

# Project Board Update

Synod Report, March 2026

## Introduction

Whilst the Project Boards and Strategy Programme Board have responsibility for overseeing the progress of development and implementation of strategy, the brief notes below are intended to provide Synod members with an oversight of the work that is happening.

# Feeding our Faith Board

The board met for the first time on Tuesday 3 February 2026. Membership of the board is as follows:

## **Feeding our Faith (Chaired by Bishop Tim)**

Archdeacon Megan

Cath Brumfitt

Colin Davies

Denise Keen

Hannah Lins

Nnaeto Onwuzurumba

Gregory Platten

Sam Rushton

David Sims

Nick Smeeton

Andrew Swift

Pat West

Jules Walker

Andy Wynter

*In attendance*

Mark Davis

Helen Emery

Simon Foster

Alison Moore

Helen Scheven

Su Parker

## Summary of Progress

The Feeding Our Faith strategy is progressing through four interconnected projects, each focused on strengthening discipleship, engagement, and inclusion across the Diocese.

### 1. Children & Young People

Mapping is underway to understand the current landscape of provision for children and young people, including why they attend or disengage from church life. The work examines existing partnerships (e.g., Youthscape, YFC, Birmingham City Mission) and explores new opportunities such as residential provision at Shallowford House. Collaboration with schools and Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) is a major focus, with developments in chaplaincy, leadership pathways, and relationships with both faith and non-faith schools. Three strategic priorities are emerging: mapping resources, deepening engagement with non-church schools, and developing a clearer approach to Further Education and Higher Education contexts.

### 2. Giving & Generosity

Work is developing around building a culture of generosity across churches and chaplaincies. The Diocese is preparing to apply for national funding to support a new post focused on giving strategy, discipleship-based generosity, and resourcing parishes. The workstream aims not only to support churches but also

to shift culture, strengthening theological understanding and financial sustainability.

### 3. Whole Life Discipleship

This project focuses on supporting every follower of Jesus to grow in faith, with a particular interest in how 'small groups' are defined, supported, and measured. Baseline data collection is being explored through national tools and diocesan systems, while communication efforts are expanding to reach both online and offline communities. Work is underway to refresh diocesan resources, share stories of faith, and build a clearer, more accessible understanding of discipleship.

### 4. Inclusion & Racial Justice

Work continues embedding racial justice, neurodiversity awareness, dementia friendly practice, and wider inclusion principles across the Diocese. Support is being provided to officers, governance bodies, and local parishes. The strand is strengthening its definition of 'inclusion', ensuring children and young people with SEN are explicitly included.

# Strengthening our Ministry Board

The board will meet for the first time on Tuesday 24 March 2026. Membership of the board is as follows:

## **Supporting our Ministry (Chaired by Bishop Sarah)**

AD Liz Jackson	<i>In attendance</i>
Angela Bernard	Ben Care
David Clark	Simon Foster
Gayle Greenway	Chris Hack
Matt Hird	Jeanette Hartwell
Karina Katsiuba	Alison Moore
Malcolm Maclean	Helen Scheven
Jenny Mayo	
Craig Newton	
Taiwo Olumuyiwa	
Sam Rushton	
Nick Smeeton	
Dorothy Steel	
Mandy Walker	

## Summary of Meeting Discussion

Because the board has yet to meet there is no update at this time.

# Building up our Parishes and Communities Board

The board met for the first time on Wednesday 18 February 2026. Membership of the board is as follows:

## **Building up our Parishes and Communities (Chaired by Bishop Matthew)**

AD Nick, AD Sue	<i>In attendance</i>
Foluso Adedipe	Carrie Blount
Helen Babiy	Simon Foster
Greg Bellmore	Alison Moore
David Candlin	Helen Scheven
Philip Coleman	Joe Wilkinson
Chris Gill	Barry Wilson
Charlotte Gompertz	
Kathy Robinson	
Sam Rushton	
Nick Smeeton	
Merry Smith	
Joanna Watson	
Andy Wynter	

## Summary of Meeting Discussion

The minutes of this meeting have not yet been finalised and shared with board members.

# Stoke Project Board

This board has been established for some time and has met on three occasions since the last meeting of Diocesan Synod.

## Summary of Progress

Significant progress has been made across the All Saints Hanley Resource Church and Encounter project over the past four months.

### 1. Project Approval

In December 2025, the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board (SMMIB) confirmed the remaining £3.7 million of this £5.9 million project.

### 2. Buildings

Refurbishment of the All Saints Hanley Church Hall began early in 2026 and is scheduled for completion in late April. This space will serve as a base for staff working across both parts of the project, providing facilities for activities, gatherings, and worship once work begins on the main church building.

An architect has been appointed, and work is underway to reimagine the All Saints Hanley church building. Major building works are expected to run through 2026, with completion anticipated towards the end of the year.

All building activity is being monitored by the Building Oversight Group, which reports directly to the Project Board.

### 3. Staffing

Several appointments have been made across the Encounter and All Saints Hanley teams, including:

- Beth Gault – Operations Manager
- Ethan Noble – Worship & Creative Lead
- Lee Jennings – Encounter Enabler
- Jo Atkinson – Encounter Enabler

Recruitment is ongoing for a Children and Families Lead and a Youth and Student Lead, with plans developing for two additional Encounter posts.

### 4. Governance and Oversight

Project governance structures are bedding in well. The Project Board meets every two months to provide oversight, support delivery, and ensure alignment with strategic objectives.

## 5. Review and Assurance

The first annual review was completed in January 2026. Our Vision and Strategy Consultant from the National Church, Liz Dumain, assessed the project as Green, indicating strong early progress and confidence in ongoing delivery.

# Telford Minster Board

This board has been established for some time and has met on two occasions since the last meeting of Diocesan Synod.

## Summary of Progress

Telford Minster is entering a significant period of transition as it moves into the final year of its current funding cycle.

### 1. Project Funding and Transition

Telford Minster's Strategic Development Fund (SDF) funding will come to an end at the end of 2026. This marks a natural transition point for the project and initiates a period of discernment and planning for what the next phase of ministry will look like.

### 2. Future Ministry Planning

Work is underway to consider the shape of Telford Minster's ministry beyond the current funding period. This includes fully understanding the many and significant ways in which Telford Minster resources the wider diocese and supporting Telford Minister as it remains mission focused and becomes financially sustainable.

### 3. Review and Evaluation Requirements

Preparatory work is now taking place ahead of the annual project review scheduled for April 2026. This review will assess progress, outcomes, and readiness for the next phase.

Alongside this, Telford Minster has begun engaging with the independent consultant who will conduct the formal end of project review. This external evaluation is a requirement of the national funding stream and will play a key role in shaping recommendations for the future.

We expect the end of project review to recognise the huge achievements that Telford Minster and its team have made, and the significant learning which this project has provided for other current and future diocesan initiatives.

Nick Smeeton, March 2026