

## THE BISHOP OF MANCHESTER



October 2018

*The Rt Revd Dr David Walker*

To:  
All Clergy  
Lay Chairs  
PCC Secretaries

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to you to update you on our Fit for Mission programme, which remains very much a priority for me and our leadership team. We are committed to being a worshipping, growing and transforming Christian presence at the heart of every community. Fit for Mission is the vehicle to ensure that we flourish in the years ahead.

I last wrote to you before Easter to explain the importance of creating a Mission Action Plan for your parish. I also outlined the work of the pilot deaneries in Ashton, Deane, North Manchester and Salford. The four pilots are due to complete this stage of their work at the end of December 2018.

The Fit for Mission Strategic Programme Board feels that now is an opportune moment to undertake an evaluation of our approach to Fit for Mission before we begin any fresh activity. Evaluation provides an opportunity to identify, celebrate and build on what has been achieved to date, as well as acknowledging and learning from what hasn't been so fruitful. It will play a major part in shaping the roll out of Fit for Mission across the diocese. In order for the evaluation to be as objective as possible, we are engaging the services of an independent agency. We have instructed Do-Well (UK) Ltd to complete the evaluation by the end of 2018. They have an excellent reputation for working with a range of organisations, including churches.

I want to be clear that the Fit for Mission Programme remains a priority. The challenges we face of falling clergy numbers and practical issues with some church buildings must be addressed in a sustainable way. At the same time there are many opportunities for mission which we need to ensure our parishes and other bodies have the capacity to grasp.

What is key is to ensure that the approach being taken by Fit for Mission is fit for purpose. The evaluation will give us some answers on the approach that has been taken so far, and shape the future of the programme as a whole. Armed with this independent analysis, we will be able to devise the best approach going forward.

While the evaluation is taking place the Fit for Mission programme will continue and nothing will stop. The existing pilot deaneries will continue to function towards their agreed deadlines, and deadlines for completion of MAPs also remain unrevised. However, until the evaluation has concluded no further work will be started.

Mission Action Plans (MAPs)

By way of a reminder, the deadline for all non-pilot deanery parish MAPs is 30 November 2018. Thank you to the parishes that have already submitted MAPs, and to the parishes in the pilot deaneries that met an earlier deadline. Remember that help is at hand from the MAP Officer, Canon Andy Salmon, if you need advice or guidance.

The importance of parish MAPs cannot be overemphasised. They are the vital means of capturing the perspective and voice of each parish. This contributes to the creation of a deanery MAP, and ensures that Fit for Mission is developed from the ground up.

As more and more MAPs are completed and shared with Archdeacons and the MAP Officer it has emerged that the parish MAP template (available online) is not being used consistently, which makes aggregation into a deanery MAP very difficult.

Please would you ensure that you use the parish MAP template and that all sections are completed.

We look forward to receiving your completed MAPs by the end of November, and to sharing the results of the evaluation with you early next year. Please email your Mission Action Plan to [map@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:map@manchester.anglican.org)

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Manchester'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'David' written in a more stylized, looped manner.