



EXPLORE MORE

Head over to cinnamonconnect.co.uk for plenty more resources, downloadable templates, events and training opportunities.



WELCOME

If you want your church to make a positive impact on your community, you're in the right place. Here at Cinnamon, we want to equip local churches, like yours, to connect with people in your communities both practically and compassionately.

It would be great if we could offer you a simple three step guide to guarantee success. But things don't work like that! Every community is different. Every church is unique. And just when you feel like you're on an even keel - life changes. The good news is that you're not alone.

Here at Cinnamon our team of community development practitioners have combined their many years of experience to give you an introduction to church-led community development.

You'll notice this booklet is split into five sections: Calling, Church, Community, Civic, and Choice. If you are new to social action, then you might find it helpful to work through these areas in order. Alternatively, dip straight into the ones that interest you.

Remember, you are not on your own! Through Cinnamon Connect you can link with church and project leaders, volunteers and activists who share your desire to see their churches make a positive impact in their communities.

See you soon,

Diane Mc William
Head of Church Engagements
Cinnamon Network



LISTEN TO YOUR COMMUNITY

How do you know that God’s plans for your community are the same as yours?



This is essentially what Missional listening is all about. Missional listening provides us with an ear to heaven so we can hear what God has to say to us through prayer and an ear to the ground so we can hear the people in the community. Even if you have lived in the community all your life, it’s good to try and see things afresh.

Prayerfully ask God the following questions:

- What are you already doing in your community?
- What assets does this community already have?
- Where are the ‘pinch points’ and the specific needs?
- Who are the ‘people of peace’ in the community?
- What would good news look in your neighbourhood?
- What resources does your church have?
- Where and through who is the Holy Spirit already at work?

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.”

Proverbs 29:18



DEFINE YOUR VISION AND VALUES

Having a clear sense of what you want to achieve will help to bring your church community together.

You may think that your purpose is obvious, but it’s worth establishing a clear vision which you can easily share with your church.

- **Vision** is an aspiration for your future destination, a ‘someday...’ statement.
- **Mission** sets the course for the journey to achieve that vision, a “today, we...” promise.
- **Values** are the non-negotiable choices, irrespective of reward or disadvantage, that you will stick to no matter what.
- **Purpose** is the reason your church or charitable organisation exists in the first place – it’s linked to the need you’re trying to meet.

EXPLORE MORE

Head over to Cinnamon Connect to download the full Missional Listening resources and to sign up for our online Missional Listening Training. cinnamonconnect.co.uk/resource/missional-listening-2/



EXPLORE MORE

Head over to Cinnamon Connect for more exercises to help you explore the vision of your church and share it with the wider church family. cinnamonconnect.co.uk/resource/defining-your-vision-and-values/



WHAT CAN YOUR CHURCH DO?

Chances are the challenges in your community will be vast.

So where do you start? What you need to remember is, the need is not the call. As a church you don't have to solve all the problems in your community.

In this section, we want to help you assess the gifts, talents and passions your church already has. Chances are, you've got more than you realise! And when you know what you've got, you can think about how to use it!

EXPLORE MORE

Take a look at our three short videos exploring the role of church in community. cinnamonconnect.co.uk/resource/church-why-engage/



REVIEW YOUR MINISTRIES

It's always good to take stock of the activities and relationships within your church.

Start with a simple spreadsheet listing all the events and activities that take place in the church or are connected with the church on a daily, weekly, monthly or annual basis.

For example, you could divide ministries into three simple categories.

- Events/activities that are aimed mainly at people within the church.
- Events/activities that are aimed mainly at people who have some connection with the church.
- Events/activities that involve people who never come to church.



EXPLORE MORE

Download the Ministry Review to complete for your church on Cinnamon Connect. cinnamonconnect.co.uk/resource/ministry-review/



EXPLORE THE SKILLS IN YOUR CHURCH

Your people are your greatest asset.

Take some time to really understand the skills of people in your congregation and where their passions and interests lie. You can't rush an audit like this. It's worth taking the time to involve other pastoral leaders in the process and to share your wider vision for the church.

Top tips to complete a successful skills audit.

- Share your vision before doing the audit
- Take your time – give people an opportunity to respond
- Feedback results – it's important that people know the impact

EXPLORE MORE

Download your Skills Audit Questionnaire and guidelines at cinnamonconnect.co.uk/resource/learning-about-your-congregation/



GET TO KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY

You can't be genuinely helpful, if you don't actually know what the needs are in your community.



Of course, they'll be many and varied, so it's worth reaching out to a whole load of different groups to find out exactly what's going on in your area.

Networking can be such a daunting word, but it's really all about building relationships. It's not about going into a meeting with a specific agenda, but rather being intentional about building relationships, gaining, trust, and identifying areas of common interest. Then, when opportunities arise, you'll know who to turn to.

Develop a list of contacts – Use the downloadable resources on Cinnamon Connect to build up a list of those you want to contact.

Reach out to individuals – Arrange to meet those individuals and take time to really listen to what they're doing.

Record your outcomes – Keep track of your conversations with key concerns or new projects that those you meet are working on.

Keep in touch – Relationships take investment, so make sure you reach out regularly, even if you don't have anything specific to discuss. There is power in just asking how people are doing.



MAP YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS

There is already so much going on in your community.

Our mapping tool enables you to build up a very detailed picture of the need within your local community alongside information about other services and support that are being provided.

Through the mapping facility you can:

- Easily add services and identify needs and assets
- Add details such as contact names, numbers and comments
- Record your level of connection with each place
- Record new ideas, observations and opportunities
- Update the content whenever you like



EXPLORE MORE

There are plenty more ideas and a useful download to help you compile them over at cinnamonconnect.co.uk/resource/a-guide-to-researching-community-priorities/



EXPLORE MORE

Visit cinnamonconnect.co.uk/map/ to explore the mapping tool and build up a picture of your community.



UNDERSTANDING CIVIC AUTHORITIES

Religion and politics are often seen as diametrically opposed – but if we take a closer look at the Bible then we see they are intertwined.

Moses, Joseph, Esther, Mordecai, Daniel and Paul all made a positive difference by working in civic spaces.

You may have preconceptions that working with local authorities includes lots of red tape, or that councils won't want to partner with faith groups. While there is inevitably some form filling, local authorities definitely do want to work with churches.

Through the COVID pandemic, many churches stepped in to respond to immediate needs in their communities, opening the door for further partnerships with local councils. Several local authorities have also adopted the Faith Covenant, which is a joint commitment between faith communities and local authorities or other commissioners.



“But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.”

Jeremiah 29:7



EXPLORE MORE

Find out more working with civic authorities cinnamonconnect.co.uk/resource/a-guide-to-civic-engagement/



MEASURING YOUR IMPACT

As the Church, we are great at telling stories of lives that have been transformed.

However, if we want to engage with civic leaders and institutions, we need to speak the language of numbers, measurement and outcome too.

A Cinnamon Social Action Audit will provide you with the body of research to help you demonstrate the outcomes of your work, so you can engage with civic leaders and institutions to impact even more lives.

Running a Cinnamon Faith Action Audit can help your church to:

- Build the CONFIDENCE of civic society in the value of what the Church and other faith groups do in towns and cities and show that faith is a force for good.
- Start new CONVERSATIONS with the local authority, police, health and other agencies.
- Develop new levels of COLLABORATION between the faith groups in a town or city and their civic leaders and organisations.

EXPLORE MORE

Head over the Cinnamon Connect to download our national report and find out more about conduct a Cinnamon Faith Action Audit in your area. cinnamonconnect.co.uk/resource/measuring-the-value-of-faith-2/



HOW TO CHOOSE A RESPONSE

After looking at the needs in your community and the assets and resources that the community and your church has to offer, you'll be in a good position to decide how to respond. Starting a project from scratch can be tough, but you don't have to do it all yourself.

Cinnamon has a range of Cinnamon Recommended Projects. These are best practice initiatives that you can literally pick off the shelf and put into action. They help you respond to issues as diverse as mental health, education and homelessness. Many offer training and ongoing support to help you get up and running and stay on track.

Remember, any effective community transformation initiative needs to be:

- **Sustainable** – offering a helpful solution to a real problem in your community
- **Deliverable** – using the resources, skill-sets and passion of your church and community

EXPLORE MORE

Get help in selecting the right response to the needs in your community by visiting cinnamonconnect.co.uk/resource/how-to-select-a-solution/



DEVELOP A FUNDRAISING PLAN

Funding can be an ongoing challenge, but it need not be a burden. The key to fundraising is therefore being able to tell your story well!

- Know your audience – what are they interested in?
- Explain the need your project is addressing and why you started it.
- Know your project model and understand why it's effective.
- Know the difference your project makes – think of outcomes and not just outputs.
- Make your story personal – talk about the changed lives and communities.
- Clearly communicate your vision for the future of the project.

ONLINE TRAINING

Cinnamon Network regularly runs Fundraising Training exclusively for churches and Christian organisations. Visit cinnamonconnect.co.uk/event to book your place on the next workshop.



USEFUL WEBSITES

fundraisingregulator.org.uk
goodfundraising.scot



FIND AND SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS

Leaders of social action projects – many of whom are also church leaders – are key in driving forward projects, strategies and bringing together a team of volunteers.

To find great volunteers:

- Know the skills/experience/passion they need
- Set realistic expectations in terms of time commitment etc
- Be you clear about the training and support you'll provide
- Advertise in the role widely

To equip the volunteers:

- Take training seriously
- Provide ongoing support and supervision
- Ask for their input and genuinely listen

To keep great volunteers:

- Make sure you're not over-burdening them
- Appreciate what they do
- Offer additional development

Empower beneficiaries to volunteer – where can you, make space for beneficiaries to become volunteers themselves.



EXPLORE MORE

Get great advice to help you find and keep brilliant volunteers at cinnamonconnect.co.uk/resource/top-tips-for-project-leaders/

