

RESOURCING SUSTAINABLE CHURCH: (Extract)

Type 1

Key Mission Church (KMC)

A large, flourishing, confident and prominent church in any tradition located in or strategically placed to serve a significant population. Well-resourced financially, in buildings, and in skills and lay involvement. Able to cover its ministry costs and more. Whole church commitment to growth. A main focus for ministry across an LMP or together with others across a Deanery Partnership. High quality of worship, nurture, welcome, music, teaching, online presence. Large USA, AWA and ER, including Fresh Expressions, multiple ministries and congregations. Flexible facilities. A base for ministry, administration and collegial prayer and collaboration for a family of churches. A resource for other churches. A place of gathering for other churches periodically. Growing and sustainable, but generous and collaborative.

Main activities

High quality, varied, attractive and regular worship. Prayer for the LMP family of churches and the world. Collegial prayer, collaboration, team formation and mutual support. Larger gatherings of people and churches. Training and courses, digital production, vocation work and hub for training both lay and ordained. Exemplary children's, family and youth work. For its core congregations, a range of small groups, social action projects, pastoral care, occasional offices, ecumenical functions, and civic presence. For its immediate community, mission, outreach, social action. Engagement with schools. Lead in multi-agency action. Cultural and economic contribution to the wider community.

Relates to: (Deanery Partnership, Local Mission Partnership, Other Church Types)

Target of more than one per DP, ideally diverse styles of church. Serves a significant part of the DP. Ideally one per LMP, not always possible, but occasionally more than one possible. A substantial resource and partner for the Category 3 and 4 churches. May include resource churches.

Deployment, staffing, governance

One of two types of mission church. Plays a symbolic and practical role in creating identity in the wider family of churches in an LMP (or occasionally a DP). One of the LMP stipendiary roles to be leader of KMC, though also with other responsibilities (DP, LMP or diocese). Incumbency located within LMP. Range and quantity of work requires a diversity of leadership, including Lay and SSM ministries. Will have and expect to grow a full range of competent, diverse and mission-minded lay officers and bodies.

Likely current characteristics

All ministers and laity committed to growth, serving the wider area, sharing resources, witness and service, intentional mission, and being a prominent public entity. Will already have significant ER and USA for a church in its situation, and be positive about stewardship and paying share. Some almost there, some with clear potential, a few needing to find this vocation. Sufficient lay leadership.

Growth expectations

Should be keen and able to generate significant growth over 5 years. Will seek to grow by 50% or more over five years depending on starting point and catchment. Thus, a church currently 100-strong would become a church of 150. Will agree mission action plan with targets for families and young people, key demographics, ER and regular giving. Much growth in the LMP will come from their two-way interaction with other churches, especially Type 3 Community Churches.

Share expectations

Expected to pay full cost of posts attached to it (at least one full time stipendiary priest) and of additional posts, with a further contribution to the wider common fund. This will be a target over the five years. Full recovery of the giving of those coming into the church family from other churches which are closing or reducing regular worship. Exemplary fundraising. Support of fundraising, giving and share commitment across the LMP, or DP.

Issues

Not all DPs have obvious candidates. Competition for role and/or resentment. Balance of churchmanship/style/theology. Role of Resource Churches. Role of significant but independent churches. Church communities with critical mass and/or giving level but across more than one building. Places with multiple self-identifying Key Mission Churches (e.g. in cities). Harvesting from other churches. Substantial capital needs to deliver role.

Type 2 Local Mission Church (LMC)

A flourishing, confident and well-used church in any tradition located in a specific village, town or area of a larger town. Adequately resourced in skills and lay involvement. Able to cover its share of ministry costs and make a contribution to the greater whole. Whole church commitment to growth. A centre for a significant part of an LMP. Good quality of worship, nurture, welcome, music, teaching, online presence. USA, AWA and ER able to grow, maybe including Fresh Expressions. Flexible or adaptable facilities and a base for local ministry. May complement others in LMP in terms of tradition. Growing and sustainable, but generous and collaborative. "Our church", to many in an LMP.

Main activities

Good quality, varied, attractive and regular worship, every Sunday and some weekdays. Prayer for the immediate community, the LMP family of churches and the world. Local collegial prayer and collaboration. Local gatherings of people and churches. Digital production, support of vocations and training. Some children's, family and youth work. A range of small groups, social action projects, pastoral care, occasional offices, ecumenical functions, and community presence. For its immediate community, mission, outreach, social action. Engagement with schools. Some cultural and economic contribution to the wider community.

Relates to: (Deanery Partnership, Local Mission Partnership, Other Church Types)

Relates primarily to its immediate community and to its LMP family of churches. Ideally several per LMP, at least one, but not more than can be properly staffed. May exceptionally share more than one building. Principal place of belonging and worship for those also involved in Type 3 and 4 churches. May include resource church plants. May have wider reach if in specific tradition or some speciality.

Deployment, staffing, governance

One of two types of mission church. Plays a partnership role in developing identity in the wider family of churches in an LMP. One of the LMP stipendiary roles to be leader of one or more Local Mission Churches. Incumbency located within LMP. Range and quantity of work requires share of diverse leadership, including Lay and SSM ministries. Strong and effective governance for itself and contributing to the Local Mission Partnership.

Likely current characteristics

Church with full lay representation and involvement. Regular worship. Commitment across the people to growth, mission, deeper discipleship, social justice and service to the community. Making significant share contribution and keen to do more. ER and USA appropriate to community and desire for more. Ideally 40+. Open to collaborative ministry and closer church working. Good or improvable building.

Growth expectations

Keen to generate significant growth over 5 years. Starting point generally 40 plus. Will seek to grow to 60 to 100 or more over five years depending on starting point and catchment. Will agree mission action plan with targets for families and young people, key demographics, ER and regular giving.

Share expectations

Expected to work towards paying full cost of its share of LMP posts attached to it, and more. This will be a target over the five years. Full recovery of the giving of those coming into the church family from other churches which are closing or reducing regular worship. Exemplary fundraising.

Issues

Temptation for LMPs to agree too many churches of this type and so dilute resources. Reluctance to collaborate. Some significant populations don't have a strong enough potential Local Mission Church yet. Balance of churchmanship/style/theology. Church communities with critical mass and/or giving level but across more than one building. Places (urban areas) with more reasonably strong potential Local Mission churches than can be properly resourced or sustained. Harvesting from other churches.

Type3 Community Church (CC)

A church in a small but significant community, not identified and resourced as a Type 1 or 2 Mission Church, but with sufficient local support and resources to remain as an active place of worship and an identifiable and self-determining church community. A centre and a focus for some worship and belonging for its community, sharing and connected, for its enrichment, sacramental life and collaborative mission and ministry, with one or more Local Mission Churches. A significant community resource – sometimes expressed in shared operation with a community organisation.

Main activities

Open and available for private prayer and community activities. Regular worship (e.g. monthly), mainly locally led. Support from LMP for occasional festival events. Occasional offices. Focus and resource for local small groups related to adjacent Mission Churches. Use by neighbouring schools. Location for specific initiatives by the LMP family of churches and ministers. A collaborative pattern of local worship with adjacent churches. Concerts, meetings, social gatherings, heritage visits and spiritual tourism

Relates to: (Deanery Partnership, Local Mission Partnership, Other Categories)

As many as wish and are demonstrably sustainable in each LMP, without diverting human resources. Cared for under the LMP structure, though may have special relationship with one or more specific Mission Churches. Provides local resource and community embeddedness to the LMP mix. Use of DP or LMP admin and resources, especially re churchyards, faculties, safeguarding, compliance etc. subject to appropriate contribution towards costs from fundraising and activities.

Deployment, staffing, governance

Administratively and pastorally works with LMP team, maybe one designated lead minister at LMP or DP level (Dean of Community Ministry?). A focal minister in each active church, not necessarily a licensed or authorised minister, who connects the local church with the LMP family. Most activity led by local laity, with guidance and materials from the LMP. Bringing such churches together in pastoral schemes would be more efficient, and offer future flexibility.

Likely current characteristics

To be a functioning church in Type 3 it must have or share a full complement of lay officers and the capacity to look after itself without significant input from the incumbent. Able to cover at least the cost of compliance and diocesan or DP services.

Growth expectations

Having local growth ambitions appropriate to their setting but should at least be able to remain stable over the next five years. Supports discipleship, community embeddedness, a rich pattern of worship and belonging and visibility in every neighbourhood. May collaborate in activities designed to evangelise or break barriers to church involvement. Demographic change, housing developments and local church flourishing may allow or require some to grow to be Mission Churches.

Share expectations

Low expectation of ministerial resourcing will lower expectation of contribution of share. Many laity in Community Churches may pay their planned giving through their Local Mission Church, so a mechanism will be needed to precept for local costs of running the church. Plate collections, fundraising proceeds and fees for occasional offices done in the CC will boost such local resources. If covenants are at LMP level, this will need to be part of the background to the conversations.

Issues

Avoiding Community Churches becoming a refuge for those resisting change. Ensuring local sustainability. Avoiding expectations which will dilute ministerial resources in the LMP. Ensuring quality of experience in locally delivered church activities, and adherence to Canon and good theology. Pressure on local SSM and PTO clergy to keep business as usual. Vulnerability to increasing fragility of key laity. Traditional reluctance for parishioners to worship in other churches.

Type 4 Festival Church (Celebration Church)

Nationally and locally defined as Celebration or Festival Churches. Churches which remain as places of worship, but which cannot or do not wish to offer regular worship. They remain as cherished symbols and sacraments in their communities, places that give local identity, connection with our culture and heritage, places for spiritual and heritage tourism, and significant resources for community gathering and activity. They can be used for Festival or Celebration events – occasional services at, say, Harvest and Christmas. Also places for the spiritual and shared journeys of local residents – weddings and funerals. Many will have other uses, be places for community activities, and even share their care with non-church groups. They should be a blessing to their neighbourhood and the family of churches, but be a burden on neither. Demographic or other changes may mean they can find more church use later.

Main activities

Being maintained, open and available as a key building in a community. Community uses – performances, exhibitions, open-days, meetings, training, public service activities, food-banks, post offices, places for school activities. Buildings and associated communities for gathering for shared prayer, bible study or learning projects. Periodic celebratory religious worship, at key points in the church or local calendar. Occasional offices and memorial events.

Relates to: (Deanery Partnership, Local Mission Partnership, Other Categories)

Relates to its LMP. Maybe collectively a shared responsibility across a DP. May have a specific relationship with a mission church, maybe in a multiple church parish for less governance challenge.

Deployment, staffing, governance

Generally removed from the daily responsibility of LMP ministers. Pastoral and ministerial needs met locally through the LMP and its family of churches and its collaborative team of ministers. Churchyards, faculties, safeguarding, compliance and organisation of offices will be organised professionally at a cost shared with other churches. Community uses organised locally or with community partners.

Likely current characteristics

A desire to remain open as a church and maybe other functions, but no will to be a regular place of worship. Unless each Festival Church can offer full lay governance and financial self-sufficiency, joining with neighbours in a pastoral scheme may be a prerequisite. Financial and governance self-sufficiency needed to be a place of worship and avoid closure.

Growth expectations

Local faithful should be on the ER of a Key Mission, Local Mission or active Community Church. Numbers will therefore cease to be counted for Festival Churches. If a significant body of worshipping Christians develops around a Festival Church it will create clear growth in partnership with others in the LMP. The generous availability of the church’s local resources and its continuing local visibility will help the appreciation of the church by the community, and the release of the active ministry team created by Festival Churches will contribute to mission and growth elsewhere across the LMP.

Share expectations

Festival Churches will be required to pledge and contribute under the Covenant Scheme an annual sum covering the “cost of compliance”, equivalent to the cost of one week’s stipendiary provision: set at £1,000 until 2023, though payment may be supported through the LMP. Worshippers located in the neighbourhood and/or parish of a Festival church are likely to be attached to and therefore giving in one of the mission churches and/or one of the Community Churches associated with them.

Issues

It feels like giving up, often after centuries of stewardship. Many church communities have become fragile but their civil communities are also small and fragile, so partnership and care for buildings and their use is still a challenge even if regular worship and pastoral responsibility has been transferred elsewhere. Share and ER numbers in the LMP may fall in the short term if people don’t choose to transfer their belonging – many and the most faithful of them, will of course transfer.

Type 5 Churches temporarily or permanently closed

These are churches that are unable to operate as active places of worship under any of the above types. As buildings, they are not needed for worship or church related activity, even on an occasional basis. As worshipping communities and entities caring for a building, they have ceased to function or are in grave danger of ceasing. In many cases the writing will have been on the wall for some time. Many of them involve significant or historically important buildings, but care has overwhelmed or exhausted their communities. A few may be abandoned by worshipping communities seeking to move into a sharing and flourishing relationship with another church – especially in more urban areas. Since this is a painful thing for the remaining valiant few, and sends a negative message, and doesn't immediately remove financial or care responsibilities from the diocese, closure is always likely to be a last resort.

Main activities

A 5A church will be temporarily closed. It will cease operation, it will be locked but made safe, it will need to be insured, inspected and maintained in a watertight condition. No activity will take place there unless and until a deal can be struck locally for a compatible and legal use. Such temporary closure may lead the move to 5B, or alternatively, may elicit a supportive response from people in the community to sustain it for a use under another type. It may be awaiting post-Covid assessment of viability.

A 5B church will be on or beyond a pathway to permanent closure. When closed, following a complex and often lengthy national process, it will be subject to an investigation of alternative and economically viable uses. This may be as a community building, commercial premises, a place of worship for a compatible form of church, housing, or a heritage attraction. Location, heritage and architectural value, access and condition will play a role in determining such uses. A community should not see closure as a total loss, and they may be part of a new thriving after re-purposing.

Relates to: (Deanery Partnership, Local Mission Partnership, Other Categories)

The LMP will need to be clear that it has no valuable or sustainable use for the building. In temporary closure (5A), the cost and care will fall on the Deanery Partnership and its constituent Local Mission Partnerships and churches. The process is so complex, long-drawn-out and sometimes painful that the diocese may need to create an arm's length organisation in partnership with public sector, heritage, charitable and other interests, to care for and repurpose these churches. Care for the Anglican remnant in these places, pastoral responsibility for wider community, and absorption by pastoral scheme into a new expression of the duty of care and the cure of souls will be a project for the LMP, using expertise lodged in the DP and the diocese. National heritage-sensitive reports have to be commissioned, and if we are likely to see more than a handful, we should begin this process soon.

Deployment, staffing, governance

Totally removed from the daily responsibility of LMP ministers. Pastoral and ministerial needs met locally through the LMP and its family of churches and its collaborative team of ministers. Churchyards, faculties, safeguarding, compliance and organisation of offices will be provided professionally at a cost shared with other churches until fully closed.

Likely current characteristics

A church should not seek temporary or permanent closure unless there is no alternative. Larger churches in urban areas whose sites and structures may have more potential for new uses, may move into closure as part of imaginative joining of parishes and investment in more promising churches. A church that does not have working lay governance, and cannot fill vacancies for PCC membership, for churchwardens, for safeguarding responsibilities and the financial and legal requirements of charity trustees, or find another neighbouring competent body to take this on, will be inevitably on a path to temporary and then permanent closure.

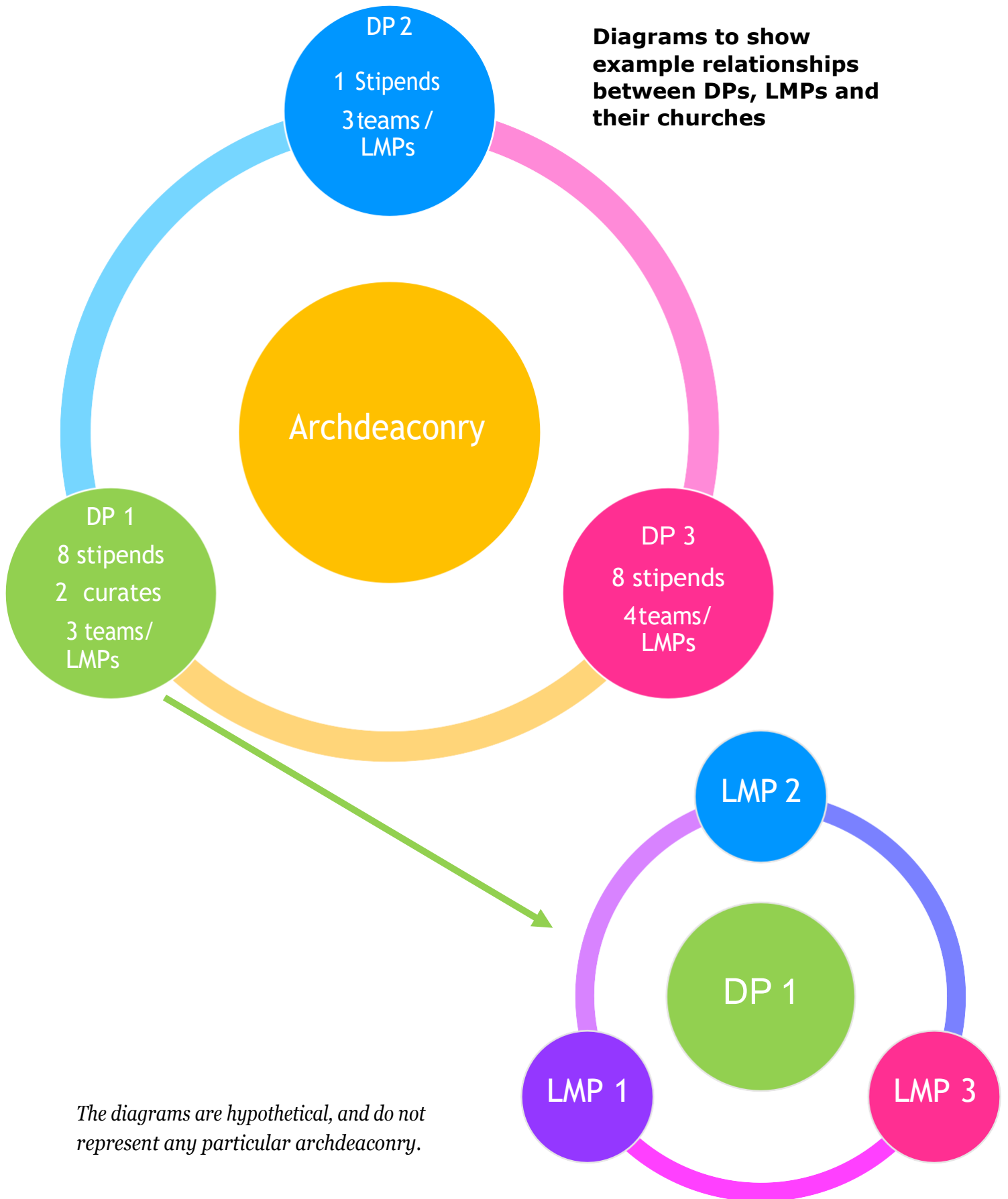
Growth expectations

Growth is likely elsewhere following closure, through aggregation of congregations, and improved focus in ministerial resources.

Share expectations

Closed churches will not pay share, but generous Christians who relocate their belonging should.

Diagrams to show example relationships between DPs, LMPs and their churches



The diagrams are hypothetical, and do not represent any particular archdeaconry.

- 1 KMC
- 3 LMCs
- a number of community and festival churches

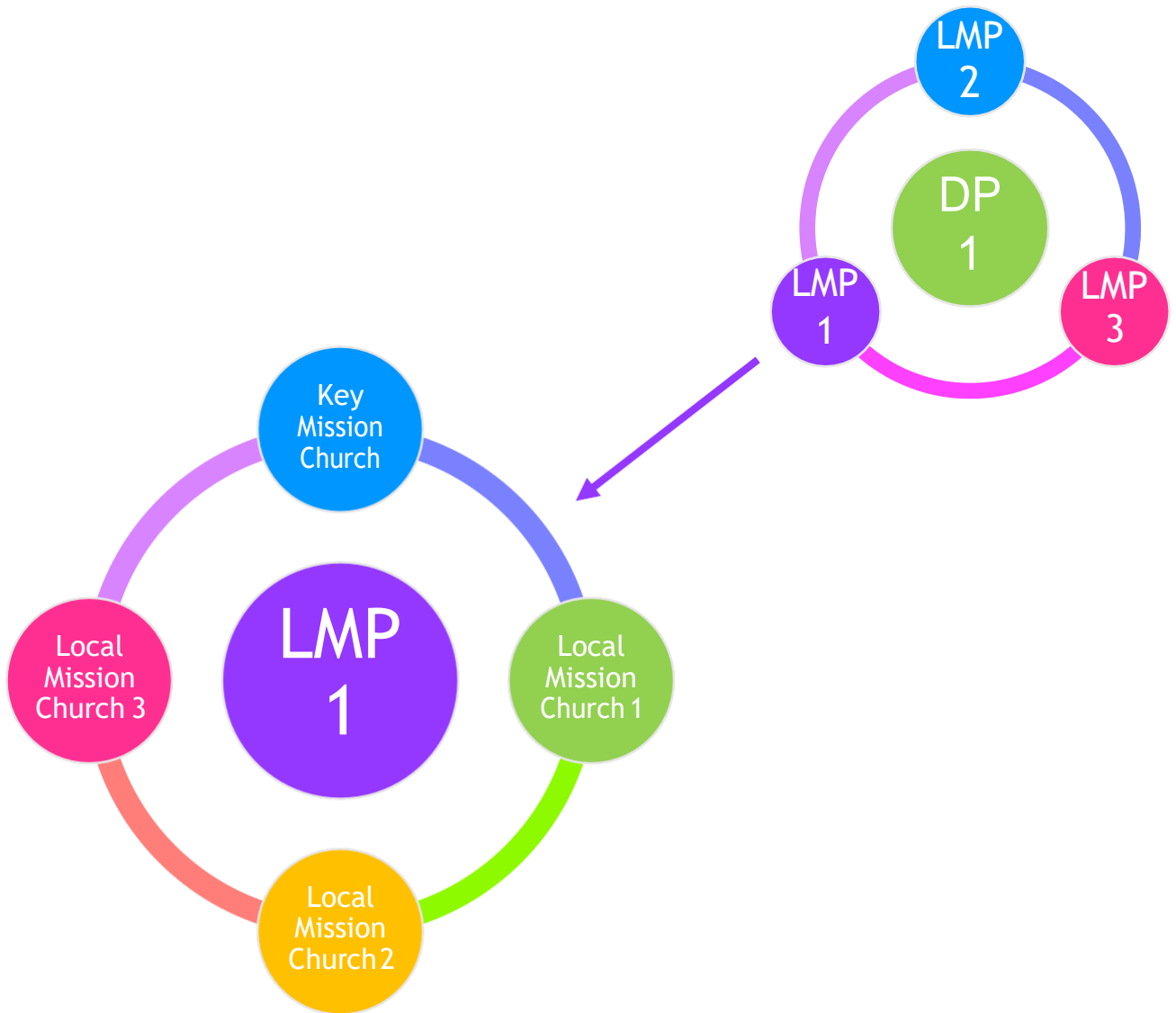
LMP 1

- 2 KMCs
- 2 LMCs
- 3 community churches
- several closed

LMP 2

- no obvious 'key church', so 1 or 2 LMCs chosen for development
- 4 LCMs + several community & festival churches

LMP 3



- good Sunday worship
 - young church & schools
 - discipleship/ vocations
 - community centre
 - food bank
 - transformation projects
- KMC**

- Tuesday Evening worship & study
 - Messy Church on Thursdays
 - gather at KMC on Sun
 - hosts quiet days
- LMC 1**

- Thurs eucharist
 - weekly coffee morning
 - hall well used by village
 - popular for weddings
 - Dementia Care Group
- LMC 2**

- church school next door - supports schools work for whole DP
 - Sunday All Age worship
 - community garden
 - good baptism prep
- LMC 3**

- cafe
 - midwk prayer
- Com Ch**

- film night
 - Harvest Festival
- Com Ch**

- local council drop in
- Com Ch**

- after school clubs
- Com Ch**

- community hall
- Com Ch**

festival

festival

festival

closed

closed

KMC = Key Mission Church

LMC = Local Mission Church

Com Ch = Community Church

