



## **CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY VISION from 2022 to 2050 BUILDING BRISTOL AS A CITY OF HOPE**

### **Introduction**

Together4Bristol/Churches Together in Greater Bristol (T4B) longs to help “transform Bristol together”. To see “the WHOLE Christian community working together in unity to help bring transformation and the Kingdom of God to the WHOLE of life”.

We need to seek God in prayer for His best ways forward, step by step.

“We need to hear the cry of God's heart for the people, combined with the cry of the broken people of Bristol - who have no hope unless we become visible, relevant and take responsibility for the state of the city and region of Bristol!” We need to recognise our own brokenness and come to love, serve and bless.

As we emerge from the COVID pandemic, with a new landscape, a dual approach needs to develop:

- a) Engagement, led by Christian Action Bristol (CAB), at a top “city level” (with the council etc) for recovery and renewal, and tackling the root causes of injustice.
  - b) A grassroots movement, with thousands of everyday Christians released in every sphere of society and across the whole of life. Everyone! Everywhere! Every day!
- For this all to happen, T4B needs increasingly to enable and facilitate a sustainable “unity for transformation” movement, to help build Bristol as a “fair, healthy and sustainable” City of Hope to 2050 and beyond. For more details, see the 5 ASPIRATIONS below.

### **OUTLINE SUMMARY of the FIVE ASPIRATIONS:**

#### **ASPIRATION 1: CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY Collaborating Together**

**Invite all churches and the WHOLE Christian Community to journey together in partnership and engage with the Vision and Aspirations of the Christian Community Vision to 2050. Walk together towards what we already have: UNITY.**

- a) **Increase diversity and be multi-generational. Collaborate for justice within the Christian community.**
- b) **Release generosity and share resources, including people and buildings.**
- c) **Build relationships and collaborate with other churches, to meet the needs of local communities together.**
- d) **Church leaders affirm people in their calling in the WHOLE of life, including in their workplace.**
- e) **ALL engage appropriately with the Christian Community Vision to 2050.**
- f) **Gather key church, prayer and sphere leaders together regularly to help turn the Vision into action.**

## **ASPIRATION 2: CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY: United Prayer**

- a) PRAY everywhere! Pray as a lifestyle. Listen to God to guide all that we all do.
- b) Church and other leaders' regular prayer gatherings

## **ASPIRATION 3: SHORT TERM RECOVERY AND RENEWAL**

Contribute to the recovery and renewal of the Bristol region. Continue to walk closely with the Mayor, Council and City Office, as we emerge from the COVID pandemic, over the next 3 to 5 years and beyond. Led by [CAB](#) and linked to some of the other spheres of life. Start to engage with the longer term Aspirations (4 and 5). Connect closely with the [One City Plan 2050](#), to contribute strategically to the transformation of the city, including in the following areas:

- a) Support those in crisis
- b) Help people move on. Help tackle the climate emergency.
- c) Support the vulnerable

## **ASPIRATION 4: MEDIUM TERM TRANSFORMATION**

Enable MISSION AND TRANSFORMATION in the WHOLE of life, including social action and tackling unjust systems. Show leadership and take opportunities to engage actively in every sphere of life , and across the whole of life, including through the six Themes of the One City Plan 2050. Every one! Every where! Every day!

- a) Work to address systemic root causes of inequality and injustice.
- b) Continue to help tackle the climate emergency.
- c) Strengthen families.
- d) Improve mental health and well-being.
- e) Use the creative Arts to celebrate beauty and also to highlight systemic issues.
- f) Encourage everyday Christians to be missional in every sphere of society and across the whole of life.

## **ASPIRATION 5: LONGER TERM TRANSFORMATION**

Help T4B become a sustainable “unity for transformation” movement. Continue previous ASPIRATIONS and:

- a) Help build a grassroots movement of thousands across the whole of life.
- b) Transition leadership to a younger generation.
- c) Set up leadership training
- d) Set up a mentoring scheme
- e) Help T4B become sustainable, including financially for the core activities of T4B, to help build Bristol as a City of Hope, to 2050 and beyond.

## THE FIVE ASPIRATIONS

### ASPIRATION 1: CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY Collaborating Together

Invite all churches and the **WHOLE** Christian Community to journey together in partnership and engage with the Vision and Aspirations of the Christian Community Vision to 2050. Walk together towards what we already have: **UNITY**

**a) Increase diversity and be multi-generational. Collaborate for justice within the Christian community.** It is important to see beyond denominational structures and break down walls. Get to know more people who are different from you, welcoming and respecting difference. Break down racial injustice within the Church and the north / south, rich / poor divides and gender inequality (Galatians 3: 28), through more intentional cross pollination and action. Invest in the younger generation, especially using social action to change young people's hearts. Be more appropriate for younger people: more visual and simplified, using bite sized chunks of information.

**b) Release generosity and share resources, including people and buildings,** between Christians in the city. Share resources across churches and release resources of finance and building eg local and citywide effective mapping: a Church audit of our resources and gifting, matching needs, with skills and resources. Intentionally looking for the gaps in the walls (Nehemiah). Look for where things are not happening and where resources can be channelled eg church planting.

**c) Build relationships and collaborate with other churches, to meet the needs of local communities together.** Listen to the needs of their communities (eg knife crime) and collaborate together (eg Noise 365 and Churches Together or similar groups) to be an effective resource in the community.

**d) Church leaders affirm people in their calling in the WHOLE of life, including in their workplace.** Envision and adopt a Kingdom agenda. Turn churches inside out. Disciple people to realise and act on their calling to be kingdom builders Monday to Saturday. Link to networks in the spheres of life and across the whole of life (see ASPIRATION 4f).

**e) ALL engage appropriately with the Christian Community Vision to 2050.** Invite churches, including the senior regional Church Leaders (or Presidents of T4B), to journey together and engage with the Vision and Aspirations of the Christian Community Vision to 2050. To encourage ALL church leaders to participate in whatever ways are appropriate for their churches, including communicating the Vision and Aspirations to church members. Identify and equip City Champions in churches. Communicate the Vision in a way that ALL churches feel they can contribute to, even on a very modest basis.

**f) Gather key church, prayer and sphere leaders together regularly, to help turn the Vision into action.** To agree focus, priorities, action and resources (see Nehemiah 3) of the Christian Community Vision to 2050 and how to engage with and support the One City Plan.

### ASPIRATION 2: CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY : United Prayer

**a) PRAY everywhere! Pray as a lifestyle. Listen to God to guide all that we all do.** For everyone to be dependent on Jesus, on a deeper personal journey of humility (Micah 6:8). Networks of intercessors / prophets help seek God's will concerning the ways forward. To seek revelation, leading to transformation.

**b) Church and other leaders' regular prayer gatherings,** including to support leaders pastorally, including their mental health (eg through [Kintsugi Hope](#))

## ASPIRATION 3: SHORT TERM RECOVERY AND RENEWAL

Contribute to the recovery and renewal of the Bristol region. Continue to walk closely with the Mayor, Council and City Office, as we emerge from the COVID pandemic, over the next 3 to 5 years and beyond. Led by [CAB](#) and linked to some of the other spheres of life. Start to engage with the longer term Aspirations (4 and 5). Connect closely with the [One City Plan 2050](#), to contribute strategically to the transformation of the city, including in the following areas:

- a) **Support those in crisis:** such as those in [food poverty](#), needing [emergency shelter](#), in [debt](#) and [addiction](#).
- b) **Help people move on:** in housing, through “[Homes not Houses](#)” and the [Bristol Housing Festival](#), and in employment, such as through [Resurgo Spear](#). **Help tackle the climate emergency** (see ASPIRATION 4b)
- c) **Support the vulnerable**, in child welfare, such as through [Transforming Lives for Good \(TLG\)](#) and [Home for Good](#). And in the area of mental health and wellness, through [Kintsugi Hope](#), and also [Refugees and Asylum Seekers](#).

## ASPIRATION 4: MEDIUM TERM TRANSFORMATION

Enable MISSION AND TRANSFORMATION in the WHOLE of life, including social action and tackling unjust systems. Show leadership and take opportunities to engage actively in every sphere of life and across the whole of life, including through the six Themes of the One City Plan 2050. Everyone! Everywhere! Every day!

- a) **Work to address systemic root causes of inequality and injustice**, through social justice initiatives, especially the needs of the vulnerable. Continue ASPIRATION 3 in the longer term. Support those in crisis and challenge poverty, including tackling food poverty (eg end food banks), and homelessness, since prevention is better than cure.
- b) **Continue to help tackle the climate emergency** and locate our local work within global needs.
- c) **Strengthen families**, especially coming alongside parents, including one parent families. See children and young people thriving and growing (eg foster carers).
- d) **Improve mental health and well-being**, especially networking with ethnic minority communities. Help people's emotional and spiritual health, including through Sport and the creative Arts. Help people break free and live free from lies of addiction.
- e) **Use the creative Arts to celebrate beauty and also to highlight systemic issues** such as inequality and injustice, including homophobia, sexism and racial injustice.
- f) **Encourage everyday Christians to be missional in every sphere of society and across the whole of life.** Enable evangelism and people to encounter Jesus, especially in the workplace. Sow and develop hope within individuals and in society, being salt and light scattered throughout the city, helped by networks in the Arts , Business and Workplace , Education , Family , Health , Media , Politics and Social Action , Sport and beyond. Everyone! Everywhere! Every day!

## **ASPIRATION 5: LONGER TERM TRANSFORMATION**

**Help T4B become a sustainable “unity for transformation” movement. Continue previous ASPIRATIONS and:**

**a) Help build a grassroots movement of thousands across the whole of life,** emphasising the Christian community scattered as well as gathered, to “set my people free”, involving not 100s but 1000s! Everyone! Everywhere! Every day!

**b) Transition leadership to a younger generation,** so that leadership is multi-generational and diverse, including the T4B Trustees.

**c) Set up leadership training,** across the Church and city, particularly for those on the margins. Help people to discover their calling and connect them with suitable others, enabling them to take up and excel in leadership positions in the city.

**d) Set up a mentoring scheme,** with experienced elders in the city and churches helping to raise up the next generation, in a diverse and inclusive way, into leadership in the city.

**e) Help T4B become sustainable, including financially for the core activities of T4B,** to enable and facilitate a sustainable “unity for transformation” movement, to help “transform Bristol together” and **help build Bistol as a City of Hope, to 2050 and beyond.**