

**Carlisle Diocese**  
**Buildings Strategy, Discipleship and Growth**

v 1.0

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## **Section 0: Introduction**

This document is an attempt to set the Buildings Strategy within theological reflection on the Diocesan Vision of Growing Disciples. It is in a sense, thinking out loud. It is also a way of incorporating into Diocesan thinking what has come out of the Churches Trust for Cumbria's Buildings Strategic Review. At the end it sets out some questions – though it doesn't answer them all! I wrote it for myself; others may read it to see my "working" or in order to understand the scope of the issues which the Buildings Strategy must tackle.

## **Section 1: Discipleship**

The Diocese has set itself a 10 year plan of Growing Disciples. and has identified 5 hallmarks of Discipleship: Mature Faith, Prayer and Worship, Community Engagement, Outreach and Mission, Quality of Relationships. A Buildings Strategy links to all of these.

## **Section 2: Context**

It is probably uncontested that if we were starting from scratch we wouldn't erect buildings as we currently have them. We would prefer to have many of them in different locations; we would prefer them to be easier to heat and to maintain; we would probably prefer them not to have such large amounts of fixed seating, thus allowing more flexible uses; we would prefer access to them to be easier. If church buildings of other Christian denominations are also taken into consideration, the situation is more complicated and the problems are more compounded. However, we are where we are.

The Bishop, Archdeacons and "Diocese" are bound by Church Legislation (the Pastoral Measures etc) and cannot unilaterally close buildings, even if closure is accompanied by the opening of a "better" building nearby. Nor is it in the spirit of the Church of England or of the current Diocesan Strategy (with its commitment to localism and subsidiarity) to try to act in this way. The changes that come have to come out of and be run by local communities – in conversation with Deaneries, Archdeacons, the rest of the Diocese, and in a spirit of mutual accountability.

On the other hand, experience and common sense tell us that local congregations do not generally campaign to close surplus buildings until there is absolutely no other alternative. They are more likely to choose to put scarce and possibly diminishing resources into church buildings than into paying for Ministry, Outreach and Mission.

There are 351 Anglican church buildings in the Diocese, with a total insured value of over £800 million.

There is also the ecumenical context: examples of this might be either that of a village with two small congregations both struggling to maintain over-large buildings when they would barely half fill one; or of a town with churches of different denominations next to each other, as it were, in competition, when a better use might be to make one the worship space and the other the hall. So the Buildings Survey is from the start ecumenical and has as one of its purposes the encouragement of ecumenical conversations.

## **Section 3: Theology**

From Moses to David, the Ark of the Covenant had no permanent home, but the impulse to provide a permanent building was a theme growing in volume and intensity until Solomon built the first Temple. There is a tension between being the pilgrim people of God and being rooted in and committed to particular locations and settled communities. The Tent for the Ark is one expression of faith, but the visible and permanent presence of a Temple building symbolising the visible and permanent presence of God is another.

St Paul uses several images for the church (vine and branches, body with parts, temple of living Stones) helpfully reminding us of the church as the people of God rather than a building. But St Paul is writing in the, at the time, secure context of the presence of the temple in Jerusalem. For us, his thinking is to be held alongside the tensions we face about our buildings rather than as offering a simplistic resolution.

Whether we like it or not, church buildings are then a visible sign of the presence of the Church in an area and, by extension, of God's work and presence in a community. Communities value their church buildings and their churchyards and we must accept that as right and proper. (In fact the closure of a church building can be seen as the Church abandoning a community.) But when Jesus points out that God is Lord of the living, not of the dead, He is saying something about being for the present and the future, rather than just for the past. Our faith is meant to liberate us, to fill us and others with joy. A few of our buildings help to do this, but many are burdens which weigh us down, with small groups holding on to them with grim determination. How could we set ourselves free?

There is also a tension between sacred and secular. Jesus in incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, tore down the barriers between God and the world, demonstrating the divine inhabiting the created and taking the created back to heaven. However as flesh and blood humans, we need reminders and symbols of the sacred alongside the secular and this seems to be a universal, psychological as well as spiritual, requirement. So St Benedict in his Rule lays down that the chapel of the monastery should not be a place for storing 'odds and ends', but a place clear and clearly devoted to prayer and worship. His Rule also reminds his monks that work is prayer and prayer is work; that is, the sacred transforms the secular.

In our context we achieve this by keeping part of the church (the chancel and sanctuary) reserved for prayer and worship. However the nave, the body of the church, does not have to be so kept, but is sanctified by the sanctuary as the world is sanctified by God in Jesus. Whilst in some places this view is not accepted and there is resistance to using Church buildings for activities, it seems that it is becoming much more widely acceptable to use Church buildings flexibly.

The places we inhabit, their design and architecture, have profound influences on us: indeed they shape us as much as we shape them. We need to be clear about our intentions as Christian communities, and make sure that we fashion our buildings in ways that are consonant with what we want to be. At its crudest, are our Churches inward looking fortresses cut off from their communities, or are they outward looking hubs at the heart of them?

Some factors which make these discussions difficult:

- ❖ The tendency for congregations to become clubs rather than churches.
- ❖ The huge emotional investment in churchyards and graves; of course one function of the early Church was as a burial club.
- ❖ Attitudes like: "it will see me out".
- ❖ The fear that the discussions shine a spotlight on the failures of the work of the clergy and congregations.
- ❖ The feeling that rural communities have had much taken away - and of course this is true, though it should be seen against an understanding that the urban communities have never had the resources of the rural communities eg ratio of clergy to people...

#### **Section 4: The Challenge**

The Diocese, through the Archdeacons and Bishops, does have a role in challenging congregations and communities. For example, good buildings, as we all know, can enhance prayer and worship, but at least

some of our church buildings are not good and do not enhance prayer and worship. Lack of warmth, poor lighting, untidiness or even dirt and an air of being unloved, do no credit to God, his Church, or us. Church buildings may be a visible sign of the presence of the church and by implication of God and his work; and being a Christian may be equally about believing and belonging; but we can easily see that if we are adequately mature in faith, we will not be too tied to our buildings – that would be idolatry, putting the buildings in place of God himself.

When our forefathers erected these buildings labour was cheap and expectations of levels of amenities in churches were low. It is also clear that they sat very lightly to the buildings and traditions of their past, for example demolishing mediaeval buildings in order to have what they saw as nice new modern buildings. The demands of good stewardship of the resources we have need to be faced just as squarely by us, though recognising that these are sensitive matters. Small communities probably cannot and probably should not try to maintain several church buildings, even when each of these is located in a separate hamlet or suburb. (NB Cumbrian understandings of small and large may need to be challenged if we are to face squarely the economics of our situation.) This question is made more complex if we take into account buildings of other Christian denominations. It is made even more complex still when we notice that quite a number of villages took the opportunity afforded by the Millennium to upgrade village halls, many of which now provide excellent facilities, though some of which are now struggling.

Again, if we are good stewards of our resources we will not be happy seeing our church plant used for one hour a week. We need to find ways in which they can be used, as they say, 24/7.

The biggest single factor may be Churchyards: around these are understandably located the most emotional issues. It will be very important to have rational thinking underpinning decisions to help where strong feelings are involved. Some of our churches could become cemetery chapels – though how they would be maintained is not clear.

Our Deaneries are increasingly taking their share in the responsibility for staffing and deployment. Buildings will attract some resources which could not be used for mission (eg Friends groups, grants, people who are interested in having a church in their village without being committed Christians) and ministry (eg paying clergy or lay workers). (NB the existence of some of these other stakeholders will complicate the process of discussing change – they would rightly expect to be intimately involved.) But buildings will always be a call on limited resources, and Deaneries cannot simply argue for the maintenance of buildings at the expense of Parish Offer.

However, disposing of buildings is not easy or quick; simply shutting a church will not put an end to our responsibility for it, nor to bills for it needing to be paid. We should not have unrealistic expectations about realising the capital tied up in redundant churches; the legislation is complex.

### ***Some options for our buildings***

- Developing alternative ways of caring for and using those churches which cannot be disposed of by sale or to the Churches Conservation Trust will become important (CCT will currently only take Grade I listed churches: and with limited funds, are only taking one or two churches each year).
- Some of our surplus churches may not be suitable for conversion to housing, but perhaps they could be converted into village halls, with the existing village halls being converted into affordable housing?
- Could some be run “at a lower temperature” (or hibernating?) or as ‘chapels or ease’ – eg used during the summer, or just for weddings, or as cemetery chapels, or as places for walkers to stop? Could/should the Diocese set up its own version of the Churches Conservation Trust to provide some

central support for those hibernating churches which we (the Deanery in conversation with the Diocese) want to retain, which do not have worshipping congregations to care for them? (Could we use the Parish Property Fund for this? At the moment it stands at about £260,000; it makes grants of up to £3,000 to churches to assist with building projects which it is hoped will lead to growth; it is being run down by making grants at levels beyond its income.) How would we enhance what is offered to tourists and visitors in these hibernating churches?

- Recent legislation allows the leasing of part of a church for some alternative use – and the part could be quite substantial – eg up to as much as 90% of the building (the nave?) being let with 10% (ie the chancel) being reserved for worship.
- In some communities there are significant reductions in the number of public buildings – with schools and pubs etc closing. Could churches be part of making up this deficit? For example, community libraries – not traditional book repositories but rather more than that – be hosted in churches?
- Where churches are closed, and no alternative use can be found, experience in other Dioceses suggests that demolition as quickly as possible is often the kindest option; a closed and increasingly vandalised and derelict church is the worst advertisement for us, and a silent accuser of the community, in a profoundly unhelpful way.
- Another option is ruination – the removal of the roof; this could be costly as it may entail considerable work to the rest of the shell to make it safe; there are also insurance and long-term maintenance issues.
- One church (Greystoke) is considering erecting a semi-permanent glass enclosure within the church to create a space small enough to heat economically: this will be where they usually worship. This might be appropriate where it seems the Church building must be retained but is too large for regular use.
- These stark options suggest that it might be appropriate to investigate a Joint Venture with a developer: there are some well-respected local developers with track-records of high quality and imaginative work; there is also Mitre Housing. A Joint Venture might produce some income which could be used to support aspects of the Building strategy: for example, projects developing church buildings which were more complex/less profitable. If a charitable trust were needed as a vehicle, the Cumbria Buildings Preservation Trust is a possible vehicle.

The quality of our discussions about these matters will be a test of the quality of our relationships. We need to be able to ask hard questions and to listen carefully to the views and feelings of each other. The way in which our buildings are used by the wider community will be an equally acid test of the quality of our relationships with the communities in which we are set. Are we distanced from them or are we and they partners? Resistance to change may come more from that part of the community which doesn't use its church than from that part which does! So conversations which include all conversation partners and which are about listening as well as speaking will be essential.

## **Section 5: Outcomes**

The Buildings Strategic Review will give Bishops and Archdeacons, Rural Deans and Lay Chairs, and the Parishes themselves, a clear sense of their sustainability, and where there are impending difficulties. In addition, churches will need to be considered in context – a building which in isolation was thought of as alright would surely be less appropriate if there were a nearby excellent church of another denomination:

we are committed to tackling these questions ecumenically. In other words, churches need to think not just about whether a church is sustainable, but also whether it is the best church to sustain.

**A *Some of our buildings are appropriate and good, and as good as they can be or nearly so.***

**B *Some of our buildings need to be used much more and need to be adapted to make that use happen. They need to be seen as centres of Mission and Outreach and used to the full.***

C We probably do have to face the fact that ***some of our buildings are either beyond our capacity to maintain and sustain or are simply surplus to requirements.*** It would be morally right to face these questions as quickly as possible and re-deploy resources while the resources are still there, rather than hanging on by our fingernails until there are no alternatives but closure and no resources left to do anything new. (To put it another way, if two congregations are to amalgamate, they need to do this while both are still healthy.) At its simplest, what we cannot say is that “there is no problem”.

Recognising how difficult it will be for some congregations and communities to face this particular option and recognising that Deaneries too are probably not in a position to lead these conversations (everybody is prepared to talk about church closures so long as it is not their own church), the Bishops and Archdeacons will have a role in helping congregations and communities to come to speedy and graceful decisions about the future of their buildings. The role of Diocesan leaders will need to be thought through and developed, and certainly there are some powers available to them, but part of it will simply be to open gracious conversations. The results of the Buildings Survey (the county-wide audit by Churches Trust for Cumbria, through a questionnaire, of church buildings) are intended to be a “mirror” for churches to show them their situation, and this too will be part of the conversation.

The Churches’ Mission Action Plans will be very important both to be informed by the reality of the state of the buildings, and to inform churches’ thinking about how they might use their buildings. An alternative way of thinking about this would be for a parish to ask, “What is our mission and what buildings do we need for it?” If the question is put this way, there will need also to be realism about what is needed and what can be afforded and done.

There is a changing relationship between Diocese and Parishes: it is clear that the Parishes’ money largely funds the ministry of the Diocese; and the language of partnership is much more to the fore as a result of the Parish Offer system. This seeing ourselves as co-workers with different perspectives will be very helpful as the context in which that conversation goes on.

It will be very important to support parochial clergy, often at the sharp end of discussions and then decisions.

It will also be important for the Church / the Diocese to be prepared to be happy about some outcomes which are less than ideal from a purely theological point of view: eg where a community wishes to retain its iconic building, but is less interested in being part of an active Christian congregation. We may need to accept a somewhat messy implementation. Partial knowledge (eg which buildings to keep but not which to dispose of) may be worth having.

## **Section 6: Toolkit**

We need to think about what we can do not just to talk about plans for the future of our buildings but to help make those plans become realities. Much of the work will need to be done locally – but there are things which can create a helpful climate and encourage action.

- One is making the DAC more effective in encouraging good applications – a perfectly proper function of a planning authority. Specifically, we need to look at the secretariat of the DAC, and how it and the DAC members could be more proactive in providing advice to parishes; we also need to recruit more specialist advisers: it might be helpful to find out from other Dioceses how they recruit advisers. We also need to look at streamlining the way in which we deal with small applications – which will also allow us to devote adequate time to the scrutiny of larger applications. Nationally there is a review of the Faculty process: suggestions coming from this Diocese include:
  - a) having a single form for application preliminary advice and faculty – at the moment applicants are required to complete two forms;
  - b) simplifying the application form for simpler applications
  - c) simplifying the language on the application form
 The pilot Buildings Surveys in Windermere and Penrith are already showing that the quality of Quinquennial Inspections is very variable: so much so, that some parishes are not responding to their Survey appropriately. We need to improve the consistency of QQIs, raising the weakest to the standard of the best. Churches Trust for Cumbria has set up a Church Architects Network which might be a useful forum for conversations. Filtering Architects who are listed as being recommended/able to do QQIs is notoriously difficult but our Buildings Strategy may want/need to challenge the DAC to tackle this.
- A second tool in the kit will be the Churches Trust for Cumbria; we will need to do more thinking about its role in helping churches to maintain and enhance their sustainability, and in encouraging and supporting those parishes which need to diversify to do so. One of the purposes of the Strategic Review is to inform the planning and work of the Churches Trust for Cumbria.
- Archdeacons' Visitations must be used constructively: they can take conversations with churches well beyond the detail of inventories and QQIs to conversations about diversification of use, and questions about mission.
- We must make sure that our churches link with and feature in Parish Plans – and other aspects of the localism agenda of the current Government.
- We need to look at the process of closing churches : can we lobby for changes in the legislation to make it quicker and simpler? And we should investigate a Joint Venture with a developer / Mitre Housing / and Architect. Can the huge value of these assets be used as a lever ?
- The Mission Action Plan will be the single most important tool for congregations as they consider the realistic future use of their buildings
- Churches will go at different speeds through the process of looking at and doing something about their buildings; we will need to put appropriate amounts of energy into those churches going more slowly, without allowing them to think that they can hide from the questions and the process.
- No doubt other tools will need to be discovered or created.

### **Section 7: Relationship with other strategies / reference back to the Vision**

It is hard to say which of MAPing, and the three strategies (Outreach, Ministry, and Buildings) is logically prior. We can say that the Buildings, and what is discovered about them in the Survey, are facts. There is no realistic prospect of changing some of these “facts” – though others could change / be changed : for example, the building of a new housing estate might change the potential for growth, and strategic value, of a building.

As each piece of the strategic jigsaw is put in place, we will need to adjust it, and the others already in place, so that they fit with each other. Although much of what Buildings Strategy represents seems at first sight to be about maintenance, it is also, negatively, about obstacles to mission; and, positively, about bases for mission.

## **Section 8: Questions**

### **1. How do we see buildings? What is our philosophy?**

Should we think of our buildings as like a peach tree which needs to be pruned in order to allow a smaller number of choice peaches to flourish; or like the family silver which must be preserved at all costs? or are they like shop windows of franchises which we should keep open to maximise our market share? or are they like Post Offices or Schools? These too are important 'shop windows' (ie contact and access points) and community facilities? However, all are also ultimately governed by economic realities, for they are expensive provisions. A further question associated with the closure of a School or Post Office is how the core services can still be offered in that community.

Or is there some other way of thinking about our buildings ?

NB the Methodist thinking on "Presence" (David Emison and others), and our Anglican self understanding as here for everyone, need to be brought to bear here. Although Methodist thinking emphasises presence of people rather than of buildings, churches have repeatedly through their history been unable to avoid the links between the two. This is still true today, when even amongst independent churches, which formerly were content to hire buildings, some are now looking for a more permanent home.

Would this thinking on presence indicate that it is more likely that we would wish to prune large unsustainable urban churches than small rural churches? On the other hand, our rural communities are still well-resourced by the Church when compared to our urban communities (though they may not feel this).

### **2. Is a "market" approach to buildings fair?**

The CTfC Buildings Strategic Review is discovering that a key element and indicator for sustainability is the capacity of the people supporting a building (ie their ability and activity). Could this mean that a building - because it was well supported - was viewed as sustainable, when from a different perspective it would be simpler to dispose of it, and better to keep a different, less well supported building? A "market methodology" would perhaps answer that if a building has that much support, by definition it is the right building to keep. To put this more theologically, we might say that where a church is active, we discern that God must be at work so that, again by definition, it is in the "right" place. However, this would mean that active successful affluent churches survive - partly, simply because they can, with no other questions being asked. By contrast, congregations in hard-pressed areas, even when not too numerically challenged, might be faced with much more painful decisions. Is this what we want or believe ?

Although we respect the fierce independence of our communities, a completely laissez-faire strategy (ie if churches can survive, there is no need to say or do anything; when they cannot, then conversations about the future begin) would endanger our mission to the whole of Cumbria. It would be bad stewardship as at least some churches and communities would be galvanised into action only by crisis, rather than doing good regular maintenance; it would neglect to count the cost of resources both lay and ordained in responding to crisis in an ad hoc way; it would not take into account the possibilities opened up by ecumenical cooperation. A more strategic approach will not achieve all its aspirations in every case, but the power of persuasion, along with those levers available to us, must be worth trying.

Those churches which need support would survive only where the Diocese and Deanery decided that they were needed strategically; would this be unjust to some struggling church communities (possibly let down by clergy or the Diocese in the past)? The impact on Diocesan finances would need to be considered. It would not be innovative to allocate resources on the basis of mission, but deciding to support struggling but strategic churches might require a larger shift and corresponding commitment than we have currently coped with. In addition, greater Diocesan support in such places might have an unintended consequence of colluding with a congregation directing resources to maintaining buildings rather than on mission and new work.

### 3. **How to have a conversation about buildings? Who with?**

Our developing Diocesan strategy will need to deal with the way in which we open the conversation with parishes and benefices about the results of the surveys; we should act in a spirit of openness – but Deaneries will need to do some strategic thinking about how the Church buildings of the Deanery serve its mission too. (Mission is partly a Deanery / Circuit responsibility.) The strategy for a Deanery will be formed by the conversation between Deanery and Archdeacon. We will need to have an eye to consistency across the Diocese, without feeling that this means uniformity; the Archdeacon responsible for the Buildings Strategy will have a role to play here.

One conversation about buildings is taking place in the feedback in the Buildings Survey. Currently the Archdeacon invites, from each church in a Deanery, clergy and lay representatives to come to a “Surgery”; at this surgery are raised questions like, “what do you think the Survey shows? how do you see your long-term viability?” It will be important to support the less vocal, less articulate churches in this process. It will also be important to maintain momentum in our discussions.

### 4. **Research : it would be good to make the time to understand what is being done elsewhere**

Although these are difficult problems, they have been and are faced by other Dioceses in much more acute forms: Norfolk and Lincolnshire have much larger numbers of very important and large buildings with only small rural communities to care for them; the City of London has equally large and important buildings with often no residents at all.

### 5. **Some questions which Church communities might need to consider**, when thinking about their buildings and their future, include:

- If your church burnt down, what would you do?
- If your church closed, how would you feel? Would you go elsewhere? If not, why not?
- Why do you come to church?
- What service do you most enjoy?
- What does good stewardship of resources mean in relation to buildings?
- What buildings can you really afford?
  - How much do you need to spend on repairs? Are you facing an impending crisis?
  - How much do you need to spend on improvements?
  - How much does your church cost to run each year?
- In what ways is your building a burden?
- In what ways is it a joy?
- What sort of Church building do you actually need?
- What does your MAP suggest about what buildings you might need and how you would use them
- Is your ministry driven by buildings or by mission?
- Does your building attract or put off newcomers and people who are thinking about coming to church?
  - what about amenities? parking ?

- How does the geography of your area work? Where are the people the church serves in relation to the church building ?
- What other church buildings are there ? (Anglican or of other denominations)
- Are there other buildings (not necessarily churches) in the area which might be easier to care for than your building?
  - or are cheaper to run ?
- Are there other buildings in your area which might be more accessible?
- How best could this building benefit its community ?
- (a question to be answered by architects and planners : ) What about potential alternative uses for the church building ?
- If, realistically, the long-term future of this church building looks very bleak, when would it be best to face possible closure ?
- What would people who don't come to church give as answers to all these questions?

## Appendix 1

It may be helpful to give a very rough estimate of the numbers of churches in each category; (these numbers have been calculated by scaling up from the figures from the west Archdeaconry, where the Buildings Survey has been completed).

A : Churches which are as good as they can be	126
B : Churches which need modification to be used more fully	134
C 1 : Churches which we would run at “lower temperature”	64
C 2 : Churches which we would hope to dispose of	27

### Resources

This strategy will need some resources:

Laity and Clergy time

Rural Deans’ time

Archdeacons’ time

time of others leading/resourcing clergy and churches through the process

as well as time, it will need money: these figures are rough estimates on the basis of a ten year implementation:

- money for CTfC - £10,000 a year (*this is the figure which CTfC believe would release match funding sufficient to sustain them: they are a strategic partner in improving our buildings*)
- money to break the chicken and egg conundrum which churches often find: that they need ideas and drawings to get money, but they need money to get ideas and drawings! and do feasibility studies - £270,000 over ten years (134 churches to be “redeveloped”, £2,000 each)
- a little extra money for the DAC secretariat (we already fund it, of course) – say, £5,000 a year
- in addition, a permanent fund to help parishes “park” churches – required income £20,000 a year? (64 churches, £300 a year each to do minor repairs etc – *this very much like a local version of the Churches Conservation Trust*);
  - £850,000 would yield £21,000 at 2.5% :

CTfC	£10,000 / year x 10 years	£ 100,000
Feasibility studies / initial drawings	134 churches x £2,000	£ 270,000
DAC secretariat	£5,000/year x 10 years	£ 50,000
set up permanent Fund		£ 850,000
<b>total</b>		<b>£1,270,000</b>

- £1,270,000 is not unrealistic given the size of the problem, and given the possibility of funding this from part of the sale of 27 churches; another comparison would be what is spent by parishes on Church buildings – of which a conservative estimate would be ten times that - £10 million over ten years (an average of £3,000 per church per year) !
- we already have a fund called the Parish Property Fund which has £260,000 in it, which is currently used to fund small grants to churches; we could use this as a “seed” for this fund; or we might wish to retain it (and indeed enhance it) for its current use. Either way, we need additional money

## Appendix 2

The diagram below has been drawn by Churches Trust for Cumbria after reflection on the results of the pilots of the Church Buildings Strategic Review in Windermere and Penrith Deaneries / Circuits.

### A VIABLE CHURCH



Probably some thinking should be given to the weightings applied to the different “petals” of the rosette: it seems likely that we might wish to give greater significance to some over against others. However it is clear that the single most important factor is human resources – and this seems right!

### Appendix 3: Programme for a Strategic Review in a Deanery/Circuit

Note that this is a joint venture with the Methodist Church (and may also include other denominations) therefore their buildings are included and they will attend joint meetings.

1. Meeting: Rural Deans (RD), Archdeacon (Archd), Lay Chair, Methodist Representative, CTfC Rep. This is the Deanery/Circuit (D/C) steering group that will lead the Strategic Review. The meeting is to discuss how to carry out the Buildings Strategic Review.
2. RDs to ask clergy to allocate church representatives who will complete the Review. Church Reps can be 1 or 2 people and can include clergy; must have a vision for how the church could develop and grow; be outward looking. (Methodist process: Superintendent → Clergy → Circuit Steward → Chapel Rep)
3. D/C group meet with all Church Reps together to introduce them to the Strategic Review. Depending on the size, this may require 1-2 meetings.
4. a) Church Reps have 3 months to complete the questionnaire. RDs to ensure this happens.  
b) RDs & Archds to consider the existing and potential mission significance and importance of each church in their location within the Deanery and to identify what inhibiting factors there might be for this potential to be realised.
5. Once responses have been collated by CTfC, D/C group meet to have a strategic meeting about all of the churches within the deanery & to discuss next steps e.g. whether support is required/should be directed and how; for instance CTfC training on specific topics and/or a half day's visit to discuss possibilities & practicalities for the building.
6. Support/Guidance given to churches. The format and substance will depend upon the decisions taken in 5 above but will include a draft action plan.
7. RDs to help finalise action plans with churches and to encourage and monitor their progress.
8. Archdeacons to monitor overall progress of the Buildings Strategy, including supporting the Rural Deans in their role.

This process is likely to take 1 year/deanery.

#### Timetable for Strategic Review

task	sub task	date
Questionnaire	revision completed	beginning of Dec 2011
Survey three deaneries in West Archdeaconry	begin briefing RDs	beginning of Dec 2011
	Briefing meetings with Deaneries and Circuits	mid Jan 2012 - mid Feb 2012
	complete surveys	April 2012
	analyse results	by end May 2012
Survey other six deaneries - three in South, three in North	begin briefing RDs	May 2012
	complete surveys	Dec 2012
	analyse results	by end Feb 2013

NB an acceleration will be needed here: having done two deaneries/circuits in about ten months (Nov 2010 - June 2011), we will be doing three deaneries/circuits in six months, and then six deaneries/circuits in ten months.

**Distinctive roles in doing Strategic Review:**

Nigel Robson on behalf of CTfC will lead the process of doing the Buildings Surveys, and of analysing the data to develop training programmes run by CTfC, supported by colleagues from CTfC and by Deanery / Circuit steering groups

Richard Pratt on behalf of the Diocese of Carlisle will 'own' the results of the Surveys, and lead the process of forming a view on the future of individual churches, working with fellow Archdeacons, Rural Deans, Lay Chairs, and ecumenical colleagues.

Archdeacons and RDs and LCs will own and lead within their respective areas discussions with individual churches – but with Richard's involvement to ensure consistency.

Circuit Superintendents and Property Stewards and the URC clergy are leading on behalf of their denominations.

Richard Pratt  
v 1.0 13<sup>th</sup> October 2012