

# **Diocesan Plan 2016 - 2018**



## Explanatory notes

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The overall responsibility of a trustee board is to ensure that the aims and objectives of the charity are carried out. In Mothers' Union terms, this means that trustees are responsible for initiating and encouraging members in the diocese to get involved in activities relating to our five objects:

- To promote and support married life
- To encourage parents in their role to develop the faith of their children
- To maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service
- To promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children
- To help those whose family life has met with adversity

The start of a new triennial period, with a new trustee board, provides an ideal opportunity for diocesan trustee boards to:

- review the current outreach and mission of Mothers' Union in the diocese;
- consider the identified needs of families in their communities
- identify approaches to address those needs; and
- set goals or markers during the triennium to measure progress.

Making plans for your diocese at the start of a triennium gives a focus to your efforts over the three years and provides you with realistic targets to aim for. Having some clear plans of what you are hoping to achieve enables you to take a longer term view and consider how Mothers' Union at a local level can work with others – local churches, voluntary agencies and statutory authorities – to bring about our objectives.

The plan should be just that:

what you want to achieve

how you intend to go about it

the resources (both human and financial) that Mothers' Union can bring to this

who might you work with in Mothers' Union or elsewhere

how you will know if you've achieved your goal.

Your diocesan plan isn't something that you will do at the start of the new triennial period and then file away until the end of 2018. It should be a 'work in progress' document that will help you over the triennium to maintain your vision and direction.

Looking at your diocesan plan on a regular basis at trustee meetings will enable you to review your progress and to make adjustments or changes to your plan, if these are needed. It is good practice to use your plan to help in planning your budget for the coming year, making sure that you have the financial resources to enable you to achieve your goals.

Knowing what dioceses are hoping to achieve also allows the staff team at Mary Sumner House to look at ways of supporting you in your mission. By knowing what dioceses are planning for the next three years, the staff team will be in a position to offer appropriate support and resources at events such as the Mothers' Union conference in May 2016.

By keeping in touch with your plans as they develop, it is hoped that the central support can continue to be relevant to diocesan needs.

In the first instance, each diocese is asked to complete a Diocesan Plan 2016-18 and return it by email to:  
[execoffice@mothersunion.org](mailto:execoffice@mothersunion.org)  
by Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

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## A possible approach to completing your diocesan plan

*If you are wondering where on earth to start with developing your diocesan plan, the following approach may be one way of doing this.*

### **Reviewing current activity**

Think about the things that happen in your diocese. Where are Mothers' Union resources (time, energy, finance) currently being targeted?

It is relatively easy to identify diocesan or even deanery initiatives, but many members are involved in a range of local community, parish or branch based activities, all of which contribute to the overall impact of Mothers' Union in your diocese.

### **Identifying need**

What do you know about the needs of families in your diocese? Are there areas where there is a high concentration of lone parent families? Or a part of the diocese with a predominantly older population? How can you find out?

There is information available that will help you to get a better understanding of the socio-economic situation of your diocese. The best place to start may be with the staff in your diocesan offices as this sort of information is used to resource and inform local diocesan plans.

### **Census Information 2011**

The Church of England has a range of information from the 2011 census available by parish and deanery and this may be available from your diocese in an easy to use format.

If not, this can be accessed from the Church of England website at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/facts-stats/research-statistics/census-2011.aspx>

This webpage has links to both parish and deanery estimates.

### **Church Urban Fund Poverty Briefing**

The Church Urban Fund produces a Poverty Briefing for each diocese in England, which gives indicators of deprivation on a range of issues and highlights the ten most deprived parishes in the diocese.

Poverty data can be found by clicking on your diocese on the diocesan map found on the homepage of Church Urban Fund website:

<https://www.cuf.org.uk/>

### **Local knowledge**

Talk to the staff in the diocesan office and to clergy in the parishes. What are the needs identified at a local level? An area with a high level of child poverty may have a good network of existing family provision through statutory or other voluntary agencies. There is little point in setting up in competition to existing provision in one area, when another area has little or nothing available.

### **Engaging with diocesan mission plans**

Many Anglican dioceses currently have strategic plans for church growth and community engagement, which may provide an opportunity for local churches and Mothers' Union to work together to achieve their common goals. Find out what the mission plans are for your diocese. Looking to work in partnership with diocesan initiatives can maximise effectiveness and build stronger links between Mothers' Union and the wider church.

### **Addressing needs**

Once you have identified what you are already doing as Mothers' Union and have a better picture of the existing provision and potential needs in your local area, the next step is to look at the gaps.

Are there areas of need that Mothers' Union could realistically be addressing?

Would this be a new initiative?

Are there opportunities to work with local churches or other agencies on this initiative?

Is there an opportunity for Mothers' Union to become involved in an existing initiative? What resources (time, energy, expertise, finance, etc) could Mothers' Union offer?

It is possible that this process will highlight that an existing Mothers' Union initiative is best placed to address needs, but that it may need some new enthusiasm and impetus to become more effective.

### **Measuring progress**

#### **Outcomes**

It is always a good idea to set a measurable goal or outcome for any initiative, otherwise how do you know whether you have achieved your aim? It's important to set realistic goals, otherwise the process becomes demoralising if these aren't reached, but if the bar is set too low, you may not achieve your potential. So it can be useful to think about a range of outcomes, for example: what would be an acceptable outcome and what would be an ideal outcome.

### **Markers**

However, having just a final goal doesn't help with motivation during the process, so put in interim markers that will keep you focussed and avoid things falling too far behind. Identify the various stages in your plans and put in markers. Remember that the process isn't always linear, and there may be different things happening at the same time. If one aspect of your planning is falling behind schedule, consider why this is happening and what additional input might be needed – or is this something out of your control?

### **Making a difference**

Having identified the outcomes, it is important to assess the impact of your efforts. Mothers' Union isn't concerned just about meeting targets, but also about making a positive difference to the lives of individuals and families. Your diocesan plan might identify the need to expand parenting provision with the identified outcome of training six new facilitators on the *Passionate about Parenting* programme. The impact will be assessed by looking at the number of additional parents able to be part of a group because of the new facilitators and their reactions to having that opportunity.

Being able to see that Mothers' Union is making a difference and having an impact on the lives of families not only helps to raise our profile in the community, but is a great motivator for members and others to get involved in our work.

## Diocesan Plan 2016-18

Diocese: \_\_\_\_\_

### What are your current activities and outreach activities?

*Please give a brief overview of what is happening in your diocese.  
Don't just limit this to 'projects' or to diocesan initiatives, but think about all that Mothers' Union does across the areas of praying, enabling and campaigning.  
If you brought your diocesan poster to Worldwide Council in October, there's no need to repeat this information, but feel free to add to it.*

Women's refuge – toiletries from rural deanery services  
Contact centre – volunteers  
Food bank – gifts  
Comfort teddies – hospital  
Knitting for premature and still born babies  
Emergency toilet bags – hospital  
Fiddle blankets – indoor members and nursing homes  
AFIA  
Centenary fund – grants to ordinands  
Distress fund – grants to the needy  
Prayer chain  
Prayer breakfast/prayer vigil/16 days of activism  
MSDay prayer walk  
Indoor members Holy Communion and Tea Party annually  
Festival service – in the Cathedral for members and our banners  
Missionary evening – focuses on giving  
Fit for Life – outreach to non members  
Crèche/Sunday school/committees – volunteers in parishes

What do the trustees consider to be the particular concerns in the area of family life in your diocese? How have you identified these concerns?

Poverty – by talking to social services

Sexting – media reports / talking to Love for Life

Abuse – talking to Women's refugees

Other concerns from trustees – co-habitation/single parents/broken marriages/working mums

What are the plans for your diocese during the coming triennial?

Please identify **up to five priorities** in the diocese which you would like to address.

It would be really helpful if you could use the following template, one for each priority, to outline your plans and how you will measure your success.

Identified area of concern:

- 1 - Attracting new members (any age)
- 2 - Fit for Life evenings
- 3 - Lapsed members
- 4 - Encourage small branches
- 5 - New project eg agricultural shows

What do you intend to do?

Linking to the previous question

- 1 – organising more social events
- 2 – get venue and advertising flyers
- 3 – encourage branches to follow up
- 4 – DP and trustees to visit and support
- 5 – talk to local event committee

What do you feel Mothers' Union can offer in this area?

Linking to question 1

- 1, 2 and 3 – members expertise and personal invitation
- 4 – encourage/organise an area get together
- 5 – changing facilities/breastfeeding area

Who might you work with?

Linking to question 1

- 1,3 and 5 – all branches and clergy
- 2 – relevant speakers/fitness instructors
- 4 – area branches

What other support/information/resources might you need?

Flyers/posters to promote MU

What are your identified goals (outcomes)?

To generate interest in MU/becoming a member  
Support community

How will you assess impact?

By using the feedback