

'What about the Poor?' - Ministry in Deprived Communities.

For 24 hours, a group of 16 practitioners and strategists, lay and ordained, from across church traditions and across the country (from Newcastle to Oxford) were hosted by St George's House, Windsor, to share experiences, and consider the strategic significance of the intentional proclamation of the gospel and ministry in the most deprived communities in England. We recognised our limitations as relatively affluent, predominantly white, 'middle class' leaders, but a group who have a passion to see broken lives transformed through God's love.

Our conversation revealed some startling realities. There is remarkable work happening up and down the country seeking to offer Christian assistance to those who are in need, through social enterprise, foodbanks, homelessness shelters, canteens, youth and children's provision, and our network of Church Schools to name but a few. The Church is often acting as an 'anchor' organization through which partnerships with statutory, voluntary and inter-faith groups can be built, seeking to journey with and support those who are deprived and in need both practically and spiritually.

However, the picture regarding the strategic planning and provision of funding for lay and ordained resources to deliver much needed ministry in deprived communities is of deep concern. Taking the total spend in the Church of England, all its activities, generated locally or given in grants centrally, whilst the 5% that together is released through Lower Income Communities Funding (LInC Funding) and the Strategic Development Fund (SDF) is increasingly targeted towards work in the poorest communities, the remaining 95% of that total spend is much less clearly targeted.

There are only a small number of Diocesan Strategy documents or websites that make any reference to targeting their spending towards the poorest communities, despite the fact that 22% of the population of England live in the poorest 10% of parishes (based on indices of multiple deprivation statistics). We recognise that these challenges in the poorest dioceses are in the context of trying to reconfigure ministry when budgets are under significant strain, and there is therefore a strategic imperative to keep afloat. But it does mean that according to recent data, we spend as a church over £8 per capita in the 20% most affluent parishes, and just over £4.50 per capita in the poorest 20% of parishes.

There is also an historic imbalance of the spread of diocesan assets, meaning that many dioceses in both provinces with post-industrial towns and/or areas of rural poverty are facing significant challenges in sustaining ministry in the most deprived communities. This again is not an intentional act, but simply a historical imbalance, mostly created in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when new predominantly industrial areas were given their own diocese, and didn't at that time need a share of the historic endowments of land and investments. The number of stipendiary priests per head of population is in very significant decline generally. Whilst this decline has been felt most obviously in rural areas, with stipendiary priests ministering to ever increasing numbers of parishes, in (smaller geographically) urban areas there has been an often hidden dramatic increase in the number of souls being



ministered to by a single stipend. In some post-industrial dioceses, for example, a stipendiary role is now covering 20,000 people and more. Additionally, there has been relatively poor development and recruitment of lay and ordained leaders from and in our most deprived communities, although Ministry Division are seeking to change their criteria to address this and there are emerging examples of Urban Lay Leadership Formation provision (for example in the dioceses of Blackburn, Birmingham and London).

Whilst the data available through Diocesan accounts is by no means consistently presented from diocese to diocese, figures for 2017 broadly indicate the following formula:

Lower than national average weekly attendance in the diocese = a diocese with less historic endowment per capita = a diocese working with the most deprived communities.

And yet, in our deprived dioceses the people give far more generously as a proportion of income, than in the most wealthy.

We spoke of the challenges of relying on 'caveated generosity', where one wealthier church tradition or diocese gives support to another poorer diocese or community, so long as it can influence their tradition or make up - and we wanted instead to begin to encourage and unlock generosity within and between dioceses that simply recognises the need to remember the poor in our strategic planning and resource allocations.

We therefore commit ourselves to speaking out about this issue and seeking, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to work with others to right this wrong. We are also encouraging more voices, especially those with influence, to speak out about this imbalance and to continue making decisions that address these challenges. We will encourage fruitful connections between those working in deprived communities, including with various Renewal and Reform groups. We will also lobby for the voice of those living in deprived areas to be heard, as historically these have often not been well represented in Church of England decision making bodies.

With thanks to St George's House, Windsor, for their generosity in funding and hosting this consultation.

This briefing note outlining the consultation conclusions was compiled by Stephen Edmonds, Vicar of Edlington and Hexthorpe, who also convened the consultation

Alphabetical List of Attendees

- Heidi Adcock – Diocesan Secretary, Diocese of Sheffield
- Dave Champness – Diocese of Blackburn Vision Consultant & National Church of England Estates Evangelism Consultant
- Debbie Clinton – Director of Renewal and Reform
- Paul Cowan – Chaplain to the Bishop of Oxford
- Philip Corbett – Priest in Charge of All Saints, Notting Hill & St Michael, Ladbrooke Grove

- Clare Dowding – Rector of St Paul, Marylebone
- David D'Silva – Curate in Charge of St Leonard and St Jude, Scawsby with St Luke, Scawthorpe
- Stephen Edmonds – Vicar of Edlington and Hexthorpe
- Tim Horobin – Vicar of St James, Lower Darwen, St James Over Darwen and St Paul's Huddlesden
- David Jennings – Head of Funding, Strategy & Development Unit, Church Commissioners and Archbishops' Council
- Ellen Loudon – Canon Chancellor of Liverpool Cathedral and Director of Social Justice
- Alison Peacock – Mission Planning Officer, Diocese of Manchester
- Paul Thomas – Vicar of Paddington
- Shane Waddle – Diocesan Secretary, Diocese of Newcastle
- John Whittaker – Team Rector of All Saints, Putney
- +Pete Wilcox – Bishop of Sheffield

Diocese	Endowment and Glebe (a)	Diocese population	Assets per capita (b)	All age average weekly attendance 2017	Attendance per capita (c)	Percentage of population in those parishes which make up the most deprived 10% of population (d)	Ranking of Assets per capita	Ranking of attendance per capita	Ranking of Population of 10% most deprived
2017	£000s		£						
Bath & Wells	40,891	955,000	42.82	21,300	2.20%	1.80%	12	6	31
Birmingham	5,470	1,581,000	3.46	16,300	1.00%	36.00%	38	41	1
Blackburn	11,423	1,346,000	8.49	22,500	1.70%	18.20%	33	20	6
Bristol	13,765	1,030,000	13.36	13,300	1.30%	10.10%	27	33	13
Canterbury	3,531	1,138,000	3.1	20,600	1.80%	7.10%	39	15	19
Carlisle	16,329	497,000	32.86	11,900	2.40%	7.20%	14	4	18
Chelmsford	66,144	3,211,000	20.6	34,600	1.10%	3.10%	23	40	27
Chester	10,978	1,638,000	6.7	30,500	1.90%	8.80%	36	13	16
Chichester	57,485	1,692,000	33.97	35,600	2.10%	2.60%	13	8	28
Coventry	58,375	881,000	66.26	14,300	1.60%	6.60%	3	23	20
Derby	32,199	1,057,000	30.46	14,800	1.40%	4.50%	17	28	26
Durham	27,341	1,487,000	18.39	18,800	1.30%	15.10%	24	34	8
Ely	37,400	761,000	49.15	17,000	2.20%	1.00%	9	5	36
Exeter	36,704	1,184,000	31	22,700	1.90%	6.60%	15	12	21
Gloucester	29,165	668,000	43.66	16,700	2.50%	1.90%	11	2	30
Guildford	11,929	1,060,000	11.25	22,700	2.10%	0.00%	29	7	40
Hereford	17,185	329,000	52.23	9,300	2.80%	5.40%	8	1	24
Leeds	29,959	2,735,000	10.95	34,400	1.30%	18.90%	31	35	5
Leicester	46,270	1,049,000	44.11	12,900	1.20%	6.00%	10	36	23
Lichfield	37,904	2,159,000	17.56	29,500	1.40%	14.40%	25	30	9
Lincoln	99,359	1,080,000	92	14,800	1.40%	11.50%	1	29	12
Liverpool	1,040	1,607,000	0.65	22,900	1.40%	29.70%	40	26	3
London	66,993	4,306,000	15.56	69,800	1.60%	9.50%	26	24	14
Manchester	21,261	2,168,000	9.81	25,800	1.20%	30.10%	32	38	2
Newcastle	3,666	822,000	4.46	13,500	1.60%	12.90%	37	22	10
Norwich	55,073	912,000	60.39	17,700	1.90%	8.40%	5	11	17
Oxford	154,666	2,387,000	64.8	46,700	2.00%	0.00%	4	10	40
Peterborough	52,587	920,000	57.16	15,300	1.70%	6.00%	6	21	22
Portsmouth	6,474	789,000	8.21	11,100	1.40%	9.00%	34	27	15
Rochester	15,138	1,358,000	11.15	24,000	1.80%	1.70%	30	17	33
St. Albans	49,418	1,922,000	25.71	28,700	1.50%	1.20%	21	25	35
St. Eds & Ipswich	18,934	679,000	27.89	13,600	2.00%	0.20%	20	9	38
Salisbury	29,038	955,000	30.41	22,900	2.40%	0.70%	18	3	37
Sheffield	9,604	1,294,000	7.42	15,500	1.20%	22.20%	35	37	4
Sodor & Man				1,500	1.70%	No Data		19	
Southwark	87,705	2,864,000	30.62	38,300	1.30%	1.50%	16	31	34
Southwell & Notts	32,186	1,151,000	27.96	13,600	1.20%	12.10%	19	39	11
Truro	29,849	564,000	52.92	10,000	1.80%	1.70%	7	16	32
Winchester	14,586	1,235,000	11.81	22,400	1.80%	2.40%	28	14	29
Worcester	67,850	890,000	76.24	11,600	1.30%	4.60%	2	32	25
York	33,952	1,442,000	23.55	25,400	1.80%	16.30%	22	18	7
Church of England	1,439,826	55,803,000	25.8	895,300	1.60%	10.00%			

Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2015) **deciles** (2017 parishes)

37% of the population of England live in parishes in the bottom 20% for IMD nationally

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
22%	15%	9%	8%	7%	6%	7%	8%	8%	9%

Is there a North/South divide?

Manchester
Liverpool
Sheffield
Durham
Blackburn
Leeds
Southwell & Notts
York

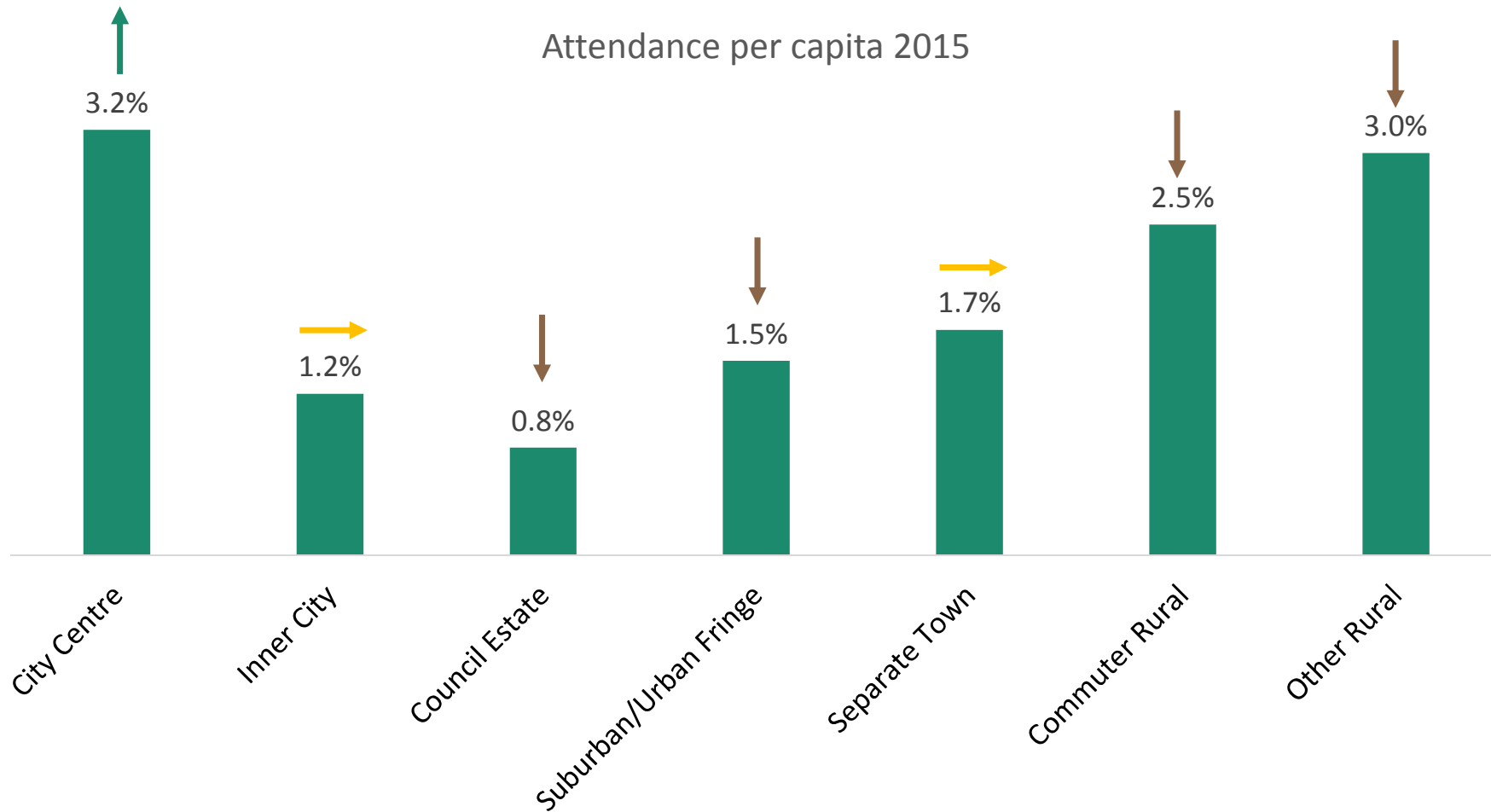
Birmingham
London
Southwark
Lichfield
Chelmsford
Canterbury
Truro
Lincoln



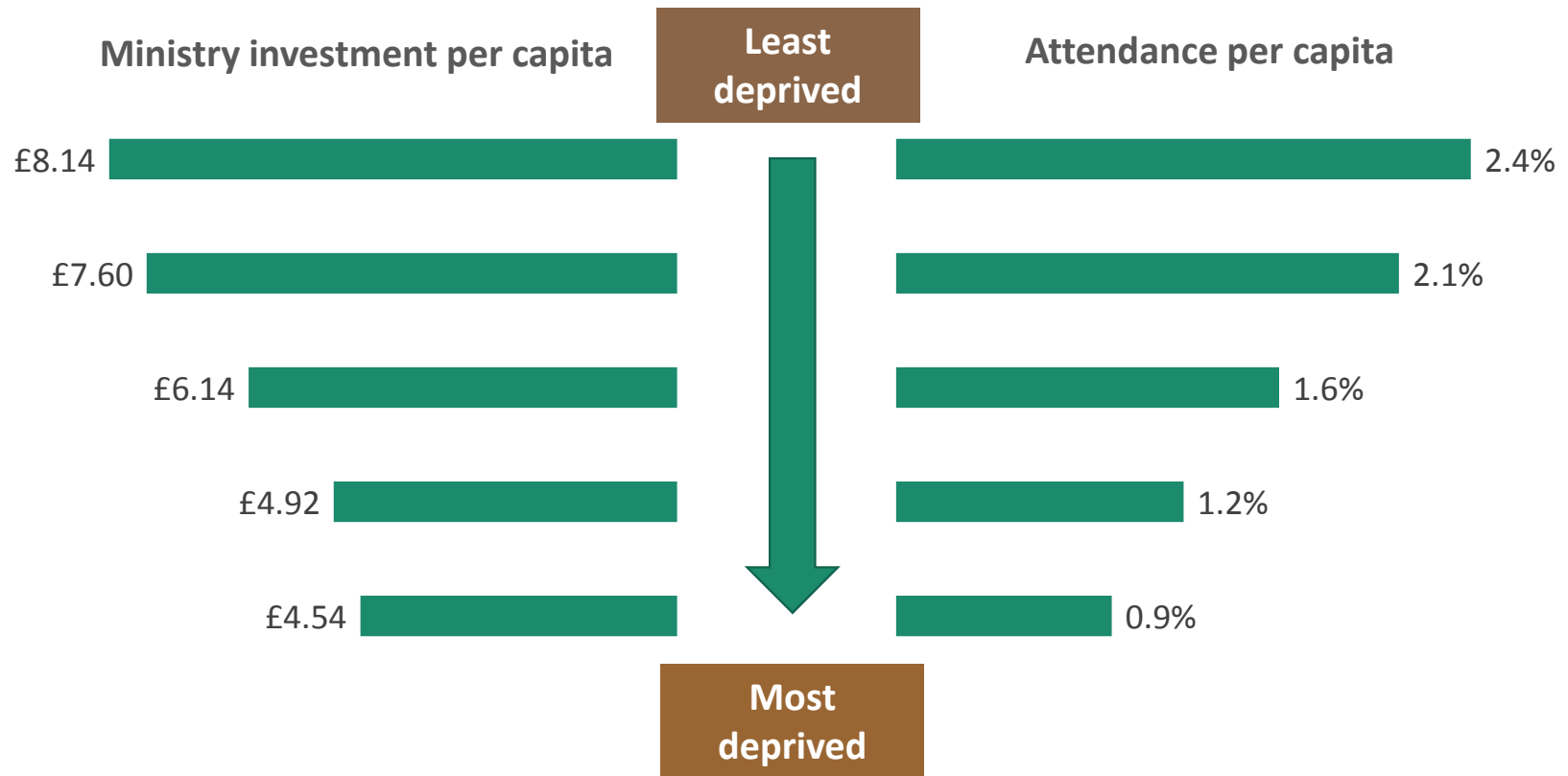
Diocese where more than the national average % (37%) of the population live in parishes in the bottom **20%** for deprivation



Attendance per capita per area type



Deprivation and attendance



Strategy and Development Unit

Strategic Development Funding

- 31% of SDF has been allocated to projects in deprived areas (using dioceses' own definitions)
- Equates to £42.1m of funding awarded at June 2019
- Funding is going into deprived communities and outer estates in places like Blackpool, Bradford, East London, Gateshead, Hull, Liverpool, Middlesbrough, Plymouth, Rotherham, and Southend
- In 2020-22, the Strategic Investment Board wishes to see SDF targeted on promoting church growth within the largest urban areas; and one or both of younger generations and deprived communities.