

# **STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2028**



**CHANGING  
ATTITUDE  
IRELAND**

## Introduction

Changing Attitude Ireland (CAI) has worked consistently to create a Church of Ireland that is open, inclusive, and affirming of LGBTQIA+ people. Over the past decade, the organisation has built a reputation for persistence, relationship-building, and visible witness. From supporting parishes to become Open and Welcoming Congregations, to helping diocesan synods pass motions of inclusion, to hosting high-profile conferences and Pride services, CAI has demonstrated that steady, grassroots change can reshape the church and wider society.

As we enter the period from September 2025 to September 2028, CAI is conscious of both the progress made and the challenges ahead. Public attitudes towards LGBTQIA+ people in Ireland have shifted markedly, with marriage equality and openly gay politicians now normalised. Within the Church of Ireland, visible signs of inclusion have emerged, such as Pride flags at cathedrals and growing acceptance in some dioceses. Yet conservative resistance remains strong, especially in Northern Ireland, while new risks such as online hate speech, transphobia, and toxic masculinity among younger people present fresh challenges.

This strategic plan sets out how CAI will respond to this changing context. It outlines seven key priorities that will guide our work, along with the steps we will take to strengthen our organisation, deepen our partnerships, and sustain our members. Above all, the plan is rooted in our belief that change happens through personal connection, visible affirmation, and persistent faithfulness to the vision of an inclusive church.

## Strategic Context

CAI enters this new three-year period with significant strengths. We have a committed core of members and allies, experience in running events and campaigns, and a growing network of Open and Welcoming Congregations. Our influence has been felt at parish, diocesan, and synod levels, and we have provided a safe community for individuals navigating faith and sexuality.

At the same time, our resources are limited. Our committee members are dedicated but often stretched, with burnout an ongoing risk. Funding is scarce, as we rely primarily on membership fees and small donations. Opposition remains strong, particularly among conservative clergy, and there are increasing threats from online hostility and societal backlash.

Yet the opportunities before us are significant. Broader Irish society has largely embraced LGBTQIA+ inclusion, and younger generations within the church are more open than previous ones. Sister churches in Scotland and Wales have adopted inclusive liturgies, offering models we can adapt. There is also the potential to expand our membership, strengthen diocesan influence, and build more formal partnerships with allied organisations across Ireland and the wider Anglican Communion.

The next three years represent an opportunity for CAI to consolidate its achievements, broaden its influence, and build resilience for the future. By combining visibility, advocacy, and relationship-building with a strong focus on care and sustainability, CAI can continue to change the Church of Ireland from within. This plan commits us to growth in membership, expansion of Open and Welcoming Congregations, deeper diocesan engagement, and stronger partnerships, all while supporting the individuals who give their time and energy to the work.

Above all, it reaffirms our vision: a Church of Ireland that fully affirms and celebrates LGBTQIA+ people, offering a witness of welcome, justice, and love to the wider world.

## Strategic Priorities

### Membership Growth and Engagement

CAI's effectiveness depends on the strength of its membership. Over the next three years, we aim to grow from 137 to 250 members, while also deepening engagement with those who already belong. Recruitment will take place through Open and Welcoming Congregations, diocesan synods, and digital platforms. We will also create more opportunities for members to connect, whether through regional gatherings, online events, or guest preaching in parishes. A volunteer coordinator role will be established to support new members, develop induction processes, and ensure volunteers are recognised and valued.

### Expanding Open and Welcoming Congregations

Parish life remains at the heart of the Church of Ireland, and CAI will continue to prioritise the growth of Open and Welcoming Congregations. Our goal is to double the number of OWCs from 15 to 50 by 2028. To achieve this, we will produce a comprehensive OWC implementation guide, with clear steps for parishes in their first, second, and third years of commitment. Each year we will recruit five new parishes, supported by mentorship from existing OWCs and quarterly networking meetings. Updated certificates and posters will make inclusivity visible, while regular check-ins will ensure ongoing support.

### Normalising LGBTQIA+ Relationships in Church Life

An important aspect of our work will be to make LGBTQIA+ relationships more visible and normal within the life of the Church of Ireland. This will involve supporting Pride services in cathedrals and parishes, promoting imagery of LGBTQIA+ families in our communications, and developing liturgies for blessing or renewing vows of same-sex couples. Drawing on models from sister churches, we will work towards a church culture in which LGBTQIA+ couples can participate openly and confidently in worship and parish life.

## Exploring LGBTQ-Inclusive Beliefs

There is an opportunity to deepen theological reflection and provide safe spaces for people to explore inclusive beliefs. CAI will work towards hosting an all-island conference in 2027-8, building on smaller preparatory events to ensure broad engagement. This gathering will bring together members, allies, and respected voices from Ireland and beyond to discuss inclusive theology, share stories, and equip attendees with the language and confidence to articulate their faith. Conference findings will be shared through publications, video resources, and online materials, with the aim of making inclusive theology accessible to parishes across the island.

## Deepening Diocesan Influence

Influence at diocesan level is critical for long-term cultural change within the church. CAI will encourage members to engage in diocesan events and opportunities to be involved in diocesan decision-making, including by standing for election as synod representatives, ensuring inclusive voices are present in debates and decision-making. We will create a stronger presence at diocesan events, through stalls, publications, and contributions to diocesan magazines, including through the development of a diocesan champions network. By sharing the successes of inclusive motions already passed, we will inspire and equip others to bring forward similar proposals in their dioceses.

## Partnerships and Networking

No organisation can bring about change alone. CAI will strengthen its partnerships both within and beyond the church. Formal relationships will be established with Changing Attitude England, the Episcopal Churches of Scotland and Wales, and civil society organisations working for LGBTQIA+ rights across the island of Ireland. We will participate in Pride events, cross-border initiatives, and international gatherings, and we will develop signposting resources to connect individuals with wider networks of support. These partnerships will not only extend our reach but also enhance our credibility and resilience.

## Organisational Resilience and Care

CAI recognises that sustaining this work requires care for our people and structures. We will begin with a skills mapping exercise to identify gaps and strengths, followed by recruitment of new committee members, particularly younger people and those from Northern Ireland. Collective care practices will be introduced to reduce burnout, supported by mental health resources and peer support. Our website and social media platforms will be updated to ensure effective communication, and we will explore new funding streams including grants, project-based proposals, and donations. This focus on resilience will allow CAI to remain a steady and trusted presence in a challenging environment.

## Implementation and Review

The strategic plan will be implemented in three phases. In the first year, CAI will focus on strengthening internal capacity, launching membership and OWC growth campaigns, and developing resources and networks of support. In the second year, we will focus on the expansion of OWCs and further development of diocesan influence to ensure supports for members and other LGBTQIA+ people in the Church are available widely. In the third year, the conference will take place and CAI will consolidate progress, evaluate achievements, and prepare the ground for the next planning cycle.

Regular monitoring will ensure accountability. Membership growth, the number of OWCs, diocesan representation, and the reach of events and resources will all be tracked annually. The committee will also monitor the wellbeing of volunteers and the organisation's financial sustainability, recognising that care for people is as important as achieving external goals.

Objectives	Key actions (2025–2028)	Measures
<b>Membership growth &amp; engagement</b>		
Grow membership base and strengthen member participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase membership to 250</li> <li>• Launch recruitment campaigns via OWCs, synods, and online platforms.</li> <li>• Appoint volunteer coordinator, create induction &amp; support systems.</li> <li>• Host member gatherings, Zoom events, and guest preaching opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership numbers.</li> <li>• Volunteer recruitment and retention.</li> <li>• Member satisfaction and engagement levels.</li> </ul>
<b>Expanding open &amp; welcoming congregations (OWC)</b>		
Double the number of OWCs and strengthen parish implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grow by 50 OWCs.</li> <li>• Publish 3-year OWC implementation guide.</li> <li>• Provide mentorship and annual networking meetings.</li> <li>• Develop updated OWC posters, certificates, and resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of OWCs.</li> <li>• Development of OWC community</li> <li>• Quality of parish implementation.</li> <li>• Positive feedback from parishioners.</li> </ul>
<b>Normalising LGBTQIA+ relationships in the church</b>		
Make LGBTQIA+ couples and families visible and affirmed in church life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Pride services in cathedrals and parishes.</li> <li>• Promote LGBTQIA+ imagery in CAI and parish communications.</li> <li>• Develop liturgies for blessings/vow renewals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBTQIA+ couples openly participating in church life.</li> <li>• Adoption of inclusive liturgies.</li> <li>• Increased visibility of LGBTQIA+ families in church contexts.</li> </ul>

Objectives	Key actions (2025–2028)	Measures
<b>Exploring LGBTQIA+ inclusive beliefs</b>		
Deepen theological reflection and provide safe spaces for dialogue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host an all-island inclusive theology conference in 2027-8.</li> <li>• Hold preparatory regional events.</li> <li>• Publish findings, videos, and glossary of inclusive terminology.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference attendance and media coverage.</li> <li>• Uptake of resources by parishes.</li> <li>• Increased confidence among members in articulating inclusive theology.</li> </ul>
<b>Deepening diocesan influence</b>		
Ensure inclusive voices shape diocesan debates and culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage members to participate in diocesan engagements and decision-making</li> <li>• Develop a network of diocesan champions</li> <li>• Increase visible presence at diocesan events</li> <li>• Publish case studies of successful diocesan-level initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of diocesan champions engaged.</li> <li>• Inclusive motions proposed/passed.</li> <li>• Increased diocesan visibility of CAI.</li> </ul>



Objectives	Key actions (2025–2028)	Measures
<b>Partnerships &amp; networking</b>		
Build alliances across church and society for greater resilience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formalise relationships with Changing Attitude England, Episcopal Churches (Scotland &amp; Wales), and Irish LGBTQIA+ civil society groups.</li> <li>• Participate in Pride and cross-border events.</li> <li>• Develop signposting resources for LGBTQIA+ support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of formal partnerships.</li> <li>• Joint initiatives undertaken.</li> <li>• Use of signposting resources by members.</li> </ul>
<b>Organisational resilience &amp; care</b>		
Strengthen CAI's internal capacity and sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct skills mapping and recruit new committee members (esp. youth and NI).</li> <li>• Establish collective care and mental health support practices.</li> <li>• Update website and social media strategy.</li> <li>• Explore grants, donations, and sponsorships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded committee size and diversity.</li> <li>• Reduced volunteer burnout.</li> <li>• Increased funding sources.</li> <li>• Improved communication reach and engagement.</li> </ul>

**YEAR 1****STRENGTHEN  
CAPACITY AND  
FOUNDATIONS.**

Renewed reach out to members and OWCs, and develop ongoing comms.  
 Skills mapping & volunteer recruitment.  
 Update website & social media.  
 Recruit 5 new OWCs.  
 Host new member events NI & ROI  
 Expand diocesan presence via communications and champions.  
 Pilot inclusive liturgies.  
 Support development of Pride and IDAHOT services in cathedrals and parishes.

**YEAR 2****DELIVER  
FLAGSHIP  
INITIATIVES AND  
EXPAND  
NETWORKS.**

Expanded calendar of member events, including regional member gatherings.  
 Launch membership & OWC growth campaigns.  
 Share worship resources for small groups to develop locally.  
 Publish OWC case studies.  
 Recruit 25 additional OWCs.  
 Host preparatory theology events towards island conference.

**YEAR 3****CONSOLIDATE  
PROGRESS AND  
REVIEW FOR  
FUTURE.**

Continue development of member supports and events.  
 Evaluate membership and diocesan engagement.  
 Recruit 30 additional OWCs.  
 Develop new OWC community supports / events.  
 Host all-island inclusive theology conference.  
 Review and renew strategic plan for 2028–2031.