sustain some churches in their current use, and indicate ways of making this happen over the medium-to-long-term. It should also help congregations and deaneries to identify those churches whose current level and type of use is unsustainable. Some churches may become 'hubs', centres of activity and focus, surrounded by a number of 'festival churches' or 'chapels of ease', where worship and fellowship is still supported, but on a less frequent basis. It is possible that some buildings may be given over entirely to other uses, or

closed, while their church communities move to other venues, such as homes, schools or village halls. This would be a last resort, of course, and needs to be managed in a careful and planned way, with local consultation – there is no diocesan ‘hit list’!

## **New developments**

Part of the Church of England’s mission is to be ‘a presence in every community’. The new housing developments springing up all over the diocese pose a sharp challenge to this core aim. It is unlikely that we will afford many new church buildings, so the strategy must consider other ways to maintain a ‘presence’ and create ‘thin places’. Talking to developers and other partners will be important, as will partnership between old and new church communities. Insights and initiatives from new communities may provide inspiration for older ones too, as they consider what a sustainable future might look like.

### *2. Take time to pray before moving on with the discussion*

**Prayer:** Almighty God,  
in the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ,  
you have opened for us the gate of heaven:  
may we who celebrate this hope  
in your Church on earth  
open our doors to all who seek you,  
and welcome them into the awesome joy of your presence.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
Amen

### *3. Try to imagine the areas of your church context which applying this lever might improve, perhaps by*

- a) ...using the ‘Ely Box (p38), to decide which parts of your efforts to ‘re-imagine your buildings’ are really reaping dividends

- b) ...using the Prophet Priest and King Triangle chart (p42) to assess individual components of the work you do in your parish or ministry context and to decide how much impact they make or whether they are suitably targeted.

4. *Now start to explore the question more deeply by considering 'what might be'*

Using Appreciative Inquiry (see p29ff) you might be asking the following questions..

'When have you felt 'liberated' in the use of your church buildings?'

'What is it about your church or worship space that helps you to experience the Holy?'

'In what location do you best feel able to promote the Gospel in your community?'

'When is your church or worship space most vibrant or well used?'

5. *Now try some objective setting by using the Development Action Planner (pp); remember to make your objectives S.M.A.R.T.*

*(Simple, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-limited)*

6. *Use your reflections about this lever and the ideas you are using to fill in your Development Action Plan to consider how your proposals might affect where you are on the Missional Strength Cross (p50)*

7. *You are starting a project to address an area of ministry or mission which you want to change over time. Be clear about the criteria for success and build in firm review dates with those identified as having responsibility for key areas of work. Use the Change Management Cycle to ponder this process (p56).*

## Working with Lever 5: Target support to key areas

In praying to be visible and generous people of Jesus Christ we aim to *target* support to key areas

1. *Read this Bible passage and take time to 'dwell in the Word' using the suggested method in the Tool Box (p37)*

### **Ezekiel 37.1-14**

Ezekiel was one of the prophets sent by God to his people. This passage is vivid and powerful. It is often read at Pentecost to remind the Church that it is the work of God to revive us and bring new life. Christians have interpreted this passage using three timeframes.

First, there was Israel in despair, to whom the prophet brought hope of renewal. Secondly, there was the once-for-all gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, when God breathed new life into fearful, hopeless disciples. Thirdly, there is the Church of today, constantly in need of strength, renewal and inspiration by the Spirit. May God breathe new life into dry bones.

*Text from 'People Fully Alive':*

Although the good news of Jesus Christ always remains the same, the church is called to proclaim it afresh in each generation. Changes in culture and context mean that the church has to adapt, lest it become a quaint irrelevance, disconnected from the wider society it is called to serve.

The strategy presupposes a diocesan ethos in which renewal and rebirth is seen as inevitable, imperative and ongoing. It also identifies some particular areas where the need for strategic change is particularly pressing.



## **Targeting resources**

Data collection and analysis is a key strategic tool. Together with other ways of describing local situations, hard evidence concerning church finance, attendance, activities, etc., will help us to understand better how diocesan resources are being invested, and how that investment may be used more effectively. Until now, support has been handed out in a fairly haphazard way. The strategy will review this to ensure that we target money and other resources where there is greatest need and greatest opportunity. Key areas for new investment will be market towns and new housing developments, *Fresh Expressions* and pioneering forms of ministry.

## **'Special measures'**

In many places churches will continue to flourish, but there may be times when they do not fare well. Churches with good habits of self-review will recognise their situation and ask for help. The diocese is always ready to provide systems of accountability, accompaniment and investment to help bring about positive change. Occasionally, the initiative will have to come from outside, because decline and low morale have sapped the internal resources needed to face the future. There may be difficult conversations in such circumstances, and all involved will have to behave with maturity and tact. The term 'Special Measures' has been adopted for churches in this second category. It underlines the diocese's concern, and its commitment to providing the support needed to achieve radical change. In a very small number of cases, mutual discernment may lead to the decision that a church should close, and its people find a new home within a more robust church community.

## **Interim ministry**

Although most clergy and lay ministers will continue to serve in a particular place over a fairly long period of time, the strategy suggests that there may be a place for deployable 'interim ministers' who can offer short-term clearly defined support and leadership, either during vacancies or to increase capacity

where there is particular need. More generally, the strategy will consider how we manage periods of vacancy, work allocation, recruitment and appointments.

## **Deployment**

An important strand in this work will be the development of a ministry deployment plan to take account of the declining number of stipendiary priests. By 2025 the number of full-time, paid clergy in our diocese is likely to reduce from a little over 100 to around 80, so we need to think carefully about where they should be and what they should do. This will have an impact on deanery plans, ministerial development reviews and role descriptions for clergy and lay ministers. The strategy will also consider how we might use paid lay workers in a supporting role to release ministers for ministry.

## **Financial planning**

Part of the strategy is to introduce a fundamental review of what we spend (a zero-based budget) in 2016, moving into a three-year budget programme from 2017. This will enable us to spend money more intentionally and develop longer-term plans. We also aim to give greater clarity to local churches about the costs of ministry and mission, and to highlight areas of financial vulnerability.

We have to ensure that diocesan activities are sustainable (and be prepared to make tough decisions where they are not), but we also want to be ambitious, so we plan to launch an Ely 2025 Fund to support new initiatives.

2. *Take time to pray before moving on with the discussion*

**Prayer:** Merciful God,  
teach us to be faithful in change and uncertainty,  
that trusting in your word  
and obeying your will  
we may enter the unfailing joy of Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

3. *Try to imagine the areas of your church context which applying this lever might improve, perhaps by*

- a) ...using the 'Ely Box' (p38), to decide which parts of your efforts to 'target support to key areas' are really reaping dividends
- b) ...using the Prophet Priest and King Triangle chart (p42) to assess individual components of the work you do in your parish or ministry context and to decide how much impact they make or whether they are suitably targeted.

4. *Now start to explore the question more deeply by considering 'what might be'*

Using Appreciative Inquiry (see p29ff) you might be asking the following questions:

- 'Was there an occasion when having to make significant changes in your church led to an unexpectedly welcome outcome?
- 'What helps you to measure success in your church/mission context?'
- 'Has there been a time when being vulnerable was helpful?'
- 'What were the most positive things you remember about the last vacancy?'

5. *Now try some objective setting by using the Development Action Planner (p57ff); remember to make your objectives S.M.A.R.T.  
(Simple, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-limited)*

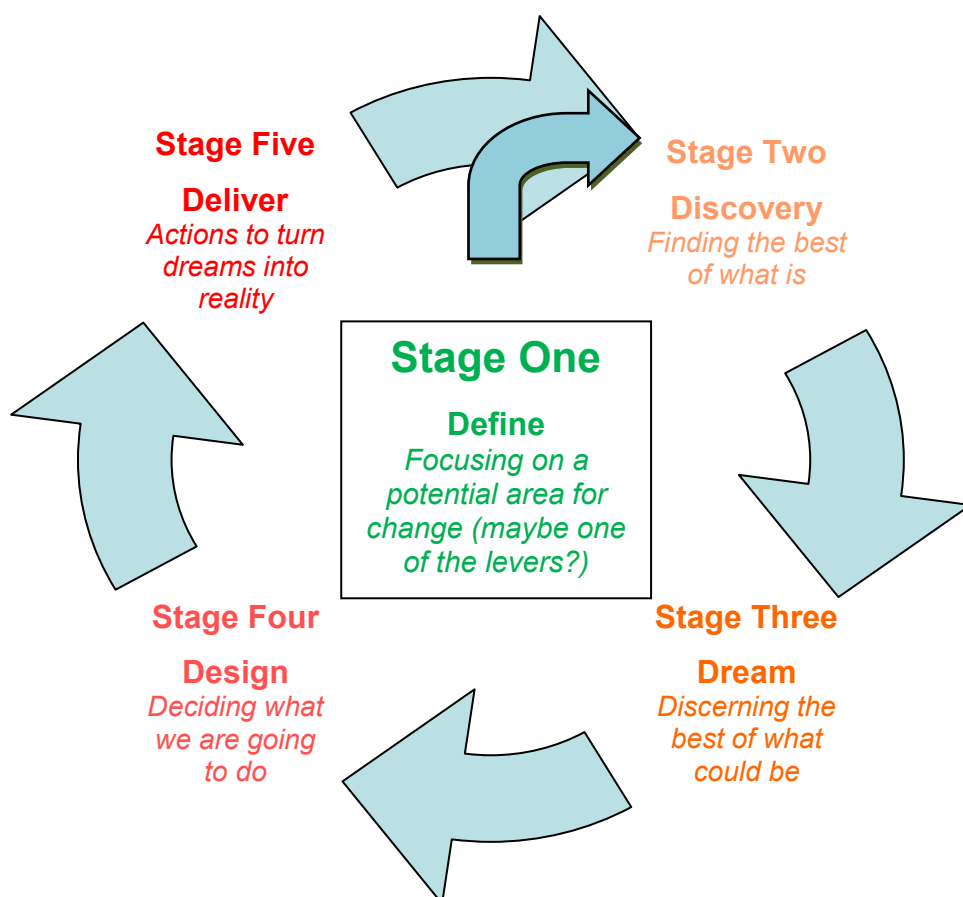
6. *Use your reflections about this lever and the ideas you are using to fill in your Development Action Plan to consider how your proposals might affect where you are on the Missional Strength Cross (p50)*
  
7. *You are starting a project to address an area of ministry or mission which you want to change over time. Be clear about the criteria for success and build in firm review dates with those identified as having responsibility for key areas of work. Use the Change Management Cycle to ponder this process (p56).*

## Appreciative Inquiry

### A method of discerning what to change by seeking a vision from collective wisdom: (Mt 13:52)

Appreciative Inquiry is a five stage process for discovering what needs to change in an organisation by tapping into the wisdom of its members, finding out the activities and attributes which REALLY work or have worked well and carrying them forward in renewed and transformed ways. It is a technique which requires suitable and careful preparation.

What follows is a taster which we hope will intrigue and encourage you to do some further reading and preparation BEFORE embarking on the process of meetings with those others who will bring their wisdom and insight to the process. We urge you therefore to read this introduction, and if it appeals to you as a tool for discernment, to then either visit one of the many online resources (for example the one developed by Sheena Orr for the Church of Scotland in 2009: see 'Further reading and resources' on p61) or to buy an easy to read and very lucid guidebook called 'The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry' by Sue Annis Hammond (Thin Book Publishing Co) which will cost you around £10 on Amazon and will take you about two hours to read.



The diagram is an adaptation of one of many representations you will find in the literature for Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and there are variations on the way it is portrayed and the number and description of the stages: sometimes four, sometimes five. But the basic idea is to approach the question of change management in this way.

Stage One: **Defining** - choosing the topic.

It is essential that a suitable area for investigation is chosen. Having read *People Fully Alive*, you may already have identified one of the levers of change as an area which contains potential for new thinking or development in your church context.

Defining the right topic for exploration makes a difference to how much energy people bring to the inquiry and to the questions which will be asked, stories told and the nature of the 'provocative propositions' (see below)

The topic defined needs to be

- Important enough for people to want to put energy into creating change
- Broad enough for people to participate by having stories to tell
- Focused enough for the topic to be relevant and meaningful to your future
- Expressed as a positive thing (again, see below) for instance 'realising the potential of our beautiful church' rather than 'seeking volunteers to draft a reordering faculty'.

The diagram shows 'define' as the centre of the cycle because all the other stages and activities need to remain in touch with the core issue or strength which this topic contains.

Stage Two: **Discovery** -the best of what is

The inquirers are going to be asked some carefully prepared questions which are designed to get people to tell their stories about what really inspires them and excites them about their faith and their church in the context of the chosen topic. Underlying this is the experience that involving people in telling

and hearing the stories not only leads to significant revelations about what works well in the church context but will also release and channel much of the energy needed to carry through the changes which the process will inspire. All comes from secular roots but we feel it has strong resonances with Biblical teaching through the use of shared narrative.

The questions need to be open and designed to encourage people to tell stories about what happens now or what has happened in the past, but always focussing upon their positive experiences.

Examples might be (for Lever 4)

*Describe a time when you truly felt that the church building was being used as God intended it:*

- *What were the circumstances?*
- *When did that happen?*
- *Who was involved?*
- *What was your contribution?*
- *How was it different to other occasions?*

Stage Three: **Dream**: the best it could be

This is perhaps the most exciting phase of the process and the part which makes it so different from so many other 'management led' change programs because it gives the inquirers the opportunity to dream dreams (Acts 2:17).

This stage involves a closer and more critical look at stories (and the facts which they generate) and looking for the key themes within them that will generate the *provocative propositions* which are essential for the next stage (Design). Here we are seeking out and sharing what is at the heart of 'our story': our former successes and the related but transformed things we dream of for the future.

Much of this stage depends upon the process you have adopted so far. If you have divided your inquirers into smaller groups or pairs to work through the discovery questions, this may be about bringing them together to share and tease out common themes. This is a 'messy' but creative stage and if approached prayerfully may be the one at which the Holy Spirit can be invited to be the Advocate who speaks in us and through us (Jn 14:26).

During this stage a series of statements should be made and recorded which indicate the key emerging themes: for instance (taking the example from Lever 4 above):

- *On those occasions when large numbers of visitors came into our church, the sense of God's Holy Place was unexpectedly intensified*
- *The intense struggle to raise funds and obtain permissions for the reordering united the congregation*
- *Acceptance that the building simply had to close brought a huge sense of relief and released us for mission*
- *The need to introduce disabled access meant we started to think about the worship space in a different way*

Stage Four: **Design**: what we want and how we are going to achieve it.

Here, the inquirers will create *provocative propositions*. Please bear with the rather zippy name: 'provocative propositions' are at the very core of Appreciative Inquiry and drive the changes, perhaps radical changes, which, by now, you are beginning to feel developing their own weight and impetus. Your vision and future direction will come from these.

Provocative propositions need to be clearly connected to what already happens and to the themes and data which have emerged from stages two and three. Additionally, they need to be challenging and 'provocative' by taking us into new places with all the hazards and opportunities that will entail (Exod 3:8).

We write these ideas down as if they are actually happening. Lever 4 examples again:

- *We view the church as a village meeting place which is also used for worship on Sundays*
- *Making ourselves vulnerable and relying on God's Grace during major projects is a calling not a curse*
- *Church is now wherever we make it happen*
- *We have moved the altar and lectern to the north side and turned the congregational seating around to make best use of the single-level nave area leaving the chancel as a prayer and healing space*



## Step five **Deliver** - what will happen

Some versions of AI call this stage **Destiny**, which we might find a little romantic for our Anglican ways, but there is a sense in which this process, if prayerfully used to invite the Holy Spirit to intercede in the work, will indeed shape our destiny. After all, *People Fully Alive* is about shaping the destiny of the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Ely for the next ten years and beyond.

'Deliver' is however about concrete actions, about plans and workstreams, about naming people to be responsible for tasks and about the nitty-gritty of permissions, funds, publicity and participation. It is about turning the ideas into reality by bringing in positive changes.

The aim is to harness the energy which has been released in the first four stages and encouraging and supporting those who have participated in the Inquiry to identify the ways in which they would like to put the provocative propositions (what might be) into effect (what is). At this point, Development Action Planning is recommended (see p57ff) to transform proposals into S.M.A.R.T objectives; carefully considered, approved, funded, publicised, measured and reviewed.

The diagram at the beginning of this section proposes a circular movement, with stage five '**Design**' moving back into stage two '**Discovery**'. This is because the business of reviewing the changes wrought should encourage people to share their stories about what they have experienced during the process and to feed back their thoughts and their energy to keep the cycle of possibility open. Things which were once new become established and can then stagnate or ossify (Mk 9:50); a sense of re-engagement and shared reflection is a healthy way to critique the changes as they bed in.

Finally, some key notes about Appreciative Inquiry

**Who?** It is clearly essential to have all the right people involved but not too many (Mk 3:13-14a). Those involved should be able to tap into a deep well of knowledge and experience about the church or mission context which you are discussing but it may also be helpful to have 'outsiders' who will bring a friendly but critical mind to the meetings. You may also have to be brave about who not to invite as most congregations and groups contain people whose personality or prejudices can stultify or hijack discussion. (Jude 16)

**How and when?** You may already have perceived that for AI to be done properly it takes time and energy. There are three bands of work:

- Preparation - which will involve one or more facilitators taking time to study the method of using AI, either through a published study guide or by visiting (with a critical eye) one of the many online resources. There is also a need to spend time with a small group of people deciding which topic (perhaps a lever) is going to be essayed.
- Gathering - The group of inquirers needs to come together for the beginning of the project. If the group includes 'newcomers' or is not a familiar combination of people who are used to collaborating, some thought might need to be given to ice-breakers and looking at group dynamics. Then their task is to look at the first and second stages, to break open the subject and start thinking, talking and praying about what is being revealed.
- Dreaming and designing might be suitable for a longer workshop or away-day once your inquirers have had the chance to digest and reflect upon the information and ideas which have emerged from stages one and two.
- Delivery will probably involve other meetings and other people, but thought must be given and decisions made about who carries through the energy, passion and (in some senses) ownership of the actions which the inquirers are recommending. Your panel may have been blessed with some remarkable and prophetic insights about what needs to happen now to carry the Gospel forward in your context, but who needs to give permission for these changes to take place, and how is common assent to be sought and achieved?

Lastly, the methodology of Appreciative Inquiry contains within itself a number of **key assumptions** including these:

- In every group or community 'something works'
- People of that community have more confidence and are better equipped for the journey if they carry with them something from their shared past...
- ...but whatever they carry forward should be something of the best of the past which has life, not merely dry bones

- Questions themselves influence the answers given so should be carefully framed
- The language we use and the things we focus on can either free or enslave our thoughts
- People experience things in different ways and these differences must be heard and valued.

In what is set out in this section we have sought to summarise a relatively simple management device but one which is written about in more detail by experts and academics who have far greater expertise and wisdom to offer. If what you have read excites you and appears to be a useful way of approaching some of the demands for change which *People Fully Alive* is advocating, we strongly urge you to look at one or more of the resources available and to take time to familiarise yourself with the concept and craft of Appreciative Inquiry before you call your first meeting.

# People Fully Alive: The Resource Manual Toolbox

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This Resource Manual proposes a *playful* use of management tools, which are not designed to supplant the action of the Holy Spirit, the teachings of the Gospel or the wisdom of the church militant but are offered here to support our efforts to understand how we are being called to 'preach the gospel afresh' and to be the church in this generation. We urge you to look at them with curiosity (if they are new to you) with a critical eye (if you are familiar with the management of change) or with an open mind (if such ideas normally leave you cold). We hope to add more tools and resources to the manual and would welcome your proposals for further inclusions. There is a contact email in the 'Further reading and resources' section (p61).

## Resource Manual Toolbox

### a) Dwelling in the Word: a suggested method (2 Tim 3:16-17)

Many groups will be led by ordained or lay ministers or laity who are familiar with and accomplished at 'dwelling in the Word'. For those less familiar, or those ministers who might find this prompt useful, here is a suggested method for using the Biblical text and notes in the box at the beginning of each lever.

1. Pause in the presence of God.....and reflect on God's life giving presence:
  - in you...
  - in those around you...
  - in your community...
  - in everything around you, before you and after you...
2. Now read the Bible passage aloud, listening carefully to what God might be saying.
3. Pause.
4. Read the passage again (perhaps a different person this time).
5. Which particular words or phrases jumped out at you?
6. How does the passage speak of and to your own church experience and context?
7. What might God be saying to you, through this, for today?
8. Now read the accompanying text in the box.
9. Gather and note down any thoughts and ideas before you move on.

## Resource Manual Toolbox

### b) The Ely Box (Isaiah 55:1-2. John 6:27)



This is a bit of fun which makes a serious point: what is succeeding and what is failing in our church activities. We hope you will use it playfully but find it useful and thought provoking.

Marketing and business gurus like to use a tool called 'The Boston Box': originally 'The Boston Consulting Group's Growth-Share Matrix'. This is a diagrammatic way of looking at products in a market and deciding which are succeeding, which are failing, which look really promising for the future and which need to be ditched. The diagram contrasts market *share* with market *growth*.

When used for commercial purposes, it looks like this:

	High Market Share	Low Market Share
High Market Growth Rate	1. Rising stars	2. Question marks
Low Market Growth Rate	3. Cash cows	4. Old dogs

For example, imagine we are a major car sales dealership and looking at what sells and what doesn't, which kind of cars we might stop stocking, and new types of car to start pushing. Our chart might look like this:

	High Market Share	Low Market Share
High Market Growth Rate	1. SUV's	2. 'Green' hybrid petrol-electric
Low Market Growth Rate	 3. Transit vans and small hatchbacks	 4. Big engined family saloons

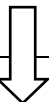

The latest fashion is for the 'SUV' - like a Nissan Juke or a Kia Sportage. Big engined family saloons like the Ford Sierra and Volvo T40 still have a place but are costly to run and while they were once the car that well-to-do family people aspired to, they have lost market share. Researchers are all telling us that we will all soon have to run hybrid vehicles, and they are getting cheaper and more reliable; they are a 'must-have' on the forecourt. The vertical arrow shows how we would like to see high market growth gradually turn a new

product - a 'rising star' like our SUV -which was expensive to develop, into a widely bought product which becomes cheaper to produce and makes good profits: a cash cow.

By contrast, you see 'Transit' type vans everywhere and small hatchbacks too. They make us a fortune, especially in fleet sales and surely people will always want them. But cheap imports from China of work vans and mass produced 'budget' runabouts are denting our sales - perhaps we can't rely on them to keep us in business for ever. The horizontal arrow shows a possible decline of our 'cash cow' into an 'old dog'.

OK - hopefully you will have got the idea.

Now just supposing we use this tool to look at what is succeeding and what is failing in our own churches. (A warning - this has to be done with sensitivity and generosity, looking objectively at what is going on and not apportioning blame or trying to be defensive). We are not interested in 'profitability' but we can substitute our own 'Kingdom' goals: attendance for example.

THE ELY BOX	High commitment/attendance	Low commitment/attendance
High Growth Rate	1. Rising stars  Messy Church Café Church 'Open the Book' (schools)	2. Question marks  Niche special services (All Souls, Remembrance events) Weddings (perhaps having a bit of a resurgence after The Marriage Project)
Low Growth Rate	 3. Cash cows  Sunday Morning Services Mid week communions Funerals (maybe the numbers are tailing off)	4. Old dogs  Evensong Holy Week weekday communion services 

Now a number of things may immediately come to mind. For instance isn't it irreligious or disrespectful to describe a midweek communion service in Holy Week as an 'old dog' especially if you regard it as a sacred observance? But this is to miss the point. What we are trying to do is to assess the missional value of the service. If only two or three people turn up, what is the service achieving? Is it a sensible use of resources to keep Evensong going with no choir and no congregation just because 'we have always had evensong here'. If you can get fifteen or twenty people to a Sunday evening café church instead, might that be worth a try?

The object of the exercise is to ask hard questions about what we do and then try to unpick the answer, looking for a suitable response. The underlying assumptions are the same: we are in this to try and win souls to Christ (and not waste our time) and we can't do everything - some things must take priority when time and resources are (more) scarce.

There are however some important points of preparation and some ancillary questions.

To prepare:

Think carefully about the words and definitions you use in the top line. Are you measuring numbers, commitment, or some other value connected with the Kingdom, which might be to do with the public profile of the church or the prophetic call of its people? Five people who attend a service held once a week in a community centre in the middle of an Urban Priority Area might be witnessing by prayer, word and worship in circumstances where the heavy commitment of resources was highly justified. It would score very little under 'attendance' but would do very well under the heading 'impact'.

Similarly, the two boxes on the 'vertical axis'. In commercial terms analysts look at growth in 'Market Share'. We could simply substitute 'growth rate' i.e. whether or not this particular service or church feature is attracting more people, staying static or shrinking. On the other hand you may discern other measures of growth such as a rise in weekly giving or numbers of new members coming forward for baptism or confirmation.

... And be thoughtful and objective about where you place a service or church activity. Don't oversell a service because it is popular with those in the pews: if



average attendance has reduced by 40% over five years, there are serious questions to be asked.

And for the purpose of analysis:

Do the 'products' compete with each other? Are the people who go to Café Church the very same people who attend the traditional services on other Sundays? Have local Christians given up on the parish church and are attending a large evangelical free church twenty miles away which we might regard as 'the competition'?

What is 'the competition'? It might be something apparently unrelated to religion like a well run and very popular children's Sunday morning football club.

What is the thing which drives people to take up the 'product' or which deters them (you might precipitously decide it is the service style when in fact it is the start time)?

Here is a blank grid: do have fun- and don't forget the arrows!

THE ELY BOX	High (attendance/value?) i.e. serves the Gospel well	Low (attendance/value?) i.e. debateable how well this serves the Gospel yet / any more
High 'growth rate'	1. Rising stars	2. Question marks
Low 'growth rate'	3. Cash cows	4. Old dogs

## Resource Manual Toolbox

### c) The Prophet Priest and King Triangle: measuring 'soft' missional data.

It is relatively straightforward to find 'hard data' to measure the 'missional life' of a church or sector ministry. In the parish context we have the measures of population, Usual Sunday Attendance, Electoral Roll, attendances (and often communicants) at the Principal Services at Christmas and Easter, and of course the payment of parish share, which can be further broken down to 'giving per member of congregation'. Other 'hard data' might include numbers of baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals. In a sector ministry context, the data is more esoteric, but as this ministry is generally offered in the context of an institution or as an adjunct to a public service, hard data about their equivalent of 'numbers of people through the doors' (and about related costs) is not difficult to find.

When it comes to comparing the work of different parishes and ministries however, there is an understandable discomfort with the unsubtle use of raw statistics to measure workload, impact and other more abstract (but nevertheless important) concepts such as 'reach' i.e. the extent to which the work of the church impacts upon the surrounding community. The activities of a small congregation in a village setting sometimes has a much higher local profile than that of (say) a much larger congregation in a sprawling suburban area. And yet, if we compare the two with hard data alone, the suburban church probably 'scores' much higher.

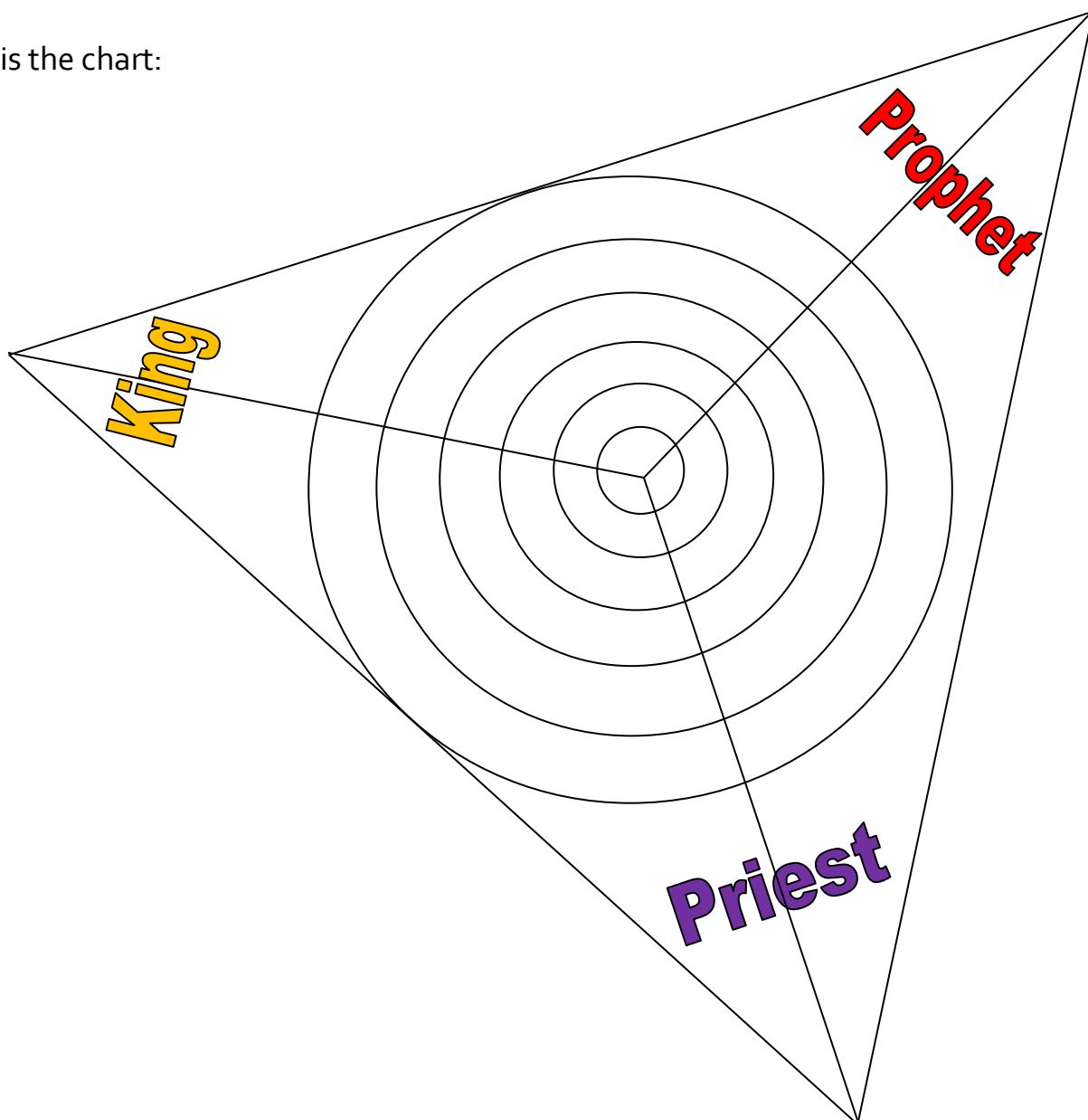
The difficulty is that every church feels that what it is doing is contributing to the mission of the Gospel and although numbers alone fail to tell the whole story it is also too easy to be complacent about activities which simply do not advance the work of Kingdom of Heaven. Do we expend energy on things which are merely designed to keep us comfy and complacent and then try to dress them up as 'worthy', 'essential', 'traditional' or 'outreach'?

The Prophet Priest and King Triangle is an attempt to offer a device to help you to measure the 'soft data' concerning your church or mission activities against some suitable criteria, using the best template we can offer, which is the ministry of Our Lord.

From the Letter to the Hebrews, the writings of Eusebius, Calvin and Wesley and many others across the breadth of Christian tradition we have the notion of Christ's ministry and mission revealed in three human and divine roles: that of **Prophet, Priest and King**. This in turn has been widely used to describe the 'classic' model of ministry (see for instance. *Priesthood and Ministry, Ecumenical Research*. Max Thurian (Taize) Mowbray 1983 p18).

A few years ago, in some work done for the pre-ordination Diploma at the East Anglian Ministerial Training Course, a student used the model of Prophet, Priest and King to create a triangular target chart to analyse and quantify the nature and extent of different types of ministry within a parish context. This chart is offered here as a self-assessment tool to help you to a) decide which aspects of Christ's ministry your work is aimed at and b) by how much that challenge is actually met.

Here is the chart:



The areas of Prophet, Priest and King can be understood in the following categories of work:

**Prophet:** preaching and teaching: social engagement, especially when this is about lobbying or concerns the kind of charitable work which is designed to speak about the issues of the day with a Christian voice; and direct intervention (for instance housing refugees).

**Priest:** offering the sacrament and worship leading. This would also involve the pastoral offices in the sense of ministering to those in need of the touch of Christ's hands offered through our hands

**King:** enlarging the Kingdom of Heaven by evangelism but also acts of grace such as offering healing, visiting or feeding: so, some more active but perhaps less dramatic charitable works.

Examples might be as follows.

- a) *Members of the ministry team offer a communion service once a month at a retirement home. Sacrament - 'Priest'.*
- b) *Members of the congregation run a drop-in for the elderly at which lunches are served. Works of the Kingdom - 'King'.*
- c) *A member of the congregation has volunteered to call a public meeting to focus opposition to the closure of the local geriatric ward. Works of prophesy - 'Prophet'.*

Plainly some church activities could be understood from the standpoint of more than one or even all three of the headings. The question is; which 'point' is the work aimed at accomplishing, and here is the sting: if none of these, then how is the activity justified as part of the work or mission of the church?

How do we 'score' these activities?

First consider which of the three aspects of Christ's ministry we are seeking to serve.

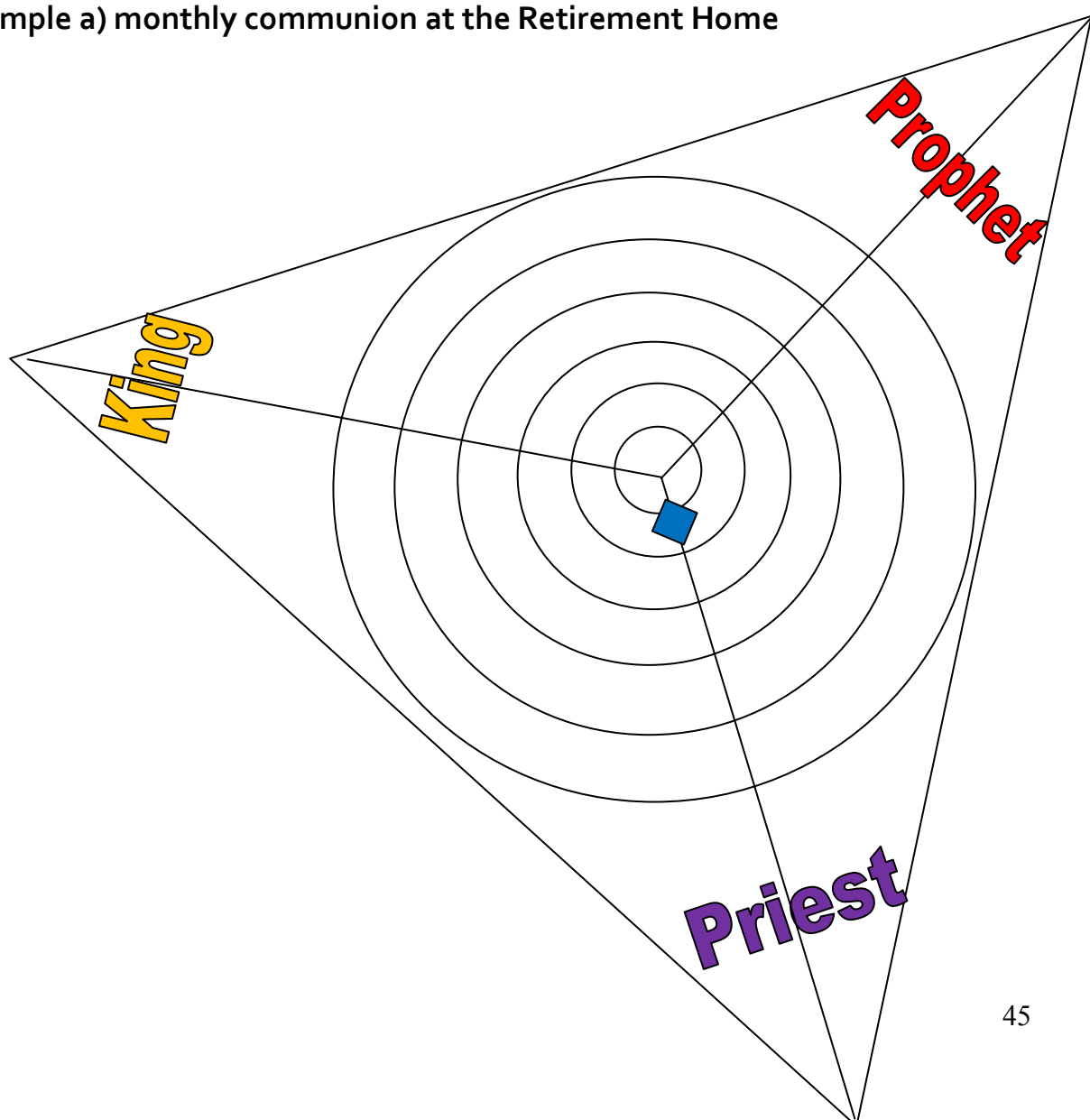
Secondly, use the concentric circles to 'score' or weight the activity starting from the first (inner) circle which we might describe as minimal impact, moving up through six grades to the outer circle which we would count as the

highest impact possible in the context in question. The diagram overlaid has been completed to show a fictional assessment of example a) above.

Members of the ministry team offer a communion service once a month at a retirement home. Although this is very 'worthy' and a long standing feature, only five or six out of the forty or fifty residents attend the service and the staff and management plainly regard it as an imposition on their heavy working routines.

Here is the chart again: we have decided to score the activity (with the blue square) under 'Priest' because it is mainly sacramental but cannot in all honesty give it much weight as the resources used to discharge this duty are not rewarded with any returns of growth or much public impact. We may well decide to continue to offer the service, we cherish and honour the wonderful people we serve, but once we start comparing this with other activities we will at least have an idea of its merits.

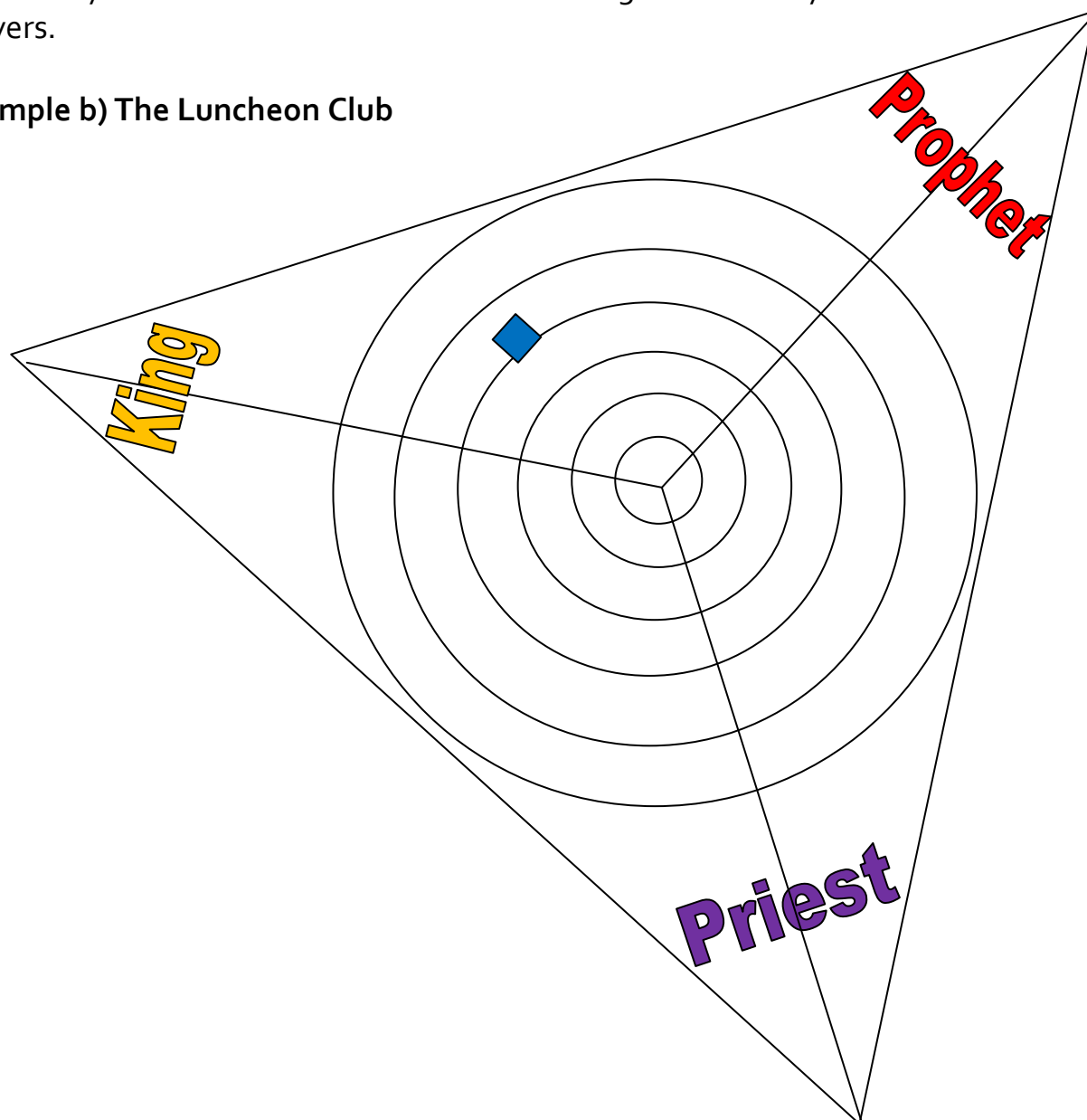
#### Example a) monthly communion at the Retirement Home



Another example - b) Members of the congregation run a drop-in luncheon club for the elderly.

This has grown recently and has become quite hard work for those involved who have noticed that the closure of a local social-services run lunch club has swollen the numbers of those attending. The LLM has stopped taking funerals on that day to ensure she is there to offer a 'thought for the day' and some prayers.

### Example b) The Luncheon Club



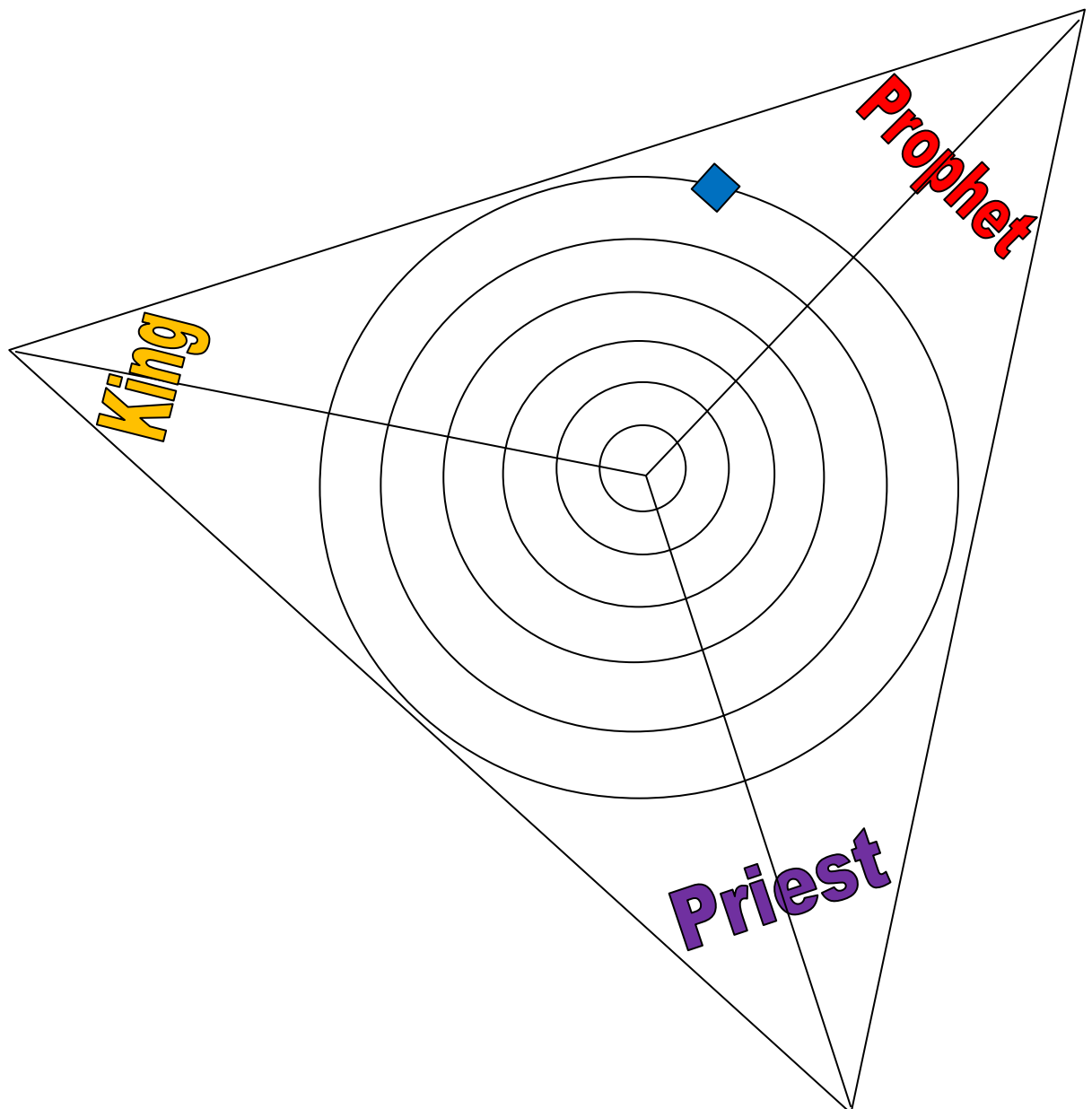
You have had a healthy debate about whether this is serving the needs of the Kingdom by feeding, or whether this is a touch of 'Prophecy' by leading some social action (when the state is withdrawing) and offering some teaching to those attending. No matter: why not place the marker somewhere between King and Prophet? The whole enterprise, albeit time consuming and (at the

moment at least) costing the parish money, has the feel of something Spirit-led which is taking off. Numbers are good and attendance is consistent. You score it in the range of 'good, with room for improvement'.

Final example: c) A member of the congregation has been tasked to call a public meeting to focus opposition to the closure of the local geriatric ward.

She manages to get both the local MP and the regional TV interested in a live debate which is held in the church. The Bishop agrees to chair/facilitate. There is a big row and 'questions are asked in the House'. The ward is saved (for now) and the church, and Christian witness, is seen and noted as part of the proceedings.

**Example c) A public meeting to debate the ward closure**



Once again, is this Prophecy or the work of the Kingdom? You decide it's more of the former but a bit of both. It scores pretty highly and shows the Church Militant still has teeth! Can this be sustained or repeated? Would you be able to 'score' this activity another year?

By now we hope you can see that this tool could be useful in critically evaluating the work your church or mission context offers its local community. The tricky part is isolating areas of work and deciding how to score them while remaining both objective and consistent - but this is YOUR tool for your context and we commend it to you. Use it playfully and some serious points may arise.

As a final thought, exercises in measuring or scoring the impact of activities work better if they are honestly and generously shared with other similar churches or communities. Can you envisage an invitation to a neighbouring parish, benefice or sector ministry using the same device and approach to compare results?

And lastly, how would it feel to compare data on (for instance) the work of the churches in primary schools across a deanery? Would this tool enable you to answer the questions 'Are we doing enough?' or 'Is what we are offering actually achieving the right outcomes?'

Sometimes the questions lead back to more fundamental issues: 'What is it exactly we are trying to achieve by going into the schools?'

(Phil 2:5)



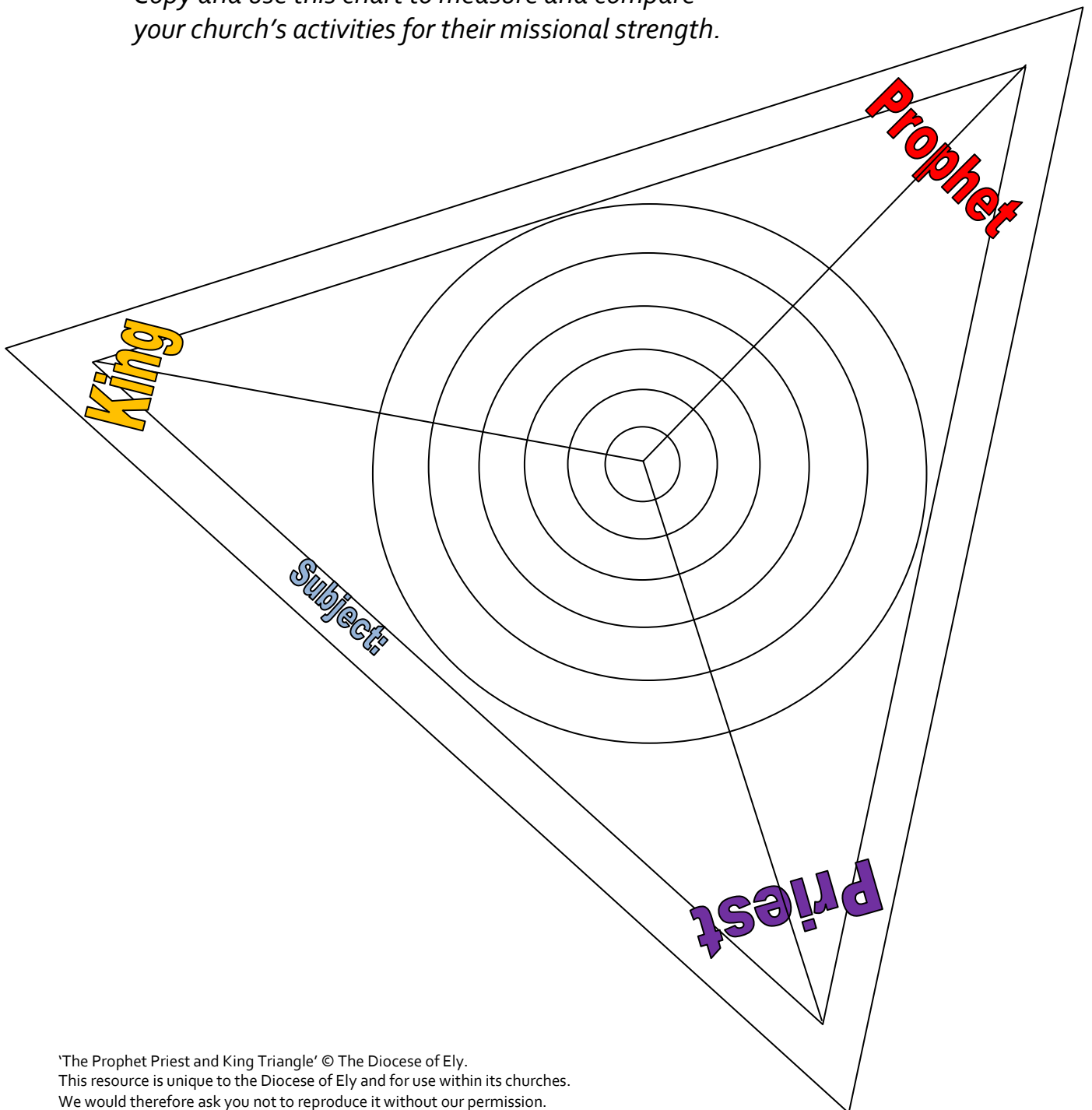


The Church of England  
**Diocese of Ely**

People Fully Alive: The Ely Diocesan Vision Strategy Resource Manual

**The Prophet Priest and King Triangle.**

*Copy and use this chart to measure and compare your church's activities for their missional strength.*



'The Prophet Priest and King Triangle' © The Diocese of Ely.  
This resource is unique to the Diocese of Ely and for use within its churches.  
We would therefore ask you not to reproduce it without our permission.

## Resource Manual Toolbox

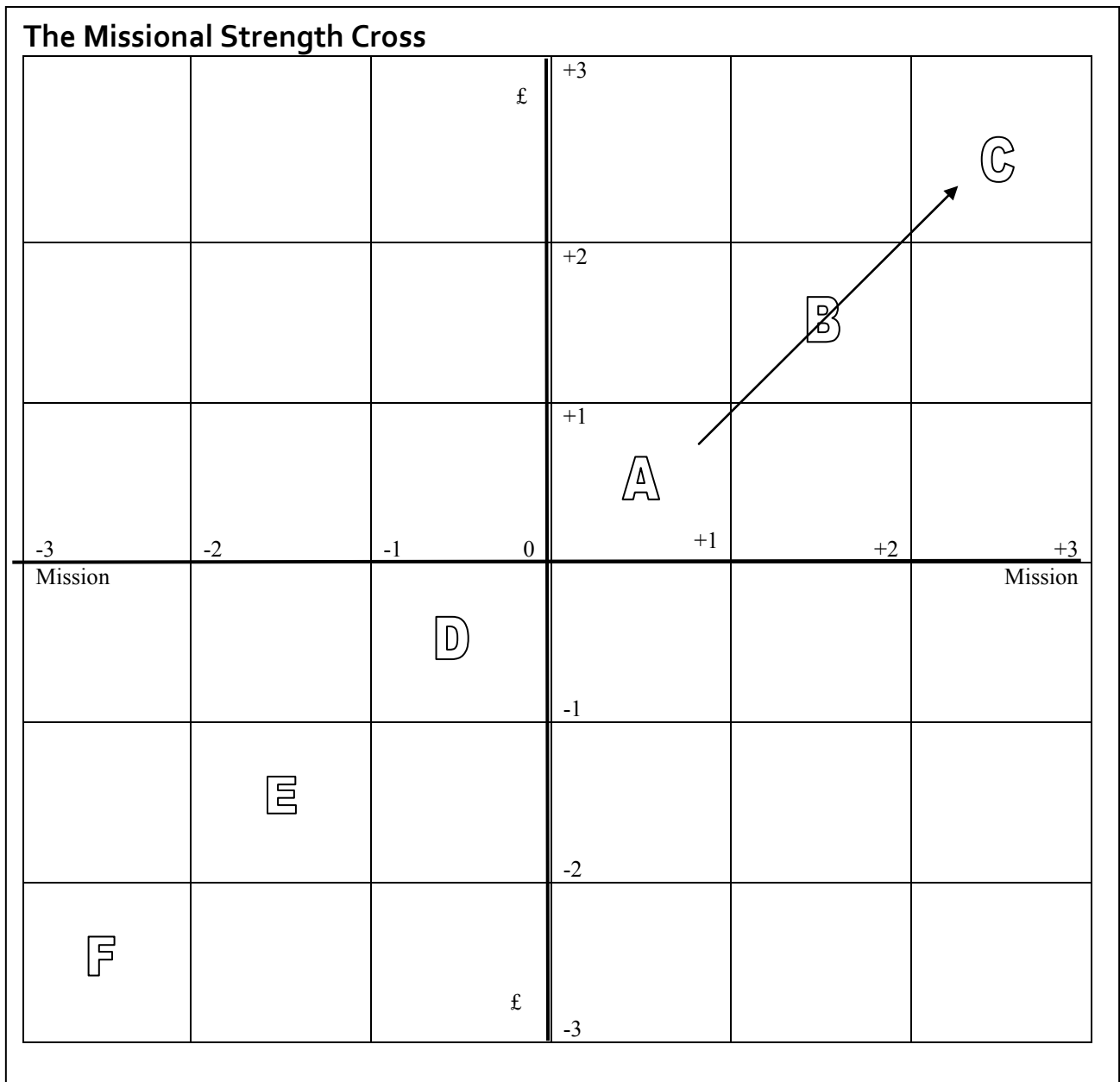
### d) The Toronto Grid - the 'Missional Strength Cross'

Hopefully you will have seen a version of this before but we now offer it to you for your own use. This is a tool for the broadest, some might say the crudest, measurement of the relative strengths and weaknesses of parishes based upon financial strength (the vertical axis) and mission strength (the horizontal axis).

In the original model derived from work undertaken in Toronto, the grid is used to measure the financial viability of each parish in disclosing the sum each parish pays out (its share plus its outgoings) or by contrast the amount the parish costs (its unpaid shares and any subsidies or debts) per annum. This is a figure which is easily calculated and does at least have some connection with the strength or weakness of a church. A church which pays £50,000 in parish share on top of £50,000 in running costs is *prima facie* in a 'stronger' position than a church which cannot afford its £5,000 p.a. share, has half a share in a full-time stipendiary minister (therefore costs the diocese c£18,000) and struggles to pay its heating, insurance and other bills amounting to (say) £10,000.

The horizontal axis is more controversial as it simply uses congregation numbers (percentage growth) as the measure of mission strength. Of course we can all agree that a growing congregation is a good thing and a shrinking one a bad thing, but this is a very simplistic measurement of the range and richness of ministry in any context and deserves to be improved upon.

We are therefore offering a revised grid which uses the same themes - financial and mission strength, but which invites you to make your own scoring based upon whether your parish or mission community is financially sound and whether a combination of 'hard' and 'soft' data gives you a positive or negative picture of your situation. We hope the exercise is enlightening and if not encouraging, at least offers a challenge to look more closely at the levers of change to see what might be accomplished. As with all the other 'tools' this is designed for a serious purpose but is meant to be used 'playfully' to help you explore the underlying issues rather than become overly concerned with the rules or the method.



## Scoring the Missional Strength Cross

**The vertical axis** is the most straightforward and is used to measure financial strength. Use 'plus points' to reflect your ability to pay parish share and annual costs, your amount of reserves and (perhaps most importantly) your ability to raise income up to and above basic share and costs year on year.

A parish would be +2 if it covered its share and costs and had modest reserves. A parish would only be +3 if it did the above and had surpluses in income which could either be devoted to (say) major re-ordering or to fund mission work. A parish would be -1 if it only managed to cover its basic costs and did not pay its parish share in full for (say) the last three years. -2 if it could not pay parish share: -3 if it could neither pay parish share nor cover its principal costs (or was facing significant repair costs beyond any hope of meeting them).

**The horizontal axis** is trickier because it looks at both the hard measures of mission (size and growth or shrinkage of Sunday attendance) and the softer measures such as pastoral offices (baptisms, weddings and funerals), schools work, teaching work such as house groups and new initiatives such as messy church.

To help you think through the things which you might want to score on this axis, there is a list of mission initiatives in the document headed '**Evidencing missional strength (without using numbers)**' below. Are there any of these which you are undertaking which can be properly credited to this score?

Churches with congregations in real growth can confidently score themselves in +1 or +2, but those with congregations which are reducing must start from -1 or -2. Now add quarter points for any or all of the initiatives on the following list which are up and running BUT take quarter points off for any of these ideas which are either not being attempted or have been unsuccessful.

**Finding your point.** Having scored the vertical and horizontal axes, draw a line between the points and the centre point of that line is 'where you are'. Plainly we all aspire to be in A>B>C and certainly hope to move out of D>E>F. Put another way, a church in B can consider itself viable and succeeding: a church in E is in difficulties.

Although this exercise may seem a little primitive, even brutal, it is designed for you to use privately and in order to provoke discussion, prayer and reflection, not to be judgemental or discouraging. We also invite you to revisit this as your Development Action Plans progress.

## **Evidencing missional strength (without using numbers)**

The purpose of this paper is to suggest a way in which the missional strength of a parish can be assessed when the numbers are challenged. The assumption behind it is that the following factors are signs of a healthy, engaged and vibrant church. A church which has mission values at its heart.

Factors to look out for a missionally strong church are as follows:

### ***The church is***

#### ***1. Spiritually active***

- An encouragement to pray for friends, neighbours, work colleagues and family members to come to faith.
- Evidenced by- prayer leaflets, additional prayer meetings, Julian groups, a rule of life has been adopted.

#### ***2. Visible in the community***

- Evidenced by an attractive church notice board is with up-to-date information.
- Here is an outward-focussed church website with up-to-date information about the parish and especially Sunday activities.
- The Church Hall has information about congregational life and the Christian faith in an attractive format.
- The Church building is open and welcoming.
- Regular contact is made with the parish via newsletters/publications/magazines. Presence on Facebook. Twitter and the like are desirable.

#### ***3. Engaging in the community***

- Evidenced by - Church members involved in the local school as Governors or Chaplains.
- Clergy engaged in the life of the school.
- Open the Book and other material is used in school.
- Clergy are visible at major village (not Church) events.

- Clergy are Chaplains for other local organisations such as uniformed organisations and British Legion.
- Thought has been given and action taken on meeting the specific local needs of the community e.g. Mother and Toddler groups/ Baby clubs. Besom. Foodbanks, debt counselling, mediation.

#### ***4. Occasional offices are taken purposefully***

- Evidenced by the use of National Church material for Funerals and Baptisms
- Opportunities are created for further engagement after the baptism or funeral maybe via invitations to the Mothers' Union or the 'Pram service'.
- Intentional steps made to invite relevant people.

#### ***5. Newcomers welcomed***

- Clear evidence of the congregation welcoming newcomers through greeting and befriending.
- Everybody welcome (or similar) course has been used.
- Evidence in PCC minutes that the issue of welcome is regularly reviewed.

#### ***6. Explorers welcomed***

- Evidenced by the provision of courses such as Alpha or Christianity Explored are offered.
- People invited to attend such course by the clergy.

#### ***7. Discipleship taken seriously***

- Evidenced by offering small study groups and courses such as Pilgrim and Emmaus.
- Encouragement to use retreat days.

#### ***8. New ways of being church***

- Evidenced by some form of Fresh Expression is being thought of. Mission Shaped Ministry course has been attended.
- Local examples have been visited.

**9. Purposeful meetings**

- The mission values of the church are seen in the PCC minutes.
- Meetings are limited, much day-to-day work is delegated giving the PCC time to pray and plan strategically.
- There is a clear and updated Development Action Plan

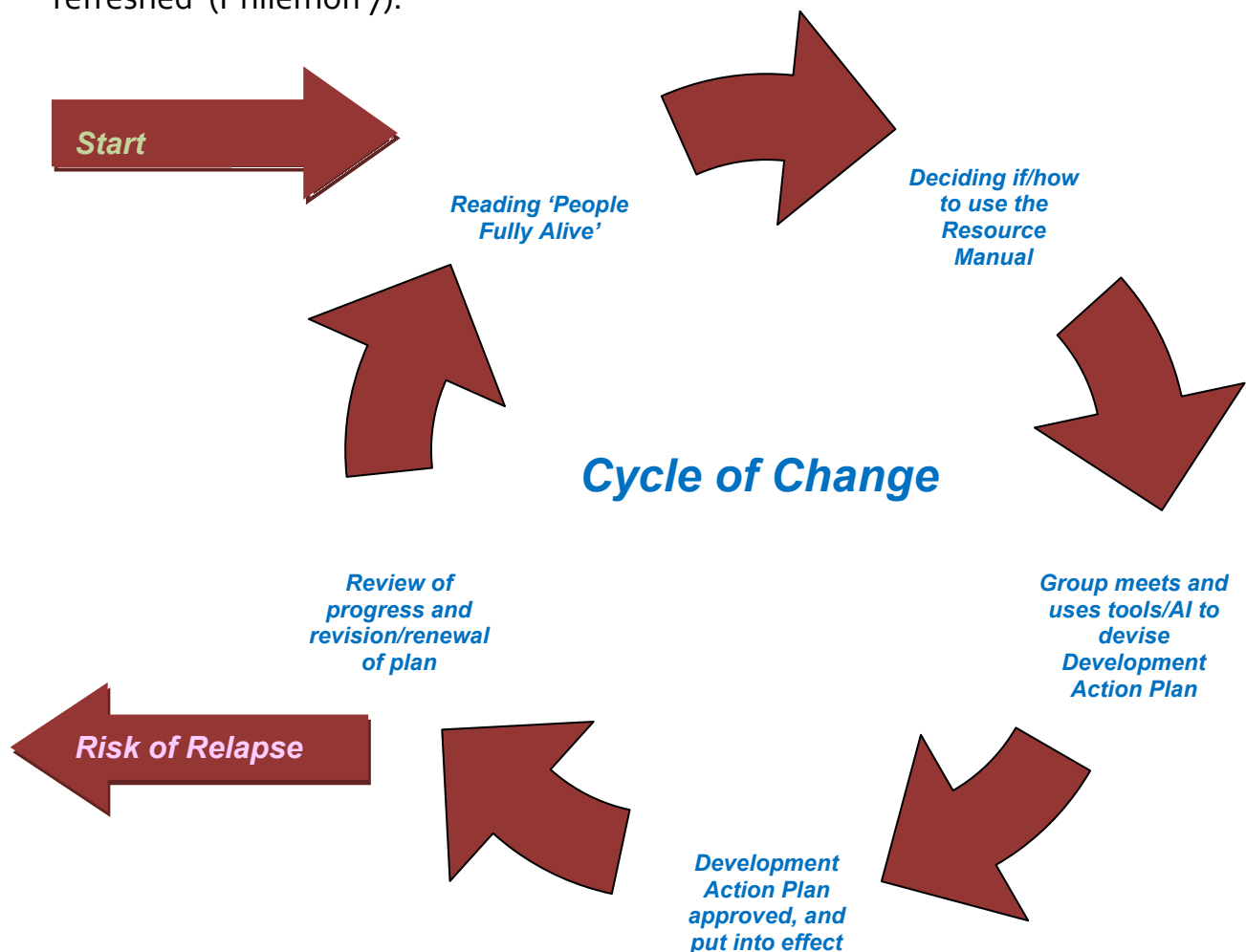
**10. Purposeful mission investment**

- The church accounts show a commitment to mission through its investment and spending (excluding building projects).

## Resource Manual Toolbox

### e) The Change Management Cycle

This diagram follows many standard representations of the 'change management cycle' which moves from the initial tentative phase of exploring the subject, through the work of devising change, to implementing the change. At this point, most practitioners agree that there is the highest risk of inertia and 'relapse' when good intentions and well made plans get sidelined or diluted. Those concerned with developing and implementing the Development Action Plans should therefore build in dates for genuine and concerted review and revision so that the 'hearts of the saints may be refreshed' (Philemon 7).



We hope *People Fully Alive* and the Resource Manual will continue to feature in your planning for change well into the future and encourage you to use this binder as a store of ideas and resources for that purpose.



## MAKING DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLANS

Once you have worked through *People Fully Alive* and given consideration to the Five Levers, we hope you will have compiled a list of significant aspirations which need to be fulfilled in order to address some of the challenges raised by the strategy. Turning these aspirations into actions and results is the next, and much longer task.

We are asking everyone to put together Development Action Plans so that those with responsibility for managing change at deanery and diocesan level can assist with your work and so that sound decisions can be made about the allocation of diocesan resources.

What follows is a suggestion for this process based upon three forms which are included for you to copy and use, should you choose to do so. But please note, these forms are here as a suggestion and are designed to aid the process of planning, not to constrain you to a particular method of planning and making records. All we ask is that you ensure that any decisions which you make which flow from *People Fully Alive* are turned into realistic and achievable objectives and result in favourable outcomes **and** that you keep a record of your decisions and your plans in a form which can be copied to your Rural Dean, Lay Chair, Archdeacon and Bishops so that they can remain informed and engaged in what is happening 'at grass roots level'.

The three forms can be used as follows

Page 1: Development Action Plan Overview - which is used to identify the objectives which you have identified to meet the needs of any of the levers of change. We suggest you might be looking at between three and six overall objectives.

Page 2: Exploring the Objective - a page to break down ONE of the objectives identified on the first page into (three) tasks - with each task cross referenced against any or all of the five levers (not simply the one the main objective is aimed addressing). On the form we have restricted the number of tasks associated with the Objective to three - of course you can adapt the form if more tasks are identified.

Page 3: Managing the Objective - a page to follow page 2 for each objective which will help you to record the who, what, how and how much of each task

and reminds you to keep the objective S.M.A.R.T - in other words realistic and manageable.

In order to make this process a little clearer we have included a completed example, drawing on the fictional circumstances imagined for Tool c) (see p42) '*members of the congregation run a drop-in for the elderly at which lunches are served*'.

You will see that the team at 'St Saviour's' have completed their Development Action Plan Overview and have identified four objectives which they are going to try to meet before January 2018. They have placed each objective against the lever of change which prompted it but also used the grid to review each objective against the three Imperatives which lie behind the levers.

The second objective is '*to improve the provision of ministry and the practical arrangements for the over sixties lunch club*'. It relates to the lever of serving the community, and addresses the imperative to engage courageously with the needs of (their local) community. In this way St Saviour's have cross checked that this objective remains squarely within the stated needs and aspirations of *People Fully Alive*. On the second page they have started work on this objective. There will be a 'page 2' - Exploring the Objective' form for the other three objectives but they are not reproduced here. In 'Exploring the Objective' they have identified and listed three key tasks for accomplishing the objective.

The first is to make a Licensed Lay Minister called Anne available to act as a regular chaplain at the over-sixties club. The second is to liaise with the local social services, whose withdrawal of funding to a local authority drop-in centre has meant a number of 'non-church' folk have been let down and might be very pleased to be invited along. The third is more prosaic, but concerns giving the church servery area a facelift and buying a better refrigerator for the food.

You will see that St Saviour's have used the levers to check their tasks are relevant to the needs of the strategy. Take 'George and Sally', who are newly retired and have expressed a wish to get more involved in practical things at church. As they are a new resource, they are 'targeted to a key area' rather than being ignored or side-lined with a token or unsuitable role. There is a high likelihood that giving them the transport project will help to nurture their confidence as workers for the Gospel.

The last page breaks down the three tasks so that St Saviour's know who is responsible, how much the task might cost (if only by identifying the resource implications) how long it should take to accomplish and how they will know if it has been a success.

They are confident to tick the boxes along the top because the objective has proved to be simple, its outcome can be measured, it is certainly achievable and realistic and they know when it should have been achieved.

St. Saviour's Development Action Plan will finally run to nine pages: one 'Page one', entitled 'Development Action Plan', with eight subsequent pages, copies of pages 2 and 3 'Exploring' and 'Managing' each of the four stated objectives.

Some readers may feel this form of Development Action Planning is rather cumbersome but we urge you to consider the times in the past when well intentioned proposals have foundered because their implementation has not been properly considered, planned, delegated, costed and reviewed or where the original idea has become so diluted or entangled in other activities that the original objective has been forgotten along the way.

As with all of the tools in this Resource Manual, we commend this to you but we do not insist that you use this exact format. Please adapt it if you wish to do so. Whatever form it takes it needs to 'show your workings' by reference to the Imperatives and Levers and include practical issues such as timetable and resourcing. All that is asked is that you produce a Development Action Plan in your preferred format which can be copied to your Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee in due course.