Please use this planning form to help you plan your Mission Action Plan. All Plans are collated and stored on the diocesan website to provide a centralised database accessible to everybody. When your Plan is ready to be published, please enter it into the online form provided on the diocesan website:

[www.stalbansdiocese.org/mission-action-plans](http://www.stalbansdiocese.org/mission-action-plans)

If you’d like to discuss this your MAP with your [local Church Growth Officer](https://www.stalbansdiocese.org/parishsupport/growing-your-church/mission-action-planning/#h-the-flourishing-churches-team), you can contact them via email using the links below:

| St Albans | **Bedford** | **Hertford** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [cgo-stalbans@stalbansdiocese.org](mailto:cgo-stalbans@stalbansdiocese.org) | [cgo-bedford@stalbansdiocese.org](mailto:cgo-bedford@stalbansdiocese.org) | [cgo-hertford@stalbansdiocese.org](mailto:cgo-hertford@stalbansdiocese.org) |

We hope this form will be user friendly and help you focus on your priorities as we work together for the Kingdom.

If you would like some guidance with Mission Action Planning for your parish, please read our Planning for Mission webpage at:  
[www.stalbansdiocese.org/parishsupport/growing-your-church/mission-action-planning/](https://www.stalbansdiocese.org/parishsupport/growing-your-church/mission-action-planning/)

We also have a Mission Action Plan Example that might give you some inspiration, and which illustrates how to make your goals SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound):

[www.stalbansdiocese.org/mission-action-plan-example](http://www.stalbansdiocese.org/mission-action-plan-example)

| Have you read the Planning for Mission Booklet?  See [Planning for Mission Booklet »](https://resource.stalbansdiocese.org/courses-events-and-resources/planning-for-mission/)  Your answer will not be shown on your published Plan. |
| --- |
| Yes |

| Name of Church, Parish, Team Ministry or Benefice | Benefice of St James the Great and St Marys, Gilston with St Botolphs, Eastwick |
| --- | --- |
| Website | <https://stjameshighwych.org.uk> and <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/> |
| Contact Name | Rev Alison Jackson |
| Position | Priest-in-Charge |
| Contact Email Address | revajacksonhwge@outlook.com |

| This Mission Action Plan was adopted by the PCC on |
| --- |
| St James PCC and St Marys and St Botolph’s PCC met on 14th August as a joint PCC. |
| The date when Mission Action Plan will be revised is  An annual revision is recommended. |
| This will be reviewed on an annual basis or sooner if required as it is a living document. |

| Which SMART Goals have been completed since your last published Mission Action Plan? |
| --- |
| Although we have not produced a MAP previously. What we have done since I became Priest-in-charge in September 2022 is –   * Set up a completely new venture called Jimmy’s Baby and Toddler Group – which celebrated it first birthday in Sept 24 * We set up a new elderly group called Wednesday Welcome which is celebrating its first birthday in May 2025. * We now run community dog walks across 5 different areas on a monthly basis. * We now have a youth venture on a Monday after school – this began in September 2024. * We now have an online prayer group which meets every Tuesday morning – this has been happening now for just over a year. * We now have a monthly Messy Church which started in January 2025 * We now have a Family Service out of St Botolph’s Church on a monthly basis, which started in 2024. * We now have a Family service starting with breakfast on a monthly basis at St James, High Wych. * A worship group to lead collective worship is now set up in the school since Sept 2024. * All these ministries are now ongoing and part of the mixed ecology of the church.   Since my arrival we have studied -   * The Bible course * The Prayer course * Studied Holy Habits for Lent by Andrew Roberts and BRF with a view to continuing Holy Habits in more depth as the next study course. * We have now run 4 Alpha courses – which has created a new bible study group and we ran a Holy Spirit Day in July 2025. |
| Which SMART Goals have not been completed since your last published Mission Action Plan? |
| N/A – We are not aware of any previous Mission Actions Plans and therefore there are no SMART goals to meet. |

| What is the vision for your Church, Parish, Team Ministry or Benefice?  For clarity on this please see [page 5 of the Planning for Mission Booklet »](https://resource.stalbansdiocese.org/courses-events-and-resources/planning-for-mission/)  Vision = Where we dream / hope / pray to be. |
| --- |
| Our overarching vision is - Growing in Faith, Growing in Hope. Growing in Love  Our new Mission Statement is -  As a Benefice we are dedicated to ‘being with’ our communities to bring faith, hope and love, showing that God’s places belong to all. |
| Has this vision changed since your last published Mission Action Plan? |
| This is a new vision |
| What are the core values for your Church, Parish, Team Ministry or Benefice? For clarity on this please see [page 5 of the Planning for Mission Booklet »](https://resource.stalbansdiocese.org/courses-events-and-resources/planning-for-mission/)  Our Core Values are –  Our overarching values are -   * Openness: Connecting with those we haven't reached before. * Commitment: Nurturing individuals of all ages in diverse and appropriate ways, calling on our imagination and courage. * Kindness: Embracing everyone on their journey of life and faith, no matter where they are. * Fun: Creating opportunities for people to come together in our community, connect, and enjoy themselves, with generosity and joy as our foundation. |

| What is your 1st Priority to make your vision a reality?  For help with identifying your priorities please see [page 6 of the Planning for Mission Booklet »](https://resource.stalbansdiocese.org/courses-events-and-resources/planning-for-mission/) | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Openness – Connecting with those we haven't reached before. | | |
| Which of the 3 strands of Living God's Love does your 1st Priority most focus on? | | |
| Going deeper into God | Making New Disciples | Transforming Communities |
| What are your SMART Goals to achieve your 1st Priority?  See [page 6 of the Planning for Mission Booklet »](https://resource.stalbansdiocese.org/courses-events-and-resources/planning-for-mission/)   1. goals maximum. | | |
| Goal 1 - Undertaking the journey to becoming an inclusive Benefice.  We will improve access to worship for all, this includes people with disabilities and in same-sex relationships.  We will develop a wider understanding of what inclusivity truly means.  The first conversation with our joint PCC happened on 13th August 2025. We have agreed to journey together, looking at all 6 areas of inclusivity recommended by the Church of England.  Disability; Mental Health; Gender; Poverty; Ethnicity and Sexuality.  Sufficient time will be given for further and deeper discussions around all 6 areas. Different PCC members will be looking at different areas of Inclusivity and taking the lead.  The access to worship for all is not only through our ‘church’ services but also through our regular outreach services at the Rivers Neurological Hospital.  The work on the step-free access at St James will continue throughout 2025.  The funding and authorisation from PCC are already in place for us to undertake the work on the step-free access at St James, we are now progressing this with the DAC.   * Time-bound - * By the end of 2025 we will, hopefully, have step-free access installed at St James * Hopefully by Easter 2026 we will have an inclusive statement on our website and on A Church Near You. * By April 2026 we will have worked towards being able to hold same-sex wedding blessings as the Church of England has now permitted this. | | |
| Are these 1st priority goals Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, and Timebound? | | |
| Yes | | |
| What is your 2nd Priority to make your vision a reality?  For help with identifying your priorities please see [page 6 of the Planning for Mission Booklet »](https://resource.stalbansdiocese.org/courses-events-and-resources/planning-for-mission/) | | |
| Commitment: Nurturing individuals of all ages in diverse and appropriate ways. | | |
| Which of the 3 strands of Living God's Love does your 2nd Priority most focus on? | | |
| Going deeper into God | Making New Disciples | Transforming Communities |
| What are your SMART Goals to achieve this Priority?   1. goals maximum per priority. See [page 6 of the Planning for Mission Booklet »](https://resource.stalbansdiocese.org/courses-events-and-resources/planning-for-mission/) | | |
| Goal 1 -   * Develop appropriate tailored discipleship journeys for each of the different age groups we engage with in our Benefice, including:- * Alpha for new seekers and baptism families. * Youth Alpha for Jim’s café * Messy Vintage for Wednesday Welcome * Diddy Disciples for Jim’s Baby and Toddler Group. * Confirmation materials for those seeking as adults to deepen their faith. * Bible Study courses for existing members   We will track participation rates at our events and will collect feedback from each age group to assess the effectiveness of the programmes.  Over the last 2 years we have established programmes which reach these groups and now have a clear mission pipeline to continue building upon.  All these programmes are already in motion and are supported by regular and committed teams of people.  We will review and refine the programmes annually, or sooner if needed, to ensure they continue to meet the needs of participants. | | |
| Are these priority goals Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, and Timebound? | | |
| Yes | | |

| What additional Priority are you working on to make your vision a reality?  For help with identifying your priorities please see [page 6 of the Planning for Mission Booklet »](https://resource.stalbansdiocese.org/courses-events-and-resources/planning-for-mission/)  1 priority per page (copy this page if required - 5 maximum) | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Kindness: Embracing everyone on their journey of life and faith, no matter where they are. | | |
| Which of the 3 strands of Living God's Love does this Priority most focus on? | | |
| Going deeper into God | Making New Disciples | Transforming Communities |
| What are your SMART Goals to achieve this Priority?  3 goals maximum per priority. See [page 6 of the Planning for Mission Booklet »](https://resource.stalbansdiocese.org/courses-events-and-resources/planning-for-mission/) | | |
| Goal 1 - Encourage the congregation to study, explore and adopt Holy Habits, deepening our relationship with God.  Goal 2 - Start of a confirmation class in June 2025.  Goal 3 - Encouraging the congregation to open the pew bibles during services giving out page numbers. We are aiming to project the readings at St James onto the screen over the course of 2026. We are going to encourage people to ‘Bring their Bible’ to church on Sundays. | | |
| Are these priority goals Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, and Timebound? | | |
| Yes | | |

| How will your priorities and goals be resourced?  Do you have the people, time and money to achieve this? Think about what is being done. By whom? By when? How will this be funded?  Your answer will not be shown on your published Plan. | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Members of the Ministry team are already involved in the delivery of a number of these programmes but are supported by several members of the congregation and local community. Some of the programmes are self-funding, others are supported by donations from the Fundraising Group as well as through grants, or through PCC funds.   * Step-Free Access - We have some funding in place for the completion of the step-free access at St James through the support of the Fundraising Group. Being headed up by Church Wardens. * Family service at St James – (Team of 3) Limited costs – Where there is expenditure this is covered by the PCC. * Family service at St Botolph’s – (Team of 4) Limited costs – Where there is expenditure this is covered by the PCC. * Messy Church – (Organising team of 2 + a team depending on availability) This is funded by a grant and monies accrued. * Jimmy’s Baby and Toddler Group – (AJ as lead + a very committed team of 6) After receiving a grant from the YMCA and the Fundraising Group, Jimmy’s is now self-funding and making money, which we are using for mission for the group. * Wednesday Welcome – (AJ as lead + a team of 7 depending on availability) This group needed some startup money which was donated by the Fundraising Group. However, this is not a self-funding group so further discussion on its future are needed. From August 2025 we have now asked for a Voluntary contribution of £1 per person. * Jim’s café – (Team of 4) This group received a grant from the Diocese and from the Fundraising Group. However, this is not a self-funding group so further discussion on its future are needed. This group will begin again in September 2025 with some fundraising money from D Filler’s bbq. | | |
| We would love to support you in making your Mission Action Plan a reality. Please indicate what support you would welcome. A member of the Diocesan team will contact you.  Your answer will not be shown on your published Plan. | | |
| Buildings & Grants | Church Growth | Growing Younger &  More Diverse |
| Please tell us more about the support you would like  Your answer will not be shown on your published Plan.  We would love a discussion with the Growing Younger and More Diverse team about our youth venture – Jim’s café. | | |
| Buildings and Grants – There is an ongoing conversation with Emma Critchley and Ann Wise regarding funding for building projects at St Botolph’s and St Mary’s before the new housing comes online – we have 3 years to achieve this.  Church growth – This is already ongoing with Kate Lomax when necessary.  Growing Younger and more Diverse - Some support with our Jim’s café would be appreciated.  Overall, we think it would be good to be able to welcome a pioneer curate into this Benefice as soon as possible. If that is not possible, then we would appreciate an SSM minister or an Associate Minister. | | |

| Reviewing your new Mission Action Plan |
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| At this point we’d like to outline what makes a Mission Action Plan excellent.  WHAT MAKES A Mission Action Plan EXCELLENT? (Ambitious and sustainable)   1. There is a clear understanding of the outcomes of previous Mission Action Plans (And reference to progress on past smart goals). 2. Clear, inspiring, memorable vision and values. Vision and values are clearly linked together. 3. Vision and values are in alignment with the diocesan vision (of Living God’s Love) and values (of imagination, joy, generosity, and courage). 4. Priorities are clearly aligned with the parish vision and values. 5. All goals are SMART. 6. All goals have a clear resource plan; you know specifically who will be doing what and by when, and how this will be funded.   WHAT MAKES A Mission Action Plan GOOD? (Committed and sustainable)   1. A well-articulated vision and values. 2. Priorities aligned with parish vision and values. 3. Explicit connection to diocesan vision of Living God’s Love and values (of imagination, joy, generosity, and courage). 4. Most Goals are SMART. 5. A clear consideration of the resources (time, money, and people) needed to achieve the goals has been made.   WHAT MAKES A Mission Action Plan AVERAGE? (Thoughtful and possible)   1. A vision or values. 2. Priorities are connected to the parish values or to parish vision. 3. Goals are listed, but they are not all SMART. 4. There is not a clear resource plan in terms of people, time or money to achieve the goals.   If you feel your Mission Action Plan would be viewed as average, you could improve the quality of your plan by reviewing your vision and values for alignment, and making your goals SMART. |