

# Someone to love

## Lincoln and Grimsby District Youth Survey

And recommendations to be considered as part of the ongoing Connexional Youth Participation Strategy.

- Help circuits to see the benefits of employing staff alongside ministers.
- Encourage circuits to think strategically and plan ahead for the future.
- Highlight further how CAF funds can be accessed to fund additional staff<sup>1</sup>.
- Encourage partnerships to spread the cost of youth or community workers.
- Prioritise grant applications that combine mission and youth/children's work.
- Recover oversight of youthwork by restructuring the youth committee, renaming the youth coordinator/synod rep as the youth minister and appointing a children's minister in the future.
- Continue with the DYE scheme and appoint a youth enabler for the District.
- Focus on Identifying, training and mentoring new youth leaders.
- Consider developing in-house gap year schemes.

In this report, the term youthwork includes work among children and young people up to the age of 24 years, in line with the work of MAYC.

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. Accessing a level of funding that equates to the proportion of time ministers spend on mission.

# Interim Report to the DLT

## July 2009

Rev Langley Mackrell-Hey

### **1.0 Executive summary: Celebration and Concern**

We have some excellent examples of youth ministry and mission. However, the sustainability of our projects in many centres is questionable owing to a lack of funding and a shortage of skilled volunteers. Whilst youthwork may be instigated by church members, our experience suggests that there is no substitute for the contribution made by dedicated paid staff (lay or ordained). Often they have a clearer awareness of accountability, are able to offer more commitment, want to agree expectations, are mature in faith, have the skills to build and manage a team and are more experienced in dealing with the spiritual and pastoral needs of young people. Thus, the belief that the impact of staff cuts can be lessened by broadening the job descriptions of others (lay or ordained) or by becoming more reliant on volunteers defies honest scrutiny.

1.1 As we face continued decline many of our churches are struggling to involve and reach out to young people. The introduction of the Connexional Youth Participation Strategy and the development of the Youth Enabler scheme is intended to address this<sup>2</sup>. As the Church has experienced decline, the gap between young people and older people has widened, some congregations have become more insular, we have fewer people with the energy to become involved in outreach and we have less finance through which we can resource such posts. Somehow the Church needs to hold its ground and rediscover that outreach energises and builds rather than tires us out.

1.2 Our District was privileged to have the support of Lydia Barlow who concentrated her time with us over a one week period, visiting projects to the North of our region. As well as feeding back into this report, Lydia worked with members of the District Youth Team to compile a short documentary entitled, *Someone to love*. This is both a reflection on her own apprehensions about meeting unchurched young people and a challenge to the mainstream Church to think about how they love their neighbour. The presentation is sensitive to the feelings of many of our Church members but encourages them to recognise their calling to outreach. With regard to youth ministry and mission, the documentary makes the point that the Church has an unprecedented opportunity to offer young people and experience of family and care that is different to the experiences of breakdown with which many of them are already familiar. Whilst most of our present success is limited to parallel congregations, at least some concept of family connexion will always remain within the life of the Church.

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<sup>2</sup> This said the difficulty in filling appointments, the short-time that youth enablers are able to devote to each District (three hours per week) and the mismatch of apprenticeship versus mission enabler means that careful thought must be given as to how youth enablers are used.

## Executive summary (continued)

1.3 This report makes some clear recommendations to help congregations be more open to collaborative ministry between lay and ordained and more willing to engage in outreach among the unchurched. In future, the YPS will look at more specific ways in which young people can be supported. However, action is needed now to:

- Help circuits to see the benefits of employing staff alongside ministers.
- Encourage circuits to think strategically and plan ahead for the future.
- Highlight how CAF funds can be accessed to fund additional staff<sup>3</sup>.
- Encourage partnerships to spread the cost of youth or community workers.
- Prioritise grant applications that combine mission and youth/children's work.
- Recover oversight of youthwork by restructuring the youth committee, appointing a youth minister now and a children's minister in the future.
- Continue with the DYE scheme and appoint a youth enabler for the District.
- Focus on Identifying, training and mentoring new youth leaders.
- Consider developing in-house gap year schemes.

1.4. Beyond these immediate recommendations, ongoing discussions regarding the resourcing of youth work and discussion of the youth accounts has led to the following suggestions:

- Many people today face the prospect of redundancy. Whilst one would hope that pastoral support is being provided, the pressures faced by staff who are unsure of their future is leading to a decrease in morale (also linked to a lack of support for lay staff nationally as a mid-term consequence of our restructuring). This lack of morale is exacerbated in some cases by the belief that as funding shortages become evident, it is the lay staff rather than the ministers who will lose their posts. Efforts must be made to counter this. Conversations with both staff and volunteers would suggest that circuits need to be more open and honest about what the future will hold.
- Identify what resources are held centrally by the District<sup>4</sup> that could be shared and used within youthwork. This will require the drawing up of an assets register for the District. Recent discussions would suggest that there are already resources to be shared but we have lost track of them.
- Develop and formalise a clearer mechanism by which funds may be drawn upon from the District Youth accounts to meet the costs of training, capital equipment and to provide bursaries for young people. The issue of who scrutinises requests made by groups such as the youth committee, or the Chair of District alongside other leaders, is key. Presently the DRMG is geared only to resourcing local Churches rather than District groups, and for IT equipment offers to cover a maximum of 25% of the cost.
- If, as it appears is the case, the youth accounts are functioning as reserve from which we make occasional withdrawals, we should consider how this fund can be maintained. This brings in to focus the need to understand the true costs of and to develop a budget for youthwork across the District.
- Capitalise on our links with schools to grow our congregations.
- Develop new ideas with young people to consider mentoring, encouraging spiritual discipline, new patterns of volunteering for service in the District.

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<sup>3</sup> E.g. Accessing a level of funding that equates to the proportion of time ministers spend on mission.

<sup>4</sup> This would be for District resources as opposed to Circuit resources.

## Executive Summary (continued)

### 1.5 Youth Committee Accounts

The District Treasurer now has a set of the District Youth Committee accounts and I am grateful to the committee for resolving this. There are three sets of youth accounts. The District Youth Committee account is controlled by the youth committee. This is used to meet the expenses of running youth events. The two other accounts, held by the District include one current account which was originally intended to fund children's and youth events alongside training, and a second account intended as a source of bursaries. Originally, the District gave an annual grant towards youthwork, held in these accounts. This has no longer been the case for several years. However, the presence of these additional funds is a source of tension for some. It is important to understand why. I am open to correction and would like to thank Basil Coxon for his support.

2.2 The youth committee was given a float from the District and permitted to open its own account for two reasons. Firstly, it was easier to delegate authority to them, rather than have them approach the District Treasurer on every occasion that they wished to organise an event. Secondly, there was concern that the surplus raised by *members of the committee* through such events was being ported into these additional accounts. By opening their own account, the youth committee was able to ensure that their own income could be held and used to subsidise future events. Since this point, the committee has shown considerable expertise in doing so. On only one occasion, for Searchlight6T, some four years ago have the committee drawn from these funds.

2.3 Thus there is a sense in which members of the District Youth Committee take the view that at least a portion of the finance available in these two additional funds has been raised by them. Questions have surfaced over how much money is available (approximately £6K in each account), who has a say in how it is spent, who scrutinises requests and how this fund is replenished. Use of these funds by the DRMG for grants towards youthwork or bursaries (rather from the DAF) has also raised questions as to whether they have the authority to draw from these accounts. This has, in fact been granted by the DPC. However we may be able to learn something from the original mechanism by which these funds were accessed. Significantly, they involved members of the youth committee.

2.4 These issues around finance explain partly the separation that has developed between the youth committee on the one hand and the District on the other.

- The oversight required by minister on behalf of the District is not defined.
- The level of commitment ministers give to this role has been varied.
- The group is seen as event planning rather than visionary.
- The committee is unaware of when or how these additional funds are used.
- The District makes no annual contribution to provide for youthwork.
- The youth committee is not made aware by the District about new projects and so is more reliant on local circuits for information.

Clearly, whilst the District can respond to some of these issues (for example, we fund the costs of safeguarding), much work has to be done to affirm the work of the committee and show our support.

### **3.0 About the District Youth Survey**

The survey began with a questionnaire<sup>5</sup> circulated by e-mail and intended to discern what work was taking place and where. Open rather than closed questions allowed respondents to share additional information. The following people were approached:

- All ministers and paid youth leaders within the District.
- All members of the District Youth Committee<sup>6</sup>.
- Other volunteer youth leaders across the District.

3.1 Respondents were encouraged to be specific about the range of activities on offer and differentiate between:

- Assemblies/schools work
- Sunday-schools
- All-age worship
- Youth worship
- Fresh-expressions of church
- Youth groups
- Outreach projects

Whilst there is often overlap between each type of work<sup>7</sup>, this approach has produced more detail about the range of activities on offer. A further question asked how the District could support people in their efforts.

3.2 Responses were received from every circuit across the District and collated using Google maps<sup>8</sup>. This is proved to be a powerful tool in helping visualise what is happening across the region. The map was circulated for comment among ministers and youth-workers. This interim report also includes feedback from further discussions related to issues such as shortages in funding, the specific skills and experience offered by youth workers and training needs.

### **4.0 Successes**

There are superb examples of youth ministry and mission taking place across the District. These include:

- Work among children
- Work among teenagers
- Work by dedicated, paid-staff<sup>9</sup>
- Work in partnership

#### **4.1 Work among children**

The Methodist Church is strongest in its ministry within primary schools. This includes governorships, regular contact through assemblies and after-school clubs. Provision for children in the form of church-based Sunday-schools, all-age services and youth groups is also encouraging. Whilst we have no figures to compare what is

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<sup>5</sup> Appendix A

<sup>6</sup> Includes representatives from Grimsby, Gainsborough, Louth, Lincoln, Spalding and Boston.

<sup>7</sup> For example, youth worship can be a fresh expression of Church

<sup>8</sup> In the absence of an e-mail link, go to <http://maps.google.com/>, type in Lincoln and Grimsby District Youth Survey, Methodist Church, Louth UK. This should take you to some links on the left. Click on any link related to the District and you will see a further link to the full map.

<sup>9</sup> The phrase 'paid-staff' or 'employees' is used in contrast to 'ordained minister'

happening now with what we were able to offer in the past, some of our projects challenge the rhetoric of rural decline. Examples include Dunston Messy Church & Sunday School, Gipsy Bridge outreach among the local playgroup, Grimoldby Breakfast Church & Binbrook Sunday School and Holiday Club.

#### 4.2 Work among teenagers

Adolescence is a crucial period during which spiritual reflection and growth takes place. The spiritual nurture and pastoral care of teenagers is often more difficult than when dealing with adults because the foundation of beliefs and values by which young people live their lives have not yet been tested and established. This is compounded by the physical changes and emotional volatility that form part of adolescence. Consequently, many teenagers crave the acceptance of a peer group who understand how they feel. They also yearn to discover life themselves. The low numbers of teenagers within some local congregations alongside the conformity of the Church is therefore unappealing to many.

Despite this, some larger centres are able to offer youth ministry, irrespective of the number of young people that they serve. Examples include Lincoln and Louth. In addition, there are some excellent examples of outreach work among unchurched, disadvantaged young people. This includes Gainsborough Youth, Side-Door Youth in Grimsby and the Nichols Project in Louth. Whilst there is often a significant difference in background, outlook and pastoral need between unchurched and church youth, these centres are managing to reach both. The link between outreach and making disciples is also becoming evident, with a good number of young people learning about the Christian faith and attending worship. This success appears to be catalysed by worship intended to meet their needs away from adult congregations. However, both young and old do mix at special events.

#### 4.3 Work by dedicated, paid-staff

Much of our success seems linked to the presence of employees who run activities in partnership with church volunteers. Some have a broader role within the church and serve as community workers, youth ministry forming a significant component of this. In contrast, most clergy appear less free to provide the level of direct leadership, regular attendance or weekly mentoring necessary to pastor young people. This is to be expected; delegation is a key component of oversight; competent leadership involves appointing people who by virtue of training and experience can do the job better than themselves. Youthwork among adolescents is becoming a specialism.<sup>10</sup> This said, there are clergy who feel a calling to reach out to young people and have been key in developing children's and youth ministry. However, given the scope of their oversight such ministers are constantly aware that whilst they focus on youthwork, some other activity in the life of the Church has less direct, ministerial support.

#### 4.4 Work in partnership

There are also examples of local churches working together to meet the needs of young people. In some instances different denominations based in the same village are working together. On a larger scale there are also partnerships between neighbouring circuits<sup>11</sup>. One such example is the Louth Circuit and Mid Lincolnshire Circuit sharing a youth worker. Beyond this, other churches are working with ecumenical charities whose intention is to broker partnerships between different

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<sup>10</sup> The emergence of training (secular or otherwise) for youthwork up to and including degree level studies is evidence of this.

<sup>11</sup> Both this joint appointment and the LYM Bus Project will be online by September 2009.

congregations. Working in this manner affords additional benefits; if the ecumenical company employs a member of staff on behalf of partner churches it is they rather than the churches who are responsible for fulfilling contractual and statutory regulation. This allows local people to focus more effectively on the work in hand and has been evident in the Boston Bus Project, overseen by LYM.<sup>12</sup>

## **5.0 Immediate concerns**

All of these issues arise from a lengthy conversation with the youth committee and additional conversations with District staff held on a one-to-one basis. The youth committee consists of representatives from across the District who organise regional activities. They include some of our paid staff and are possibly the only core group that includes a majority of under 40s functioning as leaders within the District. At its full strength, the committee includes both visionary and practical people, some with experience in senior management. Regrettably, this visionary aspect has not had the opportunity to flourish, although the group has organised some high profile events that have attracted media interest.<sup>13</sup> We also have some highly experienced staff in the District, not least Gerald Barley, manager of the Nichols Project and British Representative to the European Layworkers Conference.

5.1 Five main areas of immediate concern have emerged:

- Funding, job-security and staff-support.
- Encouraging investment in youthwork.
- Oversight of youth activities and youth development across the District.
- Linking outreach, church attendance and fresh expressions in schools-work.
- Training needs and Safeguarding.

## **5.2 Funding, Job security and staff-support**

There is some insecurity among paid staff within the District as to their own roles in the future. Aware of the increasing financial pressure, paid-staff sense that their circuits would look to retain the number of ordained ministers at the expense of lay-employees. This unease becomes greater as staff approach the end of their contracts and begin to consider whether their post is likely to be renewed. This uncertainty, along with the extension of contracts for shorter periods (for example a year), also makes it difficult to develop youth work over a long term.

5.3 The question is not whether a plan can be made to sustain us through the next five or ten years but what dedicated employees this will require. The relationship between church employees and volunteers is critical. Whilst many of our volunteers are capable, few have the time, the training or the experience to provide the same level of support. One respondent from a circuit was emphatic in saying that the only way for youth work to grow was to employ a dedicated member of staff and have them develop a partnership with parent-volunteers drawn from schools.

5.4 Paid-staff continue to focus on the needs of young people. One major question is what work will remain sustainable should redundancies be made or contracts not be renewed. Another danger is that those staff who sense that their future may be limited will already look for new work elsewhere and give notice before their contract expires.

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<sup>12</sup> I should declare an interest as a board member of Lincolnshire Youth Mission.

<sup>13</sup> Searchlight:6T.

Recommendation . in light of our recent experience, and the paper produced some four years ago on encouraging under 40s in the life of the District:

- Consider the appointment, voluntary or otherwise, of a District Youth Enabler for the forthcoming year, terms and conditions to be agreed (Lydia Barlow was assigned three hours a week with our District. (We need more detail on what the Connexion intends. The enabler would spend concentrated periods of time visiting projects. They may need housing and a wage if not acting voluntarily.
- My understanding is that as from September Districts who wish to opt in to the Youth Enabler scheme has to meet the costs incurred. Some Districts have appointed their own enablers independently.

Recommendation . circuits to:

- Discern what future staffing levels may be in 3 and 5 years.
- Consider all financial options including grants & drawing on CAF funds.
- Be open with employees about the future funding of posts.
- Consider how youthwork will be sustained if staff numbers are reduced.

### 5.5 Encouraging Investment in youthwork

Youth ministry is one priority among many others in the life of the Church. In one sense, investing in adults is more appealing. The sceptic may say that young people are with us for a comparatively short period of time, work through their adolescence and then leave for college. As circuit funds become limited, youth ministry & mission may suffer; there is likely to be a greater demand for ordained ministers and this kind of work is least likely to be self-sustaining in financial terms. Whilst this may make financial sense it fails theologically - God's love is for all, God has commissioned us to meet the needs of the poor and marginalised, God calls us to bring our gifts and offer our lives as an act of sacrifice. Moreover, whilst some young people may leave us, others from disadvantaged backgrounds (of which there are an increasing number) are more likely to remain. One of the issues is to build new forms of Church from such groups that will, in time, become self-sustaining.

Recommendation . the District to:

- Emphasise that mission requires sacrificial giving.
- Promote models of collaborative ministry that reflect the benefit of ordained and employed staff working in partnership.
- Help circuits to understand that skilled staff can enhance youth ministry.
- Continue our focus on conversion and discipleship, looking to develop new youth congregations
- Highlight success stories from across the District.

### 5.6 Oversight of youth activities and youth development across the District

At one time, three committees were dedicated to the support of children's and youth activities across the region . a children's committee, a youth committee and a joint committee<sup>14</sup>. The children's and youth committees were each served by a minister and volunteers from around the District. The joint committee met twice a year and

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<sup>14</sup> Appendix C, Appendix D.

according to the constitution also included the District Mission Enabler and the District Training Officer. We struggle to see how the District Enabler could have served, since this post was first filled six years ago. Even so, this system of working, whilst appearing a little unwieldy, would have encouraged networking and an immediate link with the District who could be on hand to provide support. For example, the original aims of the children's and youth committees were to make oversight more effective by:

- Listening regionally to the issues and concerns of children and leaders.
- Identifying, celebrating and replicating successful work.
- Enquiring sensitively about practice which seemed to merit concern.
- Offering additional resources for children's and youth work.
- Providing shared activities in children's work.
- Helping develop a strategy of support in the future.
- Showing support through the visit of children's groups by representatives from the District.
- Advising local congregations on how to establish new work.
- Liaising with the District Mission Enabler and the Training and Development Officer

5.7 Despite the loss of both the children's committee and the joint committee (the volunteers became unable to retain the same level of commitment), we have still made progress. Whilst the number of youth activities on offer will have declined, new work has been beginning. Moreover, much of our children's and youth ministry seems rooted in a renewed understanding of mission. Even so, the loss of this structure has left us with a lack of leadership and oversight where children's and youth activities are concerned. Whilst District representatives can be contacted for advice, the aims of the original committees are unambiguous. The focus is on collaborative ministry with the District taking more initiative.

5.8 The youth committee now functions with the support of one minister who is titled 'synod rep or ministerial co-ordinator' Chaired by a youth leader, the level of oversight required by this representative is unclear. Previous ministers have served on the edge of this group, some taking more of a lead than others. However, the ongoing need for accountability, illustrated by the difficulty in receiving financial reports, suggests that some measure of oversight needs to be recovered. This includes agreeing expectations.

5.9 The youth committee have shared that in the past they have felt neglected and left to support themselves. It is too easy to dismiss this as a teenage moan but we must not forget that in this case we are hearing from adults who have witnessed this loss of structure. At present, this group are the only contact we have with youth groups across the District. We therefore need to think carefully about how we can develop this link.

5.91 The recommendations below have been discussed with Emma Hearsh, Chair of the Youth Committee but have not been widely circulated.

- Reaffirm the remit of the original youth committees
- Reconstitute the District Youth Committee as the 'District Youth Team'
- Rename the 'Synod rep/co-ordinator' the 'District Youth Minister' (ordained, unpaid) with clear oversight of this team.

- Appoint (in the future) a Children's Minister (ordained, unpaid) to this team.
- Look to develop children's work from within the youth team.
- Develop an additional Youth Strategy Group which includes other key District officers to take the lead in seeing through the YPS.

## **6.0 Linking outreach, church attendance and fresh expressions in schools**

We should be proud of the way that the Methodist Church is at work among schools. However, we need to look at how we can capitalise on our relationships with teachers and parents to encourage church attendance and fresh expressions. Whilst everything we do has tremendous value, we must remember that we are also called to make disciples and build congregations. We are ideally placed to develop these links. This may lead us to think about where the greatest potential lies and to focus our work more directly.

### **6.1 Training needs and Safeguarding**

Some basic training needs were identified. The greatest problem faced by Circuits is a lack of volunteers. Beyond this, information and training was requested on:

- Helping congregations to engage with unchurched youth.
- Starting new projects from scratch.
- Helping lay people lead assemblies.
- Planning large-scale, high profile events.
- Working with non-Christian volunteers.
- A forum for sharing ideas and experiences.

In addition, it was noted that there had been little (if any) take-up on children's or youth training in the past five years. Significantly, no question was raised about safeguarding or the need for risk assessments when working with young people<sup>15</sup>. Discussion with one member of the District Child Protection group supported the view that that our approach to safeguarding is more geared to building a culture of shared values and safe-spaces linked to a means of our responding appropriately should a child disclose something to us. It is less focused on prescribing how we should behave around young people, leaving us relying on common sense and those with experience through for example their experience in education. However, some centres working with unchurched, disadvantaged and often troubled youth have had to develop further policies that govern the extent to which they may make physical contact with young people. This may be linked to the pastoral care offered to a child or young person who is in distress. Alternatively, it may relate to how staff respond when they need to protect themselves or others from a young person's behaviour. Such strategies are developed from Home Office guidelines and are similar to the policies operated in schools. The Nichols youth project is one such centre that has developed this.

The Methodist Church is currently focused on reworking its safeguarding training and so at present we need to continue with our present procedures. Local churches may be unaware of two new clarifications:

- CRB disclosures are now transferable within six months, i.e. if a volunteer has recently gone through the process of obtaining a CRB disclosure . and it is for

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<sup>15</sup> However, this information would have to have been volunteered as it was not requested.

work with children and young people at the desired level, there is no need to apply for a second disclosure linked to the Church post.

- Volunteers (rather than employees) may work in a supervised capacity with children and young people whilst their disclosure is being processed. (The supervisor must be CRB cleared.)

## **7.0 Looking to the future: Developing a youth strategy**

This survey coincided with the initial visit of Lydia Barlow, our interim District Youth Enabler who is tasked with helping discern our needs and reporting back to the Connexion. From the outset, the Youth Enabler met together with the Chair of District, the District Mission Enabler, the Youth Minister and paid staff. Our goal is to involve young people at every level in the life of the Church and to develop a plan for youth ministry which will sustain us into the future.

7.1 As a result of previous work and ongoing discussions, some ideas remain attractive and may warrant exploration. It should be said that a major aspect of the Youth Participation Strategy is involving more young people in the decision making process. If anything, the weakness of this interim report is that it has not had input from young people but their leaders. However, as the strategy unfolds we will reach a point of consultation. The following suggestions may therefore be seen as a starting point:

### **7.2 Parallel congregations versus all-age worship**

The survey suggests that we are seeing more success with teenagers attending worship that is carefully directed towards meeting their needs, rather than relying solely on all-age worship. Whilst both will always be helpful, have we now reached a point where we are seeing the benefits of more regular youth worship.

### **7.3 faith4life**

This idea was first mooted in connection with supporting under 40s in the life of the Church. In some instances we need to accept the reality that many of our young people will leave for further education and lose contact with the Methodist Church. In response, we should offer young people a discipline to live by such that their faith will thrive wherever they settle. One hopes that this is already taking place as part of our pastoral nurture. Even so, a formal pattern of training is absent. Faith4life would invite young people to commit to a pattern of Christian living that prioritises making disciples and encouraging spiritual discipline over loyalty to any particular denomination. For example, this could include:

- (1) Read the bible and pray everyday.
- (2) Belong to a local Church.
- (3) Seek out a small group for fellowship and support.
- (4) Live life as a disciple.

This strategy would be supported initially through membership of an internet website that provides regular prayer bulletins in similar fashion to those offered by Christian Aid or Tearfund. There is also huge potential in working in partnership with other denominations and organisations such as Ground Level and Fresh Expressions.

### **7.4 21+**

In the absence of paid-staff the greatest loss beyond organising events and bringing together volunteers may be a lack of informal mentoring. There are secular schemes operating across the region involving Lincolnshire Police, Lincolnshire County

Council and secular youth groups that include mentoring as part of a broader scheme. (For example, helping young people to achieve a particular goal). In the future it may be helpful to consider developing a mentoring scheme across the region, albeit with a closer focus on spiritual development. This would include church volunteers and could be either vocationally based, helping young people discern their career path or project based, guiding a group of young people to plan and achieve something for themselves.

#### 7.5 Intergen (Intergenerational) work

Nichols in Louth has worked in partnership with other churches and agencies to deliver an intergenerational project that seeks to build links between older and younger people through shared activity. This perceived divide between old and young seems to be one of our greatest difficulties. Whilst the inherited church struggles to bring different generations together through all-age worship, *intergen* has given more credibility to social events where different generations meet.

#### 7.6 District Children's day

There is a clear desire to develop children's work across the District. A large scale children's event with the kind of impact seen in the case of Searchlight:6T has been suggested as a platform for future work.

#### 7.7 Future partnerships

The success of our present partnerships raises questions about whether there are other organisations whose remit is similar to ours and with whom we may be able to pool resources. Organisations such as the Salvation Army have a clear overlap with us where outreach is concerned. Whilst much of our focus is with the Church of England, the United Reformed Church has also demonstrated commitment to youth projects across the region. Other denominations such as Threshold may also be able to work jointly alongside us. One significant question is to what extent such partnerships can be driven, at least initially, from a District rather than a Circuit perspective.

#### 7.8 Mission shaped intro and Mission Shaped Youth

One of the insights from leaders working with unchurched youth is that there needs to be a much faster transition from conversion into discipleship. This is not limited to youth work but is illustrated elsewhere, not least through our growing experiences of running Alpha courses. One difficulty is that having begun to grasp the essentials of the Christian faith, young people struggle to find a place where they can express it. There is also a tendency for the transition to discipleship to be stifled because the inherited church is travelling at a slower pace than those who have recently responded. Whilst there is a need to encourage and not push young people into discipleship we should guard against a loss of momentum.

5.9 The traditional path for encouraging discipleship has been the existence of gap year opportunities for young people to serve within churches and projects. This however is not something that has been majored upon by the Methodist Church. However, opportunity for District Youth Enablers to give their time to the Church is encouraging and will help retain a link through Further Education.

6.0 In the same way that many adults have been encouraged by Mission Shaped Ministry, there may be some merit in developing a Mission Shaped Youth course. The advantages is that this would build on the success of mission shaped intro but

we would need to look at the usefulness of other courses (such as after Alpha) in encouraging young people to step into discipleship.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

Over the last nine months there has been clear progress in encouraging youthwork across the region. This has included developing a youth network using Facebook, giving us another means of communication across the District. At present we have 67 contacts and the group is growing.

6.1 The oversight of the youth committee and the need to network more individuals to plan a youth strategy is a key issue. In one sense this is already happening as a separate group meets with Lydia Barlow. The youth committee is encouraged that youth work is likely to have a higher profile in the future.

6.2 The survey's completion is encouraging. Much more information can be received from the mapped results and those circuits who are looking to employ youthworkers shortly have been included. One additional benefit is that the Google Map can be updated at any time. One disadvantage is the lack of an easy to type web address.

6.3 In terms of future planning for new work, there are obvious areas where we have little cover such as the Wolds (apart from Binbrook), areas to the North of the District approaching the Humber Bank and to the South-East. There are undoubtedly places of great potential which will be considered in the next part of the survey.

6.4 The most immediate needs (as highlighted in the executive summary) would therefore seem to be:

- Help circuits to see the benefits of employing staff alongside ministers.
- Encourage circuits to think strategically and plan ahead for the future.
- Highlight further how CAF funds can be accessed to fund additional staff<sup>16</sup>.
- Encourage partnerships to spread the cost of youth or community workers.
- Prioritise grant applications that combine mission and youth/children's work.
- Recover oversight of youthwork by restructuring the youth committee, appointing a youth minister now and a children's minister in the future.
- Continue with the DYE scheme and appoint a youth enabler for the District.
- Focus on Identifying, training and mentoring new youth leaders.
- Consider developing in-house gap year schemes.

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<sup>16</sup> E.g. Accessing a level of funding that equates to the proportion of time ministers spend on mission.

## Appendix A

### Sample responses

Rev Langley Mackrell-Hey, Louth. (Working in partnership with David Newlove)

Assemblies: 3 schools, Fulstow primary, Grimoldby primary, Saltfleetby primary . twice a term on average. Minister visits. End of term ends with worship services.

#### Youth worship:

Louth, Daybreak Children's service 30-40 present (Sun morn, monthly)

Louth, Xpress (monthly youth worship) up to 12.

Reflections at Nichols (fresh expression, late evening, weekly, 3-6 young people plus leaders).

#### All-age worship

Grimoldby breakfast Church (All-age, Fresh Expression, 15-30 present).

Louth, Monthly, Sunday morning.

#### Youth groups:

Louth (midweek, 10-15 youngsters) . 2 ministers attend, 1-2 adults support;  
Conisholme (monthly afternoon, 10 youngsters) , minister and Nichols youth worker visits.

#### Sunday Schools

Louth (Excite, Explore Sun Mornings, weekly) staffed by Church members.

#### Outreach:

Nichols Youth Project, working with disadvantaged and unchurched young-people. Also visits Cordeaux and North Somercotes schools. Mon-Friday (lunchtimes and evenings) , management group from the circuit, 1 minister attached to the project, 2 full-time staff, 2 part-time staff. Works in partnership with other organisations. Fresh Expressions reflections time on a Monday night. Ongoing mentoring of young people. Offers placement opportunities.

#### Special projects:

Looking to employ a member of staff-joint with Horncastle to support youth work and fresh expressions in Louth . thereby releasing a minister.

Looking to develop links through a minister with Secondary schools in Louth.

Looking at how we can support young people in Saltfleet.

#### How can we support you?

We need advice/training on

We need some resources ..

We have a vision for ..how do we proceed?

## Appendix C

### **LINCOLN AND GRIMSBY DISTRICT, THE METHODIST CHURCH. DISTRICT CHILDRENS AND YOUTH COMMITTEE DISTRICT JOINT COMMITTEE**

#### **Chair:**

Ministerial support/co-ordinator - appointment approved by Synod

#### **Aim:**

To enable the continuation, renewal and development of children's and youth work within the district.

#### **Objectives:**

- i). To distribute/recirculate District resources;
- ii). To identify joint training needs/opportunities;
- iii). To be made aware of District support/activities;
- iv). To share good practice;
- v). To made aware of new policy/procedures;
- vi). Consider further development opportunities;
- vii). To identify availability of funding;
- viii). And an opportunity to support and fellowship for one another;
- ix). To encourage the implementation of best practice in matters of Safeguarding;

#### **Responsible to:**

District 'Church Life' Committee.

#### **Membership:**

Ministerial support/co-ordinator  
District Mission Enable  
Training and Development officer  
District Youth Committee Chair  
District Children's Committee Chair  
District 'Church Life' Co-ordinator  
District Child Protection Advisory Group - Representative

#### **Frequency of Meetings:**

Six monthly (twice a year).

## Appendix D

### **LINCOLN AND GRIMSBY DISTRICT, THE METHODIST CHURCH. DISTRICT CHILDRENS AND YOUTH COMMITTEE DISTRICT YOUTH COMMITTEE**

#### **Chair:**

Appointment to be approved by the district policy committee.

#### **Aim:**

To provide support and opportunities for young people and youth Leaders s/helpers within the District.

#### **Objectives:**

- i). To distribute/recirculate District resources;
- ii). To identify training needs/oppor tunities, informing the joint Committee;
- iii). To be made aware of Church life within the District;
- iv). To share good practice within the District;
- v). To be made aware of new poli cy/procedures and to act as appropriate;
- x). Consider further development opportunities, informing the Development officer/joint committee;
- xi). To identify availability of funding, control of income/expenditure and reporting to the District treasurer;
- xii). An opportunity of support and fellowship for one another;
- xiii). The provision of events/activities and worship to meet the needs/interest of young people within the District;
- xiv). To encourage District involvement in National Events/Campai gns;
- xv). Ensure that the voice/concerns of Methodist young people are heard and represented to both a District and National level.

#### **Responsible to:**

The Joint Childrens and Youth Committee.

#### **Membership:**

Ministerial Support/Co-ordinator

Chair

Vice Chair

Secretary

Treasurer

Development Offices

Activities/Events Co-ordinators

Other(s)

#### **Development Officer(s):**

1. To encourage representatives of the committee to visit childrens and youth groups and their leaders;
2. To listen to the issues and concer ns of childrens youth people and their leaders;
3. To express appreciation of any positive aspect of childrens and youth work provision;
4. To inquire sensitively about practice which seems to merit concern;
5. To offer practical help which could raise the quality of childrens and youth work;
6. To encourage chil drens and youth work to participate in shared activities.
7. To consider where there might be support for development of new childrens and

youth work;

8. To advise churches/circuits set up new children's and youth work provision;

9. To liaise with the District Mission Enabler and the Training and Development Officer;

10. To attend and inform/report to the joint committee of the quality, scope and extent of children's and youth work within the District.

**Frequency of Meetings:**

Quarterly (four a year).