rdp>

church growth

scoping questionnaire

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introduction

This questionnaire is designed as a simple tool to help you consider where you are now, some of the issues that you may have (and that you may not have identified explicitly) and to identify some of the areas that you need to prioritise to begin to plan/engage/organise in order to grow again.[1]

We all know that the church has to grow to survive and thrive. We also know that much of what we do now and how we manage resources isn't working. The rapid development programme (**rdp**) is unapologetically an opportunity-led approach to parish and deanery development and growth. It is different from other church development programmes in that it starts from an outward looking and growth bias, and it seeks to directly challenge and shift some of our current thinking.

We passionately believe that a dynamic and meaningful presence and offer in all of our communities will be the key element in building a flourishing Church and better society. The Church of England has great locations, a life and world changing message, and potentially a truly amazing offer, which is especially relevant and timely. Our parishes and deaneries are committed organisations with committed people, with a unique message, located in the heart of all our communities. We should and can be successful!

[1]This questionnaire is not intended to be a comprehensive parish/deanery development package but rather a simple tool to introduce some of the factors and issues that have been identified in research as key to church growth.

In completing this questionnaire, we suggest that you:

- Go with your first and honest responses as you read the questions
- Try not to over-analyse
- Check your answers with someone outside the church but who knows the church and will be honest (e.g. a head teacher of a local school); they may have a different perspective
- Be realistic and honest in your answers
- It is not a competition (and we are not offering any prizes!)

> "This has to be the future of churches... it reaches to the very heart of who we are and what it means to be church."

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1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly agree

(a) about you

1.	We are happy that the church is achieving the things in purpose and mission that we want it to:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
2.	We have plenty of energy and spirit and we feel very motivated about our involvement with the church:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
3.	We are creative and we regularly come up with new ideas for community engagement and mission:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
4.	We've prioritised the mission and engagement aspects of our work and we do not spend too much time on administration/maintenance issues:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly agree

(b) our community

1.	We have a broad range of people from our local community involved in our (their) church:	1	2	3	4
2.	We have a clear sense of what the perceptions of our church are in the local community:	1	2	3	4
3.	We have a good understanding of what our local community wants from us:	1	2	3	4
4.	We have a plan to increase significantly involvement from our local community in our (their) church in the next 12 months:	1	2	3	4

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1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly agree

(c) our offer

1.	We have clearly identified the range of types of people in our local community and their expectations:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
2.	We regularly review the range of our church's offer in relation to what our community wants:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
3.	We have a number of creative and innovative ideas for forthcoming activities/ events etc:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
4.	We have a strong emphasis in our church on local engagement/research and then investing in developing new ideas:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly agree

(d) communications

1.	Our communications materials and messages are clear/look good and they help us to communicate with our local community:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
2.	We use a wide range of communication channels (e.g. cafes, shops, pubs) to reach our local community:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
3.	We have and we regularly update our attractive website and we have a good presence in social networks (e.g. Facebook):	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
4.	There is positive and regular coverage of us and our activities and events in the local newspaper:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly agree

(e) income

1.	We will earn more money this year than we did last year:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
2.	We have a good *range* of sources of income:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
3.	We are good at identifying and developing new sources of income:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
4.	We have developed a plan for us to grow new areas of income or other resources over the next 12 months:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly agree

(f) alliances + resources

1. We regularly network with other organisations in our community to gain information about new opportunities for our church:	1	2	3	4
2. We have identified the key leaders/influencers in our community and we have an active and positive relationship with them:	1	2	3	4
3. We regularly consider who/how we can work with in our community to increase our profile and impact:	1	2	3	4
4. We have developed plans for a joint project/activity in our community with a key ally for the next 12 months:	1	2	3	4

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly agree

(g) church growth

1.	We regularly and actively consider ways of growing our church:	1	2	3	4
2.	We have identified the key groups in our community from where we could potentially see growth in our church:	1	2	3	4
3.	We have identified the key opportunities to grow our church's presence and impact in our community over the next 12 months:	1	2	3	4
4.	We have a focussed and clear plan to grow our church in the next 12 months and beyond:	1	2	3	4

scoring

Now please add up the individual scores from **each section**. The rationale for each section is set out below. A section score of less than 8 is weak, of 8-12 is medium and 12+ is strong.

section	total	rating (weak/medium/strong)
(a) about you		
(b) our community		
(c) our offer		
(d) communications		
(e) income		
(f) alliances + resources		
(g) church growth		

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thinking about your scores

about you - with these questions we are trying to help you to assess the current level of morale and energy.

our community - we are trying to help you ascertain the level and quality of connectedness and involvement that you currently have with your local community and the types of people who live in your community.

our offer - we want to encourage you to take a fresh look at your offer to your local community.

communications - we want to help you explore the quality, distribution and effectiveness of your current communication efforts.

income - we want to help you analyse the availability of money for investing in growth and the direction of travel. Resources and income can come in a number of ways e.g. sponsorship (artists, gardeners) - have you really considered the full range of sources of income and untapped resources?

alliances + resources - we hope that these questions will help you to look at not just the extent of your local relationships but also their quality and effectiveness.

church growth - with these questions we wanted to help you explore the level of importance and focus on growth efforts.

some key questions

The questions above were designed to capture your **first impressions** and they are not intended to be a full turnaround/ planning/development package. Even if you have completed the questionnaires individually and then collated the results, this section should be done **collectively**. We suggest that is best done by writing all feedback on a flip chart as you answer the following questions:

1. In one or two words **only**, what is your **one** main overall impression/observation?
2. Which of the sections saw your two top scores?
3. Which of the sections saw your two lowest scores?
4. Going through each section together, what was the **one** main thing that struck you?
5. Looking at your strongest two sections, what can we learn from the way we operate?
6. With whom do we now need to have a coffee to get a different / honest scoring / feedback and who will then go through our scores with us?

homework

a. Looking at the two collectively identified weakest sections, what is one thing that could be done by the church to address your weakness?

b. Going through each section, what is the main thing that now needs to be your church's focus to improve your score in the next 6 months and also then in the next year (in all of the sections)?

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notes

notes

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contact

If you are interested in finding out more about **rdp** and how it could work in your context, we would love to hear from you. More details about the programme and a growing selection of free resources are also available on our website.

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> "**rdp** has really helped me to get a perspective on where we should be heading and what we should be doing."

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