Refreshing our vision together

Guidance for engaging with younger voices

When engaging with ‘Refreshing our vision Together’, you might want to encourage fresh perspectives by involving younger voices.

Below you will find some suggestions for involving younger voices and also a sample rewording of the questions that may be more accessible to use with younger people. It would be helpful when consulting with younger voices that an adult facilitates the discussion and puts the feedback from the children/young people into the online form.

Some suggestions for involving younger voices

If possible, facilitate mixed age groups of adults and children sharing together. This helps to show all opinions are valued, and also models church as community. If it is not possible to involve younger voices directly in your context, why not have a conversation with a local school, college, chaplaincy or uniform group. In doing this you will need permission from the Head or leader, and possibly the governing bodies. You will also need to observe all safeguarding procedures, including consent for the children/young people to be involved.

When involving younger voices, here are a few useful considerations:

* First ask the children/young people if they want to be involved. If they do, make sure they know what they are being consulted about, how their ideas and suggestions will be fed into the overall process and how you will feed back to them. And remember to thank them.
* Don’t just choose the children/young people who will give the answers you want to hear. Other children/young people have things to say too. You can also pair up children/young people if it helps with their confidence
* If the children/young people don’t understand a question, try to rephrase the same question so they can better understand it and offer their own response.
* When recording what the children/young people have to say, try to write what they say and not what you interpret they have said.
* When in a mixed group of adults and children, adults try not to answer for the children or talk over them. This does not mean adults can’t offer examples or help to tease things out, this can help to draw children into the conversation.
* Where possible, make the conversation fun, creative and engaging, this helps to bring out better responses.
* Occasionally children/young people can go off in tangents, if this is the case try sensitively to re-focus it back to the question you are asking them.
* When consulting with children/young people you will need to fit in with their timings and not expect then to fit the adults. An evening PCC meeting is not best for involving children, maybe an afternoon shared PCC and school council meeting could work better.
* If consulting with children/young people in a school or out of school setting, it is best to hold group or class conversations in the normal place where they meet, and with members of their staff present.

Reworked questions for younger people

Valuing what we already have

Valuing and cherishing the people who are already part of the church or chaplaincy family.

1. Do you feel valued by your local church/chaplaincy, if so how?
2. How could your local church/chaplaincy better value people who don’t feel included?

Sharing our faith and worshipping in new and different ways

When we share our faith and worship together in new and different ways, this often connects with people who wouldn't engage with our traditional offering.  Putting in place something different offers us the scope to grow and become younger and more diverse.

1. What different types of church or worship have you been to or enjoyed in a church or chaplaincy context?
2. How could your local church or chaplaincy engage with more young people children and families?

Growing in faith

Developing our own faith and the faith of others.

1. What has help you grow or develop a Christian faith?
2. How could your local church/chaplaincy help other children or young people to explore the Christian faith?

Sharing in ministry and leadership

Sharing in ministry and models of leadership together – lay and ordained, across all ages, using the gifts, skills and passions of all so that no one person is overburdened or left out.

1. What gifts or skills do you have that are being used or could be used in your local church/chaplaincy?
2. How could your local church/chaplaincy encourage others to help run or lead different activities?

And lastly

1. Please tell us which of the four areas you think your local church/chaplaincy should focus on most over the next few years (reminder below).  
   \* Valuing what we already have  
   \* Sharing our faith and worshipping in new and different ways  
   \* Growing in faith  
   \* Sharing in ministry and leadership.