



Diocese of Llandaff

Diocesan Strategic Plan (Draft)

Vision narrative

The Diocese of Llandaff has a deep and rich history which goes back more than a thousand years, far longer if we are telling the story of Christian saints and their endeavours in South Wales before the idea of a “diocese” was invented. At no stage have any of our predecessors rested easy in their task of Christian mission. Our history is also one of disturbance and adaptation. External forces and internal dissent has often made the Church’s life challenging.

This is no less so in our time, yet in addition we now face a context unknown for many centuries. More than half the population in our diocese define themselves as having ‘no religion’. Those under 40 years of age are unlikely to have known any habit of churchgoing other than in attendance at our occasional offices - baptisms, weddings and funerals – and even those experiences of Church services are also diminishing. The Christian legacy of Wales is fading fast in people’s consciousness and religious literacy, once taken for granted, is only practiced in our Church Schools.

It is tempting to tell our current story only in terms of decline. Declining congregations, the declining strength of other denominations, declining resources and declining confidence, as neighbours and friends treat any talk of faith in Jesus Christ as a wholly private and increasingly abnormal conviction.

This draft Strategic Plan for the next five years of the Llandaff Diocese resists that story. Its ambition reminds us that the Church in Wales is the numerically largest and most far-reaching Christian organisation in Wales, sustaining a Christian presence in every single community.

Its breadth of scope reminds us that we stand in a tradition which has never defined worshipping life by its congregational strength but as an offer to the whole parish, keeping low thresholds across which anyone at all is welcome to pass. We are those who proclaim the Kingdom of God to be our concern. We’re engaged more with the realities of lives and the call of social justice than with the preoccupations of our own organisational interests.

Our shared vision for the next five years is to live within the realities of a rapidly changing and anxious society, offering the values and resources of the Christian faith in a spirit of partnership and bold humility. We know these years will require adaptive leadership, not merely technical solutions to problems we face but innovative and occasionally radical options as we discover new hope in what lies ahead.

In it all we believe profoundly in the sovereignty of God and the durability of Christ’s church and mission. We are here to pray faithfully and serve joyfully in all things, trusting in the power of God’s Spirit to redeem and renew our life together.

The Right Reverend June Osborne

Bishop of Llandaff

May 2018

1. Build the future of the diocese through innovation and the courage to adapt

- i) Develop a clear plan for ministry offered in the diocese:
 - a) produce a ministerial map which offers theological coherence and fits the needs of mission for now and what lies ahead;
 - b) agree clarity with St Padarn's about what the diocese requires of Provincial training for both laity and the ordained;
 - c) provide additional schemes of training by the diocese e.g. for lay officers, lay formation and high quality professional development for clergy;
 - d) a deployment strategy for clergy and lay employees;
 - e) agree the structuring of all parishes, benefices and ministry areas within the diocese;
 - f) produce a clear diocesan policy over which ministries to encourage, commission and licence.

- ii) Create a united sense of the opportunities of education, particularly in our Church Schools, for transforming lives:
 - a) enable Church Schools to be a full expression of church life which can make a difference to young people, their aspirations and their wellbeing;
 - b) better integrate our commitment to education into the wider life of the diocese creating stronger links to parishes, partners and other organisations;
 - c) address questions of curriculum, collective worship, inspections and buildings so that our school communities feel valued and well equipped.

- iii) Re-envisage the mission and ministry in key strategic areas:
 - a) strengthen and rethink mission in key identified areas across the Diocese;
 - b) develop a mission strategy built around strong ecumenical and interfaith relationships;
 - c) create a new mode of operating and serving the political, cultural and sporting life of south Wales.

- iv) Outline a sustainable approach to Church buildings:
 - a) create a new plan for buildings and systems which reduce the burden of them on local congregations whilst exploring the opportunities they present;
 - b) identify buildings for closure in next 5 years;
 - c) construct a diocesan team for dealing with maintenance and development of all church buildings.

- v) Ensure diocesan finances and resourcing are fit for purpose.

2. Empower all to unlock the potential which articulates faith, grows leadership and produces better decision-making

- i) Enable good decision-making:**
 - a) increase the voice of the laity in the diocesan structures and roles of responsibility;
 - b) make the Diocesan Conference/Standing Committee/DBF/Deanery Conferences/Headteacher conferences work at their very best;
 - c) explore a new constitutional model for participation and governance.

- ii) Increase confidence and formation to unlock the potential of our existing churches, congregations and church schools:**
 - a) implement lay training beyond 'Theology for Life';
 - b) recruit able clergy to do-able posts, including attracting new clergy into the diocese;
 - c) encourage and enable lay leadership in parishes and schools at every level, equipped, trained and valued.

- iii) Increase vocations to ordained and lay ministry:**
 - a) create a new environment within which 18 – 35 year olds can encounter a call to full-time ministry;
 - b) ensure best practice in discernment procedures whilst keeping processes open minded and swift;
 - c) make vocational discernment the responsibility of every part of diocesan life;
 - d) tackle unintended cultural assumptions about the experience of ministry.

3. Tell the story of a hopeful church through a confident sharing of faith and service in our communities which is seen to transform lives

- i) Shift the focus of church life to outreach: from the burdens of maintenance to the joy of service, partnerships and outward-facing projects or participation:**
 - a) encourage every congregation to find ways of expressing their journey in Christ in ways which engage with the community and unchurched;
 - b) radically reduce the demands of buildings and bureaucracy in favour of outreach;
 - c) embed pilgrimage in our lives through 'A Year of Pilgrimage' for the whole diocese;
 - d) help to discover how to use community memorialisations and ceremonials as a means of accessing the Christian faith;
 - e) celebrate our landscapes of faith through art, music, story, events and connections to our heritage.

- ii) **Commemorate the centenary of the Church in Wales in ways which are authentic and forward-looking:**
 - a) publicise and where possible participate in Provincial celebration events;
 - b) support the Cathedral Chapter's plans for the 900th anniversary of the Cathedral;
 - c) establish a new and ambitious story amongst the clergy beginning with Clergy School 2019;
 - d) launch a Resource Church in Cardiff addressing both the needs of the student population of the diocese and the better resourcing of all our congregations in their offer to those under 40.

- iii) **Communicate well the character of Llandaff:**
 - a) rebrand the Diocesan profile, articulating our sense of values, identity and mission;
 - b) create a communications strategy;
 - c) provide an improved website;
 - d) develop our presence on social media and through video capacity.