

## **Appendix 1**

During October/November of 2025 the diocese conducted meetings at all four deaneries which we referred to as “Hub Meetings”

The following summary was generated by AI from the notes of these meetings

### **DIOCESAN FUTURE PLANNING: CONSOLIDATED THEMES FROM PARISH HUB MEETINGS**

#### **1. The Big Questions Driving Everyone**

People kept circling around a few core concerns... almost like the diocese is standing at a crossroads, wondering what survives and what needs to be reimaged.

The questions beneath the surface seemed to be:

- How do we reach people who no longer naturally “come to church”?
- How do we support families whose lives are stretched thin?
- What will sustain us... spiritually, financially, practically?
- How do we honour our traditions without getting stuck?
- And, honestly, how do we cope with ageing congregations and shrinking numbers?

These questions shape everything else below.

#### **2. Mission, Evangelism and Community Presence**

##### **A. A More Visible Church**

Participants kept saying variations of “we need to be seen”:

- Be present in the community, not only on Sundays.
- More home groups, more relational spaces, more small gatherings.
- Community events with genuine value: breakfast clubs, playgroups, gardening, fetes, youth groups, op shops, emergency relief, soup kitchens, twilight meditation, messy church.

A quiet thread in the notes:

**“You may be the only chance someone has to meet God today.”**

People clearly feel this weight... and want support to act on it.

##### **B. Needs-based evangelism**

Not big campaigns, but practical, compassionate connection:

- Love in Action–style programs
- Meeting social isolation (e.g., Narrogin’s Back on Track)
- Reaching FIFO families, new housing estates, transient communities
- Ministry that is tailored to local needs, not a one-size diocesan model

##### **C. Relevance and Relationship**

A lot of concern that the church feels foreign or irrelevant to younger people.

People want:

- Personal connections
- Alpha-style exploration spaces
- Services that “lighten up” when appropriate
- Worship options that match contemporary rhythms: Saturdays, evenings, outdoors

#### **3. Discipleship, Formation and Spiritual Growth**

##### **A. A Diocesan Culture of Training**

This point came up again and again:

- Regular discipleship opportunities

- Ministry training hubs
- Youth ministry training
- Lay ministry development
- Theological and liturgical courses accessible to all
- Hub training days with follow-up support teams

## **B. Hearing the Holy Spirit**

Several groups referenced a desire to grow in discernment:

- Learning to listen
- Encouraging joy, trust, hope
- Not being crushed by bureaucracy or “rules” that feel spiritually counter-productive

## **4. Structure, Governance and Resourcing**

### **A. Communication and Connectedness**

There’s frustration about isolation between parishes:

- Better communication channels
- Sharing ideas and resources
- More active deanery life (shared convenors, collaborative events)
- A central resource hub (templates, materials, courses, sermon audio, children’s resources)
- More use of the intranet.

### **B. Diocesan Support**

People want clarity and help with:

- Buildings and maintenance
- Health and safety compliance
- Financial support
- Itinerant ministry for remote areas
- Encouraging and backing new expressions of church

### **C. Parish Viability**

This part had a candid tone:

- Some parishes are struggling visibly
- Ageing congregations
- Questions about minimum workable parish council sizes
- Op shops providing vital sustainability
- Desire for guidance on when to consolidate, when to persist, and how to use limited clergy wisely

The idea of a **peripatetic ministry team** came up as a possible solution.

## **5. Culture Change and Challenges**

The pressure points people named were fairly blunt:

- Ageing demographics
- Sunday competing with sport and life
- Resistance to change
- Fear of division (including references to GAFCON tensions)
- Red tape making simple ministry feel exhausting
- Very small volunteer bases carrying very heavy loads

There’s a longing for renewal without losing identity.

## **6. Opportunities and Fresh Expressions**

This section felt more hopeful:

- Church outdoors
- Creative worship formats
- Experimenting with service times
- Ecumenical cooperation (especially in smaller towns)
- Being “salt and light” through ordinary conversations
- Encouraging belonging among short-term residents
- Youthcare and school engagement as key mission fields
- Younger families as “the missing generation” to intentionally pursue

## **7. Sustainability: Spiritual, Financial and Missional**

People want a diocese that:

- Is financially stable without losing its soul
- Is spiritually alive (not just administratively compliant)
- Builds leaders rather than overworking a shrinking few
- Encourages each parish to “do one thing” sustainably (a nod to Hope25 – Joy26?)
- Keeps mission simple enough for busy lives

At the heart of many notes was the reminder:

**People come first. Authentic faithfulness, gratitude, imagination and equipping others are what build a sustainable future.**

## **8. Proposed Priority Areas for the Future Plan**

Pulling all the threads together, the diocese’s future plan could centre on:

- 1. Community Presence & Mission**  
Make every parish visibly engaged and relationally connected.
- 2. Discipleship & Training Culture**  
Diocesan-wide formation pathways for clergy, lay ministers, youth leaders and newcomers.
- 3. Flexible Worship & Ministry Models**  
More service times, new formats, itinerant clergy support, localised strategies.
- 4. Stronger Communication & Shared Resources**  
A central hub, improved parish-to-parish communication, more active deaneries.
- 5. Sustainable Structures & Financial Stability**  
Realistic assessments of parish viability, creative use of clergy, op shops as mission as well as income.
- 6. Youth, Families & Schools Engagement**  
This is the most urgent demographic gap... and possibly the biggest opportunity.
- 7. Reducing Red Tape Burdens**  
Explore ways to simplify compliance so ministry can breathe again.
- 8. Hopeful Culture Change**  
Fostering joy, imagination, trust, and Spirit-led confidence in God’s future