



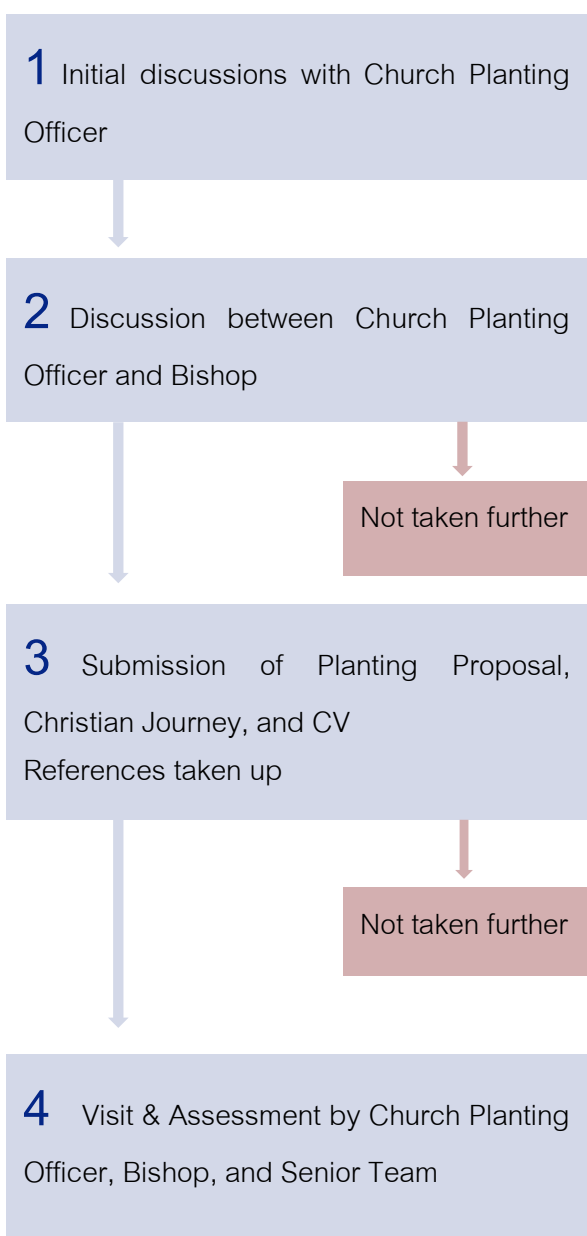
The Free Church of England

Church Planting Pathway

One of the most effective ways of making new disciples of Jesus is through church planting. The ministry of church planting is exhilarating, creative, and challenging. It can be led by ordained people, lay people seeking ordination, or lay people who continue with their existing vocations. In each case, the leaders need to have the DNA of a church planter. They need to be the right people, in the right place, with the right plan. In the case of ordained planters, the new worshipping communities that emerge are likely to become fully fledged churches. In the case of lay planters, the new worshipping communities are likely to be cells or missional communities.

Hopefully, this step-by-step introduction will help you to begin the process and to discover, together with others, whether God has a church planting adventure in store for you.

For an ordained person:



Whether you are an existing minister within the FCE, a minister within another Anglican jurisdiction, or a minister currently within another tradition, we'd love to talk with you if you believe you are discerning a call to church planting within the FCE. The initial conversations with the Church Planting Officer are informal but will cover your story, your journey of ministry to date, your relevant gifts and experiences, and your heart, vision, and ideas for church planting.

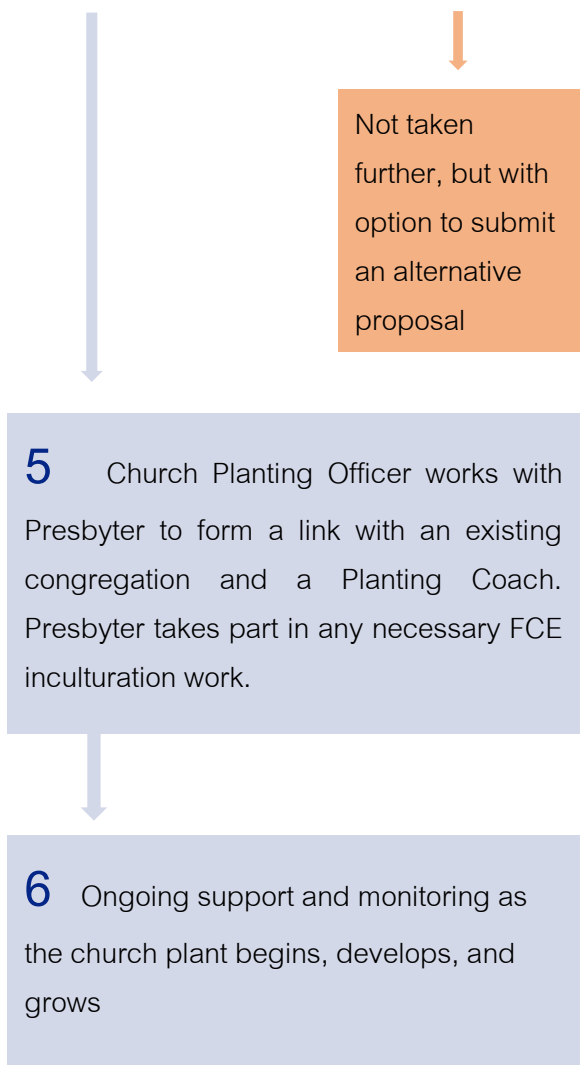
As an episcopal Church, the ministry of the Bishop is key to spiritual oversight, leadership, and proper order. It would be the Bishop who licenses you to a church planting ministry, so from this point in the process the Bishop will be fully involved in discerning your call to this type of ministry, along with other members of the senior team.

Submission of Documents

As well as submitting your CV, you will submit an outline of your Christian Journey (CJ) and your Planting Proposal. Your CJ will discuss your background, how you came to faith, your spirituality, your theological commitments, your spiritual disciplines, your journey of ministry, your gifts, and your vision for planting ministry today. It's the story of God and you. We look forward to reading it. Your Planting Proposal is an initial document of 4-5 pages which covers your vision and possible strategy for planting in your chosen location. It will outline the geography and demography of the proposed location, your 'target audience', the needs you would try to meet, and some of the ministries that are likely to emerge. References are also taken up.

Visit & Assessment

In order to get the fullest possible picture of you, your context, and your vision, members of the senior team will spend the best part of a day with you in your proposed planting location.



Utilising some assessment forms and tools and having the opportunity to spend time with you in context will enable the team to see your church planting DNA and to make sure that you are the right person, in the right place, with the right plan. The emphasis at this stage in the process is very much about working with you, so if the team discerns that your initial plan isn't quite right you will have the opportunity to work with us in making changes and submitting an alternative plan. We want to do all that we can to enable you flourish as a church planter.

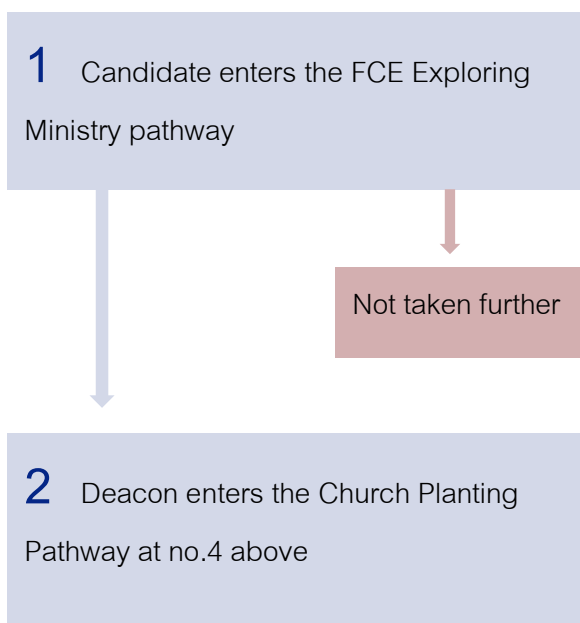
Congregational Link, Planting Coach, and Inculturation

As your planting journey begins, the Church Planting Officer will work with you to form a link with an existing FCE congregation and with a Planting Coach (from either the FCE or the wider Reformed Episcopal Church family). The link with an existing congregation is designed to provide mutual encouragement, resourcing, and ministry opportunities, especially in the potentially isolating period early on in the journey. The Planting Coach will be an experienced church planter who will act as a regular sounding board and advisor. Depending on your knowledge and experience, you will take part in guided reading and/or short ministry placements to enable you to become more familiar with the history, purpose, and distinctiveness of the FCE.

Ongoing Support

As your church plant begins, develops, and grows, the Senior Team will be rooting for you as you provide regular reports and updates, and as they pray for you and practically support you through visits, advice, monitoring, and networking you into the wider life of the denomination.

For a lay person seeking ordination:



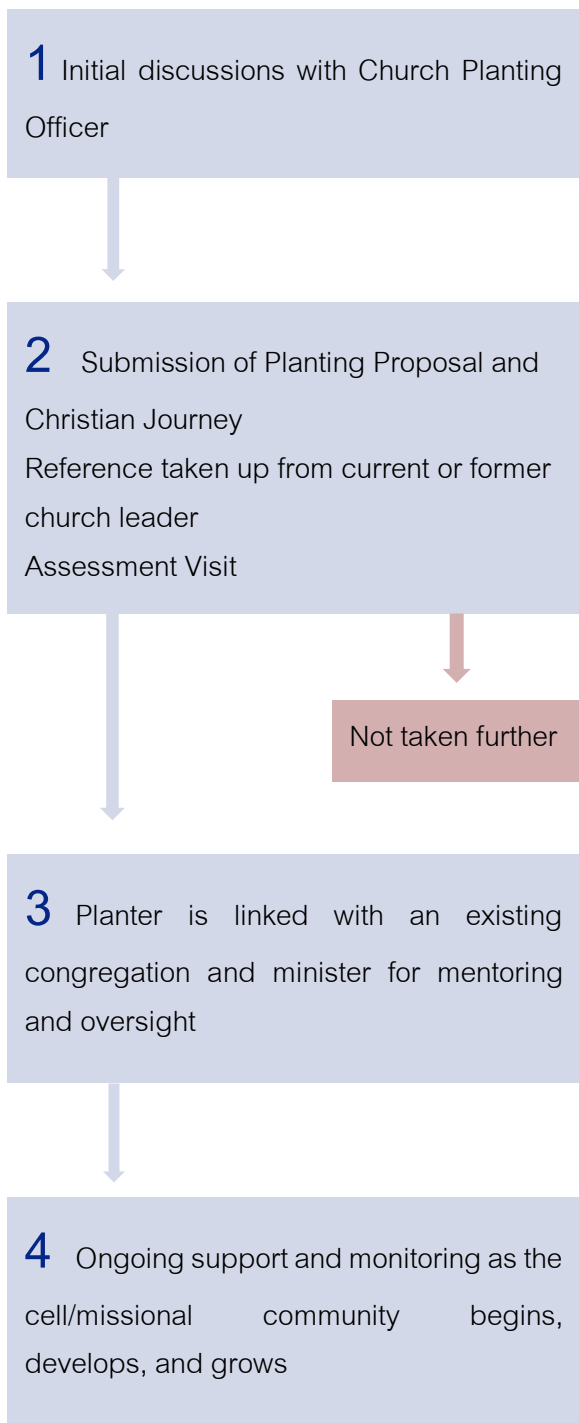
Whether you are a layman in the FCE, another Anglican jurisdiction, or another tradition, we'd love to talk with you if you believe that you are discerning a call to ordination and church planting within the FCE.

The first step is to enter the FCE's Exploring Ministry pathway, full details of which can be found in the relevant pathway document.

Should you be successful in being selected for ordination training, you would enter your training programme and would then begin to develop a Planting Proposal towards the end of your training. As a newly ordained deacon you would then enter the Church Planting Pathway at no.4 above.

As a newly ordained person, your post-ordination training will involve significant ministry experience within an existing congregation as well as developing your plans for church planting.

For a lay person in secular employment:



Whether you are a lay person in the FCE, another Anglican jurisdiction, or another tradition, we'd love to talk with you if you believe that you are discerning a call to some form of church planting within the FCE, while also continuing in your existing vocation. The initial conversations with the Church Planting Officer are informal but will cover your story, your journey of faith to date, your relevant gifts and experiences, and your heart, vision, and ideas for church planting.

Submission of Documents

At this stage you will be invited to submit an outline of your Christian Journey (CJ) and an initial Planting Proposal. Your CJ will discuss your background, how you came to faith, your spirituality, your spiritual disciplines, your journey of faith, your gifts, and your vision for planting ministry today. It's the story of God and you. We look forward to reading it. Your Planting Proposal is an initial document of 2-3 pages which covers your vision and possible strategy for planting in your chosen location. It will outline the geography and demography of the proposed location, your 'target audience', the needs you would try to meet, and the type of ministry that is likely to emerge. The Church Planting Officer is there to help you with this. A reference will be taken up from your current or former church leader.

Assessment Visit & Link Congregation

In order to get the fullest possible picture of you, your context, and your vision, members of the senior team will visit you in your proposed planting location. This will enable the team to see your church planting DNA and to help you to refine your plan. The visit team will include the FCE minister from the congregation that is likely to be your Link Congregation. This minister will be your mentor and will provide encouragement, support, and oversight. Your relationship with your Link Congregation will be similar to that which exists between a lay ministry head and a congregation within an existing church, i.e. it will be a relationship of mutual encouragement, resourcing, and ministry opportunities.

Ongoing Support

As your planting project begins, develops, and grows, your Link Congregation and mentor will be rooting for you as you provide regular reports and updates, and as they pray for you and practically support you through visits, advice, monitoring, and resourcing.