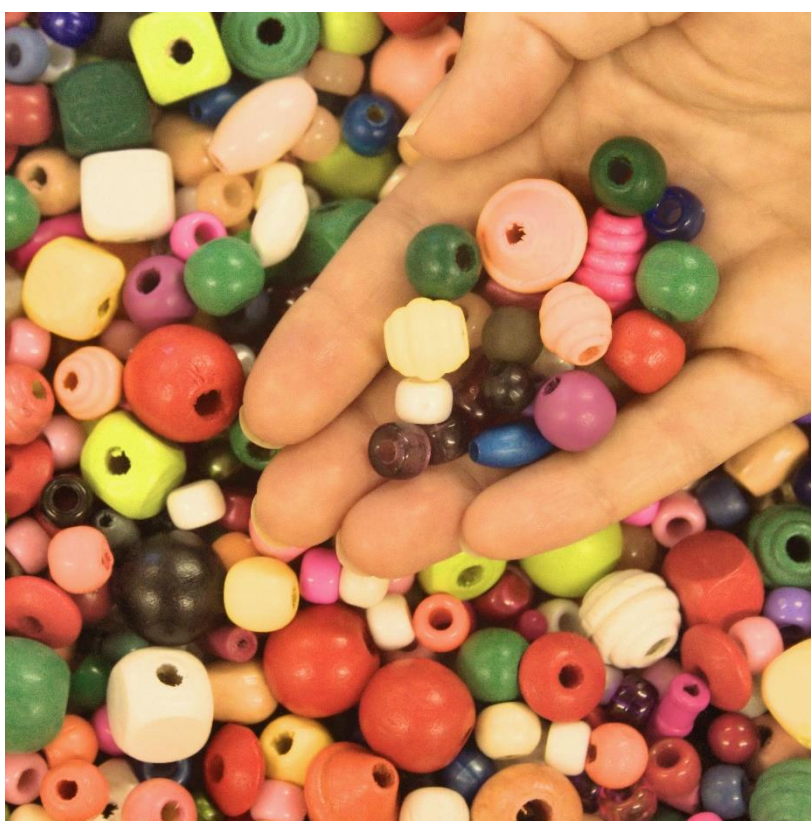# The Day of Small Things

An analysis of fresh expressions of Church in 21 dioceses of the Church of England

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Contents

The Day of Small Things

The title reflects a view of today's context and the report's content.

Some will immediately recognise it is part of a quotation from Zechariah 4:10 which is a text from the exilic period. The relevance of this is that there is writing, across the theological spectrum, arguing that, within Europe, the Church of England finds itself in a period that could be called post-Christendom. As a Church we find ourselves once more at the edge rather than the centre of society, at its margins rather than in power or control. Exilic texts address such a context.

Zechariah 4:10 holds two factors in tension. The pull one way is the call to resist the temptation to despise what are only small things, and the hint to rejoice in the sign they convey, which is the beginning of a needed rebuilding process. The pull in the other direction is that all that can be seen is only small. In writing this report we were aware of a Church of England context in which our leaders have become more candid about past decline, and the sharp nature of the challenges for the future, as well as calling for a constructive response, going under the title of *Renewal and Reform*.

Our conviction, from our researched data, is that the Church of England's fresh expressions of Church (fxC) are one of the small things in our day which are signs of renewed hope. The phrase, 'the day of small things' can be unpacked in several ways in relation to our findings. We know that 'small' is a relative term and the fxC types do vary in size. However, the broad picture from the data shows the majority of fxC (61%) fall in the range of 15-55 people with only 9% of them being of over 100 attenders. No one of these small young churches is going to make a dent in a century of ecclesial numerical decline. It would be easy to despise this feature. However, the term 'the day' suggests the language of a 'kairos' moment, a season when something's time has come. Although not all fxC in our report are small, the burden of our report is about a large number of small things which we think, as the data shows, taken together are making a positive difference.

The differences are not solely a numerical addition in the face of decline, though they are that. They are also about a reforming re-imagination of the Church, by which faithfulness to the past and contextual engagement with the present are held together. It is sign of creativity, not just of growth, but also of partnership with the disturbing but renewing Spirit of God. Among the clearest signs is the sheer presence of 1109 young Church of England churches and also the emergence of the 574 lay-lay leaders of fxC. The existence and effectiveness of this group of largely untrained and unauthorised leaders is unpacked in Chapter 11. They were unknown before this research.

The title of the report invites the Church of England not to despise what is growing within its family, but has not yet been given due sympathetic attention. The invitation is to notice a phenomenon whose time has come and which has quadrupled in the last ten years. Now may be the day of small things: a diverse set of small, sometimes frail, mainly young churches that lay a claim to being among our best hopes for the future. They are not the whole answer, but they are one sign of reform as well as renewal within the Church of England.

Executive summary

Between January 2012 and May 2016 over 2700 cases, supplied from 21 dioceses, were examined. Records were taken of 1109 examples, started between 1992 and 2014, that met the indicators set for what counts as a fresh expression of Church. The data came from interviewing the leaders. The dioceses were chosen to reflect variety in relation to context, to geographical spread and different stances towards the fresh expressions of Church phenomenon. Covering half of the Church of England, including the capital, infers they are reasonably representative.

Their impact upon diocesan and national Church life

- On average the 1109 studied make up 15% of a diocese's church communities.
- Over 50,600 are attending, or 9.8% of overall diocese AWA figures, but this should be reduced to 6% to adjust for lesser frequency of meeting. See sections 5.1 and 5.2.
- This attendance of 50,600 is the equivalent to the numbers in two average sized dioceses.
- Their average size, at about 50, is usually smaller than the average for parish church congregations. Hence the percentage of churches figure is higher than that for attendance.
- Today four times as many per year are being started as compared to 2004 and the report *Mission-shaped Church.* Three quarters of them have begun in the last ten years.
- Evidence suggests that for every one person sent out to be part of beginning a fresh expression of Church, now there are more than two-and-a-half more people.
- Nothing else, as a whole, in the Church of England has this level of missional impact and the adding of further ecclesial communities, thereby fuelling ecclesial re-imagination.
- Over ¾ of the fxC remain within the parish that started them. Some types of fxC are designed to go further afield. Within this transplants and grafts are valid, but even together then only make up 6.4% of the overall picture.
- 84% are from the Church of England only and very few are formal LEPs.

The leaders' opinions of who comes

- Setting aside flawed figures from the first report of 2013, more accurate figures from the second round of dioceses give the leaders' views that the fxC are made up of 40% Christians, 27% de-churched and 33% non-churched.
- These figures were partly lowered because the 2nd tranche contained more church plants, which attract fewer non-churched people and have a higher percentage of Christians.
- Our further report *Who's there?* surveying the complex reality of the attenders' backgrounds, yields far more modest figures: 20% for the de-churched and 21% for the non-churched.
- In 39% of cases networks were the major or total factor in how people came, not because it was their parish or local church, yet 80% were totally or mainly typical of the background area or context.
- The fxC do twice as well as parish churches (38% to fewer than 19%) in attracting under 16s, which is promising for the future, yet the majority of fxC attenders (62%) are adults.

Those who lead them

- This report confirms the finding of 2013 that the so-called lay-lay make up over 36% of all leaders of fxC and three times the number of other lay leaders.
- Chapter 10 shows that on most counts, the lay-lay leaders do as well as the rest.
- The proportions of ordained and lay leaders are about equal, varying considerably by type of fxC, which also affects which gender predominates for some types of fxC.
- The fxC are nearly as likely to be led by women as men. The most common stereotypes are ordained men, working full time and paid, and lay women, in their spare time, voluntarily.
- The contribution of the ordained pioneer ministers (OPM) is only 2.7% of the picture. This is a lower than expected proportion of their overall numbers. Section 10.3 explores this.

This is a world of young, varied and small church communities

- There are at least 20 different recognisable types of fxC. The 14 more common types are analysed and characterised in Chapter 6.
- The four most common types (in order) are: Messy Church, café church, child-focused church and church plants.
- Most types are relatively small, of around 35-55 in size, with three larger congregational fxC types with 70-100+ people.
- The classic team size sent to begin them is 3-12 adults. Large teams make up fewer than 11% of the overall picture, a figure inflated by London diocese having 41% of these.
- In this, and other ways, London and its fxC are shown (section 5.8) to be more atypical than characteristic. Care should be taken not to uncritically import what works for them.
- 16 of the 20 types of fxC occur in all 10 kinds of social context examined.
- The fxC are proportionally more on needy estates than the overall distribution of parishes, but less prevalent in areas of traditional Anglican strength such as town and rural contexts. See section 7.2.
- The fxC are begun by all traditions in the Church of England, but in varying proportions and with preferences for certain types of fxC. See section 6.19
- The fxC meet in all manner of venues, across a wide variety of days, and also with different frequencies. 46% meet monthly and Messy Churches characteristically so.

The data from leaders indicates both some depth and some frailty

- 80.4% are taking some steps to grow disciples, not just attract attenders, leaving 19.6% failing, as yet, to take steps down this path.
- While 43% have held a communion service, in some fxC this is very occasional and undoubtedly the likelihood of communion goes down with reduction of frequency of meeting.
- 37% of the fxC have had baptisms, which is also affected by frequency.
- 56% are taking some steps towards responsibility for their finances and 70% for how they are led, but only 39% have some element of self-reproducing.
- Very few fxC have any legal status within the Church of England, which is one source of vulnerability.
- 28% continue to grow numerically and a further 55% broadly maintain the growth gained.
- The latter group can also be called a plateau and questions around fxC having a natural unit size or range may help discern ways forward.
- 17% did grow but are now shrinking and in half of the cases that died, this was a prelude to it.
- 11% have died – those meeting fortnightly, and more often those not taking steps towards maturity being the more vulnerable.
- The data reveals that growth patterns vary according to a wide combination of factors: the type of fxC, the social area served, and the frequency of meeting. See chapters 6 to 8.

Six dioceses, as of October 2016, have articulated an intention to start many more fxC or church plants: Blackburn, Ely, Guildford Leicester, London, Southwell and Nottingham. (See section 15.1.4) This research covered the existing fxC in five of them. It is hoped that this overall report, and the suite of three others accompanying it, may prove to be the best guide the Church of England, and its dioceses, has of the characteristics and performance of its younger churches, known generically as fxC, for the next decade.

Canon Dr George Lings:
Director, Church Army's Research Unit
October 2016

Chapter 1   Introduction

This piece of research, conducted by Church Army's Research Unit over a 2.5 year period, is partly a quantitative survey of 568 known fresh expressions of Church (hence fxC) in a further ten dioceses of the Church of England. The word 'further' acknowledges prior work completed in 2013, but now revised, by the same team, among 541 fxC across eleven dioceses, making a total of 1109. The research has been funded in a collaboration between the Church Commissioners and Church Army.

1.1 Opportunities from surveying the 2nd set of dioceses

The opportunity to survey another quarter of the English dioceses was welcome for a number of reasons. These included providing help to the dioceses themselves, a chance to improve the quality of our work, as well as raising the level of statistical probability and utility in the findings. As we worked, the discovery of further correlations and other promising leads appeared. The value of each factor can be further developed, both here and in section 2.1.

- The chance to assist another quarter of the English dioceses by:
    a. giving them a picture of what fxC they had, together with some measure of their overall effect on the diocese, along with an assessment of the health and frailties of these young churches.
    b. benefitting a further 500+ fxC in those dioceses, offering them some equivalent of a health check.

- The time and opportunity to improve the work we had begun by:
    a. collecting data on further factors within the life of the fxC, which we realised were missing from the first round of research.
    b. offering some additional options within existing questions, which the first round of data collection indicated was needed.
    c. refining the scoring system about the three backgrounds of those who were attending.
    d. helping to provide a more rounded picture of the fxC through these improvements.

- The opportunity to test to what extent figures from the first ten dioceses were representative:
    a. underlining those prior findings which were similar.
    b. indicating where there were notable variations by diocese.
    c. identifying which factors varied for reasons other than the diocese in question.

- We realised, as we worked, that information from 21 dioceses was providing a large enough sample of different types of fxC to learn more about them:
    a. to analyse and isolate their characteristic features.
    b. to identify their opportunities, strengths and vulnerabilities.
    c. to do this even for some of the less frequent types.

- During the process we also built up enough examples within the eleven various social settings used by our questionnaire to make further comments:
    a. To show in what ways these backgrounds affect results obtained.
    b. To suggest in what ways these settings may affect future choices made.

Moreover, to do this work was congruent with the aim to help the Church of England move from reliance on anecdote, through evidence-based decision making to action. All such material could be useful guidance to future strategists and practitioners at all levels of the Church of England and to some extent other denominations.

1.2 Staffing

This research has been undertaken by four team members of Church Army's Research Unit in Sheffield. We cannot claim to be completely objective as this team has been a generalist advocate for fxC for over 10 years, although resolutely neither favouring any particular type, nor wishing to challenge the assumption of a need for a 'mixed economy'; that in expressions of Church we value the old and the young, the traditional and the emerging.

It should be noted that this research is connected to other concurrent pieces of work conducted by the same team:

- The Church Commissioners funded two full time members, the first being Mrs Elspeth McGann MMath. She also investigated what use the first 11 dioceses had made of the team's research, fed back to them during 2012-2013.

- The second funded post holder, John Vivian MA, assisted in data collection, cleaning of fxC records and investigating correlations, while rightly devoting the majority of his time to the closely associated project of surveying fxC attenders.

- The funding of Mrs Claire Dalpra MA was shared by both the Church Commissioners and Church Army, while she headed up the attenders survey, yet was an invaluable collector of fxC records.

- The funding of the team leader, Canon Dr George Lings, was also shared. In addition to data collection and writing, he acted as overall supervisor to all these named projects.

- Beyond this report, but whose results bear directly upon its longer term significance, Church Army funded another Research Unit member, Dr Andy Wier, who conducted a pilot study, not requested or funded by the Church Commissioners, into the sustainability of young churches.

1.3 Overall impact

The team suggest there is value in the wider Church being aware of this fourfold set of reports, all of which have some bearing upon one another.

It is our hope that these findings are handed on to the Church as a resource about fresh expressions of Church that may serve for some years to come.

Chapter 2:   The aims and scope of this research

2.1 The aims
The aims are fourfold, but in such a way as to be complementary.

2.1.1 Towards a national picture of fresh expressions of Church

This broader remit, by covering 1100+ fresh expressions of Church in 21 dioceses, offers the Church of England an in depth quantitative analysis of its known fresh expressions of Church (fxC) across half of its dioceses. This coverage is so wide as to be undoubtedly representative.

These research findings are wider than that previously possessed by the national Church. Reasons for this width, at this depth, include that this research work is so strongly relationally based and labour intensive that the central offices of the Church are understandably unable to emulate it. The findings also contain far more detailed information on the mission and inner life of the fxC than was available prior to 2012, except in extended stories of showcase fxC examples.[1] The data also goes beyond what is usually known about parish churches, except during the appointment of the next clergy person, or in a time of crisis.

It looks very unlikely that the remaining 20 dioceses will be analysed in the next four years. Thus what is presented here is likely to be the best pair of snapshots (2012-2013 and 2014-2016) taken of fresh expressions of Church that the Church of England has for the foreseeable future.

This report comes into the public domain some 12 years after the publication of the 2004 report *Mission-shaped Church.* To some extent it acts as an evidenced commentary on how far the tenor, content and recommendations of that report have been taken up. Arguably it is the widest enquiry into the contribution and effectiveness of the fresh expressions of Church that have begun since 2004, as well as giving some evidence about what occurred in the 12 years before it.

2.1.2 Testing the representative nature of the 2012-2013 research

Secondly, this narrower focus aimed to learn from a second round of two years research from 2014-2016. It builds upon the methodology, analysis and lessons from work in 2012-2013, commissioned by the Church Commissioners and funded by them and Church Army. This prior work studied all known fresh expressions of Church in 11 dioceses of the Church of England, written as of October 2013, and reported in January 2014. The second funded round obtained closely comparable data from another 10 dioceses, or the second quarter of the Church of England. This enabled the first set of findings, not least those of greatest surprise and encouragement, to be compared with others, using an essentially similar process and of comparable sample numbers.

The Church of England can now have more confidence that this wide selection does cover the range of fresh expressions of Church that exist. Just as important, the report shows what factors are representative of them and also where there is variety between them. This should give us confidence over certain aspects of the fxC world and wiser caution over other elements. Thus the Church is closer to having what could be regarded as a nuanced national picture.

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[1] A large number of short stories appear on the Fresh Expressions website www.freshexpressions.org.uk. Some 50 longer ones were examined in the *Encounters on the Edge* series between 1999-2012, published by Church Army and still available as free PDF files. www.churcharmy.org/encountersontheedge

2.1.3 Establishing characteristics of the more common types of fxC

Thirdly, there are some 20 different recognisable types of fxC; some types occur singly, others are more prone to overlap or multiple designate. This report aimed to look in depth at the 14 most common types and with a plausible sample size of over 60 cases. Among these. Messy Church, child-focused church, café church and church plants are the four most common.

Chapter 6 explores their overlaps and variety, assessed by missional and ecclesial factors, and draws summaries of each of these 14 more common types. It demonstrates how size, proportions of different kinds of attenders, and of ordained and lay leaders all vary considerably by type of fxC. Though all traditions in the Church of England can begin fxC, this too is in varying proportions and with preferences for certain types. This and further chapters reveal that the particular starting motive, the patterns of numerical growth, choices of venue, steps towards maturity such as sacramental practice or three-self maturity, and even fxC mortality, all vary according to a wide combination of factors: the type of fxC, the social area served (see Chapter 7), and by frequency of meeting (see Chapter 8).

For the first time we have an evidence-based taxonomy of the many types of fxC and this should be of value, both to those considering making a start, and to those with responsibility either to care for their ongoing life, or to take an overall diocesan view of what may be needed.

2.1.4 Showing what is typical across the dioceses and what is particular

The overall fxC factors that we now see go to making up the national picture and those which are confirmed as representative between the 2 sets of dioceses, could be reasonable expectations for what might appear in most dioceses. Yet dioceses also differ markedly in size, history, make-up and resources.

To test what is general and what varies across the dioceses, Chapter 5, and its first 7 sub-sections, explores the range of similarity and variances across the fxC picture in the 21 dioceses. But it only does so for those factors which reflect upon the life of the diocese, or where the diocese could be thought to play a background or environmental role, not necessarily a directive one. Not all variances are to be laid at the foot of the diocese concerned.

Yet it became increasingly apparent, in the second round of research, that the prevalence of certain types of fxC affected a whole diocesan profile. In addition, analysis of London diocese and its fxC highlighted ways in which the capital is more atypical than characteristic of elsewhere. This is unpacked in in section 5.8. We suggest that their successes be applauded but care be taken not to uncritically import what works for them.

Aspects of this particularity include that large teams make up around 11% of the national picture, and transplants fewer than 5%, yet London diocese has 41% of teams of a larger size and 28% of its fxC are the transplants. Moreover another 41% of its fxCs are church plants, compared with an average of 12%. Noting this particularity is not criticism, but it does bear upon the question of the transferability of models and approaches.

These are the four overlapping aims that the report addresses.

The overall research, covering four years, was only possible because two sources of thinking and two sources of funding have come together in a four year collaborative partnership.

2.2 The two sources

2.2.1 The Church Commissioners' 2012 brief

The Church Commissioners had noted the rise of church planting in previous decades as part of church growth patterns. They were keen to learn to what extent it merited the plaudits of its enthusiasts, or when and whether it deserved the hesitations of its critics. Questions posed in 2012 for research included the following:

1. whether newcomers were existing Christians, the de-churched or the non-churched[2]
2. evaluations of what transfer growth was occurring
3. what proportion of newcomers came from the surrounding area
4. what progress the young churches were making towards financial viability
5. how typical those coming were of the area and what ethnic diversity was present
6. evidence of indigenous leadership emerging
7. how training affects outcomes and what role pioneers are playing

Church Army's Research Unit has been glad to work with these questions, which overlapped with our own views of what was needed. As section 3.4 will show, we had to adapt our initial approach and modify our earlier questionnaire in order to cover this range of tasks.

2.2.2 Church Army's historical and current research experience

The director of Church Army's Research Unit, George Lings, has studied church planting since 1984. He also served on both working parties leading to the reports *Breaking New Ground* (1994) and *Mission-shaped Church* (2004).

Aware of this history, 1992-2012 was selected as the initial period of study. 1992 was chosen as the start year because events of that year began the setting in motion of the 1994 church planting report that brought the topic and practice to the attention of the wider Church of England. That period was extended to 2014 in the second round of work, but the start year retained for the reasons originally given, and because the first two years of research had shown some benefits of a longitudinal study.

In 2011 the Research Unit shifted its research focus away from ethnographic studies of fxC to quantitative work, thinking that stories and statistics convince different groups of people and that enough stories existed already. This move coincided with the invitation to tender for research funding from the Commissioners. Thus the scene was set to investigate the known fxC from the first 11 dioceses.

Church Army's Research Unit also knew that, following the profile gained by *Mission-shaped Church,* the then newly formed Fresh Expressions team had operated a self-registering online database from 2005. However, we considered that the integrity of this quantitative material was seriously compromised through inclusion being nearly always self-registering.

Church Army's Research Unit requested and inherited this set of 926 records which had been collected until May 2009. When non-Anglican examples and patently bogus entries (including a

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[2] These terms follow usage in the 2004 report, *Mission-shaped Church*, which sought to distinguish the last two categories and thereby avoid the unclear equivocal term - the unchurched - which could describe either group.

few from hackers) had been stripped out, it left 647 possible cases. These were then merged with our own overlapping source of database records. Our four years of research work, using these leads when needed, has further heavily pruned that inherited list, confirming its uneven character.

The team's experience of, and involvement in, the world of fxC put us in the position of being painfully aware of two contrasting factors:

- We found we could intuitively recognise what we would call a genuine fxC, although they would appear in a wide variety of external forms, as Chapter 4 of *Mission-shaped Church* had already indicated.
- At the same time it was anecdotally clear to us, later confirmed through working with the lists we received from dioceses for investigation, that considerable confusion existed in the wider Church as to what constituted a genuine fresh expression of Church.[3]

Accordingly to set up the project, the team worked on two tasks. Firstly, we set down on a set of **indicators** surrounding both the missional and the ecclesial identity of any case presented, as well as devising some markers towards its maturity or sustainability. We tested those indicators with Liverpool diocese in 2011 and they were found fair and acceptable. The ten indicators we used in the second round of research will be found on the following page. The text has only been modified from 2012 to add more explanation, when it emerged that people could misinterpret a particular category. An example of this, in relation to criterion 10, was comments in reaction to our 1st report in which a known figure, in a Radio 4 interview, misconstrued the three-self feature as a sign of independency of spirit and a desire to leave the Church of England.

Secondly, the team devised a **questionnaire** to collect data on the key dynamics of every fxC included. A copy of the questionnaire is found in Appendix One. This has evolved in relation to our experience of taking phone calls with fxC leaders. The complexity of the details involved, which affects with what assurance data can be compared from 2012-2013 and 2014-2016, is covered in section 3.4.

2.3 Complementary pieces of research work

The Church Commissioners also concurred with, and funded, our desire for some survey work among attenders at selected fxC. This research, by Claire Dalpra and John Vivian in the Church Army team, and its results appear in the 2016 report *Who's there?*: *The church backgrounds of Anglican fresh expressions of Church attenders*. We also saw the value of taking upon ourselves two further tasks, which Church Army has funded.

One was to dig deeper into what is meant by terms like sustainability, maturity and viability in fxC. The research of Dr Andy Wier published as *Sustaining young churches: A qualitative pilot study in the Church of England* should be read alongside this report.

We thought the wider Church would want also to know how useful the 1st 11 dioceses found the research findings supplied to them. This broad issue and their answers to more specific questions is the topic of a concurrent but separate report, entitled *What happens after Research?*: *How dioceses react to, respond to and utilise large scale research into their fresh expressions of Church*, researched and analysed by Mrs Elspeth McGann.

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[3] The use of the uncial C in Church is deliberate. It is indicative of the theological claim that those cases included are genuinely examples of being Church. The miniscule use would refer to particular local examples, for instance in a phrase like 'the church down the street'.

2.4 What is an Anglican fresh expression of Church? (fxC)

The Church of England's research and statistics department use the following definition. A fresh expression is any venture that works mainly with non-churchgoers and aims to become church. A fresh expression is …

1. Missional – it intends to work with non-churchgoers
2. Contextual – it seeks to fit the context
3. Formational – it aims to form disciples
4. Ecclesial – it intends to become church

Church Army's Research Unit have taken this further; this is the June 2014 version of the ten indicators

1. Is this a **new and further group**, which is **Christian and communal**, rather than an existing group modified, adapted or changed?
2. Has the starting group tried to **engage with non-church goers**? There was intention to create a fresh expression of Church (fxC), not to do an outreach project from an existing church. The aim was to help the Christians sent out to start the fxC to understand a culture and context and adapt to fit it, not make the local/indigenous people change and adapt to fit into an existing church context.
3. Does the community meet **at least once a month**?
4. Does it have **a name** that helps give it an identity? An active search, not yet yielding a name, is allowed.
5. Is there **intention to be Church**? This could be the intention from the start, or by a discovery on the way. This admits the embryonic fxD (fx of Developing community) and cases of fxE (fx of Evangelism) and even some fxW (fx of Worship). The key is that it is *not* seen as a bridge back to 'real church', but as Church in its own right.
6. Is it **Anglican** or an Ecumenical project which includes **an Anglican partner**? 'Anglican' here means the Bishop welcomes it as part of the diocesan family[4], not whether it only uses centrally authorised worship texts, or has a legal territory (parish).
7. Is there some form of **leadership** recognised by those within the community and by those outside of it[5]?
8. Do at least the majority of members (who are part of the public gathering) see it as **their major expression** of being church?
9. Are there **aspirations for the four creedal 'marks' of church, or ecclesial relationships:** 'up/holy, in/one, out/apostolic, of/catholic'? We see the two dominical sacraments (communion and baptism) as a given consequence of the life of a missional community which follows Jesus, but not the sole or even best measure of being church.
10. Is there the **intention to become '3-self'** (self-financing, self-governing and self-reproducing)? These factors may look different in each local context, but are some marks of advancing ecclesial maturity. They are not to be interpreted as indicators of congregationalist independency, or breakaway tendencies, but of taking responsibility.

Application of the indicators:

Examples that do not meet indicators 1-7 are deemed to not be Anglican fresh expressions of Church. Factors in indicators 8-10 may be more like 'health' or developmental issues; their absence may indicate the need for further maturing, present weaknesses and/or dangers, but not necessarily exclusion. The presence of these factors is healthy and indicates maturing.

Variables in the indicators:

- We still consider examples that have since died, but lasted at least two years of life.
- Contextualisation of all indicators; thus no. 5 does not require public use of the word 'Church' where it was unhelpful in the context, but it does need an understanding that this is what is forming.

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[4] This instinct is early: cf Ignatius, 'but whatever he (the Bishop) approve, this is also pleasing to God'. Smyrna. VIII

[5] Jay argues from pre 3rd century texts that 'the possession of an ordered and recognised ministry is integral to the nature of the Church'. Eric G. Jay, *The Church its Changing Image through 20 Centuries*, Vol. 1 (London: SPCK, 1977), p. 49.

2.4.1 Application and use of the indicators

Examples failing to qualify on questions 1-7 were deemed not Anglican fresh expressions of Church. Section 5.9 of the report analyses the most common reasons for exclusion. Nevertheless, in the interviews, the work done by those cases that did not qualify was affirmed in their true identity, whether as existing services, further provision for existing Christians or taking on new missional tasks. In some other cases, all that was missing was the resource to be able to meet criterion 3, that is, having at least a monthly meeting. Their missional and ecclesial instincts were affirmed, but it was understood that we would not take a full record.

Our understanding is that factors 8-10 are more about 'health' or developmental issues, rather than identity questions. Their *absence* indicated the need for further ecclesial maturing; they warn of weaknesses and dangers, but did not necessarily indicate exclusion. Their *presence* was thought healthy and acted as indicators of maturing and sustainability.

Two further practicalities operated. Examples that had since died, but did not complete at least two years of life, were excluded. Those that had since died but had a longer span of life were included and brief notes taken on likely causes of their demise. Those begun before 1992, and in the second round those started during 2015 or 2016, were excluded from the analysis, although these fxC names and leads were fed back to the diocese in question.

This list of indicators of what is to be counted as a fresh expression of Church is proving both robust in use, and sharp enough in practice to call marginal cases with careful but sufficient confidence. It has commended itself to the central Research and Statistics department of the Church of England and in turn fed into the creation of a diagram that could be downloaded as part of the returns form sent out annually to all parishes. A copy appears in Appendix Seven. In addition it is proving accessible and helpful to those who encounter it, both at the local and diocesan level. In some places its use raised specific but positive challenges to those meeting its questions. Some leaders decided to take it to their own teams as a health check.

The indicators have therefore remained largely unchanged since 2011, despite minor amendments of phrasing to assist clarity and the provision of a few cited precedents. Two years of untroubled further research experience looks like a fair test of its enduring validity. Some terms used in it and the questionnaire are further explained in a glossary within Appendix Two.

2.5   The relational approach

In addition, for sufficiently tight and consistent indicators in order to address issues of coverage, a two level relational basis to data collection has been followed. This built upon our decision to work diocese by diocese, rather that attempting a scatter operation nationally. The favourable reception of the 2013 report confirmed that more complete data, from a limited number of dioceses, was likely to be of better quality, and more utility, than partial information across the whole Church of England. Sending out a questionnaire on a national basis also invited three serious methodology problems: potential coverage error, no quality control and the effect of a non-response bias.

The first relational level was to establish a working link with a senior key contact in each diocese who would find out a reasonably complete list of alleged fxC in that diocese. Within the relationship, time was taken to explain the overall process from data collection to a report back to the diocese. In addition, existing Church Army lists of known examples in that diocese were sent to the key contact person. If we found difficulty in contacting local leads, we could go back to this key diocesan contact for advice as to alternative people to speak to.

The second level was to ensure, as far as possible, that a telephone conversation, or an email exchange, would be held with the nominated leader of the fxC. Sometimes the indicators were talked through on the phone and at other times sent by email. In nearly all cases the questionnaire had been sent and received, prior to data collection by phone, and by definition if the form was completed by email. In all cases the latter was scrutinised on reception and phone calls made to fill in gaps or double check answers that raised a suspicion of misunderstanding or implausibility. We think that we have achieved the goals of high coverage and quality, with very few done only by email, and that we have successfully contacted 98.7% of the 2788 cases supplied to us.

When all the data was collected, cleaned (that is double checked) and analysed, a report was written for the key contact person who was free to circulate it to the diocesan senior staff. We have then very often, but not always, been invited to present this material, usually to that staff team and sometimes also wider groups. After securing permission an illustrated version of the results and its analysis was put onto the Church Army's Research Unit website. A fuller description of the process and an example of a report are found at Appendix Three.

We also have a small but steady stream of evidence, from both those on the ground as well as corroborated by third party diocesan officials, that our relational approach has been appreciated, informed the understanding of those fxC leaders contacted, and spurred them on in their work. We have kept a log of what we deemed pertinent comments made to us and a few are put into Appendix Six.

We offer here the wider comment that this is evidence of helpful congruity between the subject matter of the research and the method chosen; it is plausible to understand churches primarily as relational communities.

One downside of this time-consuming relational approach has been that it was not possible to proceed with a few dioceses approached that, for various understandable reasons, did not think they should be researched. Tactically, our team also excluded some dioceses geographically adjacent to those already covered.

The upside has been that there is some level of interest from officials in half a dozen further dioceses. It is now clear that this will be on a one-off funded basis with each diocese concerned, after this discrete research period has elapsed.

2.6   A current challenge over criteria for what is church

Our set of ten indicators fitted the desire of the Church Commissioners and stated in their words: 'a robust definition of church is required, to avoid minor mission initiatives being badged as "fresh expressions"'. Church Army's Research Unit concurred entirely with that desire and we have found it is even more needed than we initially supposed in 2012.

Since 2012, a yet more demanding set of eight criteria, all of which must be explicitly fulfilled 'as a necessary and sufficient condition for a particular Christian community to be recognised as a church', has been published by the report *Fresh Expressions in the Mission of the Church* – an Anglican-Methodist working party on fresh expressions of Church.[6] Their eight criteria can be found at Appendix Four. Some might assume they are unchallenged, but we find them problematic and want our readers to explore a debate which is not concluded. These factors are more demanding

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[6] A. Smith & R. Walton (co-chairs), *Fresh Expressions in the Mission of the Church* (London: CHP, 2012), p. 114.

and their boundaries more rigid so we term them 'criteria', as does their report, but our less demanding set with more space for intention and aspiration we term 'indicators'.

On the positive side, our team accept that the search for such definitions is entirely proper. We salute the repeated emphasis in the report, and its list, on Christian community and that this particular list begins with the Church's vocational calling. We are glad that it names the place of Scripture and wish in hindsight that we had included some questions about Scripture's role in the 1st round of research. This was one prompt helping us to amend that error in the 2nd round. It is progress that teeth have been added to the dimensions of mission and wider belonging within the overall Church. However, for many reasons we find it unhelpful and even unrealistic.

At root, this working party report belongs within the stable that holds that practices are determinative of church identity, rather than the alternative view, which holds that relationships are foundational, which only then lead to practices that embody and fortify those relationships.[7] The practice-based approach is significantly prejudicial against young churches whose identity lies deeper than their performance, and whose identity is more closely connected to their intentions and potential. The same critique would be true in arguing against any thinking that children are not fully human, because they are not yet adults with attendant possessions, employment, earning power or social patterns, let alone the elusive quality of maturity.

This connection with the question of whether we deem children to be human is deliberately made. The members of Church Army's Research Unit would put the case that, in the past, the question 'when is something church?' has been treated as analogous to asking 'what is it to be a fully mature adult?' It is possible that this desire for ecclesial purity has been fuelled by interdenominational rivalry, shaded by the reality that there were very few new churches, and the expectation that any that should occur would be copies of previous ones. Our counter view is that the question 'when is something church?' is more like the question 'what is it to be human?' Today most of the fxC are young; by contrast some long existing local churches are commendably mature, while others are at best fragile and elderly, with some regrettably even suggesting the onset of ecclesial amnesia. Yet all these are churches in varying stages of life. It may be more generous and yet more accurate to say there are churches of all ages, thus to measure them by their performance and an equivalent of full maturity may be an error.

Moving into details reveals further hesitations. As this is an apparently more definitive standard than our own, it is astonishing there is no reference whatever in the list to the person or work of the Holy Spirit. This is both a theological and characteristic omission. It is all too possible that in many so-called churches, if the Spirit of God should take an extended sabbatical then absolutely nothing would change as a result. We ourselves did not set such a criterion because, although theologically vital, quantitative methods would be most unlikely to be able to disclose it.

In many existing and long standing 'churches', the first and second admirable criteria about discipleship lived out in the world and people being sent to engage in mission and service are very far from being fulfilled. Does that mean they are not churches? This problem is not new. David Watson, a peaceable Anglican renewal leader from the 1960s to 1980s, noted that most people in church may be anything from pew fillers to born-again Christians – 'but not true disciples of Jesus'.[8] We are all on that life-long journey.

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[7] The case for the priority of relationships is explored in M. Moynagh, *Church for Every Context* (Norwich: SCM, 2012), pp. 104-118.

[8] D. Watson, *Discipleship* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1983), p. 16.

Despite criteria 3 and 4, about the roles of gospel and the teaching of Scripture, it is arguable that there is considerable biblical illiteracy in existing churches, as well as deep ignorance of how the gospel is understood, how assurance of faith, salvation or heaven may be held. There may be narrow fundamentalism, a lurking congregationalism lacking a sense of catholicity, or intolerant liberalism. Others might cite further and different weaknesses. Moreover, there is nothing explicit in this list about Church people learning individual spiritual disciplines, growing into a life of holiness or seeing a rise of fruits of the Spirit, let alone naming love and forgiveness as intrinsic to the kind of Christian community that would be worth joining. The list is thick with external practices but thin on grace led virtues. It is also not hard to read behind points 3-8 a view that focuses on what leaders provide rather than what members live out.

In the first three categories of the list it would be entirely a value judgement whether the criteria were being fulfilled. As such it could not be a basis for a quantitative research project, which made it unusable for our purposes and may even be too characteristic of being born in an ivory tower.

Lastly, if these are such good and self-evident criteria, and they are what the Church of England and the Methodists have been living by, how do the working party authors explain the previous century of steady decline? What has been missing?

Our team concluded that if these criteria were applied across the country then many so-called churches would not qualify, let alone that they may well cause a number of fresh expressions of Church to stumble. We admit that if our indicators were applied to existing parishes, some of those might not qualify, perhaps on lack of missional grounds. It could be debated whether that might be helpful in both cases.

Our view is that our own report should not be devoid of theological thinking and operate only at the level of statistics. Deeper questions are involved. This sub-section therefore draws attention to what this team considers are the theological and spiritual limitations to this recent approach which is both practice-based but also more hard-edged than Anglicanism usually manifests.

Therefore we have given some reasons to question this still current example of a tougher and more exclusive way to handle the inclusion or exclusion of any alleged expressions of Church, let alone the recent crop of fxC.

The debate will continue
Whatever our critique of this list of eight, and doubtless their riposte to our own ten indicators, we concur with Walton and Smith that it is desirable that there should be movement towards an agreed standard and more consistent use of the term 'fresh expression of Church', thus our ten indicators are included in the report, in order to make them better known.

At the least, this brief discussion of criteria and indicators shows what we have consistently worked with, and what more demanding views we have set aside, and why. Our own indicators have now been shown by the 1st round of research to have been accessible, and thus it is hoped our list will contribute positively to the ongoing debate.

Chapter 3:   Investigating the methodology

This section delineates the main strengths and weaknesses of our research of which we are aware. We divide them into two categories. The 'protected weaknesses' are ones that we acted to mitigate, but the 'unprotected weaknesses' are more inherent and we can do very little about them. Some of this section underlines that the care taken in the 2012-2014 work has been continued. The later parts comment in detail on the extent to which the questions and the resultant data from the 2014-2016 work can be compared with the former round of research. This establishes the extent to which the first set can be deemed typical.

3.1 Protected weaknesses

3.1.1 Sampling

There is danger of a bias in the way dioceses have been selected ('convenience' sampling). This could include working with those known to have many good examples of fxC in order to seek a higher impact for the topic and its research. We sought to protect ourselves against this bias by our choice of dioceses, in both rounds of the research, to give a balance across three variables:

- Firstly, north/south and east/west
- Secondly, across an urban/mixed/rural spectrum
- Thirdly, across those dioceses thought to be pro/ambivalent/anti fxCs

The *geographical* factor is the least debatable and the map on page 23 shows the choices made, using colour coding to differentiate dioceses by the two rounds of research.

To get an *urban/rural* balance we used the Arthur Rank Centre's classification of dioceses into urban, semi-rural and rural, and also the population density figures from the Church of England's Research and Statistics department list of diocesan figures. We notice that the two sources do not correlate closely, and the Arthur Rank Centre do not have a category 'semi-urban'. Yet the two factors taken together have enabled us to select a range of population density variables.

The third variable is the most subjective. By what criteria can one decide that a *diocese* is pro/ambivalent/anti fresh expressions of Church? Sources of evidence could include a long list:

- What is the published attitude of the bishop? Is their private view known and similar?
- What of the views of the senior staff surrounding the bishop?
- What has been the diocese's investment in fxC training – is this known or measurable?
- What level of financial investment has been made in deploying staff to lead fxC?
- Does the diocese have a dedicated staff member to enable and support fxC and has this person a track record in this field?
- Is there a support network for leaders of fxC; who leads it and how often does it gather?
- Has there been a diocesan synod or conference on fresh expressions of Church? What were any conclusions or actions?
- Is there a policy, or even a background paper, about fresh expressions of Church and how old is it?
- Are OPMs or other pioneers used in this diocese, and if so, how many and with what result?
- What use has been made of the training courses *msm* and *msi,* and on whose initiative?

In 2012 we were aware that such a long list of diocesan variables could have made a qualitative research project in itself, with little security that all the data needed from dioceses would be disclosed. Such findings might be too sensitive to be made public. Furthermore, because the period we studied covers at least two decades, it is entirely possible that the diocesan leadership and attendant culture might have changed during that period, which adds further complexity. Thus, for manageability reasons, Church Army's Research Unit has not pursued this route.

Could the diocesan attitude be known in other ways?
It might be argued that the 2013 and 2016 reports do contain a few indicators from which one could infer an overall diocesan attitude. These include:

- the proportion of church communities in the diocese that are fxC
- data from 16 dioceses of what training, if any, was taken by the leader; it is only 16 dioceses because the training question was only added halfway through the 1st round
- the number of fxC that named 'diocesan initiative' as one reason for starting the fxC

The first factor is a dubious choice because of other variables involved. One is the high numbers of small churches in some rural areas, such as Norwich diocese, making the fxC percentage relatively low. Another is the proliferation of certain fxC in a diocese, such as Messy Churches in Guildford, or church plants in London. Moreover, the number of fxC does not itself help differentiate between central initiative and grass roots causes.

Examination of the training factor mainly reveals how relatively rarely it has been taken at all. In addition we cannot tell whether training taken was the result of diocesan policy or the advocacy of other groups, such as the Fresh Expressions team or the national leaders of Messy Church.

The last bulleted factor does begin to differentiate between motivation generated locally and centrally. The headline to note here is that diocesan initiative was present on average in 5.9% of cases in the 1st round and 9.3% in the 2nd. We examine the nature and variables of the contribution of diocesan initiative in section 6.5.

To protect ourselves from this potential weakness, in 2012 we obtained the opinions of three national figures whom we deemed to be key strategists, and gained their private assessment as a way of ensuring a spread across what can be no more than an anecdotal and informal measure for this variable. In addition, to sustain objectivity, the 2nd set of dioceses was chosen in consultation with Kevin Norris, the Senior Strategy Analyst at the Church Commissioners.

A retrospective analysis on diocesan engagement with the fxC agenda
The team thought there was value in testing how the first 11 dioceses surveyed had made use of our findings. In all cases they had received a written report, spreadsheets giving the background statistics and another spreadsheet showing which cases examined had been included and which excluded. In many cases all this information was accompanied by our visit to a group such as their senior staff.

Questions to assess their response were designed and sent. The results have been explored in a companion volume to this one, entitled *What happens after research?* Arguably the results indicate that dioceses are engaging to different degrees with the fxC aspect of their mission and the accompanying re-imagination of Church. By their own admission these responses vary from doing very little to starting major developments. As such it suggests that our choice of dioceses is fairly free of a bias towards only those dioceses disposed well to fxC.

Map of the 21 dioceses covered between 2012-2016
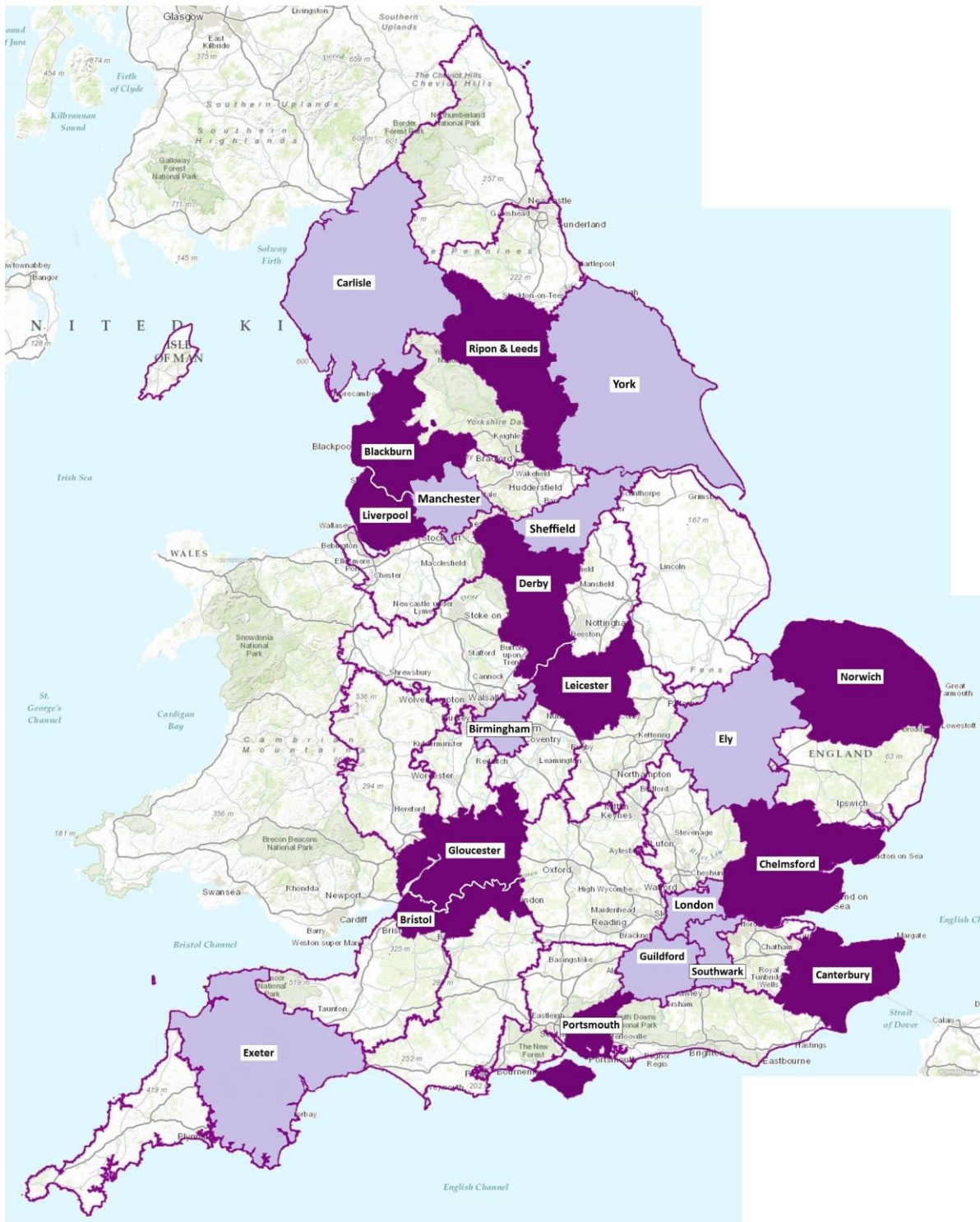
The darker colour denotes the 1st 11 dioceses of the 2012-2013 research and the lighter colour the 2nd 10 of 2014-2016.

There is a higher proportion of dioceses from York province compared with Canterbury, but as even a spread as we could manage, selecting dioceses for a range of mainly rural, mixed and mainly urban. Where the borders of north, midlands and south are to be drawn is vague. We deemed Norwich, Ely, Leicester, Derby and Birmingham to fall within the midlands. The rest may speak for themselves.

Table 1:   Background data to the dioceses surveyed

Diocese	Population 2012	Population density per square mile	Diocesan no. of churches	2012 AWA (all age)
Liverpool	1,567,000	4020	248	28500
Canterbury	923,000	950	328	21300
Leicester	992,000	1180	313	15500
Derby	1,032,000	1030	329	17500
Chelmsford	3,031,000	1980	595	40100
Norwich	878,000	490	640	18200
Ripon & Leeds	828,000	610	251	14100
Blackburn	1,318,000	1500	276	26600
Bristol	979,000	2080	205	16400
Portsmouth	766,000	1870	173	13500
Gloucester	640,000	560	386	19900

Diocese	Population 2014	Population density per square mile	Diocesan no. of churches	2014 AWA (all age)
Exeter	1,159,000	450	614	22700
Ely	751,000	500	334	18100
Southwark	2,784,000	8,700	364	41000
Guildford	1,039,000	1,920	216	25600
Carlisle	492,000	200	339	13600
London	4,171,000	14,900	489	73900
Birmingham	1,536,000	5,300	189	17200
Sheffield	1,257,000	2,170	208	17700
York	1,426,000	540	593	27500
Manchester	2,110,000	5020	322	28100

The population figures across these dioceses and their very different population density figures underline that a spread from densely urban areas to sparsely rural ones has been included. The median population density figure, when there were still 43 dioceses, was 1130. The second set of dioceses tend to be further away from that middle figure, with more of the first set closer to it.

3.1.2 Inclusion/exclusion

The decisions made about including a particular case as an fxC run the risk of being affected by team members' subjectivity. An example would be a researcher wanting to include more of a certain type of fxC, if they had that preference. However, such subjectivities and inconsistencies are protected by the framework of the ten indicators, given in section 2.4, and also the invariable practice of group decisions being sought, with concurrence achieved, on all marginal cases. We pass on to the wider Church that the marginal cases are indeed difficult to call, and we were glad to handle them as a group. Examples of four real marginal cases were examined and assessed in Appendix Five of the 2013 report and so not repeated here.

3.1.3 Inclusion/exclusion and data collection

There is a weakness in the potential for respondents to misunderstand the complex technical vocabulary in our indicators and questionnaire. Even frequently used words such as 'worship' will mean different things to people, let alone terms used in a 1994 Church of England report, like runner, graft, transplant, seed. This weakness is protected, to some extent, by our taking data within the context of a phone conversation. We have consistently noted that with those people who prefer to fill in the form themselves and give us the data by email, we almost always have a follow-up phone call, or an email, to double check suspicious data where it looks as though there is misunderstanding of terms, or apparent paradoxes in the answers, let alone gaps in answers. Occasionally we have found that the views of an incumbent and the lay leader of an fxC can differ. Where we are aware of two views, we use the content of the completed questionnaire to form our own judgement. More rarely it has later emerged that there were two views, but that at the time of data collection we took the view of the interviewed incumbent as determinative.

3.1.4 Low return rate

There was the danger of a low return rate, due to the complexity of our questionnaire covering two dense sides of A4 paper. This could have been magnified by a dislike of surveys, survey fatigue and the busyness of people's lives. This has been protected by our persistence, good humour and flexibility in offering as much help as has been needed in completing the form, and the high return rate confirms avoidance of this danger. In the first round we had no data from only 22 out of 1191 cases offered by the first 11 dioceses. In the second round the figures are: 14 out of 1597 cases offered by the 2nd 10 dioceses.

3.2 Unprotected weaknesses

These are areas within which we know our research is vulnerable.

3.2.1 Sampling

Returning to the issue of 'convenience' sampling, while we have sought to achieve a balance across the three sets of variables mentioned, we could only work with the dioceses that wanted to work with us. Thus for a variety of reasons our enquiries with Oxford and Lincoln came to nothing. Sodor and Man assured us there were no examples to survey. Having drawn a blank in the past with Hereford, we were glad to include Carlisle with its similar low population density. In the 2nd round of research we were glad to include the capital with the co-operation of Southwark and London, Chelmsford having been part of the first round.

3.2.2 Data collection in the 2nd round of research

We are aware of two kinds of 'coverage errors'.

Firstly, we cannot know that we have followed up all possible leads in any given diocese. This is partly due to the length of the research period which, going back to 1992, exceeds the direct experience of the diocesan officers. To mitigate this, we have always fed back to a diocese when further examples have been unearthed beyond their list supplied to us.

Table 2:   Further examples of alleged fxC found during the collection period

Name of Diocese	New examples found	Number of cases initially supplied	% of cases previously not known	Overall number of fxC passing the inclusion indicators
Exeter	8	169	4.52%	69
Ely	16	106	13.1%	52
Southwark	21	75	21.9%	47
Guildford	4	129	3.0%	77
Carlisle	10	126	7.4%	47
London	8	169	4.5%	86
Birmingham	3	62	4.6%	28
Sheffield	13	168	7.2%	56
York	14	268	5.0%	57
Manchester	10	217	4.4%	49

We were pleased to be given this information about further fxC from our phone calls and emails. But the proportion of further cases looks like further evidence that effective record keeping in the dioceses is, at the most charitable, extremely varied, and at worst, in distinct need of improvement.

The second coverage distortion, especially with the dioceses surveyed most recently, and our research parameter of 1992-2014, is that we met a growing list of examples begun in 2015 or 2016. For example, while Sheffield diocese has 56 confirmed cases in the period 1992-2014, there were six cases in 2015 and three more being actively planned. If that proportion were extrapolated across all the dioceses, this would make a significant number. We admit that all we have been able to do, to use an analogy, is to take a set of historical and recent snapshots of what is a moving picture.

3.2.3 The influence of temperament and handling complex issues

Our team is aware of the 'complexities of people' that might lead to inconsistencies. The temperament and confidence of the fxC leader could affect how they report (either negatively or positively, sharply or vaguely) on questions affecting the potential of their embryonic fxC to become fully-fledged. Answers may be affected by interviewees' desire to please, feeling defensive, or feeling awestruck perhaps, depending on which team members unconsciously evoke such reactions. The team have sought to be both friendly and professional, but not to trade on title or reputation. In addition the church tradition, and ecclesial status, of the interviewed leader can affect their answers to a wide range of the questions posed.

A mitigating factor may be that because we are neither representatives of the diocese, nor the national Church, that people are less likely to fear we are some ecclesial version of Ofsted, or that their answers might affect future leadership allocation or funding.

3.2.4 Singularity of source

The biggest weakness concerns the capturing of what might be called 'true'. In nearly all cases we have only one data source: the nominated leader of the fxC. Often we speak to more than one person if there is a difficult process of deciding whether something is to be included. However, in clear cases of inclusion, we usually speak to only one leader and have no way of testing the accuracy of their perceptions, other than if paradoxes appear in answers across a variety of questions. When odd answers appeared and we double checked with people misunderstanding, rather than deception, seems to be what has occurred.

3.2.5   Analysis of data collected

We remain sharply aware that the scoring methods used, especially over measures of missional effectiveness, are very simple. This was done assuming - and finding - that anything more sophisticated would not be manageable. Close accuracy of data keeping over time by the fxC leader is not common and any attempt by us for precision would shade over into qualitative work. Therefore, we have always reported findings in feedback to diocesan teams, with modesty about how the figures are derived and how secure they are. The problem is commented on, both in relation to modifications of method and limits to comparisons, in section 3.4.2. This is very pertinent to the proportions of Christian, de-churched and non-churched attenders and results explored in section 6.4, but it does not only apply there.

Under the consideration of 'numbers taken compared with numbers attending now', we were aware there could sometimes be a shift of volunteers/team members back and forth between a sending church and its fresh expression of Church. Thus findings reported in that area need to be handled with that proviso.

In addition, as with parish churches, there is a disparity between three figures: firstly the average numbers attending on a given gathering, secondly the larger pool of those attending less often, from which the first set is drawn, and thirdly the total numbers a particular church is in significant contact with in the wider community. All our survey was able to cover was the estimate of average attendance. We would note on the physical data collection form when the leader told us of their estimate of the second or third group, but this information was so unevenly given that we could not make statistical use of it.

Another difficultly is that in contrasting fxC attendance figures with those of all other existing expressions, we have only a limited way of knowing whether attendance at fresh expressions of Church has already been counted in diocesan returns. This is explored further in sections 5.1 to 5.2. We now have more evidence that the answer in practice is uneven, both within and across dioceses. All we have been able to do is make explicit what we have had to assume.

3.3 Strengths

3.3.1 Overall methodology

The background of the Research Unit
This research suits the skills, experience and interests of Church Army's Research Unit.

It builds on significant research done by them in this field. The earliest extant form of the questionnaire dates from 1993 and, in the face of the fxC phenomenon changing, has been revised

in various periods, including adding extra questions in the light of the Church Commissioners' requirements. This is significant when seeking to compare data from 2012-2013 and the following two years. The details of this factor are covered in section 3.4.

The database has also evolved since being started again from scratch in 2003 to keep pace with the considerable changes of understanding from church planting to fresh expressions of Church, first delineated in Chapters 2 and 3 of *Mission-shaped Church*. The earliest form of the ten indicators goes back to 2010.

The strength of this research method and experience has also allowed for changes to the questionnaire and database during the process, if further data was deemed to be needed. We are grateful to Mr Andy Giddins, of Dynamic Data Systems Ltd, for his work on the database design in many of these stages to enable these kinds of developments.

Modelling the evolution of theory and practice in relation to fxC
This process of evolution itself models that in the field of fresh expressions of Church there is an ongoing dialogue between evolving practice and accompanying theory, not necessarily always led by one party. This research, and its evolving practice, contributes to that conversation and by the parameters it uses is helping to shape it. As such our research and its methods are active players, not totally detached spectators.

A trust value
Having trusted relationships with many in the wider Church and the more diffuse world of fresh expressions of Church has enabled the process of partnership with the 21 dioceses to happen usually very easily. Only in one case could a diocese not make up its mind in time whether to proceed with the proposed research and internal staffing changes contributed to that deferral.

In terms of auditability, the detail of our notes, completed questionnaires, spreadsheet data and database records means full examination of our research process, data, findings and conclusion is possible by an external party if that was deemed necessary.

3.3.2 Inclusion/exclusion and data collection process

Considerable neutrality is ensured through the set of ten indicators, and the researchers' subjectivities were managed within the team by discussion of marginal cases. The aim to be as relational as we can in our preferred method of collecting data within a phone conversation has, we think, yielded better quality data, and a higher response rate, than imaginable alternatives. Genuine care and concern on the researchers' part communicates positively and has enabled a sensitive but accurate inclusion/exclusion as well as and data collection processes.

3.3.3 Data input, analysis and findings

Accuracy of data collected (and therefore findings deduced) has been double-checked by a cleaning process, always involving two people of the team, and meticulous record keeping of corrections made. There is now ample opportunity for further qualitative and quantitative research with existing data collected, including deeper examination of relationships between the variables acquired, and beyond that into new work.

3.3.4   A tool for the future

This research is now reproducible in further dioceses, but it is also possible to repeat and update the research with the same dioceses in future. Individual dioceses have approached Church Army's Research Unit during the second round of research and asked for the same sort of work to be done on a fee paying basis. However, Church Army's Research Unit can only commit to studying two dioceses per year, in order to be free to pursue other agreed research tasks.

3.4 Comparing the two rounds of research

Clarity about what is being compared

The 2013 report, from which public presentations were made beginning in January 2014, was written on the basis of data from 10 dioceses. The data collected from the 11th diocese, Gloucester, was only coming in during the report writing and was included as an appendix.

The 2016 report on 21 dioceses, over slightly different time frames, explores what useful comparisons can be made between dioceses 1-11 and dioceses 12-21. Readers should therefore not try checking whether statistics quoted in the October 2013 report are the same as cited here. The data set from Gloucester diocese has modified the prior overall figures. Positively there is now the opportunity to see the statistics from the whole revised picture within the first eleven dioceses. This report can also iron out the Gloucester anomaly in the 2013 reporting.

3.4.1 The dioceses in order and their questionnaire version

Table 3:   Developments in the first round

Diocese – 1st round	Data seeking	Analysis	Visit to diocese	Version used	Questionnaire changes
Liverpool	2012.01	2012.03	2012.05	7	
Canterbury	2012.04	2012.06	2013.02	8	Added: venue licensed or unlicensed
Leicester	2012.06	2012.09	2012.11	9	Added: start time of meeting
Derby	2012.08	2012.11	2013.01	9	
Chelmsford	2012.08	2013.01	2013.03	9	
Norwich	2012.11	2013.02	2013.06	10	Added: leader training options, how typical of the area are attenders, and ethnicity question Open questions re progress towards self-financing, self-governing and self- reproducing Are there confirmation services?
Ripon & Leeds	2013.01	2013.06	2013.08	10	
Blackburn	2013.03	2013.08	2013.09*	10	
Bristol	2013.06	2013.08	2014.06	10	
Portsmouth	2013.07	2013.10		10	
Gloucester	2013.10	2013.12		10	

It can be seen that very minor details were quickly added in the early months leading up to version 10 which then remained good for the second half of the first round of research.

* Our team was unavailable to give feedback on the chosen date for Blackburn diocese. Norman Ivison of the Fresh Expressions team kindly presented our material.

Second round revisions

We realised gaps of desirable information existed. This was partly by our own reflections and partly prompted by users telling us that their story could not fit within previously given options.

We deleted 'base ecclesial community' from the types of fxC, as it was virtually unused.

Questions added were: the end time of meeting, seven options plus 'other' over engagement with the Bible, six options and 'other' about approaches in evangelism, frequency of communion, the liberal tradition, all age worship as a discrete type of fxC, and average attendance for 2013 and 2014.

We amended the scoring system for results re Christian, de-churched and non-churched attenders. Instead of a crude 0-3 score, we asked for percentages. This is explained further in the comparison tables below within section 3.4.2.

Table 4:   **Dioceses in the 2ⁿᵈ round of research and their questionnaire version**

Diocese – 2ⁿᵈ round	Data seeking	Analysis	Visit to diocese	Version used	Questionnaire changes
Exeter	2014.02	2014.07		11	See the factors named above
Ely	2014.05	2014.10	2015.01	11	
Southwark	2014.09	2014.12	2015.07	11	
Guildford	2014.11	2015.03	2015.04	11	
Carlisle	2015.02	2015.05	2016.10	11	
London	2015.04	2015.08	2015.11	11	
Birmingham	2015.07	2015.09	Planned	11	
Sheffield	2015.09	2016.01	2016.01	11	
York	2015.12	2016.04	Planned	11	
Manchester	2016.03	2016.06		11	

In all cases we sent the diocese concerned a report based upon the analysis. Tables 3 and 4 show which dioceses chose to invite us to come and present the findings, beyond the documentation we always sent. We do not know why only some dioceses have chosen this further contact. With Manchester they only received our report in September 2016.

3.4.2   How far data from 2012-2013 can be compared with 2014-2016

The order in which these are examined is twofold.

Tables 5 to 8 begin with aspects where are there no difficulties over comparisons, to a minor impact noted, through to awareness that direct comparison is mistaken, although loose connection is plausible.

Each one also moves through the questions as they occur on our enquiry form and then proceeds to elements of wider analysis, using data derived from the form.

Table 5:   There are no difficulties in comparisons

Questionnaire number or topic	Any changes to the questionnaire since the January 2014 report?	An effect on comparisons between data	Comment
2c) Leader pay/time/gender	No changes	None	
2d) Leader training	No changes	None	
3b) stages towards fully fxC	No changes	None	
3c) Frequency / day/ time	No changes	None	
3d) Social Area/ typicality / ethnic diversity	No changes	None	
3g) Motives to start	No changes	None	
3h) C of E only or Ecumenical	No changes	None	
3i) Venue used	No changes	None	
3j) Legal identity	No changes	None	
3l) Communions and Baptisms	No changes	None	
4c) Pioneer / Progression	No changes	None	
3o) 3-self intention	No changes	None	
4a) Neighbourhood/ Network variables	No changes	None	
4b) Attenders: Christian/De-Churched/Non-Churched; by intention	No changes	None	
5) Team numbers to start	No changes	None	
5) fxC attendance figures	No changes	None – but two more years of data now available	
Analysis of attenders adult % and <16s %	n/a	None	
Analysis of which fxC are Child-focused/ all age/ or adults only	n/a	None	

Table 6: No comparison is possible or made

Questionnaire number or topic	Changes to the questionnaire since the January 2014 report	The effect on comparisons between data	Comment
2a) Leadership team numbers	New question	No prior data	
3k) Use of the Bible	New question	No prior data	
3l) Communion frequency	New question	No prior data	
3l) Are there confirmations	New question	No prior data	
3n) Approaches in evangelism	New question	No prior data	
Comparing fxC attendance to diocesan AWA	n/a	No direct comparison made	1st set were compared with 2012 AWA; 2nd set were compared with 2014 AWA
Comparing the number of fxC with the number of churches in the diocese	n/a	No direct comparison made	Each set was compared with the published figures from dioceses of those years

Table 7:   Changes made only have a minor impact

Questionnaire number or topic	Any changes to the questionnaire since the 2013 report?	The effect on comparisons between data	Comment
2b) Leader status	Category 'ALM' added, Permanent Deacon option removed	None – see the comment column	An ALM previously would have been listed as 'Other' not affecting the rest of the categories. Any Permanent Deacon can now be listed as 'Other'.
3a) Type of fxC	All Age Worship [AAW] was added. BEC category was removed (there were only 2 recorded in 1st round)*	AAW – slight impact as it is but one category among 20 BEC removal had miniscule impact These changes are noted but comparisons are acceptable	In the 1st round if, for example, an fxC was all age worship and café church, CAF would have been ticked. A few cases in the 1st round were AAW only and felt no other type described them. We re-classified them usually as child-focused Church (CFC) In the 2nd round both CAF and AAW would have been ticked. In this round around 16% of cases have ticked AAW.
3f) Traditions identified with	The Liberal option was added. We realised this omission was our design error.	Slight impact mathematically on the other traditions' figures The wider impact is that those in the Liberal tradition have been affirmed	In 1st round a Liberal Catholic fxC could tick only Catholic. In 2nd round both Catholic and Liberal could be ticked. The issue was for the exclusively Liberal fxC, now remedied. In the first round they would have had to be classified as something else (or N/A). However, only Liberal affected but a few cases.
3m) Discipleship	'Other' added as an option	Slight impact on the category 'Not at this stage' [NAST]	In the 1st round, if a fxC didn't select any of the given discipleship options they had to tick NAST even if they practiced discipleship in another way. In the 2nd round they can tick 'Other'. This affected a few cases.
fxC numerical growth, plateau and shrink trends	n/a	Slight	All fxC start at a given date but now have had two more years of life. However, many fxC plateau which mitigates this change.
Growth ratios between team size sent and attendance now	n/a	Slight	As above

* We initially made private use of the further fxC category 'Intentional Community' but it never appeared on a circulated questionnaire. It was only requested twice during round one and as such has a negligible effect on the comparisons and analysis made.

Table 8:   Comparisons may only be made with varying degrees of caution

Questionnaire number or topic	Any changes to the questionnaire since the 2013 report?	The effect on comparisons between data	Comment
3e) The ecclesial boundary of the fxC	The option of 'within the benefice' was added	This has an impact both on the 'within parish' and 'within deanery' prior figures.	In the 1st round when an fxC was within the benefice we took it on a case by case basis. A small benefice of say up to three churches, was recorded as 'within the parish'. If however, the benefice had a more numerous number of parishes and was geographically large, together with the fxC being at a distance away from the sending church, we deemed it 'within the deanery'.
4b) Attenders Christian/ De-Churched / Non-Churched ; by result	Version 11 asked for percentages of each of the 3 groups, instead of scoring the results 1-3	No strict comparison between the 2nd set of percentages, and the 1st set of aggregated scores is possible. This is the most significant caveat.	Some looser comparison can be made using the inferred scores between the two systems: (0-5% = 0, 6-39% = 1; 40-79% = 2; 80-100% = 3). But this only has any meaning at the large scale level. They are related but different systems and in both systems the scores are still rough, not exact.
4d) Mission Support	The form is unaltered. But we came to realise that there are legitimate different kinds of transplant and we now note which each case is.	The difference is only between the transplant figures cited in the 2013 report and what appears now.	In the 1st round those outside the 1992 transplant definition were reassigned. We can now be more accurate, using the revised and widened definition in the note below. We have therefore reassessed fxC from the 1st round, under the wider definition of transplant, and used the same categories as in the 2nd round.

Widening the range of what is meant by the term transplant

The 1992 definition of a transplant required that all the following three factors were present: a transplant is a church plant which crosses a parish boundary with permission; it takes a team larger than those in the receiving church; but it forms one resultant composite congregation.

The changes are variables that go beyond what was required by the second and third criteria. Yet all of these variants fall within the horticultural analogy of a transplant. This term places at least as much emphasis on moving a sizeable subsection of a prior plant elsewhere, as considering what other flora it is then placed next to, or what particular soil it is re-rooted in.

Local practice has forced us to notice that sometimes when a large group of Christians are sent out and relocate in a 'transplant', there is no receiving congregation, only an empty building. Nor is the building used always a church. Even if the transplant is to a church building with a congregation, the intention can be to create two separate congregations within that building.

Seeking more accurate churched, de-churched and non-churched attender scores
During 2014 we became aware of two factors that sat uneasily with one another.

Firstly, the results in the 2013 report revealing 35% de-churched and 40% non-churched scores for attenders at the fxC were trumpeted in some sections of the wider Church. However secondly, the danger was that often this was without naming the two important caveats that report contained on pages 23-24, namely that the data was derived from the leader's opinion and our overall figures from simplistic aggregated scores.

In the second round of research we have tried to be more rigorous in two ways and more nuanced in one further way. Furthermore, there is now a survey based on data from attenders, not leaders.

1   Firstly, the revised questionnaire asked respondents to estimate the percentage of the three groups: Christians, de-churched and non-churched. We discovered that leaders found this was the most demanding question on the form and often they could only answer to the nearest 10 per cent. Nevertheless this is less inaccurate than the prior 0-3 scoring system. The former system suffers especially in that answers 0 and 3 correspond quite closely with 0% and 100%. Thus scores 1 and 2 cover a very wide range of percentages.

2   The second move towards greater accuracy is to weight the results given by leaders by the size of attendance at their fxC. This additional beneficial complexity in calculation was not built into the 2013 report and thus its figures should be treated as not much more than a first shot.

3   The third difference is in the approach taken to analyse the findings. It lays more stress on the results from differing types of fxC. The more we have researched and seen divergent results in different dioceses, the more it has become clear that the diocese itself is not usually the most significant variable. The report explores whether type of fxC, type of social context, type of leader, or other features are far more significant. These factors cannot always be easily separated. All this underlines that overall average figures across dioceses are no more than that. That makes it less meaningful to claim that 'fxC achieve X and Y.' If an analogy would serve, it is like refusing a claim for an identical effect from apples, pears, bananas, grapefruit and figs, while still holding that 'five helpings of fruit a day' is beneficial to health.

In all these ways we hope that this report may help the wider Church and individual sending churches to have more realistic expectations.

4   The accompanying report, *Who's there?* on attenders, by Claire Dalpra and John Vivian, will bring much needed modesty and a more realistic complexity to those prior claims. The two reports need to be read together.

Summary of 3.1 to 3.4

On balance, through consideration of these strengths and weaknesses, Church Army's Research Unit suggest they have taken most reasonable precautions and are aware of the remaining weaknesses. In addition, through our interaction in feeding back to the individual dioceses over the four year period and their warm reception of our material, we have some degree of confidence to suggest the data is reasonably robust and the inferences drawn stand up to scrutiny.

The report now turns to the findings.

The shape to the findings

The findings are grouped into successive major chapters for the following reasons:

- The more examples we recorded, the more we realised that they demonstrated varied patterns, which in turn suggested no one variable accounted for them.
- The greater the number of diocese reports we wrote, it became clearer that there were both common themes across them and differences connected to the history of that diocese, as well as standout differences for which the particular diocese was not the primary cause.
- The now larger sample sizes of most of the fxC also gave us confidence to run further correlations about them. These heightened our awareness of plausible patterns within many types of fxC and notable differences between them.
- The Church of England's instinct for a localised presence, the instinct for inculturation and the ecumenical Fresh Expressions team's definition of an fxC which includes being contextual, all encouraged us to examine the fxC through the lens of their social contexts.

The report therefore aims to identify the correlations that appeared and if possible posit what might be the causation(s) behind them.

One possible counter view could hold that each fxC is a unique case. A polar contrast would be that their similarity likens them only to different coloured Smarties in a tube. We are not persuaded by either view. The data suggests that the individuality of each story does not prevent meaningful wider comment, nor that what is true of one case will be true of all.

A similar view can be taken about children. Discerning what honours each young person, but having wisdom about a general approach, is part of the task of parenting. We suggest from the generic patterns and important variances in our deeper learning about the varied world of small, young fxC that something similar to the wise raising of children and young people is going on throughout the examination of data behind this report.

For those reasons we offer analysis by different key variables. Alongside it we raise a case that those variables themselves tend to only affect certain features of the missional and ecclesial development of these young churches.

We are therefore offering the wider Church - both its permission givers and its pioneers - a multi-faceted taxonomy by which to understand what is to be learnt from 1100+ fresh expressions of Church across 21 dioceses of the Church of England. Below is our list of key variables. Throughout each chapter we comment on what we see as strengths or vulnerabilities.

1. By diocese
2. By type of fxC, such as church plant or Messy Church
3. By geographical/social context, such as urban or rural
4. By frequency of meeting, such as monthly or weekly
5. By training provided – or not
6. By leader type covering ordained, lay or lay-lay and their attached work status

However, the report's findings begin with an introductory overall picture.

Chapter 4 Some overall findings

This chapter gives some generic and basic facts that make up the background to the correlations in the successive chapters. For reasons of length this chapter is restricted to certain variables.

Successive chapters then examine the following:

Chapter 6:   the effect of fxC type
Chapter 7:   the influence of background social area
Chapter 8:   how frequency of meeting affects effectiveness
Chapter 9:   the effect of any training taken
Chapter 10:   who leads the fxC
Chapter 11:   the contribution of the 'lay-lay' leaders

After all these variables have been covered, a complementary generic and wider list of factors, assessing missional effect as well as progress to ecclesial maturity, in the fxC as a whole, are unpacked in Chapter 12.

The list of background factors to understanding the fxC picture
4.1   The number of fxC identified and excluded in the two sets of dioceses examined
4.2   Data showing the fxC as a day of small things
4.3   The diversity and spread of types of fxC
4.4   The growing fxC phenomenon- many young churches

4.5   The effect on Church of England attender numbers
4.6   Those who come to fxC
    4.6.1   The flawed messages from the 1st round of dioceses
    4.6.2   Improved data from the 2nd round of dioceses
    4.6.3   The effect of the church plant factor in dioceses 12-21
    4.6.4   Headlines from the fxC attenders survey

4.7   Contact with the under 16s
4.8   Team numbers sent to start fxC
4.9   Resultant net growth figures

4.1   The numbers of fxC cases identified and others excluded

We found 541 examples within the first 11 dioceses surveyed, and 568 in dioceses 12 to 21, making 1109 in all. Of these, 124 had died and 4 had left the Church of England, making 981 still continuing.

The number of further leads that turned out, on inspection, to be something other than an fxC was considerable. There were 650 in the first eleven dioceses and a larger proportion in the next ten dioceses, with 1029 examples. In total these come to 1679.

Further analysis of why they were excluded and lessons to learn from them is unpacked in section 12.10.

4.2 Data showing the fxC as a day of small things

Table 9: **The number of fxC at certain attendance sizes**

300+	200-299	150-199	100-149	75-99	50-74	40-49	30-39	20-29	10-19	<10
7	13	20	54	65	201	132	165	169	146	34

A note on method
In arriving at the percentages we have only included those examples that were live and still part of the Church of England during the final year of data collection.

Inferences from the data
The bulk of the examples fall in the 10-74 bracket, but there are plenty of honourable exceptions. Parish churches also range from tiny rural congregations to extremely large ones in some cities. The point here is not to compare them with the parishes, but to see where the majority of fxC lie.

The proportion with an average attendance of over 100 is 9%. The proportion that fall in the range of 55-10 attenders is 67%. This is the demonstrable basis for describing the fresh expressions of Church world as one largely populated by many *'small'* churches.

Chart 1: **Cumulative percentages of fxC by size**
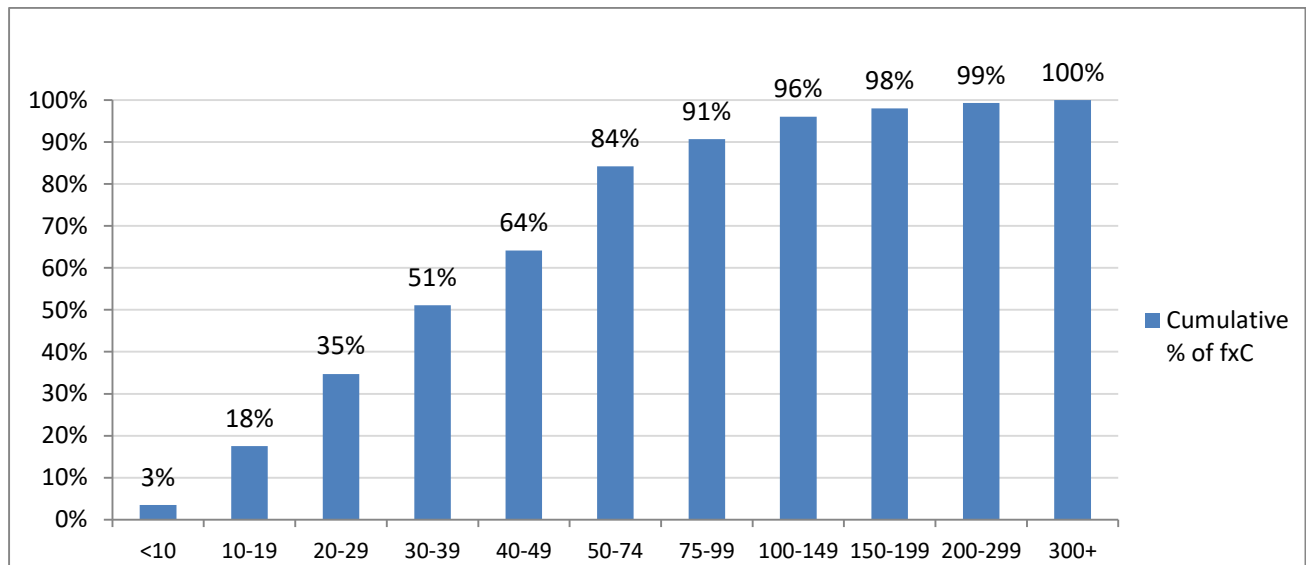
Two other epithets have been used as characteristic of the world of fxC.

One is the term 'diverse' and the other description is of them being 'young'. The next two subsections demonstrate the basis for these terms.

4.3 The diversity and spread of types of fxC

Table 10: The 21 dioceses and their numbers of the 22 types of fxC

	Liverpool	Canterbury	Leicester	Derby	Chelmsford	Norwich	Ripon & Leeds	Blackburn	Bristol	Portsmouth	Gloucester	Exeter	Ely	Southwark	Guildford	Carlisle	London	Birmingham	Sheffield	York	Manchester	Total
All Age Worship	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	8	5	15	8	9	5	13	7	7	90
Alternative Worship	8	6	2	5	1	7	3	1	3	1	5	6	5	4	3	1	4	2	2	6	3	78
Base Ecclesial Community	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Café Church	6	11	11	9	6	17	11	8	4	2	3	11	18	7	2	4	5	2	3	8	3	151
Cell Church	3	3	3	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	2	11	4	0	0	1	2	40
Children focused Church	12	11	7	10	6	11	12	16	10	2	2	7	3	4	10	4	0	1	8	6	6	148
Cluster Church	9	8	15	0	6	1	8	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	4	0	7	2	0	64
Community Development Plant	7	9	5	2	8	5	2	5	1	2	2	1	5	2	2	2	9	1	11	5	3	89
Intentional Community	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Messy Church	16	26	11	16	17	25	10	16	14	14	7	37	14	8	32	16	14	14	15	14	24	360
Midweek Service	5	3	4	5	3	1	0	8	0	0	0	1	6	1	0	2	6	1	3	2	3	54
Multiple Sunday Congregation	4	9	3	3	2	7	2	5	5	0	1	4	5	6	12	2	8	3	4	3	1	89
Network Church	8	5	13	1	9	3	4	1	3	0	4	2	4	1	0	3	8	2	2	6	1	80
New Monastic Community	2	2	1	1	5	1	1	0	2	0	2	2	0	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	30
New Traditional Service	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	5	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	2	1	0	1	0	17
Older people's Church	10	3	3	5	4	2	3	3	1	0	1	4	2	2	4	1	3	1	6	2	3	63
School based Church	7	5	3	3	1	1	3	2	2	1	1	2	3	0	1	3	0	1	1	1	5	46
Seeker Church	2	1	1	6	0	5	3	5	3	3	1	6	1	0	3	0	6	1	1	4	0	52
Special Interest Group	11	7	12	2	8	4	2	3	1	0	3	2	3	8	2	1	12	4	6	6	4	101
Church Plant	7	8	5	0	8	4	1	5	3	2	2	2	8	13	9	1	35	1	10	4	4	132
Under 5s Church	7	1	0	4	5	6	2	5	2	0	3	3	6	2	6	4	4	0	2	6	8	76
Youth Church	4	3	3	1	4	5	1	3	1	0	2	3	1	2	4	17	4	1	2	4	0	65

By looking at the right hand column it can be seen which types of fxC were in negligible numbers and, from their row, when we stopped including them. The all age worship row shows when we started collecting that type. All other types were collected throughout.

It is a diverse picture. The table also shows the diversity of the distribution of the types by diocese. The columns reveal something of the prevalence of a type in a diocese, such as café church in Ely, cell and youth church in Carlisle, Messy Church in Exeter, older people's church in Liverpool or church plants in London. Reasons for these peaks are only sometimes clear.

This list is not closed and 'forest church' is one plausible addition.

Table 11:   Percentages showing the relative popularity of the 20 types of fxC

	Average
All Age Worship	15.8%
Alternative Worship	7.0%
Café Church	13.6%
Cell Plant	3.6%
Children focused Church	13.3%
Cluster based Church	5.8%
Community Development Plant	8.0%
Messy Church	32.5%
Midweek Service	4.9%
Multiple Sunday Congregation	8.0%
Network Church	7.2%
New Monastic Community	2.7%
New Traditional Service	1.5%
Older people's Church	5.7%
School based Church	4.1%
Seeker Church	4.7%
Special Interest Group	9.1%
Church Plant	11.9%
Under 5s Church	6.9%
Youth Church	5.9%

This table, with the two discontinued types removed, also shows, through percentages, which choices are more frequent and the basis for us selecting the more common ones to examine in more detail in Chapter 6. Readers might bear in mind that with 20 types, a 5% share would be the average. This gives nuance to the figures recorded here.

Messy Church is by far the most common, at over 6 times the 5% average, but is not more than one-third of the whole story. Then come a group of fxC scoring 16%-10%, from 3 to 2 times the 5% average: all age worship, café church, child-focused church and church plants. The all age worship cases were collected from only the last 10 dioceses. Its percentage figure was calculated from only those dioceses.

There is no doubt the world of fxC is *diverse*, both by type of fxC and different degrees of take-up for them. It is further complicated in that some types multiple designate while others tend not to.

4.4 The growing fxC phenomenon – many young churches

This is shown on this and the next page by the increase in the number of fxC starts over the 20 year period and by the two sets of data in the two rounds of research.

As explained in section 5.4, both charts contain an explained estimated figure for the months missing in the final year of data collection.

Chart 2:   The number of fxC begun in each year (Dioceses 1-11)
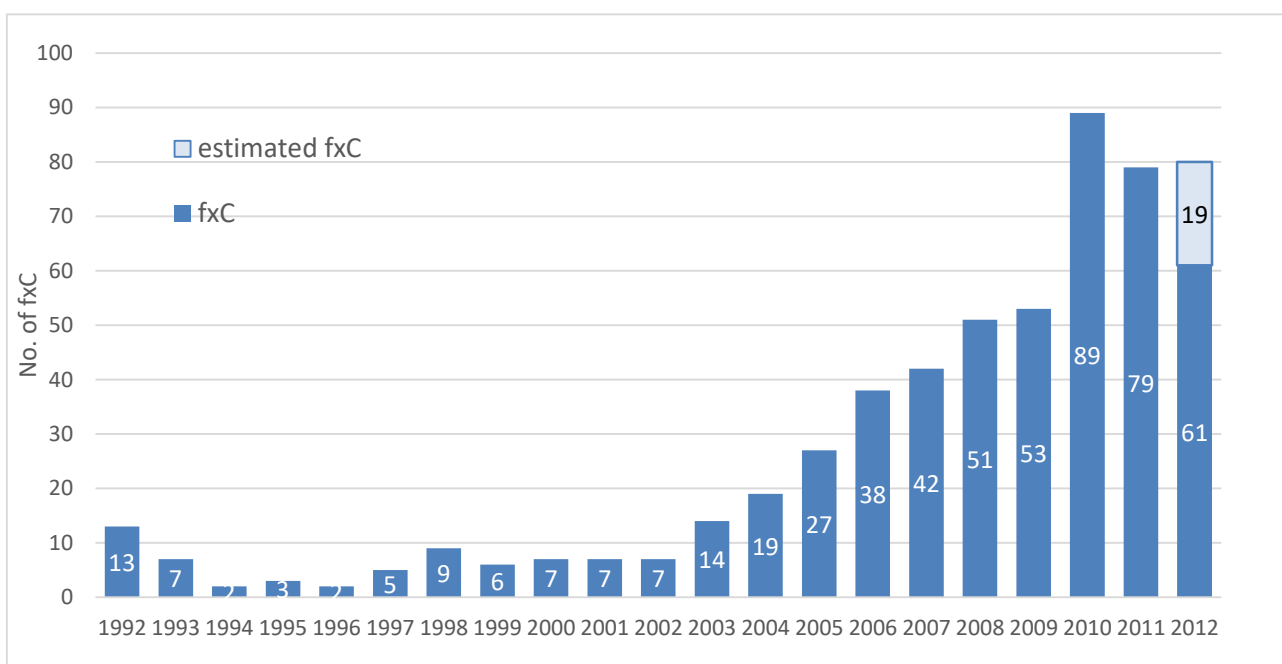
Chart 3:   The number of fxC begun in each year (Dioceses 12-21)
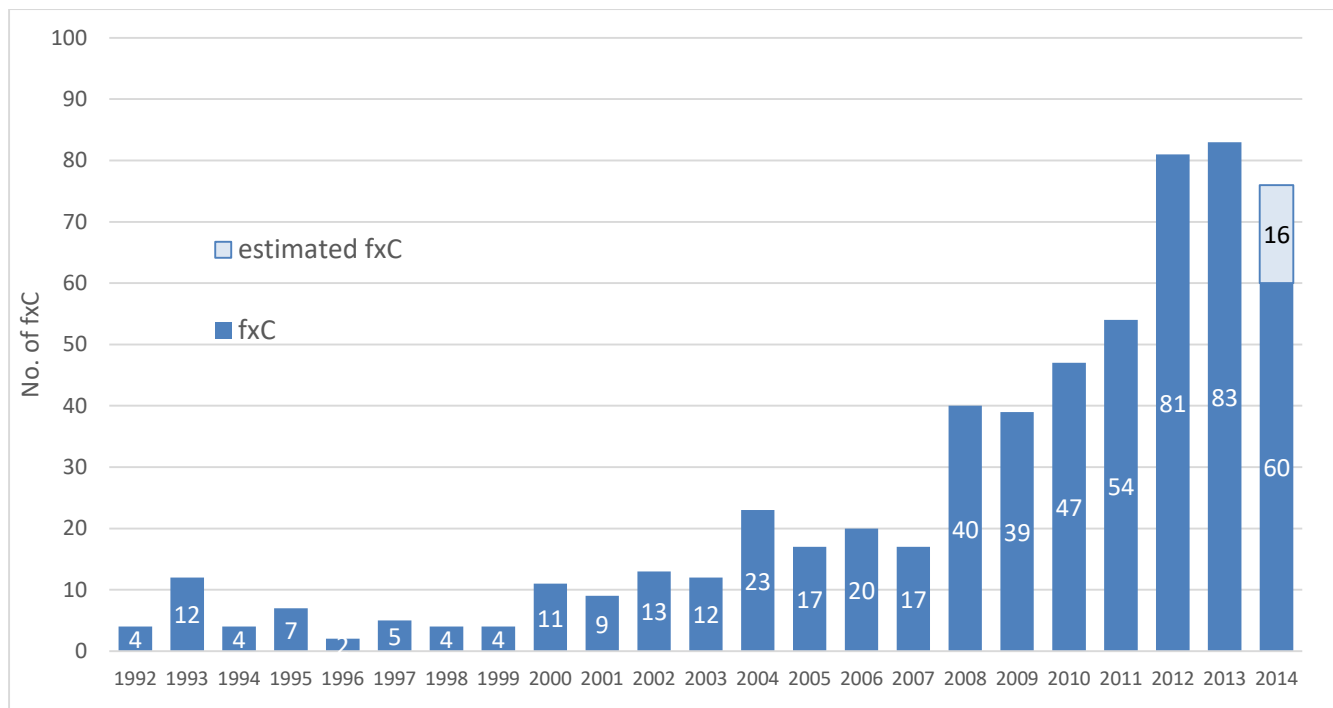
The overall picture, shown in the two charts, is of a rising number of starts per year and that this rate continues to rise. Extrapolation of the last two years is examined in section 5.4. It also outlines the case that the peak of starts per year has not yet been reached.

As the 2013 report noted, there were then four times as many fxC starting as when *Mission-shaped Church* was produced in 2004. The data in this second chart confirms that was a representative finding. The second chart also confirms the presence of the lull in starts during the mid to late 1990s and that the beginning of an increase per year was prior to the publication of *Mission-shaped Church*.

The two charts illustrate two slightly different and uneven progressions that may suggest an organic, grassroots based phenomenon. Chart 2 reads more like a steadier increase year on year from 2002, with 2010 as a spike. Chart 3 is more like a staircase, with a series of both risers (as between 2003 to 2004, 2007 to 2008 and 2011 to 2012) and treads like (with the years 2008 and 2009). Why these stages occur in the second chart, we do not know. Both charts demonstrate an undeniable upward trend in starts per year. Each chart is but a composite picture of at least 10 dioceses and only a chart per diocese would reveal greater detail. We therefore refrain from comment on the varying scores in several years which are different in the two sets of dioceses. In both sets, over three-quarters of the starts are from 2006 onwards.

In the first set of dioceses (including those estimated), the percentage of the fxC that were not yet more than five years old is 62.8%. With the second set it is slightly lower at 58.1%. Overall, 60.4%, or 689 of these fxC, are arguably *young* churches.

It is in the light of this data that this report describes the world of fxC as being populated by many small, diverse, young churches and this undergirds the report's title – *The Day of Small Things.*

4.5 The effect on Church of England attender numbers

One slightly startling measure is that if the overall fxC attendance figures of 21,592 from dioceses 1-11 and 29,032 from dioceses 12-21, making a total of 50,624, is taken as face value, then this is the equivalent to the number of attenders in two further medium-sized dioceses in the Church of England. The 2014 AWA figures show the average across 43 dioceses was 22,500. However, this calculation is without resort to adjustments for lesser frequency of attendance, at fxC meeting less than weekly, and that issue is fully unpacked in sections 5.1 and 5.2

Also, if this research with half of the dioceses was repeated with the other half of the nation, and its findings were consistent with what is found here, there might be some validity in thinking that the national fxC attendance could be nearly 100,000 people, or the numerical equivalent of having four new dioceses. If the more rigorous view over frequency of attendance, set out in section 5.2, tables 18-19 is asserted, this would still equate to numbers at over two new dioceses.

Reasons not to double this data to estimate a national figure
However, this simplistic doubling of the numbers involved should be resisted for three reasons.

Firstly, there is no certainty that the picture from the other half of the dioceses will be very similar. Secondly, there is no further capital city, with its very large population and vigorous planting history, to collect from. Thirdly, the other 22 dioceses not surveyed (at the time that was 43 dioceses, prior to the creation of the diocese of Leeds) as a whole serve a smaller size of population and have a lower aggregate AWA.

The table below uses both of the two variables named in this third factor and then assumes a similar fxC impact and shows the resultant figures, rounded to the nearest 100. If an estimated headline is helpful and meaningful, a figure, between the two, of 90,000 might be sensible.

Table 11b: Population served and AWA as between surveyed and un-surveyed dioceses

	Dioceses 1-21 surveyed	The remainder of the dioceses	Likely projected national fxC attendance
Population served (2014)	29,864,000	24,720,000	83,800
Aggregate diocesan AWA (2014)	503,000	466,500	93,900

4.6 Those who come to the fxC

This area of research findings tends to be closely examined by the wider Church. It is now more complex as there are a variety of sources giving different results and impressions. Here is the opportunity to bring those together with the hope of having a modest but definitive view of what sources should be discarded, and which can be held in what kind of tension with one another.

4.6.1 The flawed messages from the 1st round of dioceses
This source sought to give the fxC leaders' impressions of the relative proportions of existing Christians, the de-churched and the non-churched who, on average, were attending. These three groups, in rough and ready terms, were cited as follows: Christians 25%, de-churched 35% and non-churched 40%.

Not least because these figures looked impressive, they have been fastened upon by some as being sufficiently robust. Section 6.4 of this report explains why such a view should be disavowed. It should now, charitably, only be seen as a first flawed attempt to seek an answer.

4.6.2 Improved data from the 2nd round of dioceses

Section 6.4 has laid out how the scoring system has been refined, that the team numbers sent should always be included in the number of Christians and that scores should be case weighted. However, the figures remain what is only the fxC leader's opinion. Chapter 6 worked with the 14 more common types of fxC to draw upon plausible sample sizes, yet these represent over 86% of all cases. The more accurate scores, from that source, are as follows: Christians 40%, de-churched 27% and non-churched 33%.

Two inferences follow. Firstly, the proportion of existing Christians has risen quite markedly. This is partly the effect of always including the team numbers sent, partly because of a higher proportion in the 2nd set of dioceses of a type of fxC who score higher for Christians, and finally, having a less crude scoring system.

Secondly, it is still the case that the combined de-churched and non-churched attendees exceed the presence of the Christians, and we would think in proportions rarely seen in parish churches.

4.6.3 The effect of the church plant factor in dioceses 12-21

Table 12:   Comparing the missional impact of the church plants with all other fxC types

Diocese	Nos CP only	Christian	De-churched	Non-churched	Nos <> CP	Christian	De-churched	Non-churched
Exeter	2	64.3%	5.6%	30.1%	67	31.0%	24.8%	44.0%
Ely	8	61.5%	21.3%	17.2%	44	34.4%	20.8%	44.8%
Southwark	13	56.7%	27.0%	16.4%	34	32.3%	29.8%	38.0%
Guildford	9	39.6%	41.3%	19.1%	68	42.1%	24.3%	33.5%
Carlisle	1	40.0%	30.0%	30.0%	46	31.8%	18.6%	49.6%
London	35	52.5%	28.5%	19.0%	51	43.9%	29.6%	26.5%
Birmingham	1	40.0%	35.0%	15.0%	27	36.4%	29.2%	34.5%
Sheffield	10	41.5%	33.8%	24.7%	46	31.4%	22.8%	45.9%
York	4	54.9%	23.2%	21.9%	53	33.8%	29.0%	37.2%
Manchester	4	44.4%	22.8%	32.7%	45	25.8%	31.7%	42.5%
Averages		51.5%	29.0%	19.5%		34.8%	25.7%	39.4%

Readers can compare the two columns of scores for Christian attenders and it can be seen that in 9 out of the 10 dioceses the church plants have a much higher proportion of Christians than the average for the rest of all other types and that in all cases they also have a lesser proportion of non-churched attenders. Moreover, 66% of all the church plants occur among the 2nd set of dioceses, thus there is no doubt that they are a major cause of the less impressive figures from the 2nd set of dioceses. However, all the two sets of average figures from dioceses 12-21 can show is the view of the fxC leaders. Aware of this, in 2013 we recommended that a survey of fxC attenders be done to test the leaders' views, which were likely to be best guesses.

4.6.4 Headlines from the fxC attenders survey *Who's there?* by Dalpra and Vivian

The research produced returns from some 2000 attenders at fxC which had been previously surveyed for their leader's view, within 6 representative dioceses. Because the attender data was in danger of being directly contrasted with the least reliable leaders' views, they asked each leader to reassess their estimate and made comparisons to those figures, which are recorded in their section 6.3 and turned out to be more modest.

A significant complication is that their research established that the three categories of Christian, de-churched and non-churched are not meaningless, but they are not exclusive or watertight. An individual might, during their lifetime, have periods of being in all three: growing up non-churched, coming to Christian faith and church attendance and then later, stopping attending. To cope with this, Dalpra and Vivian created further categories, such as complex de-churched and complex non-churched. They also included a further one for the 8% of attenders of younger years who had grown up in an fxC and were thus a category of their own. The headline we agree should be quoted here is that the attenders' spread, still using the crude three-fold designations, is as follows, but aware of their revised terms: Churched 59%, de-churched 20%, non-churched 21%.

For the first time in the research process, the Christians are outnumbering the rest, but now including all the team and those who are blending.[9] Of that 59%, 32% were team members and 42% were blenders (section 6.4.5). It is not convincing to lump together the simple and complex categories and come up with overall figures. For example, a person growing up non-churched might have first started attending church by going somewhere else before, later, joining the fxC. In addition the 8% who have grown up in their fxC are distributed across the three basic groups.

Their report *Who's there?* (especially section 6) must be consulted to understand fully all these different ways to calculate the results.

A contrasting feature was drawn from their control group of parishes. With these it was found that 6% of attenders had been non-churched and 26% de-churched (section 6.6.4 onwards). However, because some attenders may have been joined those churches many years ago, these terms are less meaningful.

4.7 Contact with the under 16s

This is covered in more depth in section 6.11, through the lens of what occurs at the 14 more common fxC types. Overall, the average proportion of those under 16s attending is 38.4%, though varying quite widely by fxC type (2.0% to 55.6%). The comment to make is that the significance of this overall finding is highlighted by reference to the national context.

For some years the Church of England has been concerned at its declining influence among children and young people, as well as its poor record in retaining them. Strands 1 and 2 of *Anecdote to Evidence* from Professor David Voas underlined this. To put the figures of section 6.11 in context, the 2011 census shows that around 19% of the English population are under 16. The Statistics for Mission 2011 report told us that 19.9% of AWA attenders were under 16. Voas noted that the midweek attendance figure raises the Sunday one from around 15%.[10] Neither of these figures is very far away from the census figure. This broad picture was confirmed by Dalpra and Vivian's control group in *Who's there?* with the parishes having 12% of attenders in the under 16s bracket and the fxC at 38%. This confirms that the fxC set is doing markedly better in contrast with the parish church averages for those under 16s attending.

We do not know what proportion of the under 16s, in the fxC work, are in the 12-15 bracket. We suspect a majority will be under 11. This data neither guarantees that these young attenders will be retained, nor that they have all come to an active committed Christian faith. It may be more realistic to see it as a promising beginning. Yet it needs to be added that one cannot retain what is not present in the first place.

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[9] This term for belonging to more than one church is explained in section 5.1.1.
[10] D. Voas and L. Watt, *Numerical change in church attendance: national, local and individual factors,* p. 16.

An overall view of those who come

- What is clear is that each successive set of results is more modest than the last.
- There is a tendency for the leaders to be optimistic and a demonstrable need for them to be more aware of who is actually coming so that they may remain effective in mission.
- If the leaders' views are uniformly somewhat rosy, the Church needs to be aware that not all fxC perform as well as others.
- It should not be assumed that all those attending are now convinced Christians. As written in 2013, they are a new, large, relationally based fringe; this grouping in John Finney's research 20 years ago[11] was found to be the most fruitful over time.
- Any progress in contacting the non-churched is to be celebrated. It could be the English Church's most pressing mission field, because it is increasing over time, as so few children and young people have a Christian upbringing.
- The percentage of those under 16 at fxC is encouraging. This high attendance figure could make the contribution of the fxC towards both the present and the future life of the Church of England yet more significant.

4.8 Team numbers sent to start an fxC

The figures given below are only for the two sets of dioceses, not an individual diocese as, in our view, these numbers connect more to the prevalence of fxC type that occurs in a diocese, as section 6.8 on team sizes in many types of fxC shows. The number sent in each diocese is also a reflection of background factors, such as the size of a diocese and how populous it is, but that is not a serious reflection on any degree of willingness, or otherwise, of a diocese to engage with the fxC agenda. Nevertheless, we do show, in section 5.6, how the dioceses differ in team size sent and explain the links we see to those variances.

Team numbers sent: Dioceses 1-11, 6070 people; Dioceses 12-21, 8031 people; Total, 14,101. That over 14 thousand people (11306 adults and 2795 under sixteens) have done this is some measure of how many have engaged with the fxC agenda and sensed some sort of need, and or calling, to be part of it. The report makes clear when 'team size' refers only to adults.

4.9 Resultant net growth figures

By comparing the team numbers sent with the resultant declared attendance (less the team sent) we arrive at what we call the net growth ratio. This is based on the sheer number of people now attending on average, but not adjusted for frequency, nor accounting for the yet larger fringe with whom the fxC are also in meaningful contact.

Team 14,101,   Attendance 50,624,   less the team 36523,   Net growth ratio 2.6.

Lest 2.6 seems trivial, it also means a 260% increase in attendance since their start, which is one measure of the contribution that fxC make to the numerical growth of the Church of England

Section 6.10 delves deeper into the net growth factor examining the variance by fxC type and also how that factor is affected by whether it is more adults or under sixteens who are now attending.

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[11] J. Finney, *Finding Faith Today* (Swindon: BFBS, 1992), especially Chapter 4, pp. 36-47.

4.10   fxC sizes and who comes

Chart 4:   **The leader's opinion of who comes, unweighted by fxC size**

The sample sizes are as follows:

121+	42
51-120	144
36-50	112
21-35	112
1-20	101
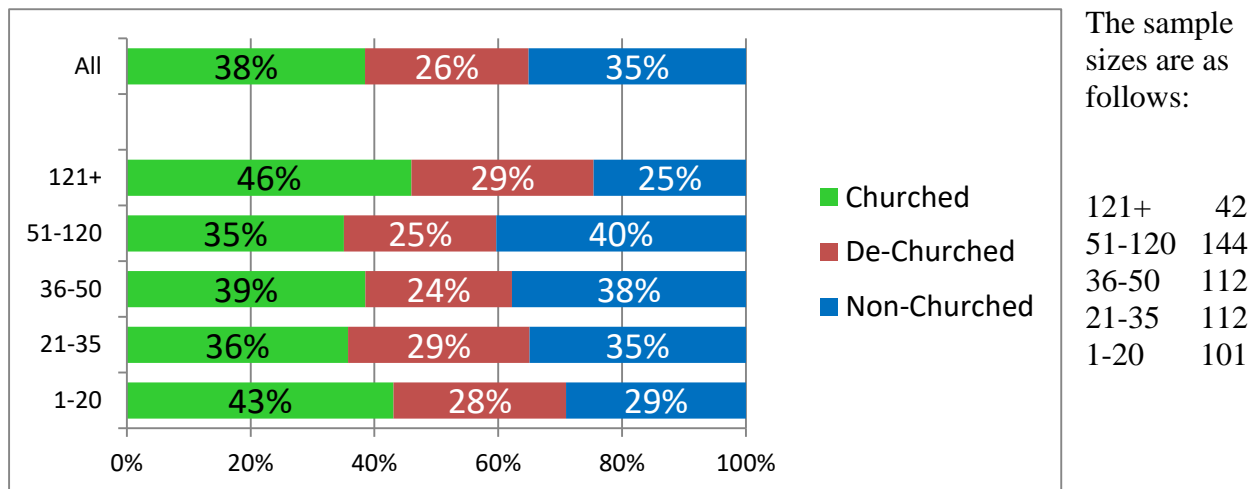
Notes

These groupings were chosen to represent (from smallest upwards) small group sized church, two equally common sizes of smaller congregations, then mid-sized congregations up to 120, the ceiling that one cleric is deemed to be able to care for, and then a group of all those congregations larger than this. The sample is from dioceses 12-21, for which we improved the scoring system

Inferences from this data

The least variation is between the various figures for the de-churched. The range is wider for the other two categories. We do not know why that should be.

We see some evidence here that the smallest size of church have relatively more difficulty in attracting outsiders. This may undergird the view that in small groupings anonymous initial exploration of faith or the Church is difficult. Yet among fxC congregations of 120 attenders, the figure for the non-churched drops yet more. This looks like evidence that larger sizes of congregation do not necessarily attract more outsiders.

Summary from Chapter 4

- 1109 fxC have been started and 981 are still in operation.
- They are mainly relatively *small* in size with two thirds of them between 10-55 attenders.
- The range of fxC types is *diverse*, unevenly present across the dioceses and with varying degrees of take-up, with Messy Church the most popular choice.
- 60% of them are *young,* being less than five years old when data about them was taken.
- If the attendance figures from the fxC in the first half of the dioceses are representative, it would be plausible that about 100,000 people attend a Church of England fxC.
- However, as the remaining dioceses serve fewer people and presently have a lower aggregate AWA, the rough figure of 90,000 people at Church of England fxC is more realistic.
- Some 14,100 people have been involved as part of the teams that began the 1109 fxC.
- Care should be taken over claims of what proportions of Christians, de-churched and non-churched are attending. We think the views of the leaders have been optimistic. But it is still reasonable to think that the majority of attenders are not existing practising Christians.
- Notable and encouraging proportions (38%) of those under 16 are present at the fxC.
- The average net growth ratio is 260% or 2.6 newcomers for every team member sent.
- Bigger sized fxC, over 120, do not attract yet more non-churched attenders.

Chapter 5 Variables between the dioceses

This chapter lays out those aspects of the research results where one, or both, of two factors may be true. Either the data reflects the extent to which the fxC are making an impact on the overall life of a diocese, or it is plausible that the overall culture and history of a diocese affects the choices being made across the fxC. The latter does not allege that the diocese is the sole cause.

Those who know our 2013 report should note two changes to the data given then. Firstly, figures from Gloucester diocese are included, affecting the averages and secondly, that comparisons are now made with 2012 central statistics, as when we first wrote only those of 2011 were available. The set in this 2016 report should be taken as more accurate, as the notes in 4.1 explain.

The list of fxC factors which reflect upon the life of the diocese and vice versa
5.1   fxC and attendance in relation to diocesan figures
5.2   fxC attenders adjusted by attendance frequency
5.3   Traditions acknowledged by the fxC
5.4   The year of start of the fxC
5.5   Leadership at fxC variables: ordained, lay or lay-lay, time given and remuneration
5.6   The fxC team size taken
5.7   The mission support to the fxC from the dynamics of runner, graft, transplant or seed
5.8   Assessing whether or not London diocese is typical
5.9   Proportions of excluded cases
5.10   Features that tend to average out across the two sets of dioceses
5.11   Features of disparity in the two sets of dioceses

5.1 fxC and attendance in relation to diocesan figures

What the fxC add to the attendance, and to the number of churches, of the Church of England sounds like a pair of sensible and important questions to ask. Readers might hope that these two calculations were a straightforward matter and that robust and unequivocal statistics can be given. Despite our best intentions and of the staff from the National Research and Statistics unit, with whom we have active co-operation and cordial relationships, the answers turn out to be far from simple. It is necessary to firstly set out the difficulties to be surmounted and then to offer several ways to produce comparisons and to acknowledge the range of answers they arrive at. We think this offers transparency to the wider Church that aids confidence in the results, but is equally clear on the caveats that require modesty in the way those results are held and communicated.

5.1.1 Qualifications to the data and its comparisons

1. **Sources**: The numbers of diocesan churches and attenders, in tables 13 to 19, are quoted from the Statistics for Mission 2012 and 2014 reports provided by the National Research and Statistics unit (R&S). Such figures have been checked by those dioceses as a fair picture. However, not only are the AWA figures rounded, but they are also the result of attempts by R&S to compensate for gaps in the data supplied by the dioceses, drawing upon figures from the prior year. This method of data production has been applied back through previous years, thus a few of the column labels of our tables read '2006 revised'.

   The fxC attendance numbers are aggregated from numbers supplied to us by the fxC leaders in interview. They look more precise than they are. The leaders had to estimate an average number for each year of the life of the fxC and often would round them up or down. The numbers cited

are those of the last complete year across all the dioceses included in that research round. So in the second round of research we took the fxC attendance figures as for 2014, not including any that had died before then.

2. **Inclusion**: We and R&S, currently led by Dr Bev Botting, note that there is a lack of consistency about whether the AWA figures across the dioceses do, or do not, include the how attenders at the fxC. We agree that inclusion is entirely desirable to gain a truer picture, share the desire to offer a fair picture both of existing church attendance and that at the fxC, while knowing complex that task is, and we think that the AWA figures are of value.

   The aims and limits, with which we are all working, include the following:

   a) The aim is to ensure that attenders are only counted once. Those filling in the national forms are instructed that any oming to church twice in a week should only appear in the count once. Figures from midweek attendance are therefore all of additional attenders.

   b) We know that those returning forms struggle to decide whether any particular activity is church, a fresh expression of Church or a church-led mission activity. The form used seeks to help respondents separate out attendance at church and fxC, but it is likely that the fxC attendance counts do include some things from the other two categories.

   c) We also know from R&S that a number of churches that do have fxC do not use the fxC attendance count box, but conflate answers within an overall church attendance box.

   d) Furthermore some people attend more than one church – see the next sub-section on blending. So a figure given without the fxC might well still include people who attend church on a Sunday, in addition to being part of an fxC.

   e) So even to produce an AWA figure with all fxC excluded is not quite as clean a solution as we would all like, though it is likely to contain less of the above problems.

   Church Army's Research Unit is sympathetic to these difficulties. Throughout our own research, by applying our agreed indicators, well over half the examples submitted to us had to be excluded. They were something other than an fxC. These leads came to us through more reliable local knowledge, but also via the flawed source of diocesan returns. We also came across stories in which numbers of fxC attenders were deliberately not reported in order to avoid parish share, on grounds that these early attenders do not yet make a financial contribution. This means that comparing numbers of fxC attenders for each diocese with a published AWA figure can only be very broad, not exact. Both sets of data have a level of admitted flaw and inexactness.

   To mitigate these problems, the R&S staff kindly prepared a special set of figures for us, with alleged fxC attendance figures removed, to make comparisons more straightforward. Our understanding is that this removed all known attendance from fxC, other than those cases which had attained to parish status, such as some transplants. As we know that only 38 of the 1109 examples that we surveyed are now parishes, we have set that limitation aside. The resultant calculation in 5.1.4 needs to be read alongside other ones made below.

3. **Blending**: In addition to these limitations, we have some evidence that a number of people belong to more one expression of Church. The Dalpra and Vivian report *Who's there?* on fxC

attenders spells this out in greater detail. This so-called 'blending' is a wider phenomenon and the multiple choices made could include a cathedral, a parish church, an fxC or new monastic order. This factor applies to all expressions of Church, not just the fxC, and creates a problem of unintentional double counting. Our methodology and data collection did not account for this. In section 5.2 on adjusted attendance figures we explore this further.

4. **Different frequencies of meeting**: A further factor is that the fxC themselves across both rounds of research are made up of about 45-46% weekly gatherings, 8-9% fortnightly and 45-47% monthly. Naturally this diminishes their overall mathematical effect (see section 5.2). It is fair and right to present such reductions because the national AWA figures have something similar over monthly attenders since 2012, in order to avoid double counting.

5. **The number of churches**: This area is a bit less complex but the figures of churches also lack some precision about whether fxC are included in that count. The 38 examples having become parishes would be counted in. An older high profile transplant is likely to be included, though not changing the previous count of churches, as it inherited a church. Setting up a new church, including a building, in an area of new housing would be probably counted, while a café church in a secular venue may well not be, nor a Messy Church within an existing parish. Not all congregations are deemed to be churches.

The resultant lack of clarity makes it very difficult for a diocese or national church to know whether the attenders at *bona fide* fxC have been included in AWA, let alone how those numbers are best weighted, or whether their young ecclesial community is deemed by the diocese to be a church and included in that number.

The next sections, subject to those caveats, mathematically compare particular sets of figures. The notes will make clear when they assume the fxC and their attenders have been included, as they deserve to be, and when no adjustment is made for frequency and blending. Other summaries are also given in 5.1.4 when the fxC attendance figures have been stripped out.
In moving carefully towards offering some answers, we think it best to begin by setting a context in which the fxC and diocesan data sit.

5.1.2 Population, penetration and AWA over time

The tables below are given for all 21 dioceses surveyed. Broad comparisons are possible in that in both sets the fxC contribution in attendance is measured against the AWA of the same year. The limitation is that decline or growth, in the second table, is assessed over a longer time period. It is not known the extent to which fxC attender numbers have been included, nor do these include adjustment by frequency or blending in attendance.

Tables 13-14: Population and AWA changes 2006 onwards : dioceses 1-11 and 12-21

DIOCESE	Population 2006	Population 2012	Change % 06 to 12	2006 AWA revised	2012 AWA	Change % AWA '06-'12	Popul'n attend 2012 %	Change in AWA	fxC attd'rs
Liverpool	1,573,000	1,567,000	-0.4%	29300	28500	-2.7%	1.82%	-800	2933
Canterbury	819,000	923,000	12.7%	23500	21300	-9.4%	2.31%	-2200	3177
Leicester	891,000	992,000	11.3%	14700	15500	5.4%	1.56%	800	1811
Derby	981,000	1,032,000	5.2%	18100	17500	-3.3%	1.70%	-600	1465
Chelmsford	2,651,000	3,031,000	14.3%	41100	40100	-2.4%	1.32%	-1000	1830
Norwich	797,000	878,000	10.2%	19400	18200	-6.2%	2.07%	-1200	2864
Ripon&Leeds	780,000	828,000	6.2%	15700	14100	-10.2%	1.70%	-1600	1083
Blackburn	1,282,000	1,318,000	2.8%	32600	26600	-18.4%	2.02%	-6000	2702
Bristol	867,000	979,000	12.9%	17600	16400	-6.8%	1.68%	-1200	1727
Portsmouth	710,000	766,000	7.9%	15000	13500	-10.0%	1.76%	-1500	1271
Gloucester	593,000	640,000	7.9%	21500	19900	-7.4%	3.11%	-1600	729
Totals	11944000	12954000		248500	231600				
Average			8.5%			-6.8%	1.79		

DIOCESE	Population 2006	Population 2014	Change % 06 to 14	2006 AWA revised	2014 AWA	Change % AWA '06-'14	% Popul'n attend 2014	Change in AWA	fxC attd'rs
Exeter	1,121,000	1,159,000	3.4%	26800	22700	-15.3%	1.96%	-4100	3314
Ely	675,000	751,000	11.3%	18300	18100	-1.1%	2.41%	-200	2558
Southwark	2,495,000	2,784,000	11.6%	42800	41000	-4.2%	1.47%	-1800	2386
Guildford	964,000	1,039,000	7.8%	29100	25600	-12.0%	2.46%	-3500	4215
Carlisle	491,000	492,000	0.2%	16300	13600	-16.6%	2.76%	-2700	1672
London	3,655,000	4,171,000	14.1%	78600	73900	-6.0%	1.77%	-4700	7242
Birmingham	1,424,000	1,536,000	7.9%	19000	17200	-9.5%	1.12%	-	1320

								1800	
Sheffield	1,189,000	1,257,000	5.7%	19200	17700	-7.8%	1.41%	- 1500	2499
York	1,397,000	1,426,000	2.1%	32100	27500	-14.3%	1.93%	4600	1806
Manchester	1,962,000	2,110,000	7.5%	33900	28100	-17.1%	1.33%	- 5800	2020
Totals	15,373,000	16,725000		3161000	285400				
Averages			8.8%			-9.7	1.71		

Three serious measures of decline and marginal presence

Because the advent of fxC has occurred as one response to a drop in church attenders in England for over one hundred years, as well as a desire to share the Christian faith with others, the number of fxC attenders and overall diocesan AWA needs putting in relation to population changes.

Measured by AWA, which is not the only indicator of attendance or belonging but has been used since 2000, all but one of the dioceses are in numerical decline, some marginally and some steeply.

Secondly, the gap between the rate of population growth and the change in church attendance continues to widen. In 16 out of 21 dioceses this is by as much as 15 percentage points.

Thirdly, an attendance of 3.1% of the population (Gloucester) at the most, and at the least 1.1% (Birmingham) is far from an effective missional presence. Together the three factors should constitute a wake-up call to realism about the depth of the challenge to be a Church for England.

The fxC numbers are one positive contribution

In the face of this set of figures, the attendance at fxC looks like a welcome mitigating factor. In 7 of the first 11 dioceses the sheer fxC attender numbers are greater than the losses. In the second set, that is the case with 5 of the 10.

Two large caveats cannot be ignored. One is that it is unknown whether and which parts of the fxC attendance are being registered in these AWA figures. However, what is certain is that if they are included then the decline elsewhere is more marked. If they are not included, the decline elsewhere is one further reason why they should be. *Mission-shaped church* asked for record keeping twelve years ago[12] and steps to achieve that have been ineffective.

The second caveat is that this calculation ignores frequency of attendance and the AWA figures do now include it while the fxC ones do not. That calculation comes in tables 18 and 19.

5.1.3 Comparisons between dioceses in the two rounds of research

Though the method does not include frequency adjustment, it is consistent in itself and enables readers to note the range of engagement with the fxC agenda and the relative scale of results.

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[12] G. Cray (ed.), *Mission-shaped church* (CHP, 2004), p. 146, recommendation 8.

Table 15:   Number of fxC and their attendance : first eleven dioceses

Diocese name	No. of fxC	Diocese no. of churches	fxC/dioc churches	fxC attendance (all ages)	Diocese AWA 2012	fxC/dioc attendance
Liverpool	78	248	31.5%	2933	28200	10.4%
Canterbury	72	328	22.0%	3177	21300	14.9%
Leicester	52	313	16.6%	1811	15700	11.5%
Derby	46	329	14.0%	1465	17400	8.4%
Chelmsford	50	595	8.4%	1830	40200	4.6%
Norwich	63	640	9.8%	2864	18100	15.8%
Ripon & Leeds	39	251	15.5%	1083	14100	7.6%
Blackburn	64	276	23.2%	2702	26800	10.1%
Bristol	33	205	16.1%	1727	16400	10.5%
Portsmouth	21	173	12.1%	1271	13500	9.4%
Gloucester	23	386	6.0%	729	19900	3.7%
Totals	541	3744		21,592	231,800	
Averages			**14.4%**			**9.3%**

Table 16: Number of fxC and their attendance : second ten dioceses

Diocese name	No. of fxC	Diocese no. of churches	fxC/dioc churches	all age fxC attendance	Diocese AWA 2014	fxC/dioc attendance
Exeter	69	614	11.2%	3314	22700	14.6%
Ely	52	334	15.6%	2558	18100	14.1%
Southwark	47	364	12.9%	2386	41000	5.8%
Guildford	77	216	35.6%	4215	25600	16.5%
Carlisle	47	339	13.9%	1672	13600	12.3%
London	86	489	17.6%	7242	73900	9.8%
Birmingham	28	189	14.8%	1320	17200	7.7%
Sheffield	56	208	26.9%	2499	17700	14.1%
York	57	593	9.6%	1806	27500	6.6%
Manchester	49	322	15.2%	2020	28100	7.2%
Totals	568	3668		29,032	285,400	
Averages			**15.5%**			**10.2%**

Inferences from the data

The averaged percentages in these two sets of data are close. This gives a level of confidence that the overall proper variety of dioceses sought, as explained in section 3.1.1, has been achieved. Both sets of data affirm the broadly representative picture that each severally contributes.

By this measure, which is too simple to be the final view, just under 1/6th of the churches of the Church of England are fresh expressions of Church and around 1/10th of the attenders are going to one, if for the moment the frequency and blending factors are excluded.

Throughout, the comparison made has been with the number of churches, not parishes, because they are more alike. Parishes may contain more than one church and most fxC meet within the existing parish that sent them out. Though it is not known which dioceses have included the fxC in their count of churches, it was assumed here that they have been, as this would be desirable. This calculation renders the figure vulnerable to the danger of over-claiming, for it works with a potentially undercounted total number of churches (traditional *and* fxC) across a diocese.

One thing is clear, namely that usually the percentage of fxC is higher than the percentage of fxC attenders, which reflects our knowledge that most fxC are smaller in size than inherited churches. Readers may notice that in a few more rural, less densely populated dioceses, such as Norwich and Exeter, these two percentage figures are reversed. This relates to their high number of small village churches. In Ely, Carlisle and York these differences play their part but less decisively.

It is also clear using this method that the fxC effect is uneven across the dioceses. In the first set, Liverpool has five times the percentage of fxC to churches compared with Gloucester, and three times the attendance percentage. The starkest contrast in the second set is the fourfold difference comparing the percentages of fxC to other churches in Guildford and York, or the percentages of fxC attenders in urban Guildford and Southwark, or between largely rural Ely and York.

There is virtually no hard evidence of what part the overall culture of a diocese has played in arriving at what has led to these figures. One straw in the wind we have detected came through writing the reports on each diocese, as it was completed. In all cases, bar one, the number of fxC started grows with each successive seven year period 1992-1998, 1999-2005, 2006-2012 and then *pro rata* 2013-2014. The exception was a fall in Southwark diocese for 1999-2005 which overlaps with a period when church planting and fresh expressions of Church were not much welcomed.

One surprise was the slightly below average percentage of fxC attenders, including the church plants, in London diocese. However, their score for fxC to diocesan churches is 2 percentage points higher than the average. The positive publicity long put out by its resource churches like HTB and St Helen's Bishopsgate, and the 2016 report *Love, Sweat and Tears* by Tim Thorlby on five Anglican church plants in East London, all paint upbeat pictures. By the measures used across the dioceses, the overall London contribution is more modest. This report examines the particularities of the London fxC story in section 5.8.

5.1.4 AWA and fxC attendance when fxC numbers are removed

This calculation goes a long way to remove the uncertainties around which fxC have been included and which ignored, and which alleged ones that were included should not have been. As such it is a cleaner calculation. The adjusted AWA comes from R&S and the fxC attendance from Church Army's Research Unit (CARU).

Table 17:   fxC as a proportion of the frequency adjusted attendance in the 21 dioceses

	AWA less fxC attenders	fxC attendance	Overall number (AWA plus fxC)	fxC %
Dioceses 1 - 11	220,700 (2012)	21,592	242,292	8.9%
Dioceses 12-21	274,500 (2014)	29,032	303,532	9.6%

Notes on the method
Only overall figures for each of the two sets of dioceses surveyed are displayed, as this data, kindly given by the R &S unit, has not been checked with the individual dioceses. Moreover this subsection only aimed to derive a meaningful average figure, not to inspect contrasts between individual dioceses. It is not adjusted for either frequency or blending.

Inferences from the data
As in section 5.1.3 tables 15 and 16, these results from the two sets of dioceses are within one percentage point of each other, if not very slightly closer, affirming by their narrow range they demonstrate what may be taken as representative of a national picture.

Nor are they far away from the unadjusted figures in table 15 of 9.3% and in table 16 of 10.2%. It is harder to know precisely what these differences mean.

One attractive inference is that in the first set of calculations the majority of fxC had been counted in, which would be welcome. What we cannot be certain about is whether some bogus fxC attenders were initially included in the AWA and other legitimate ones still excluded.

That the second set of percentages is lower, and that it is reasonable that the fxC attendance in this research is a more robust figure, probably means that the figures taken out by the R & S team did contain attenders at things which Church Army's Research Unit would not have included as fxC.

This report recommends that the percentages found in tables 15 and 16 should be the ones which are quoted, granting it will also be prudent and fair to quote those percentages in tables 18 and 19 of section 5.2, which are adjusted for frequency.

5.2 fxC attenders adjusted by attendance frequency

To move towards a more accurate picture of the fxC contribution to the whole, we now unpack how attendance numbers at fxC are affected by frequency. We think it is reasonable to assert that monthly attenders are equivalent to ¼ of a weekly person and a fortnightly attender is ½. As noted earlier AWA does now take account of this. This recalculation where fortnightly attendance is divided by 2 and monthly by 4 is shown below in two tables, one for each round of research.

Table 18:   Adjusted attendance by frequency, dioceses 1-11

Diocese	2012 AWA	Previously reported fxC totals	Adjusted fxC totals	% difference	Prev. reported % of AWA 2012	Adjusted % of AWA 2012
Liverpool	28200	2933	1910.00	-35%	10.4%	6.8%
Canterbury	21300	3177	2142.25	-33%	14.9%	10.1%
Leicester	15700	1811	1317.50	-27%	11.5%	8.4%
Derby	17400	1465	594.00	-59%	8.4%	3.4%
Chelmsford	40200	1830	1072.75	-41%	4.6%	2.7%
Norwich	18100	2864	1650.00	-42%	15.8%	9.1%
Ripon & Leeds	14300	1083	641.25	-41%	7.6%	4.5%
Blackburn	26800	2702	1500.00	-44%	10.1%	5.6%
Bristol	16400	1727	964.00	-44%	10.5%	5.9%
Portsmouth	13500	1271	365.75	-71%	9.4%	2.7%
Gloucester	19900	729	388.50	-47%	3.7%	2.0%
	231800	21592	12546.00		9.3%	5.4%

Table 19:   Adjusted attendance by frequency , diocese 12-21

Diocese	2014 AWA	Previously reported fxC totals	Adjusted fxC totals	% difference	Prev. reported % of AWA 2014	Adjusted % of AWA 2014
Exeter	22700	3314	1496.25	-55%	14.6%	6.6%
Ely	18100	2558	1837.25	-28%	14.1%	10.2%
Southwark	41000	2386	1872.5	-22%	5.8%	4.6%
Guildford	25600	4215	1117.75	-73%	16.5%	4.4%
Carlisle	13600	1672	713.00	-57%	12.3%	5.2%
London	73900	7242	6622.75	-9%	9.8%	9.0%
Birmingham	17200	1320	566.42	-57%	7.7%	3.3%
Sheffield	17700	2499	1790.00	-28%	14.1%	10.1%
York	27500	1806	1115.00	-38%	6.6%	4.1%
Manchester	28100	2020	1016.75	-50%	7.2%	3.6%
	285400	29032	18147.67		10.2%	6.4%

Inferences from the data

In existing parishes the term 'regular' no longer necessarily means weekly, and can now mean something like fortnightly, or even monthly in those parishes which have a deliberately varied service pattern across a month. Also, some churches work together and congregations rotate; for example attending different churches across a month. However, the R&S unit do treat those known to be only coming to a monthly congregation as being ¼ of an attender. Consistency then says the same should apply in fxC and the adjusted figures in tables 18 and 19 can be taken as fairer comparisons. The contribution of the fxC is then more modest, but still positive.

Across the individual dioceses the range, by this measure, is from 10% to 2% and an overall average of around 6%. This is notably less than the 10% average which was widely quoted from the October 2013 Strand 3b report. We ask readers to bear in mind that those figures were against the central 2011 returns, which themselves were not adjusted for frequency. That development only was applied from 2012 onwards.

The downward changes, via frequency adjustment, are not uniform as they are calculated from each individual fxC record, which are then grouped by diocese. The dip in each diocese will vary due to the prevalence of its fxC which hold monthly meetings. In turn a good slice of that will reflect what proportion of its fxC are monthly Messy Churches. For example, in the second set of dioceses 54% of the Exeter fxC are of this type and 42% in Guildford, or in the first set with Portsmouth, with 67% of its fxC as Messy Churches.

It will be in the readers' judgement to decide which overall contributions to attendance in a diocese are called marginal.

- In surveyed order, those with under 3% include Chelmsford, Portsmouth, and Gloucester.
- Those dioceses with over 3% and less than 5% are: Derby and what was Ripon & Leeds, Southwark, Guildford, Birmingham, York and Manchester.
- 11 dioceses have seen between over 5% to just over 10%.
- Excepting the lowest group of figures it would be harsh to write the gains as marginal.

The Church of England has tended to be a church in which both decline and growth have been at modest rates, with annual marginal gains and losses. This contribution, charting a story with a 20 year life, and which has accelerated in the last ten years as section 5.4 shows, broadly fits with that, but in this case it is a story of growth. Sections 6.3 and 6.10 amplify and nuance this.

In the overall scheme, clearly fxC are the minor partners compared to parishes, yet as a measure of overall growth they have some significance.

Blending
Another uncounted factor in fresh expressions of Church, and mentioned in section 5.1.1, is the number of people who are 'blending'. That is, they by choice attend more than one expression of being church. Our questionnaire did not include that option, but the report *Who's there?* found from their smaller sample that of the existing churchgoers at fxC, 42% of these were blending, or when the Christians are seen as a proportion of attenders, they are 23% of the total number. That would further reduce the fxC numerical contribution by between a fifth and a quarter.

A brief summary
The various measures within sections 5.1 and 5.2, nuanced by what it does and does not include, give a wider set of data than possessed before to the Church of England. They form one set of measures of the numerical contribution made by fxC.

We have tried to set out the varying ways in which the attending numbers can be compared. The results show attenders to be something between 6-10% of a diocese's attenders and around 15% of its overall number of churches.

What we have quoted as 'attendance' for the fxC in the majority of the report means the number of people at a typical meeting or gathering, not counting a wider fringe. FxC leaders continue to tell us that such fringes may be twice the size or more of the cited attendance.

5.3 Traditions in fxC across the dioceses

Knowing that the spread of traditions are more loosely held today by some, while robustly held by others, the leader respondents were permitted to choose up to three traditions with which to identify. Thus the figures cited do not sum to 100%.

Table 20:   Traditions participating in fxC: first eleven dioceses

Diocese	Evangelical	Charismatic	Central	Anglo-Catholic
Liverpool	73.1%	23.1%	24.4%	9.0%
Canterbury	63.9%	44.4%	41.7%	5.6%
Leicester	76.9%	44.2%	30.8%	3.8%
Derby	60.9%	41.3%	47.8%	4.3%
Chelmsford	80.0%	34.0%	28.0%	8.0%
Norwich	50.8%	23.8%	58.7%	14.3%
Ripon & Leeds	43.6%	41.0%	46.2%	23.1%
Blackburn	53.1%	10.9%	50.0%	14.1%
Bristol	60.6%	21.2%	54.5%	12.1%
Portsmouth	47.6%	38.1%	57.1%	4.8%
Gloucester	47.8%	39.1%	47.8%	17.4%
Averages	61.9%	31.6%	42.3%	10.2%

Section 3.4.2 explained we made a mistake in setting up the first round of research and failed to include the Liberal tradition. We are glad to set this right. Page 33 explains that this does not make very much mathematical difference, but it is important that this tradition is equally honoured and this gap in the coverage is closed.

Table 21:   Traditions participating in fxC: second ten dioceses

Diocese	Evangelical	Charismatic	Central	Anglo-Catholic	Liberal
Exeter	55.1%	27.5%	42.0%	18.8%	18.8%
Ely	63.5%	26.9%	44.2%	13.5%	9.6%
Southwark	78.7%	42.6%	12.8%	10.6%	17.0%
Guildford	64.9%	24.7%	45.5%	11.7%	23.4%
Carlisle	68.1%	25.5%	44.7%	10.6%	12.8%
London	68.6%	47.7%	17.4%	17.4%	7.0%
Birmingham	67.9%	32.1%	46.4%	21.4%	10.7%
Sheffield	78.6%	53.6%	26.8%	14.3%	3.6%
York	57.9%	26.3%	45.6%	21.1%	5.3%
Manchester	53.1%	12.2%	40.8%	22.4%	16.3%
Averages	65.3%	32.6%	35.7%	16.0%	12.7%

We have no source of data to independently verify whether the proportions identifying with the varying traditions are typical of each diocese in question. However, we note that across the Church of England, as compared with 1960, there has been a rise in the number of evangelical clergy and the advent of those wishing to be called charismatic, often in conjunction with another tradition. Thus proportions of traditions held will have varied over decades within most dioceses.

Moreover, the traditions themselves are quite unknown to many of the recent attenders at fxC who do not have any church background or who had become de-churched in early life. All we are able to track is what tradition those starting the fxC identified with.

Compared with the count of leaders questioned, the number of choices made by which the percentages were calculated reveals that many leaders selected more than one tradition, inferring some openness across and blending between the traditions. With those caveats, some broad comments may be made.

In 17 out of 21 dioceses the evangelical tradition was most frequently named. In 3, the central tradition was the leading figure, and there was one equal figure between them. The central tradition was placed second in 11 dioceses, while charismatic came second in 6 others, which may surprise those who expected a higher association with that tradition. Sometimes these figures were close and at other times far apart. In all dioceses, except Manchester, the Anglo-Catholic was less represented than those traditions already named. In the final 10 dioceses, the Liberal tradition exceeded the Catholic figure three times but more often was less represented.

It seems clear that three factors need to be weighed:

- Quite often traditions are combined.
- All traditions within the Church of England can participate in starting fxC.
- They do not do so equally and section 6.19 deals with this more fully.

5.4 Years of start

Tables 22 and 23:   fxC by diocese and seven year periods of their start

Diocese	1992-1998	1999-2005	2006-2012	2013-2014	% 1992-1998	% 1999-2005	% 2006-2012
Liverpool	5	19	54	Outside	6.4%	24.4%	69.2%
Canterbury	8	17	47		11.1%	23.6%	65.3%
Leicester	2	5	45	research	3.8%	9.6%	86.5%
Derby	1	10	35		2.2%	21.7%	76.1%
Chelmsford	6	7	37	period	12.0%	14.0%	74.0%
Norwich	4	8	51		6.3%	12.7%	81.0%
Ripon & Leeds	1	3	35		2.6%	7.7%	89.7%
Blackburn	7	11	46		10.9%	17.2%	71.9%
Bristol	3	3	27		9.1%	9.1%	81.8%
Portsmouth	2	1	18		9.5%	4.8%	85.7%
Gloucester	2	3	18		8.7%	13.0%	78.3%
Totals	41	87	413				

Diocese	1992-1998	1999-2005	2006-2013	2013-2014	% 1992-1998	% 1999-2005	% 2006-2012	% 2013-2014
Exeter	2	5	49	13	2.9%	7.2%	71.0%	18.8%
Ely	4	7	29	12	7.7%	13.5%	55.8%	23.1%
Southwark	7	6	28	6	14.9%	12.8%	59.6%	12.8%
Guildford	8	12	39	18	10.4%	15.6%	50.6%	23.4%
Carlisle	0	5	22	20	0.0%	10.6%	46.8%	42.6%
London	8	21	37	20	9.3%	24.4%	43.0%	23.3%
Birmingham	1	3	15	9	3.6%	10.7%	53.6%	32.1%
Sheffield	6	10	26	14	10.7%	17.8%	46.4%	25.0%
York	2	12	28	15	3.5%	21.1%	49.1%	26.3%
Manchester	0	8	25	16	0%	16.3%	51.0%	32.7%
Totals	38	89	298	143				

Inferences from the data

1   A marked increase in starts

The most immediately obvious fact is that, in the first three successive seven year periods, the number and attendant percentage of fxC started continues to increase. This is true for nearly all the dioceses and in the first 11 dioceses the percentage increase in the third period is the most startling. It could be observed that the Church of England is not used to being faced with a widespread and dramatic story of growth across all its surveyed dioceses. Readers should note that dioceses 12-21 will have relatively lower percentage figures for the three earlier periods, and most noticeably for 2006-2012, because of the existence of the 2013-2014 entries.

It is technically unprovable, but hard to escape the conclusion that the 2004 report *Mission-shaped Church* has played a key part in two ways. Firstly, the report was keen to tell the Church of England what it was already doing, as much as what it might be minded to do. We now have the figures, by comparing the 1992-1998 period with 1999-2005, that underline the anecdotal sense, held by the writing group, that our context was of an increase, not only in church plants but of hitherto

unnamed kinds of new starts. Secondly, the report's favourable treatment by General Synod, its high sales figures, the accompanying stories of fxC put out by what was Church Army's Sheffield Centre, the warm endorsement by Archbishop Rowan and his appointment of the advocacy work of the consequent Fresh Expressions team, all contributed to what could be called a favourable climate in which beginning other fxCs was very plausible, and even fashionable. The data demonstrates that a marked increase occurred. Exactly why, and what part national factors and local ones played is less clear. Examination of the motives that impelled the start of each fxC may be our best clue and these are covered within section 6.5.

2   A growing increase
It looks as though not only the increase is marked, but that it continues to grow over the 20 years. As mentioned, one exception was in Southwark diocese in 1999-2005. We ask readers to note that although that is also true of Portsmouth diocese, the numbers there, of 2 down to 1, are so tiny as to be less compelling. What is ironic is that the one case in Portsmouth is of the founding example of Messy Church which has had its own significant impact on the wider picture.

Charts of these increases have been shown and discussed in section 4.4.

3   Was 2012 the peak in the unfolding story?
In 2013 it was impossible to tell but intriguing to ask. Projections onwards from recent data are notoriously attractive to some but equally unprovable. Now we have data from 2013 and 2014 the exercise is possible. Inferences will be suggestive but not conclusive.

In this case projections are further complicated in that across the data collection period set as 2013-2014, the earliest dioceses were finished before the 2014 year end. Thus their numbers are artificially low. To compensate, we have assumed a steady start rate across the 24 month interval and on that basis estimated what might have been true for the whole period 2013-2014.

Table 24:   Projected 2013-2019 numbers

Diocese	Nos 2013-2014	No. of months missing	Estimated nos full period 2013-2014	Extrapolated nos 2013-2019	Nos from 2006-12
Exeter	13	11	24	84	49
Ely	12	8	18	63	29
Southwark	6	4	7-8	25-28	28
Guildford	18	2	19-20	67-70	39
Carlisle	20	None	No change	70	22
London	20	None	No change	70	37
Birmingham	9	None	No change	32	15
Sheffield	14	None	No change	49	26
York	15	None	No change	53	28
Manchester	16	None	No change	56	25

In 9 dioceses this rate of new starts for 2013-2014, when extrapolated for a seven year period, infers this trend continues to grow. This suggests that overall a peak has not yet been reached.

Only in Southwark diocese is the increase marginal, from 28 in 2006-2012 to a projected 25-28 for 2013-2019. However, the diocese now has plans to take this agenda forward and have appointed a full time dean of fresh expressions.

5.5 The dioceses and fxC leaders, status, time and pay

This section does not argue that the diocese has the single most important influence on this choice about leadership at fxC. Other data from analysis by fxC type is noteworthy, as Chapter 6 will unpack. However, there will be some effect, as dioceses make clergy appointments, determine what forms of non-stipendiary ministry may exist and fix the length of curacies. They have different attitudes to pioneer ministry, authorise different kinds of lay ministry and informally influence the culture which may surround forms of experimental or unauthorised lay ministry.

Table 25:   fxC leaders, ordained, lay and lay-lay – by diocese

Diocese	Ordained leader	Lay leader	Lay-lay leader
Liverpool	50.0%	50.0%	39.0%
Canterbury	44.0%	56.0%	42.9%
Leicester	30.8%	69.2%	52.3%
Derby	48.4%	51.6%	39.1%
Chelmsford	47.7%	52.3%	41.5%
Norwich	54.3%	45.7%	32.1%
Ripon & Leeds	59.3%	40.7%	35.2%
Blackburn	50.0%	50.0%	36.6%
Bristol	50.0%	50.0%	35.0%
Portsmouth	45.2%	54.8%	51.6%
Gloucester	42.4%	57.6%	24.2%
Average	47.7%	52.3%	39.2%
Exeter	45.9%	54.1%	48.2%
Ely	62.8%	37.2%	20.5%
Southwark	52.6%	47.4%	35.9%
Guildford	46.2%	53.8%	46.2%
Carlisle	53.2%	46.8%	39.0%
London	63.4%	36.6%	24.6%
Birmingham	50.0%	50.0%	32.5%
Sheffield	48.5%	51.5%	37.4%
York	56.8%	43.2%	34.1%
Manchester	68.1%	31.9%	19.4%
Average	54.8%	45.2%	34.1%

Over time fxC may have had more than one leader, so the percentages given are as proportions of leader records, not the number of fxC. Also it should not be assumed that these percentages have remained constant across the years since 1992. An example is that our previous 2013 report noted that the proportion of incumbents leading fxC had halved from 30% to 16%.[13]

A spectrum of results
The table shows variety about the status of those who lead. In 13 dioceses the scores are within 5% either side of it being half and half ordained and lay leaders. In 4 further dioceses the difference is greater than 5% but less than 10%, but in 4 dioceses it is greater than 10%. Yet even this extent of lay leadership is worth noticing, in a Church where clergy have been the historic major, or sole, leaders of churches. At one end of the spectrum comes Leicester with 31% ordained to 69% lay. They have followed this up by creating the designation 'licensed lay pioneer' and employed three staff workers to find, equip and encourage them. At the other end of the spectrum comes Manchester diocese with 68% ordained and 32% lay. London is similar to Manchester and section 6.13 will show the degree to which the latter is attributable to the dominant choice of church plants in that diocese. Similarly, in Portsmouth diocese the lay figure is high, but 14 out of their 21 fxC examples are Messy Churches which tend to be lay led, hence the very high proportion of 'lay-lay' leaders, a term unpacked next.

The 'lay-lay' leaders
One result that drew considerable interest in our 2013 report was the existence of the so-called 'lay-lay'. This term which we invented, and has caught on, means lay people leading an fxC, without formal licensing and usually without recognised training, who nevertheless are doing so, usually in their spare time. In the second set of dioceses they are still to be found. Examination of the table suggests that without the influence of Manchester (19.4%), Ely (20.5%) and London (24.6%) they would be about as prolific as in the first set of dioceses.

To assume they are likely to make up nearly 2/5th of the leadership of future fxC would be prudent. The questions for dioceses, and for mission and training agencies, will be how to encourage and support them, to enquire what support and training the lay-lay sense they need, but not to unduly

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[13] Strand 3b report (Sheffield: Church Army & Church of England, 2013), p. 59.

burden them with centrally devised training requirements, or undue authorisation hoops to jump through. Their effectiveness is covered in Chapter 11.

Table 26: fxC Leaders by time given and whether paid

Diocese	Full time	Part time	Spare time		Stipendiary	Locally paid	Voluntary
Liverpool	49.0%	21.0%	30.0%		46.0%	7.0%	47.0%
Canterbury	51.1%	22.2%	26.7%		45.1%	16.5%	38.5%
Leicester	36.9%	15.4%	47.7%		32.3%	13.8%	53.8%
Derby	43.8%	12.5%	43.8%		37.5%	7.8%	54.7%
Chelmsford	56.9%	18.5%	24.6%		36.9%	20.0%	43.1%
Norwich	50.6%	17.3%	32.1%		45.7%	3.7%	50.6%
Ripon & Leeds	57.4%	1.9%	40.7%		57.4%	1.9%	40.7%
Blackburn	50.0%	17.1%	32.9%		46.3%	9.8%	43.9%
Bristol	47.5%	22.5%	30.0%		32.5%	15.0%	52.5%
Portsmouth	32.3%	35.5%	32.3%		35.5%	12.9%	51.6%
Gloucester	51.5%	21.2%	27.3%		33.3%	15.2%	51.5%
Average Dioc 1-11	48.7%	18.0%	33.3%		42.1%	10.8%	47.2%
Exeter	45.9%	22.4%	31.8%		36.5%	20.0%	43.5%
Ely	51.3%	21.8%	26.9%		52.6%	7.7%	39.7%
Southwark	60.3%	15.4%	24.4%		48.7%	17.9%	33.3%
Guildford	52.1%	29.4%	18.5%		37.8%	29.4%	32.8%
Carlisle	62.3%	13.0%	24.7%		62.3%	6.5%	31.2%
London	70.1%	17.9%	11.9%		51.5%	26.1%	22.4%
Birmingham	60.0%	12.5%	27.5%		47.5%	22.5%	30.0%
Sheffield	52.5%	23.2%	24.2%		46.5%	15.2%	38.4%
York	51.1%	25.0%	23.9%		43.2%	20.5%	36.4%
Manchester	55.6%	18.1%	26.4%		58.3%	1.4%	40.3%
Average Dioc 12-21	56.4%	20.7%	22.9%		47.9%	17.8%	34.3%

Explanations of the terms

Those in 'full time' ministry often did not have all that time devoted to the fxC, but their associated status did confer some authority. 'Spare time' was deemed to be of those who had major other employment or role. 'Part time' is a variable feast and not always linked to paid church employment. Stipendiary implies income paid from the diocese, and 'locally paid' could mean by the fxC, the parish or a trust. Voluntary is self-explanatory.

Inferences from the data

Throughout our research we have found that those leading part time, or being locally paid, are the least frequent choices made. Those locally paid are more common in the southern and midlands dioceses, which may indicate parishes with greater financial resources and thus able to recruit multiple but part time staff. Anecdotally, we often recorded that they were children and families workers. Sometimes the rates of these two least chosen factors go together, as in the erstwhile Ripon & Leeds, Leicester, Exeter or Guildford. More often they diverge widely as in Liverpool, Norwich, Blackburn, Bristol, Portsmouth, Gloucester, Ely, Carlisle, London, Birmingham, Sheffield and Manchester.

Comparing tables 25 and 26 suggests there is only a loose correspondence between being ordained and full time. Sometimes there is a specific factor operating in a diocese, such as the stipendiary roles of the relatively new Network Youth Church leaders, often serving a deanery in Carlisle diocese. It is noticeable that the average figures for the two sets of dioceses show variation. In relation to the full time factor, London, Southwark and Carlisle boost the second set, and accordingly depress the spare time percentages. A similar factor occurs in relation to pay, in this case with more stipendiary roles taken in Carlisle, Manchester, Ely and London. Examination of a prevalence of types of fxC in certain dioceses will throw more light on this.

5.6 The fxC team size taken, by diocese

Table 27: Team size taken in the fxC, dioceses 1-21 (adults only)

Diocese	1-2	3-12	13-19	20-49	50+	Total fxC	%; 3-12
Liverpool	15	57	2	4	0	78	73.1%
Canterbury	4	53	5	8	2	72	73.6%
Leicester	4	36	9	2	1	52	69.2%
Derby	2	38	5	1	0	46	82.6%
Chelmsford	3	36	4	6	1	50	72.0%
Norwich	6	49	3	3	2	63	77.8%
Ripon & Leeds	8	29	2	0	0	39	74.4%
Blackburn	7	46	5	6	0	64	71.9%
Bristol	3	24	2	4	0	33	72.7%
Portsmouth	0	12	5	4	0	21	57.1%
Gloucester	2	18	1	1	1	23	78.3%
Cases, Dio 1-11	54	398	43	39	7	541	
Percentage	10.0%	73.6%	7.9%	7.2%	1.3%		
Exeter	2	61	4	2	0	69	88.4%
Ely	6	40	1	3	2	52	76.9%
Southwark	7	28	6	4	2	47	59.6%
Guildford	12	46	8	10	1	77	59.7%
Carlisle	14	25	3	5	0	47	53.2%
London	8	34	9	28	7	86	39.5%
Birmingham	3	18	3	4	0	28	64.3%
Sheffield	6	39	5	4	1	56	69.6%
York	12	39	5	1	0	57	68.4%
Manchester	11	29	6	3	0	49	59.2%
Cases Dio 12-21	81	359	50	64	13	568	
Percentages	14.3%	63.2%	8.8%	11.3%	2.3%		
Overall percentage	12.2%	68.3%	8.4%	9.3%	1.8%		68.3%

Inferences from the data

It remains true that taking 3-12 adults is the dominant choice. We suggest this is good news for the Church of England, for releasing that number of people is within the reach of many parishes wondering whether they too can start something that may be needed. It is not the case that sending a large team is typical or always necessary. It is equally clear that the generous giving away of 50+ people is rare. Without the London examples it would be less than 2% of cases.

Looking at the right hand column, it is also clear that London is the diocese that most radically departs from the typicality of the 3-12 sized team, at 39.5%, because of its history of larger transplants. It is the only diocese where teams of 20-49 combined with those of 50+ are greater than the team size of 3-12.

Other dioceses, listed in survey order and with lower scores for 3-13 people, include Portsmouth, Guildford, Southwark, Carlisle, and Manchester, but for different reasons. Portsmouth and Guildford have high proportions of Messy Churches that tend to need larger teams. Southwark is second only to London for its high proportion of church plants. Carlisle has the higher number of 1-2 people sent, i.e. its Network Youth Church leaders. Manchester has several teams of 1-2.

These variables underline two lessons. There is a strong link between team size sent and certain types of fxC. People considering what to start should be aware of this. Section 6.8 makes this explicit. However, it is also true that modest teams do begin most of what we have observed.

5.7 Diocese and mission support type

This section follows on from examining team sizes because there is often a link between those sizes and what *Breaking New Ground* in 1994 called runners, grafts, transplants and seeds. Classically, the *seed* category meant to 1-2 people moving house to a new location, *transplants* often took 20-50 people taking the lead in another church/parish, while *grafts* were usually smaller and in more equal partnership with the receiving church. *Runners*, which stayed within the sending parish, could vary between 3 to 20+ people.

Research ought to be able to adjust to data which overflows its previously defined categories and we deemed this necessary in relation to what counted as a transplant, because of patterns that we found in London diocese, the 17th in the series. Section 3.4, table 8 and the accompanying text explain the reasons for widening the application of this term. The four kinds of transplant now recognised all share the feature of the transfer of existing Christians, for mission reasons, across a parish boundary into another venue. But then they vary from the first which is the classic type.

Nos	type
18	as the senior / larger partner with an existing ecclesial community and its building
4	sharing a church building with another ecclesial community but in a separate congregation
8	into an empty ecclesial building
21	into a secular venue

Therefore, the figures previously given for transplants in the 2013 report have been modified. Prior to this awareness, some cases that did not meet all the criteria for transplant were assigned to the next most appropriate label. This report now reverses this for greater consistency in using the term.

Having gone back to each case across the 16 prior dioceses, changes were made, it so happens, in 16 instances. 13 were deemed transplants, two runners and 1 a seed. Conversely, the number of seeds dropped by 9, there are now 2 fewer grafts and there are 5 fewer runners.

To gauge the effect of these changes, under the prior view of what was a transplant, in dioceses 1-11 their proportion was 0.4% and across dioceses 12-21 it rose to 6.9%, with London contributing 28% of the transplants and Ely 10%, based on the new wider definition.

The amended more accurate figures are below.

Table 28:   Mission support dynamics for fxC – 1st set of dioceses

Diocese	Runner %	Graft %	Transplant %	Seed %	n/a %
Liverpool	88%	1%	0%	10%	0%
Canterbury	83%	1%	7%	8%	0%
Leicester	88%	4%	2%	4%	2%
Derby	93%	2%	0%	4%	0%
Chelmsford	94%	0%	2%	4%	0%
Norwich	97%	0%	0%	2%	2%
Ripon & Leeds	92%	0%	0%	5%	3%
Blackburn	95%	0%	2%	5%	0%
Bristol	79%	3%	12%	6%	3%
Portsmouth	90%	0%	0%	10%	0%
Gloucester	91%	0%	0%	9%	0%
Averages Dioc. 1-11	90.4%	0.9%	2.2%	5.7%	0.7%

Table 29:   Mission support dynamics for fxC – 2nd set of dioceses

Diocese	Total fxC	Runner %	Graft %	Transplant %	Seed %	n/a %
Exeter	69	91.3%	0.0%	1.4%	5.8%	1.4%

Ely	52	82.7%	0.0%	9.6%	7.7%	0.0%
Southwark	47	74.5%	10.6%	2.1%	10.6%	2.1%
Guildford	77	89.6%	1.3%	3.9%	3.9%	1.3%
Carlisle	47	78.7%	0.0%	0.0%	19.1%	2.1%
London	86	50.0%	7.0%	27.9%	15.1%	0.0%
Birmingham	28	82.1%	0.0%	3.6%	10.7%	3.6%
Sheffield	56	76.8%	5.4%	3.6%	8.9%	5.4%
York	57	82.5%	0.0%	3.5%	10.5%	3.5%
Manchester	49	95.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.1%	0.0%
no. of fxC	568					
Averages Dioc. 12-21		79.2%	2.6%	6.9%	9.5%	1.8%
All Dioceses	**1109**	**84.7%**	**1.8%**	**4.6%**	**7.7%**	**1.3%**

Inferences from the data

These two tables, starting from a classification around for 20 years,[14] fill out the national scene, which is that **transplants** make up 4.6% of the overall picture, and the **grafts** another 1.8%. The transplants are principally found in London, Ely, Bristol and Canterbury dioceses. Grafts are the most common in Southwark, London and Sheffield. We know of no anecdotal source suggesting that there are much higher proportions in dioceses as yet not surveyed. It is most likely that covering the capital has unearthed the highest incidence of them.

Any view that entertains these two mission support types are the major feature of the fxC world is mistaken as together they contribute only 6.4% of the examples. Their numerical contribution is larger by virtue of larger team sizes taken and their subsequent growth. Their public profile is also higher because of the crossing of parish boundaries, seeking permissions and the forming of partnerships involved.

Our team holds no view that they are in any way wrong, but we think that the opportunities for them and the range of factors or resources needed are not common. The classic kind require an urban context, a church building and congregation in need of some level of rescue, a large team of committed and prosperous volunteers, and the income from the start for a full time ordained leader, all of which require a large sending church and support from the diocese to steer a path should there be any injured local parish church feelings. There are not likely to be more than a few cases where all of these factors are present in any given diocese, but it is an option where these features do exist.

Those transplants moving into an empty ecclesial or secular venue have the same human resource issues but are less hampered by the proper requirements of close partnership in a shared building, although securing good relationships with the surrounding parish(es) and permission givers is just as important.

The data suggests that the proportion of **seeds** has nearly doubled in the 2nd set of dioceses; the raw numbers confirm this, with the number rising from 31 to 54. Why they should be more prevalent in the 2nd set of dioceses, we do not know. It is unlikely to be connected to a rise in the deployment of Ordained Pioneer Ministers as the number of them in the 2nd set of dioceses has fallen compared with the 1st set and they account for tiny proportions of the whole.

The most frequent connections to types of fxC across all the dioceses is as follows, but it is not the case that the proportions of these types have increased in the 2nd set of dioceses, with the exception of the Carlisle youth churches, accounting for half of the youth churches below.

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[14] The meaning of the terms is found in *Breaking New Ground* (London: CHP 1994), pp. 6-7 and 49. They are explained a little in the glossary.

Table 30: **The five most common types of fxC started through the seed dynamic**

Type of fxC	Network church	Community development plant	Special interest group	Youth church	Alternative worship
Number of seeds	22	21	19	14	12

The first type of fxC represents crossing the assumption that mission should be parish-based. The next three might represent crossing kinds of cultural gaps. This may be an indicator that more small groups of people are willing to take a risk, start something from meagre resources and include the willingness to re-locate and re-imagine in order to do so.

Runners continue to be the dominant part of the overall picture. Their proportion in the 2nd set of dioceses reduces as the proportions of the other three kinds all rise. Yet they still make up ¾ of the story. This underlines that the bulk of fxC start and remain within the parish that gave them birth. This, in its own way, is a sign of hope, that freshness need not mean either radical novelty, or the dismantling of a local, geographical base for mission and pastoral care.

5.8 Assessing whether or not London diocese is typical

Finding the right terms to describe the similarity and difference
In this report's examination of fxC across 21 dioceses there are clear differences between them. Some features are simply of context and this is neither cause for praise nor censure. This applies to factors like the size of a diocese and its urban to rural mix. This will, in turn, have some effect upon the number of churches, the size of population served, and the population density. Some of these features were shown in section 3.1.1 table 1. The table below serves to highlight the contextual differences, by choosing the more sparsely and more densely populated dioceses within the second tranche using the 2014 statistics for mission. Clearly London diocese, with 8.5 times the population of Carlisle diocese but 75 times its density of population, is radically different from Carlisle.

Table 31: Features of sparsely and densely populated dioceses, by population density

Diocese	No of Churches	Population served	Population density, per square mile	Population per church	% of population attending
Carlisle	339	492,000	200	1451	2.76%
Ely	335	751,000	500	2242	2.41%
Exeter	611	1,159,000	450	1897	1.96%
Sheffield	208	1,257,000	2170	6043	1.41%
Manchester	322	2,110,000	5020	6553	1.33%
Birmingham	189	1,536,000	5300	8127	1.12%
Southwark	364	2,784,000	8700	7648	1.47%
London	489	4,171,000	14900	8530	1.77%

Various comments can be made. Manchester, Carlisle and Ely have similar numbers of churches, but utterly different figures for population per church and the resultant percentage attending. The number of churches is not in itself diagnostic. But in terms of effective penetration of a diocese, other factors do make a difference. The two dioceses that make up most of London have notably higher populations and population densities to serve than elsewhere. Outside the capital only Birmingham, Manchester (and Liverpool) have densities over 4000. All the others are below 2500, down to the likes of Carlisle. This means there are not very many other large areas of dense population, though Leeds would be one. What is unusual about the two London dioceses is that they modify, but do not negate, the general trend shown in the table that the higher the population density and population per church, the percentage of population attending falls. This tendency has been known since the time of the Leslie Paul report of 1964.[15]

This becomes an argument that all urban dioceses, not just the capital, need more churches and the fxC phenomenon is part of that response, as sections 7.1 and 7.2 show. It is also an argument that the existing churches in the more rural dioceses are, pro rata, doing somewhat better.

All this bears on the question of typicality.
In mathematical lists of diocesan figures, the mean and the median can be calculated, but that does not really render those figures typical. Terms such as 'usual and unusual' or 'similar and dissimilar' may be more accurate. The word typical is somewhat meaningless, as there is no typical diocese as shown above. However, if a diocese reveals markedly different patterns to the average elsewhere then the term 'untypical' is more merited and this, with the wider range of contexts illustrated above, does affect questions of transferability.

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[15] '…the distribution of clergy is in inverse proportion to pastoral need … the greater the density of population … the poorer the pastoral results of the Church, the feebler its total impact, L Paul, *The deployment and payment of the Clergy*, (CIO, 1964), pp. 54, 57 and 80.

Ways in which the London fxC are similar to elsewhere

- The 9.8% percentage of attenders at all types of fxC as a direct proportion of the diocese AWA, with dioceses 1-11 yielding 9.3% and dioceses 12-21, 10.2%.[16]
- The 70% of people drawn from neighbourhoods, with 47% from networks.[17] The former is very close to the 71.7% neighbourhood average across all 21 dioceses. The network figure is more divergent as dioceses 1-11 showed only 36.4% and dioceses 12-21, 41.7%.
- Conforming to the pattern seen elsewhere that, in the motives for starting up, church plants work more with geographical factors and other fxC begin more for cultural considerations, though both are motivated by growth. This feature is unpacked in section 6.5.
- All traditions of the Church of England have played a part and in similar proportions to the averages; variants being more charismatics and half the proportion from the central tradition.

Ways in which London and its fxC are unusual

- The population density in 2014 at 14,900 is highly unusual, when compared with Southwark 8,700, Birmingham 5,300 or Liverpool 4,020 in 2012, and 7 other dioceses around 1–2 thousand, let alone the 8 at less than 1000 people per square mile. It is at least a question whether in such a tightly packed urban context and with a mobile population, parish boundaries are of lower significance than would be true elsewhere.
- This may connect to the London story in which 62% of their fxC crossed a parish boundary to start an fxC. In dioceses 1-11, the fxC locating beyond a parish boundary were 16.8%, and dioceses 12-21, including London, were 30.5%, with those fxC occurring beyond the benefice boundary being even less at 21.8%.
- The London fxC have the lowest level, though not by much, of attenders being typical or mainly typical of the served area or culture, at 73%, compared with the 81.5% in the 1st 11 dioceses and dioceses 12-21 at 79.9%.
- A high proportion of London's fxC are church plants (41%), nearly three and half times the average across dioceses 1-21.[18] In also recording that Southwark's church plants are 28% of their total, this means that the capital has 36% of the surveyed dioceses' church plants. For the numbers of church plants in all the 21 dioceses, see table 10 of section 4.3. Four further dioceses have an above average proportion of them: Sheffield 18%, Chelmsford 16%, Ely 15% and Guildford 12%. London's set is 26.5% of the total of 132. They have been long tried elsewhere, sometimes widely, and were 61%, or the dominant type, of the 1992-1998 period.
- 28% of all London's fxC cases are transplants, compared with 2.2% in dioceses 1-11 and 6.8% in dioceses 12-21, including London. All of these are church plants; none are of other types of fxC, though most of these church plants also draw on other fxC instincts or designations like cell, all age worship, or being multiple congregations. In London, 7% are grafts, but elsewhere they are 1.8%.
- It tends to be the London transplants (and one in Sheffield) that move into an empty church or share a church but in order to create a separate congregation.
- The high percentage of ordained leaders at the London fxC. Most often they are full time, and male, all of which features are more strongly present at the 35 church plants. Elsewhere there is a significant contribution made by spare time, voluntary women who, across the dioceses, are equally effective.
- The 40.7% with larger teams (20 or more people) to start the fxC. Elsewhere in dioceses 1-11 that size is 8.5%, and in dioceses 12-21, including London, it is 13.6%. Conversely 40% of

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[16] These figures are not adjusted for frequency (see section 5.2) but are the same measure used for all.
[17] These do not sum, as the data given to us includes cases where the factors 'neighbourhood' and 'network' were strongly present. What is being registered is the proportion of times that on a scoring of 0-3 to assess the prevalence of each factor, at least 2 was recorded.
[18] Throughout this research the team has followed the lead given by *Mission-shaped Church* that church plants are seen as one type of fxC.

teams are only 3-12 people, 23 percentage points below the average in the 2nd set of dioceses and 33 percentage points below that of the first 11 dioceses.

- The higher than usual use of church buildings, at 61%, compared with dioceses 1-11 at 43.9%, and the second set including London at 50.7%. This is then reflected in more fxC meetings held on Sunday and on a weekly basis.
- The larger mean size of the London fxC at 90.5, as compared with 43.4 in the 1st 11 dioceses and 56.6 in the 2nd set, even including London. This is mainly because of the church plants. Looking at all church plants across the 21 dioceses, their average size is 103.3.
- That 77% of fxC attenders are adults, and only 23% under 16s, compared with 59% adults and 41% under 16s in dioceses 1-11. In dioceses 12-21, including London, that figure is similar at 63.5% adults and 36.5% under 16s. The London figures may positively reflect the higher percentage of young adults in the capital, and now attending an fxC.
- The commendable high proportion, relatively speaking, of diocesan initiative in the motives measured to account for the starting story. In London it applied to 23.3% of cases, as compared with 5.9% in dioceses 1-11 and 9.3% in dioceses 12-21, including London.
- Having only 16% of the fxC as Messy Churches, whereas 32% is the average in dioceses 1-11 and 33% in dioceses 12-21, including London.

Application from these like and unlike features
The length and width of the second list goes a long way to justify the view that the London context and its overall set of fxC are unusual. However, the two lists neither contain any sense that what has occurred in London should not have happened, nor that it was not done well. The question for the wider Church is how realistic it is to hope that this pattern can work widely elsewhere.

This is now a sharper question because of recent 'resource church' plants begun in Brighton, Bournemouth, Norwich and Lincoln, one recently started in Birmingham, and the possibility of one in Southwark and another in Blackburn. More are being considered. All of these are somewhat like London in being clearly urban and close to town or city centres. There may be several elements worth considering within this trend: firstly, the feasibility of starting one of these high cost outlay examples; secondly, the extent to which this pattern is contextual; and thirdly, what difference beginning one such highly resourced example will make to the overall mission task of a diocese.

This consideration of transferability will be relevant both for how London diocese talks about its own story in the wider Church, and for those who watch from outside, rightly asking what can be learnt from their strengths, what transfers well and what is unique to the capital city - appropriate for it, but not a pattern that can be exported readily and widely, although appropriate in a limited number of further cases.

Encouragements and surprises from the London fxC figures

While the evidence aired in this report questions whether particular fxC practice in London diocese can be taken as a model for wide use elsewhere, this needs to be accompanied by recording the strengths of what has been done and where the results contain surprises.

Encouragements
- London diocese has begun 86 fxC since 1992, a few more than any other diocese. 80 of them are still going. Moreover, starting more fxC of several types is a consistent, intentional, growing trend over the 23 years, with 57 begun between 2006 and 2014.

- There is a clear story of positive partnership between the diocese and adventurous parishes.
- The proportion of fxC which continue to grow in size is towards 10 percentage points higher than nearly elsewhere, and only half of the overall the number that later shrink. This may be because these examples are well resourced in staff.
- The London fxC score high for all the various ways in which evangelism can be practiced.
- 22% of examples have planted again, and 19% hope to do so. A few have done so more than once. This is rare elsewhere and valuable for ongoing mission and church health.
- The figures for various measures of ecclesial maturity are all considerably above average.
- 70-75% holding communions and baptisms, 93% have taken steps to promote discipleship; the three-self figures are 15-20 percentage points higher than usual elsewhere.
- This list of features reflects the strengths in the church plants, because of greater resources of leaders, finance and teams that have been given.

Surprises
London diocese has a nationally high reputation for church planting, yet some other facts need to be noted.
- Church of England central statistics show London AWA 2006-2014 decreased by 6.0%, yet the population in the same period rose by 14.1%. There appears to be further to go to keep up with the influx of people to the capital.
- The net growth ratio at the fxC (those now compared to those sent) is only 2.1, much lower than the 2.6 average of dioceses 1-11 and 2.5 in dioceses 12-21.
- The attenders are only 9.8% of the London total AWA. This is only marginally higher than in dioceses 1-11 at 9.3% and lower than in dioceses 12-21 at 10.2%. It only comes 12th out of 21 dioceses for the percentage of attenders added.
- The set of London fxC have the highest proportion of Christians attending seen so far. This 49.9% compares with 40.2& from dioceses 12-21, including London. Dioceses 1-11 are not quoted here for comparison as the method of calculation changed.
- The London fxC also have the lowest proportion of those whose background is non-churched at 21.2%, as compared with 33.0% from dioceses 12-21, including London.
- Their church plants, by these measures, have yet higher figures at 52.5% for Christians and 19% for the presence of non-churched people. This factor is not limited to London and is generally true of church plants as compared with an average across all other types – see table 12 and section 4.6.3.
- 54% of the London fxC seem to be on a numerical plateau as compared to between 47-49% elsewhere, though the overall average is 55%.

Our research into London diocese and its results were fed back to the senior staff of London diocese with our overall comment that it has two sets of young churches. One set was the church plants with their evident strength but lower than expected missional impact. The other was all the other types of fxC. They were more frail, still in greater ecclesial immaturity, but with more contacts with the non-churched. Both sets needed to be valued but encouraged differently.

There appear to be a number of reasons to think that more modesty about the London fxC and its planting story is in order, while applauding real positives such as where there has been strong partnership with the diocese, the swift passage to ecclesial maturity from well-resourced starts, the sending out of yet further examples and the intent to continue to start more young churches.

5.9 Proportions of excluded cases

It is arguable that examining this feature by dioceses is appropriate for two reasons. Firstly, in partnership with us, they produced the lists of alleged cases from which we worked. Then at the end of each survey we returned to them a spreadsheet itemising which examples had been included and which had been excluded. The latter were coded, as the tables below will explain, and a few words added in another column outlining the reasons for attributing the code.

We think it is our responsibility to pass onto the wider Church the extent of the problem of the high number of examples excluded. This must be some reflection on the confusion surrounding the term 'fresh expression of Church' that exists within a particular diocese, although it is not clear what factors within the diocese may continue that. But the exclusion rate also reflects upon the ability or resource of the diocese to track and record genuine examples and this is more directly connected to the questions of diocesan priorities, finance and attendant appointments.

Secondly, some examples were well worth following up by the diocese, either because they represented beginnings with potential to become fxC or active plans to begin one. In addition, there were plenty of cases which although not found to be fresh expressions of Church were nevertheless positive steps taken in mission which deserved support in their own right.

Table 32:   Classifying exclusions across dioceses 1-21

Diocese	Total ex-cluded	Alleged cases	% not an fxc	fxC > < 92-'12		Arch	Less than monthly	Not yet	Sub total nearly fxC	Duplicate record	Not fxC	Mission project
Liverpool	56	135	42%	0		11	5	0	16	2	38	7
Canterbury	44	115	37%	0		9	3	9	21	4	19	3
Leicester	37	90	42%	0		6	4	4	14	3	20	9
Derby	71	117	61%	0		5	3	6	14	1	56	19
Norwich	100	120	58%	1		19	11	3	33	9	57	27
Chelmsford	70	163	61%	1		17	10	2	29	3	37	19
Ripon&Leeds	64	103	62%	2		12	2	1	15	3	44	16
Blackburn	113	177	64%	6		14	4	2	20	7	80	27
Bristol	39	72	54%	6		9	1	1	11	2	20	7
Portsmouth	11	32	34%	0		2	4	0	6	0	5	3
Gloucester	44	67	66%	3		6	5	0	11	2	28	9
Totals	649			19		110	52	28	190	36	461	146

Diocese	Total ex-cluded	Alleged cases	% not an fxc	fxC > < '92-'14		Arch	Less than monthly	Not yet	Sub total nearly fxC	Duplicate record	Not fxC	Mission project
Exeter	108	177	61%	0		21	13	4	38	13	57	30
Ely	70	122	57%	1		16	3	2	21	1	47	22
Southwark	49	96	51%	0		6	1	4	11	1	37	13
Guildford	56	133	42%	3		13	4	4	21	1	31	10
Carlisle	89	136	65%	5		10	7	2	19	7	58	24
London	92	178	52%	14		10	4	5	19	3	55	27
Birmingham	37	65	57%	1		7	6	1	14	0	22	10
Sheffield	125	181	69%	8		28	3	3	34	11	72	38
York	225	282	80%	32		28	10	0	38	13	142	68
Manchester	178	227	78%	11		34	8	0	42	16	109	52
Totals	1029			75		173	59	25	257	66	631	294

Explaining the labels
What are not included here are either genuine fxC that have died, or the few that chose to leave the Church of England. These issues are covered in section 12.10.

The first three columns after the diocese's name should be self-explanatory. Next comes the column entitled $><$ '92-'12 and $><$ '92-'14. This means those church plants that began prior to 1992 and all types of existing fxC started after the research period, being post-2012 in the 1st round and post-2014 in the 2nd round. Looking at that column, there is some evidence that as we gathered material towards the end of each two year research period, more examples tended to appear as we were gathering data in the year they occurred.

The next three columns have been grouped. *Arch* uses an analogy within the image of building a complete bridge. We use it to indicate that some steps have been taken but that the process of creating an fxC is not complete. Usually missional contact is established but no worshipping community yet exists, though there is intention to do so. *Less than monthly* is one of our indicators for exclusion. Yet these cases contain a mixture from those which, because of resources, might only meet every other month and would wish to do more, through to those content to mount the occasional event. We should add that we did not penalise cases that chose not to meet when everyone was away in August or at Christmas, and one rare case in which the fxC serving the pagan community rightly, for missional reasons, chose only to meet formally on the eight high points of the pagan year. *Not yet* simply means something planned but not begun.

The *not an fxC* column includes the 'duplicate records'. These can occur as ventures change names over time, or operate across a benefice, or appear in different years of the statistics for mission. The *not an fxC* designation also contains rebadged existing services, groups and events, a practice of little merit that we wish would cease, as well as further events begun for existing Christians. The latter do have value to deepen the discipleship or widen experience, but are neither what we were studying, nor fresh expressions of Church in themselves. The next column, however, pulls out from that overall list the numbers of those that were deemed 'mission projects'. These have been started to connect with others outside the church community but with the hope the contacts will grow and newcomers will join that community. We feed back to dioceses that these mission projects are to be encouraged, but not badged as fxC, though in some cases to their surprise they may find that starting an fxC turns out to be what is needed.

Inferences from the data

Confusion
The most obvious comment is the extent of confusion about what should be included. If anything the problem has got worse, not better. The average exclusion rate in dioceses 1-11 was 54.6%, or rather over half, yet in dioceses 12-21 it was worse, with the exception of Guildford, rising to 64% or three-fifths, with York topping out at 80% and Manchester close behind at 78%.

It is hard to know whether this is more due to the limits imposed upon the Statistics for Mission form and process, despite the valiant attempts of Bev Botting and her team, or the lack of a dedicated person with the time or skills in diocesan offices to sift what comes in from parishes, or again the desire of local clergy or wardens to try and show that something is happening locally, coupled with the lack of informed knowledge of what should count. The pity of it is that it is then too easy to either give up on gaining accurate assessment of what is occurring, or to make claims for progress that are derived from deeply flawed data. Both serve the Church and its mission ill, which is unhelpful at this time of both need and opportunity.

In a Church seeking to be more evidence-based, there is a deep flaw in the overall system about gaining accurate data about one of the Church's more promising overall initiatives. It has taken Church Army's Research Unit four years to uncover the depth and width of the problem, including finding examples no one knew about (see table 2), with every prospect that the research exercise will not be extended across the other half of the Church of England. A lead from the top and centre of the Church looks needed, to sort out the ten year continuation of this problem, coupled with willingness at diocesan level to obtain more robust figures.

Other gains
However, there are substantial positives to draw from these two tables. In the first set of dioceses, 36% of those deemed 'not an fxC' were 146 mission projects and they deserve their own plaudits and support from the dioceses in which they occur. Across the second set of figures this number rises to 46% or 294 cases. This set of 440 examples may even warrant a research project of its own to track what happens to them.

Equally hopeful are the group of 'arches', 'less than monthly meetings' and those ventures planned but 'not yet'. In the 1st 11 diocese there are 190 such, and in the 2nd set of 10 dioceses even more at 257. Once again this is a set of 447 local initiatives that may well be promising. The dioceses involved know from our spread sheets which and where these are. We imagine those in post as parish development officers or missioners, or whatever title the diocese chooses, should be following these up to see their vision and life develop.

Church Army's Research Unit holds no view that only the 1100+ cases that are genuinely fresh expressions of Church are of value. These two tables disclose 887 other developments occurring, on which no report is being written, yet they too represent some creativity, risk and adventure across the life of the half of the dioceses of the Church of England.

5.10 Features averaging out across the sets of dioceses

Part of the value of the 2nd round of research was to investigate the extent to which the findings across the 1st 11 dioceses were representative. Would choosing another similar size of examples and dioceses throw up more variables or would the second set confirm certain patterns noted across the first set?

The next tables look at these through the lens of the two sets of dioceses. In doing this we only allege that the averages across the two groups are markedly similar. We are not at all saying that every fxC, or particular type of fxC, or social context in which they occur, will conform to these findings. The use of the next tables may be that a diocese in the future might expect that its overall diocesan portfolio of fxC would yield these sorts of results.

The two words chosen - 'close' and 'similar'- need some defining so as not to be entirely subjective. Thus the tables show not only the raw percentages for the two sets of dioceses, but also the extent to which they differ. Readers need to bear in mind that the smaller the original percentages, the greater the comparative difference. Thus the difference from 1% to 2% could be described as a 100% increase, or from 2% to 1% as 50% decrease. Either appears to be a big difference and whether that is significant or not would depend on the sample size and the underlying reason.

This may be easier to illustrate by examining the table we called 'close' comparisons.

Table 33: 'Close' factors across the two sets of dioceses

Row no.	Close Factors	Dioceses 1-11	Dioceses 12-21	% Difference	Percentage points
1	fxC at % of diocesan churches	14.4%	15.5%	7.6%	1.1
2a	fxC attendance as % of dioc AWA	9.3%	10.2%	9.7%	0.9
2b	fxC frequency adjusted attendance	5.4%	6.4%	18.5%	1.0
3	fxC left C of E (2 in each round)	0.37%	0.35%	-5.4%	-0.02
4	People come from neighbourhood	71.3%	72.0%	1.0%	0.7
5	Attendees >= mainly typical	81.5%	79.9%	-2.0%	-1.6
6	2 kinds of plateau combined	39.7%	37.6%	-5.3%	-2.1
7	fxc attendance fluctuates	9.1%	9.6%	5.5%	0.5
8	fxC attendance grows then shrinks	24.2%	23.6%	-2.5%	-0.6
9	Has held confirmation services	28.0%	26.4%	-5.7%	-1.6
10	Pioneer value >=2	62.1%	61.6%	-0.8%	-0.5
11	Frequency weekly	46.4%	44.7%	-3.7%	-1.7
12	Frequency monthly	44.7%	46.8%	4.7%	2.1
13	Frequency fortnightly	8.9%	8.1%	-9.0%	-0.8
14	Gross growth ratio	3.6	3.5		0.1
15	Not fxC but something else	62.1%	61.3%	-1.3%	-0.8
16	Arch towards fxC	16.9%	16.8%	-0.6%	-0.1

By 'close' we grouped variables by three factors, one being impressionistic. Firstly, we spotted those which at first blush just looked similar; secondly, because the *percentage points* difference between them was around or below 2; and thirdly (which is the least satisfactory because of the effect of small initial percentages) where the difference either way was normally under 10%.

Inferences from the two sets of 'close' data

Although we have data from half of the Church of England, there will not be another capital city[19] in the other half of the dioceses, making extrapolation somewhat risky.

However, this data from row 1 of the second set of dioceses confirms that among Church of England churches the **typical proportion of churches that are fxC** is currently around 15%. Also, on the associated basis of 1109 fxC in 21 dioceses, it is not unrealistic to think that there have been about 2000 genuine fxC across the whole country. Rows 2a and 2b confirm that between 6-10% of **attenders** are doing so at an fxC. A diocese might well therefore compare its own results with these two sets of proportions and reflect upon past and future priorities.

Row 3 confirms that the tiny proportion of fxC begun within but which subsequently **leave** the Church of England was maintained. Four examples across 21 dioceses is hardly a cause for fear and even less a pointer to any trend. We do point out that this does not account for around 25-30 examples of church plants started by those believing themselves to be Anglican yet not part of the diocese in which they occur. After consultation we elected not to study or include these.

Rows 4 and 5 give credence to several broad impressions. The fxC are connecting with the geographical **neighbourhood** around them and around 80% of fxC leaders felt that those coming are deemed to be mainly or totally typical of the surrounding area. In a parish-based national Church this looks more like continuity with, rather than departure from, that tradition. However, neighbourhood clearly does not account for all who have been coming. We will comment on people coming through specific friendship networks in relation to the next table.

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[19] Chelmsford, Southwark and London dioceses make up most of the capital and boosted attendance numbers.

Rows 6-8 about **attendance changes over time** suggest, (somewhat to our surprise, knowing how many other variables can be significant: type of fxC, social context, team size sent, leadership resources) that the overall proportions of fxC that plateau, where numbers fluctuate or which later shrink, remain much the same in the 2nd set of dioceses. We do not know why that should be the case, but perhaps it should inform expectations, either in a diocese, or a prospective local example, and head off unwarranted optimism that all young churches will continue to burgeon in size. The report returns to further comment on the feature that nearly half of all fxC seem to reach a plateau, in Chapter 5 examining variables within different types of fxC.

Row 9 shows that the percentage of fxC with people coming to **confirmation** is curiously close, in that Baptism figures are only similar and Holy Communion figures are dissimilar.

Row 10 tells the percentage of fxC in which the leader thought starting it was totally or mainly a **'pioneer'** task; that is, responding to a gap or past weakness. This is by contrast to 'progression' which means building upon past strength, history or contacts. Our interpretation is that people taking bold steps in mission is to be celebrated, and also that there continue to be gaps in the current cover that need such initiatives, despite a parish system.

Rows 11-13 strongly suggest that we should expect these kinds of proportions of fxC that elect to meet **weekly, fortnightly and monthly**. It underlines that fortnightly continues to be the unusual choice, while the rest are nearly evenly split between monthly and weekly. What that choice of frequency connects to is disclosed in Chapter 5 on the characteristics of fxC type. Chapter 7 explores how frequency itself influences what occurs.

Row 14 again helps set some expectation at the level of a diocese about what it might expect by way of return in the investment made in sending people out to start an fxC. The **ratio of those sent**, to those now, evens out across the dioceses. Its figures mean that with a growth ratio of 3.5, 2.5 extra people net are now attending compared with those originally sent out. We know this varies with type of fxC, so this is only an overall expectation in a diocesan fxC landscape.

Row 15 confirms that over 60% of cases submitted to us turned out not to be an fxC. Of these, row 16 confirms that those ventures we deemed an 'arch' (see section 5.9) are about 1/6th of the exclusions made. We repeat that for a diocese they are likely to repay encouragement and could become fxC in their own right.

Table 34: **'Similar' factor across the two sets of dioceses**

Row no.	Similar Factors	Dioceses 1-11	Dioceses 12-21	% Difference	Percentage points
1	fxC continue to grow in attenders	27.0%	29.2%	8.1%	2.2
2	People come from networks	36.4%	41.7%	14.6%	5.3
3	Male leader	48.0%	52.6%	9.6%	4.6
4	Female leader	52.0%	47.4%	-8.8%	-4.6
5	Leader lay-lay	39.2%	34.1%	-13.0%	-5.1
6	Leader part time	18.0%	20.7%	15.0%	2.7
7	Venue <> church	56.1%	49.3%	-12.1%	-6.8
8	Has held baptisms	34.9%	38.9%	11.5%	4.0
9	>=1 step in discipleship	77.8%	81.9%	5.3%	4.1
10	Discipling by Groups	46.0%	49.8%	8.3%	3.8
11	3 Self-reproduction	37.2%	41.4%	11.3%	4.2
12	fxC died	9.98%	12.32%	23.4%	2.32

What we called 'similar', we grouped those features which displayed either a percentage point difference of >2 and <7, *or* a percentage difference of around 10-20%.

Inferences from the two sets of 'similar' data

Row 1, noting a small rise in the percentage of fxC that continue to grow in size, we think reflects the higher incidence of church plants and multiple Sunday congregations in dioceses 12-21.

Row 2 gives the figure for the proportion of cases where **network** played a major or overriding role. To think that feature accounts for 2/5th (39.1%) of the mission picture overall looks secure.

Rows 3-6 cover some aspects of **who leads the fxC**. On gender and lay or ordained the impression of the overall rough picture is that half and half is what we see, in each case the 2nd set reversing the prior slight imbalance. Section 6.13 takes a deeper look at leadership and fxC type where there are wide divergences too. Chapter 10 is devoted to examining the **lay-lay**, now shown to be a consistent large part of the overall picture.

Row 7 shows a small reversal of narrow majority to minority for those fxC using a **church building** as their venue. Section 7.12 explores varieties in choice of venue, in relation to the different social areas served.

Row 8 shows the figure for **baptisms**. It will be more meaningful to unpack the slight difference seen here when considering sacraments at types of fxC.

Rows 9-10 handle aspects of promoting **discipleship**. The first shows that the instinct to take at least one route down that path continues. That it has increased will be shown to relate to different proportions of types of fxC in the second sample.

Row 11 logs the percentage of **died fxC**. We have included it in this table because, until the outlier of 17 examples within York diocese, the average was similar at 10.4%.

Conclusions from these two tables
These two tables show which elements confirm the scope of the ways in which the first set of dioceses, and their results, have been shown to be representative of the fxC contribution to the Church of England as a whole.

We hesitate to use the word 'typical' and emphasise it is only about what might be typical of the fxC landscape as a whole, not of the variety of fxC types that make it up, much less their individual stories. Perhaps it is analogous to figures for the average distribution of men and women, the average age of death, or the overall birth rate.

Other factors in the overall life of the fxC show greater disparity.

The next section unpacks this.

5.11 Features of disparity in the two sets of dioceses

It is important to note that these variances could be either attributed to differences between the dioceses, or it may be that other factors, rather than being in a certain diocese, are more significant. The comments will separate these out where it is sufficiently clear.

Table 35: **'Dissimilar' factors across the two sets of dioceses**

Row No.	Dissimilar factors	Dioceses 1-11	Dioceses 12-21	% Difference	Percentage points
1	All excluded cases	54.6%	64.4%	17.9%	9.8
2	De-Churched attending	35.1%	26.8%	-23.6%	-8.3
3	Non-church attending	40.3%	33.0%	-18.1%	-7.3
4	Leader ordained	47.7%	54.8%	14.9%	7.1
5	Leader lay	52.3%	45.2%	-13.6%	-7.1
6	Leader full time	48.7%	56.4%	15.8%	7.7
7	Team size taken is 3-12	73.6%	63.2%	-14.1%	-10.4
8	Team size taken is 50+	1.3%	2.3%	76.9%	1.0
9	Has held Communions	38.6%	46.8%	21.2%	8.2
10	Meet <> Sunday	58.3%	45.8%	-21.4%	-12.5
11	fxC CofE only, not ecumenical	88.0%	80.5%	-8.5%	-7.5
12	Discipling by 1-1	47.0%	55.6%	18.3%	8.6
13	Mission support graft	0.80%	2.64%	230.0%	1.8
14	Mission support runner	90.2%	79.2%	-12.2%	-11.0
15	Mission support seed	5.9%	9.5%	61.0%	3.6

What we called 'dissimilar'; we grouped those features which displayed either a percentage point difference of >7, *or* a percentage difference of over 15%. A few rows contain changes across small initial percentages, yielding large difference percentages.

Inferences from the two sets of 'dissimilar' data

Row 1 shows how the **exclusion** rate has, in our view, sadly increased and not diminished. Section 5.9 showed to which dioceses in particular this is attributable.

Rows 2-3 about the **de-churched** and **non-churched** deserve comment; this is done both by fxC type in section 6.4 and in a wider way in section 4.6, drawing upon four sets of data since 2012. Here we simply state that the figures from dioceses 1-11 can no longer be taken as either reliable or representative.

Rows 4-6 show the reversal of the **lay/ordained** leader proportion. Sections 5.5 and 6.13 show them to vary more by fxC type than by diocese.

Rows 7-8 about changing proportions of **some team sizes** is related to the higher incidence of church plants in the 2nd set of dioceses. This also affects the upward change about **communions**, the decrease over meeting on another day from Sunday, as well the substantial change in **graft** mission support type. This and the **seed** increase are commented on in sections 6.8 and 6.9.

Row 11 about whether the fxC were started in **ecumenical** partnership is covered in section 12.9.

A further set of percentages showing factors with even greater disparity is overleaf.

Table 36   'Unlike' factors across the two sets of dioceses

Row no.	Unlike Factors	Dioceses 1-11	Dioceses 12-21	% Difference	Percentage points
1	Christians attending	24.7%	40.2%	62.8%	15.5
2	Types of fxC are church plants	8.3%	15.3%	84.3%	7.0
3	Team size taken is 20-49	7.2%	11.3%	56.9%	4.1
4	Mean congregation size	43.4	56.6	30.4%	13.2
5	Leader spare time	33.3%	22.9%	-31.2%	-10.4
6	Leader voluntary	47.2%	34.3%	-27.3%	-12.9
7	Leader locally paid	10.8%	17.8%	64.8%	7.0
8	Meet Sunday	41.7%	54.2%	30.0%	12.5
9	Meet > Parish boundary	16.8%	30.5%	81.5%	13.7
10	3 Self - Not at this stage	25.9%	12.9%	-50.2%	-13.0
11	3 Self Finance	48.1%	63.0%	31.0%	14.9
12	3 Self Governing	64.3%	76.2%	18.5%	11.9
13	Discipling via courses	30.3%	38.7%	27.7%	8.4
14	Discipling by serving in teams	32.7%	44.5%	36.1%	11.8
15	Mission support transplant	2.2%	6.87%	212.3%	4.67

Notes

In this table, made otherwise of percentages, there is one entry of numerals, pulled out to the left of the columns to make this visually explicit.

No comment can be made either on use of the Bible or approaches in evangelism, as these factors were only tackled in the 2nd set of dioceses.

This group of fxC features which we called 'unlike' had either even wider % differences, or percentage point changes.

Inferences from the two sets of 'unlike' data

All these rows suggest that these elements within the data from dioceses 1-11 are hardly representative. It will be safer for the research and the wider Church to take the averages across the 21 dioceses as more likely to be representative, but with the caveat that the variance suggests these features themselves are either more volatile, or more likely, that they are dependent upon factors other than which set of dioceses they were derived from.

Row 1 abut the **Christians attending** is an even greater difference than for the de-churched and non-churched. Sections 4.6 and 6.4 unpack how this should be understood. This is why we state that the figures from dioceses 1-11 can no longer be taken as either reliable or representative.

Row 2 about **church plants** is important. They are the principal cause of the rise in row 3 of team size 20-49 and of transplants, in row 15. They also influence rows 4-8 about congregation size, the leader variables and row 9 about crossing boundaries. They have a similar influence on the changes to **three-self factors** in rows 10-12. However, we think row 7 and its upturn in **locally paid leaders** is attributable to more prosperous southern dioceses being surveyed in the 2nd set.

This completes the examination of which factors have proved similar across the 21 dioceses and those which have varied, with some comment on what may be the causes. Not all differences can or should be laid at the foot of a diocese. FxC type is significant and forms the heart of the next chapter.

Summary from Chapter 5

1. It is reasonable to claim that fxC make up around 15% of the churches across the dioceses. There is a jungle of impenetrable unknowns around when, whether and which fxC have been included in diocesan figures. By virtue of passing the indicators in this research they ought to be.

2. Over 9% of people attending in a diocese are attenders at an fxC. This figure is 6% if we account for the monthly fxCs. The proportion of blenders is unknown. There are other caveats over what gets counted, but more precise figures are unobtainable.

3. The proportions of churches and attenders are averages. Figures across individual dioceses vary widely.

4. By measures of population growth, AWA 2006 onwards and also the percentage of the population attending the Church of England, numerical decline continues.

5. In 12 out of 21 dioceses the number of people at the fxC is greater than the recent AWA drop, but fewer if that figure is frequency adjusted. In the rest of the dioceses they help offset it. Sadly it looks unlikely that these numbers are consistently included.

6. All traditions in the Church of England have started fxC, but not evenly across them. Many fxC own more than one tradition.

7. There is clear evidence that the trend to start fxC has grown in each seven year period since 1992. The biggest leap forward is in the 2006-2012 period, but the most recent figures for 2013-2014 suggest this does not mark a peak.

8. Ordained and lay people can be equally likely to lead fxC in the majority of dioceses, but this varies more by fxC type, than by diocese.

9. The 'lay-lay' leader proportion continues to be normally just below 40%, with two dioceses having many less, depressing the 2nd set of diocesan figures.

10. The dominant team size sent continues to be 3-12. Only London diocese departs from this pattern. Carlisle's recent deanery youth workers swell the figures for seeds and 1-2 sent.

11. Runners continue be the dominant mission-support type. About 75% of all fxC remain within their sending parish. However, transplants are a notable feature of the London diocesan story.

12. London diocese, by a wide range of measures, is not typical of elsewhere and caution is advised in borrowing its models uncritically. The data raises questions about how effective the London fxC overall performance in mission has been, though these fxC are notably strong in developing ecclesial maturity.

13. The excluded cases contain both some 400 starts with potential that still need further development and another 400 mission projects which could be nurtured by a diocese.

14. Some 28 measurable features across the life of fxC are either close or similar in the averages across the two sets of dioceses. They are evidence towards vindicating the representative nature of the 1st 11 dioceses.

15. However, 30 other factors reveal by their disparity that either volatility by individual case or factors other than the diocese are more significant to account for the variations shown.

For this and other reasons above the next chapter deals with variables across different types of fxC.

Chapter 6   Variations and characteristics in types of fxC

This chapter explores a list of factors that are connected to a prior choice of fxC. We have limited this choice to the 14 most frequent types out of the 20, with a threshold set of at least a sample size of 60 cases. These 14 types make up 86.7% of the total.

From a large number of correlations it seems to us that there are some features of the overall picture, and affecting particular cases, in which the choice of fxC type is likely to be determinative of what else follows. An obvious example would be that Messy Churches are strongly linked to a frequency of monthly meetings. However, we do not assert that the fxC type exists in isolation from other features that also have their influence. These would include social context, leadership resources and frequency of meeting, which subsequent chapters unpack.

The effect of multiple choices made
A significant complication is that it is clear that many fxC examples draw their particular identity from a number of different models. The average multiple designation is 1.6, but this masks that while many single designate, many other individual fxC chose two types, and some even four, to draw on. We accept that this reduces clarity about the characteristics of a single type of fxC, but it was too complex to separate out the multiple designations. We could only operate by logging each time an fxC type was cited and feed that into the overall picture. This may not be totally invalid in that this local practice suggests that there is real overlap in the characteristics across the types of fxC, as well some cases of marked difference.

The list of variables affected by the choice of fxC across these 14 types
6.1   The number of fxC and when they occurred
6.2   Average size of fxC by attendance
6.3   Proportions of fxC that grow, plateau and shrink
6.4   Proportions of Christians, de-churched and non-churched at fxC
6.5   Motives to start the fxC
6.6   Reaching neighbourhood and network
6.7   The typicality of attenders
6.8   Team sizes taken
6.9   Mission support dynamics and parish boundaries
6.10   Growth ratios
6.11   Proportions of adults and under 16s
6.12   Frequency of gathering
6.13   Leadership patterns across the fxC
6.14   Progress in 'three-self' responsibility
6.15   Engagement with Scripture
6.16   Holding Communions and Baptisms
6.17   Ways to pursue discipleship
6.18   Ways to engage with evangelism
6.19   The spread across the traditions
6.20   Mortality rates in the 14 most common types of fxC
6.21   Resisting a danger from this approach
6.22   Towards characterising the 13 types

This list of factors shows the range of measures we have tried to provide, both to assess missional effectiveness, in 6.2 to 6.12, and also ones to show to how young churches may take steps towards ecclesial maturity in 6.13 to 6.18. 6.19 to 6.20 are wider considerations and the last two sections explore a summary.

The missional and ecclesial lists are not to be seen as totally separate for the following reasons. The mission is being undertaken by the fxC as a young church and its very existence is a missional signal. Moreover, church identity is a deeper theological reality than either ecclesial maturity, or missional effectiveness. Church maturity is also rightly partially assessed by its fruitfulness (John 15) and this will include missional effectiveness. But it may not be meaningless to think that certain features of a young church connect more obviously with either missional or ecclesial aspects. The sections use that broad but somewhat artificial taxonomy.

6.1 The number of fxC and the periods when they occurred

Table 37: The 14 more common types of fxC and their distribution over the 20+ year period

Type of fxC	Nos. 1992-98	% 1992-1998	Nos. 1999-05	% 1999-2005	Nos. 2006-12	% 2006-2012	Nos. 2013-14	% 2013-2014	Totals
Messy Church	2	2.5%	11	6.3%	282	39.7%	65	45.5%	360
Café Church	3	3.8%	24	13.6%	107	15.0%	17	11.9%	151
Child-focussed Church	6	7.6%	31	17.6%	100	14.1%	11	7.7%	148
Traditional Church Plant	48	60.8%	32	18.2%	43	6.0%	9	6.3%	132
Special interest group	1	1.3%	21	11.9%	72	10.1%	7	4.9%	101
Multiple congregation	4	5.1%	21	11.9%	55	7.7%	9	6.3%	89
Community development plant	14	17.7%	22	12.5%	46	6.5%	7	4.9%	89
All age worship *	5	6.3%	14	8.0%	47	6.6%	24	16.8%	90
Network church	6	7.6%	21	11.9%	46	6.5%	7	4.9%	80
Alternative worship	8	10.1%	19	10.8%	49	6.9%	2	1.4%	78
Church based on <5s	4	5.1%	19	10.8%	43	6.0%	10	7.0%	76
Youth church	1	1.3%	20	11.4%	32	4.5%	12	8.4%	65
Cluster based church	2	2.5%	10	5.7%	51	7.2%	1	0.7%	64
Older people's church	5	6.3%	16	9.1%	36	5.1%	6	4.2%	63

The figures reflect the history of this phenomenon over the last 20 years. In the first period the church plants[20] (61%) were the dominant type, accompanied by some 'alternative worship' examples. Indeed, we feel sure that most of the other examples from 1992-1998 are only so named retrospectively. The church plants are not markedly less in the periods that follow, but their diminishing percentage in the table serves to illustrate the diversity that grew up around them, both before, and more markedly after, *Mission-shaped Church* in 2004.

The table also shows the spectacular rise of the Messy Churches. We have no data to say whether that trend is at a peak or will continue to rise. There is an asterisk beside all age worship to remind readers that we only offered that designation in the 2nd set of dioceses. It is possible that there might up to twice as many, making them the 2nd most common choice.

We have been asked what proportion of the church plants are in London diocese. The answer is only 35, or 26.5% of the 132. What is more significant is the 48 cases from 1992-1998. That is a larger factor in making them among the most common choice, across the whole period.

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[20] Sometimes, as in *Mission-shaped church,* p. 71, known as traditional church plants.

6.2   Average sizes of the 14 most frequent fxC types

In the tables and charts that follow, the 14 types are listed in decreasing order of occurrence. All these types are explained in the glossary.

Chart 5:   The average attendance at the 14 most common types of fxC
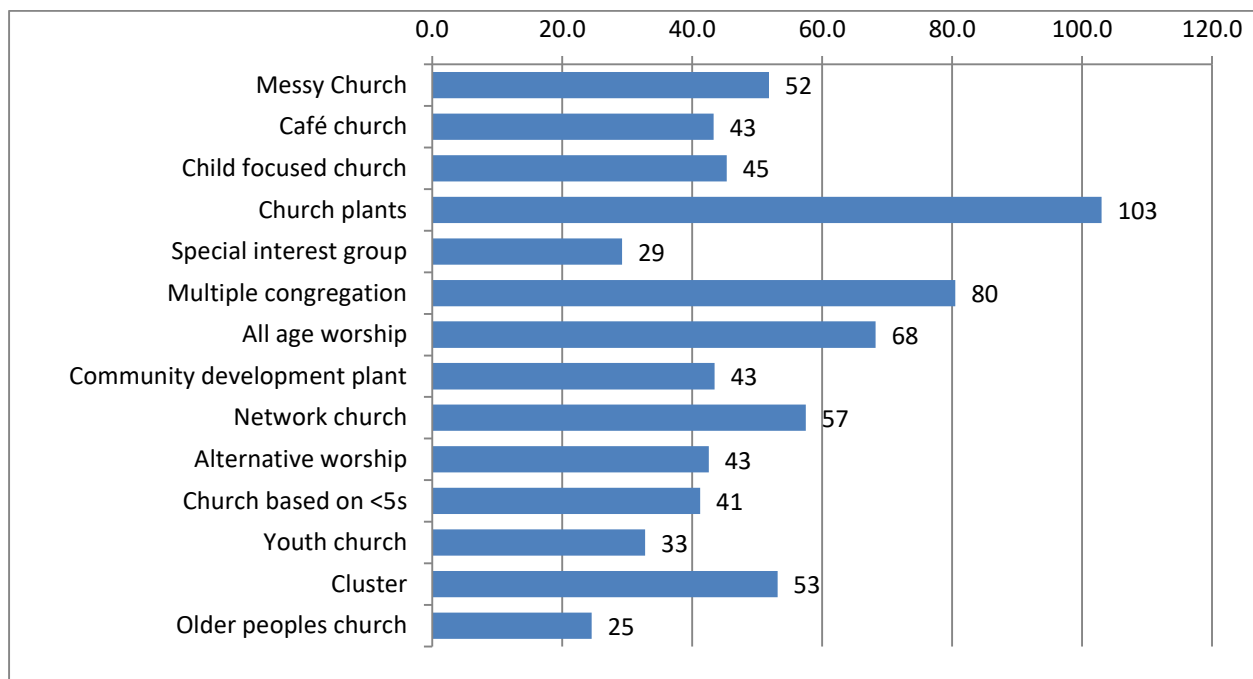
The three largest types - church plants, multiple Sunday congregations and all age worship -could all be called variants on long standing congregational models. A number of factors suggest their larger size might be expected. Firstly, while congregation sizes in inherited church vary considerably by social context - from city centre to deep rural - their average across all dioceses from the 2014 national statistics is still 61. Secondly, in our diocesan reports we have usually found that, across all types, the fxC are smaller than the average of dioceses' congregations. Thirdly, it is known that some church plants in the capital are of considerable size. There is therefore some rationale as to why these three types are larger across the country.

Eight of the types are in the size range 40-60. These make a major contribution to determining the national figure. It was 43.9 for dioceses 1-11 and 56.6 for dioceses 12-21, which included the capital, with 36% of the church plants being in London and Southwark dioceses. Three types of fxC are in the 25-35 range, all of which may value the intimacy such a size affords

Our comment which has been made both to surveyed dioceses and to national conferences, is that the fxC world is best understood as being a large number of relatively young and relatively small churches. The church plants are a standout difference by size, but they make up but 8.3% of the cases in the 1st 11 dioceses and 15% of dioceses 12-21. It seems that what is occurring is not so much the birth of fewer larger examples but a proliferation of smaller ones. The Church of England can value both, but should recognise the diverse character of what has happened.

An intriguing ongoing question

It is an enduring but elusive question for Church Army's Research Unit whether these averages are one indicator that there is such a factor as 'natural unit size or range'. Intuitively it seems likely in certain types of fxC that value all attenders interacting with each other, such as in clusters or youth congregations, or in those that have some sense of intimacy and engagement such as church for

older people or for under 5s and their carers, or within the interactive dynamics of café church. Community development plants classically serve more deprived areas in which building a strong sense of community is a high value. Another clear example would be cell church where, by definition, numbers will be limited by small group dynamics.

We have deliberately used the term 'natural', rather than 'normal' which might be too prescriptive and tight, and we use the looser phrase 'size or range' for the same reason.

Testing if there is a meaningful range of sizes
We did take 350 live Messy Churches and plotted the range of attendance sizes, to test whether with this most common type of fxC there might be substance to our suspicion, or whether the majority of cases were widely dispersed over an implausible range of sizes.

Table 38:   The range of attendance sizes in the Messy Churches

Over 150	Over 100	70-99	51-69	40-50	30-39	20-29	<20
(2)	22	51	71	87	66	36	17

The left hand (2) are not additional, but are there to show there were a few yet larger ones. The data shows that 64% of them fall between 30-69 attenders, in a standard curve across sizes. This adds some weight to thinking that this might be the natural range for Messy Churches. It will not be the only factor. In some places the size of venue will place constraints, as will the number of team members that can be mustered for the task. We repeated this exercise for café churches, being the second most common type of fxC.

Table 39:   The range of attendance sizes in the Café Churches

Over 150	Over 100	70-99	51-69	40-50	30-39	20-29	<20
(2)	9	8	18	22	28	29	18

Based on 132 live examples, once again the (2) over 150 are shown but not counted twice. The data shows 52% as being in the 69-30 range and 73% in the 69-20 range. The bulk of the café churches are smaller than the Messy Churches, perhaps reflecting the interactive nature of much café church. Looking at individual cases, they occur across a range of social contexts from cities to villages. So the question of natural unit size of range persists.

Another variable that adds both data and urgency to this question around 'natural unit size or range' is what happens to the attendance patterns across the years of the life of the fxC. This is examined next.

6.3   Growth, plateau and shrinkage by fxC type

One reason for choosing to research a period stretching over 20 years is the hope of identifying longitudinal patterns in relation to growth at younger churches. To recognise these, reliable data over a period of time is needed and here there are limits. Church Army's Research Unit is aware that the kind of people who start new ventures may not be those enamoured of close statistical record keeping about attendance. With that in mind, and the principle of manageability to moderate what we could achieve, we asked the respondents to submit average annual attendance figures for each year of their existence, separated out into those under 16 years of age and those 16 years or older.

Where we had more than two years of those two sets of figures, we added these two age groups together and began to examine the trends, leading us to posit some different patterns by which to interpret the data.

How these statistics are grouped needs to be noted. The figures come from examining the pattern of average attendance at the fxC over at least the last three years, in the 1st round up to 2012 and in the 2nd round, up to 2014.

Those with a shorter length of recorded attendance were deemed 'too soon to tell' and not analysed. Data and patterns from fxC examples which died in years prior to the collection years were included (although not their attendance figures). However, those examples dying in the final year of collection, and with an average attendance back at least three years, were included.

The figures shown will not be identical to those in section 4.10 because they only deal with the 14 most common types, not all types. Also, although these factors were described as in section 5.10 and table 33 as 'close', this only compares the overall fxC landscape in the two sets of dioceses; it does not differentiate them by fxC type which is what is examined now.

The five categories we devised, which we confess have some degree of arbitrariness, are as follows:

- Continues to grow: overall the fxC attendance has risen by more than or equal to 5% year on year.
- Grow then plateau: at least two years of numerical growth occurred before a plateau followed.
- Quickly plateau: after growth from the beginning in the first year, numbers attending remain constant within 5%.
- Fluctuate: at least two cycles of more than 5% growth and decline are observable. In some summarising we add the fluctuate figures to the two kinds of plateau.

(In all three cases involving some kind of plateau, this analysis masks the equalising of an outflow and inflow of people, and quite often notes on the returned questionnaire indicated this.)

- Grow then shrink: after a period of growth, numbers have declined by at least 10% year on year, and in some cases may now be less than the start.

The variety of patterns of growth we detected through attendance over time, and the fact that they were so different across the dioceses surveyed, led the team to investigate whether there were other correlations that cast light upon them and which suggested demonstrable causes.

Table 40:   Numerical growth, kinds of plateau, and shrinkage at 14 types of fxC

Growth features at 14 most common types of fxC	Continue to grow	Grow plateau	Quick plateau	Fluctuate	3 kinds of plateau	Grow then shrink
Messy Church	31.2%	7.3%	32.2%	8.3%	47.8%	21.0%
Cafe church	34.0%	14.2%	19.8%	9.4%	43.4%	22.6%
Child-focused church	22.6%	13.2%	28.3%	6.6%	48.1%	29.2%
Church plant	31.3%	18.8%	12.5%	8.0%	39.3%	29.5%
Special interest group	28.6%	14.3%	27.0%	12.7%	54.0%	17.5%
All age worship	23.1%	7.7%	16.9%	24.6%	49.2%	27.7%
Multiple Sunday congregation	40.7%	15.3%	22.0%	8.5%	45.8%	13.6%
Community development plant	29.7%	14.1%	9.4%	18.8%	42.2%	28.1%
Network church	26.5%	12.2%	10.2%	18.4%	40.8%	32.7%
Alternative worship	18.3%	10.0%	20.0%	10.0%	40.0%	41.7%
Church based on <5s	27.8%	9.3%	33.3%	13.0%	55.6%	16.7%
Youth church	17.9%	7.7%	17.9%	12.8%	38.5%	43.6%
Cluster based church	46.9%	9.4%	12.5%	3.1%	25.0%	28.1%
Older people's church	27.1%	14.6%	43.8%	4.2%	62.5%	10.4%
Average (These 14 types)	29.4%	11.6%	23.4%	10.7%	45.7%	25.0%

Comment on fxC seeing continued growth

The overall picture, from the table's bottom row, shows around 3 in 10 continue to grow in size, almost half are on some sort of plateau numerically, and one quarter have shrunk in size.

The most vigorous continued growth is found at 46.9% in the cluster fxC type. Literature about this type, often calling them mission-shaped or missional communities, does encourage each one to form around a particular identified mission focus and to invite others from that culture, area or special need to become part of the group.[21] Clusters are also used by some larger churches as a missional sub-unit and can have quite fluid membership. Next, and much above average, comes the multiple congregations at 40.7%. We are less clear why this should be but it may relate to their above average numbers of existing Christians and de-churched attenders (see section 6.4).

Sadly our method does not allow for a rigorous assessment of transfer, or the presence of blending (people attending more than one church), but it does allow us to note that the two come third and fifth in the table for starting with teams of 20-49 and above average for taking 13-19 people. That will be included in our calculation of the proportion of existing Christians present.

Those least likely to continue to grow numerically are youth church and alternative worship, with below average attendance numbers (youth church 32.8, alternative worship 42.6) as well as the highest likelihood of subsequent shrinkage (youth church 43.6%, alternative worship 41.7%).

Comment on later shrinkage

Shrinkage can occur for all types of fxC, with an average of it occurring to one in four, though ranging from 1 in 10 for older people's church to 2 out of 5 among youth church. None escape this potential danger. Because some particularly wish to commend the part played by church plants, the data actually shows that their shrinkage rate is above average at 29.5%, at a similar rate to all age worship, with yet higher figures among alternative worship and youth church, as stated.

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[21] Two examples are B. Hopkins and M. Breen, *Clusters* (3dm ministries, 2007) and M. Stibbe and A. Williams, *Breakout* (Authentic, 2008)

It is hard to know what contributes to certain types being higher or lower. For example, it might be that a low rate among church for <5s is related to a wide demand for a variety of activities among those with young children and a constant fresh supply of those in that category. Why it is especially high among youth churches we do not know. Anecdotally, though by definition there is constant throughput because of serving a defined age band, we hear of struggles by local examples being unable to recruit at the lower end. Any type of fxC serving an age group faces the challenge to replace leavers, and failure to do so can be terminal. We used to think that shrinkage in fxC attendance was not necessarily linked to subsequent closure. From the 1st set of dioceses, we found that of those that shrank, death only occurred in 27.5% of cases, but in the 2nd set, that rate had risen slightly and on average now stands at 31.8%. Section 12.12, chart 48 shows a different calculation – the percentage of those that died, which were already shrinking.

Comment on the figures for some kind of plateau
The last but one column on the right combines the figure for the previous three. To clarify what is meant by the column headings, we designate as 'fluctuate' those examples where there are at least two cycles of growth and decline. 'Quickly plateau' is assigned to those fxC which reach a stable number in their first year of operating. 'Grow plateau' is reserved for those that initially grew and plateaued in more recent years.

Nine of the fourteen types, including church plants, have a combined plateau figure in the 39%-49% range. Another three are yet higher. With church for <5s (55.6%), one factor is that in taking records some examples told us that they had a maximum size for health and safety reasons and had a waiting list. Some older people's churches (62.5%) have limits because of the size of care homes they serve. The so called 'special interest group' fxC (54.0%) serve a wide range of contexts and cultures, such as the arts, goths, LGBT groups, workplace, those suffering addiction, and those with learning difficulties, thus further universal comment is unprofitable.

Rethinking beyond a plateau
46% of fxC being on a numerical plateau should not be ignored. It can be interpreted in several ways. One is to admit to a constraint and that the wider Church, and fxC leaders, would be unrealistic to expect all the young churches to continue to grow in size. For some this will be seen as a weakness in this movement.

However, this prevalence could connect to the postulated 'natural unit size or range'. This is not merely an academic question of data analysis. If there is any truth in this idea, it ushers in a further important question, but with an unknown answer: If a type of fxC reaches its natural unit size or range and has plateaued, what should happen?

In past decades, influenced by Church Growth school thinking, an assumed answer was that any local church could grow larger in size. This would be either by addressing the quality of what we might call its 'public services' - whether that be its building facilities, worship style and diversity, welcome quality or pastoral care. - or it could do it by changing the leadership style, and underlying philosophy of ministry, say from pastor to manager, and thereby removing the constraint on growth the prior model was unconsciously enforcing.

In a day that has seen the effects of 1000+ young churches in 21 dioceses, another option is to respect the natural size reached and to ask what next should come to birth. Of course, this will be affected by leadership resources available, but getting beyond the 46% plateau is an important question for the wider Church from this research.

6.4   Proportions of Christians, de-churched and non-churched

The team took as their broad understanding the meaning of the latter two terms as explained in *Mission-shaped Church* pages 38-41. In Appendix Two, the glossary comments further. In practice, during interviews with leaders the team found they were very seldom asked what the terms meant and this inferred they were reasonably self-explanatory.

We think that precise borders between churched, de-churched and non-churched are neither clear nor fully agreed. For example, we would exclude from being classified as churched or de-churched those who have only attended an occasional office (baptism, wedding or funeral), much less those attending a concert or civic function in a church building, at all of which the local Christian community were not present. Nor would we necessarily include all who have attended a church school. Our view is that the thinking that deems such people thereby 'churched' owes more to the long shadows of Christendom than realism about the current mission climate and task.

In tackling this variable across the 14 more common types of fxC, readers may recall that section 3.4 and table 8 gave some headlines about the change we made over our method of data collection for these proportions. This was done between dioceses 1-11 and the subsequent 2nd set. This and its consequences are now explained more fully.

The background to making changes in collection and reporting
The 'results' from dioceses 1-10, in approximate terms and the opinion of the interviewed leader: 25% of attendees were Christians, 35% were from the de-churched and 40% were non-churched. We urged that these were: a) only the leaders' opinions; b) estimated from a very crude scoring system; c) should be treated with some reservation. However, they became widely quoted and trusted too much without the caveats being stated or the scoring system evaluated.

The previous crude scoring system used a range of 0 to 3 to enable leaders to indicate rough proportions of all three groups present.
- 0 meant a group was not a factor
- 1 disclosed a group was thought to be a minor reality
- 2 inferred the group was a major reality
- 3 indicated it was the only or overriding factor

We accepted that sometimes overall scores across the three groups of people might not add up to a total of 3, yet resisted, queried and modified anything scoring more than 5 overall. Then the scored data was totalled, from which a percentage was derived. Percentages suggest precision, but in reality all we had were far more rough proportions.

We therefore wanted to revise the method to reduce the margins of error. We have done this in two mathematical ways and also tightened up how interviews with leaders were conducted. We have therefore considered afresh whether the two systems can meaningfully be compared.

1   We amended the data collection form and asked leaders to estimate the percentages of each group present. If they struggled to do this we accepted that they might only be able to do this to the nearest 10%. There is here a margin of error, but it seemed to us less than in the previous system. In that prior system both the score 0 and 3 tend respectively to be interpreted as 0% and close to 100%, leaving scores 1 and 2 to cover the rest.
2   We recognised in working with the prior system, that we had failed to compute the results in a case-weighted way. Thus one large fxC having a high number of Christian attenders might well

mask the results from several small ones in which they were a much lower proportion of attenders. Then the overall result would be skewed.

3 We thought, wrongly, that the leaders would understand that in estimating the existing Christians present, they would include the team. We found this was an unreliable thought and it needed to be made explicit by us in the conversation. This creates a further disparity between what the first survey was reputed to show and what we are more confident of showing now.

4 We now also have figures from the Dalpra and Vivian report, *Who's there?* derived from surveying the attenders. It will make more sense that the wider Church compares them to a more accurate version of what the leaders were estimating. Section 4.6 teases this out more.

Only reporting on the 2nd set of dioceses

For these four reasons, we have taken the view that it is not meaningful to offer any precise comparisons between the data from the 1st 11 dioceses and the data from the 2nd set of dioceses, about the proportions of Christian, the de-churched and the non-churched at fxC. The two sets will show some disparity, and the headline from the 1st set has already been given on the previous page. We wish the wider Church to set aside the previous figures as a first attempt which turned out to be too flawed to be fully trustworthy and we offer the second set to be read in their own right and alongside what our parallel team found from surveying the attenders.

Table 41: Percentages of Christians, de-churched and non-churched at fxC, dioceses 12-21

Christians, de-Churched and non-Churched at 14 types of fxC	Attendees deemed Churched	Attendees deemed De-Churched	Attendees deemed Non-Churched
Messy Church	32.5%	22.3%	45.2%
Cafe church	46.1%	27.6%	26.3%
Child-focused church	23.1%	33.7%	42.8%
Church plant	51.7%	28.5%	19.5%
Special interest group	38.5%	27.7%	33.7%
All age worship	42.9%	27.3%	29.8%
Multiple Sunday congregation	45.7%	32.5%	21.8%
Community development plant	36.2%	26.3%	37.3%
Network church	44.6%	32.2%	23.2%
Alternative worship	39.0%	31.7%	29.2%
Church based on <5s	25.5%	26.9%	47.5%
Youth church	47.3%	16.4%	36.3%
Cluster based church	44.9%	29.3%	25.8%
Older people's church	46.0%	40.7%	13.3%
Average (14 types)	38.7%	27.8%	33.5%

We re-emphasise this is but the leaders' view. However, we know of no reason to think that the degree of optimism, or a rose tinted hue, is notably unequally distributed among the types of fxC leaders and thus the relative scores still have some significance.

Chart 6: Percentages of Christians, de-churched and non-churched at fxC, dioceses 12-21
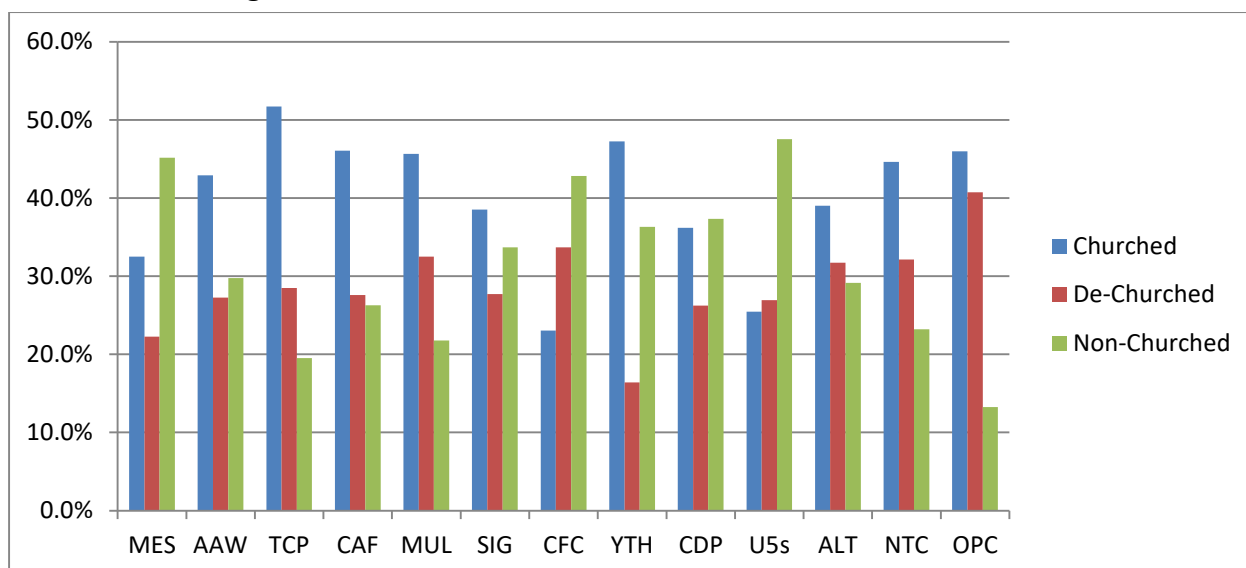
Abbreviations:

AAW	All age worship	ALT	Alternative worship	CAF	Café church
CDP	Community development plant	CFC	Child-focused church	CLU	Cluster
MES	Messy Church	MUL	Multiple congregation	NTC	Network church
OPC	Older people church	SIG	Special interest group	TCP	Traditional church plant
U5s	Church for <5s & carers	YTH	Youth congregation		

Table 33 and the chart 2 show the same thing, but both are shown in order to aid readers who find it easier to see comparisons by one method or the other. To simplify the data we now table the types most and least likely to engage with each of the three broad groups in society.

Table 42: Reaching the non-churched

Most likely	%	Least likely	%
Church based on <5s	47.5%	Older people's church	13.3%
Messy Church	45.2%	Church plants	19.5%
Child-focused church	42.8%	Multiple Sunday congregation	21.8%
Community development plant	37.3%	Network church	23.2%
Youth church	36.3%	Clusters	25.8%
Average (14 types)	33.5%	Café church	26.3%

Inferences

The statistics confirm what earlier ethnographic work suggested, that community development plants and Messy Church contact significant proportions of non-churched people. The statistics also add that those fxC which directly appeal to under 5s and their carers, those of school age together with their parents, and also young people, do best in contacting the group we call the non-churched. The non-churched are the growing proportion in society as both church attendance and Sunday school attendance has fallen over the last 100 years. For the mission of the Church of England, these signs of ways forward among them are of great importance.

It is also clear that other types of fxC are less effective, and in some cases by quite a margin. With the older people's church we infer that there are fewer non-churched in this generation. Otherwise they appear to us to include two different groups. It might be that the church plants and multiple congregations - by their congregational style, known preference for Sunday, and often for using an existing church building may unintentionally have created a difficult gap to cross for those not used

to church. We also know from wider experience that taking larger teams can create a tendency to begin churches similar in style to the sending church and these two types do have such team sizes; however, it would take other research to discover whether this downside applied in these cases.

Of the other two, the data suggests that both network churches and the cluster movement should take note that for all their mission-shaped language, they are currently underperforming among the non-churched for that rhetoric.

Table 43: Reaching the de-churched

Most likely	%	Least likely	%
Older people's church	40.7%	Youth church	16.4%
Child focused church	33.7%	Messy Church	22.3%
Multiple Sunday congregation	32.5%	Community development plant	26.3%
Network church	32.2%	Church based on <5s	26.9%
Alternative worship	31.7%	All age worship	27.3%
Average (14 types)	27.8%		

Inferences
The range of these figures is much narrower (with youth church and older people's church as the outliers at either end), thus any ordering of them is less compelling. We notice that three of the groups that scored low for non-churched are high in the list for the de-churched, and this may partially substantiate the comments above about the style and choices of their public gatherings. It raises an intriguing question: how possible is it in one type of fxC to appeal to both the de-churched and non-churched groups? Only the child-focused type appears in both lists for those most likely to reach a named group. The newcomer to the most likely list is alternative worship and its presence will confirm a longer view that it more readily draws de-churched people compared to other approaches. Our findings suggest there is some truth in this.

What will be the case among three of the first four cited as least likely to reach the de-churched is that in the nation there are few de-churched in these target groups, both by virtue of their age and that they have had fewer years to be in, let alone fall out of, church. This also applies, for cultural and longer historical reasons, to the community development plants that table 37 shows score high for gaps within the parish cover. We also know by correlation with area that they score highest for being in what used to be called UPAs and on local authority estates (see Chapter 7). Our earlier ethnographic studies indicate in areas of deprivation there are higher proportions of generations of the non-churched, and even their parents may not be de-churched.[22]

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[22] See G. Lings, *Encounters on the Edge* Nos. 1 (Living Proof – A new way of being church?), 2 (Unit 8: Out of sight, out of nothing), 6 (Across the pond), 14 (Can the Church make a difference to communities living in the inner city?) and 18 (Stepping Stones). http://www.churcharmy.org.uk/encountersontheedge

Table 44:   Reaching existing Christians

Most likely	%	Least likely	%
Church plants	51.7%	Child-focused Church	23.1%
Youth church	47.3%	Church based on <5s	25.5%
Café church	46.1%	Messy Church	32.5%
Older people's church	46.0	Community development plant	36.2%
Multiple Sunday congregation	45.7%	Special interest group	38.5%
Average (14 types)	38.7`%		

Three factors to note

Firstly, as with table 42, about the non-churched, a diversity of scores reappears, so comparisons have more force. Secondly, the numbers of existing Christians attending will include the team sent and still present. Those types of fxC sending larger teams could argue this disadvantages them in this table, but the counter view could be that with greater resources sent, there should be a greater missional effect, which helps balance these two factors out.

Thirdly, an overall reality needs to be registered, while comparing the different missional effects of these 14 types. With only the exception of the church plants, the majority of attenders, at all types of fxC, are either de-churched or non-churched. The overall proportion is 39% Christians (including the team) and 61% either returning to church or attending for the first time.

Inferences

The church plants are the most populated by Christians, nearly the least likely to attract the non-churched and are slightly above average for attracting the de-churched. It was as we studied Ely in 2015, the second diocese in our 2014-2016 work, that we noticed a marked increase in the number of Christians attending as compared with our 2012-2013 studies. Digging deeper we found this was disproportionally the effect of the church plants within their overall fxC set. A similar effect was then found in Southwark and more markedly in London. Congruent with this tendency, this year has seen the 2016 report *Love, Sweat and Tears* by Tim Thorlby on five Anglican church plants in east London. We could not help noting that it cites 80% for the proportion of newcomers 'who were previously attending another church'.[23]

It looks as though multiple Sunday congregation and café church are only a little less in the same position. All can be valued in that the majority of their attenders are newcomers, but modesty in their claims vis-à-vis other types of fxC is in order. Those people wondering what they may be called by God to start, may wish to bear in mind these different performances.

With older people's church our research unearthed a particular dynamic. Part of their *raison d'etre* is taking church community and worship to existing church people who are no longer easily able to come. It might be infirmity or poor transport on a Sunday. It underlines too that 'fresh' does not mean novel, but something more like suitable or contextual.

With youth church, another different interpretation of their Christians score is possible. At this stage of life, differentiation from their parents is important and valid. In addition, with cultural change, and since Bishop Graham Cray wrote on youth congregations in 2002[24], the need to provide for existing Christian young people has become more accepted. That they also score above the average for reaching the non-churched has to be set alongside this.

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[23] T. Thorlby, *Love Sweat and tears* (The Centre for Theology and Community, 2016), p iii.
[24] G. Cray, *Youth Congregations and the Emerging Church* (Grove Evangelism 57, 2002).

6.5 Motives for starting fxC

We began to suspect the choices made were not only different but even diagnostic as we analysed results from dioceses like Ely, Southwark and London which had higher than average numbers of church plants. In these results we saw scores lower than hitherto for reaching the non-churched and we dug deeper into what had motivated them to start.

Throughout 2012-2016, we have used the same seven options, plus 'other', for leaders to describe what led them to start an fxC. In explaining their results to a diocese we have grouped the seven into three pairs and one single category, as shown in the first row of table 45.

Table 45:   Motives to start within the 14 most common types

| 14 more common types of fxC | Growth based | | Geography based | | | Culture based | |
	Diocesan Initiative	Growth Philosophy	Inadequate Penetration of the Parish	New Housing Opportunity	Physically Restricted at sending church	Provide Increased Diversity	Unreached People Group
MES	3.1%	53.9%	27.5%	1.4%	0.8%	55.3%	85.6%
CAF	6.6%	53.0%	27.2%	2.6%	4.0%	51.7%	70.2%
CFC	1.4%	54.7%	24.3%	3.4%	3.4%	52.0%	85.1%
CP	27.3%	51.5%	52.3%	24.2%	25.0%	22.7%	40.2%
SIG	9.9%	33.7%	9.9%	3.0%	2.0%	43.6%	84.2%
AAW	10.0%	56.7%	33.3%	4.4%	8.9%	53.3%	73.3%
MUL	10.1%	58.4%	15.7%	2.2%	13.5%	74.2%	64.0%
CDP	14.6%	36.0%	49.4%	19.1%	6.7%	31.5%	77.5%
NTC	22.5%	60.0%	18.8%	7.5%	7.5%	25.0%	76.3%
ALT	16.7%	37.2%	17.9%	2.6%	7.7%	60.3%	70.5%
>5s	1.3%	56.6%	15.8%	2.6%	0.0%	52.6%	86.8%
YTH	18.5%	52.3%	13.8%	0.0%	1.5%	43.1%	89.2%
CLU	9.4%	71.9%	12.5%	1.6%	4.7%	34.4%	65.6%
OPC	0.0%	46.0%	27.0%	4.8%	4.8%	46.0%	77.8%
Average (14 types)	9.5%	51.8%	26.4%	5.4%	5.9%	47.7%	75.7%

Abbreviations:

AAW	All age worship	ALT	Alternative worship	CAF	Café church
CDP	Community development plant	CFC	Child-focused church	CLU	Cluster
MES	Messy Church	MUL	Multiple congregation	NTC	Network church
OPC	Older people's church	SIG	Special interest group	TCP	Traditional church plant
U5s	Church for <5s & carers	YTH	Youth congregation		

Two limitations
We know that certain types of fxC multiple designate, thus the figures present a more stark set of contrasts than the reality. The results for each single type may also be affected by the kind of social area they serve and Chapter 7 delves into that topic. All we can do here is compare the bald results shown.

Inferences about the fxC types from the data
The **church plants** may represent the clearest example of a distinct pattern. They score highest for diocesan initiative, within growth mentality, although only average for a local church's desire to see growth. This first figure is both welcome and understandable in that 54% meet beyond the parish boundary from which they came, compared to an average for the 14 types of 28%. At the same time they are all but twice as likely as most other cases to be started because a gap appears in the effective mission presence of either its own parish or another designated one. Response to new

housing is a relatively rare motive today, perhaps linked to the fortune of the economy since 2008. However, the church plants stand out as the most likely to have been begun for this reason, and the most likely to begin by the need to respond to the sending church being full.

By contrast, they identify least with the two cultural reasons: that is, providing greater diversity of ways of being church or by spotting cultural groups in society under-represented in the particular sending church. It may well be that what contributes to the low figure for diversity is that church plants have had a tendency to emulate the style of the sending church, thus diversity might almost be seen to compromise their values. If they are sometimes accused of a lack of contextualising in their arrival, then this data about starting motives is congruent with that danger.
Similarly, they are clearly the least likely to choose the motive of starting in order to connect with an unreached people group. If that is typical, it is as though they don't firstly think culturally, but rather focus on where they came from, and by spotting gaps where their desire to grow and their way of being church can overlap and occur again. However, these figures are averages taken over 20 years, with 80 of them starting prior to 2006. It seems that more recent examples are taking contextualising more seriously. Some evidence of that comes from the 12 church plants in the Stepney episcopal area, all begun since 2000. Of these, 7 (or 58%) ticked unreached people group, which begins to close the gap to the scores of the other types but is still below the 75% average.

Network churches are both similar and different to this pattern. For similar reasons they score high on diocesan initiative and 75% cross a parish boundary to begin, while the locally felt growth motive is higher than for church plants. Filling a parish gap, or a response to new housing, or the sending church being full is seldom the motive. Increasing the diversity of ways of being church only applies to $1/4^{th}$ of cases, but spotting a people group is the dominant pull.

The pattern across **café churches** is not unlike that for **network churches**, and the designations easily overlap. The principal difference is their far higher score for providing diversity. This could be a reflection of their sense of identity centred round holding their gatherings in a distinctly different style to what they would see as passive congregational life.

Multiple congregations and **all age worship** share some features. Almost by definition they stay within the sending parish, thus the growth motive tends to be local, not diocesan. Both score above average for the existing church being full, though this is but true of a minority of cases. Again, befitting their type, they come first and fourth in the column of proving diversity. All age worship rates higher on filling a parish gap and working with an unreached people group. These might be ways of talking about providing more for families with children.

This last factor named is probably born out in that **youth congregations**, **church for under 5s**, **Messy Church** and **child-focused church** are among the highest scoring for unreached people group – as is **special interest group** for specific reasons. The **youth congregations** rate third in the diocesan initiative column and this accords with 47.7% meeting beyond the parish boundary. Unsurprisingly they score very low for the church being full, but surprisingly they are below average for providing more diverse ways of being church. Most often **Messy Church** is motivated by a local desire for growth; they rate third highest for providing diversity, and third highest about an unreached people group as their reason to start an fxC.

As befits the **community development plants**, they score 2nd highest behind church plants over spotting gaps within the parish cover and also in responding to areas of new housing, with the latter plausibly linked to an above average score for diocesan initiative. By contrast to the church plants, they score above average for working with an unreached people group.

It would be over-claiming to state that motives are diagnostic of all types of fxC. But this examination shows they often do differentiate them and the table provides evidence that puts figures behind what may have been sensed by intuition.

Inferences between the motives from the data

Two comments may bear inspection.

Firstly, the proportion of local growth convictions to diocesan initiative is always larger, on average by a factor of 5 to 1. There is one perfectly good reason for this. In a parish-based fxC, not involving extra stipendiary staff, there is no need for the diocese to take the lead.

One further comment on the first point may help wider readers. European churches and some denominations in Britain and Ireland are interested in what has happened in the Church of England. We have seen evidence that they can gain the impression that what has occurred has been empowered from the centre. This data flatly contradicts that narrative. The percentage of cases attributing diocesan initiative has varied over the 20+ years, but only between 6% and 11% of the stories. While central support and initiative is rightly valued, this data supports a quite different scenario, namely a grass roots phenomenon of great diversity, done for a wide variety of reasons.

Only in two to three types – church planting, Messy Church and to a lesser extent café church - has anything like a franchise been in operation. Moreover, Chapter 8 on training, will unpack the marginal role that has played. All this is not to dismiss the roles of Bishops, the report *Mission-shaped Church* or the subsequent Fresh Expressions team, over 12 years. But it would be a disservice to those about to set out on the journey and wanting to enable something similar in their own denomination, to let them imagine that what has been seen in the Church of England was centrally planned or organisationally delivered.

Rather, it looks more as though the untidy, muddling pragmatism operating at many levels of the Church of England has played a large part. Where what has started has been engendered by the beckoning of *missio Dei* or the disturbance of the Holy Spirit, is beyond empirical demonstration by this report, but from time to time leaders looking at the motives section in the questionnaire have explicitly told us that they felt impelled by a call of God to start their fxC.

Secondly, table 45 shows that the area-based reasons are usually less common than the cultural ones, except in the case of the church plants. This is nuanced by the change in motive over time.

The table overleaf shows these changes.

Table 46:   Motive over time – all types of fxC

Motive	1992-98	1999-05	2006-12	2013-14	Total	1992-98 %	1999-05 %	2006-12 %	2013-14 %	Average %
Diocesan Initiative	8	20	46	11	85	10.1%	11.4%	6.5%	7.7%	7.7%
Growth Philosophy	35	82	377	83	577	44.3%	46.6%	53.0%	58.0%	52.0%
Inadequate Penetration of the parish	39	50	160	35	284	49.4%	28.4%	22.5%	24.5%	25.6%
New Housing Opportunity	17	12	23	2	54	21.5%	6.8%	3.2%	1.4%	4.9%
Physically Restricted at sending church	18	14	21	6	59	22.8%	8.0%	3.0%	4.2%	5.3%
Provide Increased Diversity	21	81	359	85	546	26.6%	46.0%	50.5%	59.4%	49.2%
Unreached People Group	42	128	551	116	837	53.2%	72.7%	77.5%	81.1%	75.5%
No. of fxC	79	176	711	143	1109					

Looking at the motives in different periods across the years, the factors that have steadily increased are the local growth factor, and the two cultural reasons shown in the last two rows even more so. Conversely, the area-based ones and the sending church being full have shrunk over the years.

We suggest this is of importance in the missional and ecclesial understanding of the Church of England. Historically, it has valued parishes which are an area based concept, until recently with one minister and one church to serve it through one congregation, though there can be several different service times.

Excellent though responsibility for an area is, it does not by itself engender the desire to provide diverse ways of being church or what should be fashioned with unreached people groups in mind. Those missional instincts can work with parishes, but they arise from a wider imagination and awareness that a diversity of approaches is legitimate. This is one message from the fxC to the rest of the Church: in our mission we need to think both culturally and by area.

6.6 Reaching neighbourhood and networks

By 'neighbourhood' we mean an area-based approach to mission, which in speaking to leaders we explain is roughly co-terminus with their parish, knowing that sometimes parish boundaries and felt neighbourhoods do not sit exactly with one another. By 'networks', we explain that we mean relationally formed groups. These might be from schools, interests, stages of life, or work. We hold no view that one of these two is better or worse than the other, but accept that both operate today, as the report *Mission-shaped church* indicated in 2004.

Chart 7:   Relative propensities of 14 types of fxC to reach neighbourhoods or networks
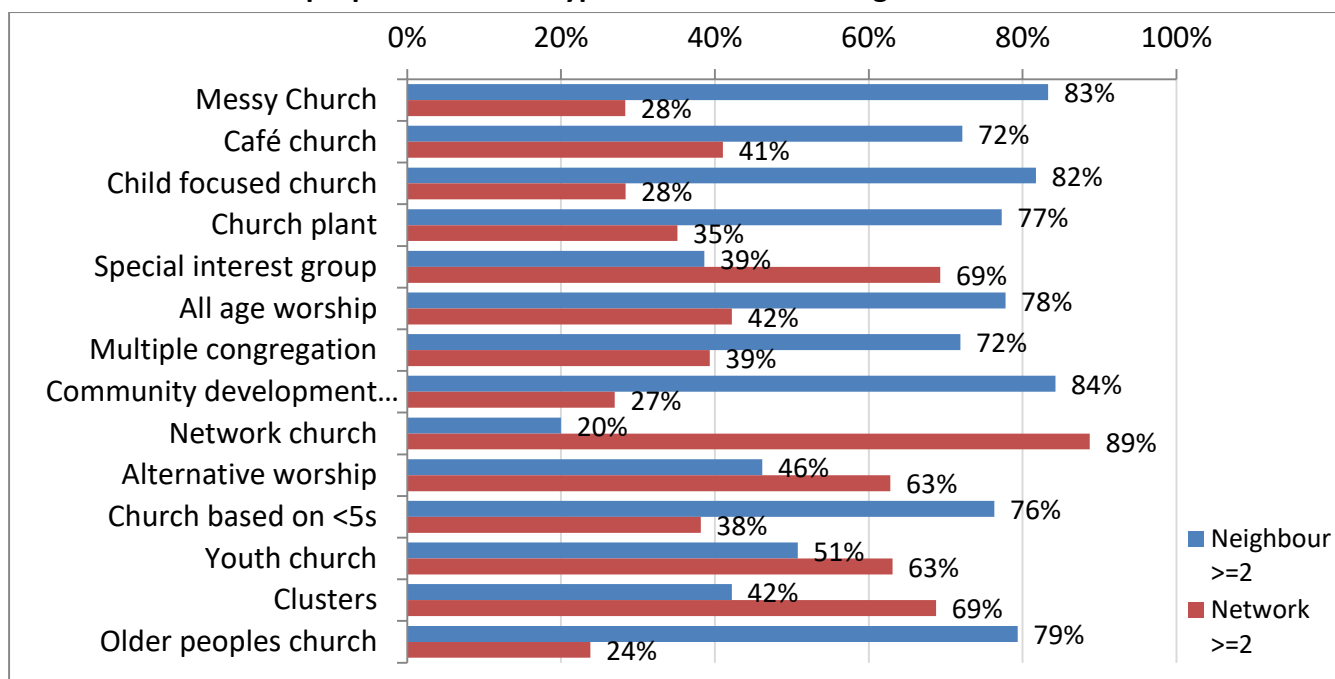
How the figures are derived
Leaders score where they think the attenders come from, using these two terms. They score the extent to which each is true by a 0-3 system in which 0 means not at all, 1 means a minority feature, 2 a majority feature, and 3 nearly all or totally the case. These numbers are then totalled to create rough percentages. Thus the bar chart is preferable to a table of figures that would imply greater exactitude. There is no halfway score possible, thus we allow a result of 2 attributed to both factors and for that reason the numbers do not sum to 100%.

Inferences from the data
The chart exhibits the percentage of fxC of each type that thought neighbourhood or network was the major or complete reality. The averages for these two are: neighbourhood 69% and network 42%, confirming what we have seen with each of the 21 dioceses, that both play a part and network is still the minor factor but not to be ignored or despised.

It might be expected that different motives, of section 6.5, for starting an fxC might intersect with this way of examining the Church's mission today and the contribution that the fxC make. We found a correspondence between the six types of fxC which score highest on neighbourhood and that they are also the top six of the scores for sensing a gap in the parish cover. But those that score highest on network are not directly related to high scores for either the motive of providing diversity or detecting an unreached people group. Three of the types of fxC that have a significant number of children also score high on neighbourhood. This might be interpreted as these fxC being near enough to walk to.

6.7 The typicality of attenders by fxC type

This factor was added halfway through the first round of dioceses. Thereafter, when we wrote a report for a diocese as it was completed, one comment was on the extent to which attenders at the fxC were typical of the area or culture served. The Anglican instinct for parish, and serving those within it, underlies such a concern. The overall statistic quoted in the diocesan reports summed figures for 'totally typical' and 'mainly typical'. We accept these terms are rough judgements made by the leader and sometimes very difficult to do when serving highly diverse communities and ages. Section 5.10 of this report showed that the averages for such typicality, across the two sets of dioceses, were narrowly either side of 80%, with a range from 92% to 73%. Here is the breakdown of typicality, by type of fxC, to see if this shows deviations from that overall picture.

Chart 8: **Typicality of attenders of social area at the 14 most common types of fxC**

Abbreviations:

AAW	All age worship	ALT	Alternative worship	CAF	Café church
CDP	Community development plant	CFC	Child-focused church	CLU	Cluster
MES	Messy Church	MUL	Multiple congregation	NTC	Network church
OPC	Older People's Church	SIG	Special interest group	TCP	Traditional church plant
U5s	Church for <5s & carers	YTH	Youth congregation		

Some first impressions include that most types of fxC are bracketed around the 80% mark when summing the totally and mainly typical bars. There is one outlier: the special interest group fxC, which by definition is for a specific set of people and thus a more specific segment of the overall population. In addition, the scores for 'slightly typical' are low throughout, except at SIG fxC. There is some linkage with the neighbourhood and network chart. Of the five types that score highest for network, three of them score below - and one at - the 80% typicality average. Across the seven types scoring highest on neighbourhood, five score above that 80% average. Of these the age based older people's church would naturally have a lower typicality score. The differences are not wide, yet here is some evidence that fxC which are designed to serve networks will have to accept some reduction in typicality. It is part of an overall mission of the Church to serve both neighbourhoods and networks.

6.8 Adult team sizes sent in different types of fxC

Team size was briefly examined in relation to the 21 dioceses in section 5.6. This way of looking at the evidence could only demonstrate an overall pattern showing that 3-12 adults made up some 68% of all sizes chosen, and only a few dioceses departed from this dominance in the overall picture. That second comment acts as a spur to find a reason for this variance. The table below orders the 14 types by descending order of examples, showing how they vary from the average.

Table 47:   Team sizes in the 14 more common types of fxC

Team Size at 14 types of fxC	Team size 1 to 2	Team size 3 to 12	Team size 13 to 19	Team size 20 to 49	Team size 50 plus
Messy Church	3.7%	63.0%	20.2%	12.7%	0.3%
Cafe church	5.0%	62.9%	16.4%	14.3%	1.4%
Child-focused church	9.6%	68.4%	16.9%	5.1%	0.0%
Traditional church plant	2.4%	29.8%	9.7%	37.1%	21.0%
Special interest group	17.6%	67.0%	6.6%	7.7%	1.1%
Multiple Sunday congregation	7.1%	55.3%	12.9%	16.5%	8.2%
Community development plant	7.4%	72.8%	7.4%	9.9%	2.5%
All age worship	6.6%	53.9%	10.5%	21.1%	7.9%
Network church	11.0%	47.9%	13.7%	17.8%	9.6%
Alternative worship	13.0%	71.0%	7.2%	5.8%	2.9%
Church based on <5s	19.4%	75.8%	1.6%	3.2%	0.0%
Cluster based church	4.8%	53.2%	16.1%	21.0%	4.8%
Youth church	24.6%	45.9%	14.8%	13.1%	1.6%
Older people's church	20.6%	74.6%	1.6%	3.2%	0%
Average (14 most common types)	9.8%	58.9%	13.7%	13.8%	3.8%
Averages dioceses 1- 11	10.0%	73.6%	7.9%	7.2%	1.3%
Averages dioceses 12-21	14.3%	63.2%	8.8%	11.3%	2.3%

Inferences from the data

Youth churches are more likely than others to start with 1-2 people. We suspect this higher than average figure is influenced by the number of Network Youth Church leaders in Carlisle diocese. By contrast, their 13-19 figure is above the average but we do not know why.

Clusters, almost by definition, are begun by like-minded groups, but as the data shows, they can be of variable size. Few are 50+ as this is near what is deemed to be their operating ceiling.

Church based on <5s as shown in section 6.2 tend to be smaller than most other types and this is reflected in their team size choices. Much the same could be said for **alternative worship** fxC.

Network churches, by contrast, are the 4th largest in average size and their above average figures for the two larger team sizes fits with that picture. This sort of pattern also fits for the even larger average attendance size **multiple Sunday congregations** and **all age worship**.

Community development plants which customarily serve more needy areas can face a dilemma. They need to take enough people to take a difference, but not so many that it feels like an invasion or creates dependency. Their 2nd highest score in the table for 3-12 people may reflect working out those dynamics.

The **special interest groups** are so varied that the report forebears to comment. 95% of the teams sent to begin **older people's church** teams are small, as befits this smallest size of fxC.

The **traditional church plant**s are the most different to everything else. They relatively rarely begin with a small team, either of 1-2 or even 3-12. 13-19 some say is a tricky number; too big to be a small group and too small to be a credible congregation. Accordingly, 58% of them take at least 20 or more people and of this 21% take 50 or more people.

This leaves three final groups, the **child-focused, café churches and Messy Churches**, all of which do take some level of human resource to run effectively. While their percentage that are staffed by 3-12 people is around the average, Messy Church and café church are well above the average for teams of 13-19 and 20-49. With all three, the number of team of 50+ is minimal.

Some implications
The discernibly different preferences exercised for team size taken across the different types of fxC does at least two pieces of work. At the level of interpreting the overall picture, this section, linked to 4.6 reveals that it is the predominance of different fxC types which contributes to the varying picture across the dioceses. It also adds to the Church's growing understanding of how each type of fxC may normally be characterised.

At the level of practice it would also help local people wondering what they might be called to do, what fxC type choices to make, and what they might expect will be needed in terms of the size of group to start well. While the dominance of the 3-12 team size helpfully puts many choices within the range of many parishes, some awareness of the differing demands of different types of fxC should be part of their thinking too.

6.9 Mission support dynamics and parish boundaries

This section builds upon section 5.7, but seeks to explain the divergence of pattern noted there by seeing how far they are attributable to the choice of fxC type. Readers should be aware that there is only sometimes a correlation between team size and mission support type. For example, s*eeds* are always small, but runners can vary greatly in size and so can transplants.

Table 48:   Kinds of mission support at the 14 more common types of fxC

Mission support at 14 types of fxC	Runner %	Graft %	Transplant %	Seed %
Messy Church	98.1%	0.0%	0.6%	1.1%
Cafe church	86.8%	0.7%	4.3%	7.3%
Child-focused church	95.9%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%
Traditional church plant	49.2%	12.1%	32.6%	6.1%
Special interest group	75.2%	1.0%	0.0%	18.8%
Multiple Sunday congregation	84.3%	5.6%	5.6%	2.2%
Community development plant	67.4%	2.2%	6.7%	23.6%
All age worship	76.7%	4.8%	8.9%	6.7%
Network church	52.5%	0.0%	16.3%	27.5%
Alternative worship	74.4%	2.6%	2.6%	15.4%
Church based on <5s	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Cluster based church	68.8%	1.6%	7.8%	15.6%
Youth church	76.9%	0.0%	0.0%	21.5%
Older people's church	96.8%	1.6%	0.0%	1.6%
Average (14 types)	82.1%	2.1%	5.7%	8.4%

Inferences from the data

With some types of fxC it is hard to make any meaningful comment, or to be sure why variants from the mean occur, such as why clusters score high for seed, although we understand they are one way that larger churches multiply from an eclectic attendance base.

Youth church displays the characteristic of either being in and for an existing parish, making it a runner, or working more widely across an area, like as a deanery, where the seed dynamic more usually applies and at more than twice the average. But there are no grafts or transplants.
Church based on <5s is clearly shown to be something which is parish based, is supported by it, and remains within its existing overall life. **Child-focused church, Messy Church** and **older people's church** are similarly nearly all runners, but in a few cases it has involved a move elsewhere in order to begin one. **Café church** is similar to them but with a higher figure for the seed dynamic.

All age worship has more than double the average score for grafts, as does **multiple Sunday congregation**, and this may indicate in some cases the coming together of the sent and receiving people, by which a diversifying of approaches in worship is what is being added. In the majority of cases they seem to be adding to the diversity of style of congregation within the sending parish.

Though many types have the runner dynamic, including the **community development plants** and also **network churches,** these two score the two highest for the seed dynamic, indicating the willingness of a few people to move house into an area in order to make a difference from modest beginnings.

From what else we have seen, it is diagnostic that just under half of the **church plants** remain within the parish, but this is the lowest figure in the list. This type of fxC scores easily the highest for both grafts and transplants. There are some seed examples but fewer than the average.

The links to where fxC meet in relation to parish boundaries

Across the 14 types, 28% cross a parish boundary, but this masks their distribution by type.

Table 49:   Contrasting the types of fxC most, and least, likely to meet beyond the parish

Most likely to meet beyond the sending parish	%	Least likely to move beyond the sending parish	%
Network churches	75.0%	Older people's church	4.8%
Clusters	73.4%	Child-focused church	7.4%
Church plants	53.8%	Church based on <5s	9.2%
Youth church	47.7%	Messy Churches	10.8%
Special interest group	44.6%	Multiple congregations	18.0%

Those most likely to meet beyond the sending parish, network church and clusters, are two ways of being church strongly based on relational networks more than geographical areas. A number of church plants, via the dynamics of grafts and transplants, elect to move elsewhere. Some youth churches are benefice or deanery-based, contributing to their figure, and special interest groups also draw upon a basis of a wider shared network.

Among those least likely to move beyond the parish are firstly fxC to provide for the elderly of that parish, then the three groups that provide for families with younger children. That 1/5th of multiple congregations do move beyond the parish is related to the proportion of multiple congregations that are grafts and transplants.

6.10   Growth ratios across different types of fxC

Chapter 6 so far has covered the variations in fxC size, their growth plateau or shrinkage over time, what proportions of Christians, de-churched and non-churched they draw, as well as the motives for starting up, the team size they took and with what kind of mission support dynamic.
Now it is time to see, across these 14 types, what the resultant growth from the start has been when compared with the average attendance now.

Table 50:   Ratios comparing to those adults and under 16s beginning the fxC, with now

Growth in the 14 more common types of fxC	Ratio: adults sent to attendance now	Ratio: <16s sent to att'd now	Ratio: total sent to att'd now	Overall net growth ratio	
Messy Church	2.62	11.91	4.36	3.36	
Cafe church	2.73	5.06	3.14		2.14
Child-focused church	3.14	9.42	4.85	3.85	
Traditional church plant	2.40	2.99	2.52		1.52
Special interest group	3.38	5.86	3.62	2.62	
All age worship	3.08	6.06	3.74	2.74	
Multiple Sunday congregation	3.82	6.17	4.38	3.38	
Community development plant	2.81	5.99	3.34	2.34	
Network church	2.12	2.52	2.22		1.22
Alternative worship	2.90	6.07	3.43	2.43	
Church based on <5s	3.98	17.95	6.63	5.63	
Youth church	1.92	3.75	2.63		1.63
Cluster based church	2.15	2.24	2.17		1.17
Older people's church	4.04	4.14	4.04	3.04	
Average (14 most common types)	2.9	7.4	3.8	2.8	

How the comparison figures are derived and what they mean
The ratio divides attendance by those sent. The right hand column, the 'net growth ratio', is calculated by subtracting the number sent from the numbers now, and then dividing the remainder by the team sent. The figures in the right hand column then show how many extra people are now attending, on average, for each person who began the fxC. This can be converted into a percentage. For example, a 2.50 net growth ratio means a 250% increase in the life of the fxC from the group that started it to what was true when we took the attendance figures.

Caveats about the numbers
The child ratio is always higher, sometimes markedly so. Such figures tend to be inflated because often there are no children on the team who set up the fxC. Yet when the young church starts they come with their parents. Therefore we try to ask when conducting interviews whether there were existing church children brought to the first public gathering. This distortion would in turn have an effect on the overall growth ratio which should be treated with a little caution. The adult ratio is unaffected by this complication and in some ways, therefore, is the more reliable comparator.

Throughout our research we have adopted the simple measure used in other Church of England statistics that deems a child to be under 16 and an adult of 16 and over. This becomes problematic in reporting when dealing with teenagers and youth church.

Some inferences from the data
Readers should not imagine from the middle column, the ratio of <16s sent to now, that the three types of fxC that major on under 16s - **Messy Church**, **child-focused church** and **church for**

under 5s - are flooded out something like three or four to one with this age band. Section 6.11 will show the numbers of adults to <16s in these 14 types of fxC and comment on the relative proportions of the two age groups.

Readers should, however, note that these three types have been highly effective in attracting under 16s. This in turn helps gives them the first, second and fourth highest overall *net growth ratios*. Of these three, in terms of attracting adults, church based on under 5s does best, then child-focused church, with both well above the average. Messy Church is way below that.

Multiple Sunday congregation scores well in drawing an above average ratio for adults (3.82) and a bit below the average re under 16s (6.17). **All age worship** figures for adults (3.08) are a bit lower and for <16s (6.06), perhaps reflecting an intentional appeal across the age range.

The three types that have notably lower *net growth ratio* scores are the **clusters** (1.17), **network churches** (1.22) and the **church plants** (1.52). A mitigating factor with all three is that because they tend to take larger team sizes, their percentage growth figure will be lower. To illustrate this, a team of 10 growing to 40 attenders has seen a net growth ratio of 3.0. However, a team of 20 growing to 50 has a net growth ratio of 1.5, although in both cases 30 new people have come. At the same time, there is also a sense that the gains in these three types of fxC are more modest than anecdote or publicity might expect. Their growth ratios contribute to the ongoing question of whether the mission of the Church of England is better served by a proliferation of smaller churches or investment in a few larger ones, or again what combination of the two is fruitful.

Overall, the 2.8 average net growth ratio equates to a 280% increase from the starting point. This is seldom matched in the recent history of existing parishes and is one measure of how vigorously these young churches have grown, even though many have later reached a plateau.

6.11 Proportions of adults and <16s at 14 types of fxC

Table 51:   Numbers and percentages of <16s and adults at some fxC

14 most common types of fxC	fxC adult attendance	fxC <16s attendance	fxC total attendance	Adult attendance (%)	<16s attendance (%)
Messy Church	8841	9301	18142	48.7%	51.3%
Cafe church	4081	1633	5714	71.4%	28.6%
Child-focused church	2800	3137	5937	47.2%	52.8%
Traditional church plant	8635	2692	11327	76.2%	23.8%
Special interest group	2374	428	2802	84.7%	15.3%
All age worship	3513	1946	5459	64.4%	35.6%
Multiple Sunday congregation	4372	2227	6599	66.3%	33.7%
Community development plant	2402	1030	3432	70.0%	30.0%
Network church	3051	1146	4197	72.7%	27.3%
Alternative worship	1806	747	2553	70.7%	29.3%
Church based on <5s	1443	1526	2969	48.6%	51.4%
Youth church	800	1002	1802	44.4%	55.6%
Cluster based church	2482	918	3400	73.0%	27.0%
Older people's church	1443	29	1472	98.0%	2.0%
Average (14 types)				63.4%	36.6%

The background and a limitation

Part of the backdrop to these figures is what proportion of the population in England are under 16; from the 2011 Census, the figure for England is 18.9%. Secondly, a related element is concern in the wider Church over how well or poorly we are in contact with the young. Thirdly, in retrospect, it would have been more helpful to divide the under 11s from teenagers, but the Church of England has used 16 and over, and under 16, in other statistics and this swayed us. Regrettably we cannot tell usually from these figures what proportion of the under 16s are under eleven and which are teenagers. There are exceptions in the cases of church based on under 5s where teenagers under 16 would be rare, or where they are dominant in youth churches.

Totals of the middle columns are not shown because of the factor that types of fxC are not discrete and leaders therefore sometimes multiple designate the fxC in question by a factor of about 1.6. The numbers of adults and <16s then only represent the figures related to types of fxC chosen, not absolute numbers in each type.

Inferences from the data

The table's contents lay to rest any suspicion or accusation that those types of fxC which are reputedly good at drawing children are dominated by them. The three types - **Messy Church**, **child-focused church** and **church based on under 5s** - are all around the 48% adult, and 52% <16s mark, which bears witness to a family-based, not child-centred identity for these churches. Equally these three types, unsurprisingly together with youth church, are the highest scoring for children, which is a promising contribution to ongoing contact with the young. Next come two other types: **multiple congregations** and **all age worship**. They have about 65% adults and 35% <16s.

Several types are >70% comprised of adults, and thus fewer under 16s, although they are still above the average in the population. Those giving their <16 figures include: **café church** (28.6%) **clusters** (27.0%), **network church** (27.3%), **alternative worship** (29.3%), and **church plants** (23.8%). The style of public worship, and their approaches to learning and participation, across these four types is rather different, which makes this similarity of result intriguing.

All of the types named thus far are likely to benefit from the finding from Professor David Voas that churches with >2 children for 10 adults are more likely to grow than those with lower proportions of children.[25]

Two types are notably adult-based. One is **older people's church**. The **special interest group** type is much more varied and ranges across church for those recovering from various addictions, adults with learning difficulties and workplace church. Having children present in such contexts may not be appropriate.

Comment on the average figures

Apart from these two types, all the other most common types have a proportion of under 16s well above the proportion in the population. The overall percentage is 36.6%.

Professor Voas also gave some figures from Statistics for Mission 2011 that, from attendance at inherited churches on Sundays and midweek, 19.7% are <16. However, counting those on Sunday only yielded a result of around one child to six adults.[26] Off the record, he doubted the former figure for it dubiously could include large one-off school events like an end of term service held in church.

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[25] *From Anecdote to Evidence* (Church of England, 2014), p. 23

[26] D. Voas & L. Watt ,*The Church Growth Programme Report on Strands 1 and 2*: numerical change in church attendance; national local and individual factors, p.16.

So it appears that the fxC are making contact more effectively with the <16s than much of the rest of the Church. This a welcome piece of news. It is an open question for the future whether the proportions, that in reality constituted child attendance, will be followed by teen and young adult attendance.

6.12   Frequency of gathering

Table 52:   Frequency of meeting and 14 more common types of fxC

Meeting frequency in 14most common types of fxC	weekly %	fortnightly %	monthly %
Messy Church	7.2%	5.6%	87.2%
Cafe church	42.7%	10.7%	46.7%
Child-focused church	43.9%	8.8%	47.3%
Church plant	96.2%	2.3%	1.5%
Special interest group	68.0%	14.0%	18.0%
All age worship	46.7%	7.8%	45.6%
Multiple Sunday congregation	61.8%	4.5%	33.7%
Community development plant	74.2%	10.1%	15.7%
Network church	75.0%	17.5%	7.5%
Alternative worship	52.6%	12.8%	34.6%
Church based on <5s	65.8%	6.6%	27.6%
Youth church	67.7%	21.5%	10.8%
Cluster based church	70.3%	20.3%	9.4%
Older people's church	38.1%	7.9%	54.0%
Average (14 most common types)	49.1%	9.3%	41.7%

Comment on this section will be brief as frequency itself seems to have an important effect upon other variables, especially those that are some measurement of developing ecclesial maturity. On reflection it becomes obvious that any community that meets 12 times a year will tend to develop less quickly than one that gathers over 50 times in the same period. Chapter 7 explores this. Differentiating the types above, say by which meet weekly, the polar opposites are the **church plants** (96.2%) and the **Messy Churches** (7.2%).

Some types tend to be resource hungry such as **café church** and **alternative worship**. This may account for the former being fairly evenly split between weekly and monthly and only just over half the latter being weekly.

It is also clear that fortnightly continues to be the least common choice. We surmise that it has the disadvantage of being more demanding than monthly and yet also more difficult than weekly to remember when the next gathering is. We note a correlation that **clusters, n**etwork churches and **y**outh church are more likely than many to choose the fortnightly frequency, and they had among the lower growth ratios, but we cannot prove causation.

One factor that differentiates **multiple Sunday congregations** and **all age worship** is their frequency, although we found them similar over several factors: being larger in size than most others, some motives by which to start, proportions of adults and under 16s, the ratio of under 16s sent and now, and team sizes sent. Yet the all age worship is much more likely to be monthly,

which may feel more like a worship style option in the overall monthly diet of a church. The very term 'multiple congregation' reflects a stronger sense of corporate identity and this may be what is showing in them meeting more often weekly. There is also the correlation that the multiple congregations are nearly twice as likely to continue to grow in size.

6.13 Leadership patterns in the 13 common types of fxC

Table 53: Proportions of fxC leaders that are male, female, ordained or lay

Some leader details at the 14 most common types of fxC	Male Leader %	Female Leader %	Ordained Leader %	Lay Leader %	Lay-Lay Leader %
Messy Church	26.2%	73.8%	41.9%	58.1%	51.4%
Cafe church	59.9%	40.1%	64.3%	35.7%	28.1%
Child-focused church	43.2%	56.8%	55.6%	44.4%	37.5%
Church plant	85.4%	14.6%	82.8%	17.2%	9.2%
Special interest group	59.9%	40.1%	47.2%	52.8%	47.7%
All age worship	61.4%	38.6%	67.1%	32.9%	28.2%
Multiple Sunday congregation	63.0%	37.0%	70.3%	29.7%	23.1%
Community development plant	67.6%	32.4%	54.0%	46.0%	33.6%
Network church	73.9%	26.1%	56.3%	43.7%	39.6%
Alternative worship	72.1%	27.9%	59.8%	40.2%	28.7%
Church based on <5s	21.7%	78.3%	37.7%	62.3%	55.6%
Youth church	70.9%	29.1%	32.0%	68.0%	63.7%
Cluster based church	57.6%	42.4%	28.2%	71.8%	70.4%
Older people's church	32.6%	67.4%	44.9%	55.1%	48.7%
Average (14 types)	50.2%	49.8%	51.6%	48.4%	41.5%

A caveat

All types of fxC that have existed for some years may well have seen their founder succeeded by a further leader. We record all these changes. Thus there have been more leaders than cases of fxC. Conversely a few leaders have led more than one fxC over time. In a very few cases it has been insisted that there is not one leader but a team. Here we have not assigned a gender.

In terms of succession, it is more common that an ordained founder is followed by a lay successor than the other way around, but we have detected no pattern of one gender being succeeded by the other. The percentages shown only give an overall picture across time, in which one particular type of fxC may have been led by a variety of leaders who fall across differing categories.

Inferences from this data

It is plausible to think, in relation to **gender**, there may be three groups of fxC which tend to have different characteristics. One group is those two fxC which have a large proportion of younger children, and at the other end of the age spectrum, older people's church. These are much more likely to be led by women: church based on <5s (78%), Messy Church (74%). In contrast in descending order, the following larger group are much more likely to be led by men: church plants (85%), network church (74%), alternative worship (72%), youth church (71%), Community development plants (68%), multiple Sunday congregations (65%), and all age worship (61%). The third group or remainder have a <60->40 split that could go either way, but usually with males being the leader.

This could look like there are many more male leaders than female. However, because the number of each fxC type varies from over 300 to 60+, the overall percentage of male and female leaders is far closer. In dioceses 1-11 it was 48% male and 52% female. Across dioceses 12-21 that figure reverses to 52.6% male and 47.4% female. It is most likely that the reversal is attributable to the 2nd set which had many more (male led) church plants.

There are broad similarities and some marked differences when comparing the male and female leader percentages with the splitting out of the **lay** and **ordained** categories. In Messy Church leaders are likely to be lay and female (58% and 74%) as are church based on <5s leaders (62% and 78%). The church plant leaders are most likely to be ordained and male (83% and 85%). To a lesser degree this is true for multiple congregations (70% and 63%), for all age worship (67% and 61%) and for café church (64% and 60%).

In network churches, alternative worship and community development plants, the dominance of ordained over lay is less marked than that of male leaders being more common than female. Two types that move away from the two nameable leader stereotypes (that is, the male ordained leader and the female lay leader) are the clusters and youth congregations. While across the two fxC types more are male led, they are significantly lay led (cluster 72% and youth 68%).

This is the first time we have been able to examine the distribution of **lay-lay leaders**. The average of 41.5% across the 14 types is a little higher than for all types. In dioceses 1-11 it was 39.2% and in dioceses 12-21 it was 34.1. The high number of Messy Churches, and their above average score for having lay-lay leaders, will contribute to this.

Readers should note that the lay leader column includes the lay-lay figure; one could create a further column entitled 'professional lay' or 'accredited lay' and its figures would be by subtracting the lay-lay figure from the 'lay' column. For example, in Messy Churches we could say that 7% are 'accredited' lay leaders, or 8% in café churches. Across these 14 types of fxC, the 'accredited' lay figure is less than 10%, except for the community development plants (12%) and alternative worship (12%). In clusters the accredited percentage is miniscule.

The lay-lay are more prevalent among the following types: clusters (70%), youth church (64%), church based on <5s (56%), then Messy Church (51%). older people's church (49%) and special interest group (48%). They are the least common in relation to church plants (9%).

Time given and any remuneration
We have figures showing whether leaders served in a full time, part time or spare time capacity and whether this was stipendiary, locally paid or in a voluntary capacity. As might be expected, those types of fxC that commonly are led by ordained males were also full time and stipendiary. Conversely, the lay-lay leaders in clusters were doing so voluntarily and in their spare time. Appendix Five contains those tables.

A question
When linked to other data, this picture begins to suggest that in those types of fxC which are more like inherited church - when it comes to having a larger than fxC average congregation, a not dissimilar style of worship and teaching to inherited church, whose choice of venue is an existing church building, and which meet mainly on Sundays - then the leader will be ordained. It is a value judgement whether or not this is a bias to existing forms, collusion with the expectations of existing Christians and the most helpful use of resources. We can but raise this question.

A change of focus

The first twelve sections of this chapter have explored the more obviously missional aspects of the life of these young churches and 14 types of them. Now, following a brief examination of their leadership, the chapter turns to sections which may be more thought of as directly assisting ecclesial maturity.

There is no implied order to the next sections under consideration. This matters to us because different voices in the wider Church can place more emphasis on financial sustainability, Eucharistic practice, biblical teaching or, more recently, on developing discipleship. We would rather not divide any of these and suggest it may be more helpful to view them as complementary to one another; none can be ignored without some peril.

6.14   Progress in three-self responsibility

The meaning of the three terms used here is covered in the glossary of Appendix Two. It is probably prudent to add one further explanation. We have found in the past that both local and national figures have misinterpreted the three-self features as a desire for complete independence from the sending or mother church. This is neither fair to the evangelical Henry Venn, the 19th century co-founder of the concept, nor the Anglo-Catholic missionary Roland Allen who wrote later and drew heavily upon it.[27] Venn talked about its goal as interdependence and Allen was specific that it existed within an episcopal, connected church. We follow this lead and accordingly never talk of the three factors as conferring or abetting independence; rather we use the language of 'taking responsibility' or growing in maturity.

Table 54:   Steps taken towards three-self responsibility in 14 types of fxC

MATURITY and three-self thinking	Self financing %	Self governing %	Self reproducing %	Not at this stage %
Messy Church	61.4%	72.5%	30.0%	20.0%
Cafe church	49.7%	74.2%	41.1%	20.5%
Child-focused church	45.3%	62.2%	33.1%	28.4%
Church plant	89.4%	89.4%	69.7%	4.5%
Special interest group	48.5%	70.3%	52.5%	23.8%
All age worship	63.3%	82.2%	53.3%	11.1%
Multiple Sunday congregation	56.2%	74.2%	50.6%	16.9%
Community development plant	69.7%	82.0%	53.9%	13.5%
Network church	68.8%	85.0%	70.0%	10.0%
Alternative worship	55.1%	69.2%	53.8%	20.5%
Church based on <5s	50.0%	64.5%	30.3%	26.3%
Youth church	35.4%	80.0%	49.2%	15.4%
Cluster based church	54.7%	81.3%	73.4%	9.4%
Older people's church	42.9%	58.7%	17.5%	36.5%
Average (14 most common types)	58.0%	74.3%	45.1%	18.6%
Average all types: dioceses 1-11	48.1%	64.3%	37.2%	25.9%

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[27] R. Allen, *Missionary Methods - St Paul's or Ours?* (1912) and *The Spontaneous Expansion of The Church – and the Causes that Hinder It* (1927), both reprinted (Lutterworth, 2006).

What was counted for inclusion

The title of table 54 begins with the words 'steps taken'. Our questionnaire stressed that we were interested in both intention and result, by asking the leader to make an overall comment on what progress had been made towards any of these three desirable aspects of interdependent maturity. From what was written – or left blank – together we deduced whether it was correct to tick the questionnaire box for each of those categories. The minimum to secure a tick towards self-financing was that some form of giving was being practiced. For self-governing we looked to the existence of a leadership group for the fxC meeting to plan, review and take decisions that did not need to be taken to a parent PCC. For self-reproducing we required at least indigenous leaders coming through, while open to a fuller application such as the starting of a further fxC.

We therefore accept there is a rough and ready comparison going on, in all three categories. Some finance variables are: making a full cost recovery, covering running costs, or only being at the level of donations. Similarly, some fxCs have their own church council and attendant legal ecclesial identity as parishes, DCCs or a Bishop's Mission Order, but the majority only have a local leadership group dealing with day to day matters. Equally, while a minority have sent out a further fxC, more have seen ordinands emerge and most have only seen indigenous leaders.

We are aware of the limitations posed by this lack of clarity and it reminds us that on finishing research one is more aware of how it should have started. Accordingly, we have already updated our questionnaire by setting out such variables within the three features and we look forward to using it in one-off work with all the examples in Lichfield diocese in the autumn of 2016.

Inferences from the data

As was found in the 1st set of dioceses, the highest scores overall are found over fxC taking steps towards responsibility for being self-governing, then for self-financing, and only thirdly for being self-reproducing. The 2nd set of dioceses scored higher, we think because of there being more church plants. The three choices are not mutually exclusive and the obverse of the 'not at this stage %' label would be the percentage which had begun at least one of these three. On average, across the 14 types, 81.4% have begun this part of the journey towards maturity.

By these measures the **church plants** most often take steps down these roads. With fewer than 5% not having made such steps, and the highest scores for self-financing and self-governing, and then third for self-reproducing, a high bar is set for the others to follow. This commendable ability is aided by the propensity to take a larger start-up team, to have a full time ordained leader and a high proportion of adults to children.

Network churches might be placed next for high scores and they too have above average larger team sizes, and a correspondingly high percentage of adults, but only half have a full time ordained leader. They are also notable for being the second highest self-reproducing percentage, though we do not know why. One supposition would be their encouraging of indigenous leaders. With **clusters,** the top score for self-reproducing is more clearly related to their style and aim: to reproduce more indigenous leaders from which to begin further clusters.

It may be tendentious to comment further on the self-financing figures, for not only is the range of what is measured rather imprecise, but also the costs of the different types can be widely divergent as between a lay-lay volunteer and a stipendiary cleric. There is also the limited ability to pay and we think we see that reflected most clearly with **youth church**, then perhaps **child-focused church** and **special interest group**. It is of interest that **Messy Church** is just above average in this regard, only a little below for self-governing, but way down over self-reproducing. **Older people's church** shows itself as least likely to have made progress across these measures.

6.15 Engagement with Scripture

Anglicans set store by word and sacrament, so this report follows the two in that order. Readers are asked to bear in mind that questions about the use of Scripture only began to be put in the 2nd set of dioceses. Thus the sample size is about half of that in the other sections, but the effect on percentages for each type of fxC is likely to be insignificant. We have no indication that any types of fxC have behaved markedly differently between the two sets of dioceses.

Table 55:   Relative scores of how the 14 types of fxC engage with Scripture

14 most common types of fxC	Sermon or talk	Passages read in public	Study in groups	Encourage devotional reading	Memory verses	Story telling	Creative activity/ resource
Messy Church	79.3%	28.7%	6.4%	8.5%	19.1%	91.5%	97.9%
Cafe church	81.0%	66.7%	52.4%	31.7%	20.6%	50.8%	65.1%
Child-focused church	71.4%	49.0%	10.2%	12.2%	32.7%	83.7%	83.7%
Church plant	100.0%	93.1%	87.4%	81.6%	21.8%	29.9%	41.4%
Special interest group	66.7%	64.6%	62.5%	43.8%	4.2%	31.3%	35.4%
All age worship	87.8%	74.4%	43.3%	36.7%	23.3%	64.4%	68.9%
Multiple Sunday congregation	87.5%	89.6%	45.8%	56.3%	10.4%	47.9%	50.0%
Community development plant	97.5%	80.0%	75.0%	47.5%	17.5%	42.5%	52.5%
Network church	75.9%	69.0%	86.2%	69.0%	10.3%	31.0%	65.5%
Alternative worship	66.7%	69.4%	58.3%	44.4%	13.9%	44.4%	66.7%
Church based on <5s	31.7%	22.0%	4.9%	2.4%	14.6%	95.1%	58.5%
Youth church	84.2%	63.2%	81.6%	50.0%	13.2%	28.9%	73.7%
Cluster based church	82.4%	64.7%	88.2%	82.4%	11.8%	29.4%	41.2%
Older people's church	92.9%	85.7%	25.0%	42.9%	3.6%	25.0%	28.6%
Average (14 types)	80.4%	60.7%	43.4%	36.8%	17.6%	58.7%	66.8%

Inferences from the data

A commonality, not shown here, is that almost none of these fxC are failing to draw on Scripture at all. The exception is one case of an fxC based on <5s not doing so. On closer examination of the table, a contrast appears between two groups, in which the polar opposites are the clearest examples and they shade towards one another in the middle. Firstly, there are those with well above average scores for there being a talk, public reading of Bible passages, then followed by small groups who study Scripture, all of which the church plants obviously exemplify.

Table 56:   The types favouring traditional ways to engage with Scripture

Most likely to include a talk	%	Most likely to include Bible readings	%	Most likely to have small groups	%
Church plant	100%	Church plant	93.1%	Clusters	88.2%
Community development plant	97.5%	Multiple Sunday congregation	89.6%	Church plant	87.4%
Older people's church	92.9%	Older people's church	85.7%	Network church	86.2%
All age worship	87.8%	Community development plant	80.0%	Youth church	81.6%
Multiple Sunday congregation	87.5%	All age worship	74.4%	Community development plant	75.0%

The lists in the first two categories are very similar in fxC type and result. In the small groups column, that order is disturbed by clusters for whom small groups are characteristic, and by youth church, where groups are highly valued and some are just a small group.

Secondly, there are those other types of fxC in which other approaches, like forms of storytelling and creative activity, are prominent, but they did not tick the option of encouraging private reading of Scripture. Across these variables Messy Church is probably the best known exemplar.

Table 57: The types favouring other ways to engage with Scripture

Most likely to include storytelling	%	Most likely to include creative activity	%	Least likely to encourage devotional reading	%
Church based on <5s	95.1%	Messy Church	97.9%	Church based on <5s	2.4%
Messy Church	91.5%	Child-focused church	83.7%	Messy Church	8.5%
Child-focused church	83.7%	Youth church	73.7%	Child-focused church	12.2%
All age worship	64.4%	All age worship	68.9%	Café church	31.7%
Cafe church	50.8%	Alternative worship	66.7%	All age worship	36.7%

The range of percentages in each column is wider than in the previous table. Yet over all three categories broadly the same range of types appears. Most often they have in common that they include significant proportions of children and this influences their choice of how to engage with Scripture. We also noticed that **café church** appears in two of the three columns and would be 7th in the missing one. We think this is for a different reason. The style of café church is not didactic but oblique which may account for it, as is true for classic alternative worship.

It is beyond the remit, style or scope of this report to say which of the set of different approaches the two groups highlighted is more effective in promoting discipleship. Both would argue that what has been chosen is appropriate to the kind of people and their age who attend. Readers may well feel that this section confirms their existing suspicions that something like these two groups exists. We now have the data to substantiate that and the extent of the difference.

6.16   Communions Baptisms and Confirmations

Table 58: The percentage of the 14 types with communions, baptisms or confirmations

The the 14 most common types of fxC	Communion %	Baptism %	Confirmation %
Messy Church	12.8%	21.7%	10.2%
Cafe church	45.0%	38.4%	22.6%
Child-focused church	26.4%	37.2%	23.5%
Church plant	99.2%	84.1%	70.9%
Special interest group	52.5%	38.6%	21.3%
All age worship	53.3%	62.2%	44.4%
Multiple Sunday congregation	61.8%	69.7%	55.9%
Community development plant	58.4%	60.7%	41.4%
Network church	67.5%	52.5%	45.5%
Alternative worship	73.1%	43.6%	27.8%
Church based on <5s	14.5%	30.3%	19.0%
Youth church	52.3%	33.8%	48.0%
Cluster based church	56.3%	45.3%	30.8%
Older people's church	71.4%	6.3%	15.8%
Average (14 most common types)	46.0%	42.1%	30.3%

Our 2013 report showed data on both sacraments, in regard to what percentage of the total of all fxC in each diocese held them. All this could show was an average across the 10 dioceses. The

disparity across them pointed to another factor at work and the report went on to examine this by some fxC types and by frequency of meeting.

This section can now test whether what was thought then about the connections to various fxC types holds good, having a larger sample size. We are only able to compare certain percentages because pages 52-54 of the 2013 report only cited the five highest and five lowest scores and some of these fell in fxC categories that are far less common and do not appear in this chapter.

We begin by examining which types of fxC do appear in both tables and the extent to which the figures vary, firstly for communion and then for baptism. Comparison for confirmations cannot be pursued as data for that was only collected halfway through that research round, and was not shown by fxC type.

Communion
In respect of communion, as before virtually all of the church plants have held one. The figure for alternative worship has increased by five percentage points to 73.1% and two percentage points for network churches. We would take these results as indicating a typical picture of these types. As might be expected, it is common (71%) in older people's church.

Among those least likely to hold a communion are three types of fxC with many children. The Messy Church figure is up by three percentage points to 13%, while child-focused church is down by five to 26%. The 2013 figure for church based on <5s was 16% and is now down one point. The results from these least likely types look broadly consistent with the 2013 data.

Baptism
In regard to varying engagement with baptism, the church plant percentage has risen since the report in 2013 from 77% to 84%, and similarly among multiple congregations from 60% to 70%. In network churches, it is remains the same at 53%

At the lower end of this engagement the Messy church figure stays the same at 22%, and among youth congregations it increased from 32% to 34%. The figure among older people's church dropped from 9% to 6%. This low figure may be expected with this age group. Among this group a pattern of broad consistency appears once more.

Where there is an increase or decrease within one fxC type we do not know why in individual cases in that all our records are a snapshot in time; none are revisited some years later. There is, however, more emphasis on fxC maturing ecclesially, including sacramental practice, and this might have been a factor to raise some figures reported now in 2016.

Confirmation
With confirmation, table 58 makes clear among which fxC types it is least common. They tend to be those types with a focus on people at either end of life, but that does not account for lower figures for café church or alternative worship.

It is most common among the church plants (71%), then a cluster of other congregational models of fxC. In addition, it features strongly (48%) in youth church, an age group where it has long been a rite of passage. In that confirmation is a distinctive Anglican (and Catholic) practice, as opposed to the initiation understanding in many Free Churches, its presence here is one indicator of fxC continuing the traditions of its mother church.

Wider comment

In relation to those fxC types that have a major connection with children under eleven years of age - church based on >5s, Messy Church and child-focused church – it is clear that that they are more likely to have held a baptism than a confirmation or a communion. Hindsight might have expected that, but now the figures demonstrate it.

The figures might have been even higher for baptism but, on a wide anecdotal basis, leaders from those three types of fxC would tell us that there have been baptisms of both adults and children but that they took place, for a variety of reasons, in the sending church. This might include Sunday being a more convenient day for those needed to travel to the family event, a view of grandparents or even of the incumbent stressing the person was joining the wider family of the Church. In those cases, we did not register the fxC as holding baptisms. If the baptism took place in the parish church but very much in the style of the fxC – say a Messy baptism – then we would record that.

Among three other types of fxC – multiple congregations, all age worship and community development plants – the scores for baptism are higher than for communion. We do not know how to account for this, noting that with the remaining eight types of fxC the communion rate is higher. We comment on why that might be in section 8.7.

Chapter 8 (section 8.6) also draws out comment on the further level of detail about the frequency with which a communion service is held across types of fxC.

Further analysis

In Chapter 12, section 7, the report shows further data on who has been presiding at Communion. This forms part of a chapter which deals with a variety of elements within the overall picture of all the fxC types from all 21 dioceses.

The variety of reasons given by those fxC who are not, as yet, celebrating either sacrament are covered in section 8.6 for communion and 8.7 for baptism.

6.17   Ways to pursue discipleship

Table 59:   Ways to pursue discipleship in the 14 more common types of fxC

14 types of fxC	At least one step in discipleship %	Not at this stage %	Small groups %	1-1 %	Running courses %	Serving in teams %
MES	66.1%	33.9%	20.6%	38.6%	19.4%	33.1%
CAF	80.8%	19.2%	49.0%	49.7%	38.4%	38.4%
CFC	79.1%	20.9%	39.9%	37.2%	33.8%	31.1%
TCP	97.0%	3.0%	89.4%	67.4%	75.0%	68.2%
SIG	92.1%	7.9%	66.3%	69.3%	30.7%	37.6%
AAW	85.6%	14.4%	52.2%	63.3%	55.6%	48.9%
MUL	89.9%	10.1%	61.8%	55.1%	51.7%	53.9%
CDP	95.5%	4.5%	77.5%	70.8%	53.9%	52.8%
NTC	98.8%	1.3%	91.3%	76.3%	43.8%	55.0%
ALT	85.9%	14.1%	61.5%	55.1%	28.2%	48.7%
U5S	77.6%	22.4%	23.7%	43.4%	31.6%	21.1%
YTH	100.0%	0.0%	89.2%	72.3%	33.8%	53.8%
CLU	100.0%	0.0%	89.1%	89.1%	40.6%	56.3%
OPC	77.8%	22.2%	34.9%	57.1%	17.5%	17.5%
Average (14 types)	83.4%	16.6%	52.9%	55.1%	37.3%	42.2%

Abbreviations:

AAW	All age worship	ALT	Alternative worship	CAF	Café church
CDP	Community development plant	CFC	Child-focused church	CLU	Cluster
MES	Messy Church	MUL	Multiple congregation	NTC	Network church
OPC	Older people's church	SIG	Special interest group	TCP	Trad. church plant
U5s	Church for <5s & carers	YTH	Youth congregation		

Notes on method and interpretation

The discipleship question on the form has remained unaltered over the four years, so results across the two reports can be compared, although the 2013 report used a chart, not a table. It is immediately admitted that our categories do not plumb the depth of discipleship and are limited by the nature of quantitative research. Yet leaders filling in the questionnaire seldom asked for other factors to be taken into account.

It may also be reasonable, though hard to quantify, that those types of fxC that have the most Christians already will find it easier to embark down these paths. Conversely, those types with the highest proportions of non-churched people may well have a longer road to travel, even before it is appropriate to begin these paths into discipleship, important though that is.

Inferences from the discipleship data

One headline is that the paths of small groups and 1-1 generally score higher than running courses or serving in teams. The next is that the first data column shows which types of fxC most often take at least one path; the highest scoring and well above average are: cluster and youth church, then network church, church plant and community development plant. It is rare that they do not offer any routes in discipleship, and all five were cited for high scores in the 2013 report. This suggests this is a representative feature of these types of fxC.

Those types of fxC with the lowest proportion, and below the average, for still not embarking on any of the four options given are: Messy Church, church based on <5s, older people's church child-

focused church and café church. There is some correspondence with page 50 of the 2013 report for all of these. What is also noticeable compared with 2013 is that the Messy Church percentage is lower by some 10 percentages points, the café church and child-focused church figures by about 5 percentage points and alternative worship by four. We do not know why this should be. Lest this paragraph sound unduly condemnatory, it should be said that the average is 83% and the lowest figure shows that the majority (66%) of Messy Churches are taking at least one step down the road of discipleship.

What is diagnostic of those types most and least likely to be following these routes to discipleship? The **clusters** score very highly for small groups and working 1-1 with their members and are above the average for serving in teams. **Youth church** is high scoring for the same three paths but lower, though above average, for running courses. It could well be that this path is not so well suited to the immediacy of youth culture. **Network church** is highest on small groups, second for 1-1 and third for serving in teams, but only a bit above average for courses.

Church plants have a different profile. Their score for running courses (often Alpha) is leagues ahead of every other type of fxC and there is also a sizeable gap above all others for serving in teams. They also score very strongly on having small groups. These three scores may be, in part, a reflection of the larger team sizes that were taken to start them, as well as values held. Only the 1-1 factor is more modest, ranking sixth among the fxC types, although 12 percentage points above the average.

The scores for **community development plants** are all above the average but are among the more even scores across the four discipleship paths. We do not know whether this reflects a variety of choices made by individual examples, or if it reveals a pattern.

Of the five types overall, least likely to be embarked on steps in discipleship is **Messy Church**. Conversations and awareness of their literature suggests that the gap from a monthly meeting to being in a small group or on a course is a sizeable one. They are almost three times less likely to have small groups as the average, yet 1/5th report that they have tried it or still do. And they are half as likely to run courses as the average, but yet again 1/5th do. It seems easier for them to do 1-1 work (38.6%) and drawing people in via serving in teams (33.1%). These headlines and the concerns they raise have been fed back to their first international conference in 2016.

Church based on <5s comes next for high proportions of not starting down this road. Just over 1/5th have small groups or serving in teams; 1-1 is most popular (43%) and they are only a little below average for running courses. We presume many of the latter will relate to parenting. Next comes **older people's church.** Here 1-1 is the preferred route (57%), with modest scores for the other three routes. With **child-focused church**, as with Messy Church, we meet a higher than average of non-churched people present, together with the issue of a large proportion of young children. This type are slightly less likely to pursue 1-1 discipleship than Messy Church, but nearly twice as likely to have small groups and more likely to run courses (34% to 19%). Next comes **café Church**, whose figures for groups, 1-1 and serving in teams are all a few percentage points below the average, although running courses is just above. These modest results may link to the culture of café, which tends to be *laissez-faire.*

Those remaining four types of fxC which are 'mid-table' are not insignificant in themselves, but for the purposes of finding distinctive features between the types of fxC there is little distinctive to report.

6.18 Ways to engage with evangelism

The section on evangelism is put here because it relates to the overall task of discipleship. Some approaches elide the two and others hold them as distinct stages, such as in the five marks of mission. It could easily be disputed as to whether evangelism fits better with the earlier missional sections or with this one. We have placed it here believing that any divorce between church and mission does violence to the nature of the Church and the purposes of God for her. It could be irenic to settle for saying it could belong in either section, but not be wrong to place in either.

Table 60: Approaches in evangelism across the 14 more common types of fxC

14 most common types of fxC	Enquirers Course	Building relationships	Members share their stories	Invite to worship	Invite to events	Acts of service	Not at this stage yet
MES	13.3%	54.3%	18.1%	52.1%	51.1%	20.2%	6.9%
CAF	34.9%	61.9%	44.4%	63.5%	50.8%	34.9%	0.0%
CFC	24.5%	57.1%	16.3%	51.0%	46.9%	22.4%	2.0%
TCP	75.9%	82.8%	63.2%	72.4%	82.8%	65.5%	1.1%
SIG	27.1%	56.3%	47.9%	45.8%	37.5%	29.2%	2.1%
AAW	37.8%	73.3%	35.6%	68.9%	57.8%	37.8%	1.1%
MUL	58.3%	75.0%	41.7%	77.1%	58.3%	37.5%	0.0%
CDP	41.5%	58.5%	43.9%	65.9%	61.0%	51.2%	2.4%
NTC	37.9%	62.1%	62.1%	51.7%	51.7%	55.2%	0.0%
ALT	19.4%	69.4%	44.4%	52.8%	58.3%	44.4%	0.0%
U5S	17.1%	46.3%	14.6%	53.7%	39.0%	22.0%	2.4%
YTH	36.8%	71.1%	55.3%	60.5%	76.3%	39.5%	5.3%
CLU	52.9%	88.2%	70.6%	64.7%	76.5%	70.6%	0.0%
OPC	14.3%	53.6%	42.9%	64.3%	39.3%	10.7%	3.6%
Averages	36.3%	65.2%	40.5%	61.1%	56.9%	37.8%	2.2%

Abbreviations:

AAW	All age worship	ALT	Alternative worship	CAF	Café church
CDP	Community development plant	CFC	Child-focused church	CLU	Cluster
MES	Messy Church	MUL	Multiple congregation	NTC	Network church
OPC	older people's church	SIG	Special interest group	TCP	Tradition'l church plant
U5s	Church for <5s & carers	YTH	Youth congregation		

A note on method

Readers will discern that the categories named are among the gentler and relational ways in which evangelism can be practised. We did not include town or city-wide campaigns as we wished to know what individual young churches were doing. We did not include a term like 'present the gospel', partly because it would favour certain traditions. However, a few leaders did include it under the 'other' category which we provided, but we have not included it here because it could occur across a number of these columns. The percentage figures are splayed to show more easily which deviate either side of the average.

Inferences from the evangelism data

Overall comments include that building relationships is the most favoured; 'does your evangelism include building relationships?' may be one of those 'do you like apple pie?' questions and people feel they must tick it. It is followed in popularity by the two invitations: to worship, or to other events put on by the fxC. People telling their faith story or serving the community in acts of service were less often ticked, but still had above a 40% average. Only a few cases in certain types were not able to name any approaches they were taking.

One apparently counter-intuitive feature that the table discloses is that although this chapter has shown earlier that both the **church plants** and the **clusters** have higher proportions of attending Christians, and a lower than usual growth ratio, they consistently score higher than most other types across the various ways of doing evangelism, not least a standout figure among the church plants. 76% of these offer an 'enquirers course'. Of the ways forward in evangelism, such a course is a more focused evangelistic approach and perhaps the one which most widely separates the 14 types. This focused desire to reach out is commendable.

Conversely, those types like **Messy Church**, **child-focused church,** and **church based on <5s** which have the higher proportions of non-churched attenders score relatively low compared to other types of fxC over most of these evangelistic routes. That said, over half of Messy Churches are engaged in building relationships and inviting others to join their worship or special events. The other two types are not far behind. It might seem that in these types an external evangelistic need and inner confidence to do so are inversely related, or it may be that only certain types of evangelistic approach fit with the style of these fxC.

Commensurate with the last comment, **older people's church**, with over 85% existing Christians and de-churched people, scores above average for members telling their story and inviting others to worship, but usually well below average for all the other four routes.

There may be a similar link between the values of a type, the people it characteristically draws and its evangelism scores, in that both **youth church** and **network church** score well above average for members telling their story.

'Acts of service' are most characteristic of **clusters**, which fits with their founding call to spot a group or need and seek to identify with it. It is strong too in **network** church which, without a territory and often a church building, is a major way to make connections. It is true for 66% of the church plants, speaking well for their engagement with the area they come into. It is also to be expected to be above average among **community development plants**, scoring 51%.

The **multiple Sunday congregations** and **all age worship** once more have broadly similar patterns and may be exhibiting attractional styles of evangelism, scoring relatively high on building relationships and inviting others to worship but modestly on three other avenues. The two differ most on whether they have an enquirers course. We surmise that the all age worship type, with a 20 percentage points lower score, is more likely to be monthly (see 5.14) and may therefore rely more on any such course put on by the parent church.

6.19   The spread across the traditions

Section 5.3 mentioned that traditions in the Church of England are held more loosely than before by many and yet more passionately and singly by some. Because of the former, in many fxC they are frequently combined, hence the dotted lines in the table overleaf. It also means that all we can show is how often each is cited for these types of fxC.

Table 61:   Traditions acknowledged in the 14 more common types of fxC.

Traditions at 14 types of fxC	Anglo-Catholic	Central	Charismatic	Evangelical	Liberal
Messy Church	15.3%	55.3%	18.3%	55.3%	31.1%
Cafe church	9.3%	39.1%	41.1%	69.5%	11.1%
Child-focused church	12.8%	52.7%	24.3%	60.8%	12.2%
Traditional church plant	7.6%	16.7%	50.8%	84.8%	3.4%
Special interest group	12.9%	22.8%	38.6%	59.4%	16.7%
All age worship	13.3%	40.0%	33.3%	67.8%	6.7%
Multiple Sunday congregation	14.6%	40.4%	32.6%	65.2%	10.4%
Community development plant	10.1%	23.6%	47.2%	83.1%	4.9%
Network church	11.3%	15.0%	68.8%	78.8%	10.3%
Alternative worship	19.2%	41.0%	44.9%	61.5%	19.4%
Church based on <5s	23.7%	46.1%	18.4%	47.4%	17.1%
Youth church	13.8%	27.7%	50.8%	75.4%	13.2%
Cluster based church	0.0%	4.7%	82.8%	87.5%	5.9%
Older people's church	9.5%	33.3%	30.2%	68.3%	7.1%
Average (14 most common types)	12.7%	37.5%	36.6%	66.5%	12.8%

A note on method

The scores have been splayed (high-left and low-right) to make it easier to see at a glance the spread in relation to the mean and how the choices across the traditions are both like and unlike.
The traditions are listed alphabetically. Section 3.4.2 and table 7 put the case that not having the liberal option in research into dioceses 1-11 only has a slight impact mathematically.

Inferences from the traditions data

Those types of fxC most often associated with the **evangelical** tradition are: clusters, church plants, community development plants, network churches and youth church. The first two also have the feature that with some regularity they are offshoots from larger churches.

Those relatively least likely to identify with in this tradition are church based on <5s, Messy Church, special interest group, child-focused church and alternative worship. We think that this list contains three types - Messy Church, alternative worship and some kinds of special interest group - which are not didactic in a traditional way, and also three groups with a focus on children that many evangelical churches may feel they already provide for them through either family services or an existing monthly all age worship. That said, the figures are relative proportions and with one exception the majority of examples across all types do identify with the evangelical tradition.

Those types most often associated with the **charismatic** tradition are identical to the list for the evangelicals, although the order varies slightly and with lower scores. This similarity will partly reflect that many in these types name both traditions. The spike, among charismatics, is the clusters. We should not pass over that in both traditions the lists of the most associated fxC types include the community development plant and its existence in areas of deprivation.

Chart 62:   **Similarities between traditions and type of fxC most often chosen**

Type	Cluster	Church Plant	Comm'ity Dev. Plt.	Network	Youth
Evangelical	88%	85%	83%	79%`	75%
	Cluster	Network	Church Plant	Youth	Comm'ity Dev. Plant
Charismatic	83%	69%	51%	51%	47%

The list of those types least likely to name the charismatic tradition overlaps with the evangelical list, over all the fxC for families and younger children, but it also includes multiple congregations and all age worship. We wonder whether this tradition, with its distinctive approach to worship, would not readily welcome the diversity of worship approaches brought by other styles.

As before, shown in section 5.3, tables 20 and 21, and probably contrary to public perception or the assumptions of critics, more fxC identify with the central tradition than those which link to the charismatic tradition. This breadth, or overall inclusiveness, is worth noting, both to correct distortions and to note the take-up across the traditions.

Those types most often associated with the **central** contain none of those listed as favoured by the first two traditions. Its list is firstly Messy Church, then child-focused church, church based on <5s, then alternative worship and multiple Sunday congregations, very closely followed by all age worship. That might well be taken as a list of choices springing from the commendable desire to engage with younger generations and with more diverse styles of worship. A harsh judgment might be that these are all safer choices and ones that more easily remain within an existing parish and its church building.

As might be expected as the reverse side of the coin, as opposed to the popular choices, the list least engaged with is nearly the same as what was on the lists for most identifying with evangelical and charismatic: clusters, network churches, church plants, and community development plants. Only special interest group breaks that pattern.

Those types most often associated with the **anglo-catholic** tradition contain four out of the five central choices. The difference is that their list does not include child-focused church, but does include youth church. The difference is that Messy Church is first choice in the central group, but only third in the catholic one. Different priorities for Eucharist may be playing some part in all these choices, though this does not square with church based on under 5s scoring highest among the anglo-catholic choices, and which score 2nd lowest for holding a communion service.

Those least associated with the catholic tradition overlaps with the central list: clusters, then church plants, café churches, older people's church and community development plants.

Four of the types most often associated with the **liberal** tradition are the same as in the anglo-catholic list. What is added is special interest group. In that the liberal tradition is noted for its support of groups suffering discrimination of any sort, adding this makes perfect sense.

Four of the types are least linked to the liberal tradition are all similarly named by either the central or catholic tradition, the exception being all age worship.

Overall comments
Looking at this examination of the traditions named across these 14 more common types of fxC, two features stand out, but they exist in some tension or even contradiction with one another.

Firstly, it is clear that the *relative* preferences for a tradition to associate with are clearly marked down lines of tradition. In terms of more popular association, clusters, church plants, community development plants, network churches and youth church are strongly linked to both the evangelical and charismatic traditions and they are least found among the other three traditions. The exception is youth church being the 5th choice in fxC linking to both liberal and anglo-catholic traditions. Not only that, but a quite different list including Messy Church, child-focused church, church based on <5s, and alternative worship, by relative scores, more strongly favour association with the central, catholic and liberal traditions. This looks like evidence of a discernible divide over the more favoured type of fxC type.

A caveat to this particularity then needs to be entered. Although Messy Church is less frequently linked to the evangelical tradition relative to other fxC types, nevertheless, that choice and the central tradition are the two majority identifications the Messy Churches do make. Something similar can be said about child-focused church and nearly so with church based on <5s.

However, secondly, though sometimes the percentages are small, with one exception all types of fxC can be found to associate with all of the five traditions named. Clusters are that exception and are highly specific to the evangelical and charismatic traditions. By contrast the Messy Churches cite both central and evangelical more than 50% of the time. It is also true that all but one type of fxC cite the evangelical tradition more than half the time and, reading across the rows, it is the most commonly cited tradition for every type except Messy Church where it is a tie. It is then fair to note that the evangelical tradition is the dominant - but by no means exclusive - one in the fxC picture.

6.20 Mortality rates in the 14 more common types of fxC

Having examined some measures of missional effectiveness, paths in ecclesial maturity and links to the variety of traditions, across these thirteen types of fxC, we examine the mortality rate.

Table 63: fxC mortality rates: average 11.1%

Type of fxC	% died
Messy Church	4.4%
Cafe church	15.9%
Child-focused church	17.6%
Traditional church plant	15.9%
Special interest group	8.9%
Multiple Sunday congregation	10.1%
Community development plant	12.4%
All age worship	13.3%
Network church	7.5%
Alternative worship	25.6%
Church based on <5s	9.2%
Cluster based church	1.6%
Youth church	18.5%
Older people's church	4.8%

These rates vary widely. We think the cluster rate is low partly because it is one of the newest types, and they are also well supported by their sending church. Conversely both the café churches and the alternative worship types require considerable creativity and teamwork; this may cause them to fade. There is some evidence that youth churches suffer from not replacing those leaving at 18 with those who are younger, while church based on <5s seems to have a ready supply and in some cases a waiting list. The Messy Church figure is the lowest figure after clusters and some have existed now for ten years. The church plant figure is higher than some would expect, but it should be borne in mind that many have existed for up to 20 years. The beginning of the chapter showed that 48 of the 132 began in the 1992-1998 period.

Section 12.12 examines wider questions around fxC mortality.

6.21　　Resisting a danger from this approach

The focus in this long chapter on fxC type could create the impression that this is the most important factor to bear in mind in any consideration of future action by local churches or national policy. Such a view would ride roughshod over the missiological principle, rooted back to the Incarnation, of churches, young or old, working contextually.

We strongly suggest that it would be a mistake to interpret this chapter as answering the possible question 'what is the best type of fxC?' In that some types of fxC have strong advocacy, either by virtue of their longevity, frequency, size or background resources, this question lurks in the background. We think it is better to admit it exists among some people and then to suggest it is rather misleading and unhelpful. Its dangers include the following: the importance of working contextually is obscured, the likelihood of imposing an ecclesial solution and wrongly interpreting a missional opportunity is increased, the resource questions connected to people, their gifts and time are not weighed, and the approach of listening prior to acting is short circuited, all in favour of adopting the type of fxC which is simply preferred by the group proposing starting something.

From many years of working with practitioners, including the four years of this overall survey, we think it likely that how people chose what to do in starting an fxC contains a mix of stories.

Some evolved what they did from scratch and we came along afterwards and retrospectively classified it. Others had a prior philosophy of ministry (examples would be likely to include church plants, clusters and cell) and followed it. Others heard of an approach and adopted it, of which Messy Church and café church are the most likely. In addition, some started out with a particular approach in mind and discovered it needed either gradual or radical change.

From church history, such evolution, especially in relation to working with a non-churched context and one hopes in partnership with the Holy Spirit who disturbs to lead us into all truth, should be honoured. Some degree of incompleteness and a kind of 'not yet' in church life should be expected from several theological themes: creation and fall, the now and not yet nature of the kingdom, the so-called three tenses or overall process of salvation in Christ, and the lifetime framework of discipleship.

Only now that this sort of chapter has been written can potential practitioners stand back and weigh how the different types tend to behave, and what resources they require, then set that against the context they face and what they learn from attention to all of these factors.

6.22 Towards characterising the 14 types

Highlights follow in relation to the specific types, tending to emphasise differences while assuming a generic ecclesial and missional identity. Appendix Two is the glossary of the report which can be read in conjunction with these summaries. The difference is that the appendix in its first sub-section gives a flavour of the history, values and broad characteristics of each type of fxC. These short paragraphs deal with the research findings from 2012-2016. For ease of reference they are ordered alphabetically by label, not by most common to least common.

All age worship

This is the 3rd largest in average size, yet the 4th least likely to continue to grow and just above average as likely to shrink, and nearly half plateau. They score below average for attracting the non-churched and above average for having Christians, but are missionally better over both counts than the multiple congregations. The team size varies, with half being 3-12, but 2nd highest for taking 20-49 and 4th highest for 50+. In some ways they are a variant on the multiple Sunday congregation using similar venues, and in respect of adult / child ratios. Yet their growth is less vigorous, mortality higher (13.3%) and nearly half of them meet only monthly. We only have data from the 2nd set of dioceses. If their numbers were similar in dioceses 1-11, they would be the 2nd most common type.

Leaders are mainly ordained males. They score especially high for steps towards self-governing but well above average for the other two measures, making them among the least likely to have taken none of these steps. Their engagement with Scripture is not unlike that of multiple Sunday congregations, but they also score much higher on storytelling and creative activities. They do hold Communions and Baptisms but a bit less often than the multiple Sunday congregations, probably reflecting their higher choice of meeting monthly. In terms of pursuing discipleship, they have a relative preference for running courses compared to others. Building relationships and inviting others to worship are their preferred routes in evangelism. This type of fxC is a common choice among all traditions except for liberals.

Alternative worship

These are not often motivated by growth thinking, or for new housing. Stronger motives are sensing an unreached people group (71%) and they are 2nd highest for providing diversity (60%). Just under two-thirds remain within the existing parish. They do relatively better among the de-churched rather than the non-churched, tending more to serve networks than neighbourhoods, and adults over children. They are usually started by 3-12 people and large team sizes are rare. Half meet weekly, and 35% monthly. They are twice as likely to shrink as to continue to grow, one of the two most adverse comparisons we have seen.

The male leaders dominate and more often are ordained. They score around the three-self maturity averages, yet a fifth have taken no steps in this direction, the 5th highest score. Again we note a link, and they have easily the highest mortality rate at 25.6%. In terms of Scripture, they are among the less likely to have a talk, but otherwise their scores for other means are near the average, usually slightly above, except for storytelling, the latter perhaps reflecting them being 71% adults. Communion is important and they score 2nd highest for this, though holding Baptisms is around the average at 44%. In terms of discipleship, they are among the least likely to run courses, but 62% have small groups. In evangelism they favour building relationships but not enquirers courses. They are much liked among catholic, central and liberal traditions and among the least favoured by evangelicals.

Café church

These are the 2nd most common type and 1/3rd continue to grow in size. However, they are relatively weak at drawing the non-churched, and 3rd highest for attracting Christians. Motivated by growth, providing diversity and sensing unreached people groups, their teams are usually 3-12 and sometimes 13-19. 72% of those who come are adults. Over ¾ stay within the parish and they are almost as likely to be weekly as monthly.

They are more likely to be ordained male led, with ¾ having a local leadership, yet they score relatively low for steps towards self-financing, and are slightly more likely than Messy Church to have taken no steps towards any three-self goals. Engagement with Bible is above average for most methods, but below it for encouraging private reading. In contrast, they are below the averages for either sacrament. They are 5th most likely to have taken no steps in promoting discipleship. Perhaps the *laissez-faire* culture of café life contributes to this. But all of them have taken some routes in evangelism. Cafe church is among the least popular choice for catholics and liberals but above the average among the other traditions. The mortality rate is well above average at 15.9%.

Child-focused church

This term was invented after *Mission-shaped Church,* and first used in the Fresh Expressions self-registering database. It is seldom used as a specific term by fxC practitioners. It lacks definition compared with some other types, yet was the 3rd most common type selected. It does well in drawing the non-churched and the de-churched, and has the lowest figure for attracting Christians. As the name suggests, in 85% of cases they spring out of sensing an unreached people group, with children slightly outnumbering adults and people dominantly drawn from the neighbourhood. 93% stay within the parish, and they occur almost equally weekly and monthly. From usually modest teams, they have the 2nd highest net growth ratio. But this is offset in that more shrink than continue to grow and nearly half plateau. Whether this is linked to any lack of clear value-led identity we do not know.

There is slight preference for female and ordained leaders, and it has among the lowest scores for all three aspects of three-self maturing, with 3/10 having taken no steps at all. This may link to them having the 3rd highest mortality rate (17.6%). Like Messy Church, there is a propensity for storytelling and creative activities to engage with Scripture, but a much higher emphasis on reading passages in public worship. ¼ have held a Communion and 2/5th a Baptism. This type is the 4th most likely to have taken no steps in promoting discipleship, and is below all the averages for routes in evangelism. It is a more frequent choice for those in the central tradition, an average one for catholics and liberals and less favoured by charismatics and evangelicals.

Church based on under 5s

Perhaps unsurprisingly these are among the smaller type of fxC. They are twice as likely to grow as to shrink, but over half plateau. Anecdotally they are rare in some having a waiting list. They score highest in attracting the non-churched, 4th lowest for de-churched and 2nd lowest for Christians. Their characteristic motive is noticing an unreached people group – in this case the under 5s and those who care for them, who come in similar proportions. But people come to them mainly from neighbourhoods; 91% of this type remain within the sending parish, still being supported by that parish, with 2/3rd meeting weekly. The teams that start them are nearly always small - 1-2 and 3-12 - and their net growth ratio is easily the highest, though much influenced by a high child net growth ratio. This growth is despite an obvious high rate of turnover as children reach school age.

Leaders are normally female (78%) and two-thirds are lay, with a very high lay-lay score (56%).

Unsurprisingly for this age group, the three-self maturity scores are relatively low and just over ¼ have taken no steps at all. Formal ways to engage with Scripture are least favoured and storytelling is used by 95%, as well as other creative activities. Perhaps it is surprising that 15% have held a Communion, though more obvious that 30% have held a Baptism. In discipleship, small groups and running courses are uncommon and 22% have taken no routes at all. Evangelism is primarily through inviting others to come, and only 1/5th have tried some kind of enquirers course. This type is the lead choice of catholics and liberals, is much favoured by the central tradition and is among the least pursued by charismatics and evangelicals. The mortality rate is below average (9.2%), perhaps because of continuing demand.

Church plant

These are the 4th most common type and clearly the largest in average size of 103. In a number of ways they are highly distinctive. They top the lists for the following: being started either by diocesan initiative, in seeking to address gaps within the parish cover or caused by new housing, or because the existing congregation fill the current church building. They also score lowest over the two cultural factors: providing wider diversity, or to contact an unreached people group. They are the most likely to take a team of 50+ or a team of 20-49 and the least likely to take either 1-2 or 3-12 people. However, they score 2nd lowest for reaching the non-churched and highest for attracting Christians and have the 3rd lowest net growth ratio. Only a few more continue to grow compared with those that subsequently shrink, and 39% plateau. Unusually, compared to other types, 1/3rd are transplants and a further 1/8th are grafts, with only 46% remaining in the sending parish, yet they are more likely to draw from neighbourhoods than networks. ¾ of those who come are adults. They score highest (96%) for meeting weekly.

Distinctions continue in that they are the most likely to have an ordained male leader and are least likely to be lay-lay led. They are the most likely to have taken steps towards self-financing and self-governing and score high for self-reproducing. They score highest for a talk and public reading of Scripture and 2nd highest for small groups and private reading. They top the lists for holding Communions and Baptisms, and only four examples have taken no steps in discipleship. They are easily the most likely to hold enquirers courses, and nearly all have followed some routes in evangelism. They are most favoured by the evangelical and charismatic traditions and nearly least favoured by all the others. Surprisingly, for all these strengths, they have the 4th equal highest mortality rate at 15.9%.

Clusters

These are motivated mainly by growth thinking, though not by gaps in the parish cover, new housing or providing diversity. At present they show the highest tendency to continue to grow and the lowest tendency to plateau. However, they score low for attracting the non-churched, and high for the de-churched and Christians. They are started more often than the average by the larger team sizes and have the lowest net growth ratio. They operate more through networks, and in ¾ of cases meet beyond the parish boundary. ¾ of attenders are adults, dominantly meeting weekly, with a fifth fortnightly and fewer than 10% monthly.

Leaders are more likely to be male, but ¾ are lay and with the highest proportion of lay-lay at 70%. These low cost fxC types score above average across the three-self maturity measures, and highest for self-reproducing which is one of their aims. Fitting with a view of simpler smaller church, the use of Scripture is focused on small groups and private reading. Storytelling and creative activities are more marginal. An emphasis on Communion and Baptism is above average and this provision is also made through their parent congregation. They are one of two groups where all known examples are pursuing discipleship, in which small groups and meeting others 1-1 predominate. They score

relatively highly across all routes in evangelism, which is at some odds with their present modest missional impact. They are the most favoured by the charismatic and evangelical traditions, are totally absent among catholics and are distinctly rare among central and liberal traditions. The mortality rate is lowest of all at 1.6%.

Community development plant

Their motives tend to be filling gaps in the parish cover, responding to new housing and meeting unreached people groups. They do well among the non-churched, less well among the de-churched and draw relatively fewer Christians. More continue to grow than to shrink. 12.4% of them have ceased. As their name implies, they score highest for finding people coming from a neighbourhood, and the strongest preference is for a team of 3-12. But nearly ¼ were started by someone relocating to begin the work. These factors all make up features of smaller beginnings for needy areas.

The leaders are far more commonly male, but more evenly ordained or lay. They score well above average for all three-self maturity measures, with few not having taken some steps. They score highly for talks, passages being read, study in groups and well above average in holding Communions (58%) and Baptisms (61%). Very few have taken no steps in promoting discipleship and they score above average for all measures of this. Inviting others to worship and acts of service in the community are two evangelistic strengths. 74% meet weekly. Evangelicals and charismatics favour them, but they are a less popular choice among the other three traditions.

Messy Church

This is the most common type (33% of included cases), more than twice as common as café churches and towards three times as common as church plants. Messy Churches score highly in drawing the non-churched, less than average for the de-churched and among the lowest for drawing existing Christians. They mainly start to provide diversity and to contact unreached people groups, attracting only slightly more children than adults. Most start-up teams are of 3-12 people, but they are the most likely to choose the rarer size of 13-19. They have a high net growth ratio, but having reached a certain size, nearly half will plateau. 89% remain within the sending parish, dominantly draw from the neighbourhood, and 87% meet monthly.

Three quarters of the leaders are female, mainly lay and more than average lay-lay. 73% have a local leadership team and most are taking some steps towards self-financing. However, 1/5th have taken no steps towards any three-self maturity goals. In terms of 'the word', 79% have some form of talk, but a higher emphasis falls on storytelling and creative activities. Very few have small groups. They are the least likely to have held a Communion and 2nd least likely to have had a Baptism. They lag behind other types too in providing steps in discipleship, though 66% have done something. They are also below the average for the three most popular routes in evangelism (building relationships, inviting people to their fxC or to other events), yet over half of them are doing these. The chief take-up is from the central tradition as its most popular choice, and by the evangelical tradition. The mortality rate is second lowest at 4.4%.

Multiple Sunday congregation

These are the 2nd largest in size at an average of 81, are among the most likely to continue to grow, with a strong net growth ratio, and are the 2nd least likely to shrink, though nearly half plateau. They score highest for providing diversity, 2nd highest for reacting to a full church building and 3rd highest for wanting growth, but nearly the lowest for spotting an unreached people group and low for filling a gap in the parish cover. The latter two low scores may relate to the definitional feature that they occur within an existing church building and on the same day as other congregations. Perhaps accordingly they score nearly lowest for attracting the non-churched, though do well

among the de-churched, but are 5th highest for attracting Christians. Over half are started by a team of 3-12, but they are above the averages for using the other larger teams. As expected, the vast majority meet within the sending parish, but 18% of cases meet beyond, overlapping as a label with church plant grafts and transplants. 2/3rd of them meet weekly and two-thirds of those coming are adults.

63% of the leaders are male and 70% are ordained. They score around the averages on all three-self measures. Talks and public reading of Scripture feature highly, though small groups is only just above average; we suspect this is because small groups often occur across the congregations, not for one of them. 62% hold Communions and 70% have had Baptisms. 90% have provided some steps in discipleship and in most measures of it somewhat above the average. All are following some routes in evangelism. This type is relatively favoured by the central tradition and less favoured by charismatics. The mortality rate is 10.1%, a little below the average.

Network church

This type is more defined by its aspiration to work beyond parishes and their neighbourhoods, than by any internal style or stated values. This is reflected in them scoring highest for meeting beyond the parish, and people coming from networks, 2nd highest for diocesan influence (as needed to broker such arrangements) and 2nd for a desire for growth. They score almost lowest for providing diversity and only average for working with an unreached people group. In results, they score modestly in a number of ways: they are among the lowest for non-churched attenders but 4th highest for the de-churched. While over ¼ continue to grow, nearly 1/3rd grow then shrink, and 41% plateau. They can be started by a variety of team sizes, but score above average for all the larger team sizes. Perhaps accordingly their net growth ratio is among the lowest at 7.5%. 75% meet weekly and unusually 18% meet fortnightly, with nearly ¾ being adults.

These are dominantly male led with a lesser tendency for ordained leaders. They score among the highest for all three-self maturity measures, perhaps reflecting that they are the most cast loose from a prior parish structure. While around 7/10 have a talk and bible passages read, they particularly favour small groups and private reading. Teaching memory verses is least favoured. 68% hold Communions and 53% a Baptism. Allied with their profile re Scripture, in terms of discipleship they are the most likely to have small groups, and all but one case have promoted at least one route in discipleship. This small group emphasis, and encouraging of individuals, is mirrored in their evangelism, with high scores for running courses, serving in the community and members sharing their story. They are favoured by charismatics and evangelicals, while the central and liberal traditions are disinclined to them. Their mortality rate is low at 7.5%.

Older people's church

This is the smallest in size of the 14 types, with a correspondingly small team being sent. These fxC are dominantly comprised of adults; however, 2% of the attenders are children. They are the type with the highest proportion (41%) of de-churched attenders and above average numbers of existing Christians. Accordingly they score well above average for Communion (71%) but very low (6%) for baptisms. They have the highest plateau figure at 63%, but few subsequently shrink or cease. Only 4.8% have died. Perhaps there continues to be a supply of those entering this stage of life, to compensate for their attenders' death rate which will be higher than elsewhere. They are relatively weak on paths in evangelism, yet scored above average for spotting, in the elderly, a gap in the parish cover and an unreached people group. 95% remain within the parish.

54% meet monthly, dominantly weekday (75%), and they are more commonly female led, and majority lay led, of whom 49% are lay-lay, usually accompanied by a team of 3-12. 78% are taking at least one step in discipleship, of which one-third have small groups and well over half (57%) choose 1-1 meeting. 43% advocate devotional reading. These are several marks that separate them from the long known service in an old people's home or a secular older people's social gathering. They are found in all traditions in rough proportions to the weighted averages.

Special interest group

As the glossary points out, this is a catch all term for an fxC engaging with a sub-culture. Thus any characterisation is only dealing with averages across a wide range of contexts. It may be characteristic that they are the 2nd smallest in average size, among the 3rd most likely to plateau and among the least likely to shrink, mainly meeting weekly and dominantly for adults at 86% of attenders. All these may be marks of a close identity and valued function. Naturally they are most motivated by providing diversity and spotting an unreached people group, and score high in reaching people through networks. A little fewer than half (45%) meet beyond the parish. They are usually started by a small number.

Leaders are more likely to be lay and male and nearly half are lay-lay. They are 4th most likely not to have taken any steps in three-self maturity, but their mortality rate is only 8.9%. Examining averages, it may be that study in groups is important to them, for they score below average on nearly all other counts for engaging with the Bible. This communal feel might connect with their relative high score for members telling their story as a route in evangelism. Half have held communions and 2/5th a Baptism. 92% have taken some steps in discipleship and 1-1 is important to them. Only the liberal tradition shows particular favour for this approach, and it is relatively less favoured by central and evangelical traditions. We need to add that in conversations with leaders, the term was used both more tightly to describe a particular approach in community curated worship and more loosely by others to describe anything different from their present standard worship fare. We tried to head off the latter but suspect we were not always successful.

Youth church

These are the 3rd smallest in size, least likely to grow in size, most likely to shrink and 2nd least likely to plateau. They score 5th highest for attracting the non-churched. They operate in a context of young people which has few de-churched, and they provide for many Christian young people. The dominant motive is engaging with an unreached people group, not any parish or area-based motives. Diocesan involvement is relatively high for some appointments of leaders, because 49% of groups operate beyond the parish boundary and they engage more with networks than neighbourhoods. We cannot comment meaningfully on the adult/child ratio for this age group straddles that border set at 16. They mainly meet weekly, but are the types most likely to meet fortnightly.

Male leaders are far more common (71%) as are lay ones (68%). The lay-lay figure is 64%. They score high for a local leadership towards self-governing, but the lowest for self-financing. Engaging with Scripture, creative activities, study in groups and encouraging private reading score high, relative to other types. Yet 84% also use some form of talk. Holding Communions (52%) is just above the average, but Baptisms are well down. This may reflect their strength in providing for existing young Christians who have been baptised already. They are the other type to score 100% for pursuing discipleship in one way or another. Small groups and 1-1 work feature strongly in discipleship. Inviting to events and building relationships are the lead routes in evangelism. They are favoured above the averages by all the traditions, especially charismatics and evangelicals but not by the liberals. Their mortality rate is the 2nd highest at 18.5%.

Wider inferences from Chapter 6

The 14 more commonly chosen types of fxC have now been assessed through the lens of a variety of missional and ecclesial factors. The reduction from 20 types to 14 was chosen for manageability, both for the report writers and for readers. It also secured a more plausible minimum sample size of 60. This number is not large, but we can only stress that it represents all the cases found across the dioceses and we took the view that knowing something from them was of more value than maintaining silence.

This chapter, and the attempt from it to write a short characterisation of each of the 14 types, shows with more clarity some features of fxC types as sufficiently distinctive, while other features equally clearly overlap. We think it helpful to draw a theologically rooted analogy to understand this complex picture of similarity and difference and the language surrounding the term 'fresh expressions of Church', as well as the labels of the 14 types explored here.

If churches are helpfully understood as communities of people centred in Jesus Christ, then an analogy drawn from humanity is apt. Humans can be differentiated by various features, sometimes shading into one another, sometimes distinct. These would include gender, age, race, size, various measures of ability and even health. Yet across them all is the honour and frailty of being human. In a more limited way, each person mirrors this mix of particularity and wider generic identity, by having both a first name and a surname. To know a person well, we pay attention to their individuality, but also to their family inheritance and cultural background.

We suggest that something akin to this mixture of the specific and the generic occurs with this variety of 'fresh expressions of Church'. That term itself is intentionally generic and covers a disparity of practice and stages towards maturity. In that sense the term 'fresh expression of Church' is akin to the generic word 'human' or the narrower term: a surname. The types themselves are more like a first name, carrying a yet more specific identity within a wider belonging. The analogy of a first name, as usual, is not perfect in that we know that, for example, within café churches there is wide disparity of practice as Appendix Two points out. However, we know too that if we have more than one friend called John or Jill, each is unique.

One commonality the fxC share is that, relatively speaking, they are all young in years. It is clear that all of them are still on the path to fuller maturity as churches and also in effective continued mission. Candid reflection on the life of all local churches would suggest that none have fully arrived in maturity, and any suggesting that they have arrived tend to be viewed with suspicion.

We also know from wider experience that some local churches are declining in numbers and vigour and they too have a mortality rate. They should not thereby be dismissed. This perception suggests that the very word 'church' may be better thought of as analogous with the word 'human' than the term 'adult'; for then we better encompass a humble but generous inclusion of churches, young and old, at all stages of their life. We think this view is congruent with what was explored further in section 2.6.

Generic observations from the 14 types of fxC

- It seems that those types which do best in attracting higher proportions of the non-churched are those with a focus on the younger generations: teens, school-age children and those of pre-school age, and the community development plants.

- All these five types are also among the slowest to mature ecclesially. It seems to make sense that as they serve people starting with less church background, we should expect their ecclesial journey to maturity to take longer.

- Some types do best among the de-churched: older people's church being the stand-out example and then child- focused church, network church, multiple Sunday congregations, alternative worship and clusters. Their achievement can be celebrated, though we observe most of them are relatively poor at reaching the non-churched. This division of what works best for which group in the overall mission is worth noting.

- It is clear that some types, again often linked to provision for younger elements of the population are more influenced by the two cultural motives. Other types, like the Church plants, multiple congregations and all age worship work more with area considerations and existing buildings being full. These are differences, not value judgements.

- Among the types, some deliberately work with the social reality of network and others with neighbourhood. Those with a lower typicality score may be more focused on serving networks. The former are more likely to need to cross parish boundaries. Both are needed and almost none serve only neighbourhood or network; the distinction is never absolute.

- The various types are neither the same in size, nor are the team sizes taken. We should respect these differences, but be aware of them in future planning and expectations.

- Church plants are the most distinctive type over both missional and ecclesial characteristics, but this is neither right nor wrong.

- There is clear, often mutually exclusive, preference among two groups of traditions for which type of fxC they most favour, one group being evangelicals and charismatics, the other being the rest. Yet nearly all types of fxC are found in all five traditions.

- Because among 11 of the 14 types, at least 40% of them have plateaued in size, the plausible notion of a natural unit size or range for each type arises. A standard curve was demonstrated for the two most common types and this adds some weight to this concept.

- The differences between types over frequency of meeting are marked at each end of the spectrum. Chapter 8 examines what effect that frequency has.

- Because these types make up over 87% of the fxC, this data is useful for those who have used the various types in the past, and those who may use them in the future, to gain more understanding of their characteristic strengths and weaknesses in practice.

The data shows the more common types all have some characteristic features, some more marked than others. They do different work among a variety of segments of the population and have both strengths and weaknesses. We think our work may demonstrate that it is better to celebrate them all, aware of their possibilities and pitfalls. It is our hope that every diocese can:

- Expect to be home to them all.
- Understand how they contribute to the overall diocesan landscape.
- Build learning networks across different types, recognising their complementary contributions.
- Encourage those considering starting one to do so with their eyes open to the evidence of how they differ and overlap.

Chapter 7   Variations influenced by social area

Building upon the comment in section 6.21 that context is important, Chapter 7 examines the interaction between the 11 types of social/geographic area which our questionnaire offered, usually with all types of fxC, not just the 14 more common types compared and contrasted in Chapter 6. Occasionally, for simplicity, we have excluded the rarer types of fxC. We wished to examine the distribution of the fxC across these social areas and to what extent the different contexts influenced how these young churches behaved and developed.

Throughout the research from 2012 onwards, we have asked the leaders to characterise the social area served by their fxC, using the same 11 pre-chosen labels. We tried, where we could, to use terms in common parlance like 'city centre', 'town,' 'new town' or 'suburb', but without precise definitions. The latter might have been more rigorous, but the local leaders would usually not have known whether they applied. We differentiated between three types of estate – those dominated by local authority housing, those owner occupied and those which were mixed. We also included the well-known, but now dated, term 'urban priority area'. The returns citing new town were minimal, so in practice the charts and tables work with ten areas.

The two rural categories we use are somewhat blunt, being only 'expanded village' and 'rural'. We are aware there are much more sophisticated taxonomies. Some of our much earlier ethnographic work used some of these, such as: distance from, or proximity to, resources, and villages differentiated by type of dominant activity.[28]

We were glad for people to use up to three of these categories if their parish or network contained that distinct mixture, but encouraged them not to proliferate entities without a need. Thus in the correlations, numbers may not sum to 100%.

The list of fxC variables that may be affected by the social area(s) they occur within

7.1   The overall distribution
7.2   A broad comparison with a large sample of parishes
7.3   The distribution of the 17 more common types of fxC by area

Missional
7.4   Average sizes of fxC in the different areas
7.5   Neighbourhood and network by social areas
7.6   The typicality of attenders by area
7.7   Ethnicity within fxC by area
7.8   Proportions of Christians, de-churched and non-churched by area
7.9   Net growth in these areas

Ecclesial
7.10   Distribution of leader types by area
7.11   Variance of three-self scores by area
7.12   Variance by venue type and area
7.13   Variance by theological tradition
7.14   Mortality of fxC types by social area

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[28] G. Lings, *Encounters on the Edge* No. 27: The Village and Fresh Expressions (Sheffield: Church Army, 2005), pp. 4-8.

7.1 The overall distribution of fxC by area

One designation, 'new town', only came up six times in over 1000 cases. With such a tiny sample size we have not shown it, nor in any of the subsequent correlations. This absence comes from the curious fact that the new towns are predominantly in dioceses we have not yet surveyed. The surveyed dioceses were confident they had few, or no, such areas.

Chart 9: The distribution of the fxC across 10 different social areas
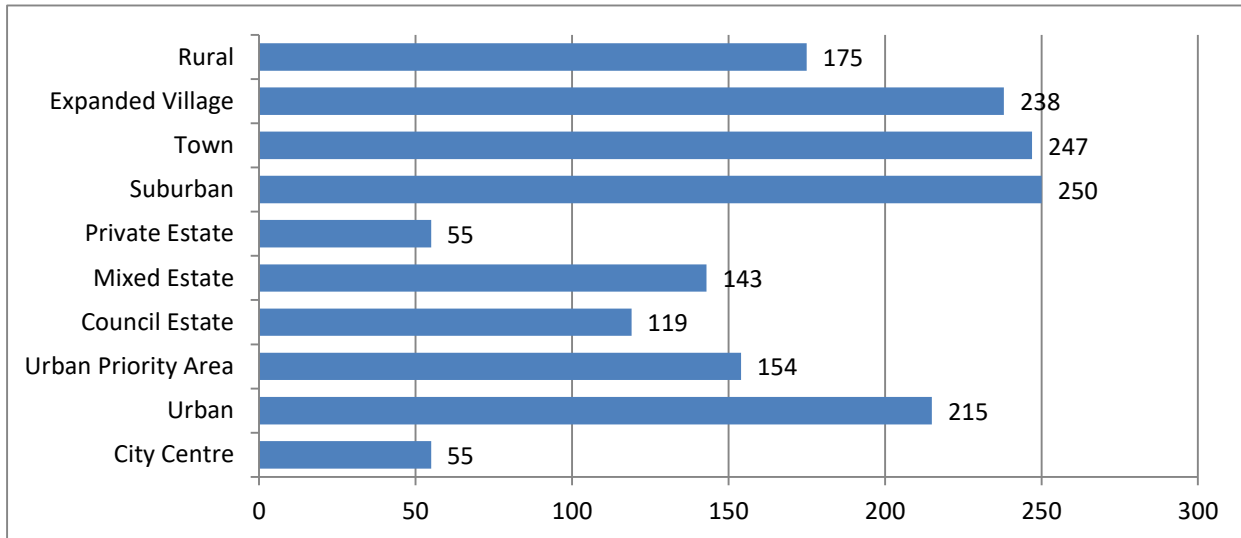
Inferences from the data

Firstly, the data shows all areas have fxC. They are neither a totally urban nor rural phenomenon. Nor are they exclusively for affluent or impoverished areas. Secondly, the distribution of fxC is not even; however, the proportions of people living in these different contexts is not even either, with a propensity for people being in urban areas. Furthermore, the fxC are not the same size in the different areas. That difference is shown by contrasting the two charts on this page.

Chart 10: The distribution of fxC attenders across 10 different social areas
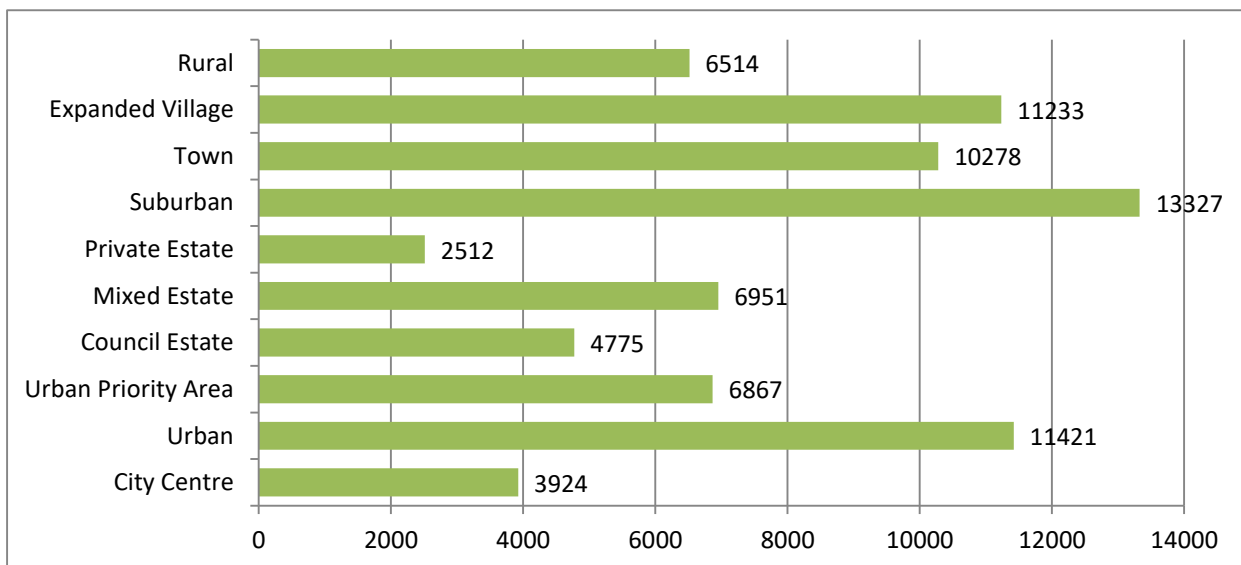
There is similarity in the broad shape, but comparing the length of the bars between the two tables shows the second set for the suburbs and the city centres are longer, and those among rural, council estate and town are shorter, reflecting, in the former group larger average sizes and, in the latter group, smaller average fxC sizes in those locations, as section 7.4 will show.

7.2 A broad comparison with a large sample of parishes

Because the 11 broad types of social area do not map easily onto more complex secular taxonomies, it is hard to know whether this distribution of fxC is healthy. However, one possible broad comparison with the Church of England distribution by its parishes arose because we were sent material, by the Resource, Strategy and Development unit, that lay behind a presentation by the Bishop of Burnley, Philip North, given at a 2016 General Synod meeting. It was based on data from 11,000 parishes, which is somewhat fewer than the totality of parishes. The data itself came from a one-off question on the statistics for mission returns and was answered with different rigour by the dioceses.

Table 64: Distribution of church attendance compared with overall population

Parish context	No. of parishes	Population served	% of national population	Average church attendance	% of national parish attendance	Overall penetration	Average 5 year church attendance growth
Suburban / urban	2092	18252119	40.2%	275349	34.7%	1.5%	1.8%
Separate town	1199	9137111	20.1%	157477	19.9%	1.7%	0.0%
Inner city	644	6303523	13.9%	75910	9.6%	1.2%	0.5%
Commuter rural	2403	3984421	8.8%	102032	12.9%	2.6%	-5.8%
Other rural	4295	3544300	7.8%	115657	14.6%	3.3%	-4.3%
Council estate	288	2807122	6.2%	22731	2.9%	0.8%	-8.4%
City centre	256	1365854	3.0%	44007	5.5%	3.2%	0.5%

The emphasis of Bishop Philip's analysis fell upon how poorly the Church of England was doing in the inner city and council estates, when comparing the national population distribution with parish attendance. However, it did give us the opportunity to examine whether the fxC as a whole conformed to this picture or deviated from it.

Table 65: Comparing the fxC attendance distribution with that of the parishes

Type of area	fxC	Parish	Parish label
Rural	8.4%	14.6%	Other rural
Expanded village	14.4%	12.9%	Commuter rural
Town	13.2%	19.9%	Separate town
Suburban	17.1%	34.7%	Suburban & urban
Private estate	3.2%		
Mixed estate	8.9%		
Council estate	6.6%	2.9%	Council estate
Urban priority	8.8%	9.6%	Inner city
Urban	14.7%		
City centre	5.0%	5.5%	City Centre

Most of the labels in both lists of table 65 match well, and in expanded villages and city centres the proportions of attendance are similar. The greatest lack of clarity comes from being unable to split out the suburban/urban component of the parish list, which would have been helpful. Summing scores from these two fxC categories comes to not far short of the parish proportion, and adding the private estates would all but equalise it.

What does emerge is that the fxC engage proportionally more with council estates than the parishes and if the mixed estates were to be added, that would be yet more so. We also notice that in the areas of relative strongest existing parish-based presence - that is rural and towns - the parishes outscore the fxC. This could be interpreted as the demand for fxC being lower where there seems to be stronger existing church presence. Complacency, or the absence of all need for further young churches in either higher scoring context, would be challenged by Bishop Philip's columns showing the overall penetration and their low 5-year growth figures.

The comparison also led us into an examination of the proportions of attenders at fxC which serve areas that have historically been tougher or more challenging for the Church of England, and areas which might be thought of as easier and its heartlands. The 'challenges' we have in mind might either be establishing an effective congregational presence, or a lack of openness to change despite a need demonstrated by circumstances. For the latter reason, we have included rural in what we deem to be tougher, at least for starting fxC. It is of course arguable that the mixed housing estates could fall either side of the line drawn in this table.

Table 66:   Dividing the fxC attendance by two broad types of area

Area	RUR	EPV	TWN	SUB	PE	ME	CE	UPA	URB	CTC	Total	%
Tough	6514					6761	4775	6867	11421		36,538	47.0%
Easier		11233	10278	13329	2512					3924	41,274	53.0%

Abbreviations
RUR - rural   EPV – expanded village   TWN- town   SUB - suburb   PE – Private housing estate
ME – mixed council and private estate   CE – council estate   UPA   - Urban priority area
URB – urban   CTC – city centre

The data, from chart 10 and table 65, makes plausible the claim that the fxC are spread across the variety of social areas of England and lays some claim to a stronger proportional presence than the parishes in estate areas of greater challenge. It is certainly not the case that they are narrowly confined to engagement with those areas in England which are more prosperous or comfortable.

7.3 The distribution of more common types of fxC by area

The table below contains 17 types of fxC which are listed in reverse order of popularity and with us operating with a cut off sample size of 40 examples. The data for Seeker has been omitted as it never appears singly and thus is implausible as a type in itself. Because more than one area could be chosen, the figures in the rows below do not sum to 100%.

Table 67: The percentage of each fxC type across the 10 areas

	CTC	URB	UPA	CE	ME	PE	SUB	TWN	EPV	RUR
MES	0.8%	12.5%	11.9%	7.5%	14.7%	3.3%	25.3%	22.8%	28.9%	19.7%
CAF	4.6%	14.6%	12.6%	9.3%	12.6%	6.0%	17.9%	21.9%	23.8%	22.5%
CFC	1.4%	10.1%	11.5%	10.1%	12.8%	6.1%	25.7%	20.9%	27.0%	25.0%
TCP	6.1%	34.1%	17.4%	20.5%	22.0%	16.7%	26.5%	10.6%	11.4%	4.5%
SIG	16.8%	37.6%	9.9%	7.9%	4.0%	1.0%	20.8%	22.8%	9.9%	7.9%
MUL	6.7%	16.9%	10.1%	6.7%	12.4%	1.1%	32.6%	24.7%	23.6%	10.1%
CDP	5.6%	22.5%	38.2%	38.2%	22.5%	6.7%	15.7%	11.2%	10.1%	4.5%
AAW	3.3%	15.6%	17.8%	12.2%	10.0%	4.4%	25.6%	27.8%	26.7%	17.8%
NTC	22.5%	27.5%	6.3%	5.0%	5.0%	1.3%	21.3%	35.0%	17.5%	6.3%
ALT	19.2%	23.1%	11.5%	5.1%	3.8%	0.0%	17.9%	17.9%	14.1%	19.2%
U5s	1.3%	21.1%	10.5%	9.2%	11.8%	6.6%	23.7%	22.4%	28.9%	9.2%
YTH	4.6%	20.0%	16.9%	6.2%	7.7%	0.0%	18.5%	29.2%	24.6%	24.6%
CLU	17.2%	21.9%	10.9%	4.7%	12.5%	1.6%	34.4%	34.4%	12.5%	6.3%
OPC	1.6%	17.5%	15.9%	15.9%	14.3%	4.8%	20.6%	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%
MWS	11.1%	20.4%	13.0%	14.8%	5.6%	9.3%	16.7%	25.9%	27.8%	5.6%
SBC	0.0%	4.3%	15.2%	13.0%	10.9%	13.0%	37.0%	15.2%	28.3%	28.3%
CEL	0.0%	22.5%	20.0%	15.0%	7.5%	5.0%	22.5%	20.0%	7.5%	25.0%

Abbreviations of social areas
CTC – city centre URB – urban UPA - Urban priority area
CE – council estate ME – mixed council and private estate PE – Private housing estate
SUB - suburb TWN- town EPV – expanded village RUR – rural

Abbreviations of types of fresh expression of Church:

| AAW	All age worship	ALT	Alternative worship	CAF	Café church
CDP	Community development plant	CEL	Cell Church	CFC	Child-focused church
CLU	Cluster	MES	Messy Church	MWS	Midweek Congregation
MUL	Multiple congregation	NTC	Network church	OPC	older people's church
SBC	School based church	SIG	Special interest group	TCP	Traditional church plant
U5s	Church for <5s & carers	YTH	Youth congregation		

Table 67 highlights in grey those cases where fewer than 2% of cases of an fxC type occur. These curiously fall in two mutually exclusive lists and in only two areas: the city centre and private estates. In the city centre, the age groups greyed out are minimal, but both café church and cell serve many ages. For the exclusions in the private estates, we see no plausible explanation.

Inferences from the data
The complexity of the picture is that all types of fxC occur in at least 9 of the 10 social areas and 13 types occur (at least minimally) in all 10 social areas. Thus from this view any prevalence of dominant connections are but suggestive, not exhaustive.

However, the data can be worked with in another way. We examined which areas tend to be favoured by certain types of fxC. Six charts follow which highlight this and evoke comments that can be made. Throughout these charts the dashed line is the average occurrence of a type of fxC, if area was not a factor.
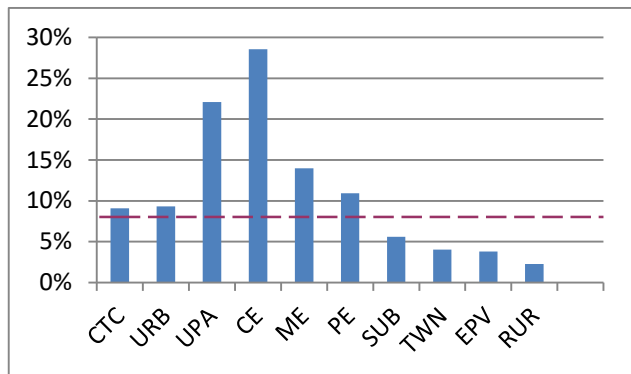
Chart 11a: In each area what % are CAF?
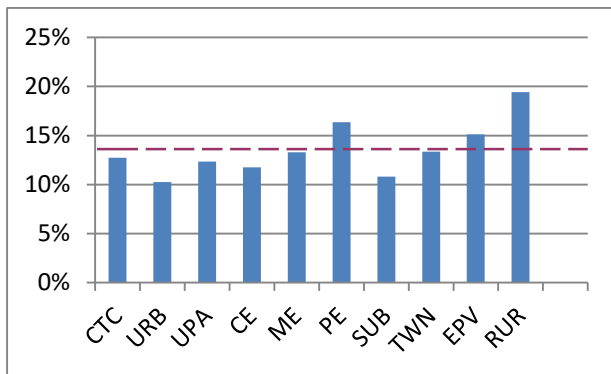
Chart 11b: In each area what % are CDP?

Abbreviations of social areas
CTC – city centre   URB – urban   UPA - Urban priority area
CE – council estate   ME – mixed council and private estate   PE - Private housing estate
SUB - suburb   TWN- town   EPV - expanded village   RUR – rural

We include **café church** as one example of a type that is likely to be found across all the 11 kinds of social area, with additional note that its attraction in rural areas is marked, but curiously less so in the suburbs. **All age worship** is another type with a broad distribution quite like this.

By contrast, the **community development plants** are shown to be most likely in the two urban areas with the more glaring community needs. This is not to say that there are not profound social needs in rural areas, but only that this response is not one chosen there.
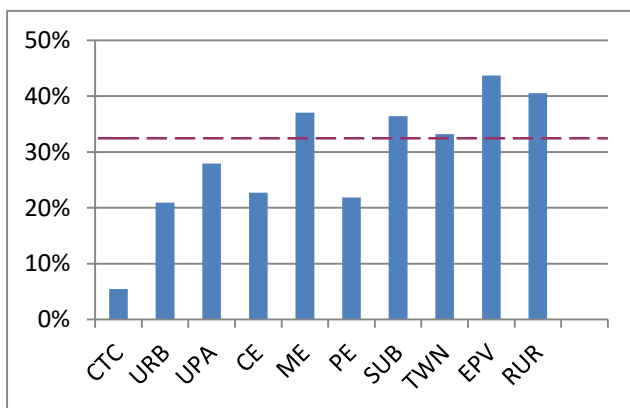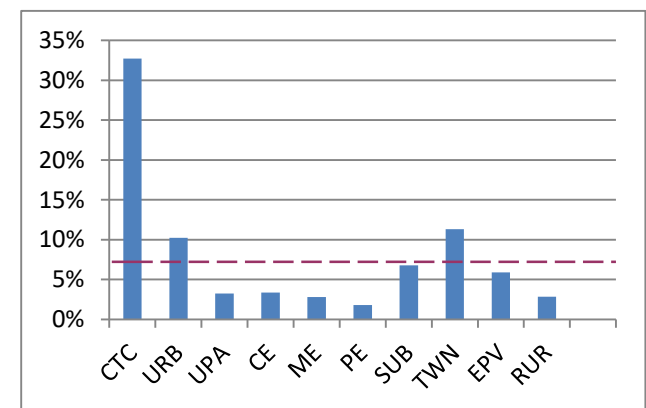
Chart 11c: In each area what % are MES?

Chart 11d: In each area what % are NTC?

Messy Church is found in all areas but notably fewer in the city centres, presumably because these tend to be areas with few children. It is also clearly strong in both the rural areas. With **church based on <5s** and also **child-focused church** there is wide spread, though they are also not much found in the city centres. For similar reasons **older people's church** is least found in city centre areas, but it is strongly represented on council estates.

Conversely, **network church** is a designation most commonly associated in the city centres where parochial boundaries have little significance, and is above its average in urban and town areas, where again the need to overflow parish boundaries can apply. **Alternative worship** is another type with a very strong showing in the city centre locations, as is **special interest group**, although they are not unknown elsewhere. **Clusters** also feature strongly in the city centres.
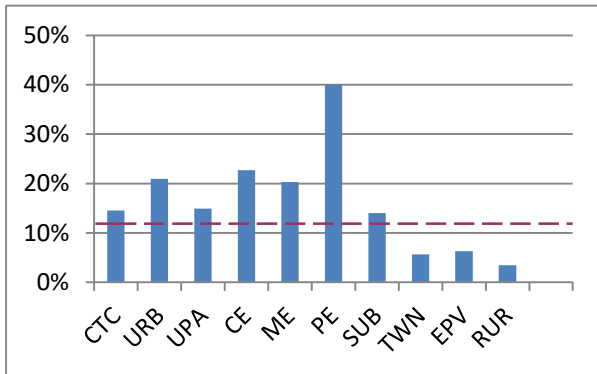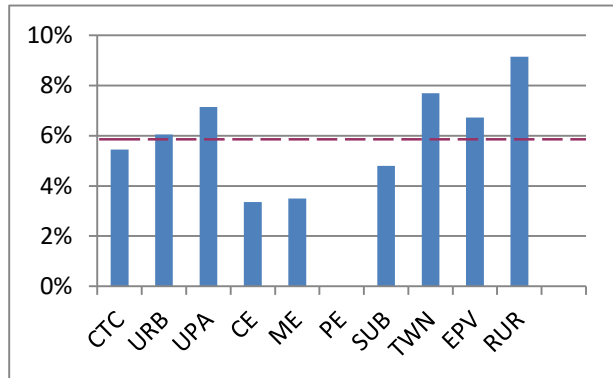
Chart 11e: In each area what % are TCP?

Chart 11f: In each area what % are YTH?

Abbreviations of social areas
CTC – city centre   URB – urban   UPA   - Urban priority area
CE – council estate   ME – mixed council and private estate   PE – Private housing estate
SUB – suburb   TWN- town   EPV – expanded village RUR – rural

The **church plants** feature most in all urban contexts through to the suburbs, and notably on the private estates, but not dominantly as some might expect in the city centres. It is however, neither a common choice in either rural context, nor even in the towns.

Youth church is spread widely, only being less represented on estates. The prevalence in the two rural settings partly reflects the examples in Carlisle diocese, but their relative popularity in the towns and urban priority areas may also indicate the areas where not only are youth to be found, but where there is also less for them to do.

Chart 11g: In each area what % are MUL?
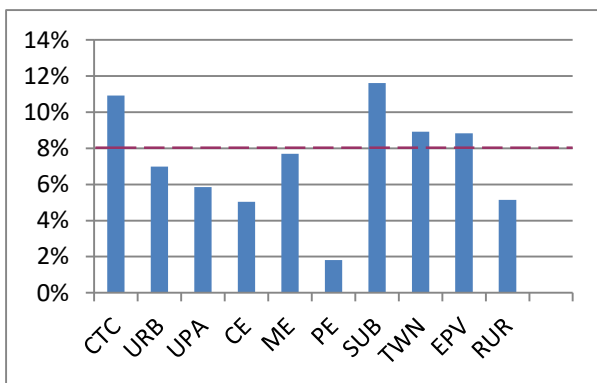
Multiple Sunday congregations do not really fit with any of the broad patterns above. They are more common in the centres and also suburbs, towns and expanded villages. This may reflect the presence of larger existing churches which choose to multiply in this way.

Overall
Nearly all types occur in nearly all areas. The majority of them are not to be thought of as specific to one particular area. The exceptions might be the community development plants with work in areas of urban deprivation, and then the four types with a strong affinity to the city centre.

The city centre seems to link to certain age groups being absent or prevalent and this in turn affects the choice of types of fxC. There is also a tendency for the types that include a major investment in children and youth (though not true of school-based church and the towns) to be more common in the suburbs, towns and two rural areas.

7.4 Average sizes of fxC in the different social areas

This data on the effect of context is complementary to fxC type data, examined in section 6.2.

Chart 12:   **The average size of all fxC in the 10 different social contexts**
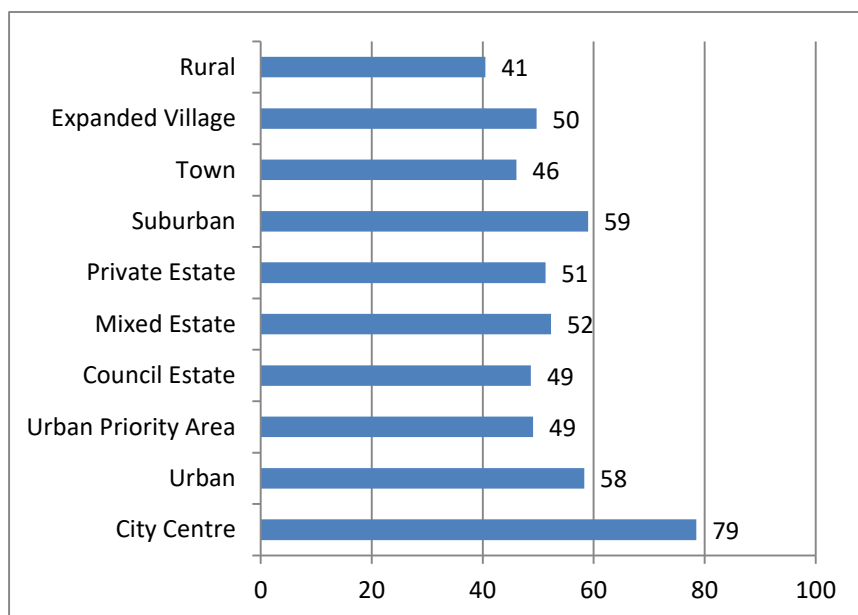
The standout features are that the city centre sees the largest sizes, followed by urban and suburban. The next seven social areas do not see much variation and, as might be expected, the rural examples are the smallest, although not by very much.

This picture is nuanced more by splitting out the attendance between adults and under 16s by area.

Chart 13:   **Average fxC size of fxC by geographical area – split by 16 and over and <16s**
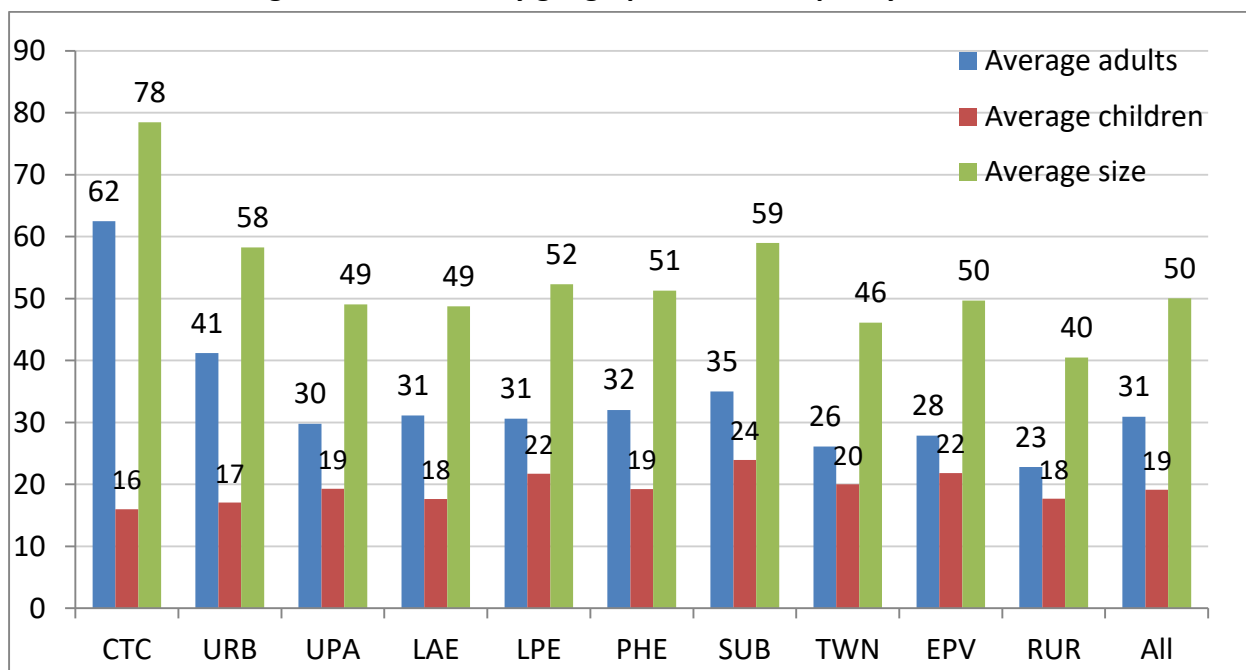
Abbreviations
CTC – city centre   URB – urban   UPA   - Urban priority area
CE – council estate   ME – mixed council and private estate   PE – Private housing estate
SUB - suburb   TWN- town   EPV – expanded village RUR – rural

It can then be seen that in the city centre examples the proportion of adults is notably highest and that of children is lowest, a pattern repeated less markedly in the urban areas. By contrast it is the rural areas in which the gap in proportions between adults and children is narrowest.

7.5 Neighbourhood and network seen by social area

Chart 14:   **FxC attenders by neighbourhood and network, by social area**

A note on methodology and meaning

These scores have been turned into percentages summing to 100%, from the aggregated scores on the 0-3 scale used in several of our questions. Thus they have been put into a chart rather than a precise looking table of figures and should not be read too precisely.

The meaning of the terms was covered in section 6.6 and the data could be read alongside its chart 7 examining neighbourhood and n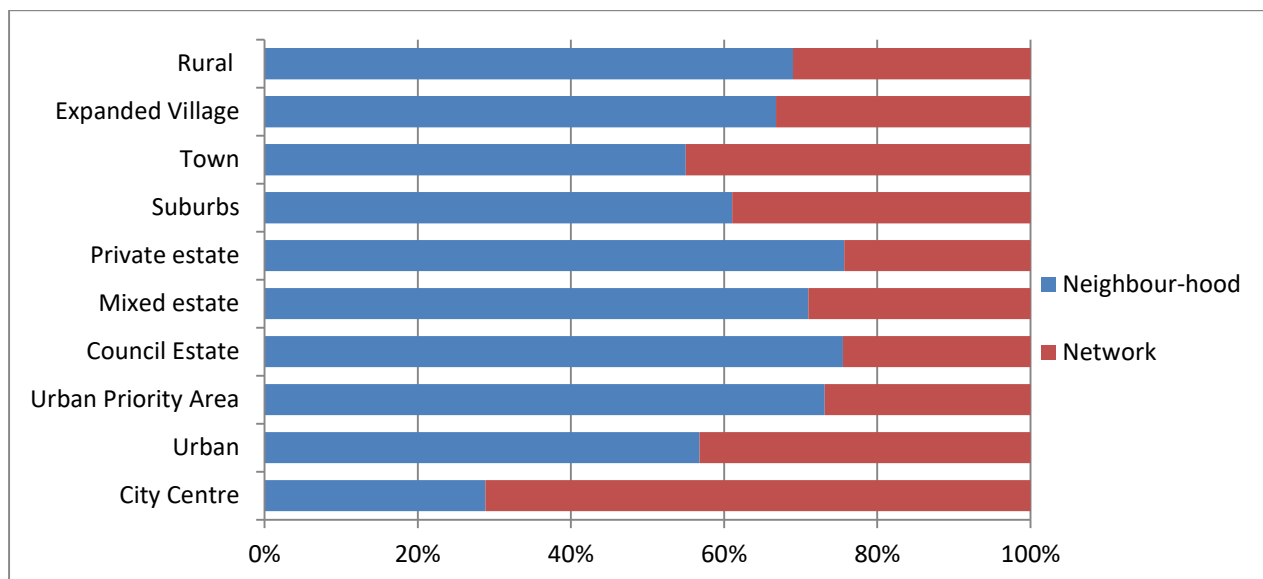etwork by fxC type. However, chart 7 and chart 14 use different methods to show results so should not be compared directly.

Inferences from the data

This may be one of those instances in which some prior popular assumptions turn out to be prudent, but the data then adds a level of detail not previously available to nuance the assumption.
The feature of network is only dominant in city centres, then under 50% in towns and urban areas, and just under 40% in the suburbs. It accounts for just over 30% in the rural areas and a bit less on the mixed estates, with network the least present in the other two estate areas, although still over 20%. This may be congruent with the observation that poverty is linked to lack of mobility, upon whose presence network is at least partially reliant.

The conclusions are threefold:

- Firstly, in no context should working through *both* neighbourhood and network be abandoned, including the rural context.
- Secondly, reliance on neighbourhood alone cannot be sufficient. Across the 21 dioceses, in 39% of cases network was a major factor.
- Thirdly, historic Anglican parochial instincts for territory alone should be modified to this extent, paying attention to contextual variation.

7.6 The typicality of attenders by the 10 areas

Chart 15: Typicality of attenders, by the area in which the fxC meets
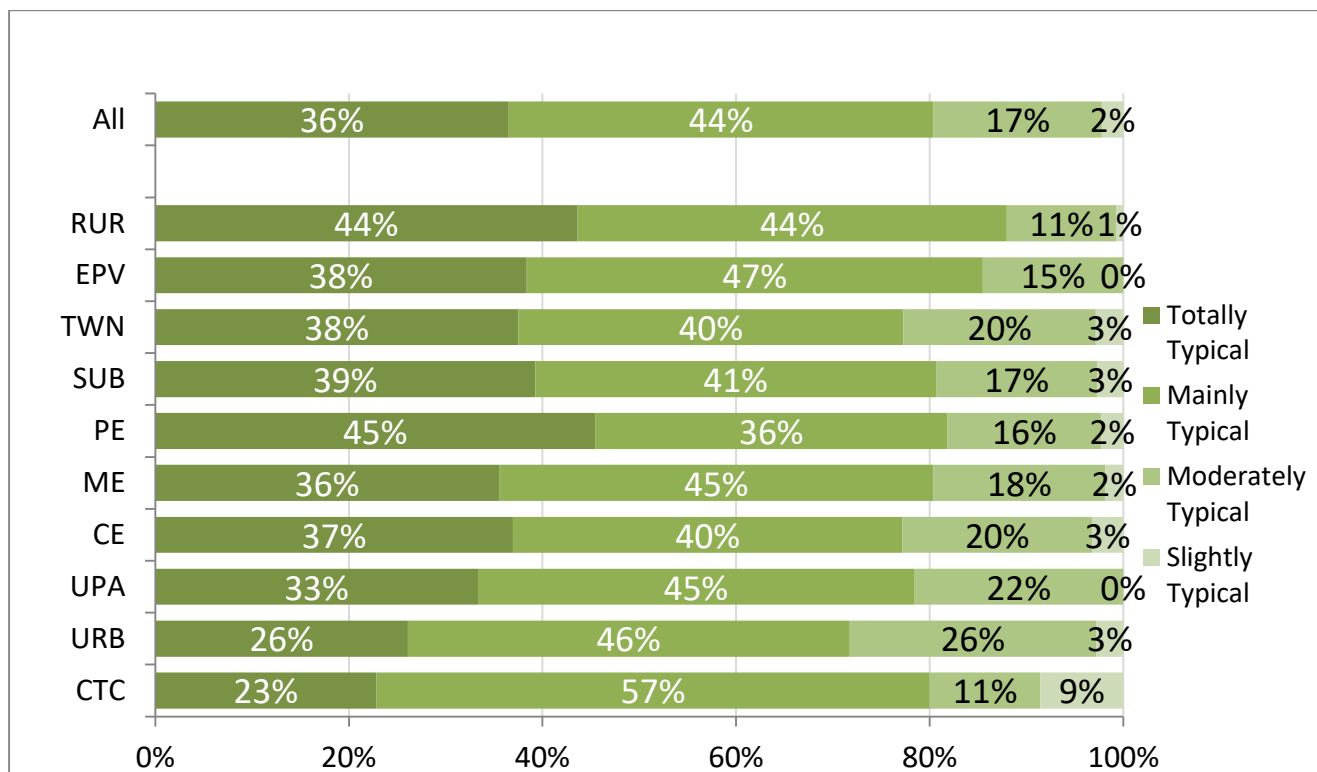
Abbreviations
RUR - rural   EPV – expanded village   TWN- town   SUB - suburb
CE – council estate   ME – mixed council and private estate   PE – Private housing estate
UPA - urban priority area   URB – urban   CTC – city centre

Section 6.7 explained that summing 'totally typical' and 'mainly typical' gave a measure of whether the fxC, in who they reached, were maintaining some continuity with the incarnational and parochial instincts of the Church of England. Section 6.7 showed most of the 14 most common types of fxC to be close to the 80% average, with slight diminution of typicality in those types of fxC set up for networks.

This chart, by 10 social areas, conforms to that broad 80% overall picture, but with some suggestive contextual variations. The 'totally typical' figure is lowest in the more urban contexts and highest in the rural ones. The high figure for private estates is an outlier and may indicate some cultural uniformity on such estates. We infer that there may be a wider social, cultural and even ethnic mix in the more urban areas and thus the leaders sensed those who came to the fxC only represented some of that mix. We note that it is the city centre location that is easily highest for 'slightly typical'. The 'mainly typical' figure then all but balances out the 'totally typical' differences, though still leaving the two rural locations as scoring the highest.

7.7 Ethnicity within fxC, by 10 social areas

Chart 16: **Ethnic diversity of fxC by geographical area**

Area	One Ethnic Background	A Few Ethnic Backgrounds	Wide diversity of Ethnic Backgrounds
All 10 areas	43%	43%	14%
City Centre	29%	51%	20%
Urban	18%	47%	35%
Urban Priority Area	35%	38%	27%
Council estate	34%	43%	23%
Mixed Estate	35%	49%	17%
Private Estate	41%	48%	11%
Suburb	36%	49%	15%
Town	50%	47%	3%
Expaned Village	54%	44%	1%
Rural	69%	30%	1%
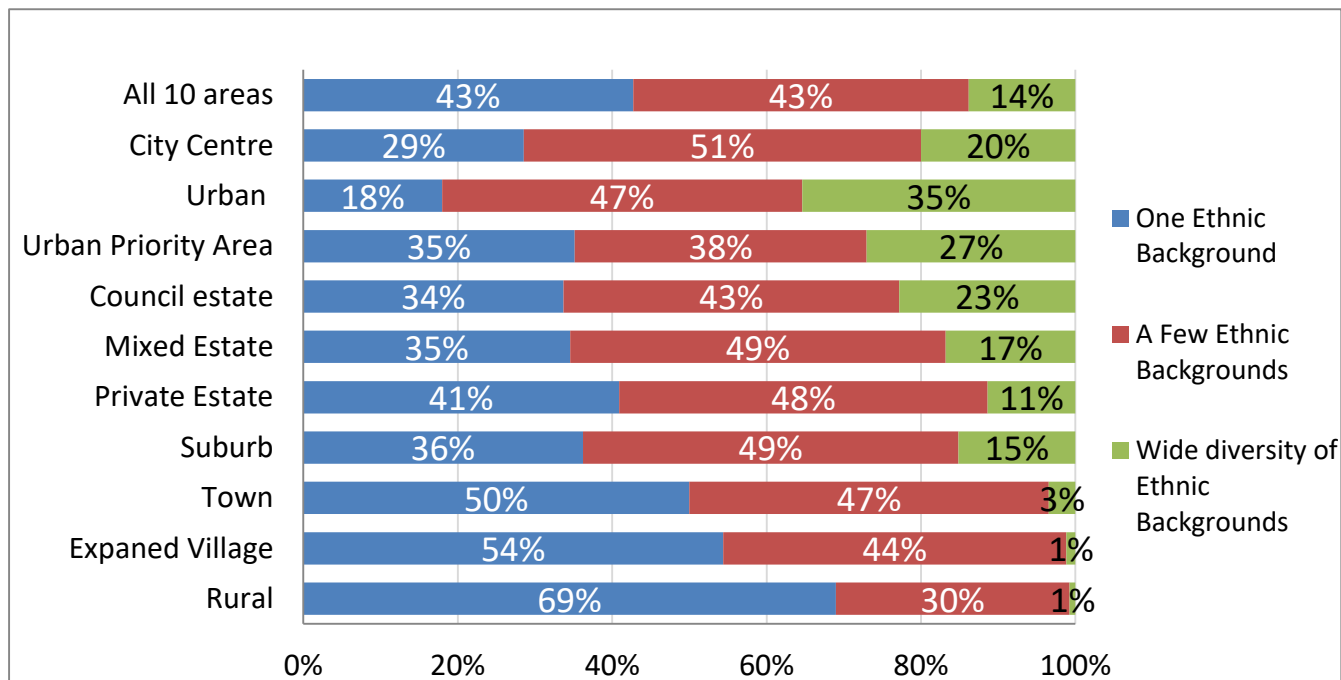
Inferences from the data and conversations with leaders

As might be expected, the greater incidence of one ethnic background at the fxC is highest in the rural areas and usually steadily decreases with increasing urbanisation, though diminishing again in the city centre. The converse is true of the wide diversity spread.

However, in our conversations with leaders of fxC, they were often at pains to tell us that the ethnic mix was typical of their area. In Southwark diocese, we sometimes were told that one ethnic group was present and the attenders were all black. In the rural areas, but not only in these contexts, leaders said that migrant groups from Europe were a part of the few ethnic groups being present.
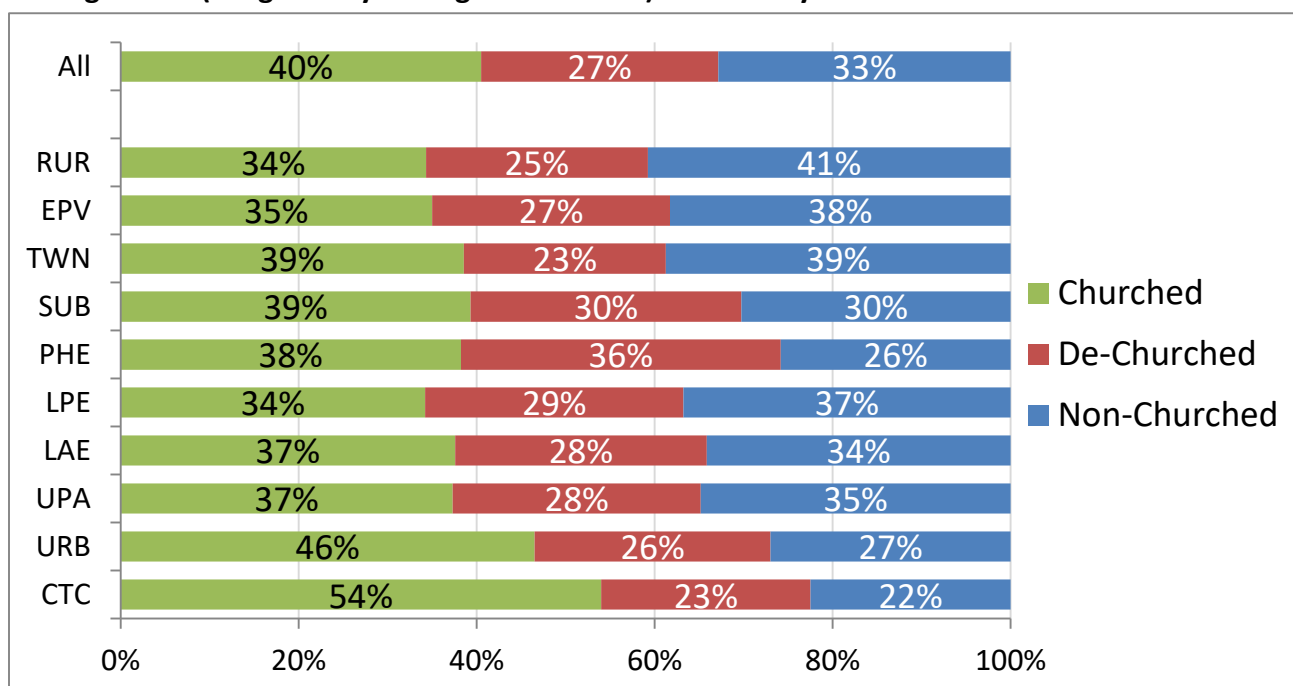
Our broad classifications of social type do not allow geographically-based census figures to be contrasted with this finding. However, in our reports to individual dioceses, we have drawn on these census figures for their geographical area, and pointed up the white British figure as one to compare with the diversity in the fxC across the diocese.

7.8 Proportions of Christian, de-churched and non-churched

In the 2nd set of dioceses, we calculated these results both in a way which was weighted by average attendance size and also unweighted in this way. The differences were only usually of some 2-3%, with the exception of changing the weighted urban Christians score from 46% to an unweighted score of 42%. The unweighted scores were a flatter set of differences.

Knowing that fxC congregation sizes are larger in city centres, urban and suburban settings (see section 7.1), we opted to show the version that honours that effect. The unweighted version, however, appears in Appendix Five.

Chart 17: Areas into which fxC were planted, by leaders' estimates of attenders' church backgrounds (weighted by average attendance) drawn only from dioceses 12-21

Area	Churched	De-Churched	Non-Churched
All	40%	27%	33%
RUR	34%	25%	41%
EPV	35%	27%	38%
TWN	39%	23%	39%
SUB	39%	30%	30%
PHE	38%	36%	26%
LPE	34%	29%	37%
LAE	37%	28%	34%
UPA	37%	28%	35%
URB	46%	26%	27%
CTC	54%	23%	22%

Abbreviations
RUR - rural   EPV – expanded village   TWN- town   SUB - suburb
CE – council estate   ME – mixed council and private estate   PE – Private housing estate
UPA - urban priority area   URB – urban   CTC – city centre

Inferences from the data

Our first impression is how often the results by area are similar. The outliers are the higher proportion of attending Christians in the city centre fxC examples, and the higher proportion of de-churched attenders in the private estates, contributing to the lowest figure for non-churched attenders both in those estates and in the city centres. With the exception of these outliers, the attenders who are Christian already only range from 46%-34%, the de-churched from 30%-23% and the non-churched from 41%-27%.

From this section and comparison with section 6.4, we now know that the type of fxC and its associated style is more significant than area to explain differences across the proportions of these three groups of attenders. In section 6.4 the variance between the 14 most common fxC types for Christian attenders is 52% to 23%, for the de-churched 41% to 16% and for the non-churched 48% to 13%. At the opposite ends of the range, the top figures are double that for the lowest.

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7.9 Net growth differentiated by these areas

To conclude the missional aspects of correlating the fxC against 10 social areas, the next chart looks at whether there are differences in the 'net growth ratio'. This chart and comments on it may be read in conjunction with section 6.10 and table 50, where it was explained how this figure is derived and that the numbers on the bottom axis represent the extra people that now attend, per person originally sent. It also can be read with section 7.4 giving the fxC average sizes.

Chart 18:   Net growth ratio of all fxC in 10 different social areas
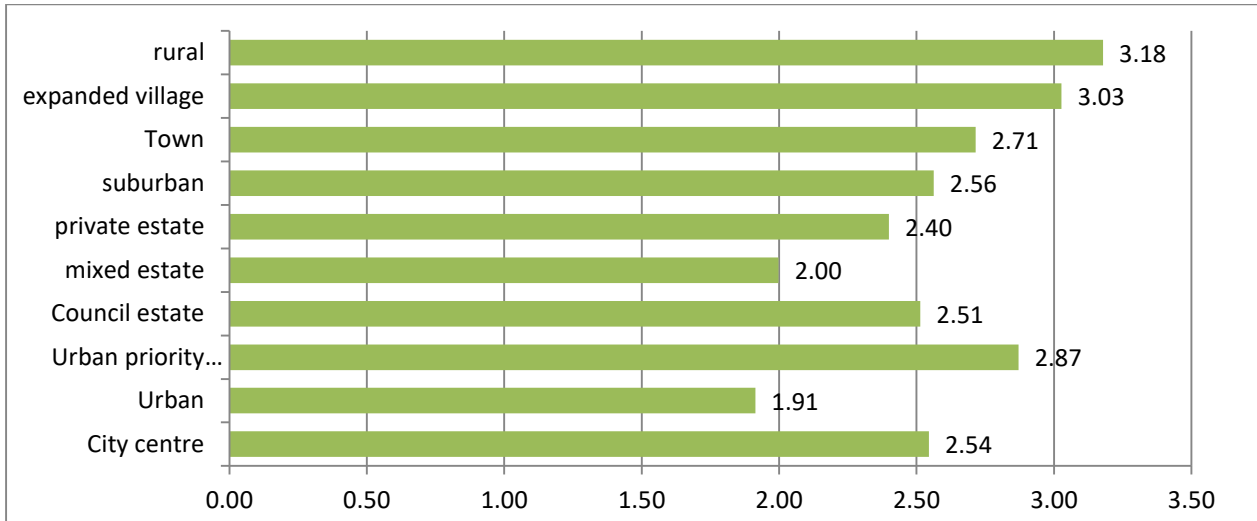
We think these results which seem to favour certain areas in missional effectiveness, such as the rural and some urban contexts, should be moderated by awareness of the average team size sent.

Chart 19a: Average team size (adults and children) across all fxC in 10 different social areas
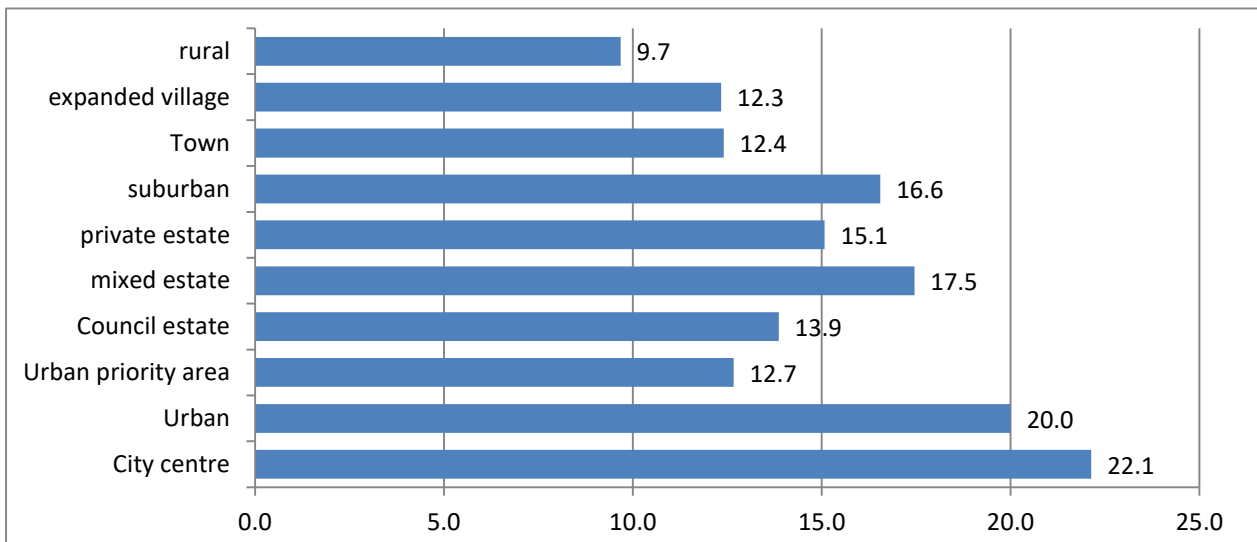
It then becomes apparent by contrasting the two charts that usually the smaller the team size, the greater the net growth. This is partly a product of how smaller numbers work. To illustrate this, contrast the top and bottom rows of the two charts. In the rural context, sending 10 people and now having 41, less the team sent, means the net growth ratio is around 3.2. However, in the city centre if you send 22 and now have 79, less the team sent, the net growth ratio is around 2.5. Thus the figures have to be read carefully while always applauding growth from slim resources.

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If the two sets of data are put into one line graph it may be easier to spot any standout points.

Chart 19b: All fxC across 10 social areas showing team size sent and net growth
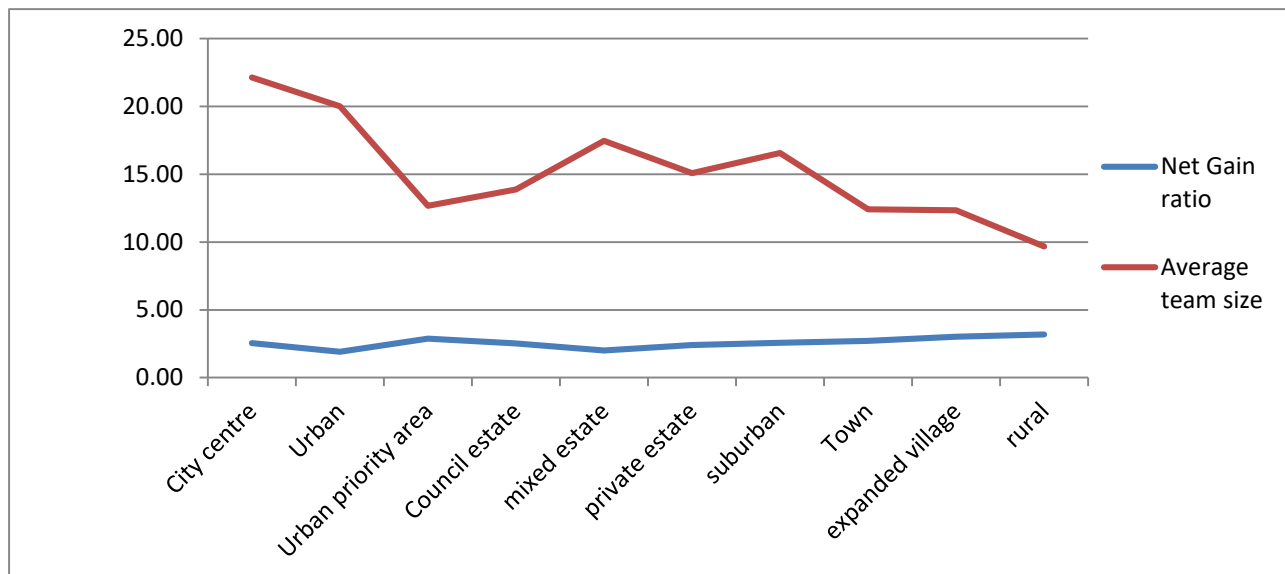
One visual impression is that as the bottom axis of social context labelled moves from most urban to most rural, generally the team size falls while the net growth slowly rises. The largest exceptions to that team size sent pattern are in the two areas of greater urban need. This might reflect fewer resources to send from local churches and a wise awareness that parachuting in outside resources invites problems of cultural imposition and continued dependency.

Then it can be seen that for the resources sent, the results in the 'urban' areas, and especially on the 'mixed estates', are the most modest. It might be thought that this could reflect a tough mission context, but the relatively high net growth in the urban priority areas (UPA) and council estates would contradict this, leaving us with real uncertainty about any likely causation. What may be more likely is that those two urban areas conform to the general rule that the smaller team sizes sent make the larger net growth.

A possible inference to draw

The stories of starting bigger new churches with larger sent teams - which tend to be in city centre, urban and suburban contexts - tend to create more headlines and can be advocated as a strategic way forward. However, it would be a mistake not to take equal notice of the contribution made in the other social contexts by smaller teams that are arguably more effective in mission if measured by the net growth figures, and to note that such smaller teams are within the reach of many more parish churches that as yet have not begun a fresh expression of Church. Section 7.9 deliberately included the children sent, to reflect the total resource sent and not inflate the new growth ratio.

This chapter has portrayed the distribution of fxC by area and in a comparison to one measure of the distribution of parishes. It then took some missional features of fxC and considered to what extent these aspects of their behaviour may be affected by the social area in which they occur.

A complementary feature is now to take a few markers of ecclesial resources and choices and see if they correlate in any ways with the social area served. This will include identifying which ecclesial markers are not affected by the area served, but rather affected by other considerations.

7.10 Leaders of fxC in different social areas

We have a number of ways of differentiating data about leaders: gender, lay or ordained status, paid or voluntary, and whether they regard the role as full, part or spare time.

Having run correlations on all of these variables in relation to the 10 broad kinds of area, the features that drive the other aspects are gender and whether the person is lay or ordained. Accordingly we show both in the following chart.

Chart 20: Gender and lay/ordained status of fxC leaders – by social area
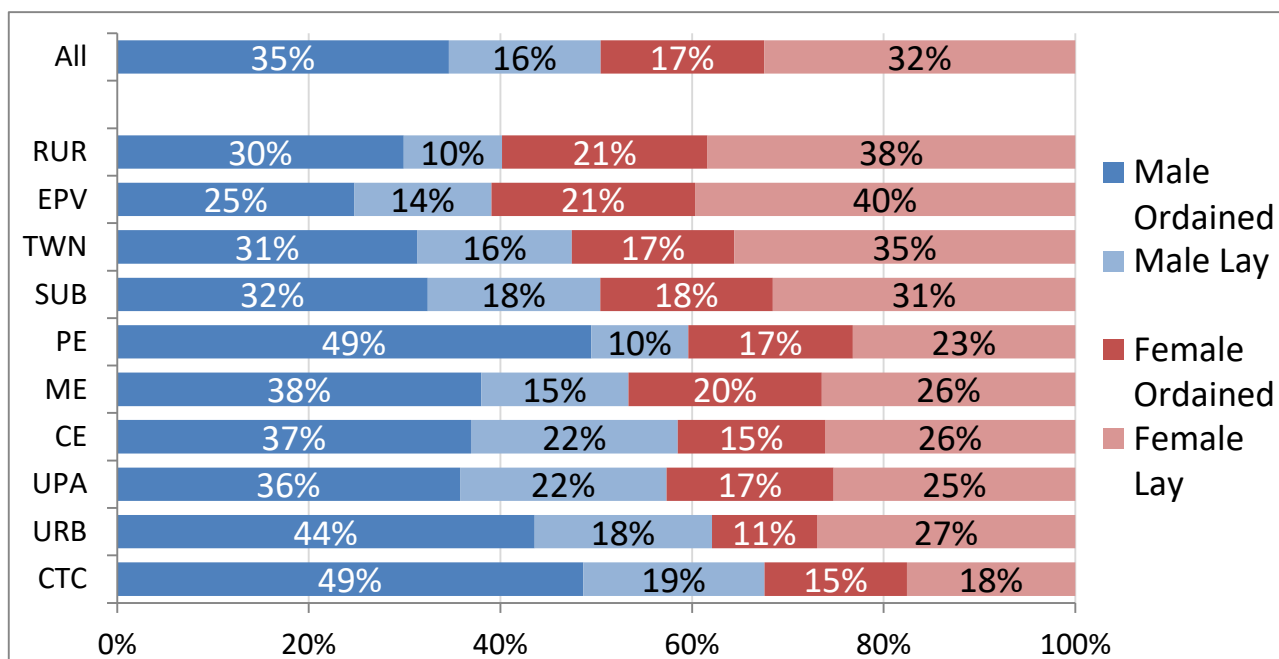
Abbreviations
RUR - rural   EPV – expanded village   TWN- town   SUB - suburb
PE – Private housing estate   ME – mixed council and private estate   CE – Council estate
UPA - urban priority area   URB – urban   CTC – city centre

Inferences from the data

There is a slight tendency for ordained males to be more often found in the more urban contexts, notably in 'city centre' and 'private estate' contexts, but the overall ordained figure is often brought back towards the mean by the ordained females being found slightly more often in rural ones. A pattern, distributing the female lay, is more marked with a prevalence of them in rural and outer urban contexts. The male lay are most strongly represented in council estates and UPA areas. Having said this, it is also true that all leader types can be found in all social areas.

But looking at features like communion and baptism by area, it seems that the distribution by ordained and lay in large measure accounts for the differences seen. Therefore, these separate figures are not shown. But, for example, the highest incidence of ordained leaders in city centre and private estates correlates with the highest incidence of holding communions and baptisms. This ordained leader factor will not be the only, one as we know from the 2013 report that the type of fxC also affects the pace at which young churches move towards sacramental practice.

In this report, sections 7.1 and 7.3 showed that the more common types of fxC are not uniformly spread across the 10 social areas and this affects the leadership figures.

Section 6.13 showed that certain types of fxC are more likely to have lay and indeed lay-lay leaders. Both these factors lay behind the distribution of the lay-lay by area as shown in the chart below.

Chart 21:   Distribution of the lay-lay fxC leaders by social area

Abbreviations
RUR - rural   `   EPV – expanded village   TWN- town   SUB - suburb
PE – private housing estate   ME – mixed council and private estate   CE – council estate
UPA - urban priority area   URB – urban   CTC – city centre
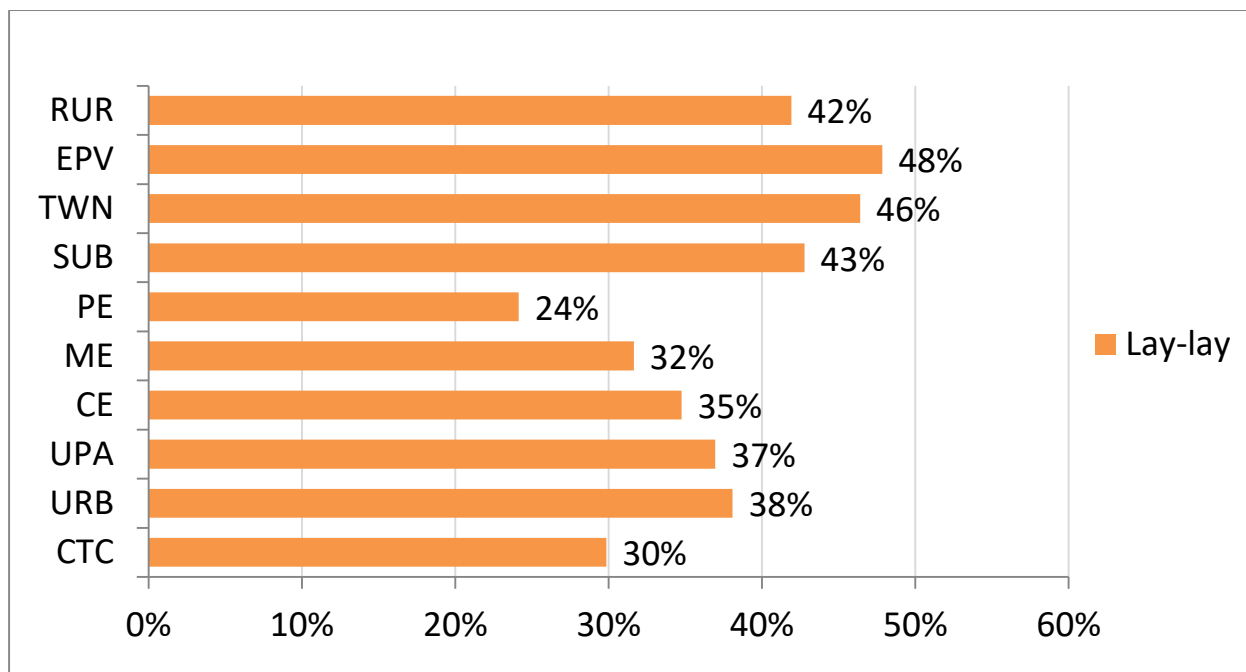
It might appear that the contexts have created this diverse distribution of the lay-lay leader; we think it more likely that it was a background factor and that the choice of fxC type and the associated presence, or lack, of ordained leadership was more significant. Whether that availability itself is affected by rural or urban context is beyond our data or ability to comment.

However, the data continues to show the relatively newly named category of lay-lay leader can occur in any of these contexts, while showing that they are more likely to be found in the outer urban areas, towns and rural contexts.

Other material not shown
In addition, the correlations for four paths in discipleship and social areas also reveal a marginal tendency for fxC following at least one of these paths to drop as the social areas move from city centre to rural. But again this is not shown. We do not know if this directly relates to the prevalence of the lay-lay leader in the outer areas and the converse presence of the ordained one in the more urbanised ones.

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7.11 Three-self maturity and different social areas

Chart 22:   Three-self maturity across all types of fxC by social area
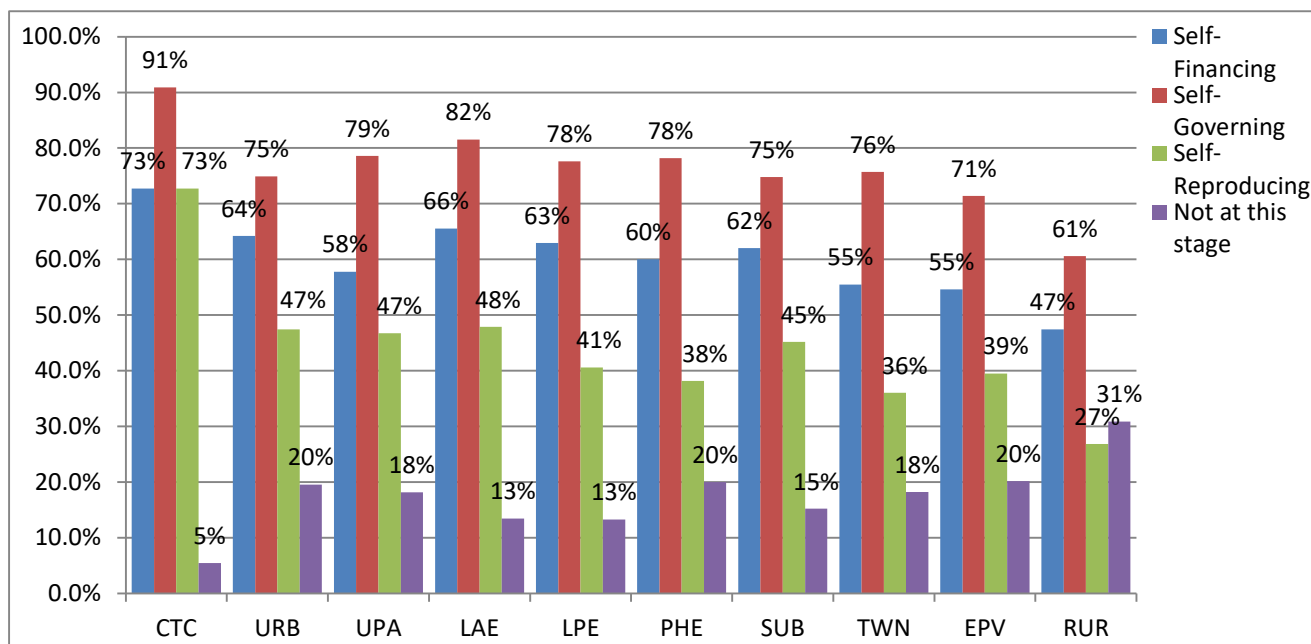
Abbreviations of social areas
CTC – city centre   URB – urban   UPA   - Urban priority area
CE – council estate   ME – mixed council and private estate   PE – Private housing estate
SUB - suburb   TWN- town   EPV – expanded village   RUR – rural

Inferences from the data

The connections here are more complex and uncertain. For example, the prevalence of the lay-lay, as shown in chart 21, whose staffing costs are minimal, might be thought to make it easier for fxC in those areas to become self-financing. The differences in average size across the fxC types could contribute to ability to give and promote the need for leadership structures. It might also be the case that in more deprived areas there is less confidence to take a lead.

There is some linkage between the prevalence of the ordained leader (of either gender) and three-self scores, but only clearly for the city centre fxC and the two kinds of rural context. For the other contexts no clear linkage is demonstrable.

In addition, section 6.14 showed that the type of fxC has a significant effect on progress towards three-self maturity. The ranges for taking steps towards self-financing are a high score of 89% and a low one of 35%, for self-governing a narrower range with a high of 89% and a low of 62%, but wide again for self-reproducing, with a high of 73% and low score of 18%. These are greater than the differences seen by area. Section 7.1 showed distribution of the types across the areas.

However, whatever the reasons for the variations it can be seen that three-self progress tends to occur more at the urban end of the spectrum and relatively less the more rural the context is. In similar fashion, the proportion of those fxC 'not at this stage' rises with this shift. At the two ends, this is from 5% to 31%.

7.12   fxC venue chosen and type of social area

We examined the possible link between social context and venue chosen. It contains what may be a surprise to any holding a stereotype that rural contexts would favour ecclesial venues and inner urban ones less so. That is not what we found.

Chart 23:   Social areas served by fxC, by meeting venue
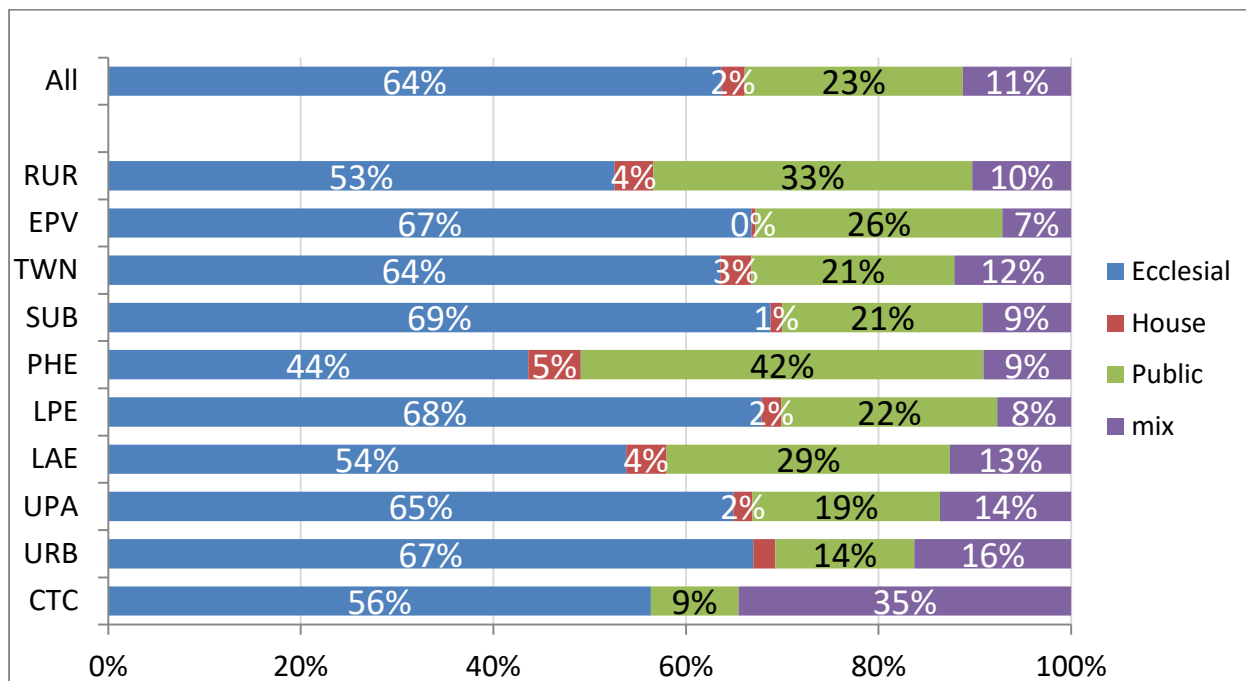
Abbreviations of social areas
RUR - rural   EPV – expanded village   TWN- town   SUB - suburb   PE – private housing estate
ME – mixed council and private estate   CE – council estate   UPA - urban priority area
URB – urban   CTC – city centre

In interpretation a balance is required. Some things are clear but not always why. Using **houses** is a rare choice, but it may mean something that they are a bit used in private estates where there may be no public buildings constructed, or on council estates where a fresh beginning away from a church building can be needed. The rural examples we think are related to cell church practice. As to using a **mixture**, we do not know why this has turned out to be so well represented in the city centre locations. Perhaps the **ecclesial** venues (which here include church and church hall in proportions ranging from 2:1 to 3:1) are more to be expected in the expanded villages, towns and suburbs, but they have as strong a showing in the two more inner city areas, on the mixed estates.
The **public** building shows up very strongly on the private estate, which may indicate the lack of a church building in the development. More surprising is the 33% in the rural context. This may be a straw in the wind that even for some rural people a church building is not the way forward.

Different choices of venue are also affected by the fxC type. See Appendix Five for details.

It remains the case that nearly all venue options, in all contexts, are worth considering and by discernment to choose what works, if necessary by trial and error, in context. Sometimes there will only be one venue available. Anecdotally, we recall conversations with fxC leaders that a change of venue made a difference; sometimes that change was positive, at others times it was the reverse.

7.13   The spread of traditions in fxC by social area

Note

Chapter 3 explained that the liberal tradition was only added in the second round of our research. Thus the liberal figures collected are only for the 10 dioceses of that round. In that these 10 contain 2 dioceses within the capital, this affects the extent to which they are representative, by raising the proportions of fxC linked to the evangelical and charismatic traditions. However, as table 20 in section 5.3 shows, the variance between dioceses 1-11 and 12-21 is at most of 7 percentage points. It is also the case that many fxC own more than one tradition and so to show a bar chart rather than a tale with percentage figures is more appropriate.

Chart 24:   Traditions owned by the fxC team – by social area
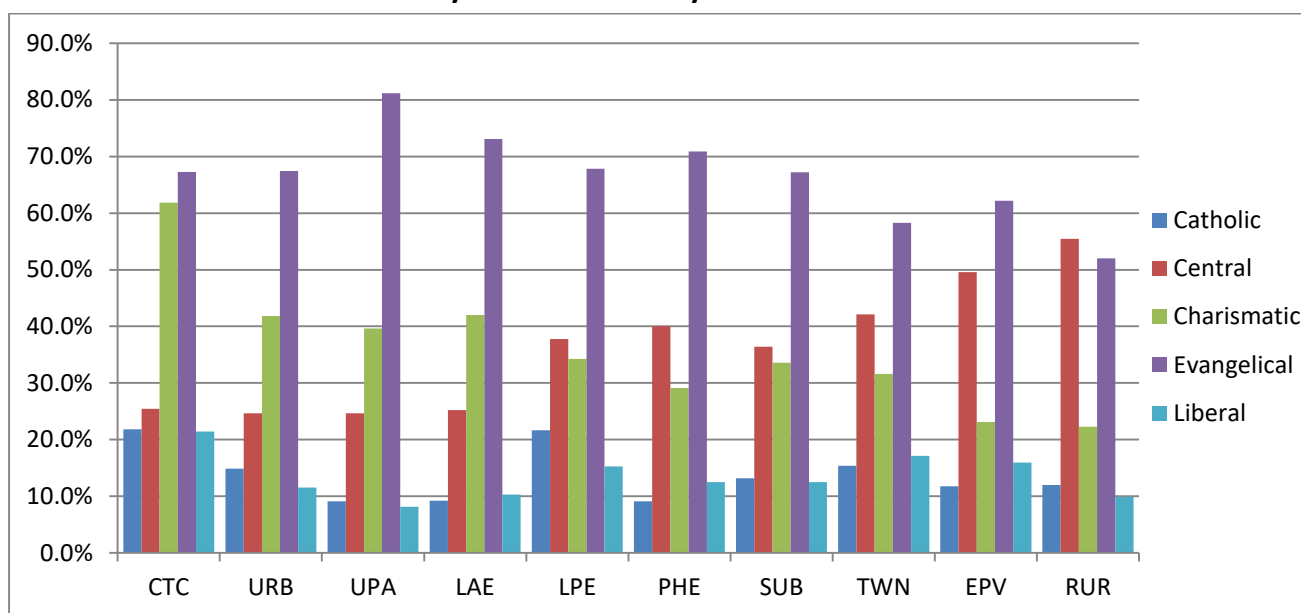
Abbreviations of social areas
CTC – city centre   URB – urban   UPA   - Urban priority area
CE – council estate   ME – mixed council and private estate   PE – Private housing estate
SUB - suburb   TWN- town   EPV – expanded village   RUR – rural

What is apparent is that most of the traditions have a distinct and different spread.

The **evangelical** fxC are the most common, except in the rural areas, and are especially represented in the UPA areas. The **charismatic** fxC are strongest in the city centres and less and less present as the X axis moves towards the rural end of the spectrum. The converse to this is the rise of the **central** tradition along that same axis. Section 5.3 and tables 20 and 21 showed that the central tradition is more often acknowledged by fxC leaders than the charismatic, but chart 24 shows where that strength is to be found. All three traditions conform to the view suggesting that all kinds of the more distinct traditions fare less well in rural locations that have to serve all comers, being the only (Anglican) church in the village.

The **catholic** tradition is stronger in the city centre and on mixed estates, then in the towns and suburbs. But overall it is only the 4th most commonly acknowledged tradition. The **liberal** tradition is owned most in city centre fxC, but otherwise there are not further variations by area to comment upon.

7.14   Mortality of fxC in the differing social areas

Note
The fxC leaders are free to choose more than one area and combinations are common. Overall nearly 1.5 areas are selected. Similarly, a local parish may be made up of several different social areas. Therefore all the chart below can show is the result that occurs whenever an fxC comes to an end, by which a number is added to each of its acknowledged traditions and areas served. In that sense the data is too complicated to weight easily.

Chart 25: Social areas in which fxC were begun, by mortality rate
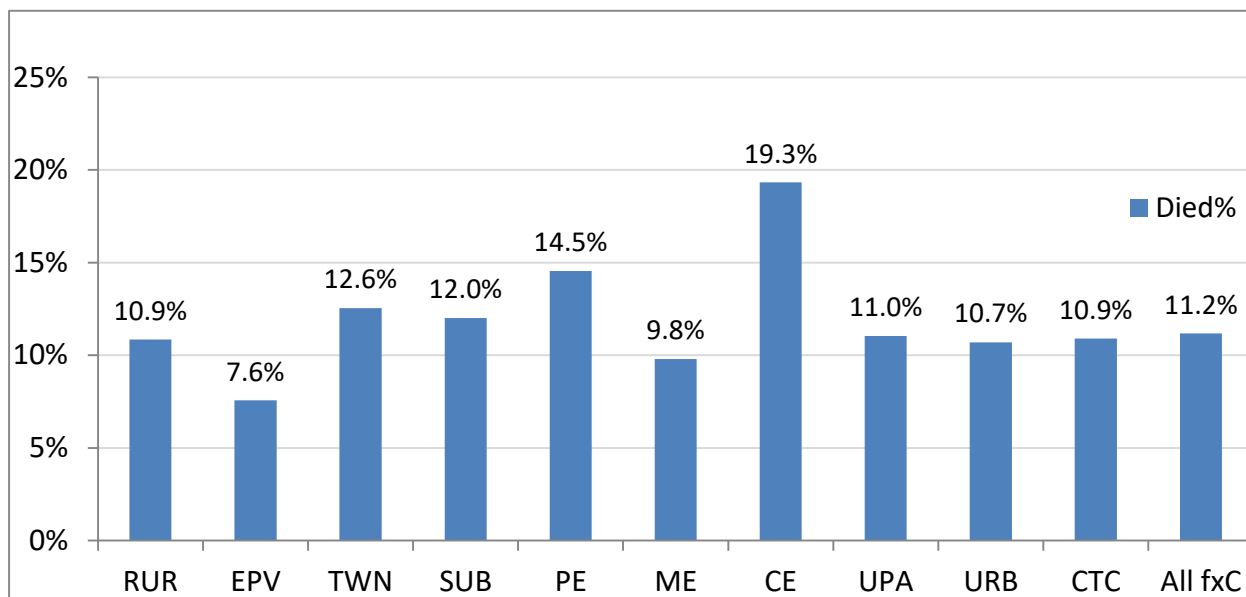
Abbreviations of social areas

CTC – city centre	URB – urban	UPA - Urban priority area
CE – council estate	ME – mixed council and private estate	PE – Private housing estate
SUB - suburb	TWN- town	EPV – expanded village RUR – rural

A few inferences

It looks as though those fxC which serve council estates are the most vulnerable and even private estates are above the average. We can understand there may be sustainability issues for fxC on council estates, but they are not unique in this. We are not sure why this feature has been disclosed, especially as the mixed estate figure is low.

Those located in expanded villages have the lowest mortality rate, but again we are unsure why this should be, for instance as compared with the rural examples.

Otherwise the areas do not show a marked difference from the average, which itself has remained fairly constant across the averages in the two sets of dioceses.

It is not shown that 6 examples, in 5 dioceses, served new towns and that, of these, 2 have ceased. That 33% mortality is concerning but without any confidence that it is typical.

Summary from Chapter 7

This chapter examined how the fxC are distributed across 10 kinds of social/geographic area, excluding analysis of the tiny sample in new towns.

- The fxC, as a whole, occur in all social or geographical areas, from city centre, through various urban designations, beyond the suburbs and towns out to two rural contexts.
- Compared with one source about a similar distribution of parishes, the fxC are proportionally more engaged with needy estates, but less prevalent in social areas of traditional Anglican strength such as rural parishes.
- One calculation gives 47% of the fxC serving more demanding social contexts, or those sometimes assumed to be resistant to change.
- A few types of fxC are not found in city centres, or on private estates, but otherwise all types can exist in all the 10 social areas, with some discernible preferences.
- The fxC vary by size according to area, the largest being city centre, urban and suburban, and the smallest being rural.
- Adults are predominant in the city centre examples. Children as a percentage become more represented the further out of town and into rurality the fxC exist.
- The fxC work with both neighbourhood and network in all social contexts, including the rural. Reliance on neighbourhood alone is a mistake. But the proportions of both kinds of association vary widely by area.
- The width of ethnicities served varies with area, increasing with urban contexts. The fxC reflect this.
- The proportions of Christians, de-churched and non-churched attending does not differ widely by area, except for the city centre examples having more Christians attending.
- Net growth figures vary as much by team size sent as by area, making comparisons difficult to establish.
- There is a slight tendency for male ordained leaders to be found in urban contexts and female lay and ordained leaders in rural contexts. This connects to the distribution of fxC types and may not be a general rule. We do not know if this is typical in the wider church and its parishes and so be a background factor.
- Similarly, and for the same sorts of reasons, the lay-lay leaders are most strongly found in the rural and town contexts.
- We think the distribution of leadership and type of fxC by social context affects the tendency for three-self maturity to be more strongly found in urban contexts.
- The five traditions are not evenly spread. Though all appear everywhere, the evangelical fxC are the most common everywhere except the rural. The charismatic ones diminish as the spectrum moves from urban to rural, while the reverse is true of the central tradition.
- fxC mortality occurs in all contexts, but is highest (19.3%) on the council estates, then private estates.

Chapter 8   Variations influenced by frequency

As noted at the end of Chapter 6, the 14 more common types of fxC can be ranked by their tendency to meet weekly, fortnightly or monthly. At each end of the spectrum these differences are very marked and less so towards the averages.

Behind this is a debate, sometimes focused narrowly on Messy Churches, whether meeting monthly is a legitimate way to practice being church. But the questions around meeting monthly affect at least 6 other types of fxC among the 14, of whom at least 30% meet only monthly.

This range has an effect on the overall figures, that appear to suggest that as many fxC meet monthly as weekly, and confirm as everywhere else that fortnightly is the least common choice.

All types across all 21 dioceses: weekly 45.5%, fortnightly 8.5%, monthly 45.8%.

However, table 68 on the next page will show it is more meaningful to look at the distribution of meeting frequency by fxC type and the chapter then explores whether this variable of frequency of meeting makes a difference or not. Where the data shows that frequency does create variable results, the chapter unpacks which areas of the life of a young church seem to be most affected by that choice of frequency.

In this chapter we draw on data from a wider set of the types of fxC than the 14 of Chapter 6. However, we have not included three types: base ecclesial community and intentional community as we had only two cases each where this was but part of the overall identity of an fxC. Nor have we included new traditional service as there were only 17 examples.

We have this time included seeker, not because we think it a type on its own for the data shows that is not so, but because there are over 50 examples where it is part of the identity of an fxC.

The list of variables affected by the choice of frequency across these 19 types

Overall
8.1   Connection of frequency and the fxC type

Missional
8.2   Proportions of Christians, de-churched and non-churched
8.3   Growth patterns and frequency of meeting

Ecclesial
8.4   Progress in 'three-self' responsibility
8.5   Engagement with Scripture
8.6   Holding Communions
8.7   Holding Baptisms
8.8   Distribution of leaders
8.9   Ways to pursue discipleship
8.10   Mortality of fxC

8.1 19 types of fxC and frequency of meeting

The table below adds only a little to what was explored in Chapter 6, section 12; it acts more as a reference point for this chapter, to stop people having to flick back to Chapter 5 to remind themselves of which types tend to prefer which frequency of gathering.

Table 68:   Frequency of meeting in 19 types of fxC

19 types of fxC	Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly
Messy Church	7.2%	5.6%	87.2%
Cafe Church	42.7%	10.7%	46.7%
Child Focused Church	43.9%	8.8%	47.3%
Traditional Church Plant	96.2%	2.3%	1.5%
Special Interest Group	68.0%	14.0%	18.0%
All Age Worship	46.7%	7.8%	45.6%
Multiple Sunday Congregation	61.8%	4.5%	33.7%
Community Development Plant	74.2%	10.1%	15.7%
Network Church	75.0%	17.5%	7.5%
Alternative Worship	52.6%	12.8%	34.6%
Church Based on <5s	65.8%	6.6%	27.6%
Youth Church	67.7%	21.5%	10.8%
Cluster Based Church	70.3%	20.3%	9.4%
Older people's Church	38.1%	7.9%	54.0%
Mid week church	81.5%	3.7%	14.8%
Seeker Church	51.9%	7.7%	40.4%
School based Church	50.0%	13.0%	37.0%
Cell Church	75.0%	22.5%	2.5%
New Monastic Community	65.5%	13.8%	20.7%

We have deliberately offset the last five types, highlighting them as the new categories that were not considered in Chapter 6. All the types are listed in diminishing order of sample size, and the last five range from 54 to 30. Having made comment on the distribution across the 14 more common types in section 6.12, it only remains to note that the five added display a variety of frequency preferences, most markedly between cell church and older people's church, but all these five further types fall within the wide range already demonstrated by the prior 14 types.

The table also shows how Messy Churches normally choose a monthly frequency, as do a narrow majority of older people's church. At 360 examples, the Messy Churches are the most numerous type of fxC and this does have a significant, but not sole, part to play in shaping the results for monthly frequency types. Congruent with this, it is also the case that monthly fxCs started exceed weekly ones for every year after 2008, but never beforehand. See Appendix Five for this chart.

Shaping this chapter
Our next question was to wonder whether frequency has a greater effect upon the missional effectiveness, or on the pace of the path to ecclesial maturity, in this range of young churches.

One obvious measure to determine whether the missional aspect was directly affected was to examine the correlation between the three frequencies of meeting and the three groups with different backgrounds who might come: the Christians, the de-churched and the non-churched. The chart appears on the next page.

8.2 Proportions of Christians, de-churched and non-churched

Chart 26: fxC leaders' estimates of the church background of fxC attendance, weighted by average attendance, and by frequency of fxC meeting (dioceses 12-21 only)
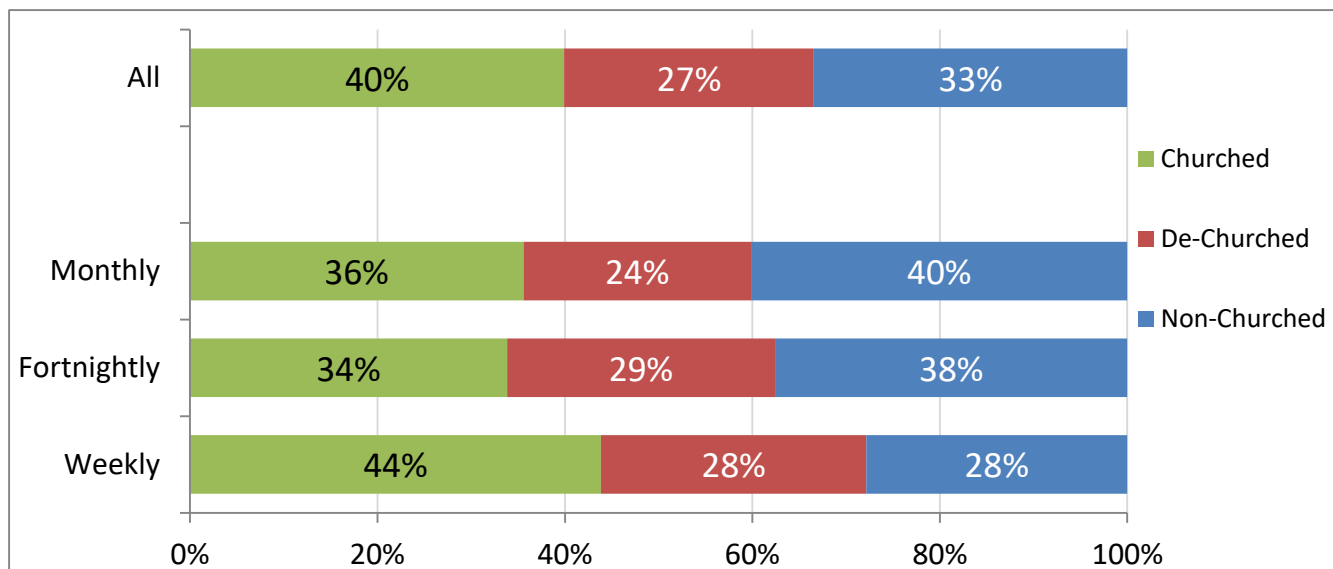
At first sight it could seem that while the differences between fortnightly and monthly gathering are minimal, with greater variation over the de-churched, the big difference is over the proportions of non-churched, as between monthly and weekly. The question is why this is so.

To investigate this we made our own table with the following features:

- the 14 most common types because their overall behaviour would affect the weighted responses.
- the sample size of each type which would also affect the weighted response.
- we noted their leaders' scores for the three groups present.
- we noted what proportions of each type met weekly, fortnightly and monthly.

It was then possible to see if and when there were influential links between markedly different missional effects and similar disparity of choice of frequency. We found in 8 types of fxC there were strong links. One example was church plants having the highest score for weekly meeting and the lowest score for non-churched attenders. Another was Messy Church which has a very high propensity for monthly gatherings and the 2nd highest score for attracting the non-churched. Moreover, both have large sample sizes. These were the most extreme cases, but other fxC types had similar but less marked tendencies.

We are confident that what the chart shows is explained by the prior choice of fxC type and its subsequent tendency to choose a frequency, rather than the other way around. Nor is it plausible that an fxC deliberately chose a meeting frequency knowing this sort of data in advance.

We also considered the relationship between frequency and attendance size and found a similar effect, in which the prior choice of fxC type is more telling. This chapter might now have moved away from examination of mission and frequency of meeting, thinking that they are not meaningfully linked, to looking at how a chosen frequency over time may be connected to the pace of a path to ecclesial maturity.

8.3 Growth patterns and frequency of meeting

However, another broadly missional feature made us reconsider.

Chart 27:   Growth patterns of 19 types of fxC by frequency of meeting
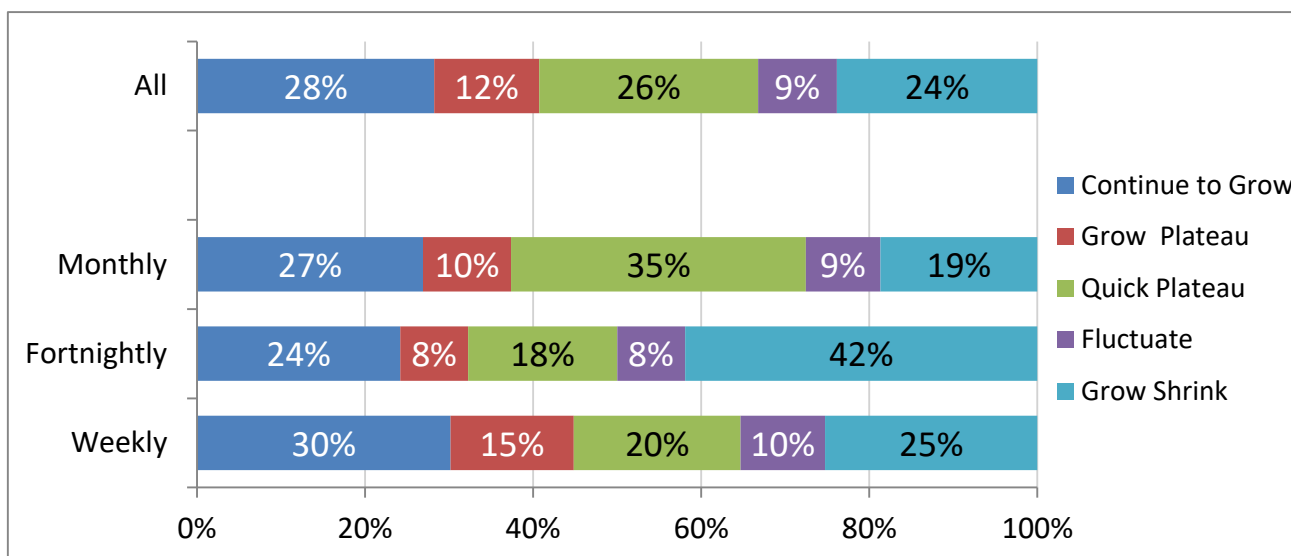
Three features here merit some immediate comment. Firstly, the proportions of fxC across the three frequencies which continue to grow in size are not far apart, but fortnightly is the lowest.

However, secondly, the proportions that either plateau quickly, and those which grow then plateau (terms defined on page 82), are much wider apart. This could suggest that meeting monthly is itself a limiting strategy. We need to consider this phenomenon in relation to table 40 in section 6.3, which shows that the figures above for the three kinds of plateau are closely mirrored in the experience of the Messy Church fxCs and that they are the largest single background influence to the chart above. Alongside this, both child-focused church and all age worship have slightly more monthly than weekly fxCs and they, with Messy Church, are among the 5 highest types to plateau. The counter evidence is that church based on >5s and the special interest groups are also among that 5 and they have a predominantly weekly pattern. It is plausible in those latter two cases that the clientele and ambience particularly favours a certain natural unit size or range and remaining at that level. It then remains an open question whether the model of being church or having a monthly frequency is the operating factor in creating a plateau. It is also an ongoing question whether the concept of a natural unit range or size is to be honoured or resisted.

Thirdly, the later shrinkage among the fortnightly frequency types is the starkest single feature of the chart. Among the 14 types of fxC that score high for fortnightly frequency, only the youth churches conform to this linkage of frequency and size and they have some effect here. But, by contrast, the other three fxC types in which those that shrink exceed those that grow have average or low scores for fortnightly meeting. It is likely that the fortnightly meeting interval itself raises a problem of sustaining attendance, and of seeing it continue to grow.

It looks as though meeting frequency does not so much affect what church backgrounds, or lack of them, are drawn to fxC, as what happens in the developing life of the fxC over time. That is the context in which ecclesial maturity is established and to that the report now turns.

8.4 'Three-self' responsibility and meeting frequency

Chart 28:   Progress towards three-self aims by frequency of fxC meeting
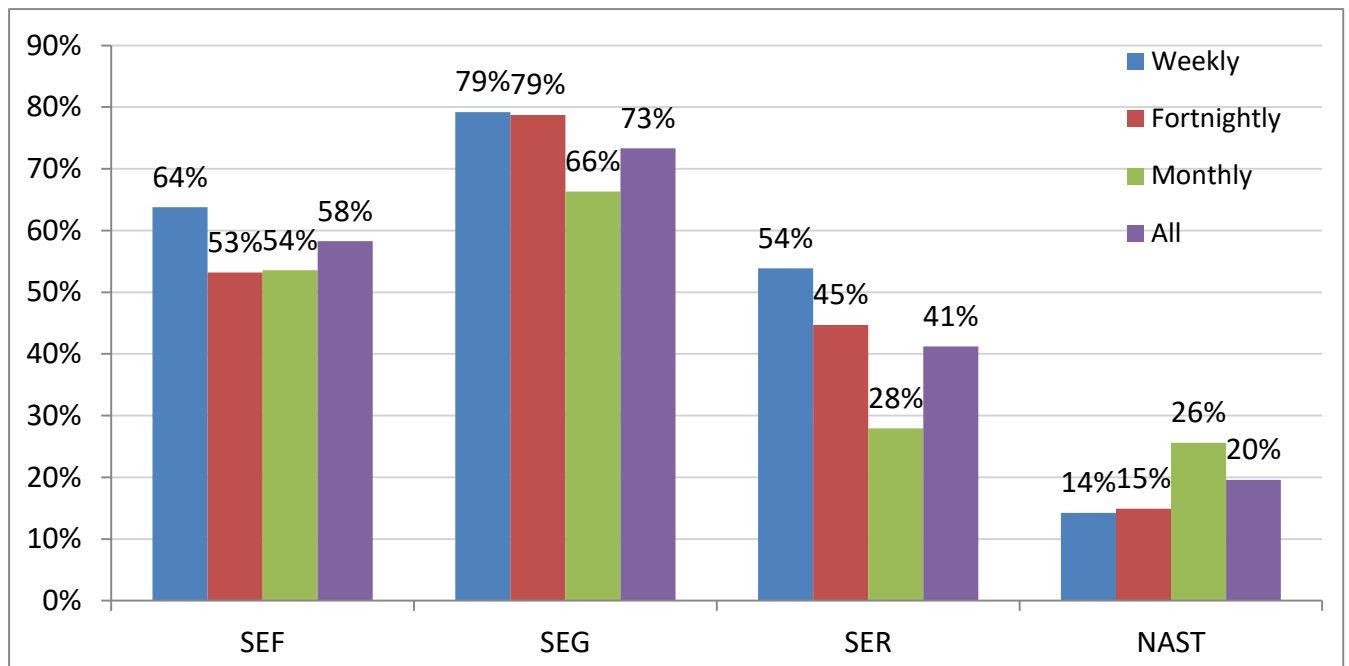
A note

We re-emphasise that these 'three-self' measures of taking responsibility each contain a wider range of steps to take. For example, under financing there is a wide difference between taking a collection and covering the full on-costs of a stipendiary worker. It was doing the research that showed us the gradations of that width which applies to all three areas. We have addressed this, and in future surveys on individual dioceses we will be able to tease those out levels. Some modesty about these results is in order. All we could measure this time is how many fxC are at least taking some steps down these paths to an interdependent maturity.

That said, the bar chart reveals a few headlines. The self-governing aspect is always the most developed. The self-reproducing is the least developed. What we did not know before was that in regard to finance, being fortnightly or monthly seems to make no difference, and that in taking some steps towards government, being weekly of fortnightly makes no difference. We did know that being monthly is the lowest score on most counts.

There is also some linkage to types of fxC operating here, as section 6.14 laid out, but also some linkage to the age group served, with lower scores for the fxC with higher proportions of children.

The self-reproducing aspect is shown to be most reduced by infrequency, as is what we would regard as the unhappy situation of no progress being made on any of the three aspects of taking responsibility. In that such decisions lie with the existing leaders, we are less persuaded that a lesser frequency of meeting is a fully adequate reason for not making some progress.

8.5 Engagement with Scripture and meeting frequency

Chart 29:   Engagement with Scripture by frequency of meeting in 19 types of fxC
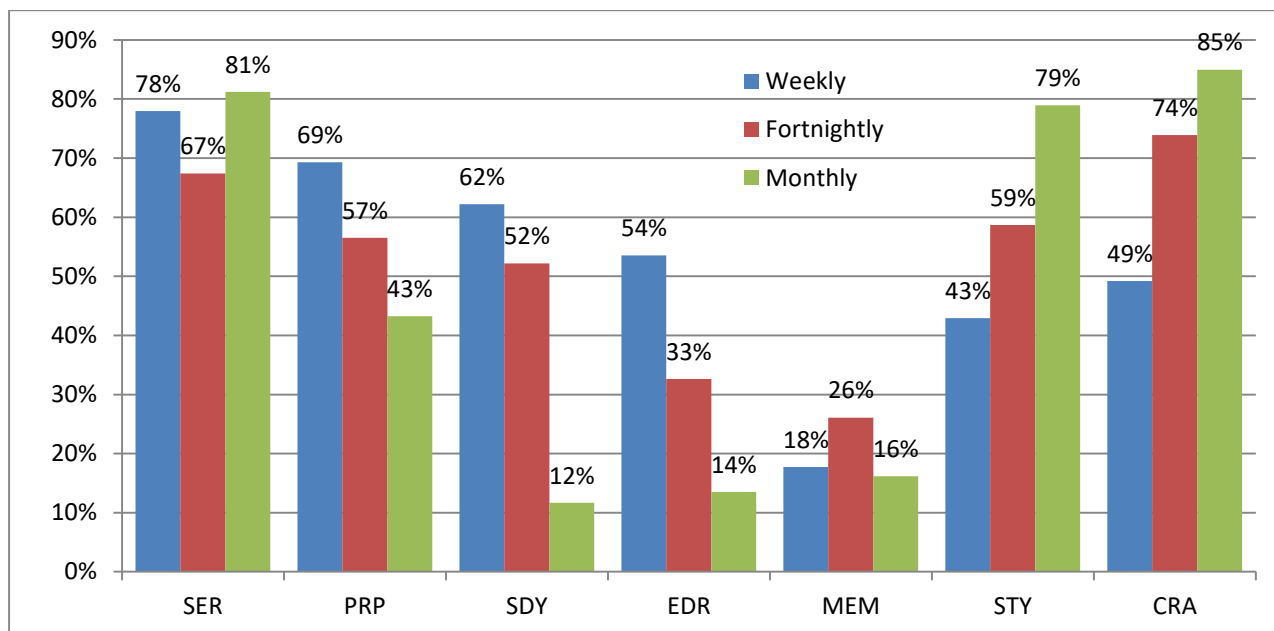
Abbreviations:
SER Sermon or talk   RP Passages read in public   SDY – Study in groups
EDR Encourage devotional reading MEM – Memory verses   STY Storytelling   CRA – creative activities

Immediately, three things are apparent. Firstly, memory verses are least used and not much affected by frequency. Secondly, apart from giving some sort of talk, use of the first 4 categories falls with each lessening of frequency and study in groups and encouraging devotional reading plummet with the monthly frequency. Thirdly, however, the last two approaches markedly rise with decrease of frequency. But is frequency the cause of the choices?

Once more the fxC type plays its part, illustrated by the large number of weekly church plants and multiple congregations having very high scores for a sermon and Bible readings. Conversely, the very large number of Messy Churches and 4th most common child-focused churches meeting more often monthly score very highly on storytelling and creative activities.

The age group served also is suggestive. 4 types of fxC have over 50% of their attenders as under 16s and the two most common ones meet monthly. That will affect what approaches may suit children. Conversely it is also the case that in 7 other types of fxC, they have between 14% and 27% of their attenders who are under 16: in other words, they are more dominated by adults and their needs. All but one of these types far more often meet weekly. This suggests that frequency alone does not account for the differences the chart might suggest.

A counter argument could be put that just as all frequencies find it equally possible to have some sort of talk, none of the other three more formal routes need be excluded and the small existing proportions show it is possible.

It would be instructive to know, say in five years' time, whether the results for the monthly groups have changed and if so in what way. Only then would we be more certain whether deeper engagement with Scripture increases over time among those types of fxC who may only see their people 12 times a year. Is this just a slower pace, or it is a permanent constraint?

8.6 Holding Communions and fxC meeting frequency

Chart 30:   Holding Communions, by frequency of meeting, in 19 types of fxC
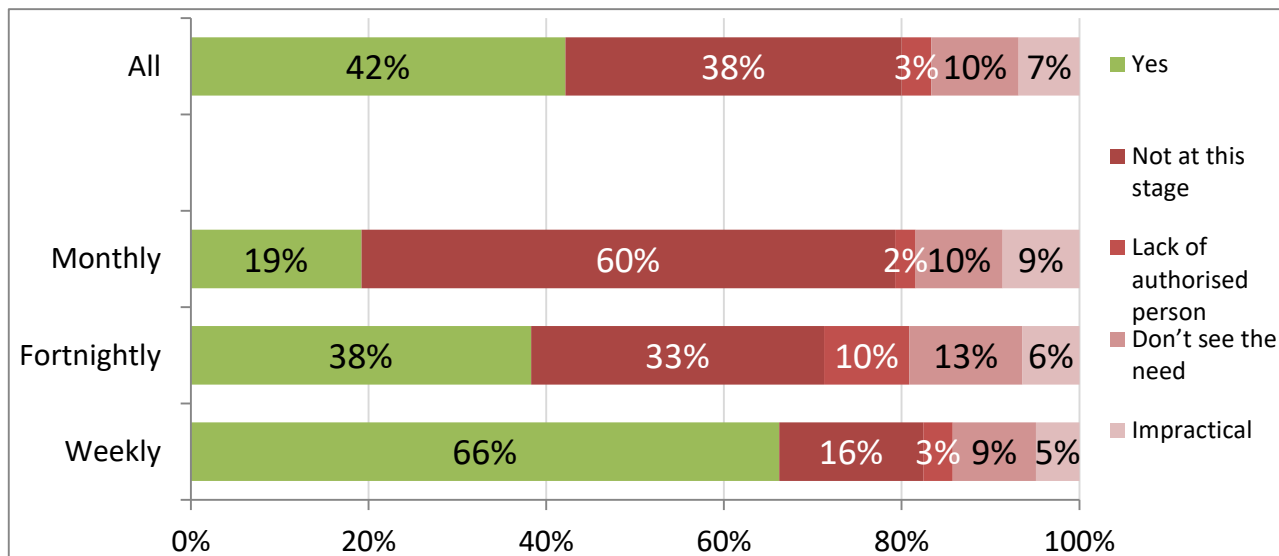
Inferences from the data

Two initial comments can be made. The propensity to hold communions is shown to drop directly with decreased frequency of meeting. This is nearly balanced by the proportion of leaders saying that the lack of holding Communions is because the fxC is not at this stage. These two responses, when added together, come out at 82% for weekly, 79% for monthly and 71% for fortnightly. This balancing factor is worth stressing in that some critics have wondered whether certain types of fxC, that meet less often, may not even wish to include communion at a future stage. This evidence shows that not to be the case.

For reasons we cannot fathom, the fortnightly frequency examples are less inclined to address their present gap in Eucharistic practice and they find it three to five times hardest to find an authorised person. We surmise that fortnightly is an untidy rhythm in church life and it may be more difficult for an ordained person to diarise.

This chapter so far has shown that choice of fxC type is a factor. Once more we found 7 types of fxC in which either monthly meeting and low communion rates, or weekly meeting and high communion rates were linked. They included most of the larger sample size fxCs.

Examining this area too, in five years time, for whether the results for the monthly groups have changed, would be complementary to the comment about Scripture. Only then would we be more sure whether increased Eucharistic practice occurs over time, among those types of fxC who may only see their people 12 times a year. Is this about pace, or a limitation?

In the 2nd round of research we dug a little deeper and asked about the frequency by which Communion was held. We offered various frequency intervals and have divided the results into two

groups of fxC: those meeting monthly and those meeting more frequently than that, combining the 205 fortnightly and weekly ones, partly because there were only 19 fortnightly examples, yet 60 monthly examples.

Table 69:   Varieties of Communion frequency, in all types of fxC by meeting frequency

Communion frequency	Weekly	Fort- nightly	Monthly	Bi- monthly	¾ times a year	Annually	Less Often
Monthly fxC			20%	2%	23%	22%	33%
Weekly or fortnightly fxC	16%	12%	43%	4%	14%	7%	4%

Inferences from this further data

This data considerably modifies the overall picture shown by chart 30. There are comments, some of which may be obvious but should be stated.

Firstly, by definition those fxC meeting monthly could not have communions more often than that, so no figure is shown rather than a potentially accusatory 0%. Similarly, the fortnightly ones could not have weekly communion, so the weekly figure can only apply to the weekly fxC.

Secondly, among the monthly examples over half of them have communion annually, or less often; anecdotal examples of this would include Messy Churches that have a messy Maundy Thursday communion. To have over half at such a long interval rather weakens the impression that 19% of the monthly fxC do hold a communion. The clear inference is that there is further to go on this journey than was first apparent.

Thirdly, among the weekly and fortnightly fxC there is a preference for monthly communions. We suggest this reflects the preponderance of fxC out of the evangelical tradition and the debated issue of whether too frequent Eucharistic worship is asking too much of non-churched attenders.

A wider comment
It is beyond the remit and authority of this research to adjudicate across a divergence in the wider Church between those who argue that without sacramental practice something cannot be a church in the first place, and others who think certain communities can be regarded as churches which will therefore, over time, move towards sacramental life. Church Army's Research Unit happens to hold the latter view, which is reflected in the 10 indicators. What this overall data establishes is that the process towards sacramental practice has begun. FxC are not devoid of this feature, though a researched view over a longer period will be needed to assess further progress.

Confirmations
We have not shown a further separate chart for this. The patterns across the frequencies is very similar, with the variance that the 'not at this stage' figures for the monthly frequency are even higher.

8.7 Holding Baptisms and fxC meeting frequency

Chart 31:   **Holding Baptisms, by frequency of meeting, in 19 types of fxC**
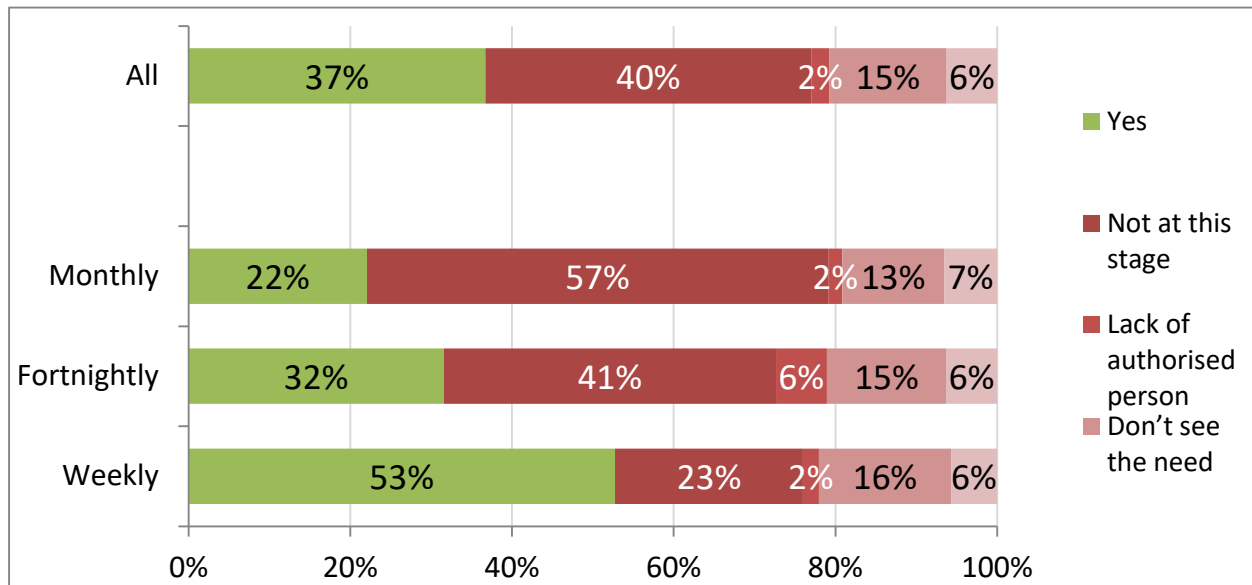
Inferences from the data

Readers may well notice how similar the broad patterns of this chart are to the prior one about Communion. Again there is a correlation between falling frequency of meeting and diminished propensity for holding baptisms, though the range of difference across the three frequencies is narrower. Similarly, in fxC where baptisms are not presently held, there is recognition that this is a matter of work in progress, not a question of a widespread sense of there being no need. The fortnightly examples once again find it harder to find an authorised person.

Then there are variations from the communions. In regard to seeing no need, the baptism figures are higher for each group than for communion, but we should note that the two sacraments operate quite differently. Baptism by its theological nature is a once for all act and resists repetition. Among certain age groups the lack of need is because it has already occurred. Communion by contrast is to be regularly repeated, though with wide interpretation of what frequency is best.

Another variation is the curious fact that with the cumulative scores for holding baptisms, combined with leaders saying it was a matter of not yet being at that stage, the monthly total is slightly higher than for the weekly examples.

A third variant is that the present practice of baptisms is lower than the rate for communions for the weekly and fortnightly based fxCs, but not for the monthly ones. We explain this in that the scores for the 2 largest types of fxC which have at least 50% attenders aged under 16, have a propensity for monthly gathering and have high non-churched attender scores, show an understandable tendency to score higher for holding baptisms.

It is another example that looking at merely two variables about practice raises questions, and to find answers they need relating to wider additional features such as context, overall type of fxC and who is coming to the fxC, examined at the least by spiritual background and by age. Another factor to consider is what leadership resources are available and how that connects to frequency.

8.8 The distribution of leaders and frequency of meeting

Chart 32:   Frequency of fxC, by gender and ordained/lay status
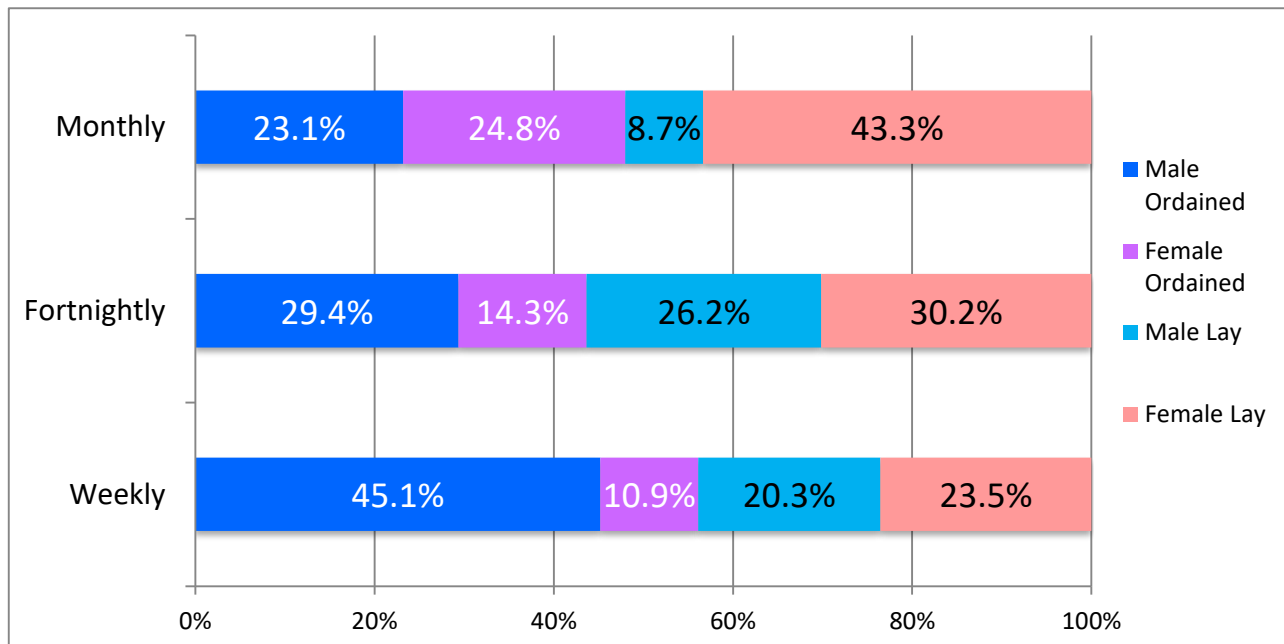
The interpretation of chart 32 in this chapter is not concerned to reiterate the uneven distribution of leaders by gender which had been noted in sections 6.13 and 7.10.

Rather readers should note that summing the ordained from both genders, 56.0% of the weekly fxC have ordained leaders, 47.9% of the monthly ones and 43.7% of the fortnightly ones. This will have some effect on the ecclesial measures examined, particularly upon the variations in sacramental practice. There is less reason to think this factor should affect three-self thinking or the need for discipleship.

Having said that, this variance, in which frequency has the more ordained leaders, is much less than the variations in practice for Communion and Baptism, underlining that both the style of, and clientele at, the different types of fxC and their chosen frequency of meeting have a greater effect.

Chart 32 also bears witness to what was uncovered in sections 6.12 and 6.13, that the church plants are dominantly weekly; with male ordained leaders, and the Messy Churches might be deemed the opposite, meeting monthly with lay female leaders.

8.9 Ways to pursue discipleship and frequency of meeting

Chart 33:   Paths in discipleship, by frequency of meeting, in 19 types of fxC
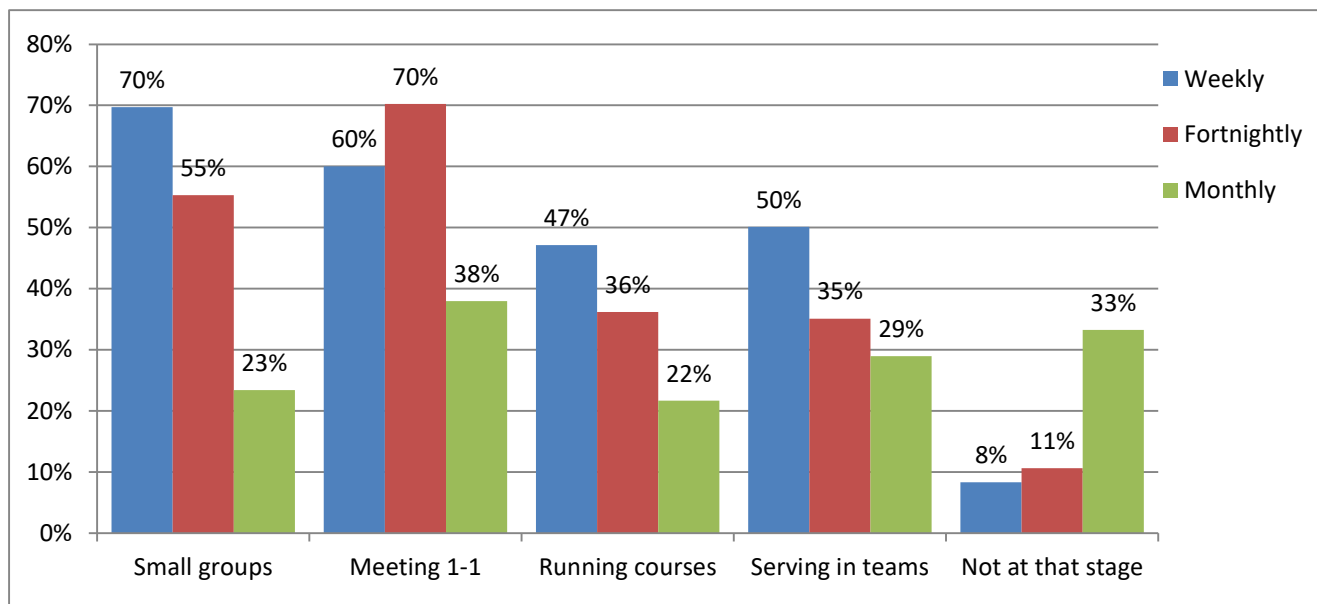
Inferences from the data

Generally speaking, as the frequency of meeting falls so the frequency of discipleship paths taken diminishes. The question rightly asked by the wider Church is whether this represents a worrying weakness or is better understood as a process which takes longer, if the frequency of meeting is less often. The report can now make a comment, but needs to register limitations to the interpretation.

Firstly, over both Communion and Baptism, we always asked for the reason in all cases where each sacrament was not present. With the routes towards discipleship, the 'not at that stage' option was global, rather than in relation to each of the four possible routes. That makes interpreting the 'not at this stage' figure more crude. We can only apply it across the four paths, which in reality may not apply equally. Secondly, we do not know whether 'not at that stage' should be interpreted as 'not yet' rather than 'don't see the need'.

That said, if the range of 'not at this stage' figures are added to present practice it then turns out that the weekly frequency has the highest score for groups and courses, the fortnightly frequency for meeting 1-1 and the monthly frequency for serving in teams, although equal with the weekly ones for meeting 1-1. That way of looking at the data suggests that progress over discipleship is a developmental issue for fxC that meet monthly, more than an inherent weakness. But this is not a secure interpretation.

Examining frequency should not ignore the effects of the choices made by different fxC (see section 6.17, table 59) and the groups they serve. We know that Messy Church, child-focused church and church based on under 5s which have over 50% under 16s, are the highest for 'not at this stage' in taking any steps in discipleship and among the lowest in that table for all the four routes. It is also the case that these three have the highest proportion of non-churched attenders. The remaining example with over 50% under 16 is youth church and they have a relatively high proportion of existing Christians. All these fxC are taking at least one step. The age group and spiritual background served clearly have a part to play.

Behind this comparison can be the assumption that all types of fxC should be equally good at all four routes in discipleship. The data from section 6.17, table 59, reveals that in practice this is not so, although it also shows that all the fxC types have some engagement with each of these four routes. Chart 33 shows the disparity of practice over small groups varies most with frequency, and table 59 about fxC types and having small groups echoes this with a range from 91% to 21%.

The disparities over meeting 1-1 are somewhat less and the range across types is narrower from 89% to 37%. There is a spike for fortnightly and 1-1. It seems this connects to the relatively high fortnightly preference among cells, clusters, youth church and network church, all of whom score highly for using 1-1 meeting.

Differences by frequency of meeting, for running courses and serving in teams are still less marked, but the range across fxC for the former is 75% to 18% and the latter 68% to 18%.

A topic to be continued
The debate over what is an adequate and sustainable frequency of meeting will continue. We urge it be linked to the age group and spiritual background served. It is bound to focus on Messy Churches for two reasons. Firstly, at 32.5% of the total of fxC they are the single largest component of the overall fxC phenomenon, and secondly, 87% of them meet monthly. This is understandable, but some consideration should be given to café church, child-focused church and all age worship, where slightly more meet monthly than weekly. These would, for that reason, make a useful further study in themselves because of those nearly equal proportions of meeting. All the other types dominantly meet weekly, and church plants do so almost exclusively.

8.10 Mortality rates and frequency of meeting

Chart 34:   Mortality rates in 19 types of fxC and frequency of meeting
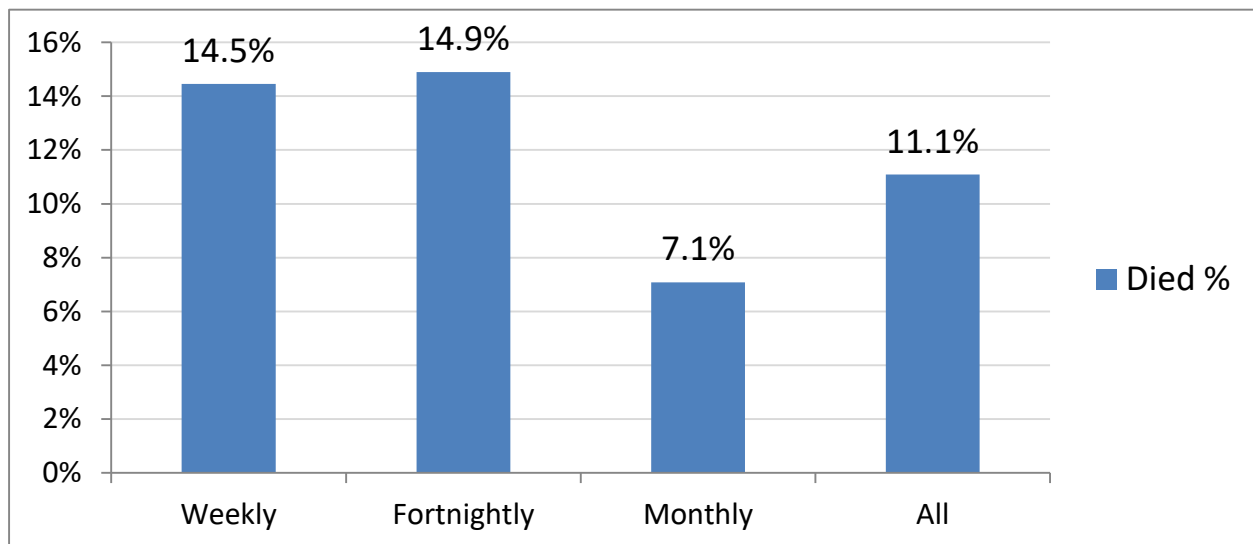
Firstly, it is clear that monthly meeting does not lead to increased mortality. Secondly, compared with the 2013 report, the weekly figure has nearly caught up with the fortnightly one.

Thirdly, using other data the low monthly rate is linked to the 4.4% rate among Messy Churches which in turn suggests that mortality is higher among other monthly types. All of this suggests that frequency is less likely to be the determinative factor in affecting mortality rates among fxC.

Summary from Chapter 8

The chapter began with two questions:

1. Is monthly or fortnightly meeting, rather than weekly, necessarily a constraint?

2. Does the frequency have more effect on the missional or ecclesial aspects of the fxC?

- This chapter set down a table showing the frequencies chosen by the 19 types of fxC for which we have reasonable sample sizes.

- Section 8.2 showed that frequency of meeting does not much affect whether Christians, de-churched or non-churched will come, once the interpretation of the chart is read against the characteristics of the types of fxC and their sample sizes.

- Section 8.3 showed that there is some genuine vulnerability in maintaining an fxC size among the fortnightly examples. But it is a more open question whether fxC type (and any natural unit size) or monthly frequency is the more influential factor.

- The next five sections tackled the effect of different frequencies on five different measures of assessing steps towards ecclesial maturity. At first sight, in nearly all five measures, a less frequent pattern of meeting reduced the scores towards such progress.

- Such variance is only to a minor degree attributable to the distribution of ordained and lay leaders.

- In none of these measures does fortnightly or monthly meeting make progress impossible, but equally in each measure, among those with a weekly frequency, only a proportion had made progress. Being weekly, itself, does not ensure a maturity is being reached.

- In some measures, like engagement with Scripture, the different routes preferred have strong links to the dominant age group within a type of fxC.

- In the three measures where respondents could comment on that absence in their case, the high 'not yet' scores among the monthly frequency fxC can be taken to suggest that this lack indicates slower progress over time, more than inherent weakness. In relation to pursuing discipleship, this may be true but the interpretation is less secure.

- Mortality and frequency have less direct linkage than was thought. The 2013 report on page 73 showed the fortnightly as being the most vulnerable. That 15% rate continues, but the weekly types are now close to it. The average low monthly rate of 7.1% is distorted downwards by the 4.4% low Messy Church death rate. Section 12.12 examines the mortality among fxC more widely.

Chapter 9   The effect of training on fxC

In order to make examination of this variable more manageable we are showing only the results of certain avenues of training that we investigated. We have excluded some for the following reasons:

- *mission-shaped intro* is a six week course devised by the Fresh Expressions team, but we found it was only used by one of the dioceses we investigated.
- In practice we found the category called 'training event' was too wide to be helpful in analysis. This is a pity for it was one of the more popular options ticked. Anecdotally, we know it often meant a leader had attended a Messy Church training day. 40% of Messy Church leaders ticked training event, but it could also be attending input for cluster leaders or a diocesan day on fxC generically. Because the focus of the first two is narrow and the third is wide it would be misleading to use it.
- Similarly, we offered 'other' and it was selected by some, but these would need painstaking sifting of the notes written across over a 100 forms to see if any patterns emerged.
- We found that with the longer lived fxC it was not always known whether a past leader had received any specific training and this accounts for about 19% of all cases.

It is also important to note two other factors:

Firstly, we only started asking the training question halfway through the first round of dioceses, beginning with Norwich; therefore, we are not minded to compare the two sets of dioceses.

Secondly, the largest group throughout the research period was of leaders of fxC who had taken no training at all for this role. We say this neither to praise nor censure them, but in retrospect we see that for our purposes they act as a sort of control group for this chapter. They make up about 34% of all fxC leaders. These, with the 'not known' group, account for half of all fxC leaders.

This leaves us evaluating four training sources, which could overlap but did not do so very often:

- The one year *mission-shaped ministry* (*msm*) course devised by Fresh Expressions.
- Those who have at some stage studied a church planting module.
- Those who had some sort of consultant or mentor to them or their fxC.
- Those with prior experience of leading any type of fxC, including church plants.
- Plus the control group without any training.

Largely without exception, all five categories above were found in the 16 dioceses since we started asking the training question.

9.1 The overall take-up for avenues of training

The figures below are for all the dioceses since Norwich, and are computed for all leaders whose information on the types of fxC training question we knew. They were not calculated to include those leaders' records where the answer to the training question was 'not known'.

The *msm* course has a national ecumenical team behind it, has been developed and promoted over the years in various UK denominations, and has been exported to Europe, America and the Antipodes, as well as translated into German and into Japanese. There are plans also to make it more available through digital outputs. The other three routes have no such wide advocacy, but church planting modules occur in some training institutions and are run by individual churches.

This prominence of *msm* may create the assumption that it is widely used among the Anglican fxC and indeed it could be expected to have had a major role in what we have seen emerge and which has now been researched over the last four years.

Those considering what may be learnt from the Church of England's history of the emergence of fresh expressions of Church since the publication of *Mission-shaped Church* in 2004 do well to note the take-up of these four sorts of training.

The surprising figure for the take-up for *msm* in the first 6 dioceses was only 9.3% of the fxC leaders , and across all 16 dioceses it has been 6.6% of all leaders.[29] 1/15th of leaders doing *msm* cannot be seen as a major source of the change that we have seen. This is not to dismiss the quality within the course, on which some of Church Army's Research Unit have taught, but simply to expose that it cannot be trumpeted as a major cause of the upsurge of fxC that has occurred.

The figure for those who have taken a **module** on fxC or church planting is similar at 5.9% for the first 6 dioceses and 7.8% overall.

There are similar figures for those who have received some form of **consultancy**, with 5.2% in the first set and 8.0% overall. Both of these two further routes may have been helpful to the participants but, like *msm*, they are minor players.

What is a larger feature is those cases with prior **experience**. The average in the first 6 dioceses is 13.7% and interestingly it is 20.4% overall, implying an increase across the 2nd set of dioceses. This increase might be a straw in the wind in that, as the years roll on, an increasing number of ordained and lay people will have had experience of leading an fxC.

Because three of these four measures have increased, the figure for no training taken has diminished from 43% in the first 6 dioceses to 41% overall.

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[29] Two dioceses have made much more use of *msm*t. In Norwich the figure was 21.4% and in Carlisle 16.1%.

9.2 Overall take-up for training by most types of fxC

It is also clear that the take-up for training as a whole, and for particular routes within it, is not evenly spread across the types of fxC. Table 70 below reveals the preferences as compared with the averages across all 19 types that we have been customarily assessing. A bar chart version of this data for the 14 most common types is in Appendix Five.

Table 70: Kinds of training accessed by the 19 types of fxC

19 types of fxC	CPM	CSP	EXP	MSM		NON
Messy Church	4%	7%	15%	7%		27%
Cafe Church	8%	6%	31%	13%		38%
Child Focused Church	9%	3%	18%	8%		53%
Traditional Church Plant	14%	18%	28%	3%		40%
Special Interest Group	12%	8%	26%	1%		43%
All Age Worship	12%	12%	24%	5%		40%
Multiple Sunday Congregation	4%	4%	20%	9%		52%
Community Development Plant	19%	19%	26%	9%		29%
Network Church	8%	9%	33%	15%		36%
Alternative Worship	19%	10%	28%	13%		36%
Church Based on <5s	12%	3%	10%	10%		56%
Youth Church	5%	5%	26%	16%		53%
Cluster Based Church	9%	14%	26%	3%		20%
Older people's Church	8%	10%	15%	4%		54%
Mid week church	10%	7%	20%	7%		49%
Seeker Church	4%	15%	37%	15%		39%
School based Church	26%	13%	29%	3%		32%
Cell Church	3%	8%	23%	23%		41%
New Monastic Community	8%	12%	48%	16%		32%
Average	7.8%	8.0%	20.5%	6.6%		40.9%

Abbreviations
CPM - Church planting module   CSP - Consultancy provided   EXP - Previous fxC experience
MSM - *Mission-shaped ministry* course   NON – None taken

Inferences from the data

Across the four training routes all the figures are of minority choices, so some modesty about interpretation is required. The column figures have been spread out to make it easier to see at a glance which types tend to favour a route, which are close to the mean, or which are disinclined to do so. Some links might have been expected; for instance the five fxC types scoring lowest for taking a church planting module are those that have their own focus and approach to ministry. Conversely, the church plants were more likely to do so. In a similar way, leaders at church plants, clusters, special interest groups and all school-based church seem disinclined to take *msm* which is generic, not fxC type specific. The counter to that is the relatively high take-up from cell church, which does have its own methodology, training and values. But all these comments are relative to the bigger picture that only a small minority of all leaders have taken *msm*. It would be of interest if the providers of *msm* were to survey their attenders to see whether the types of preferences shown in this table are confirmed.

In assessing the factor of 'previous experience', caution is advised because we do not know whether that experience was of that type of fxC or of another kind. But we note that the scores for seeker and for new monastic score are high. It is possible that the higher figures for 'consultancy provided' is linked to the existence of wider support and networks for both church plants and clusters. We do not know why it applies to community development plants but hazard the possibility that as these occur in areas of greater challenge and need, this support might be sought more often.

As explained in this chapter's introduction, we excluded the route 'training event' as containing too diverse a set of circumstances. However, we noted that 40% of Messy Church leaders had selected this and 30% of cluster leaders. This goes to explain why, in the 'none taken' column, these two types of fxC score so low for the proportion of leaders that have taken no training.

We have noted three factors:
- the modest nature of the proportion of leaders who have taken some form of training.
- that half of all leaders either have taken no training route or we have no information on them.
- which types are more and less likely to have taken any training.

Now is the time to ask what the effects of training are, as compared with the control group in which no specific fxC related training has been taken, upon the life of the fxC they lead.

We have taken just two missional and two ecclesial parameters to test this, trying to select those that might be the most diagnostic of a hoped for positive effect of training.

The two missional factors selected were: the proportions of Christians, de-churched and non-churched and the patterns of growth, plateau or decline Of course there are others factors, which earlier chapters have worked with, but these could be taken as more foundational.

9.3 Training and the three groups coming to fxC

Chart 35:   Estimated proportions of church backgrounds of fxC attenders (weighted by average size of fxC) by the training source for leaders
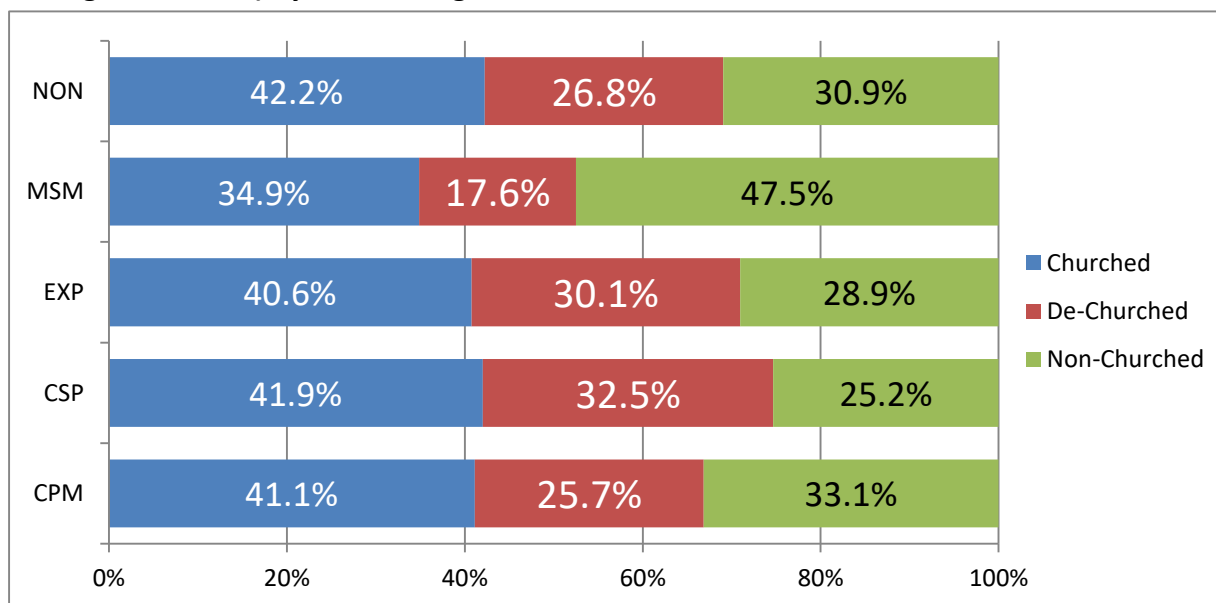
Abbreviations
CPM - Church planting module   CSP - Consultancy provided   EXP - Previous fxC experience
MSM - *Mission-shaped ministry* course   NON - none

Note
Drawing on data from all the types of training offered on the questionnaire, the **averages** are as follows: Christians 41.8%, de-churched 27.2% and non-churched 30.9%.

Inferences from the data shown

Two visual impressions arise.

Firstly, those without any training are not drawing noticeably less favourable proportions of non-churched and de-churched people or notably more Christians than the averages, although the Christians control figure is marginally higher than for all of the other four routes.

Secondly, those leaders of fxC who have been to *msm* are seeing significantly more non-churched people coming. That looks like an encouragement for the course designers, teachers and participants. Yet it must also be said that the proportion of de-churched is also markedly less, such that the overall missional impact of contacting those hitherto not in church is less dramatic.

This report is pleased to note any sign that training makes a positive difference to more missional effectiveness, but our instinct is to ask why it should be so. Is it directly attributable to that training or might the choice of fxC, and how these behave differently play a role?

We therefore ran an investigation on any possible linkage to certain types of fxC more often taking this source of training. The resultant charts and tables are complex, with potentially 19 types of fxC and 7 types of training options. To suggest a linkage to fxC type also required cross-checking with section 6.4 which assessed the 14 most common types and whom they reached. The full chart and tables are within Appendix Five. A simplified table is number 70 in section 9.2.

Whether the type of fxC affects this score

As far as we can see by looking at which types of fxC most use *msm,* and then whether those types have high scores for attracting the non-churched, there is no linkage. It then seems secure to suggest that the *msm* course does, in some way, assist those who use it in drawing additional proportions of the non-churched.

9.4 Training received and patterns of growth

Chart 36: Growth patterns of fxC by sources of training of leaders
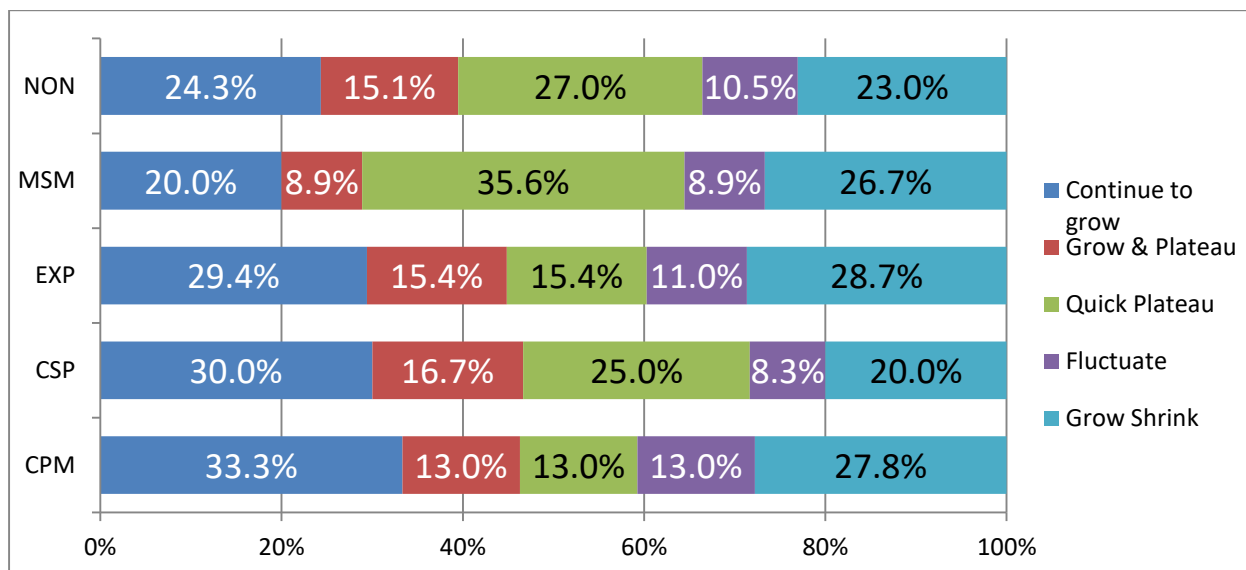
Abbreviations
CPM - Church planting module   CSP - Consultancy provided   EXP - Previous fxC experience
MSM - *mission-shaped ministry* course   NON - none

Notes

Firstly, care must be taken as to what this bar chart means. For example, the information in the bottom horizontal bar does not mean that 33.3% of all fxC continue to grow. It means that of all the examples, where we have at least three years of attendance and in which leaders studied a church planting module, 33.3% of those continued to grow.

Secondly, drawing on data from all the training options offered on the questionnaire, the averages for the 5 possible patterns of growth are as follows: continue to grow 26.7%, grow then plateau 11.9%, quickly plateau 25.4%, fluctuate 10.1% and grow shrink 25.9%. The three combined kinds of plateau then become 47.4%.

Thirdly, 47% of the fxC in the correlation of chart 36 were too young to supply the needed three years of average attendance figures, so this is a picture of those fxC that are at least three years old. Thus towards half of the overall picture is unknown and in that sense missing.

Inferences from the data shown

By contrast to the potential encouragement that *msm* can draw from section 9.3, this chart reveals this source of training is least likely to result in an fxC continuing to grow in size. Conversely, those having used this resources are easily the most likely to hit a quick plateau. When their three types of plateau are added, that figure is 55.3%. The shrinkage rate is a bit above average.

Those fxC where the leader has **prior experience** show a greater tendency to continue to grow than those with leaders without any training, a marked reduction in the tendency to plateau but a larger tendency for subsequent shrinkage. The features that show up for those having done a **church planting module** are similar to those connected to the factor of experience.

The scores for fxC with leaders having received **consultancy** have their own pattern. These register an above average score for continuing to grow, a slightly reduced tendency for some kind of plateau

compared with those without training (though both are a bit above the average), but a marked reduction in those liable to shrink.

Overall, no routes are free from the difficulties or encouragements that can occur.

We investigated whether there was any linkage between the high figure for a quick plateau among the fxC where the leader had taken *msm* and the types of fxC most and least likely to experience this sort of plateau. The proportions of these types to take *msm* are marginal at best and there was no obvious pattern linking the two factors. We are left with unexplained data that those fxC whose leaders have taken *msm* are somewhat more likely to find their numbers plateau.

Similarly, we investigated whether there was any linkage between the higher figure for continued growth plateau among the fxC where the leader had taken a church planting module and the types of fxC most and least likely to experience ongoing numerical growth. We were not able to find any consistent linkage between the types of fxC most or least likely to have taken a church planting module and their propensity to continue to grow.

The data on training seems to show that plateau and growth tendencies are slightly connected to variance across training routes taken, but these are not obviously linked to what is known about fxC type. The differences being slight is borne out by the control group examples, who took no training, not being markedly different. Growth and plateau may be more associated with the type of fxC chosen, who they reach and what their resources and contacts are.

9.5 Types of training and three-self responsibility

The report now evaluates a feature that is one diagnostic test of progress towards ecclesial maturity in young churches and whether the propensity to take such steps is much affected by training received.

Chart 37:   Three-self responsibility in fxC, and sources of training.
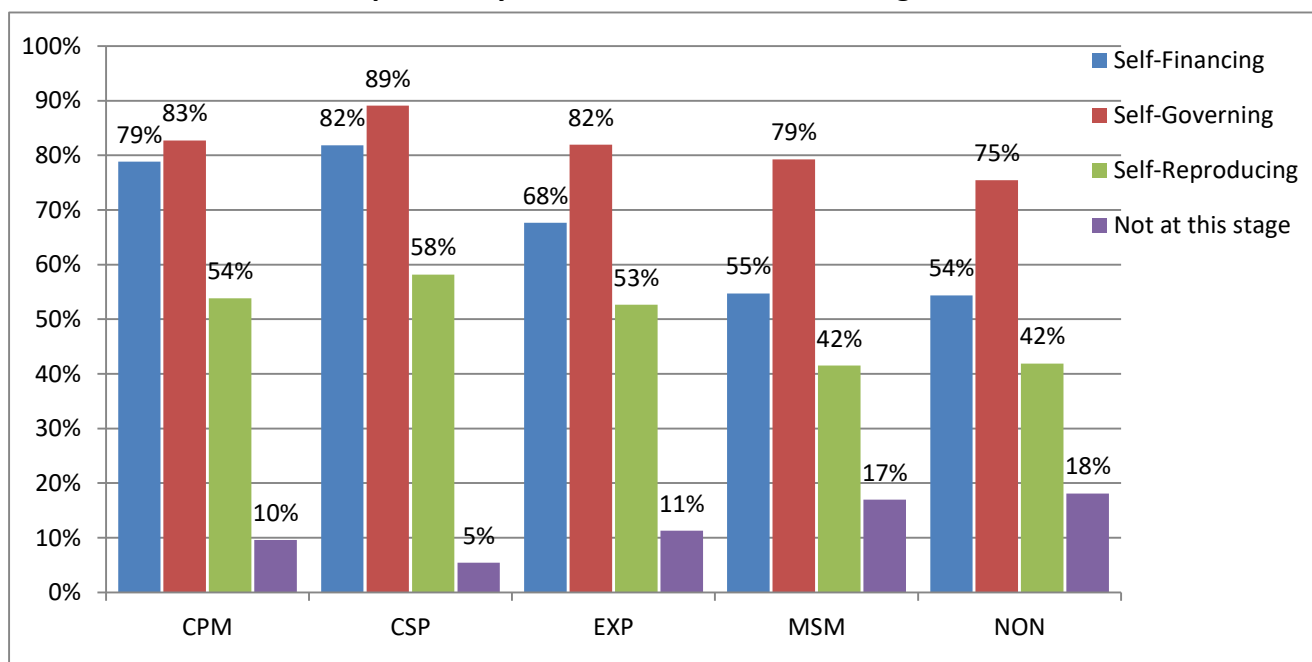
Abbreviations
CPM - Church planting module   CSP - Consultancy provided   EXP - Previous fxC experience
MSM - *mission-shaped ministry* course

Inferences from the data

The differences between the 5 groups of three factors, plus those 'not at this stage', are the least marked over self-governing, with a range of 89%-75%, very slightly wider for self-reproducing, from 58% to 41%, but notably wider for self-financing: between 82% and 54%.

It may be that the necessity for some form of organised leadership in a young church is so self-evident that the self-governing feature is not much affected by a training input that might advocate it.

Comparing the four training routes and the control group, a few comments can be made. Firstly, the differences between those who have been on *msm* and those who have taken no training is negligible. Both under-score compared with the other routes, most noticeably over self-financing and self-reproducing. Secondly, but not by very much, those provided with consultancy are the most likely to be making progress, followed by those having taken a church planting module, in relation to all three-self maturity paths.

We know, from section 6.14 table 54, that the three elements of taking responsibility vary widely by fxC type: the finance range is 89%-35%, governing is 89%-59% and reproducing 73%-18%.

Looking there at the 5 highest and 5 lowest types of fxC for **self-financing**, there is overlap with **consultancy** provided. Nearly all of the low scores were among the least likely to have a consultant and most of the high scoring ones were more likely to do so.

In relation to **self-governing**, 4 out of 5 types scoring high were among those most likely to have a **consultant**, and 2 out of the lowest scoring were among those least likely to have one. Once again there is some overlap. We cannot know the content of these consulting relationships; we can only point up the connection and thus commend it to the wider Church.

We did run the same query in relation to **self-reproducing**, but were aware that the meaning of the term is very wide, which leads us to be more cagey about any significance. 2 of the highest scoring types for self-reproducing were among the higher recipients of **consultancy**, and 3 other types were above or around the average for its presence. But 4 out of 5 of the lowest scoring types also scored low for having a consultant.

It looks as though, by comparing this data on three-self maturity with which types of fxC most use it, there is a link. Consultancy makes a difference and those types of fxC that most and least use it show higher and lower scores for three-self maturity accordingly.

9.6 Routes in training and paths in discipleship

Chart 38:   Paths in discipleship in fxC, and sources of training
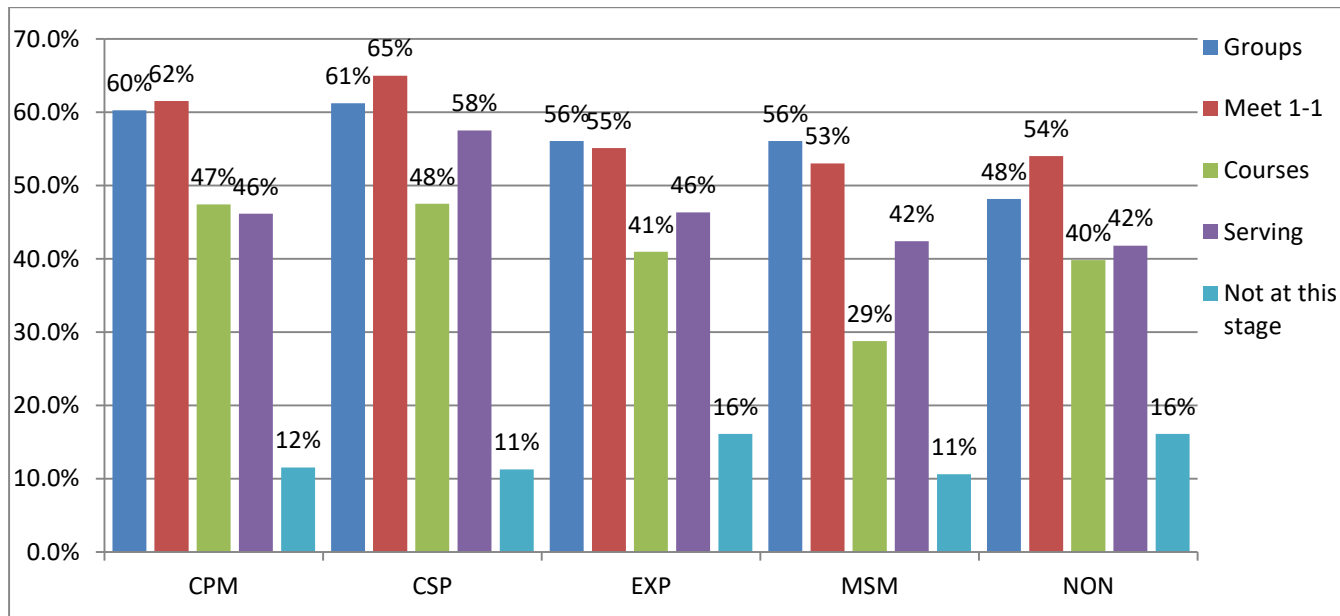
Abbreviations
CPM - Church planting module   CSP - Consultancy provided   EXP - Previous fxC experience
MSM - *mission-shaped ministry* course

Note
Leaders may select as many of these paths towards discipleship as are true of their fxC, thus none of the percentages sum to 100%. In theory, all training routes could have led to the fxC having small groups. The columns show which choices are selected relatively more often.

Inferences from the data
The overall patterns have some similarity to those about three-self responsibility. Once again consultancy appears the most effective input, with church planting modules and bringing previous experience coming in not far behind. Again *msm* does a little less well than the other routes, although it has the lowest score for 'not at this stage'. There is the additional ironic feature that the leader doing a one year course appears to be connected to the fxC being the least likely to offer courses to their attenders.

What is different to chart 37's shape, showing the three-self features, is that the control group re discipleship is no longer level pegging at the foot of the table with those where the leader has done *msm*. Perhaps unexpectedly, the control group has out-scored it and is comparable with the church planting module and the effect of experience. Only consultancy out-scores it.

At the same time, it is also true the control group has the joint highest score for 'not at this stage'. We looked to see if there were connections to types of fxC with higher scores, both for not having taken the four training routes and scoring high for 'not at this stage' in connection with discipleship. We found that both factors were true for 3 of the types of fxC which have higher proportions of younger children, church based on <5s, child-focused church and Messy Church, and they have higher proportions of the non-churched. It is more understandable that discipleship is taking longer and is a more uncertain path.

Café church and alternative worship both score high for 'not at this stage' about discipleship. Both types might be said to have a more *laissez-faire* culture, but they do embrace a wider range of

practice, so inferences are not very secure. Here café church leaders score only average or below for taking any of the training routes, except for taking *msm*. Alternative worship leaders only score above average for taking a church planting module. There might be a connection.

Linking discipleship scores and training
Causality lies beyond this data. Some possible correlations have been named. What lies behind all this are wider questions. We know there is a module on discipleship within the *msm* course, but we cannot know what place it has in the other training paths. We are also aware that there has been an increased emphasis on discipleship in books and is a current central topic for Messy Church thinkers and its network.

It seems that consultancy is the more effective influence over encouraging routes in discipleship, but the scores of the control group make the other routes of doubtful additional value.

Summary from Chapter 9

- Prior training has only played a minor role up till now in what has occurred.
- The four forms of training are unevenly accessed by the types of fxC, but in no case are any single one of them an input to even one-third of the leaders.
- The range of scores for no training taken, by types of fxC, is between 56% and 20%.
- Only 6.6% of fxC leaders have used *msm*. This is less than might be expected – except in Norwich (21.4%) and Carlisle (16.1%).
- *msm* has a positive linkage to drawing the non-churched, but a relatively poor score in relation to securing further numerical growth and also in relation to the two ecclesial measures chosen.
- A change from the 2013 report[30] is that in the second round consultancy is no longer linked positively to continued numerical growth. However, it is linked positively to the ecclesial measures: making progress in taking three-self responsibility and providing paths in discipleship.

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[30] Strand 3b, page 57, section 4.5.2, chart 8.

Chapter 10   Leadership and the fxC

This chapter only adds factors beyond those which have been covered by previous sections. To aid the reader the section references are as follows:

- 5.5 examined how the distribution of ordained, lay and lay-lay varies by the 21 dioceses, and included variance by the time given by the leaders and whether they are stipendiary, locally paid or voluntary.

- 6.13 examined these kinds of leadership variables, as well as gender, and their uneven distribution across the 14 most common types of fxC, with the church plants and Messy Church being at opposite ends of the spectrum of many of the results.

- 7.10 explored whether the following variables, ordained and lay and by gender, differed across the 10 different social/geographical areas used in our questionnaire.

- 8.8 tested the extent to which uneven distribution of ordained and lay leaders would account for differences in the rate towards ecclesial maturity linked to the three different frequencies of meeting.

What is not in this chapter is an assessment, drawing on missonal and ecclesial measures, of the fxC which have lay-lay leaders, as compared with those with all other kinds of leader. That forms the basis of Chapter 11.

10.1   Overall numbers of different kinds of leaders

The longer an fxC lasts, the greater the chance that the founder will have moved on and a successor emerged. As the collection period goes back to 1992, this has occurred quite often.

As mentioned in Chapter 9, with the longer lived fxC examples there have been times when we have not been able to have direct contact with a prior leader and only been able to speak with the more recent one. Certain features like gender and ordained status were not in doubt; whether they were stipendiary was less certain, and the time given and training taken were the most unknown. In regard to the latter, this applied to about 19% of the cases. Overall the uncertain or unknown factors have a marginal effect on the figures, and for each person we have at least a partial record.

We can therefore say that, as a result, there are **1576 leader records** from 1109 fxC, an average of 1.42 leaders per fxC, though such a figure increases for the longer lived ones and the younger fxCs will most likely still be on their first leader.

It would be interesting to have an **average length of stay** among leaders, but although we have a start month and year date for each leader, there is no field for their departure. Manually working this out for over 1500 records, from the successor's date which may not be the same as the departure date of the prior leader, seems disproportionate for the time and effort involved.

This supplementary chapter does now provide some overall numbers that, subject to the variables explored in Chapters 5-9, gives some headlines and other details.

Table 71:   Summary figures in relation to 1576 leaders of 1109 fxC

Gender	Male	Female	
	50.5%	49.4%	
Status	Ordained	Licensed lay	Lay-lay
	51.6%	12.0%	36.4%
	Or 814	Or 188	Or 574
Time given	Full time	Part time	Spare time
	52.9%	19.5%	27.5%
Pay	Stipendiary	Locally paid	Voluntary
	45.3%	14.7%	40.0%

Inferences from the overall data

Comments are made here in awareness of variables, especially related to fxC type, but the wider Church may care to take note of the following overall comments.

In relation to **gender**, both are almost equally represented. In the history of the Church of England this is a rare occurrence and consonant with a still growing recognition that both genders may be called to offer leadership. It could be said that the fxC as a whole are taking a notable role in this regard.

In connection with the **lay and ordained** factors, once more the figures are close, with only a slight preponderance to the ordained. We suggest that this also runs contrary to the inherited Church of England instinct to turn to the ordained for leadership. This is another striking positive contribution the fxC are making to the re-imagination of who can lead in God's Church.

While there has been more than a century of licensed lay leaders, like Readers and Church Army Evangelists, and they are represented within these figures, it is more noteworthy that there are three times as many **lay-lay** leaders as 'professional' lay leaders. We do not know of any comparable feature among the inherited expressions of Church, and the lay-lay are one distinctive contribution made by the fxC to the overall life of the Church.

It is arguable that in some senses the figures for pay and time given follow behind those for the ordained. But simply to make that comment would be to marginalise three features.

The first is the presence of the 'locally paid' leader, which is another indicator that the fxC phenomenon is mostly a grass roots movement.

The second feature, being the 40% serving in a **voluntary** capacity, underlines this and may prove to be another welcome change brought by the fxC to a Church struggling to know how it can afford the level of stipendiary ministry to which it has been accustomed.

The third is that the two genders score very unequally when it comes to what proportion are ordained, how they are paid and on what basis they offer their time. This is dealt with next.

10.2   Time and pay and fxC leaders

Section 10.1 could only present overall figures and there were some encouragements to be drawn from them. However, digging deeper into the data shows up significant differences.

Table 72:   Gender and ordained status of fxC leaders

	Male	Female	Male %	Female %
Lay	249	511	32.8%	67.2%
Ordained	545	269	67.0%	33.0%

There is a marked difference here. Section 6.13 shows links to fxC types and gender correlation. Yet 26.7% of all C of E clergy are female, so it looks as though ordained women (33.0%) are more likely to take-up fxC leadership than their male counterparts.

For 73.3% of clergy are male, yet only 67% of fxC are led by men.

Table 73:   Gender and time available of fxC leaders

	Nos male	Nos female	% male	% Female
Full time	576	258	69.1%	30.9%
Part time	97	210	31.6%	68.4%
Spare time	121	312	27.9%	72.1%

The predominant picture is that over 2/3^{rds} of those who are full time leaders are male. These will nearly all be ordained, as shown above. By contrast, among the fewest serving part time, 2/3^{rds} are females, while among the more numerous serving spare time, over 2/3^{rds} are also women. This reflects not just the fxC type factor, but may be influenced by wider social factors including work patterns, time available and lack of equal opportunity.

Table 74:   Gender and remuneration of fxC leaders

	Nos male	Nos female	% male	% female
Stipendiary	512	201	71.8%	28.2%
Locally Paid	111	120	48.1%	51.9%
Voluntary	171	459	27.1%	72.9%

National figures tell us that 71% of all parish based clergy are stipendiary,[31] but this table shows the male/female split of stipendiaries, a result not dissimilar to the overall proportions of each.

The table also shows how few of either gender are locally paid. Usually these are children and family workers or youth workers. With the voluntary group, there are nearly three times as many women as men.

Table 75:   Background links

	Lay	Ordained
Stipendiary	7.3%	92.7%
Locally Paid	84.8%	15.2%
Voluntary	81.3%	18.7%

This table demonstrates the link in the fxC leaders between the ordained and the stipendiaries. It highlights that the locally paid are dominantly but not exclusively lay, as are those serving in a voluntary capacity.

This page demonstrates that while the overall figures suggest some picture of equality between male and female leaders, and between ordained and lay, the detail reveals this is far from true and stereotypes of the ordained stipendiary male leader and the lay voluntary female one remain. These two most common stereotypes were cited within section 5.2 of the 2013 report. 28.4% of leaders are ordained, male, stipendiary and full time. Lay, female, voluntary, spare time leaders are 18.8% of all leaders. This has proved to be representative, though not necessarily welcome, let alone fair.

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[31] 2014 Ministry Statistics.

10.3   Subdividing types of ordained and lay fxC leaders

What none of the prior chapters have disclosed is how the ordained and lay leaders can be further subdivided, and this is shown next.

Table 76:   6 types of leader status across the 1109 fxC

Type	Incumbent or priest-in-charge	Assistant ordained	Ordained Pioneer	Licensed lay	Church Army Evangelist	Lay-lay
%	26.3%	22.7%	2.7%	9.5%	2.5%	36.4%

Inferences from the data

Firstly, recent research conducted for the National Pioneer Ministry Advisor, Canon Dave Male, has established that there are about 125 known Ordained Pioneer Ministers (OPMs). Yet our research, covering half of the Church of England's dioceses, from which one might expect over 60 to be pioneer minister led, shows that only 40, or 2.7% of all leaders, are deployed in leading an fxC. One question is whether this indicates an inappropriate failure to deploy them for one of the more obvious tasks for which their gifts equip them. To determine an answer, Canon Male kindly gave us access to his information, which gave some very helpful answers, yet raised some puzzles. One unresolved puzzle is why of our 40 pioneer ministers, 18 were not on his list. But his data has revealed reasons why the numbers of OPMs leading fxC are lower than might be expected.

The data set to work from is 105 cases, out of the listed 124, where it was known in which diocese the OPM was. From this we could determine whether the OPMs might be disproportionally placed in the 20 dioceses we have not covered. In fact, 63, or 60%, were in the 21 dioceses we had covered and only 42, or 40%, in the remainder. That was not the reason.
Because we now knew their year of ordination, we could exclude the 18 OPMs ordained near to, or after, the end of our fxC data collection period, among the dioceses we had covered. Moreover, we could exclude those 5 OPMs deployed outside the Church of England, either overseas or in another denomination. Neither group could be expected to show in the results.

Cross checking with his data also enabled us to find 7 examples of fxC within our database led by a person who had not told us that they were an OPM, but had chosen another designation like curate or SSM. This raised our original figure of 33 to the quoted 40.

Cross checking with our own information from each diocese revealed a further 7 cases in which an OPM was at work, but in conversation with them it had been established that what they were leading, though of value, was something other than an fxC or only a stage towards becoming one.

Table 77:   A revised summary of pioneer figures

OPMs whose diocese is known	Less those in the 20 dioceses not surveyed	Less OPMs ordained after the fxC data collection	Less OPMs outside the Church of England	Resultant number of OPM leading an fxC in the 21 dioceses	Number in Church Army survey
105	-42	-18	-5	40	40

This looks extremely neat, but does not explain the 18 on our list not known to Canon Male. We are only somewhat closer to clarity. Anecdotally, we are aware that some of our included fxC OPM leaders were deemed by their diocese to be pioneer ministers, but at the time of research there was no agreed central list to verify whether they had nationally been so designated.

We are still left with a question. If one might expect 60 fxC being OPM led, why are there only 40? We do not know is why this is the case. Bside this, there is also what the Canon Male research has shown, from the replies given by 67 of the existing OPMs to open questions about where they are now, and also what they are doing. Of those 67 people, across some 29 dioceses, only 19 (or 28%), of them explicitly said they had begun, or led, an fxC. The overall list, covering 105 of them, also appears to infer that only 31 of the dioceses have an OPM at all.

A few wider comments may be offered. It seems clear that not all OPMs lead fxC. Anecdotally Church Army's Research Unit members hear that some training for pioneer ministry see their role as far wider than that. It is a picture of overlapping circles. Some OPMs do other sorts of missional ministry and most fxC are not OPM led. What is also clear is that the growth of fxC, and its effect, is not principally being led by the ordained pioneer ministers. There also looks to be more work to do to establish more closely what OPMs are doing, where they are, and how the Church of England may best stay in touch with them. There were a further number we were unable to trace through Crockfords Clerical Directory. The National Advisor is best placed to follow this.

Secondly, in relation to who has led the fxC growth and its effect, the Church Army contribution is not numerically large. Only 2.5% of all leaders, or 39 Church Army Evangelists, have been leading an fxC. In that there are around 280 deployed Church Army Evangelists, again might this indicate that not enough use is being made of this skilled resource?

Thirdly, the single largest group, when split out this way, is the lay-lay group, with 574 of them. At some 36% this group is three times the size of the 'professional' lay of all kinds. For this reason they merit their own chapter (Chapter 11) to examine how they compare to all other leaders.

Fourthly, those of incumbent or similar status are slightly more numerous than those of assistant status (which includes curates and various categories of self-supporting clergy). It is, however, sometimes the case that the incumbents are offering oversight as much as day-to-day leadership.

10.4 Noting the leader variances by diocese

Tables 78 and 79:   Variances by clergy designations in fxC leaders

Most likely to be incumbent led	%	Most likely to be assistant clergy led	%	Most likely to be ordained pioneer led	%
Carlisle	37.7%	Manchester	34.7%	Gloucester	12.1%
Ely	37.2%	Ripon & Leeds	33.3%	York	6.8%
Sheffield	32.3%	London	32.8%	Liverpool	6.0%
Derby	31.3%	Bristol	30.0%	London	4.5%
Manchester	30.6%	Birmingham	27.5%	Sheffield	4.0%

Least likely to be incumbent led	%	Least likely to be assistant clergy led	%	Least likely to be ordained pioneer led	%
Gloucester	15.2%	Leicester	10.8%	Canterbury	0%
Bristol	17.5%	Sheffield	12.1%	Norwich	0%
Chelmsford &	18.5%	Portsmouth	12.9%	Exeter	0%
Leicester	18.5%	Gloucester	15.2%	Guildford	0%
Birmingham	20.0%	Carlisle & Derby	15.6%	Carlisle	0%

The data shows the spread, but these differences also reflect the predominance of types of fxC in certain dioceses and who tends to lead them. With the incumbents, no southern dioceses appear in the most likely top 5 and no northern ones in the least likely. In connection with Ordained Pioneer Ministers, it is clear that Gloucester is the notable exception at 12%, and 5 dioceses have none whatever.

Tables 80 and 81:   Variance by lay designations in fxC leaders

Most likely to be licensed lay led	%	Most likely to be Church Army led	%	Most likely to be lay-lay led	%
Gloucester	30.3%	Sheffield	7.1%	Leicester	52.3%
Birmingham	17.5%	Canterbury	4.4%	Portsmouth	51.6%
Ely	15.4%	Guildford	4.2%	Exeter	48.2%
Bristol	15.0%	Manchester	4.2%	Guildford	46.2%
Leicester	13.8%	Blackburn	3.7%	Canterbury	42.9%

Least likely to be licensed lay led	%	Least likely to be Church Army led	%	Least likely to be lay-lay led	%
Portsmouth	3.2%	Bristol & Portsmouth	0%	Manchester	19.4%
Guildford	3.4%	Exeter	0%	Ely	20.5%
Ripon & Leeds	3.7%	Carlisle	0%	Gloucester	24.2%
Exeter	5.9%	London	0%	London	24.6%
York	6.8%	Birmingham	0%	Norwich	32.1%

Gloucester diocese is the outlier for drawing on the licensed lay, and Sheffield diocese for Church Army Evangelists, partly because the Church Army training college has been in that diocese since 1992. 6 dioceses have no Church Army Evangelists leading an fxC. The lay-lay figures connect partly to the number of lay-led Messy Churches or the prevalence of ordained-led church plants, but diocesan culture and tradition may also play its part. Most of those dioceses that have the higher lay-lay figures are also among the lower licensed lay figures.

10.5 Variations of leaders and growth measures

This topic is covered the next chapter by contrasting what is true for the lay-lay with a combined group of all the other leader designations. This covers both the growth patterns over time and to what extent the de-churched and non-churched are being reached.

We mention in passing here that if the lay-lay and licensed lay are split out there are some differences over what proportions of their fxC grow, plateau or shrink. Comparing those led by the lay-lay and the licensed lay, the lay-lay-led are slightly more likely to continue to grow (25.4% to 21.6%) and less likely to grow then shrink (24.1% to 33.6%). However those led by the lay-lay are more likely to quickly plateau (31.5% to 23.1%). See also section 11.7.

We also ran a correlation of the five growth variables and leader gender. It showed some differences, but was in some danger of stereotypical interpretation, quite apart from the results being much influenced by the division of the gender of leaders across the fxC types, so we have put it in Appendix Five.

Returning to the two stereotypes, there are 447 ordained male stipendiaries in full time ministry, but also 297 women who are lay, unpaid and leading in their spare time. Compared to the church plants which Canon Dr George Lings researched in the 1980s and early 1990s, the latter is a new feature. How they are thanked, supported, encouraged and developed are important considerations in the patterns of future training and diocesan networking. Too often training favours those able to take time off to study from work or who see such things as part of their working life. This should be addressed. See Recommendation 15.2.4.

Summary from Chapter 10

- Over time there have been some 1576 leaders across the 1109 fxC.
- Our data taken does not enable us to know the average length of stay of a leader.
- On average the number of male and female leaders is much the same, though section 6.13 shows considerable variance by fxC type.
- Similarly, the combined lay figure is just under half of the fxC leaders. However, there are three times as many lay-lay as licensed lay. Proportions of ordained or lay are shown by section 6.13 to also vary widely with fxC type.
- 40% of all leaders are serving voluntarily, 15% being locally paid and 45% are stipendiary.
- Two-thirds of male fxC leaders are ordained and two thirds of female fxC leader are lay
- Over 70% of the stipendiary leaders are male and over 70% of the voluntary leaders are female. The locally paid are almost equally divided.
- Just over a quarter of fxC leaders are incumbents or a priest–in-charge, and under a quarter various groupings of assistant clergy, including the self-supporting types.
- Both Church Army Evangelists and Ordained Pioneer Ministers only account for between 2-3% each of the fxC leaders. It is clear that not all OPMs lead an fxC.
- There is variance in the distribution of different types of fxC leaders by diocese.
- The two most clear stereotypes of leader are the 447 ordained, full time, male stipendiaries and the 297 lay, spare time, females serving voluntarily.

Chapter 11   Evaluating the lay-lay leader contribution

11.1   The surprise and the research question

One surprise from the first round of 10 dioceses researched by Church Army's Research Unit between 2012 and 2013 was discovering the presence of a large group of leaders that have become known as the 'lay-lay'. We invented this shorthand term to mean people with no centralised formal training, or official authorisation for this specific task, although a number bring significant work and life experience, including skills with people. This group now accounts for 574 (or 36.4% of the 1576), leaders across the 1109 fxC recorded.

This group, and its size, constituted a major surprise within the first set of overall findings. The reason to highlight it is that it is also clear, when data across the 20-year period is surveyed, that the proportion of such lay-led examples is increasing.

In 1992-1998, being lay-lay was a minor factor, true of only 17.3% or 19 of the leaders among the fxC. Yet as the number of fxC increased in the next period, 1999-2005, the proportion of the leaders who were lay-lay had increased to 28.4% or 73 people. In the period 2006-2012, the factor grew again to 41.1% and 387 people. However, in the shorter 2013-2014 period, and only among the 2nd set of dioceses, the proportion fell to 35.6% (the number is 95 but should not be directly compared as being from two years and only 10 dioceses). This is in part because of the increased incidence of the church plants led by the ordained.

An initial report on the impact of the lay-lay leaders was written in July 2014 following the first tranche of 10 dioceses researched. This chapter is an updated and rewritten version of that initial report, now taking into account a further 11 dioceses. Broadly, most of the trends identified in that initial report remain true with the additional data added; the second tranche of dioceses included in this chapter confirms many of the conclusions identified in the initial report.

Given that the lay-lay group turned out to be such a significant proportion of the total, and their existence was initially a surprise, their impact merits closer scrutiny.

Our team decided to test this question:
How did the young churches, that were lay-lay led, perform compared to those led by the rest of the leaders who were, in some sense, professional?

The set of other leaders ranged from Readers and licensed lay, Church Army Evangelists, various designations of assistant clergy, ordained pioneers and those of incumbent status. We examined:

- the demographics of the 'lay-lay' group by gender, employment and time available;
- the range of the fresh expressions of Church they led and their frequency of meeting;
- missional features such as who attends these and what growth patterns they exhibit;
- ecclesial aspects such as what signs of maturity and sustainability they evince.

This chapter draws on the data set of the 21 dioceses covered in the research by Church Army's Research Unit. In these 21 dioceses, there are some 574 lay-lay leaders of fresh expressions of Church. In that the Church of England faces a time of scarce financial and ministerial resources, and this is coupled with a national mission task that looks larger than those resources, this contribution might be a promising way forward. This was what our team needed to test.

11.2   Data on the lay-lay leaders

There is a substantial set of contrasts in table 82 below between who the lay-lay leaders of fresh expressions of Church are, and all other leaders; the rest of this report tests what differences these may or may not make.

- 72% of lay-lay leaders are female, while 63% of all other leaders are male.

- In terms of employment status, the majority of lay-lay leaders (59%) lead the fxC in their spare time, while 73% of all other leaders are in varieties of full time ministry, although often not being able to give all that time to the fxC task.

- The vast majority of lay-lay leaders (71%) lead an fxC on a voluntary basis, with a further 27% locally paid, while the equally large majority of all other leaders are stipendiary (70%).

Table 82:   Gender, employment status and remuneration comparisons within lay-lay leaders and with other leaders

	Gender		Employment status			Remuneration		
	Male	Female	Full time	Part time	Spare time	Stipendiary	Locally paid	Voluntary
Lay-lay	28.0%	72.0%	17.3%	23.7%	59.0%	2.4%	26.5%	71.0%
All other	63.3%	36.7%	73.4%	17.1%	9.6%	69.8%	7.9%	22.4%

In these three ways the lay-lay leaders are a significantly different set to the other group who are, in varying degrees, professionals in church ministry. The figures also demonstrate the extent of the presence of a group who are a far less expensive means of providing leadership of fxC. Church Army's Research Unit wanted to discover whether the set of young churches led by the lay-lay suffered either missionally or ecclesially as a result.

11.3   The variable of training taken

Table 83 shows that more lay-lay leaders have attended some kind of training event than all other leaders (28% to 19%). We know that in a good number of cases it was a one-off Messy Church event. By contrast, only 9% of them have been part of training focused on starting further churches (*msm*, *msi*, church planting module). This compares with 18% in the other set of leaders. However, a small but higher proportion of lay-lay leaders have done the *msm* course.

The lay-lay leaders are also less likely to have had previous fxC experience compared with the other leaders. The last two factors suggest that the majority of lay-lay leaders are leading an fxC for the first time. This stepping out is to be celebrated. At the same time, the figures show that 39% of the other leaders have no specific training for leading fxC and very many of them are also doing this for the first time, although with the benefit of other ministerial training.

Table 83:   Training comparisons within lay-lay leaders and within other leaders

	msm	*msi*	Planting module	Training event	Consultancy provided	Previous experience	Other	None
Lay-lay	7.3%	0.3%	1.7%	27.7%	8.7%	13.1%	10.3%	43.6%
All other	6.2%	0.6%	11.2%	19.3%	7.6%	24.6%	9.8%	39.4%

It should be noted that these percentages do not sum to 100% as leaders can select more than one kind of training they have had. The figures represent the percentages of each type of leader that have experienced each method of training.

Multiple designations also relate to chart 42 and table 85, in section 11.8, on the following pages, as in these cases leaders can be leading fxC that engage with more than one method of discipleship and have pursued more than one three-self aim.

11.4   The range of types of fxC that led by the lay-lay

We found that lay-lay leaders can lead every type of fresh expression of Church. Chart 39 below shows what proportions of each type of fxC are led by lay-lay leaders and what proportion are led by all other leaders.

Chart 39:   Contrasting the lay-lay fxC and all other leaders of 19 types of fxC
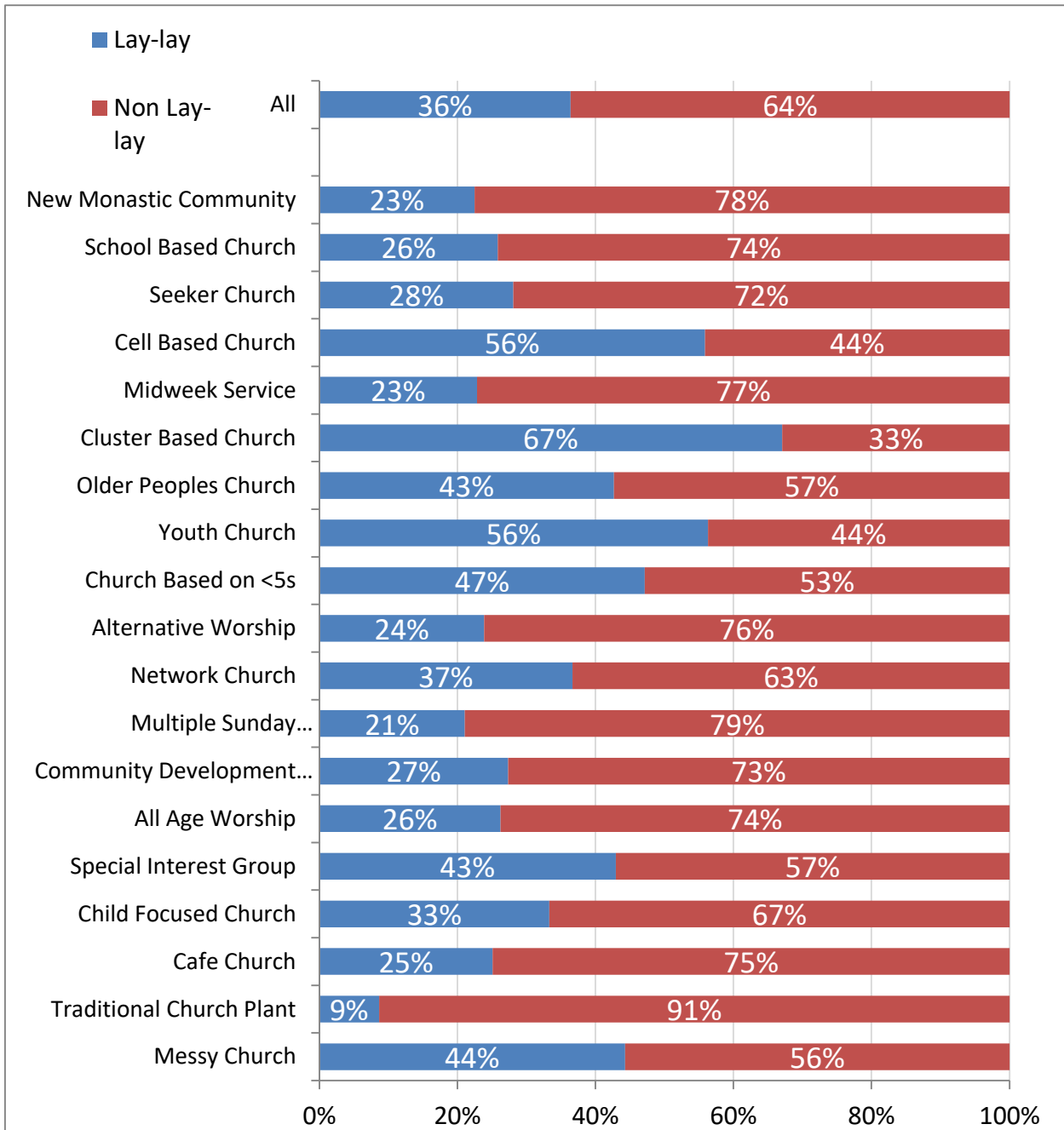
Lay-lay leaders account for the majority of leaders in cluster based church, youth church, cell based church, and just under half in church based on <5s, Messy Church and special interest group. Three of these types strongly engage with children and young people, a crucial mission field for the Church of England. The lay-lay account for only 9% of church plant leaders, but otherwise for at least 21% of the leaders of all other types of fxC.

11.5　Frequency of gathering

46.5% of fxC led by lay-lay leaders meet monthly, compared to 40.3% led by other leaders. Correspondingly, 43.4% of the lay-lay led meet weekly as compared to 52.9% led by all others. In both cases fortnightly meeting is least often practiced. As most lay-lay leaders lead fxC on a voluntary basis in their spare time, it is perhaps surprising that almost half the total number do meet weekly, perhaps indicating their commendable level of commitment.

11.6　Those who go to the lay-lay led fxC

Chart 40 displays the average numbers of adults, children (aged under 16) and the average total size of fxC led by lay-lay and all other leaders. The fxC led by lay-lay people have very slightly fewer children than those led by all other leaders, but considerably fewer adults, and consequently they have a smaller average size than those led by other leaders. This can in part be explained by the fact that lay-lay leaders account for the majority of leaders across a number of types of fxC that, while being all age, cater for children, as seen in chart 39. Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of traditional church plants are not led by lay-lay leaders, and this is the type with the largest average attendance and with a higher percentage of adults.

As a word of caution, working out the average attendance size in comparison to the different status of the leader is slightly complex; a number of fxCs have had more than one kind of leader over time, and the older the fxC example the more likely this is. However, this phenomenon is not so common as to severely compromise the data used in these calculations.

Chart 40:　Average sizes at fxC by different leader status
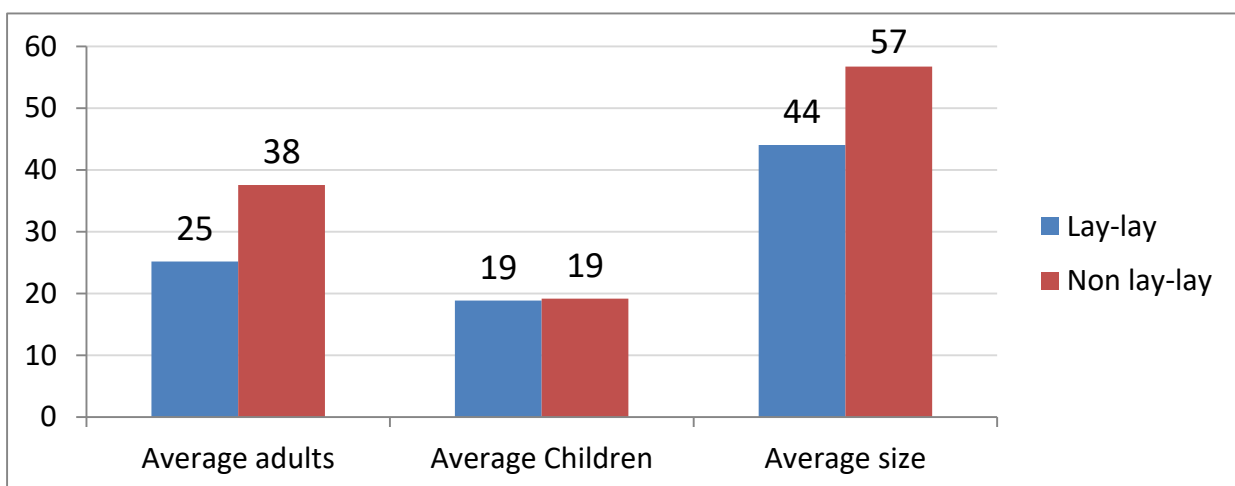
While the average size of lay-lay-led fxC is smaller than those led by other leaders, they were also started by smaller sending teams. Consequently, the growth ratios of lay-lay-led fxC compare favourably to those led by leaders with some kind of formal training. Lay-lay-led fxC have an average growth ratio of 3.5, compared to a growth ratio of 3.2 for all other leaders; this means that for every one person who was part of a lay-lay-led sending team, a further 2.5 people have started attending fxC on average, whereas for sending teams led by all other leaders, a further 2.2 people have since joined for every 1 person sent.

Another marker of the missional effectiveness of lay-lay-led fxC is not just numbers attending but the kinds of people reached by the fxC they lead, as shown in chart 41 below. The data shows the lay-lay-led initiatives are more effective at reaching those with no previous church connection, but

are slightly less effective at reaching out to Christians and the de-churched. We wonder if this suggests that the lay-lay-led fxC are more linked to, and thus more effective with, those outside of Church, or it could be that non-churched people are more attracted to a group with lay-lay leadership. Equally these figures may disclose that 'professional' leaders have less contact with those outside the church community and that strangers see existing church leaders as part of the cultural distance they feel from the Church.

Chart 41: The estimated backgrounds of those who now attend (weighted by size of fxC)
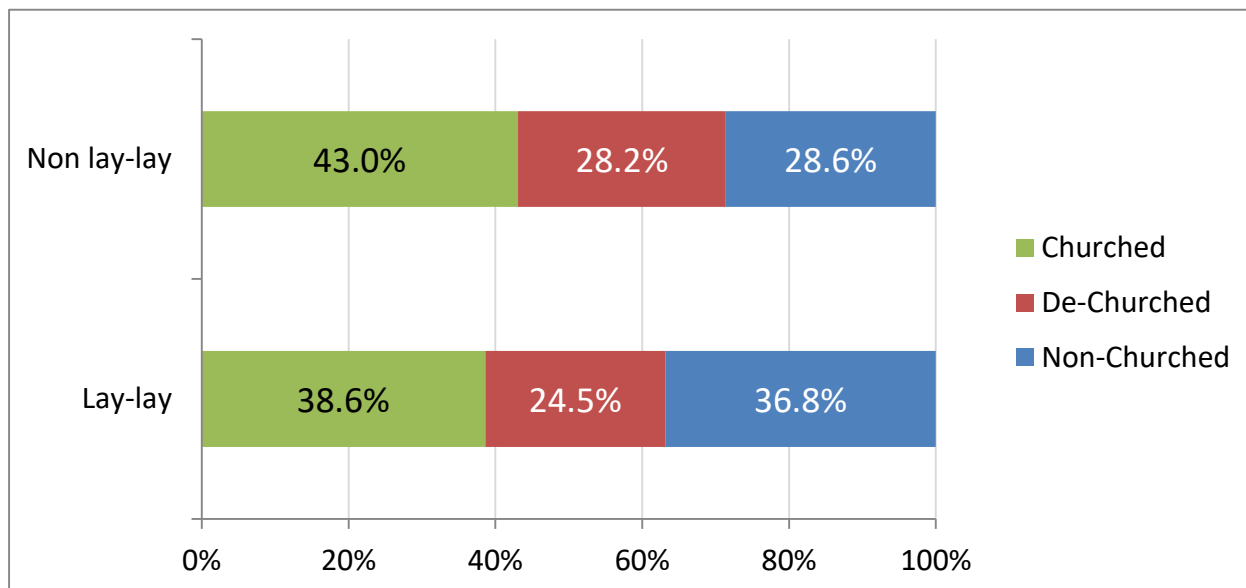
11.7   Growth over time

In terms of numerical growth trends over time, similarities and differences appear below.

Table 84: Growth trends of fxC led by lay-lay and all others

	Continues to grow	Grow then plateau	Quickly plateau	Fluctuate	Grow then shrink
Lay-lay	25.4%	10.2%	31.5%	8.9%	24.1%
All other	27.3%	12.9%	21.9%	10.7%	27.1%

The fxC led by lay-lay, at 25.4%, are nearly as likely to experience continued numerical growth as those led by others, at 27.3%. The proportions that experience numbers that fluctuate over the years are also similar. See section 10.5 to compare the lay-lay with just the licensed lay leaders.

The lay-lay-led fxC (10.2%) are less likely to experience growth over a few years followed by a plateau, as compared with all other leaders (12.9%). It is also true that they are considerably more likely to plateau within a year, where 31.5% (lay-lay) compares with 21.9% (all other leaders). More work is needed to establish whether this plateau effect is linked to whether a natural unit size has been reached. That effect might be caused by the choice of fxC type, the availability of venues, the norms of the social area served, and the extent of warm contacts in the area.

It should be noted that the lay-lay fxC are also less likely to shrink after initial growth has occurred. It is possible to posit that without an ordained leader these groups have learnt to be more self-reliant

and also that they may experience less frequent leadership losses. Thus overall they are hardly being outperformed by those led professionally.

11.8   Signs of maturing in lay-lay-led fxC

There are various measures to examine whether lay-lay-led fxC show evidence of advancing in ecclesial maturity and developing sustainability.

Pursuing discipleship

In terms of discipleship, chart 42 shows that a similar low proportion of lay-lay-led and other leader-led fxC (just under a fifth) are not yet at the stage of engaging with discipleship. In both cases, the fact that over 80% of leaders have engaged with some form of discipleship should serve as an indication that both are seeking to pursue ecclesial maturity.

Chart 42:   Different paths to discipleship at fxC by leader status
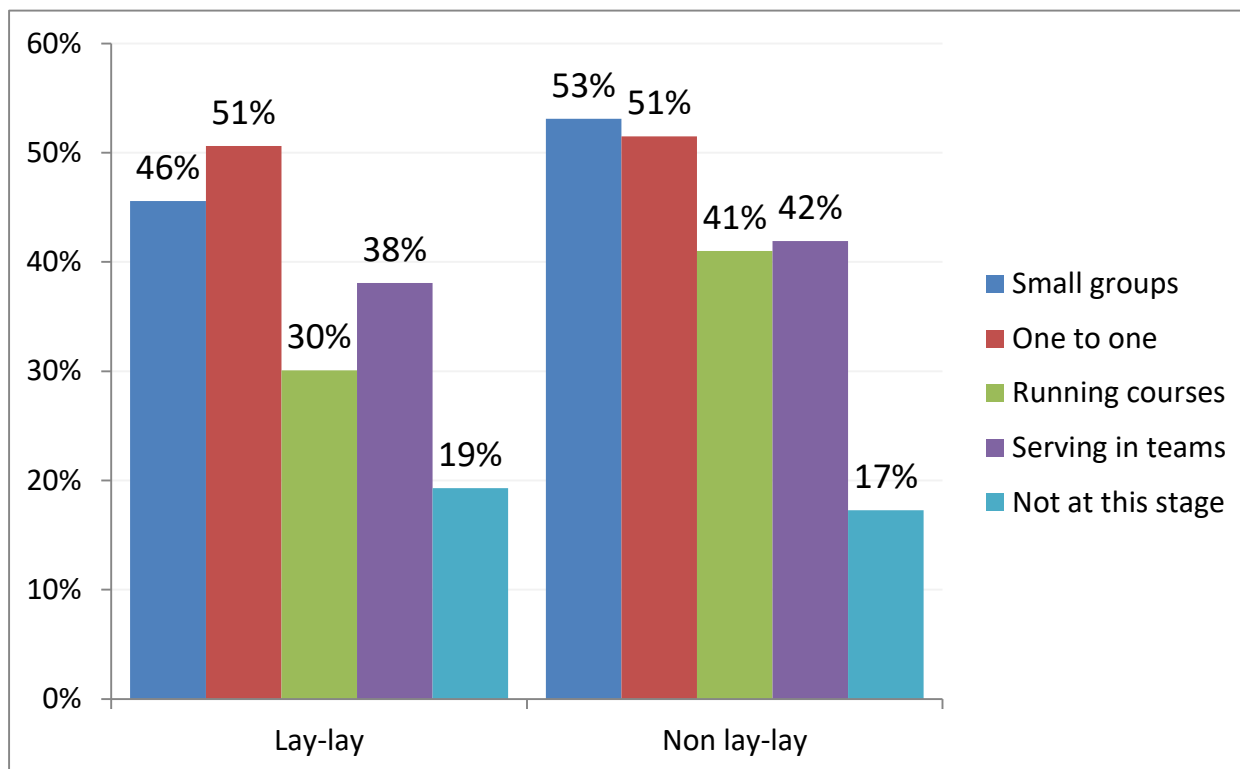
The percentages above reveal the lay-lay leaders are less likely to offer discipleship courses than all other leaders (30% to 41%) or run small group discipleship (46% to 53%). Professional leaders might well excel in leading these courses or running these groups. However, lay-lay and all other leaders are almost as likely to engage with 1-1 discipleship. It may be that voluntary spare time leaders find that discipling people 1-1 is an easier arrangement. A slightly greater proportion of non lay-lay leaders have encouraged members onto some form of leadership team as a means of discipleship, though almost 40% of lay-lay leaders have also done so.

Maturing through taking responsibility

Table 85:   **Engagement with three-self principles by fxC led by lay-lay and all other leaders**

	Three-self engagement			
	Self-financing	**Self-governing**	**Self-reproducing**	**Not at this stage**
Lay-lay	53.7%	77.7%	39.4%	15.3%
All other	61.7%	74.0%	45.9%	18.4%

Table 85 shows that the lay-lay-led fxC are more likely to engage with the self-governing aspect of three-self identity than other leaders (78% of lay-lay leaders have compared to 74% of other leaders). The lay-lay are also slightly more likely to have engaged with at least one of the three-self aims, with only 15% not yet making any progress towards any of the three, compared to 18% of all other leaders. However, the lay-lay are less likely, than the other kinds of leaders to have engaged with the self-financing and self-reproducing elements. That said, over half of the lay-lay-led fxC are engaging with self-financing and two-fifths with self-reproducing.

Sacramental provision

Chart 43, with figures for communion, and chart 44 figures for baptism show very similar patterns. The lay-lay-led fxC are less likely to offer communion than fxC led by others (34% to 54%). The baptism figures show a parallel picture, with lay-lay fxC at 31% and the rest at 46%.

Chart 43:   **Communion at lay-lay led and all other examples of fxC**
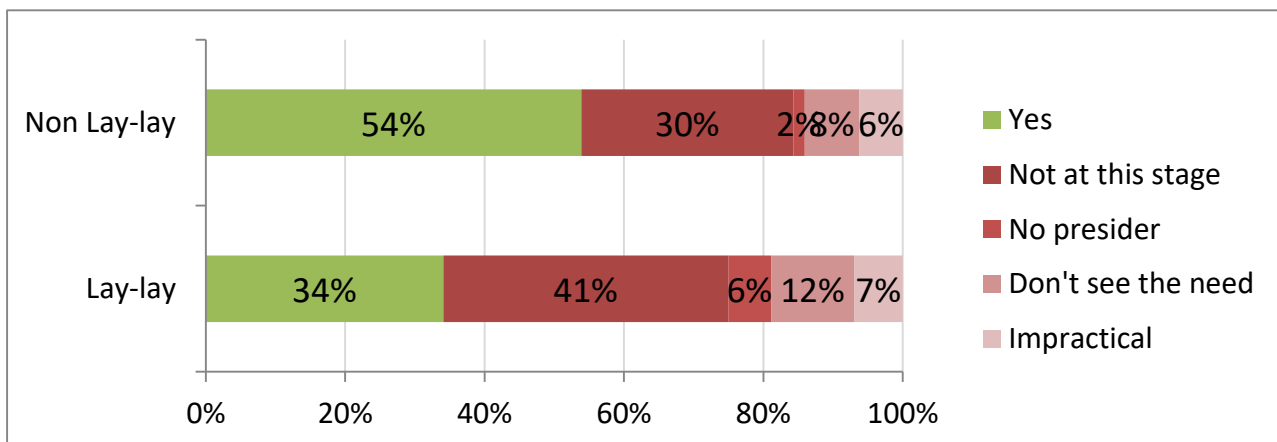
Chart 44: Baptism at lay-lay led and all other example of fxC
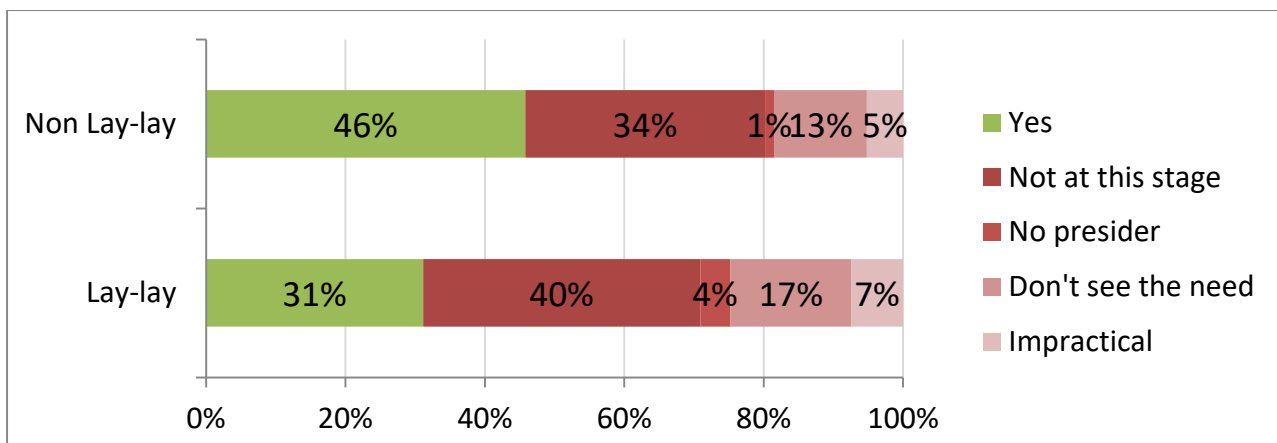
The rest of the data in both charts compares similarly. Two-fifths of the lay-lay examples are registering a not yet response in both cases and this reduces the disparity between offering sacraments in the two sets. However, 12% of the lay-lay examples say they see no need for communion and 17% no need for baptism, which is somewhat concerning, though 8% and 13% respectively of non lay-lay examples report the same response.

Unsurprisingly, more of the lay-lay say they are hampered by there being no one authorised to carry out the sacraments, although many more have clearly found someone. It is perhaps intrinsic that sacraments would be the one measure where lay-lay-led fxC lag behind what those led by others can provide. Where the local clergy are not involved, or do not wish to be, this is an unfortunate constraint.

It is also true that many of the types of fxC that lay-lay leaders more commonly lead (referring back to chart 39) do not lend themselves to sacramental practice as opposed to many types most commonly led by non lay-lay leaders. For example, traditional church plants, multiple Sunday congregations and midweek services - the three types among which non lay-lay leadership is most prevalent - can engage with sacramental practice more easily in their context than youth churches, churches based on under 5s and Messy Churches, which have among the highest proportions of lay-lay leaders.

Summary from Chapter 11

The lay-lay leaders show significant disparities to the other leaders over some factors: the time they have available, that 71% do not receive remuneration, and that 72% are female as compared to the 63% of the other leaders who are male. There are some differences in practice over sacramental provision and different types of fxC led.

However, in broad terms the missional effectiveness of the fxC they lead is comparable to that of their 'professional' counterparts, and they engage with a greater proportion of non-churched attenders. In addition, while non lay-lay leaders on average lead larger fxC, lay-lay leaders have grown their fxC from smaller sending teams and have greater growth ratios than their professionally trained counterparts.

Further, lay-lay leaders do not noticeably lag behind when it comes to ecclesial development of the fxC. The overwhelming majority of lay-lay-led fxC have made steps towards maturity through engaging with discipleship and three-self identity, and it is understandable why their sacramental development is taking longer.

Their efforts deserve recognition and their leadership merits support. There is a need to honour what the lay-lay group have done, bearing in mind from section 10.3 that this is the single largest group who are leading fxC. Writers in the field of fxC have urged that the size of the mission task facing the Church of England will require many lay leaders and this is evidence that it is already occurring. The wider Church may need the difficult combination of humility to learn from them, as well as wisdom to give them the kind of support, training and recognition that does not lead to any unintended emasculation of their essential contribution.

The wider Church could do far worse than ask a representative group of the lay-lay what training they already believe they have received through life and also via this current particular leadership experience, and therefore what further training, and / or support, they would welcome.

Recognition of prior learning – and forms of it that the Church itself has not provided – has been a weakness in our Church training instincts in the past.

More thought needs to be given to two issues:

1. One is whether there are natural unit sizes at which most examples of various types of fxC will plateau. What should happen towards that point in terms of finding more leaders to be part of bringing to birth yet further fxC?

2. The second is the question of whether these findings imply that all fxC should be lay-lay led. Factors resisting such a conclusion would include that for some groups, like pioneers and Church Army Evangelists, such a role is vocational, not merely a matter of advisability or necessity. Other interviews have revealed to us that some clergy find this part of their wider roles is life-giving and restores a balance in their overall ministry. In some places there may be a lack of leadership resources, which needs a leader sent in from the Church catholic. More sinister factors around this issue could include that history suggests that lay-lay initiatives can be dismissed as inherently second class and thought never able to mature fully ecclesially. The debate on that second question is sharpened by these factors but not concluded.

Yet this chapter substantiates that by most measures, lay-lay leaders of fxC are performing as well as their formally recognised and officially trained counterparts. It is hard to doubt that they have a significant part to play in the future. This evidence is particularly impressive given that broadly lay-lay leaders lead fresh expressions of Church on a voluntary basis in their spare time.

Chapter 12   Further overall details

The list of further details

12.1   Various motives over time to start fxC

Chart 45:   Changing motives over time for starting fxC
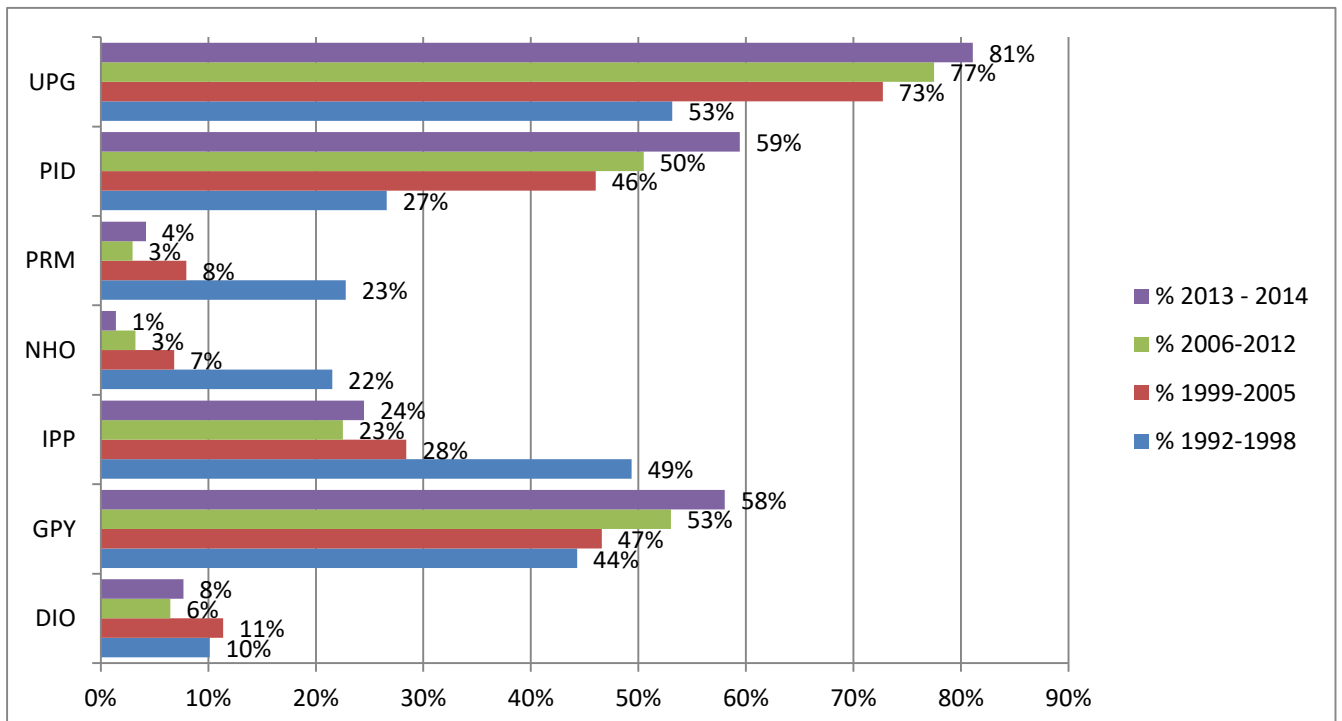
Abbreviations:
DIO – diocesan initiative   GPY – growth philosophy   IPP – inadequate penetration of a parish
NHO - new housing opportunity PRM – Physically restricted at sending church
PID - provide increased diversity UPG – unreached people group

Notes
The motives have been grouped.

The bottom two share being about growth, differentiated by the source of that thinking being central or local.

The next three above them all deal with aspects of parish-based thinking, such as finding its under-represented areas, housing added to it, or limits to space within the existing parish church.

The last two towards the top of the chart are cultural considerations.

Inferences from the data

Local visions for growth have always been more common than a diocesan initiative, welcome though the latter is. The local impetus has continued to steadily increase over time, whereas overall, with a few dioceses bucking that trend, the central initiative has slightly diminished.

The next three motives are all valid, but clearly have diminished over time, the last two markedly so. Response to spotting an area of the parish from which few come was true in virtually half the cases back in 1992-1998 and is now barely one-quarter of the picture. The remaining and growing features are a comment on a shift over time.

It is the two cultural factors which have steadily grown (as well as the 'growth philosophy' factor) with the unreached people group now being part of the story in 4/5th of all cases. This is part of the evidence from the longer story of the fxC that today's Anglican mission must think in terms of both of parish or area, and also of culture and context.

It may also be the case, from comparing the bars for 2006-2012 and 2013-2014, that we have approached something near a steady state across the spread of these motives. But only a few more years of data collection could secure that view.

12.2   Mission in pioneer and progression modes

Throughout the research period and going back to early church planting writing from Bob Hopkins, the terms pioneer and progression have been used.[32] In short, pioneer means responding to weakness; it might be that there is an area in which - or culture where - hitherto the local church has made little impact and those trying to start something feel like they are starting from scratch. By contrast, progression is more like building on strength. It might be a favourable history of church work in an area, or many existing Christians already being in an area or culture. The glossary in Appendix Two develops the differences between the two a little more.

We asked leaders to assess which of these two terms was more apt in the circumstances they faced. They scored their responses using our familiar 0-3 system, which ranged from a factor being absent to being the only or overriding factor. We allowed them to score both factors at 2, meaning a major reality. Thus any derived figures do not sum to 100%.

We have been interested to see whether over time the proportions have changed.

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[32] B. Hopkins, *Church Planting: 1. Models for mission in the Church of England* (Grove Evangelism no. 4: Nottingham, 1988), p 17-22.

Table 86: Percentage of pioneer and progression scores ≥2 over time

Mission assessment	% 1992-98	% 1999-2005	% 2006-2012	% 2013-2014
Major or only factor Pioneer	65.8%	66.5%	61.2%	57.3%
Major or only factor Progression	39.2%	40.3%	45.1%	49.0%

It is not the case that the cultural motives of section 12.1 are linked directly to pioneer work and the parish-based ones to progression work. Either mission context can apply to each class of motive.

Perhaps unsurprisingly throughout the 20 year period, the pioneer motive has been more prevalent in that the nature of the need for fxC is that they are seeking to provide something beyond what the parish already does.

It may be the case that, as the number of Messy Churches within parishes has increased and all age worship has been included in the 2nd set of dioceses, this is what is raising the progression figure over the years. It might also be connected to the wide range of traditions that start fxC.

12.3   Parish boundaries and fxC

Since 1991 the issue of whether these mission developments claiming to be churches threaten the intended integrity of the parish boundary has been an issue. It contributed to the commissioning of the first church planting report, *Breaking New Ground* in 1994. This has been a bone of contention in the past but now seems to be less so.

The issue relates to the four types of mission support, terms all explained in the glossary of Appendix Two. Section 5.7 dealt with the specific distribution, by diocese, of grafts and transplants, both of which by definition cross a parish boundary, ideally with permission, and these days do so in practice. Its tables gave the figures for all the 21 dioceses split into the two sets, across the four kinds of mission support and showing the somewhat varying averages in each set. This occurred principally because of the tripling of the incidence of transplants, and the doubling of seeds, in the 2nd set of dioceses. Very broadly, runners nearly always stay in the sending parish, grafts and transplants nearly always move beyond it and often seeds move into it.

Across the totals of the four categories for mission support, the averages are as follows:
          Runners 84.7%,   grafts 1.8%,   transplants 4.6%   seeds 7.7%.

For 1.3% of cases none of these designations fitted.

Section 6.9 addressed the issue, not by diocese, but by what tended to characterise each of the 14 more common types of fxC in relation to these four types of mission support. It showed which fxC types are more likely to have which kind of mission support. The following bar chart, using those same 14 types, now relates those 14 types to specific ecclesial boundaries.

Chart 46: 14 more common types of fxC in relation to ecclesial boundaries

Abbreviations:

AAW	All age worship	ALT	Alternative worship
CDP	Community development plant	CFC	Child-focused church
MES	Messy Church	MUL	Multiple congregation
OPC	Older people's church	SIG	Special interest group
U5s	Church for <5s & carers	YTH	Youth congregation

CAF	Café church
CLU	Cluster
NTC	Network church
TCP	Traditional church plant

Note

The category of benefice was only added in the 2nd round of dioceses Section 3.4.2 and table 8 explains the reason for the changes made and evaluates the effect.

Inferences from the data

11 of the 14 types mainly meet within the parish or benefice that began them. Among eight types this is a dominant (70%+) feature. Fears that the overflowing of parish boundaries by all types of fxC was a creeping wave, rendering these markers meaningless and spreading unprincipled competition, have no more fuel for that view than before. Fears for the parish look exaggerated.

The tendency to cross a parish boundary, and instead serve a deanery, firstly connects strongly with the need to serve a network of people, through network church, cluster, or youth church. To a lesser extent it is true of the special interest group and alternative worship and church plants. The clusters and network churches are also seen to overflow deanery boundaries for network reasons. The second factor is those church plants which are by choice transplants, which may or may not be network based.

- Only 24% of the fxC in the 21 dioceses cross a parish or benefice boundary and this proportion has remained fairly steady for 20 years.
- FxC doing so were designed to serve wider networks which inherently cross boundaries.
- In this research period, very few fxC crossed an ecclesial boundary without consent.

12.4   Venues used by the fxC

The variety of venues used was examined in section 7.12 by correlating their use to the 10 kinds of social area in which fxC are found.

The choices analysed were church owned building that could include its hall, a secular public venue, a house, or a deliberate mixture of venues was chosen. An overlapping but slightly different approach was used in our reports to the dioceses, differentiating between the church itself, its hall and all secular venues, which in those reports would include houses.

Two complications to all reporting on this dimension of fxC life are that firstly, some Messy Churches deliberately use different venues for the unfolding stages of a gathering, and secondly, several examples of different types of fxC have used a mixture of venues for different aspects, or stages, of their ongoing life.

The averages for a simple three types of venue are: church 55%, church hall 25% and secular 36%.

The variations by the 21 dioceses are not significant in themselves, but they do indicate the range of choices that are being made.

- For use of the church building, the range is between London at 70% and Liverpool at 40%.
- For being in the church hall, the range is from Portsmouth at 57% to Canterbury at 12.5%.
- For using a secular venue, we found Leicester at 56% and Guildford at 23%.

We know from section 7.12 the effects different social areas bring and suspect this range of choice so venue masks other factors like the type of fxC, as well as the sheer practicality of what is available and suitable. If and when we act as consultants, our only mantra is to urge local leaders to discover what works in context and for whom. Anecdotally we also know of fxC that struggled and even closed because they made what turned out to be an injudicious change of venue.

12.5   Days of meeting in fxC

We have figures for this factor divided into weekday, Saturday and Sunday.
Overall figures are: weekday 54.5%, Saturday 10.2%, Sunday 51.2%.

A table listing these by diocese has limited meaning. The ranges across them are wide:
- 72% of London's fxC meet on a Sunday, whereas only 32% of those in Liverpool do.
- Conversely, 75% of the Liverpool set are weekday, with Bristol the lowest at 30%.
- Leicester has 21% of them meeting on a Saturday, but the neighbouring diocese, Derby, has only 4% doing so.

The choices and recording are made complicated in that some fxC deliberately meet on more than one day, both over time and in any one period. Hence the figures in relation to days chosen do not sum to 100%.

There are more meaningful connections between the choice of day and which fxC type it is.

Chart 47: 14 more common fxC types and choice of meeting day

Abbreviations:

AAW	All age worship	ALT	Alternative worship	CAF	Café church
CDP	Community development plant	CFC	Child-focused church	CLU	Cluster
MES	Messy Church	MUL	Multiple congregation	NTC	Network church
OPC	Older people's church	SIG	Special interest group	TCP	Traditional church plant
U5s	Church for <5s & carers	YTH	Youth congregation		

Inferences from the data

It is not hard to imagine why the two highest scores for weekday are among the shut-in elderly and the very young. Both have some struggles with Sunday congregational attendance.

Conversely, multiple congregations (100%), church plants (98%), all age worship (82%), café church (80%), community development plants (71%) and alternative worship (65%) have a strong tendency to meet on a Sunday. The higher scores for Saturday are among Messy Church (21%), alternative worship (11.5%) and special interest group (11%). Those types where choices of day between weekend and weekday are most evenly spread include youth, network church, child-focused church, clusters and Messy Church.

Across the types all days of the week are used, but Wednesday is the most popular day to meet for 11 of the 14 types, with only youth church equally using Tuesday and older people's church strongly favouring meeting on a Thursday.

Overall there are changes from the Sunday dominance in parish life.
- Apart from multiple congregations no type of fxC exclusively meets on a Sunday.
- The overall data shows that just over one half of the fxC do not meet on Sunday.
- The data by type shows they have rather different patterns, which is related to their history and the kind of group they serve.
- The lesson should be to choose the day(s) that work in context.

12.6   Progress in fxC towards sustainability and viability

This report has only been able to look at this question using quantitative methods. We commend that readers consult Dr Andy Wier's pilot qualitative report, entitled *Sustaining young churches: a qualitative pilot study in the Church of England*, to dig deeper into the subtleties surrounding terms like 'sustainability' and 'viability', as well as teasing out the measures that can be used to establish what might be called ecclesial maturity.

For the purposes of this report we worked with four measures that could serve as indicators of an intention to pursue ecclesial maturity:

1   Lessons from the historic study of world mission, and the creation of young churches, suggest that maturity is furthered by progress in at least three dimensions of their lives. These are: taking governmental responsibility, engendering reproductive growth and reaching self-determined financial viability, these can be used to assess growth towards maturity in a more rounded way. They are known as **three-self** thinking.[33]

Our view is that the welcome breadth of these three factors should not be prey to a reductionism preferred by some economists and their over-valuing of the catchphrase 'the bottom line'. Being financially secure is not everything. The wider Church will sadly include some parishes with generously endowed congregations, who thus are financially secure, but which are not always known for generosity to others, including giving away resources of people, openness to appropriate mission challenges, or courage in the face of risk. Financial security and Christian maturity are not identical.

2   The centrality of the topic of **discipleship**, enabling people to grow as those wishing to becoming more Christ-like, has been emphasised by a variety of authors over the last few decades and by some diocesan bishops in promulgating a strategy for their dioceses.

3   Furthermore, the two **sacraments**, being dominical, are not negotiable in corporate Christian life and the practice of them contributes to ecclesial identity. Therefore, they too need to be part of this list of features associated with ecclesial maturity. Confirmation is not a dominical sacrament but is a practice. We include it at this point.

4   Anglicans have long valued the twin ministries of word and sacrament, and we are glad that the 2nd round of research enabled us to include how the fxC engage with **Scripture**.

The data collection form therefore included some questions in relation to all these areas. Chapter 6, in sections 6.14 to 6.17, showed how the 14 more common types were pursing these avenues. Chapter 8, and its sections 8.4 to 8.9, tested the extent to which these aspirations were modified by the three different frequencies of meeting: weekly, fortnightly and monthly. Each chapter contains its summaries of those investigations and Chapter 6 went further in attempting a portrait of the characteristic face of each of the 14 more common types of fxC.

This section goes wider, both drawing on the above data but also seeing the broader picture across all the fxC types, excepting the two types with a sample size of only 2 each.

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[33] The works of Henry Venn in the 19th century and Roland Allen in the 20th are often cited in support of this view. Some people add a fourth dimension - self-theologising - but this is even harder to measure and was omitted. The glossary comments further in Appendix Two.

1   Across this whole set of fxC, 81% of them haven taken at least some steps down the path towards **three-self maturity**. The range within the 14 more common types varies with the three sorts of progress, shown in section 6.14. Among the 14 types, the range over self-financing it is 89% to 35%, for self-governing it is narrower at 89% to 59%, and it widens again with self-reproducing with 73% to 18%. It is also clear that no type globally has failed to engage at all with three-self practice, though not all examples within a type have done so. The least engaged is older people's church, yet with 63% having done so, and the highest proportion of progress is among the church plants, with 95% having done so. Section 6.14 and its table can be read to discern which types of fxC are more likely and less likely to be making progress with each of the elements with three-self maturity.

2   Across the whole set of fxC, 80% of them have pursued at least one route in promoting **discipleship**. Again there is a range of engagement among the more common 14 types from 100% to 66%, see section 6.17. Here with two types, youth church and cluster, all of the examples are taking steps down at least one road in discipleship, but no type is devoid of taking such steps. In Messy Church it is the lowest, but still 66% of them have made a beginning. The topic of how to pursue 'messy discipleship' is one of acute interest and some recent publishing.[34]
Section 6.17 teases out which types of fxC are liable to favour which of the four named paths to assist discipleship. The data shows that to assert that fxC as a whole, or even specific types, are not interested in discipleship is unfounded.

3   Across the whole set of fxC, 43% of them have held a **communion**. However, this figure is potentially misleading as the figures vary widely by fxC type and to some extent by diocese. The range among the 14 more common types is 99% among church plants to 13% of Messy Church, and by diocese from 74% in London to 22% in Derby. Section 6.16 discusses the range by fxC type. It seems from this, and other background data, that holding a communion is less likely when the dominant age group is younger and with a higher proportion of non-churched attenders. Chapter 8 on frequency adds that monthly meeting (section 8.6) correlates strongly with a lower figure for holding a communion, further accentuated by showing how it affects the frequency of communion. The lack of provision of ordained leaders at fxC with monthly meetings only slightly mitigates this. This is a developmental issue for those 8 or 9 types of fxC with any marked tendency to have monthly meetings (see section 8.1).

Turning to holding a **baptism**, the figures are more often lower than for communion, though not in 6 dioceses and 2 others where the percentages are equal. They are also lower in 6 of the 14 more common types of fxC (see section 6.16). There the range is from 84% to 6%. It is not the case that all examples in any one type of fxC have held a baptism. Section 8.7 on frequency and baptism unpacks one theological reason, but there are some practical reasons why the baptism figure would tend to be lower. This could be because of an age group served, such as older people's church. That might be true at the younger end, but the figures among those types with many children are variable, with child-focused church at 37%, church based on >5s at 30%, while Messy Church is only 21%. FxC type has its part to play. We sought no comparable data about the frequency of baptisms.

Across the whole set of fxC 26.9% have had candidates in a **confirmation**. But in this case it is only across 16 dioceses, because we only started collecting data on this question halfway through the first round of research. The average percentages of 28% in dioceses 6-11 and 26.4% in dioceses 12-21 are close, so this gap in data may well not matter. However, the range across the dioceses is wide, with London at 51% and Manchester unusually low at 8%. It is not entirely clear why this

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[34] P. Moore, *Making Disciples in Messy Church* (Abingdon: BRF, 2013) and G. Lings (Ed.) *Messy Church Theology* (Abingdon: BRF, 2013).

wide range exists, but prevalence of fxC type and any dominant associated age group served will play a part. Across the 14 more common types of fxC, the average take-up is 30%, but the range is wide with church plants at 71% and Messy Church at 10%. The presence of many children or of older shut in adults plays a part in that among older people's church, only 16% have had confirmation candidates and 19% in church based on <5s.

We did not ask whether any fxC have themselves been the venue for such a service, but that is not a required feature as cathedrals are often the venue among parish churches.

4   The numerical figures for engagement with **the Bible** are not quoted because they only come from the 2nd set of dioceses. However, percentages are quoted and across all types of fxC all but one type of fxC - unsurprisingly church based on >5s - engage with Scripture in one way or another. Even among the church based on >5s group, only a single case fails to do so. Section 6.15 lays out the seven routes, plus 'other', that could be taken and traces the variety of ways that tend to be chosen by the 14 more common but different types of fxC, including sub-tables listing the 5 most likely to engage with the more traditional routes and another sub-table doing the same for more creative or private ways of doing so. The two groups of results tend to suggest that different types of fxC do take different paths. The exception is the all age worship type which appears 4th or 5th in five out of the six lists. Section 8.5 goes on to show that the routes taken are not so much affected by frequency as by fxC type. Those more creative routes favoured by the fxC types with a monthly meeting out-score the weekly ones for use of those creative approaches. This and section 6.15, as defined by its seven routes to engage with the Bible, suggests the fxC have made more progress in drawing upon the word than with the sacraments.

12.7   Who presides at fxC communions?

The overall picture
475 of the 1109 fxC have held some kind of communion service, using a variety of frequencies, but in a vast majority of those fxC the president is ordained. Of the 475, in 63 fxC a lay person has led the service. We use the term led, rather than presided, aware of some of the niceties of what formally constitutes a communion service. The lay-led proportion in relation to the 1109 fxC is 5.7% of the total, and 13.3% of the 475.

We took some notes of their practice and discerned three different combinations.
- In 34 fxC, the so-called 'communion service' was always lay led.
- In 15 fxC over time, the service had been led by the clergy fxC member or the lay leader.
- In 14 fxC over time, the service had been led by an imported clergy person or the lay leader.

Of the 63 cases, in 31 of them we have no further comments from the interviewed fxC leader. But across the rest, 19 cases were of an agape occurring, 8 used extended communion, 1 was an ecumenical communion and 4, as far as we can see, were lay-led communions.

It is also clear that this practice is more associated with certain types of fxC. Of the 63 cases, clusters are 35%, special interest group 19%, alternative worship 16%, network church 14%, church plants 11% and Messy Church 10%. In multiple congregations and new traditional services it does not occur. In the rest it is arguably negligible. Because in an individual fxC presiders may change over time, or deliberately alternate, figures cited do not sum to 100%.

Any fear of a widespread revolt over lay presidency, among fxC practice, seems far-fetched.

12.8   fxC and the traditions within Anglicanism

The complications of leaders multiple classifying across the traditions have been acknowledged, and liberal as a distinct tradition was only added in the second round of research.

The range of traditions has then been examined in relation to the spread in the fxC within each of the 21 dioceses in section 5.3. How they are distributed across the fxC types is covered by section 6.19. In addition, section 7.13 explored whether there were links between the theological tradition of the team starting an fxC and types of geographical and social area served.

It remains to set down the overall spread and comment, as stereotypes about which traditions are dominant have been aired, and these stereotypes can depart from the reality.

Table 87:   Traditions that the fxC identified with

	Anglo-Catholic	Central	Charismatic	Evangelical	Liberal
Averages from 21 dioceses	13.2%	39.0%	32.1%	63.7%	12.7%

Inferences from this data

Multiple choices mean the percentages do not sum to 100%.

- All traditions are represented, and except for the cluster type of fxC, all five traditions are found in relation to all types of fxC, but not in equal measure as section 6.19 explains.
- That section and this shows the single tradition most likely to be chosen is evangelical. Section 6.19 showed it as the leading choice in all but one type of fxC.
- The central tradition then comes next in terms of most frequent association, not the charismatic tradition, as some have supposed.

12.9   fxC and interdenominational co-operation

This aspect has not featured in this report thus far, but it has been one factor in reporting back to the individual dioceses, especially if its own figure deviates either way from the mean. We have headed this subsection using the term 'interdenominational' rather than ecumenical because it is rare that the aim in a local partnership is the classic meaning of 'ecumenism'- that the Churches as denominations should be fully one.

The data is in three categories, as shown in the column labels below. We have used the acronym LEP for Local Ecumenical Partnership, though we are aware there is a more recent term.

Table 88:   fxC by Anglican and interdenominational partnerships

Diocese	No. of fxC	C of E only figures	Informal Partner figures	LEP figures	C of E only %	Informal partner %	LEP %
Liverpool	78	68	10		87.2%	12.8%	-
Canterbury	72	68	4		94.4%	5.6%	-
Leicester	52	48	4		92.3%	7.7%	-
Derby	46	41	4	1	89.1%	8.7%	2.2%
Chelmsford	50	44	6		88.0%	12.0%	-
Norwich	63	48	14	1	76.2%	22.2%	1.6%
Ripon & Leeds	39	36	3		92.3%	7.7%	-
Blackburn	64	59	5		92.2%	7.8%	-
Bristol	33	27	5	1	81.8%	15.2%	3.0%
Portsmouth	21	19	2		90.5%	9.5%	-
Gloucester	23	18	5		78.3%	21.7%	-
Exeter	69	48	20	1	69.6%	29.0%	1.4%
Ely	52	42	8	2	80.8%	15.4%	3.8%
Southwark	47	36	11		76.6%	23.4%	-
Guildford	77	61	9	7	79.2%	11.7%	9.1%
Carlisle	47	30	15	2	63.8%	31.9%	4.3%
London	86	80	6		93.0%	7.0%	-
Birmingham	28	23	4	1	82.1%	14.3%	3.6%
Sheffield	56	45	1	10	80.4%	1.8%	17.9%
York	57	49	6	2	86.0%	10.5%	3.5%
Manchester	49	43	5	1	87.8%	10.2%	2.0%
Totals	1109	933	147	29			
Averages					84.1%	13.3%	2.6%

We see a contrast here between a national impression and local reality. Nationally, ecumenical partnership is strongly favoured, as modelled by the make-up of the national Fresh Expressions team, backed up by its literature and their practice of delivering its most substantial course, *msm*, to people from a mixture of denominations. However, in practice, fxC connected to the Church of England have very largely (84%) taken the route of acting alone.

It is immediately obvious that the LEP route is absent in over half the dioceses, and rare in the remainder, except in Guildford and Sheffield. Where it has occurred it is sometimes sensibly linked to beginning something on a big new estate, as instanced in cases in Ely or Guildford. Despite the call in *Mission-shaped Church* for ecumenical processes to be made light touch, not much improvement has occurred. For those keen to press on and do something, this route is too cumbersome.

Informal partnership locally between the Church of England and another denomination to start an fxC is more common, though variable, and always still a minor feature of the landscape. It is strongest in Carlisle, then Exeter, Norwich, Gloucester and Ely which are all mainly rural dioceses. The Sheffield LEP figure is inflated by the examples which are derived from the prior existing LEP at St Thomas Crookes. We presume this rural predominance is a reflection of the need to co-operate across smaller churches, or in villages where few denominations are left.

12.10   Learning from the exclusion rate and reasons re. fxC

Much of this issue has been covered in section 5.9. It gave, by each diocese, the figures and some percentages for the kinds of exclusion made, what each term means and what proportion of the alleged cases of fxC, in many cases turned out to be something else, although a 100+ were genuine but outside the time period studied.

In the first round of research the rate for 'excluded', with its average of 53.9%, revealed the disturbing extent of that confusion. The 2nd round was if anything worse, whereby at the end the average exclusion rate across 21 dioceses was 60.2%. A summary table is provided here showing which features have increased the most.

Table 89:   Subdividing the categories of examples deemed 'not an fxC'

	Total exclusions	Outside research period	Arch	Less than monthly	Not yet started	Duplicate record	Not an fxC	Outreach project	
Dioceses 1-11	649	19	110	52	28	36	404	146	Section 5.9
Dioceses 12-21	1029	75	173	59	25	66	631	294	commented in
Totals	1678	94	283	111	59	102	1035	440	a

positive vein that part of the overall learning is that the outreach projects (a subset of the 'not an fxC' column) were worth praising in their own right. And those three groups - 'arch', 'less than monthly' and 'not yet started' - when summed came to another 447 examples and were all worth a diocese following up to see how they developed. All the dioceses surveyed have been sent this information on a case by case basis, and could do so.

It still leaves a national problem of confusion around the term 'fresh expression of Church' that section 5.9 comments upon. It would seem from the second set of dioceses that the problem has got worse despite the existence of our 2013 report and conferences to disclose its messages. This is a pity, for the research demonstrates what the 1109 included cases are bringing to the overall mission and ecclesial self-understanding of the Church of England.

We see some value in unpacking the large 'not an fxC' category for it should assist dioceses in future to stop clergy, wardens and diocesan officials wrongly or even hopefully designating things as fxC which are not.

We hope the result will be greater clarity across the variety of what is being done, greater honesty in not pretending something is a fresh expression of Church because it sounds good, and greater realism about how each of these different things is appropriately supported.

Table 90: Unpacking the 'not an fxC' category

	Breakdown of 'Not fxC' category								
	Rebadged existing service	Rebadged groups / events	Outreach projects	Infrequent events	New event for Christians	Chap-laincy	Never CofE	Did not last 2 years	No info found or never started
Liverpool	3	13	7		9	1		3	2
Canterbury	4	3	3		6	1			2
Leicester	4	2	9		4		1		
Derby	11	14	19		10		1		1
Chelmsford	11	8	27		7		2	1	1
Norwich	4	5	19		7			2	
Ripon & Leeds	4	6	16		7	2		3	6
Blackburn	12	15	27		9		4	4	9
Bristol	1	6	7		4	1	1		
Portsmouth		1	3				1		
Gloucester	3	6	9		6			3	1
Exeter	6	6	30	3	6		1	4	1
Ely	3	4	22	4	9			4	1
Southwark	6	4	13	3	5	2	1	2	1
Guildford	4	3	10	2	6			6	
Carlisle	4	9	24	2	11	1	1	5	1
London	6	4	27	2	8	1	2	4	2
Birmingham	1		10	3	5			3	
Sheffield	9	4	38	1	8	1	2	7	2
York	15	14	68	3	26	1	1	11	3
Manchester	14	8	52	5	12		2	13	3
Totals	125	135	440	28	165	11	20	75	36

Several comments are needed to tease out the strands this table reveals.

The rebadged services, rebadged groups/events and new events for Christians may well be ecclesial, useful and needed. Together they are 41% of the total. But it was clear that they were neither aimed at, nor actually bringing in any outsiders, and thus were not missional. We admit some ambivalence about them. We accept that in some cases they may enliven or renew the existing church, which we applaud. We nevertheless wish they would not call themselves fresh expressions of Church as this is confusing at best, and could be dishonest or delusional at worst. In some of the rebadged cases we suspected that an exercise in box ticking or being thought trendy was going on.

By direct contrast, it can be seen that the third column and single most commonly excluded type, being 43% of the whole, were those that were missional but which had no ecclesial intentions or features. We regard these as admirable, but their purpose was to bring any new people back into the very church putting on these projects. No new church either occurred or was envisaged. Sometimes the infrequent events were a variant on this kind.

When it came to chaplaincy, only some examples examined were excluded. Where an ongoing, reasonably settled, worshipping and witnessing community resulted, they were included as fxC. Where chaplains were exercising doubtless valuable ministry to individuals or groups but no ecclesial community would, or could, form as a result, then they were not included. The latter are pieces of mission at the edge, and to be welcomed, but they are not fresh expressions of Church.

In 20 cases out of a total of 2787 leads we were given there was no Anglican partner involved, and for that reason alone they fell outside the remit of our investigations. In 36 cases the example cited was simply not known locally, we could not make contact with anyone, or it was an idea from which nothing ever came.

The high exclusion rate demonstrates that Church Army's Research Unit has been unafraid to insist on the term 'fresh expression of Church' being used as meant in *Mission-shaped Church.* It would have been possible, but undesirable, to increase the number of cases by lowering the bar. We did not wish to do this, suspecting the term had been borrowed and used indiscriminately since 2004. We also wish to minimise any dangers of over-claiming. The exclusions then have the power to reveal the results from one attempt at greater consistency and robustness.

Some might posit that to dismiss over half of the alleged cases reveals the term has become meaningless, but we hold to the reverse view. Our argument is that any new vocabulary takes time to settle; it is very likely, in a church as diverse and diffuse as the Church of England, to go through a period of unsettled and uneven reception. That will involve a sifting process that helpfully discloses what is not meant by the term. In 2004 when it was coined in *Mission-shaped Church,* that could not be authoritatively anticipated. Reception has been a feature of Anglican life - for example, the transition over time from tractarian re-invention to the parish communion movement, or the ordination of women.

We also assert from our qualitative studies of other new initiatives that similar distortions have occurred over what counts as clusters, café church, cell church or Messy Church. We detect a disturbing tendency for increased use of any new label that becomes popular to be in inverse proportion to accurate understanding of its meaning. The same could be said for the use of the word 'mission' in parish and diocesan literature. It is almost now there by default, and as has been said: 'when everything is mission, nothing is'.

Our team's view is that inventing a further term will not rescue the Church from this tendency to uncritically borrow new terms and thus obscure their meaning. Our view is that we should not abandon the term now in view of the confusion, but urge that it be used correctly, drawing on an Anglican Reformation tag: 'The abuse does not take away the use.' It is likely that any further invented term would be subjected to a similar process of debasement and it would also clash with the existing nomenclature. Our research, using consistent and agreed indicators that are now becoming known, is a good chance to recover this unhelpful situation, at least in the dioceses surveyed and whose officers now have a useful measuring device.

Our team has been heartened, in the period of writing this report, to be in close contact with the Research and Statistics unit of the Church of England. They have sought to design and disseminate a flow diagram to accompany requests for data about fxC. We are appreciative of their generous working with our comments on its shape and text to produce what would be diagnostic, accurate and readily understood by those who fill in the forms. We are glad to recommend that the final version be adopted and used in collection of national data returns and be adopted universally by the dioceses. We are now in a better position to have greater clarity, which will aid future research and decisions about the allocating of resources. A version is to be found in Appendix Seven.

Summary of lessons from the exclusions

- The overall exclusion rate is high, although it varies across dioceses.

- The most common reason for exclusion was that an example proffered was something else, such as a mission project.

- Progress is being made towards clarity and consistency by use of a diagnostic flow diagram, through partnership with the central Research and Statistics unit.

- The argument to retain the term 'fresh expressions of Church' remains coherent.

12.11   Elements indicating vulnerability in fxC

12.11.1   Setting missional and ecclesial growth in a wider perspective

Church Army's Research Unit has an understanding that an interest in growth should be held within a wider brief. An excessive interest in numerical attendance has long been one critique of the thinking of the Church Growth school and need not be chronicled here. A more fully orbed view would see it as but one factor within a more holistic understanding, which might either be called the pursuit of sustainability, or of health and maturity. Our view is that the latter words are freer of reduction to solely economic categories and very pertinent to understanding the Church within an interpersonal rather than institutional paradigm. Dr Andy Wier's report on sustainability in fxC makes common cause with this.

In the work with the 21 dioceses covered, whenever we detected vulnerability, either in patterns of conversations with leaders or conclusions from the overall statistics derived, we fed this back to the dioceses, through our individual reports and presentations to them. Similarly, when higher than average overall scores were registered, we passed on this sign of health. This report now adds a list of the kinds of vulnerabilities in young fresh expressions of Church, from our data, but highlighted from the interviews with leaders of fxC.

In the paradigm of maturity and health, vulnerability is a term that indicates possible weakness but which may not be fatal. However, the wider the range of vulnerabilities exhibited, or the more severe the absence of one desirable feature, the higher the risk to ongoing life involved. The report also considers in section 12.12 those cases that no longer exist and in effect are young local churches that have died.

12.11.2   Features inferring some vulnerability

Is discipleship being ignored? This term includes a wide range of attributes: becoming committed to Christ, growing in holiness, working at being authentic community, serving others, practicing giving, establishing personal patterns in spirituality, exercising gifts and ministries, witnessing to the faith, and applying faith to life. Our work could only detect external steps taken to promote these, as the deeper ones would require qualitative work. We recognise that these desirable developments are all the more difficult to foster where the gathering pattern is only monthly, which applies to 45.8% of all the cases we studied. Where any diocesan list showed both a high percentage of monthly fxC and a low figure for taking some steps in discipleship, as compared to elsewhere, we drew the diocese's attention to it.

Are certain types of fxC so resource hungry that they cannot, and should not, increase their frequency of gathering above monthly? We sense this is a potential trap for alternative worship, thoroughgoing forms of café church,[35] and Messy Church. If this work level ceiling exists, how do such types of fxC find different ways of gathering and building being a church community between their monthly high points, which then are more sustainable?

48% of cases are lay led, and the further 23% led by assistant clergy. What proper assurance of continued existence does the fxC have in the face of a change of parish incumbent? Anecdotally over 30 years, one sadly recurring pattern has been that this change has too often led to closure of the fxC, on the say so of the clergy newcomer and not because it was unsustainable. We note from responses to a specific question within the questionnaire that in the overall 20 year period, 88% of fxC have no legal identity of their own (see below).

Table 91:   Legal identities and fxC

Legal status of fxC	1992-1998	1999-2005	2005-2012	2013-2014	Totals	%
Bishops Mission Order	2	9	26	8	45	4.1%
Charitable trust	4	7	16	1	28	2.5%
Conventional district	2	3	1	0	6	0.5%
Daughter church	0	1	0	0	1	0.1%
Extra parochial place	2	3	1	0	6	0.5%
Parish status	8	11	17	2	38	3.4%
Team district church	7	1	3	1	12	1.1%
Sub Totals	25	35	64	12	136	12.3%
Overall nos fxC	79	176	711	143	1109	
No legal identity	54	141	647	131	973	
No legal identity %	68.4%	80.1%	91.0%	91.6%	87.7%	

Note
The totals for the Bishop's Mission Order (BMO) row include fxC that have been granted a BMO already and those taking steps down this road, encouraged by the diocese to think it would be forthcoming.

We know that the BMO is now available, has occasionally been applied retrospectively and its use has increased. But it is often not suitable as it was designed for those types of fxC that, by mission design and ecclesial agreement, operate beyond parish boundaries.

An analogy, designed to provoke further discussion, is that many fxC are in effect treated like immigrants doing good work, who have not yet been given the right to remain, let alone acquired British citizenship. There is active debate about whether they are to be regarded as churches or not, but little to nothing is said about giving them rights and legal identity within the Anglican family, unless they can become indistinguishable from existing churches, a move which would remove their *raison d'être.* Further comment on the meaning and use of these possible legal designations is found within the glossary of Appendix Two. We recommend that this present imbalance of so many fxC having no legal status, and thus no right to remain or no working representation, be addressed. This

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[35] Thoroughgoing means those versions that offer a whole café experience (not just coffee), involving a team and even paid staff. See G. Lings *Encounters on the Edge* nos. 33 and 34 (Sheffield: Church Army, 2007).

problem of succession and subsequent closure also can occur when a curate moves on and is not replaced.

Is responsibility being taken towards attaining greater maturity? This would include the financing of an fxC, finding proper governing of its life, and taking steps towards reproducing more disciples of Christ, further gifts, ministries, leaders, and in time a further fresh expression of Church. Once again, when our team were meeting the complete absence of such features in particular cases we sensed vulnerability, and where such overall figures were low in a diocese, in our overall report to that diocese we passed on our concern.

What simplicity of inner church life will be necessary in cases with the 27.5% of spare time and 19.5% of part time leaders, such that both the leaders, and the communities they lead, have time to engage with their wider community? What support will the leaders need from wider national, diocesan or local networks?

If most fxC are small, with a mean size of 50 and with 54.7% on a plateau, where are leaders for further reproduction of churches to be found, or grown within such relatively small groups? This dynamic also applies to the cases were the founder moves on, retires or even dies in post. Many fxC appear to have no succession plan, nor are their leaders deliberately apprenticing others to follow them or begin something further.

In the cases where the membership is mainly composed of junior school-aged children or younger, what plans and resources are there for the next stage when these members are 11+ and moving through the teenage years? By failing to have a long-term strategic view, such fxC could be inadvertently planning to fail those young people.

Does the high overall exclusion rate of 60.2% indicate more than confusion, and illustrate a lack of fxC being truly embedded in a diocese? If so, how could this change for the better?

Either at the stage of taking the record, or entering the data, members of Church Army's Research Unit sometimes were aware that particular stories exhibited several of the above vulnerabilities. Although our indicators meant they could be included, we had real concerns about how long they might last.

With that vulnerability in mind, this report turns to examination of which cases had ceased to meet and in effect had died.

12.12   Mortality within fxC

In the research, we have included and subjected to the same analysis all those examples that lived for at least two years and began within the research periods. The very few drawn to our notice that lived less than two years we deemed not to have built lasting patterns that merited tracking.

The mortality rate across dioceses 1-11 was 54 out of 541, or 9.98%. This compares with earlier estimates of 8% in the 1990s, when an attempt at national records was kept by Dr Lings until 1998.[36] This research work acts as an attempt to cover the gap since then and bring it up to date. It may be that there are some other earlier examples now lost to the corporate memory. In the 2nd tranche of dioceses, the rate was similar at just over 10% until the York diocese was covered, which has 17 examples, raising the overall rate in the 2nd tranche to 12.3%.

We are hesitant to say whether this rate is acceptable. Compared with much higher losses in other denominations in previous decades, this result is encouraging. Some writers have urged that any entrepreneurial culture in relation to the Church must embrace risk,[37] while conversely the ending of a community of faith should not be taken lightly. It is hard to know what are suitable parallels. If compared with the failure rate in small businesses, this rate might be thought too low; if it were analogous to infant mortality, it would be shocking. For the Church of England, perhaps one comparison should be the resistance to the closure of church buildings.

For completeness, the report also tracks if any fxC went independent from the Church of England and we find only four cases, two in each round of research. We note with sadness that they are now divorced from the life of the Church of England, but in an ecumenical world this hardly constitutes ecclesial death.

Some contributory factors to fxC mortality

We correlated the features of those that had died with some dynamics we hold to be endemic to church maturity and sustainability. One is engagement in discipleship. The data shows that of the 124 that died, 23.4% were taking no steps in that direction, which is about 1/6th more often than the average (19.6%) within the overall 1109 examples who have taken no such steps.

We also linked records of those fxC that died with whether steps towards three-self maturity had been taken. The figure for those taking no steps was 25.0%, compared with a rating of 19.2% for those still living, which means this gap occurs a little under ¼ more often. We infer from this that the lesson is that failure to plan for maturity contributes to likely mortality.

We note also that sacramental practice, statistically speaking, appears to work the other way round. 56% of those fxC that died had celebrated communion, whereas only 43% of those still alive had done so. With Baptisms, the figures are similar but closer. 40% of those that died had held a baptism, while only 37% of those still alive had done so. We infer that holding such services does not confer ecclesial immortality, but otherwise offer little explanation for this statistic. It is quite possible that the considerable proportion of fxC that are less than three years old, many of which have not yet got to the stage of holding communion services, has an effect on these overall figures.

We also correlated growth patterns over time and mortality.

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[36] G. Lings and S. Murray, *Church Planting, past present and future*, Grove Evangelism no. 61 (Cambridge: Grove Books, 2003), p. 7, and the same authors, *Church Planting in the UK since 2000,* Grove Evangelism no. 99 (Cambridge: Grove Books, 2012).
[37] An early example in relation to contemporary UK Anglican mission would be R. Warren, *Building Missionary Congregations* (London: CHP, 1995), p. 35, citing the call to 'let a thousand flowers bloom'.

Chart 48:   Mortality and links to growth patterns
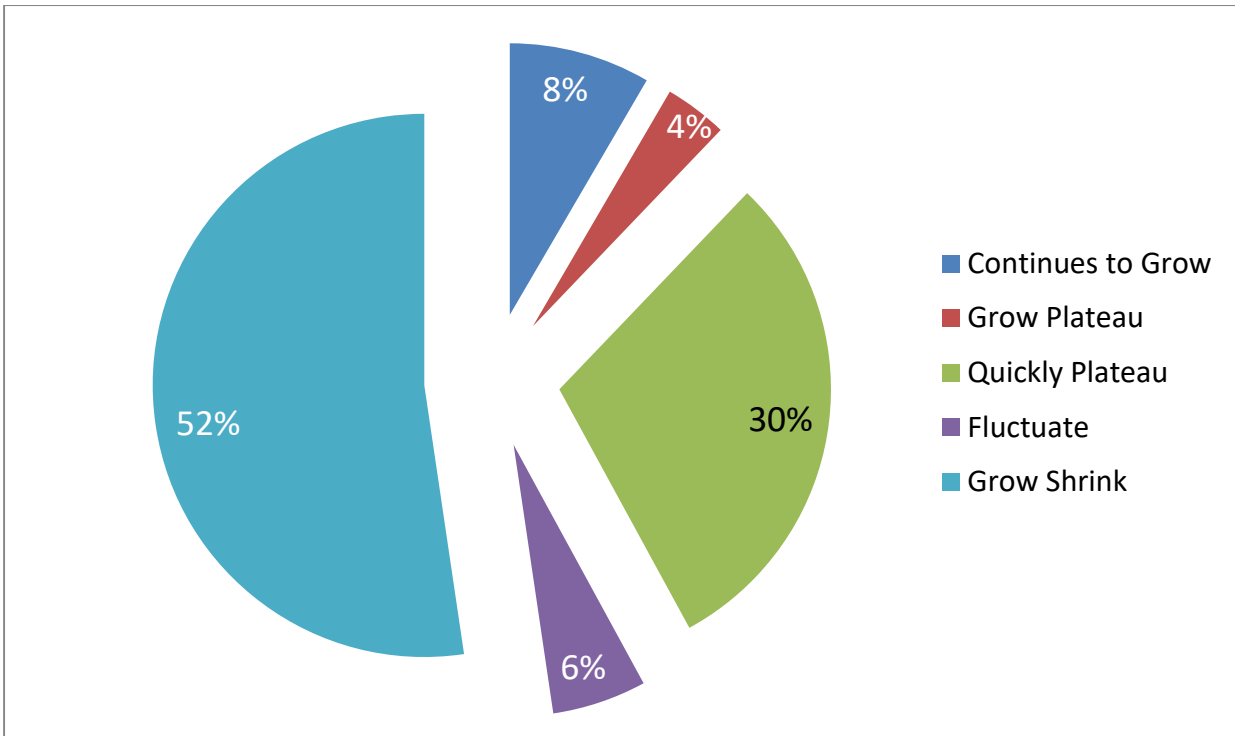
This data shows that of those that have ceased, 30% were those fxC which had quickly plateaued. Among those that died, those at greater risk (52%) were those that had already shrunk.

For completeness we note that what might be termed 'untimely death' can occur among those that had been growing.

Length of life

By comparing the year and month of start with the year and month of ending we can measure how long they existed for and investigate if there are patterns to note.

Chart 49:   The length of life of 124 fxC that died, out of 1109 fxC in 21 dioceses
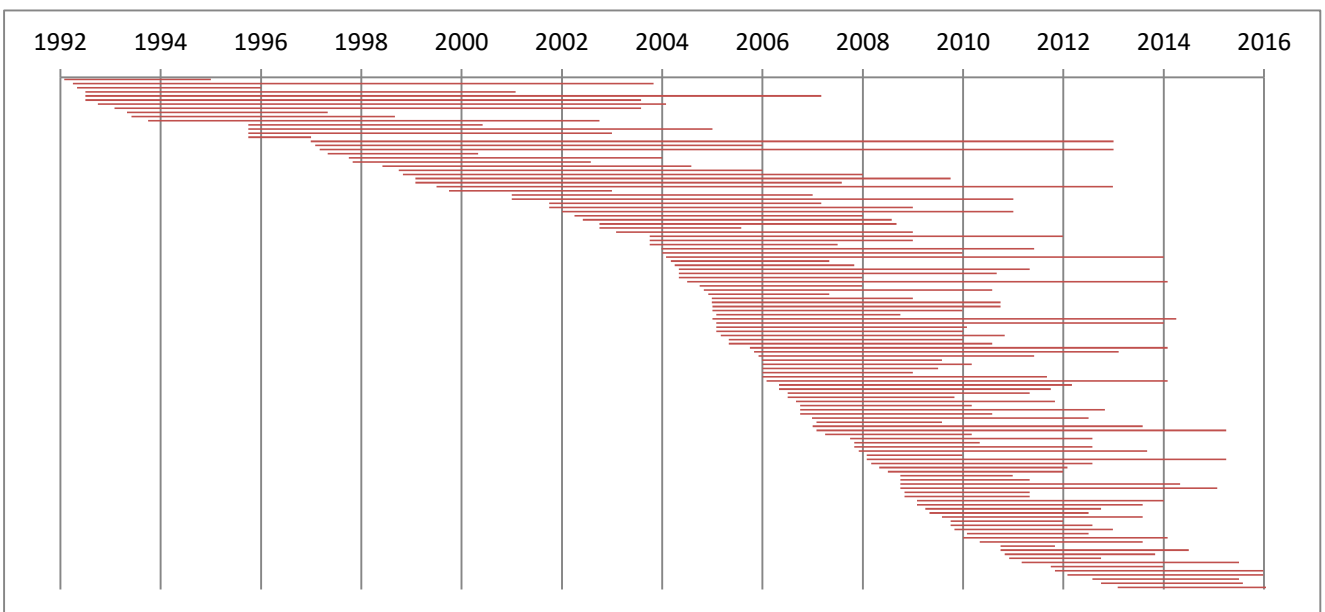
The Gantt chart 49 above shows the length of life of the 124 examples among dioceses 1-21 that eventually died. On first glance it looks as though the examples begun in earlier years have a longer shelf life than the recent ones.[38] Then a caveat needs considering.

Our approach breaks the overall 21 years into three seven-year periods. While this is somewhat artificial, it sharpens possible inferences. The earliest period, 1992-1998, was dominated by the type now termed 'traditional church plants' as opposed to other types of fxC, many of which had not yet been thought of. These church plants were usually designed to serve geographical areas and often could be the only expression of the Anglican Church for that local area. As such, some hope for their longevity was embedded. Against this, it is possible that some short lived examples have been lost to the corporate memory, but this is in the realm of supposition. Returning to the three seven-year periods, the ethnographic work of Church Army's Research Unit and the literature from that time espousing particular varieties of approach, tell us that the 1999-2005 period saw a widening of approaches, including café church, cell church, Messy Church and network churches. By 2004, *Mission-shaped Church* could name 12 types.

It could be argued that the more recent periods, 2006-2012 and 2013-2014, have been marked by the following of particular brands, or the rise in starting something out of its popularity, both of which are equivocal features, as well as the further widening of types of fxC known to exist. These years could be characterised as having a climate of experimentation in which it would be expected that there would be a higher failure rate, including what was short lived. Does all this mean a drift from stability to greater uncertainty?

The overall picture broken into time periods now needs exploring.

Table 92:   Periods in which the fxC death occurred

	1992-1998	1999-2005	2006-2012	2013 -2014	Total
Died during the period	5	15	75	29	124
Started in that period	79	176	711	143	1109
No. active during that period	79	250	946	1014	
% died in that period	6.3%	6.0%	7.9%	2.9%	

Please note that the third row of the figures is calculated on the sum of those fxC started by the end of that period less those that died before that period. This is done because an fxC starting in one period will not necessarily die during it, if at all.

The significant figures are the percentages which show the mortality rate in each of the four periods. Up till the last few years it has stayed much the same. It is uncertain whether the two years of the last period will turn out to be typical. Only at the end of that period in 2019 will we know whether that lower mortality rate has been sustained. It is a matter of interpretation whether these rates represent a welcome climate of experimentation, or one of less well considered or resourced starts, or the start of less viable fxC, any of which could lead to higher rates of death.

In summary, the earliest period shows, via chart 49 that those which did die lasted longer but, via table 92, in equal proportions to later ones of them. The middle period with the wider advent of variety of type sees the beginning of shorter life spans but reveals variety of life length. The most recent period has a much lower proportion of deaths, but those that died did so relatively quickly.

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[38] The chart contains two recent examples which lived less than two years. They were from our pilot diocese, before we decided that two years was the minimum length of life needed for inclusion.

Table 93: How long the fxC lived

Length of life	No. of cases
Under two years	4
More than 2 years but less than 3 years	16
3 or more years but less than 5	43
5 or more years but less than 8	36
8 or more years but less than 10	15
10 or more years	10
Total	124

In this table, from across the whole period, we see a variety of length of life for which the average is 5.7 years. It might be argued that once the first eight years are navigated, prospects for continued existence are brighter. There may be some truth in this for then a tradition and patterns exist, not just a short story.

But this ignores what we know from individual stories that endings can be caused by a very wide range of factors, some of which are unpredictable. The latter can include moral scandal, being shut by the incoming incumbent, or the unforeseen depopulation of an area. More commonly there are features like the founder moving on, key lay leaders moving away, exhaustion of ideas, as well as benign factors like sensing the job had been completed.

We also examined whether the numbers in the initial team size affected longevity and mortality. It was clear that there are no significant correlations of that kind. Section 6.20 looked at mortality in the 14 more common types. We show here a chart for all the types where it is shown which are more prone to ceasing.

Chart 50: Mortality rates (from most common to least common) and fxc types
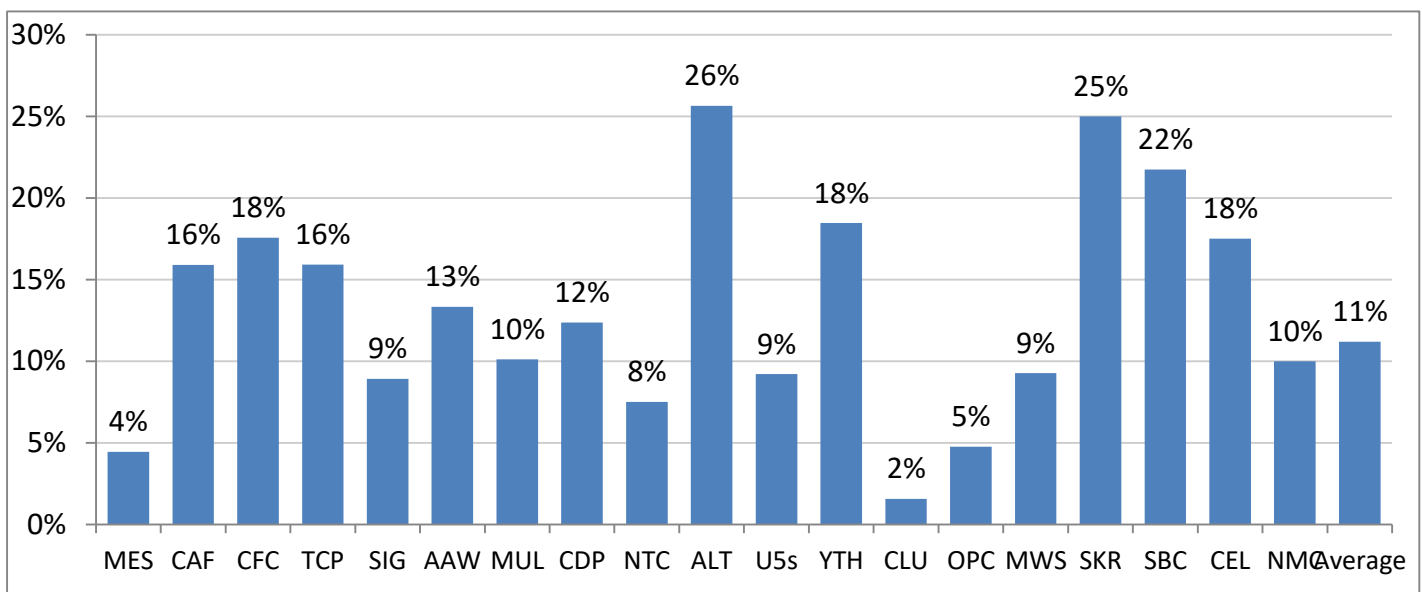
Abbreviations:

AAW	All age worship	ALT	Alternative worship	CDP	Community development plant
CAF	Café church	CEL	Cell plant	CFC	Child-focused church
CLU	Cluster	MES	Messy Church	MUL	Multiple congregation
MWS	Midweek church	NMC	New monastic community	NTC	Network church
OPC	older people's church	SBC	School-based church	SKR	Seeker church
SIG	Special interest group	TCP	Traditional church plant	U5s	Church for <5s & carers
YTH	Youth congregation				

With an overall average of 11%, clearly there are differences between the fxC types. Yet no types have a higher than 26% mortality rate and one is 1.6%. So on average, 89% of all fxC types continue their existence as of the time of writing.

It should be borne in mind that a few types are newer, like clusters and school-based church. Here it may be too soon to tell how their stories will unfold and what history will show the eventual survival rate has been. Already the school-based examples are among those at higher risk and clusters are the lowest.

Some other fxC types have been known for 20 years and it is among these that we register the higher mortality scores: alternative worship (26%), seeker (25%), cell (18%), youth church (18%) and church plants (16%). The exception among these longer known types would be the multiple congregations at 10%. We do not know the precise causation for these links, although we are aware of anecdotal conjectures. This would merit further investigation.

It might be thought that there is a distinct relationship between some fxC types being resource hungry and not being able to continue. With alternative worship, café church and seeker, that analysis is plausible, but Messy Church at 4.4% appears to refute this. Here we must bear in mind that though the first Messy Church began in 2004, many are more recent.

Summary from Chapter 12

This chapter brought together a wide range of considerations and offered some conclusions.

- The 21 types of fxC are not evenly spread across the dioceses, with some types being prevalent in certain dioceses. It is clear which are the most numerous types.
- The two periods of research confirm that the starts of fxC are a still rising trend, confirming that four times as many start per year as compared with 12 years ago.
- The number of attenders (although not of the same level of attendance frequency, or known depth of commitment) are equivalent to the attenders in two Church of England dioceses. If the other half of the dioceses contain as many examples then there would be around 100,000 people attending an Anglican fxC.
- Modesty is in order in relation to prior claims of the percentages of de-churched and non-churched people attending fxC.
- The *Who's there?* attenders survey has shown this area is more complex than previously thought.
- It depends on which calculation is used to determine whether these two groups outnumber the existing Christians present at fxC. However, the fxC have higher scores than a control group of parishes.
- There is both evidence of progress towards ecclesial maturity in the fxC and that there is further to go, not least in relation to provision of communion.
- Only certain types of fxC are likely to cross a parish boundary and usually this is for fxC that are network-based in their mission.
- Interdenominational partnership over starting an fxC is a minor part of the story.
- There are signs of, and lessons from, the vulnerability in these young churches.
- Failure to pursue certain features of maturity seems to contribute to mortality.
- Mortality rates among the fxC seem to be reducing among those started more recently.

Chapter 13   Learning from this research of 2012-2016

The overall framework of understanding to work within, at all times, is that fresh expressions of Church are made of two elements. Just as water is composed of hydrogen and oxygen, so fxC are made of missional and ecclesial elements. Take either one out and the result may be of value but it is not a fresh expression of Church.

13.1   False assumptions to avoid

- *Buying an fxC off the shelf really works*. It can be done, but it is usually a mistake. We urge readers not to slavishly copy, or replicate, what others have done.
- *Only big urban congregations can do this*. We have seen fxC started even by small rural churches, which went well.
- *It takes a team of 50 to do it properly*. This is not true. The most common adult team size is 3-12 people (see section 6.8). The evidence of subsequent growth in size and maturity is not mainly dependent on team size.
- *Only evangelicals can do this*. Again this is not true; all traditions can do this (see sections 5.3 and 6.19), but it is wise to consider what type of fxC each church can work with in integrity.
- *Laying on an act of worship is the best starting point*. A steady flow of reflective writing commends a longer process of loving and serving people, making relationships that naturally include spiritual conversations and only then evolving public worship.
- *All fxC do the same job*. The evidence in Chapter 6 denies this. They could be likened to related but different members within a large family. All the types have attendant strengths and weaknesses; they take different resources and have different natural unit sizes.
- *The point is to get new people to the main church*. That can be a by-product, but it is not the aim. The call is to add to the diversity and number of interdependent churches, in order to express the mission and kingdom of God.

13.2   Missional lessons to learn

- *Be clear on the groups of outsiders the fxC is for*. Ensure the leader(s) and team are focused on those not attending church and proactive in connecting with them. Studies elsewhere reveal the downside of disaffected Christians joining
- *Different types of fxC connect better with different missional groups* in society (see sections 6.4 but also 8.2).
- *Discern and discover what God is calling for* in your context and its mission. There is much variety to choose from (see Chapter 6 and its sub-sections).
- *Discern how often you plan to meet* (see Chapter 8). Fortnightly can be the most risky (see section 8.10). Either weekly or monthly work better. Local stories suggest changing to meeting more frequently later can be difficult.
- *FxC can start in any kind of geographical context* (see Chapter 7), though it may be slower work in some of them.
- *Think about whether the calling is to reach a neighbourhood or a network* (see section 6.6 and 7.5); if the calling is to the latter, ensure it is not a wide range of different networks.
- *Think culturally not just territorially* (see section 6.5). What social or cultural groups are missing from your church and which of those groups do you have relational links with?

13.3   Ecclesial lessons to learn

- *FxC are part of the wider Church*, in which there is further wisdom, so access national or diocesan training (see Chapter 9). In particular, explore whether someone could have an ongoing consulting role for your fxC.
- *Consider what size community your fxC should grow to*. Small, healthy and vigorous is fine. Most fxC are not large, often fewer than 50 adults and children. (See sections 6.1 and 6.2). They may well have a natural unit range or size; beyond that point the best question to ask will be how to start yet another fxC.
- *Choose the venue by what suits the context* and its people, not by habit or the preference of existing Christians (see section 7.12). The same is true for day of meeting.
- *Start with the end in mind*. The goal is a community mature in Christ. As soon as it is appropriate encourage the young church to take responsibility for its finances and local leadership. Look for gifts and ministries in the newcomers.
- *Be aware that the pace or progress will differ* more by the type of fxC and frequency of meeting than size; (see sections 6.14 to 6.17, 7.11 and 8.4 to 8.9)
- *Start with discipleship in mind*, not just attendance (see sections 6.17, and 8.9). Being apprentices of Jesus can happen in many ways, but it should be intentional and relational.
- *Discern when and how to introduce the two sacraments*, but explore how they are practiced in culturally suitable ways (see sections 6.16, 8.6 and 8.7).
- *Leadership matters*, *and ideally it will be as part of a team*, but it can be exercised by either gender, by lay or ordained, and by full time to spare time. All of these have been shown to work (see sections 6.13, 7.10, 8.8, and Chapters 10 and 11).

13.4   Traps to avoid

About starting
- *Do not choose the type of fxC to begin by its popularity*, but pray and think through what fits with where you are, and what resources the people sensing a call to do this have.
- *Think longer term*. Do not start something with and for young children without any thought about what will be needed when they become 11 and change schools.
- *Being lay is no hindrance*. Just under half the fxC are lay-led. 36% of leaders have no formal badge and few have any specific training (see especially Chapter 11).
- *Vicars can do this too*. If you are ordained and busy maintaining what there already is, do not dismiss putting down some responsibilities and being renewed in ministry by being part of starting something new.

About keeping going
- *Being a church which is young, small and still maturing* is not wrong.
- *Do not get cut off from the wider Church* but let them know your progress and struggles.
- *Do not go it alone*; having a critical friend, or consultant, is very helpful
- *Keep the life of the fxC simple*, especially if you are leading spare time or part time; share out the tasks and make it a working boat, not a passenger ship.
- *Do not think because you have started that you have arrived*. Continued growth in size and depth depends on many things (see sections 6.2, 7.4, 8.3, 9.4 and 11.7). There are known factors that make closure more likely; shape the church's life to avoid them.
- *Consider the factors that make for vulnerability* (see section 12.11) as a kind of health check.
- *Finding ways to develop discipleship can take time* and may involve trying a number of approaches. The test is fruit, not ease of method.

Chapter 14   Possible future research

Further quantitative and qualitative research into sustainability

For further qualitative research, it would be advisable to return to selected cases within those already interviewed, as there is every indication of an existing trusting relational link and the assurance that the cases studied further are genuine fxC. Areas to explore would include:

1   **What causes fxC not to continue to grow** in size or to further reproduce? We now know that over half of the fxC either reach a plateau immediately or within a couple of years, or their numbers fluctuate, while 17% subsequently shrink. Beneath this lies a wide range of factors: leadership, contextual, missional and ecclesial. Further research may disclose and name both the advantageous and the inhibiting ones.

2   How are the fxC taking people on **the journey from attendance to Christian commitment**? How are steps being taken towards discipleship, three-self maturity and attendant sustainability? What place does evangelism have in the life of an fxC, and what varying forms might it take in different types of fxC? What fruit is coming from it?

3   What are the effects on the starting and **sustaining of fxC** in the light of the ecclesial environment created by a wide list of diocesan features (see section 3.1.1)?

4   What would be learnt by having **a control group of existing parishes**?
     Many variables could be chosen, of which these are some:

     - Their steps taken in discipleship.
     - Their proportions of drawing from neighbourhood and network.
     - Their leadership patterns and costs.
     - How all and any of these affect their growth patterns.

5   As to quantitative work we are aware that **further correlations** could be run on this data set, some of which may prove significant. Our initial exploration of some of these possible links suggests there is more to learn about their connections and about the dynamics across the whole range of fxC, as well as within particular types Examples of correlations run that may warrant comment include the following:

     How does *the type of fxC* correlate with:
     - What leader variables are present and significant?
     - Which types of fxC tend to have a pioneer start and which build on progression?
     - What is learnt from their choices of where to meet?

     We have already shown that *frequency of meeting* has an effect on mortality rates in fxC. We have not yet explored how that might correlate with the above range of further factors.

     We have also demonstrated how *the area served* has an effect on the growth patterns. As yet we are not sure what underlying causes may be operating. Analysing further correlations may give some clues, as well as being able to discount some prior guesses. This would include running correlations with factors in this report in connection with fxC type, such as three-self identity, use of the sacraments, the proportions of Christians, de-churched and non-churched, and frequency of meeting.

Chapter 15   Recommendations

15.1   Obtain better data

15.1.1   Make wider use of this report's ten indicators re. fresh expressions of Church

Since 2013 there has been interest in adopting the ten indicators in other Anglican national churches, with the Methodist Church of Britain and Ireland using them for parallel research work in 2017, and in a few national bodies across Europe. Using them would help counteract the widespread confusion we have found in all dioceses surveyed associated with the term 'fresh expression of Church', which tends to devalue its currency.[39] The ten indicators give sinews to the important link between identity and expectations. If there is lack of clarity about what something is, and how that is known, it is less likely to be able to fulfil aspirations and is more prone to have unrealistic ones – either too low or too high. The ten indicators could act as a national standard, yet as indicators are more modest than other criteria which can create too rigid a boundary of inclusion and exclusion. They help create a framework for better future training and practical planning, both in theological colleges and diocesan strategy.

15.1.2   Adopt the flow diagram of the Research and Statistics unit

To obtain cleaner data in future, the diagnostic flow diagram proposed to accompany the future collection of national church data returns should be adopted and universally used by all the dioceses, without local amendment, and not provided only as a separate download, which discourages its use. See Appendix Seven for a version of it.

15.1.3   Track examples from 2016 onwards

40% of examples starting in the last three years of data collection, the number of new starts from 2013 and 2014, and an awareness of unregistered examples begun since 2015, all suggest this is still a rising trend. It would make sense for a competent team to track this while there is interest, energy, experience and skill to do so. Involving a partnership drawing on the experience of the current researchers, but also with the Central Research and Statistics unit and diocesan officers, commends itself. Church Army's Research Unit has paid arrangements with a few dioceses to do this from 2016 onwards, but this one-off basis may be insufficient. Funding is the limiting issues, not the skill and experience.

15.1.4 Learn from the Leicester diocesan story

50 fxC in Leicester diocese were analysed in 2012 and reported on. This strengthened an emerging call of God to the diocese to grow as many fxC as inherited churches by 2030, (or 320). As it was envisaged that these would be led by 640 licensed pioneers, three Pioneer Development Workers (PDW) were appointed in 2015, supported by a grant from the Church Commissioners.

As part of the work of the PDWs a periodic update of fxC data is occurring. The update on existing and further fxC up to the end of 2014 was conducted in 2016 and a video of the findings is on the Leicester diocesan website. It is planned in the spring of 2017 to survey those fxC started up to the end of 2016 and again two years later for those up to the end of 2018. This sets a national precedent to have the results of a regular update of fxC against a declared aspiration.

Ely diocese has set a not dissimilar overall goal and London diocese are looking for another 100 worshipping communities by 2020. All these deserve tracking and contribute to obtaining better ongoing data. It also appears that Blackburn are aiming for 50, Guildford for 100 and Southwell and Nottingham have a similar aspiration, some dioceses using church planting vocabulary.

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[39] A. Davison and A. Milbank rightly criticise this vagueness in *For the Parish* (Norwich: SCM, 2010).

15.2 Learning lessons from recent practice

15.2.1 Balance the claims of the large and small models about fxC

There is a need in publicity to better balance the broadly publicised claims of the small number of large churches with the more unsung performance of the many small ones. The survey data shows that the vast proportion of what has been done outside London is of the latter kind, and this is more within the range of future churches considering whether to embark on fxC.

15.2.2 Note the lessons about network

We now have a nuanced view of what the 39% proportion that work with network brings to the national mission of the Church of England. The Church needs to apply the discovery that certain types of fxC best serve networks and others better serve neighbourhoods. Diocesan strategies should warmly and deliberately include the legitimacy of both approaches.

15.2.3 Keep track of the pioneers and their effect

The Church needs to keep up its beginning, through the National Pioneer Advisor, of an effective and up to date national list of where both ordained and lay pioneers are deployed, and to use the forms of analysis in this research to compare their effect in three to five years' time with the base of those begun from 2012-2016.

15.2.4 Recognise and affirm the role of the lay and lay-lay fxC leaders

Dioceses, knowing they have a set of fxC, should give attention to devise patterns of future training, networking and mutual support, at times and in ways that will suit the high proportion of all fxC leaders, not least those who are female, lay and spare time. These are the nearest the Church has to what is currently typical.

15.2.5 Devise a further new category of legal ecclesial identity for fxC

There are advantages to giving legal status more widely to those fxC which are part of an existing parish. This will offer them deeper Anglican identity, a sense of being welcomed in the diocese and protection against the advent of those with parochial power who are not disposed towards them. Those to be included will be *bona fide* fxC in that they meet the ten indicators of this research and they and their existing parish wish them to be thus recognised.

15.2.6 Build beyond the support already given to specific types of fxC

Messy Churches and their leaders are helped by a regional system of co-ordinators and Messy Fiestas. 21 dioceses are now in a position to know, through this overall research and its diocesan reports, that they have a discernible set of a particular type of fxC, and there would be advantage to gather such a group together for mutual learning and wider mutual accountability. In particular, all such meetings would provide support given to the voluntary lay leader, and would also address issues of either ecclesial or missional vulnerability.

15.2.7 Flexibility is needed re. expectations of growth

The correlations explored all show that fxC grow and flourish at different rates according to type, by frequency of meeting, in relation to social context and by leadership resource. Awareness of this complexity needs to be built into planning and financing of new ventures, otherwise unrealistic expectations occur that will frustrate dioceses and unduly pressurise those starting out.

15.2.8 Give accurate descriptions of fxC in parish profiles

Diocesan guidelines on writing parish profiles should be updated to give help to church wardens in making explicit the identity of each distinct worshipping congregation (fxC or traditional) within a parish or benefice. Interviews should put specific questions about how their futures are seen by potential incoming clergy.

Appendix One: The questionnaire

Church of England fresh expressions of Church (fxC) questionnaire v.11

1 Basic data about this expression of Church

What is its name ....

Normal meeting place ....
Road & Number ....

Diocese ....
Town/Village ....

Public start (yyyy.mm e.g. 2009.02) ....
Postcode ....

Name of sending Church ....
Website (if any) ....

2 Leadership

2a Name of leader or key contact person ....   Number of people on leadership team ....

Address ....

Phone ....   Email ....

Founder's name if different from above ....   **year left**: ....

2b What status has the current leader, or key contact? Preferably tick one designation

[ ] ALM   [ ] Chaplain   [ ] Church Army   [ ] Curate   [ ] Incumbent

[ ] Lay person   [ ] Lay Worker   [ ] NSM   [ ] OLM   [ ] Pioneer Minister

[ ] Priest in charge   [ ] Reader   [ ] SSM   [ ] Team Vicar   [ ] Other ....

2c In addition, is the current leader......   [ ] Stipendiary   [ ] Locally paid   [ ] Voluntary

and is the current leader......   [ ] Full time   [ ] Part time   [ ] Spare time

Indicate the gender of the leader or key contact   [ ] Male   [ ] Female

2d What **TRAINING** has the leader for starting/planting fxCs?   [ ] *msm*   [ ] *msi*   [ ] Planting module   [ ] Training event

[ ] Consultancy provided   [ ] Previous fxC experience   [ ] None   [ ] Other.......................

3 Characterise this expression of Church

How is it best described? You may tick up to four boxes.

3a [ ] All Age Worship   [ ] Alternative Worship   [ ] Café Church   [ ] Cell Church

[ ] Child Focused Church   [ ] Church based on <5s   [ ] Cluster based Church   [ ] Community Development Plant

[ ] Messy Church   [ ] Midweek Church   [ ] Multiple Sunday Congregation   [ ] Network Church

[ ] New Monastic   [ ] Older Peoples' Church   [ ] School based Church   [ ] Seeker Church

[ ] Special Interest group: e.g. Arts/Goths/workplace/helping addicts/learning disability. Describe it ....

[ ] Traditional Church Plant   [ ] New Traditional service   [ ] Youth Church   [ ] Other – contact us

3b Would you describe it as a **fresh expression of** *Church*, or on the way to that? If you think of it as only a stage, which of the following is most accurate. (If it is fully a fresh expression of Church please tick all three.)

Fresh expression of...   [ ] developing community   [ ] evangelism   [ ] worship

3c How often do you meet?

[ ] Weekly   [ ] Fortnightly   [ ] Monthly   **Which day(s)** ....   Start time .... End time ....

3d Identify the GEOGRAPHICAL area planted into. You may tick up to three boxes.

[ ] Expanded village   [ ] Rural   [ ] Local Authority Estate   [ ] Private Estate

[ ] Suburb   [ ] Town   [ ] City Centre   [ ] Local and Private Estate

[ ] Urban   [ ] Urban Priority Area   [ ] New Town   [ ] Other ....

How **typical** are the people in your fxC of the social area(s)/context?

[ ] Totally   [ ] Mainly   [ ] Moderately   [ ] Slightly

How ethnically **diverse** is your fxC?

[ ] Wide diversity of ethnic backgrounds   [ ] A few ethnic backgrounds   [ ] One ethnic background   [ ] Prefer not to say

3e **WHERE** is the fresh expression planted in relation to the "sending" church? Tick only one box

[ ] Within the Parish   [ ] Within the Benefice   [ ] Within the Deanery   [ ] Within the Diocese

3f Tell us the **TRADITION** of the planting Team. Preferably select 1, but no more than 3.

[ ] Anglo-Catholic   [ ] Central   [ ] Charismatic   [ ] Evangelical   [ ] Liberal

3g Which of these **MOTIVATIONS** was most significant? Tick up to 3 relevant boxes

[ ] Bishop / diocesan initiative   [ ] Grow is what Church should do   [ ] Inadequate penetration of the parish

[ ] New housing opportunity   [ ] Physically restricted at sending Church   [ ] Provide increased diversity

[ ] Unreached people group   [ ] Other ....

3h What are the **DENOMINATIONAL** features? Tick one option

[ ] Church of England only   [ ] Formal Local Ecumenical Partnership   [ ] Informal Ecumenical Co-operation

3i What kind of **BUILDINGS** are used for public gatherings? If there is a regular venue, tick 1 option on each of lines 1,2,3 below. If there is deliberate use of a variety of locations, then leave lines 1 - 3 blank and go to line 4.

1. [ ] Ecclesial   [ ] Public   [ ] House
2. [ ] Owned   [ ] Rented   [ ] Loaned
3. [ ] Licensed for public worship   [ ] Unlicensed
4. [ ] A variety of locations are deliberately used. Please list them ....

3j What **LEGAL STATUS** does the fresh expression planted have? Please tick one option below

[ ] None   [ ] Team District Church   [ ] Conventional District   [ ] Charitable Trust

[ ] Parish Status   [ ] Extra Parochial Place   [ ] Bishop's Mission Order   [ ] Proprietary Chapel

3k How does your fxC engage with **THE BIBLE / SCRIPTURES**? Tick as many options as apply.
    [ ] Sermon / Talk   [ ] Passages read in public   [ ] Study in groups   [ ] Encourage devotional reading
    [ ] Memory verses   [ ] Story telling (e.g. Godly Play, Open the Book..........)
    [ ] Creative activity/resource ....   [ ] Other ....
    [ ] Not at this stage yet

3l Does your fresh expression of Church offer **THE SACRAMENTS**?
    Communion services?   [ ] No [ ] Yes   If yes, how frequently? ....
    Baptisms?   [ ] No [ ] Yes   If yes, no.s [ ] Adults [ ] Children
    Have there been Confirmations? [ ] No [ ] Yes   If yes, no.s [ ] Adults [ ] Children
    If you wrote No, for what reason(s)? Tick which are true where you are
    Communion: [ ] Not at that stage [ ] Lack of authorised person [ ] Don't see the need   [ ] Impractical
    Baptism: [ ] Not at that stage [ ] Lack of authorised person [ ] Don't see the need   [ ] Impractical
    Confirmation: [ ] Not at that stage [ ] Lack of authorised person [ ] Don't see the need   [ ] Impractical
    If you wrote Yes, who presides? Tick which are true where you are
    Communion: [ ] Imported Clergy [ ] Clergy member of the fxC   [ ] Lay member of the fxC
    Baptism: [ ] Imported Clergy [ ] Clergy member of the fxC   [ ] Lay member of the fxC

3m How do you **DISCIPLE** people? Tick as many options as apply in your case.
    [ ] Small Groups   [ ] One to One   [ ] Running Courses   [ ] Serving in Teams
    [ ] Not at this stage yet   [ ] Other ....

3n Your fxC's existence is one factor in **EVANGELISM** – How else does the fxC engage with it? Tick as many options as apply.
    [ ] Enquirers course   [ ] Building relationships with others   [ ] Members share their story [ ] Inviting to worship
    [ ] Inviting to events   [ ] Acts of service -> conversations   [ ] Not at this stage yet   [ ] Other..

3o Is there **intention** to help this fresh expression grow to **THREE SELF** identity? Tick boxes as needed
    [ ] Self-financing   [ ] Self-governing   [ ] Self-reproducing   [ ] Not at this stage
    - What progress has been made towards **self-financing**? ....
    - What steps have been taken towards **self-governing**? ....
    - What developments are there of **self-reproducing** via indigenous leaders, starting a further fxC, etc? ....

4   Mission factors

We aim to record what was intended (**the task**), what **resulted** and what **resources** were available in the following ways.
Please weight your responses to each set of questions as follows: (try to make the total score not more than 4 for each row)
              0 = not true   1 = minor reality   2 = major reality   3 = the only or over-riding factor

4a   The Mission **TASK** was a neighbourhood   [Score 0-3 ....]   or a network   [Score 0-3 ....]
    Overall the **result** was through neighbourhood   [Score 0-3 ....]   through network   [Score 0-3 ....]

4b   Was the Mission **TASK** to reach:
    Christians   [Score 0-3 ....]   the de-churched [Score 0-3 ....]   or the non-churched [Score 0-3 ....]
    What was the **result**? (please give as <u>percentages</u>) e.g. Christians (20%), de-churched (50%), non-churched (30%)
    Christians   [..........]%   the de-churched [..........]%   or the non-churched [..........]%

4c   Was the Mission **RESOURCE** a 'Pioneer' work [Score 0-3 ....] or 'Progression' from existing presence [Score 0-3 ....]

4d   Which Mission **SUPPORT** dynamic applied? Contact us if you need to for what this means. Tick only one box
    [ ] Runner   [ ] Graft   [ ] Transplant   [ ] Seed

5   Numbers involved   Adults: Children <16:

What was the number of people sent to begin this fxC?   ....

Please give us an estimation of average attendance at meetings in each year (if the fxC began prior to 2006, please phone us)
2006 Adults .... Children & Youth (<16) ....   **2007** Adults .... Children & Youth (<16) ....
2008 Adults .... Children & Youth (<16) ....   **2009** Adults .... Children & Youth (<16) ....
2010 Adults .... Children & Youth (<16) ....   **2011** Adults .... Children & Youth (<16) ....
2012 Adults .... Children & Youth (<16) ....   **2013** Adults .... Children & Youth (<16) ....
2014 Adults .... Children & Youth (<16) ....   **2015** Adults .... Children & Youth (<16) ....

6   Is this fresh expression/church plant still meeting?

If not, please give the year and month of closure (in the format yyyy.mm) ....
What were the major reasons for stopping? ....

If you are stuck we would prefer you to make a phone call, than give us inexact information. You could speak to
Claire Dalpra (0114 252 1643), George Lings (0114 252 1641), Elspeth McGann (0114 252 7276) or John Vivian (0114 252 1664), or email ask@churcharmy.org.uk.

Questionnaire designed by Church Army's Research Unit.

Appendix Two: Glossary

Rather than list all the entries alphabetically, they are by category and then listed A-Z.

1. Types of fresh expression of Church
2. Dynamics differentiating mission resources available to fxC
3. Kinds of support to fxC
4. Two groups in the UK mission field
5. Three elements contributing to their maturity
6. Various legal designations for fxC
7. Some ministerial categories of those who lead them

1   Types of fresh expression of Church

Where a type of fresh expression of Church is further explained in *Mission-shaped Church*, the letters 'msc' are put in brackets after it. Where there are ethnographic studies on types not covered in that report, these are footnoted, and all of these are available free as PDF files from Church Army's Research Unit. Consult www.churcharmy.org.uk\fxcresearch and the tab Encounters On The Edge.

All age worship
This term has been around since the 1980s and may be seen as a desire to go beyond the felt limitations of its antecedent, the family service. A few are still called that. Those limits were such services being too child-centred and an associated dumbing down of content. Those advocating and resourcing all age worship include Scripture Union and BRF/Messy Church, and also those voices insisting that children are part of today's church, not of tomorrow. Its approach tends to be thematic and utilises different learning styles. It can be resource hungry, reflected in being equally monthly or weekly. They were not listed in *Mission-shaped Church* as they were thought then only to be a variant on existing Sunday services. The research period 2014-2016 has noted how often they are cited within the identity of fxC. Yet of 90 cases, only 11 were described as solely all age worship. They are more commonly seen (66 times) as one value within some multiple congregations, church plants café churches and Messy Churches, in that order.

Alternative worship (msc) is often spelt alt.worship and sometimes using other labels such as emerging church. These communities were seen first in the late 1980s. In worship they use a variety of media to explore Christian faith and discipleship, with a style of offering participants space and options. A small community core prepares for, or curates, these. Their history is one of connecting well with disenchanted Christians, but now they also have links to new monasticism and attract spiritual seekers.

Base ecclesial community (msc). This model, originating from South America in the 1950s, is led by local lay people, with a focus to connect church and life and tackle its inequalities. It has only been tried in a few English locations and we know none that have continued. Its excellent values continue to attract interest.

Café church (msc) is a catch-all term for a range of levels of engagement. At its trivial end, the introduction of serving coffee has been known to be cited. More seriously, it picks up the proliferation of cafés in society as safe gathering places. Characteristic are locations set out with tables, drinks and sometimes food. Conversation predominates over presentation; being or becoming community over providing worship. Discussion is more apt than lecture. People are freer

to come and go. Sometimes an optional further venue is used, at which another style may occur such as alternative worship.

Cell church (msc) can occur as standalone, or in parallel to an existing congregation. Arriving in the UK in 1995 from the Far East, classically lay-led groups of people meet in a home, share their lives to grow as disciples and seek to bring outsiders into this quality of relationships. The leaders of the different cells also meet with one another and a person who supervises and supports them. Difficulties have been to invite newcomers to such an exposed environment and to grow further leaders to begin new groups as old ones expand.

Child-focused church. This label was invented by the Fresh Expressions team after 2004, noticing the beginning of groups based around the primary school age group. The content is such that both parents and children can engage, and the style is such that the children may move around. Locations can be in schools, halls or churches. They are one type of fxC linked to a stage of life. They are differentiated from Messy Church by no distinct craft and family meal stage.

Church based on under 5s. As with child-focused church, this term was coined post-2004 and is based around the pre-school age group, but embraces parents, grandparents and carers. The best examples are educationally aware and take the spirituality of the child seriously.[40]

Clusters. Severally called clusters, mid-sized communities or mission-shaped communities, this model combines a majority proportion identity, of those involved with a 20-50 sized group, and membership of a larger church which is at best complementary, but may be secondary to this. Each CLU is seen as church in its own right and is born out of a shared specific mission focus. They may meet weekly or fortnightly, with a monthly larger gathering or celebration.[41]

Community development plant (msc). These grow, sometimes by accident, from forms of Christian social engagement, most commonly in deprived areas and among communities with high proportions of the non-churched. At best, they discern and discover, with local people, what would be suitable forms of worship and they search for indigenous leadership.

Intentional community. These, by their high demands and vocational processes, are still very rare. Often there is some overlap with new monasticism. Classically there will be a shared purse as part of a shared rule, and there may be a joint household or a row of adjacent ones. Usually they will be involved in the social issues of their context.

Messy Church. The prototype began in 2004 and within ten years has seen 3000 more registered worldwide. Its values are Christ-centred church, for all ages, drawing on human instincts for hospitality, creativity and celebration. Its popularity has led to unwise unthinking copying, and splendid creative adaptation. BRF, its sponsors, have taken a light touch to this but wish it were well understood.[42]

Midweek church (msc). By definition this is a midweek congregation as part of an existing church and their building. At best, it has its own sense of identity, humour, membership, pastoral structures and ownership by those who attend. They are often begun to try to reach a group that the existing church congregation(s) does not engage with, either by age or day of availability.

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[40] C. Dalpra, *Encounters on the Edge* No. 31: Small Beginnings (Sheffield: Church Army, 2006).

[41] A book of one story in a large church is M. Stibbe & A. Williams, *Breakout* (Carlisle: Authentic, 2008).

[42] G. Lings, *Encounters on the Edge* No. 46: Messy Church, (Sheffield: Church Army, 2010) and *Encounters on the Edge* No. 56: Sweaty Church (Sheffield: Church Army, 2012).

Multiple Sunday congregation (msc) is similar to midweek church but on a Sunday. At best it has its own identity, membership and ownership by those who attend. Often the point of diversity that led to its start is the need to provide a weekly different style of worship, not least its music, rather than run a monthly rota of different approaches which alienates one group every week.

Network church (msc) is begun to connect with people and contacts that are not defined by a geographic or parochial area, but by coherent patterns within a shared life, whether derived from work, school, a common interest, or a stage of life, or even among people who gather for a common purpose e.g. outreach to a specific group. If a possible network is too diffuse and transient, such as clubbers, it has been hard if not impossible to form community, and chaplaincy models are more suitable.

New monastic community. These draw inspiration from a variety of monastic traditions (e.g. Celtic, Benedictine, Franciscan). Their focus is on sustaining intentional community, patterns of prayer, hospitality and engaging with mission. This leads to the distillation of a rule of life and involves a vocational process and making some form of vows for members to join.[43] More often the instincts for this are combined into another type of fxC, rather than existing on its own.

Older people's church. These are more than providing communion services in old people's homes. To qualify as fxC there needs to be evidence of pastoral contact, engagement with ongoing discipleship and encouragement to older people to exercise ministries in their own right. Their worship is varied depending on context, from the familiar Book of Common Prayer to what is appreciated by the boomer generation.

School-based church (msc). This further type of stage-of-life church are those fxC that not only meet in a school but which are *for* the school, in that they engage with the pupils, teachers and parents, and are part of the life of the school. The time of meeting will more easily be at the end of the school day or week, rather than at the weekend.

Seeker (msc). It is accurate, in hindsight, to call this an instinct to present the Christian faith in an attractive way to the willing newcomer, more than a whole way of being church. We have found no examples where this is the sole identity of an fxC, not least because it is too resource hungry. However, a number of fxC draw on its approach and resources that originated in Chicago.

Special interest group. This is our invented term for a variety of fxC based around a specific subculture. Examples are wide: the arts, goths, workplace, LGBT groups, recovering addicts, and those with learning difficulties. The fxC engages with their interests and needs, and aims to be a Christian worshipping community born out of the subculture it is based in and in mission to it.[44]

Traditional church plant (msc). These have occurred since the 1970s and were started to provide a focus of worship and community in areas of large parishes with discernible areas at a distance from the parish church. From the 1980s they became more known, and that era saw them occur much more frequently. Some crossed parish boundaries which prompted investigation by the wider Church. They were often similar in style to the congregation that sent them, being led by authorised ministers and meeting on a Sunday, but some tended to greater informality and the use of secular venues, while others took over existing buildings and formed relationships with the existing congregations there. They continue to be a distinct part of the fxC picture, including plans to begin

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[43] This is but tangentially covered in *Mission-shaped Church* p. 74 and can be explored further in G. Lings, *Encounters on the Edge* No. 29: Northumbria Community (Sheffield: Church Army, 2006).

[44] Some of these have been explored by C. Dalpra in the *Encounters on the Edge* series. No. 17 examined work with addicts and no. 44 churches for those with learning disabilities. G. Lings covered one aiming to be workplace church in no. 24 and for the performing arts in no. 25.

them in other cities and town centres, but till now are more likely found in the southern region of England.

New traditional service (msc). These began realising that, in the midst of change, a significant group in society still valued the old, and it was just as mission-shaped and legitimate to provide for them. These are new congregations, not all meeting on a Sunday, with traditional worship held in churches, not secular venues, and forming community.

Youth church (msc). At best these will be by youth for youth, believing that the missions factor here is not age, but cultural change and identity. Equally, they will not be mainly trendy church for Christian young people, but churches that grow out of making connections with non-churched young people. Some are now finding it is necessary to reproduce yet another but connected expression, which is a related church for young adults as they outgrow their teenage years.

2   Dynamics differentiating mission resources in fxC

Pioneer. An assessment of what a church is currently doing could reveal age or cultural gaps in its cover, or geographical areas from which few if any people come to church. As such, a weakness would have been identified, and an awareness of little to build from. To respond would be to pioneer, to be the first to address this need. Thus what begins would feel more like starting from scratch.

Progression. By contrast, an assessment might reveal the possibility of being able to build upon existing good foundations laid by the church. These could be existing good relationships (for example, with a school, or mothers and toddlers group) or previous initiatives in the community that the church has been involved with (e.g. a debt counselling service, a holiday club or Alpha course). Thus what would follow would be to make progress from what already existed.

Both are equally valid but have very different characteristics and need different approaches.[45]

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3   Kinds of support to fresh expressions of Church

Graft. This botanical allusion refers to when the fresh expression of Church crossed a parish boundary, by agreement, to assist another church, but the incomers were numerically the smaller player in the resultant church, although very significant in bringing new life.

Runner. This term, taken from the propagating habit of strawberry plants, normally means the fresh expression of Church started within the parish of its sending church and has strong existing supportive links with that church.

Seed. This is based on a horticultural analogy by which small seeds can be blown on the wind some distance to start a new plant. It means the situation when people are sent out, and in that sense with support, but they usually have to move area and house to begin a new work elsewhere, with permission, but largely on their own.

Transplant. This is another botanical picture conveying a similar dynamic to graft, but with the important difference of the incomers being the major players and clearly taking the lead. This category has been widened by us out of our experience, for we found that nowadays transplants also

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[45] *Mission-shaped Church,* pp. 110-111, develops this more.

go into existing churches, but as a parallel congregation, not with a view to making an overall new one. They also make use of empty church buildings and secular venues.

All four types of support are equally valid and each contains strengths and challenges.[46]
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4   Two groups in the UK mission field
Both of the following terms are explained more in *Mission-shaped Church,* pages 36-41. Since then a few further factors have become clearer. There are of course other groups, like those of other faiths and other classifications such as theist and atheist.

De-churched. We mean a person who has had some previous meaningful contact with a church congregation but currently does not. This group is further significantly divided into those open to return to church as they know it or those not open to do so. Evidence from Tearfund research since *Mission-shaped Church* indicates the closed group is the far larger one. The term de-churched is not meaningfully applied to, nor necessarily includes, those who have only been attenders at occasional offices or used the building for a civic or secular purpose. Neither does it indicate whether a person has Christian belief. Our team is becoming more aware of what may be termed the de-churched believer. All in this group may or may not call themselves Christian in either a cultural or spiritual sense.

Non-churched. We mean a person who has had no meaningful contact with a church community and its corporate life. The decline in church attendance, paucity of children in Sunday schools, the diminishing content of Christianity in schools, and its marginalisation in some media, all mean that the non-churched are the growing proportion of the population. They are also the majority of its younger segments. It is also the case that those closed to coming to church as they understand it massively outweigh those open to try. Among this group it would be rare that they call themselves Christian, or even religious, but they might well be open to spirituality.
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5   Three elements contributing to maturity and responsibility in fxC

Self-financing. All healthy fresh expressions of Church should take responsibility for how they are financed. Only occasionally will this mean them financing a full time stipendiary minister of their own, but it could mean negotiating an appropriate diocesan parish share, bearing in mind they deal with a large proportion of newcomers and, as has been said, 'The last part of a person to be converted is their wallet.' For fresh expressions of Church planted within a parish context, 'self-financing' instincts include having visible accounts, keeping costs low, being led by self-supporting leaders and encouraging a culture of regular giving (even if modest to begin with). The key is that a fresh expression should not be overly dependent on its sending church for financial resource, and whatever degree of dependency exists should be financially visible.

Self-governing. All healthy fresh expressions of Church should be able to take responsibility for their own strategic decisions within the overall governance structures of the parish church. Self-governing does not necessarily or usually mean the fresh expression will be utterly independent of its parent church. 'Self-governing' instincts include growing a stable leadership team (that can survive the departure of a founding leader or a change of incumbent), planning for the longer-term and gaining representation on appropriate church councils e.g. PCC or deanery synod.

Self-reproducing. All healthy expressions of Church, fresh or inherited, should include the potential for reproduction. More than growth of the fresh expression of Church by addition

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[46] *Mission-shaped Church,* pp. 111-115, spells out these features.

('producing' more Christians), 'self-reproducing' instincts go further to seek developments in nurturing further leaders or multiplying ministry gifts, seeing the fruit of holiness in members' lives, fostering vocations, establishing new mission projects, and in time planting further fxC.
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6   Various legal designations for churches and fxC

Bishop's Mission Order (BMO). *Mission-shaped Church* requested that a form of legislation be passed that enabled a bishop to approve a mission plan desirable to the diocese that crossed existing ecclesial parish boundaries, but which other local clergy might not favour, despite consultation. It was thought that an episcopal church should not be held back by concerns that were parochial, in the negative sense of that word. The BMO has been used and found valuable. However, our team received comments on how complex achieving one still is, and that unless the diocesan bishop is in favour, the chances of securing one are slim.

Charitable trust. There are a few fxC that, by reason of significant outlay on staff, premises and resources, need and value accountability to a wider body. However, they find themselves without any ecclesial legal standing and without prospect of obtaining one, so they select this route.

Conventional district. This arrangement can be employed where new housing developments make it desirable for parish boundaries to be re-drawn. Or it can be where a distinct area of existing housing crosses existing boundaries but needs its own church. Then part of one or more parishes may be designated a conventional district. In a conventional district, a priest-in-charge can be appointed directly by the bishop in place of the incumbent. On change of incumbent the arrangement must be renewed, which makes it in theory a vulnerable situation.

Extra-parochial place. This denotes a geographically defined area considered to be outside any ecclesiastical or civil parish. In the 1990s, it was the only device available to give legal status to network-based churches that were wanted by the diocese. Still being construed around place, they were a kind of least worst solution, and in our study they have not been used for that purpose since the invention of the more flexible BMO.

Parishes. These normally, but not always, have one geographically bounded area that they serve and a consecrated building within it for public worship. The group of Christians who gather there are led by an episcopally authorised minister. For many centuries this has been the standard way in which local Anglican ministry has been delivered to the English nation. A few longstanding fxC serving significant areas of housing have become parishes.

Proprietary chapel. This device from earlier centuries is a term for a chapel that originally belonged to a private person. They are anomalies in English ecclesiastical law, having no parish area, but being able to have an Anglican clergyman licensed there. The device has been used usually by those relatively rare examples of church plants that do not enjoy harmonious relations with either the surrounding parishes or the diocese in which they find themselves.

Team district church. The creation of groups of churches, in theory to give their leaders more support, are usually called teams. The senior leader is the rector with the parish church, and team vicars then have charge of other usually smaller surrounding churches. Their team district churches will have limited local governance but be subject to the PCC of the overall church.
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7   Some ministerial categories of those who lead fxC

Church Army Evangelists have been trained and commissioned by Church Army since 1882, and they are admitted by a Bishop into the Church of England lay office of Evangelist. They can be deployed directly by Church Army or employed by a diocese or parish. They not only do evangelism by seeking to make Christ known through words and actions, but also evoke and enable the gift of evangelism in others. In the last few years Church Army has become an acknowledged mission community, welcoming both lay and ordained evangelists.

Lay-lay is a term invented during the research. It is shorthand for those lay people discovered to be leading fresh expressions of Church, but who do not have an official church status for this (such as Reader or licensed Lay Minister), nor in the vast majority of cases do they have any diocesan training for this role.

NSM. Non-stipendiary ministers are ordained people who offer their time as parish priests, but without financial remuneration, whether alongside having another job or not. Like stipendiary ministers, they are deployed by agreement with the license of the bishop.

OLM. Ordained Local Ministers are similar to NSMs in that they do not receive financial remuneration. They differ from NSMs in that they are people whose local parish has put them forward for selection and training and ordination to be 'local' ministers in their home parish. Their calling is to return to their home parish and be a minister there, rather than to go somewhere else.

OPM. Ordained Pioneer Ministers are individuals who are clear that their vocation is to serve and guide the whole Church in the particular role of starting and developing fresh expressions of Church.

Readers are licensed lay ministers who are trained as preachers, catechists and facilitators of learning. They are encouraged to be examples to other laity as bearers and interpreters of the word of God in daily working life.

SSM. Self-supporting Minister is a term many favour over NSM, in the sense of positively affirming their own self-support as ordained people, as opposed to defining them negatively against stipendiary ministers.

Stipendiary. These clergy receive a stipend and housing such that they do not need to have other paid work and they can give their working lives to the Church.

Locally paid. Locally paid individuals are paid by individual churches or other non-diocesan sources.

Voluntary. Individuals who receive no financial remuneration for their role, in this case in relation to the church and the work they do.

Appendix Three: Reports to the dioceses surveyed

The process

The relational link with a diocese surveyed is developed in several stages. First, a report on the statistics derived from the research is written and then sent to the key contact person in the diocese. This report is illustrated by graphs, and can be up to 20 pages in length. In addition, the key contact person receives a copy of the statistics behind the report, in a set of spreadsheets, and another spreadsheet which lists all the contacts made and which examples of alleged fxC were excluded and upon what grounds.

The key contact person then enquires of the senior staff how they would wish this material to be shared. Usually the result has been that members of Church Army's Research Unit travelled out to the diocese and met some or all of the senior staff team and presented the material. Sometimes further wider groups received a subsequent presentation.

The diocese was thus furnished with a researched view of the contribution made by the fxC to the life of the diocese, and our interpretation of the strengths and vulnerabilities of these fxC from the data. Each of the 21 dioceses now possesses a working list of the fxC as a good basis for future effective diocesan record keeping. We also check if they are content that the report be put onto the website of Church Army's Research Unit, for their own diocese and for other interested parties to view.

The shape to the diocesan reports

Our conviction, expressed through the ten indicators, has been that by definition fxC are both missional and ecclesial. It was therefore natural that the set of reports used those categories to create a structure to the feedback.

All the reports share a common skeleton: they begin with headlines about the diocese, and then fxC attendance, when the fxC started over time and what slice of diocesan life they represent. Some missional factors are then examined, followed by some ecclesial ones. Where we find unusual features in a diocese, these form their own separate section. A concluding section highlights strengths and weaknesses.

We were tempted to include one report as illustrative of this shape, as we did in 2013. In that this research was conducted in Sheffield, we would have selected that diocese. However, *The Day of Small Things* is ironically not small, and readers may wish to look at the report on the diocese from which they come. Thus we have opted for a digital route.

Finding the reports on each of the 21 dioceses surveyed

The URL is: http://www.churcharmy.org.uk/fxCresearch

All the dioceses surveyed have seen their report.

Appendix Four: Alternative criteria for fxC

This is the list of eight criteria for being church, all of which must be present, from the working party report: *FRESH EXPRESSIONS in the mission of the Church*. D. Walton and A. Smith (co-chairs), (CHP, 2012), p. 114.

1   A community of people who are called by God to be committed disciples of Jesus Christ and to live out their discipleship in the world.

2   A community that regularly assembles for Christian worship and is then sent out into the world to engage in mission and service.

3   A community in which the Gospel is proclaimed in ways that are appropriate to the lives of its members.

4   A community in which the Scriptures are regularly preached and taught.

5   A community in which baptism is conferred in appropriate circumstances as a rite of initiation into the Church.

6   A community that celebrates the Lord's Supper.

7   A community where pastoral responsibility and presidency at the Lord's Supper is exercised by the appropriate authorised ministry.

8   A community that is united to others through: mutual commitment, spiritual communion, structures of governance, oversight and communion and an authorised ministry in common.

Extracts from the paragraph that follows their criteria include:

'… these eight constitute the defining set of ecclesial elements whose presence in a Christian community is sufficient for it to constitute a church so far as the Church of England and the Methodist Church are concerned'

'The presence of some, but not all, of these elements may indicate that a community is on the way to becoming a church, though it has not yet attained that state.'

Then, perhaps confusingly, the paragraph adds: 'Being the Church is not a case of all or nothing, but instead involves degrees.'

Appendix Five: Various additional charts and tables

Section 6.13: Table of time and remuneration of fxC leaders in 14 more common fxC types

Leader details at 14 most common types of fxC	Full time	Part Time	Spare Time	Stipendiary	Locally Paid	Voluntary
Messy Church	42.4%	21.5%	36.1%	33.5%	14.8%	51.6%
Traditional Church Plant	81.8%	9.9%	8.3%	76.9%	10.3%	12.8%
Cafe Church	58.0%	17.4%	24.6%	52.7%	11.1%	36.2%
Child Focused Church	57.0%	16.9%	25.6%	51.2%	9.7%	38.6%
Special Interest Group	50.0%	19.0%	31.0%	38.7%	14.1%	47.2%
All Age Worship	65.2%	14.9%	19.9%	57.4%	14.2%	28.4%
Community Development Plant	64.0%	23.7%	12.2%	56.1%	19.4%	24.5%
Multiple Sunday Congregation	68.8%	12.5%	18.0%	61.7%	9.4%	28.1%
Network Church	55.8%	21.7%	22.5%	49.2%	18.3%	32.5%
Alternative Worship	55.8%	23.9%	20.4%	48.7%	15.9%	35.4%
Church Based on <5s	35.8%	30.2%	34.0%	33.0%	12.3%	54.7%
Youth Church	64.1%	19.4%	16.5%	38.8%	42.7%	18.4%
Older people's Church	39.3%	23.6%	37.1%	33.7%	9.0%	57.3%
Average (14 most common types)	54.20%	19.50%	26.20%	46.40%	14.70%	38.80%

Section 7.8: Chart showing areas into which fxC were planted by leader's estimates of attenders church backgrounds (u*nweighted* by average attendance)
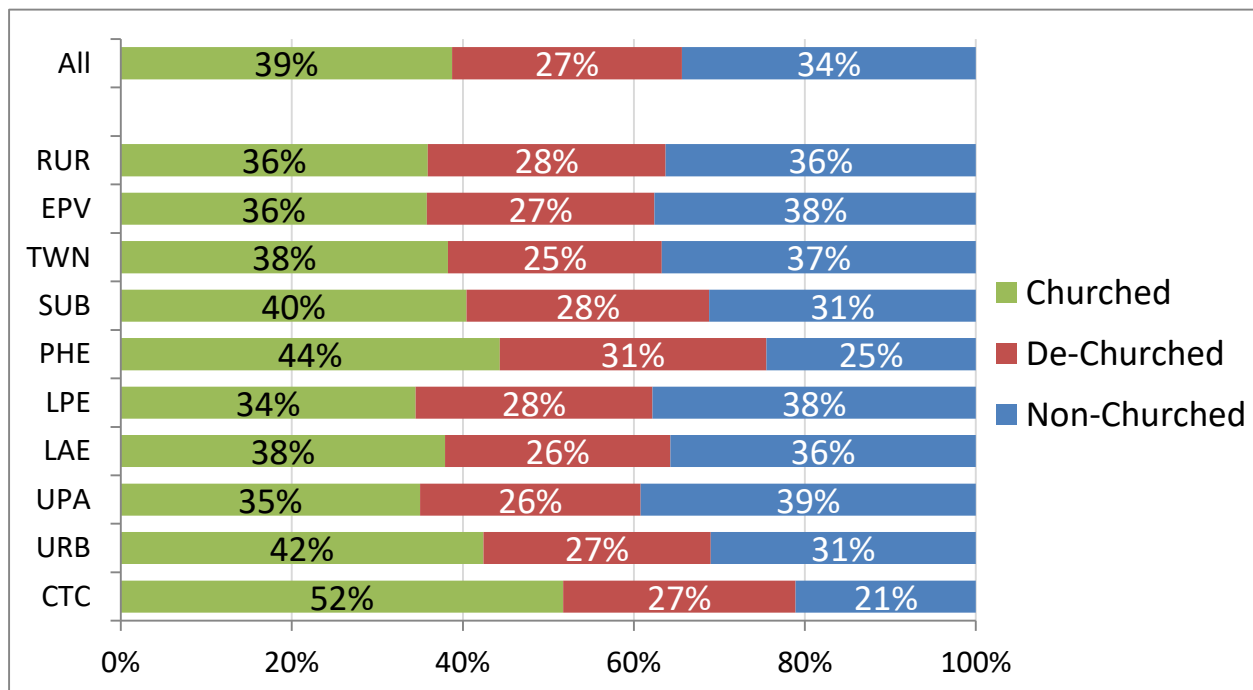
Section 9.2: The relationship of training taken and the 14 most common types of fxC
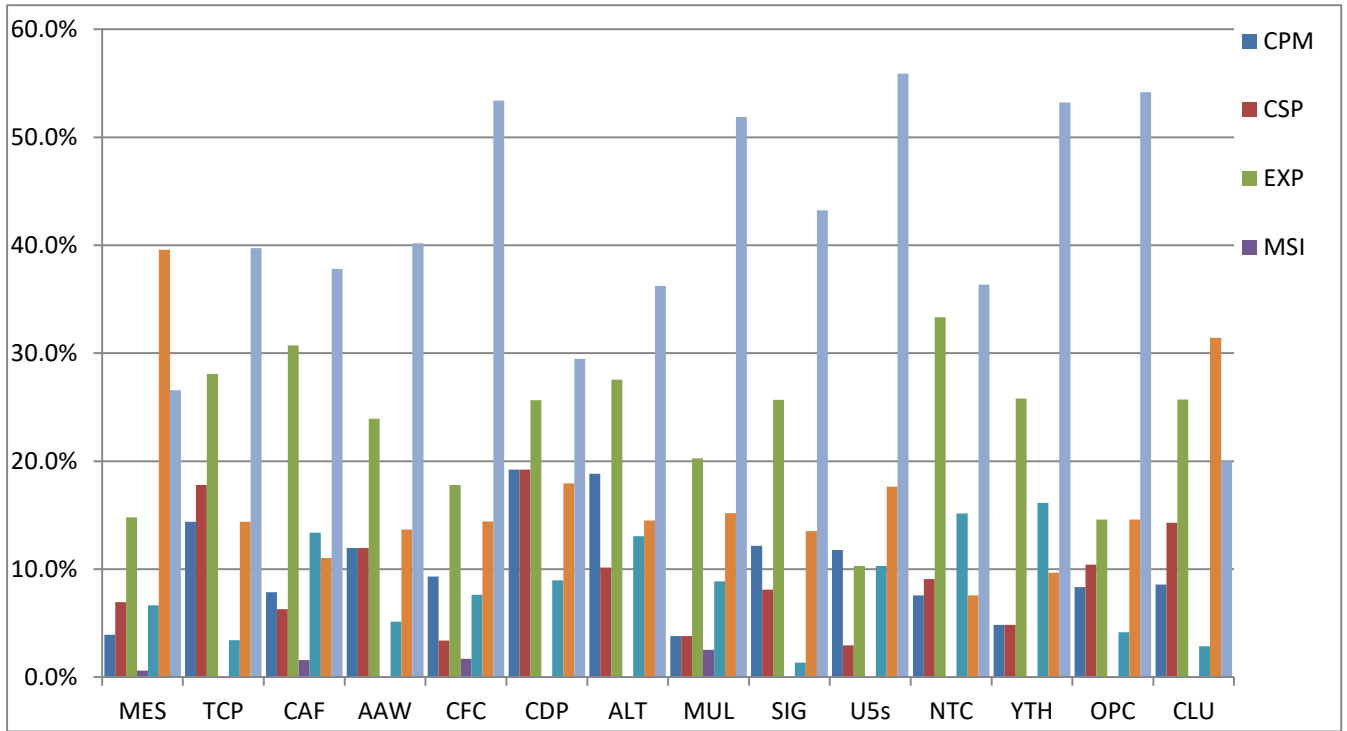
Section 8.1: Chart showing meeting frequency of fxC by year started (1992-2014)
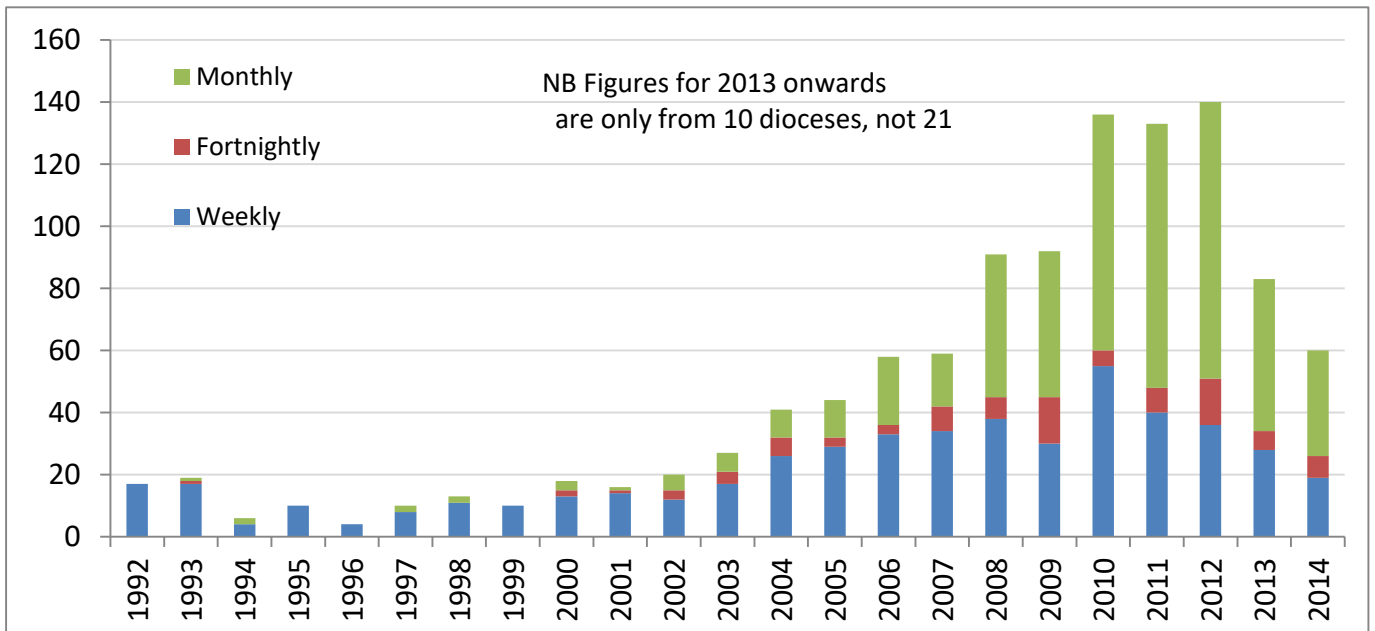
Section 10.5   Chart showing growth variables by gender of leader

Growth patterns of fxC by gender of leader

Pattern	Male	Female
Grow shrink	61.3%	38.7%
Fluctuate	60.2%	39.8%
Quick plateau	43.8%	56.2%
Grow plateau	61.9%	37.3%
Continue grow	51.0%	48.7%
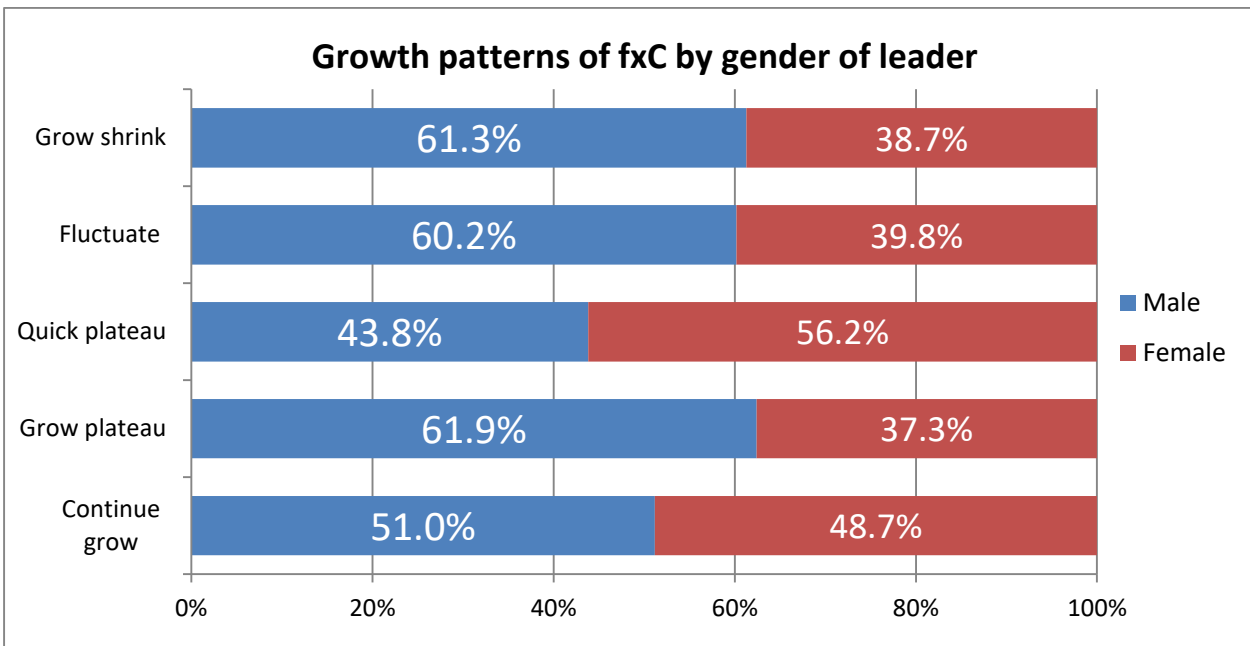
Section 7.12   Chart showing venue choice by the 14 most common fxC types

Type	Ecclesial	House	Public	mix
OPC	46%		46%	5%
CLU	27%	9%	17%	44%
YTH	60%	9%	9%	20%
U5s	91%		5%	4%
ALT	60%		17%	22%
NTC	21%	6%	28%	45%
CDP	39%	4%	34%	21%
MUL	96%		3%	
AAW	64%		26%	7%
SIG	48%	5%	15%	33%
TCP	45%		48%	8%
CFC	70%		25%	5%
CAF	61%		28%	10%
MES	76%		19%	4%

231
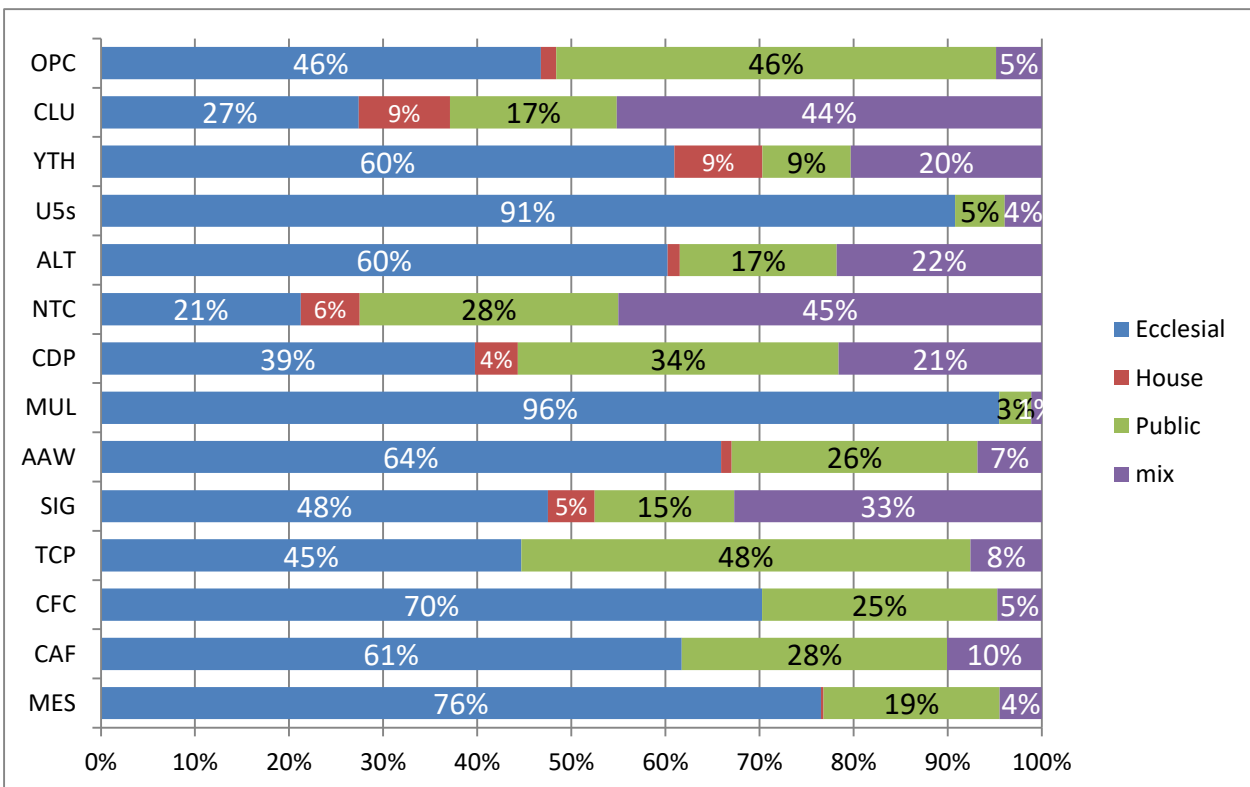
Appendix Six: Comments from leaders

Four of my mums take turns doing the talk [at fxC] but they don't come to church on a Sunday

[Leader at a fxC based on under 5s]

The London view is fresh expressions of Church is just what good parishes do!

The wider church needs to think more about fresh expressions of Church in a rural context. Many of our rural communities are now made up of urban incomers who have brought their 'townness' with them.

The LGBT fresh expression of Church is a haven for the oppressed. Some of them have had really bad experiences of church

It's the best thing we've done in years!

[Messy Church leader]

Where does the Church of England take stock of mission and fresh expressions of Church within Universities – both the edgy stuff and the more traditional expressions of Church? There are no statistics on this. Things happen under the radar.

[University Chaplain]

Messy Church has credible advertising, is a trusted brand and you know what you're getting.

Working with uniformed organisations as an approach in mission is not as effective as it used to be. Involving them on a Sunday morning is a challenge!

[Child-focused church leader]

We just love it. The atmosphere is something else. I just call it a weekly miracle.

Our motto is 'Meeting people where they are but not leaving them there'

We have 5 churches in the benefice and 6 congregations – this is our family church

[ordained leader describing the fxC]

I didn't want to be a vicar of a middle-class church where poorer people didn't feel welcome

[leader on why they began the fxC]

It challenged us and moved us on to do more

[fxC team member on impact fxC that has now died has had on team and church]

I would never have thought I could be an evangelist, but with Messy Church we're finding that it's enabling us to be

[Messy Church leader]

We've modelled how to enable an existing church to get an injection rather than chucking everyone out and starting again

[Church Graft leader]

The diocese doesn't have a coordinated approach to fresh expressions

For us, the requirement of church attendance for school applications is a mixed blessing.

[Child-focused fxC leader]

We [the team] receive pastoral care from the members as well as doing the 'pastoring' ourselves

Your findings would really help the person appointed to the new 0.5 post of fresh expressions pioneer in the deanery

We could have forced our initiative to be a fresh expression of Church right from the start but we have deliberately left time and space for the group to evolve and 'own' its ecclesial identity.

[Leader of an 'Arch' initiative]

Appendix Seven: The flow diagram from the Research and Statistics Unit

Missional
Does it serve (focus on) people outside the existing worshipping community?

There are many forms of worship and congregational activities but fresh expressions of Church aim to bring new people to God's kingdom.

Contextual
Does it do something different to engage those outside the Church in Christian community?

Fresh expressions of Church go beyond simple outreach and do something different to contact and connect with those outside the Church.

Regular
Does it meet at least once a month?

Unlike one off and taster services, fresh expressions of Church meet regularly developing a sense of community

As fresh expressions of Church develop they gain the identity of being: "One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church".

Ecclesial
Does it have an identity, interacting with local Christians, God, the wider church and the world?

Please remember: Social activities and outreach are not fresh expressions of Church

Fresh expressions of Church develop discipleship through learning, serving and belonging. As fresh expressions of Church mature they will take on responsibility for their finances and leadership

Maturing
Is the fresh expression of Church developing disciples and as a whole?

This is a fresh expression of Church