DIOCESE OF LONDON

Further support to London missional workers announced as second London Missional Housing Bond is launched

~ £2m of crowdfunded social investment sought to provide affordable accommodation to missional workers in deprived areas of London ~
~ First Missional Housing Bond raised nearly £400k in 2013 ~

7 October 2014 The Bishop of London, Richard Chartres, has officially launched the second London Missional Housing Bond at St Peter's, Bethnal Green, paving the way for further support for the church's mission in deprived communities in London. The second Bond is seeking £2m in crowdfunded social investment for the provision of affordable rented housing for key church missional workers.

The launch event also celebrated the success of the first London Missional Housing Bond, which raised nearly £400,000 from individuals, churches and trusts in 2013, and the purchase of the first Missional House in Bethnal Green, which is now home to two missional workers. The Missional House was later blessed by the Bishop of London.

The launch event and thanksgiving service was led by Rev'd Adam Atkinson, vicar of St Peter's, which was selected as a Local Partner to the Bond through a competitive bidding process last year. Other churches interested in having a Missional House are being invited to apply to become further Local Mission Partners. The Bishop of London spoke at the service and the residents of the first Missional House, Steve and Michelle Addison, were interviewed by the Bishop of Stepney.

The London Missional Housing Bond is a social investment bond which grew out of an increasing need to address the cost of housing in deprived parishes in London, and the challenge it posed to church mission given the importance of living locally to missional work.

It is a collaborative project involving the Diocese of London, the Eden Network, the Centre for Theology and Community and Mission Housing (a Christian Housing Association) and seeks to raise social investment to enable the partnership to buy properties in London and rent them out at below-market levels to workers involved in mission in some of London's most deprived communities.

Commenting at the launch, the Bishop of Stepney Adrian Newman said:

> *"The Church in London has had so many positive stories to tell in recent years, not least the significant growth in church attendance we have seen across the Capital. It is nevertheless the case that accommodation costs can create difficulties for church mission in some of the more challenging areas of London, which is why I have been so personally enthusiastic about this project. It is also a fantastic example of the innovative, creative thinking that has meant the church is going from strength-to-strength in London."*

Speaking on behalf of the London Missional Housing Bond Partners, Tim Thorlby from The Centre for Theology and Community added:

> *"We believe that lending is an underused source of finance for the church and its mission. We see the London Missional Housing Bond as an opportunity to engage the Church – at all levels – in a discussion about the role of social investment in mission and church life. We hope that the church will learn social investment as one of its regular habits."*

Further information on the London Missional Housing Bond is available at www.lmhb.org.uk.