

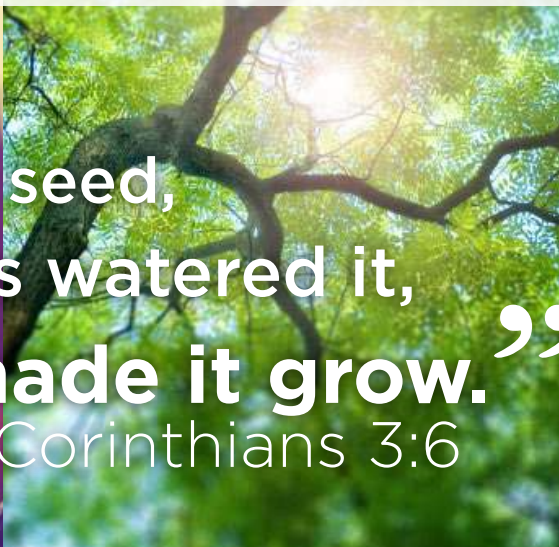


LEADERS' GUIDE

From Evidence to Action



A parish guide to the findings of the
Church Growth Research Programme



“I planted the seed,
Apollos watered it,
but God made it grow.”
1 Corinthians 3:6

INTRODUCTION



The focus of the Church Growth Research Programme (2011 – 2013) was to look into the factors which are influencing church growth in the Church of England - to identify areas of ministry which are **growing numerically** and to find out why. This is the first time that such a wide ranging and systematic study of factors relating to church growth has been undertaken within the Church of England.

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” Matthew 28 v 19

Church growth has evangelism at its heart; we seek growth out of a desire to see the Great Commission of Jesus fulfilled.

Church growth is about making new disciples of Jesus Christ in every context and in every community in this land.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, The Most Revd and Rt Hon. Justin Welby, has welcomed the research findings and all that they have highlighted. Linking church growth with the need to evangelise, he says:



“As Christians we believe the best decision anyone can make is to decide to follow Jesus Christ. It must then be of primary importance to us that so many people live their lives unaware of Jesus’ invitation to follow him. How we as a Church help people hear, experience and respond to the call of Jesus is the most urgent of our priorities. These findings and conclusions are offered to stimulate the church of Jesus Christ to make new disciples and to grow.”

It is for this reason – because the findings prompt churches to act - that following on from the research, a toolkit, **From Evidence to Action** has been developed. This uses and builds on the findings of the research as summarised in **From Anecdote to Evidence**, published in January 2014. It is designed to help those who want to reflect and act on these findings.

Welcoming the toolkit, The Bishop of Liverpool, The Rt Revd Paul Bayes says:



“If the Church is to grow spiritually and numerically, good research is necessary but not sufficient. The moment comes in the mission of each local Christian community when decisions need to be made and priorities set. This toolkit is skilfully designed to resource that moment. If you use it in a context of faithful prayer and hopeful listening - to one another and to the wider community in which we are set - then it will bear real fruit. I commend it to you most warmly.”

“I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.” 1 Corinthians 3:6

THE TOOLKIT COMPRISES:

- This Leaders' Guide
- A set of worksheets for parish groups to use (enclosed at the back of this guide)
- A website: www.fromevidencetoaction.org.uk designed to be a complementary tool to be used alongside the guide and worksheets

THE WEBSITE INCLUDES:

- Sermon materials on church growth and the research findings
- Bible studies for groups to use alongside the worksheets
- Case studies of churches in different contexts
- Alternative worksheet templates and ideas for interactive exercises based around the findings and slide presentations
- Suggestions of resources, for example websites and publications which will inform and help parishes as they seek to apply different aspects of the findings to their own contexts
- More information, news, events and updates on further research
- A chance to contribute to the on-going conversation about church growth

This **Leaders' Guide** is aimed specifically at church leaders (lay and ordained) who would like to use the research at parish level, and to consider what the findings might mean for them and their congregations. It provides a framework for looking at the findings which is set out in the basic working materials (the worksheets) to start off discussions. Alternative and less structured templates for those who prefer them are available on the website.

WWW.FROMEVIDENCETOACTION.ORG.UK

WHAT DID THE RESEARCH SHOW?

Despite the fact that the Church of England faces great challenges, the research provided evidence to show that growth is possible; that many churches are growing; and that some stand out as having experienced significant growth - including some parish churches, church plants, fresh expressions of Church and cathedrals.



When they analysed their findings, the researchers concluded that there is no “single recipe” for growth, but they found evidence to show that there are some **common factors** which appear to be strongly linked to growing churches of any size, and in any place or setting.

The research did not set out to reveal all the answers but these findings, along with some other key messages highlighted in **From Anecdote to Evidence** help us to ask the right questions while giving us significantly more evidence than we had before, contributing to on-going discussions in this field.

The evidence provides an opportunity for the Church at all levels to respond and to consider what action may be needed to encourage growth.

THE CONCEPT OF CHURCH GROWTH

The research programme was specifically focussed on **numerical church growth**, but church growth is a much wider concept.

In this guide it isn't possible to explore every aspect of church growth in depth, but it is right to acknowledge that the Church seeks to grow in the following ways:

- The holiness, transformation and commitment of her members (growth in spiritual depth) - both as individuals and as churches.
- An increased number of disciples of Jesus Christ (growth in numbers).
- The fruit of social righteousness and a transformed society (growth in the outworking of our discipleship).

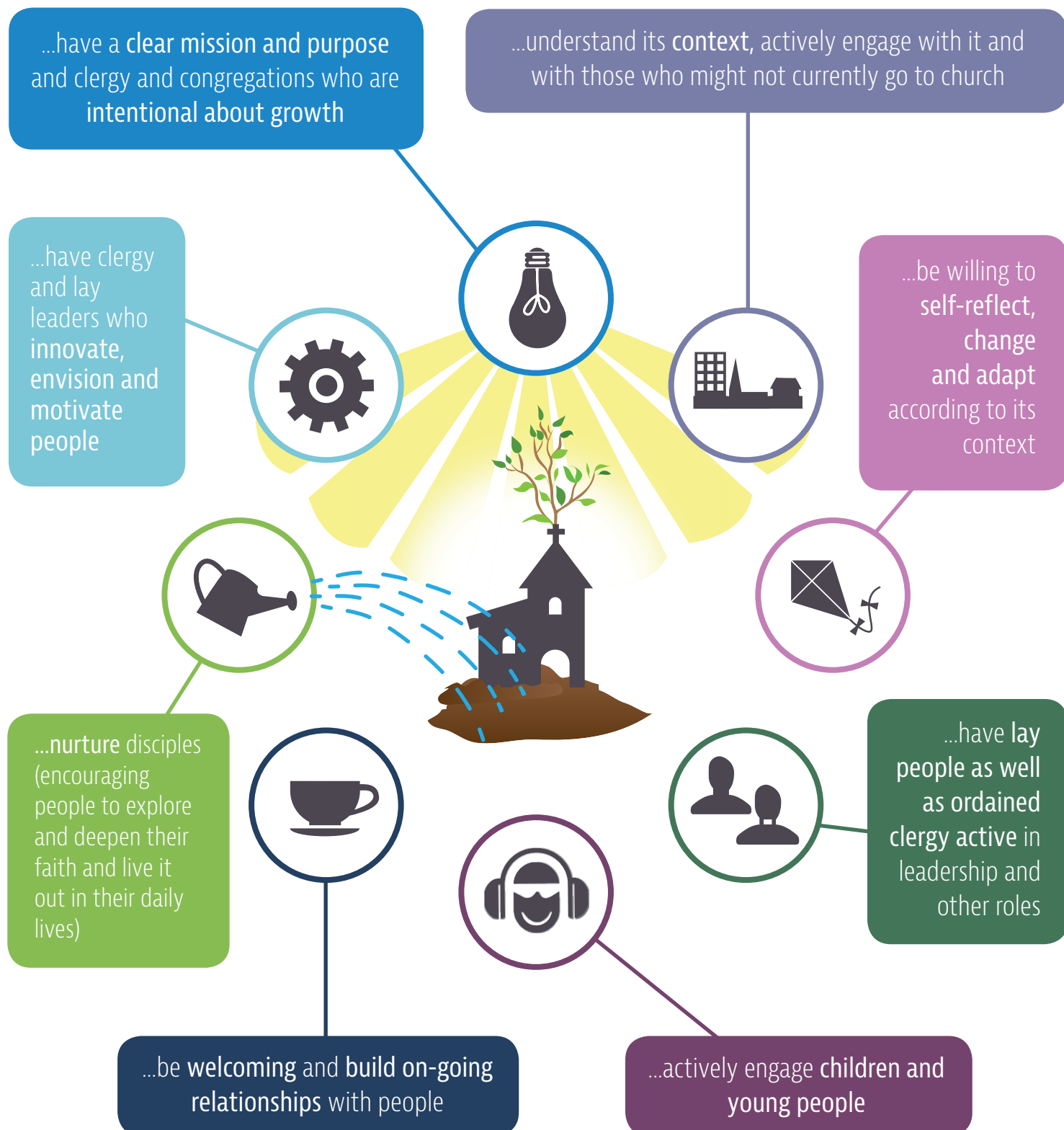
We, therefore, want to see the Church of England grow, not just to preserve the institution, but because a growing church means more and more faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, disciples who will live out their faith in daily lives of service to others and for the good of communities.

The **From Evidence to Action** website provides more information about church growth for those who would like to consider these concepts further. Go to www.fromevidencetoaction.org.uk to find recorded sermons, Bible study material, links to other resources and suggestions for further reading.

WHAT DID THE GROWING CHURCHES HAVE IN COMMON?

The evidence showed that growing churches are likely to have some factors in common.

A GROWING CHURCH IS LIKELY TO:



TWO KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE CHURCH:

In the course of the research looking at what may lead to growth, the researchers identified two key challenges for the Church, nationally and locally:

1 THE CHALLENGE TO CONNECT WITH THE YOUNGER GENERATIONS

“Therefore whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.” Matthew 18:4-5

Jesus' words remind us of the place of children in the Kingdom... and therefore their importance in His church.

The evidence from the research points to the need and therefore a challenge to be intentional about attracting and connecting with children and young people. We need to involve them in church life, encouraging them to grow in faith and discipleship. Quite simply, a church with children and young people is more likely to be growing; a church where there are no children and young people is much more likely to be in decline.

The research showed that nearly a half of churches have fewer than five under 16-year-olds. It also showed that among Anglicans who say that religion is very important in their lives, only 36% felt it was especially important for children to learn religious faith at home.

Positive findings from the research highlighted that churches which employ a children's/youth worker are half as likely to be declining, and that three quarters of churches which offer youth activities such as retreats, camps or conferences reported growth.

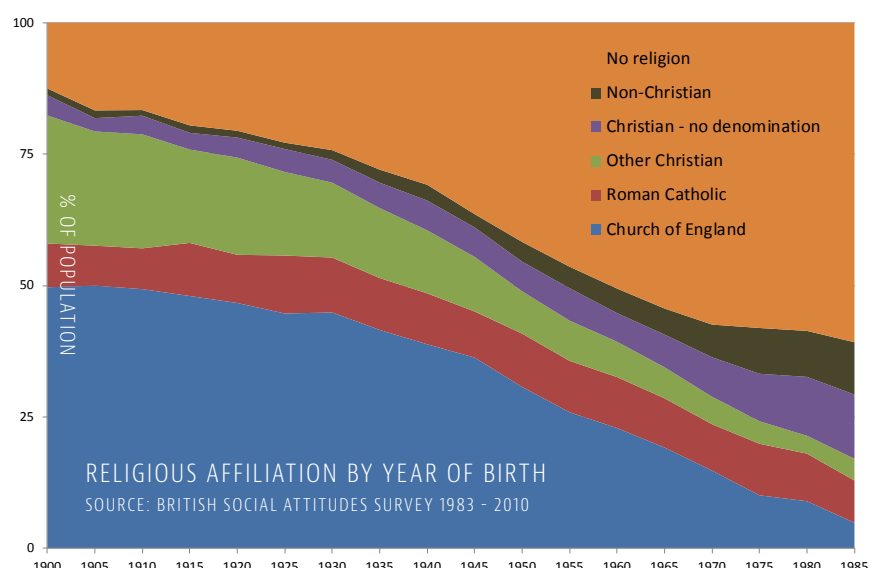
“These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road when you lie down and when you get up.” Deuteronomy 6:6-7

2 THE CHALLENGE TO REACH PEOPLE WHO MIGHT NOT OTHERWISE GO TO CHURCH

Building on existing strengths and exploring the new

While the church used to be at the centre of community life this is now not always the case. Fewer people attend church, not because they have stopped going, but because they never attended in the first place.

The graph shows that for each successive year of birth over the 20th century, a smaller and smaller proportion of people regard themselves as belonging to the Church.



The Church, therefore, has a choice to continue to manage decline or to develop new ways of connecting with people who might otherwise not attend.

The findings suggest that the Church at all levels needs to be continually “re-thinking” how it does things. Getting some of the basics right - for example, a good welcome - is important; alongside looking at other effective and sometimes new ways of reaching those who might otherwise not go to church.

This may involve:

MAKING CHANGES IN EXISTING CHURCHES...

Churches of all traditions and sizes (including parish churches, greater churches and church plants) are reaching those who might not usually attend church by **making changes and adapting to differing contexts**.

This may involve starting new ministries, varying timings and styles of worship or looking at other specific initiatives to help them respond to opportunities and needs where they are. The materials in **From Evidence to Action** prompt parishes to consider how being open to change, and adapting in what may often be only small ways, may help them to grow.

EXPLORING FURTHER WAYS TO EXPRESS CHURCH...

Fresh expressions of Church are new worshipping and witnessing communities which specifically reach out from an existing parish to those who have previously been unreached by the Church. They show significant growth with 66% continuing to grow or maintain growth.

Fresh expressions of Church aim to create church for communities and groups of people where they are (rather than inviting them to existing churches). They offer wide diversity, reflecting different styles, timings and models of church. Café church, pub church, church based around drop-in centres and church for the 18-30s – all these are examples of fresh expressions of Church.

These communities meet in a wide variety of venues, including cafes and bars, community centres and schools; more than half (56%) don't meet in churches. The research showed that just under half who attend a fresh expression of Church did not attend church before and also just under half are under 16.

BOTH EXISTING AND NEW...

Many churches are intentionally exploring what fresh expressions of Church can add in their own contexts. Increasingly there is a “mixed economy” where an inherited (or more traditional) Church may start a fresh expression of Church as part of its overall vision to reach out in ministry and mission to people more widely.

A parish church might begin something new, in a different venue and at a different time from its other activities and aimed at a whole new congregation (for example, a “Messy Church” or café church); equally a fresh expression of Church may emerge within a parish and run in parallel, complementing the work of the parish church while reaching a different audience. There is evidence to show that 91% of those fresh expressions of Church researched arose from and remain in mutually supportive relationships with parishes, underlining the opportunities provided by being open to the mixed economy.

To find out more about the findings from the research into fresh expressions of Church carried out by the Church Army team go to:

 WWW.CHURCHARMY.ORG.UK/FXCRESEARCH

To find out more about fresh expressions of Church more generally go to:

 WWW.FRESHEXPRESSIONS.ORG.UK

MESSY CHURCH AT ST PAUL'S, CAMDEN SQUARE

CASE STUDY

Messy Church at St Paul's, Camden Square, North London, is an example of how introducing a fresh expression of Church within a parish church setting has worked successfully, engaging with children and families in an urban context.

Meeting twice each term on a Wednesday afternoon between 4.30 and 6.30pm the session begins with arts, crafts and games followed by about 30 minutes of informal worship, which sometimes includes "Messy Mass". After this a hot meal is served and everyone gathers together to eat and socialise.

In particular it has been a way of reaching out to families who would otherwise not have much to do with church, offering an opportunity to meet people, form friendships and learn about God in a format that is non-threatening and non-pressurising and aimed at the total beginner. Hosting a Messy Church has also had positive effect on how the local church is perceived by the wider community. Many of those who attend have come through the very positive connection between the church and local school.



CASE STUDIES OF GROWING CHURCHES

ST JOHN AT HACKNEY, LONDON DIOCESE

CASE STUDY

St John at Hackney is an urban parish church in Hackney, East London. Rector, Father Rob Wickham, explains how the church's context has influenced its work towards growth.

"The church has a rich heritage of responding to its community and making a contribution to society more broadly - it has always been intentional in its mission strategy. In order to see growth and make a difference in Hackney, we have continued this approach."

In 2007, the church undertook an intensive year-long listening exercise, to help inform and shape its continuing mission to its local community over the following five years. They looked specifically at:

- building relationships with all the church's key stakeholders
- how the large building, originally accommodating 2,200 people, could be used more of the time and more effectively
- the sustainability of the church including energy consumption and its Fairtrade status

The church prayed over the conclusions which were also shared with the community and, as a result “The St John at Hackney Project” was launched.

The project identified three main aims:

- 1 To try to restore aspects of the building** which included a sensitive re-ordering of the space inside the building, taking out the pews and replacing them with chairs to make the space more flexible
- 2 To open up the church building**, especially to the community, local businesses, and the creative industries
- 3 To be intentional about developing three specific areas of ministry including in the following ways:**



Children and Young people: providing a large number of community initiatives for children and young people and adapting the pattern and style of Sunday worship

Older people: caring for and nurturing community through a group called Senior Saints which offers weekly lunch clubs and regular trips

Supporting a number of local health initiatives: including taking part in the Hackney Churches winter night shelter project and, in partnership with an organisation called Positive East, running an HIV testing clinic at the church

Father Rob believes that opening up the church's doors and welcoming more people in has influenced the increased numbers attending the church. Attendance at the children's carol service rose from 70 in 2007 to 600 in 2013 and numbers at the traditional annual carol service grew from 70 to 300.

Regular Sunday attendance has more than trebled and the church has planted two new congregations, including an 11am informal service aimed at making the church more attractive to children who are actively encouraged to be involved.

Approximately 180 people now attend over three services and the Sunday school has grown from 15 to 50 children attending each week.

In April 2013, the church started a period of further conversations with local stake-holders and with members of the church family, including the youngest children, who had their feelings heard and recorded.

“Oasis Vision 2018”, sets out the church's plans for the next five years which include a commitment to:

- work towards opening its building 24 hours a day and seven days a week
- treble the size of its congregations again – and aim for an electoral roll of 450
- focus mission on those living in isolation (including the development of food banks and a credit union)
- develop the church's ministry and work with those in their 20s and 30s
- continue and develop the work started with children and young people
- use the re-ordered building to its full potential (the re-ordered space can seat 1,500 people)
- grow new leaders who reflect the diversity of the church and the local area

Re-ordering the inside of the building has been particularly important to ensure that it is possible to use the building to its greatest advantage and to keep it open. Father Rob explains: **“It's important that this isn't done just for its own sake but rather that these changes are made rooted in praise, in Bible study and in the Good News of Jesus.”**

CASE STUDIES OF GROWING CHURCHES

THIRST AND THIRST TOO, ELY DIOCESE

CASE
STUDY

As Sue Butler and a group of Christian parents from St Phillip's School in Romsey Town, Cambridge chatted and regularly prayed for people at the school gate over a number of years, they could not have known God would develop what they did into Thirst and Thirst Too, a fresh expression of Church which would reach many families in the area and welcome them into the heart of a Christian community.



Sue, who is now an Ordained Pioneer Minister says: **“a group of us would meet to pray for the school, the needs of the children and parents and for the area. Over that time, we saw lots of answers to prayer - great things happened; people came to faith and people were healed...”**

As their time as primary school parents drew to a close, Sue and others reflected on the relationships built with parents and carers and also the prayers offered and answered over a ten year period. Acknowledging a feeling that there might be more work for them to do at the school, they asked God to show them what was next.

What resulted was a weekly café style gathering in the school which they called Thirst. Advertised in the school newsletter they offered **“Welcome, coffee, doughnuts, friendship, listening, reflection, Jesus, love, hope...”**

Thirty people came to the first café and Sue says that right from that day, Thirst was a place where people could be very open and she says **“a place of healing and bonding where people were touched by God.”**

When members of Thirst asked if they could bring their families and friends to something where they could share what they had experienced at Thirst, the leaders were keen to respond and “Thirst Too” started in December 2012.

Thirst Too is an all age fresh expression of Church gathering which meets monthly on a Saturday at a local community centre. It is attended by many young families, most whom are linked with St Phillip's school; others have heard about it via friends and family. Between 55 and 65 attend including around 30 children, teenagers and pre-schoolers.

The evening begins with a shared meal and time to relax together while the “formal” part of the evening often involves a fairly fast moving multi-media presentation with film clips, stories and songs. This is followed by a memory Bible verse in “retro” Sunday School style on big cards, which they learn together, and interactive prayers which could be “shouting out” prayers or writing them down. **“We have tried all sorts of things to help people to engage and embrace the things of God,”** says Sue.

There is then an opportunity for people to take part in various activities, including football, art and craft or watching film clips. Everything is designed to be informal and to offer opportunities for conversations and building relationships with people and for them to engage with God if they would like to.

During the evening a prayer room is open to all – a reflective space where people can be quiet or receive prayer; the Eucharist is offered and this is open to all who come to participate.

A growing number of people from Thirst and Thirst Too have taken steps of faith. In 2013 there were six baptisms and in February 2014, 13 people including whole families were baptised. Some have also enquired about confirmation.

A Bishop's Mission Order has recently been granted and Sue is now licensed as the ordained Leader of Thirst and Thirst Too.

CASE STUDIES OF GROWING CHURCHES

ST MARY'S BOWDON, CHESTER DIOCESE

CASE STUDY

Set in the leafy suburbs of Greater Manchester, the congregation of St Mary's Bowdon, worship in a 900 seat Gothic revival building, built on an ancient site of Christian worship going back to the 8th Century. A plaque inside the church lists the names of all the vicars as far back as 1210.

Current Vicar, Revd Roger Preece, has been at Bowdon, since 2008.

"When I arrived," says Roger, "there was a strong sense from the established members that they enjoyed their traditional Anglican worship. The church also has a strong musical tradition and is well known for its cathedral quality music with a 40-strong robed choir; I too love and respect this - the richness of the liturgy and sacraments are very important to me."

Aware of the context and history when looking at how to develop and grow the church, Roger and his team chose not to change things significantly from what people liked and what worked in the existing pattern. They decided, instead, to invest in what could be added to respond to the needs of others in the parish who might be helped in their journey by rather different styles of worship.

The parish had committed to being part of the Chester diocese Growth Action Planning initiative and Roger was able to work with the PCC and standing committee to develop a strategy.

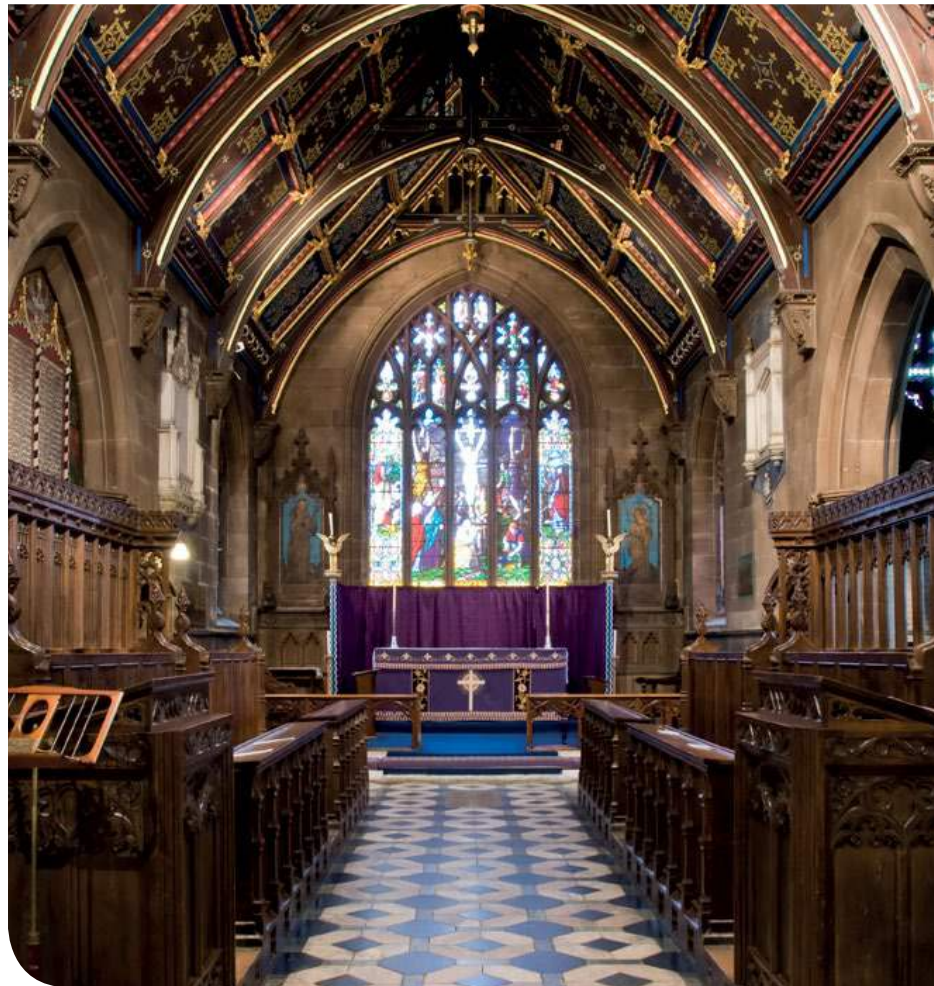
First, they considered the demographic makeup of the 7,000 people who lived in the parish; then they looked at the existing church connections within each group asking how the church could serve them.

Roger says: **"We realised that many people make connections to church life in different ways and that the journey of belonging can move in a different way and pace to the path of believing. We aimed to find ways of helping everyone in the parish move closer in their journey of faith by making increased connection with the church community."**

A large number of different pathways were developed to offer a range of activities for each group of people (including young families, older adults, young workers and teenagers) with bridging points to allow people to move from one to another.

All the programmes are open to everyone regardless of faith. Some are purely social, but hosted by members of the church, others have some Christian content that introduces faith, or are focussed on committed worshippers; the aim is for everyone to be able to find something of church that they can belong to.

The Youth pathway, for example, provides activities for local young people whatever their faith; programmes for those wanting to explore faith and opportunities to meet together for those who have faith and are wanting to



grow in knowledge and discipleship.

This includes hosting a Street Academy in partnership with “The Message Trust” which offers creative arts, drumming and musical production skills to young people while tutors share stories of faith and build relationships with the young people in the context of their teaching. The church has also become a centre for the Duke of Edinburgh’s award scheme, with more than 90 young people involved this year.

In terms of pattern and style of worship at Bowdon, some more contemporary options have been added to the range of traditional worship on offer. A new all age worship service has emerged on a Sunday morning running alongside the main service in the parish centre and the café style church, Café Sundae, is popular with younger people.

“We’re deliberately trying not to be homogenous,” says Roger - “we’re looking for things which will appeal to the variety of people in the parish – those with different experiences, different cultural backgrounds and different needs.”

Growth in a parish with multiple congregations and many ways of connecting is difficult to measure. But signs of growth include:

- 5000 visits to church over last Christmas
- 10 adult cell groups and 5 youth groups
- 250 volunteers serve church life in some way
- Six congregations in different styles meet for worship regularly
- 60 people have attended Life Recovery groups
- The Bowdon Facebook page has 440 “likes” with around 2000 connecting to content for some weeks.

IN ADDITION TO THESE, YOU’LL FIND MORE STORIES OF GROWING CHURCHES IN THE WORKSHEET SECTION AND ON THE WEBSITE



PRAYER AND GROWTH



The research findings focus on the factors which have been shown through using statistical methods and other research to be associated with numerical growth. The researchers were not asked to investigate the effect that prayer has on growth, which is not possible to quantify.

While prayer is not mentioned specifically in the research findings, it is an integral part of our faith and Christian discipleship. Through prayer we open ourselves to God; we immerse ourselves in His presence; we seek and discern His will and we bring our requests before Him. Prayer unites us, strengthens and envisions us as we live out our daily lives. Some parishes have found it helpful to write a prayer and pray it regularly together. As you reflect on growth in your setting you might consider doing the same.

A PARISH PRAYER - ST MARY'S PARTINGTON AND CARRINGTON

Ever living, ever loving God,
we give you thanks for our Church Family.
Grant that we may become
a vibrant, Spirit filled, Christ centred Church;
which is faithful to Scripture,
rooted in prayer
and where all age groups are represented,
as we give glory to you our God
in our worship and in our lives.
Amen.

The Revd Peter Geddes, Vicar of St Mary's, Partington and Carrington, in Chester Diocese, explains how writing a prayer led to a clearer vision for growth in this parish:

CASE STUDY

"As we considered our journey and vision for growth, we went through a process of listening and discernment and decided to turn our vision statement into a prayer. We pray this prayer regularly every week, and it is now familiar to people. Over time, it has helped everyone in the church family to remember, understand and come together to own the vision we have to grow as a church."

"I call on you, my God, for you will answer me; turn your ear to me and hear my prayer." Psalm 17: v6

USING FROM EVIDENCE TO ACTION - A FRAMEWORK FOR PRAYER AND DISCUSSION

One of the original aims of the research was to put *church leaders* and *decision makers* in a better place to reflect, discern and decide on shapes of ministry in order to support a growing Church at all levels. The material included in the **From Evidence to Action** toolkit, therefore, does not set out to give prescribed answers but instead **to enable parishes and those who lead them to ask good questions.**

If you are a church leader, the following sections explain how to use the working materials produced for parishes and provided with this pack. Also explained is how to access a range of other materials and resources online. Every effort has been made to ensure that the worksheets are easy to use and the format and content has been developed in consultation with both clergy and lay leaders.

WORKSHEETS

At the back of this guide is a series of worksheets which present, in turn, each of the common factors found to be associated with growth.

The common factors are not presented in any particular order of importance – so you might choose only to pick out and consider the common factor or factors which are most relevant in your own parish.

Suitable for use by PCCs, staff teams or in any small group setting, these materials are designed to be flexible. The worksheets on the common factors are intended to be given to participants; it's not necessary for everyone to have a copy of the Leaders' Guide. The materials could be used as a weekly or monthly focus for any church group; you could approach them as a course or consider sections of the materials at a PCC meeting, for example. The factors could be addressed one at a time or all in one sitting.

All the worksheets are included within the bound folder version of this resource and can be photocopied, or downloaded from the website:

WWW.FROMEVIDENCETOACTION.ORG.UK/FACTORS/OVERVIEW-OF-ALL-FACTORS



If you would prefer to use your own or a different approach, we have provided alternative and simpler templates for each of the common factors at www.fromevidencetoaction.org.uk/templates. There are also ideas for interactive exercises to encourage discussion around the common factors available at: www.fromevidencetoaction.org.uk/interactive

Before you begin using the materials, it is a good idea to identify a key individual who can oversee the process of working through the research findings and coordinate any action. This will help with continuity, ensure consistent communication and also that there is a named person who is responsible for making sure that things happen. The coordinator could be an ordained leader, or, equally, a lay person.

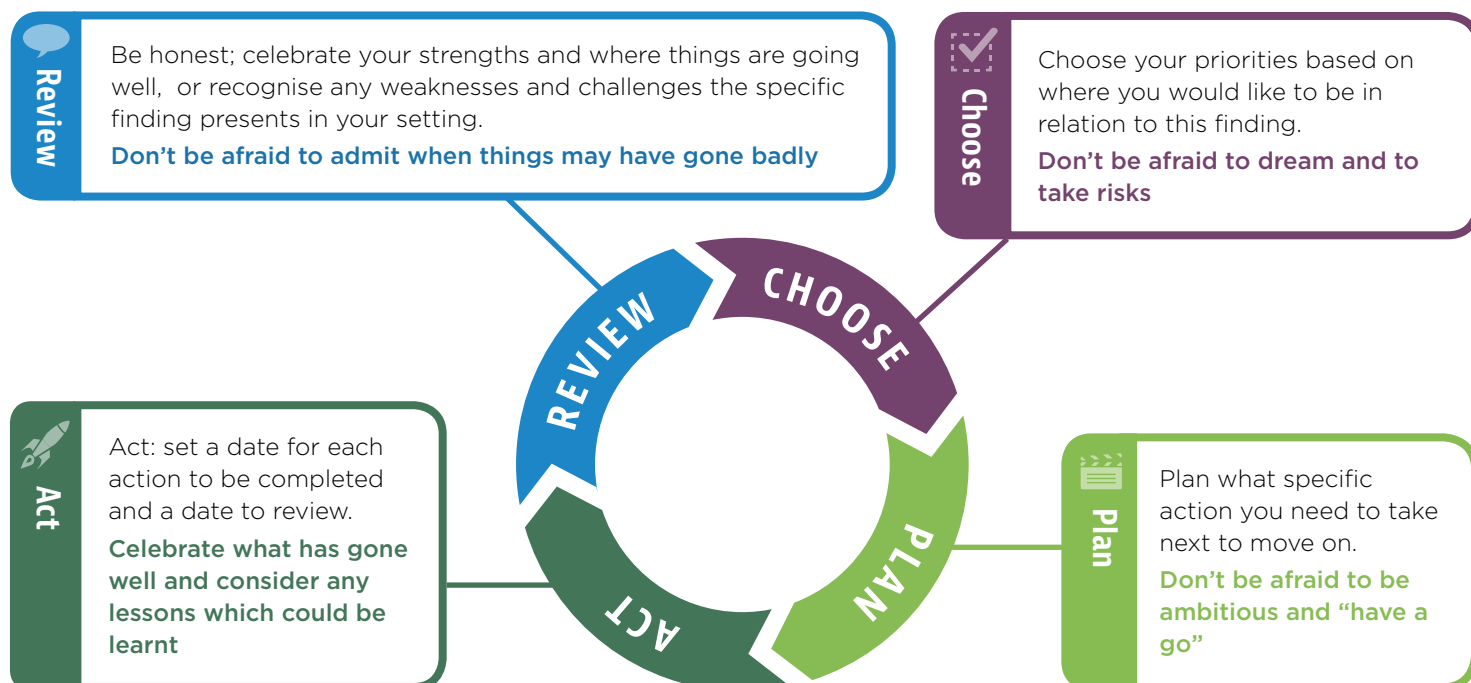
The worksheets are designed to stand alone but you might find it helpful to use them alongside **From Anecdote to Evidence**, which contains the key findings of the research in full.

You can find this online at:

WWW.CHURCHGROWTHRESEARCH.ORG.UK/REPORT



The worksheets encourage parishes to take a few key steps to:



AFTER FROM EVIDENCE TO ACTION - WHAT NEXT?

One of the key messages from the research was to highlight the importance and value of parishes being involved in a cycle of self-reflection and review in every aspect of parish life. This tool should provide a structure to support this cycle and can help parishes to continue reviewing, choosing, planning and acting on their plans.

Each worksheet offers an opportunity to set a date to complete any actions arising from discussion. Parishes are also encouraged to set a date to review progress on each factor as well as to consider working through From Evidence to Action again in, perhaps, 18 months or two years' time.

In going through this process, some may also want to consider and work on certain aspects of their church life in more depth. The **From Evidence to Action** website www.fromevidencetoaction.org.uk will continue to build up a library of resources on specific aspects of the findings as well as adding, on an on-going basis, to the more general resources around church growth.

MISSION ACTION PLANNING

Some parishes are already involved in a regular cycle of **Mission Action Planning (MAP)** and the **From Evidence to Action** framework has been designed to complement and enhance this and other parish development tools.

- If your church has a Mission Action Plan (or a parish development plan), please refer to it as you work through the common factors.
- If your Mission Action Plan is ready to be reviewed, **From Evidence to Action** can support this process as you consider the common factors.
- If you don't have a Mission Action Plan, **From Evidence to Action** offers a structure to help develop one for your parish.

Many dioceses offer support, advice and resources on Mission Action Planning and church growth, so as you work through the findings in PCCs and with church members, it may be useful to work and communicate closely, where appropriate, with diocesan colleagues and officers.



FROM EVIDENCE TO ACTION: WHAT IT ISN'T

From Evidence to Action is not an instruction manual and does not offer a certain route to growth. What it aims to do, however, is to offer encouragement, support and some practical tools to those who want to see their churches growing, and for ever increasing numbers to be added to those who come to know and follow Jesus in their everyday lives.

“And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.” Acts 2:47

KEY RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

The www.fromevidencetoaction.org.uk website includes a number of resources and working material for parishes to use and refer to which are based around the research findings. Please select the resources which are particularly helpful to you and your parish.

The resources available include:

TEACHING MATERIALS including sermons and short talks on aspects of the findings and church growth generally

BIBLE STUDY MATERIALS based around the findings and church growth generally – these can be used as a study group series or stand alone

WORKSHEETS on eight common factors linked with growth for churches and groups (downloadable version)

ALTERNATIVE TEMPLATES - less structured worksheets for groups who would prefer more flexibility

INTERACTIVE EXERCISES - intended for groups who prefer to engage with the findings in a more interactive way

FROM ANECDOTE TO EVIDENCE: a summary report of the findings of the Church Growth Research programme 2011-2013

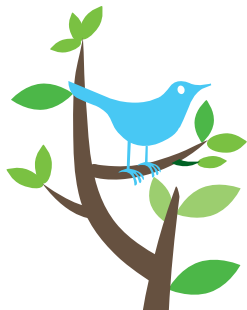
INFOGRAPHIC showing the key messages of From Anecdote to Evidence

SLIDE PRESENTATION of the findings of the Church Growth Research Programme

GRAPHS presented in From Anecdote to Evidence

THE FULL REPORTS of the different strands of the Church Growth research programme

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION ON GROWTH



From Evidence to Action is contributing to an on-going conversation in the Church of England about numerical church growth, which has been prompted by the Church Growth Research Programme and its findings. Below are a number of links to online information around growth. Visit the following websites to find out about further research being undertaken as a result of the initial findings as well as examples of what is happening in parishes around the country.



CHURCH GROWTH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT WEBSITE

www.churchgrowthrd.org.uk

This is a hub for communicating and sharing some of the Church of England's work on church growth research and development and aims to help the Church allocate its resources effectively to help facilitate its mission and growth.



CHURCH GROWTH RESEARCH PROGRAMME

www.churchgrowthresearch.org.uk

This will continue to contain news and updates on the research programme and publish any further research.



RESOURCING MISSION BULLETIN

www.churchgrowthrd.org.uk/resourcing_mission_bulletin

This online publication aims to help disseminate the lessons learned from existing ministry and mission, spread ideas about the opportunities for growth and, more generally, stimulate thinking on a range of resourcing issues.

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If you need help or advice on using the worksheets, would like to comment on any aspect of **From Evidence to Action** or have questions arising from any of the toolkit and materials, please contact

churchgrowth@churchofengland.org

“ I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.” 1 Corinthians 3:6



“ There is no single recipe for growth; there are no simple solutions to decline. The road to growth depends on the context and what works in one place may not work in another. What seems crucial is that congregations are constantly engaged in reflection; churches cannot soar on autopilot.

Growth is a product of good leadership (lay and ordained) working with a willing set of churchgoers in a favourable environment. ”

From Anecdote to Evidence

**Professor David Voas, Researcher,
Church Growth Research Programme**



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