

Terms of Reference

Context:

In 2022 the Diocese of Liverpool embarked upon a six-year step change initiative, encouraged by and in partnership with the Church Commissioners.

Bishops and Archdeacons are leading us forward to work more collaboratively across deanery-scale geography and to focus more time on four priority areas: introducing people to Jesus, deepening discipleship, developing Christian leaders and working for justice. All activity should be building these areas of focus. There is also a vision to reduce the burden of structural bureaucracy by moving to have fewer larger parishes and deal with our buildings issue.

Fit for Mission will change the way we organise ourselves at parish level, and the way we prioritise our time and resources for mission, pastoral care and governance.

In order to deliver the step change mentioned in the paragraph above, change teams are being formed to focus on specific areas of work. These change teams will have the responsibility to develop proposals, with due attention and consultation, and in some cases for the oversight/implementation of those proposals after they have been agreed. In most cases these are 'task and finish' groups that will dissolve once the step change has been achieved. The change teams are: Growth, Right Buildings, Support Services Oversight, Finance, Safeguarding and Churchwardens.

In order to create space and energy for the change portfolio work, it is envisaged that consolidation of other leadership tasks will need to take place. All these changes will be locally driven and agreed, and will ensure that priorities are properly resourced.

Purpose:

The Right Buildings change team will in the first instance work to deliver a Right Buildings proposal for the larger Parish. The team will ensure that local intel is uncovered, understood and fully taken into account in the process. This will be a significant piece of work that will involve listening to church and local communities, other local research and broad assessment of opportunities for each current property (churches, halls and land). Bringing together all this work the team will make a best option proposal that will include maximizing the use of some buildings and the shared use / repurposing or sale of others. The team will be looking across the whole of the larger Parish trying to offer the best pragmatic opportunity for the gospel to be received across the area.

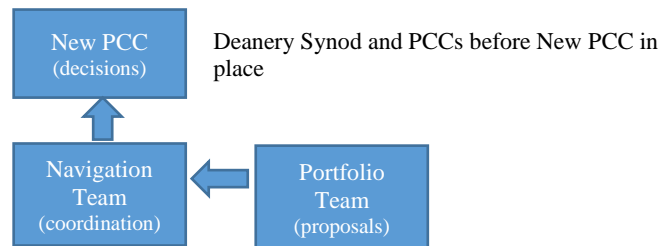
The team will be assisted with process and expertise during the proposal phase by the Buildings Strategy Manager.

Once a decision has been made this team may give oversight to implementation (although membership of the group could change at that point according to individual's availability and desire to continue). Development of buildings would be supported by a Fit for Mission fundraiser and project manager. Site development/shared use would be supported by the Assistant Diocesan Secretary and a project manager. Sale of buildings would be supported by the Assistant Diocesan Secretary and the Bishop's Planning Officer and team.

Accountability:

The Right Buildings team members will be accountable to each other and to their Lead. The Lead will be accountable to the Navigation Team. Coordination of the portfolio teams' work within the larger Parish will be managed by the Navigation team; the Right Buildings Lead will regularly attend the Navigation team meeting to discuss progress and issues.

Once the Right Buildings team has developed the Right Buildings proposal, the proposal will firstly be reviewed by the Navigation team for alignment/coordination purposes. It will then be reviewed by PCCs and Deanery Synod.



Membership and roles:

The Right Buildings team will be led by the Right Buildings Lead, responsible for every aspect of the team's work and wellbeing. The Right Buildings Lead will ensure that the vision and goals of the team are clear and understood. The Right Buildings Lead may be lay or ordained and the best person should be determined by their ability.

The number of people in the Right Buildings team is open for local determination, however it is recommended that the team is between 5 and 8 people (not including the Buildings Strategy Manager) and should be a mix of lay and ordained.

Each person has a clear role as defined by the role descriptions below.

Responsibilities:

- Work closely with the Buildings Strategy Manager to gather and understand information regarding each property (churches, halls and land) in the deanery/larger parish. This information will come from publicly available data, local church and wider communities and through specific visits aimed at gathering building and community data.
- Analyse all gathered data to discern an all-encompassing proposal for the larger parish, which may include options, but certainly a preferred option. The Proposals Report is likely to be developed in workshops with the Buildings Strategy Manager and additional specialist facilitation support as required.
- Support the Buildings Strategy Manager to concisely document evidence and the detailed recommendation within the Right Buildings proposal.
- Present the Right Buildings proposal to the Navigation team initially.
- Determine a consultation process for communicating the proposal to Deanery Synod and PCCs; undertake this explanation/consultation. Make modifications to the proposal as required.
- Lead the process of adoption of the proposal by Deanery Synod.
- Depending on the recommendations engage with the Fit for Mission team to plan for sub-project execution around each building/site.

Term and Frequency:

The Right Buildings team will meet regularly from the beginning of Fit for Missions activities in a Deanery, as defined by the portfolio lead, for prayer, business and to ensure good relationships and communication between the team. The proposal work may take up to 12 months.

Role Descriptions

Right Buildings Portfolio Lead

Purpose:

Ensure that the Right Buildings Proposal is produced, consulted on, agreed and ultimately executed.

Main Responsibilities:

- Oversee and give leadership to the work of the Right Buildings team, particularly ensuring that it stays on track.
- Ensure that the vision and goals of the team are clear and understood. Particularly ensure that the team avoids bias.
- Define the frequency and mode of team meetings.
- Work closely with the Buildings Strategy Manager to plan and execute the work.
- Work with team members to share out the tasks e.g. elements of research, accompanying the Buildings Strategy Manager on visits etc.
- Communicate regularly with the Navigation Team as to progress, attending their meeting at an agreed frequency. Identify any barriers so that they can be dealt with.
- Ensure the consultation process (following the first proposal) is well defined; lead on it.
- Attend to the Right Buildings team's health as a team, offering support as needed.

Term:

12 months for Right Buildings Proposal.
Option to continue to lead on implementation.

Right Buildings Portfolio Team Member

Purpose:

Proactively work as a member of the team to ensure the best possible Right Buildings Proposal is produced, consulted on and ultimately executed.

What we are looking for from team members:

Essential requirements for all members -

- Be committed to the Fit for Mission vision and rooted in the Gospel
- Recognise the urgent need for change and be prepared to act looking to future opportunities
- Ability to think broadly and strategically
- Trusted on the ground, with influence to help people engage in the change
- Able to work as a 'we' on the team
- Capacity to invest the amount of time required; maybe stop doing some other things to create the time for this change
- Courage to keep going and ride out the significant challenges which will be part of the journey
- Prepared to learn from the experience of other churches
- Take a professional unbiased viewpoint
- Listen to others and God

Useful skills or experience include -

- Basic IT skills such as use of e-mail, Microsoft Office, etc.
- Knowledge of the Church of England's organisational structure and processes
- Some experience of working with justice initiatives
- Some experience in trying to adapt buildings
- An ability to deal with complex information

Main Responsibilities:

- Review documents/data and proactively participate in the development of the Right Buildings process.
- Do all you can to support the Right Buildings Lead and the Buildings Strategy Manager, so that the process is successful.
- Fully participate in the Workshops which develop the Right Buildings Proposal
- Avoid bias, look for the best Right Buildings solution for your larger parish for the future.
- Take responsibility for one or more specific areas of work within the team e.g. research elements, buildings visits, community visits etc.
- Bring any issues or problems to the attention of the Lead.
- When necessary, help to explain the Right Buildings Process to others.
- Maintain confidentiality until the Proposal Report is published.

Term:

12 months for Right Buildings Proposal.
Option to then continue during the implementation phase.