

Blueprint for Better Choices

United Kingdom and Ireland Territory





An introduction from the Territorial Leaders

As we continue to journey together in our shared mission, we are pleased to introduce the 'Blueprint for Better Choices'.

Just as a builder employs a blueprint as a guide for constructing a building, so this document is designed to assist the territory in recognising and stating its priorities, and in making informed, impactful decisions moving forward.



Our focus should be on ensuring fruitful, impactful local mission

This document is the culmination of months of prayer, reflection and collaboration, bringing together insights from senior leaders, divisional leaders, the Territorial Advisory Council, SATCo, Cabinet, and broader discernment and input within our territorial governance structure.

Through this ongoing process of spiritual discernment, our goal is to understand God's intentions for our territory and identify how we are to manage the resources that he entrusts to us. This emphasis on discernment was pivotal when we assumed our roles as territorial leaders. We earnestly sought God's guidance and were drawn to the opening chapters of the book of Joshua in the Old Testament. These

chapters emphasise the importance of courage, strategic planning, and personal responsibility and commitment.

We concluded that God was calling us to live, think and act with courage in accordance with his purposes, noting that the way forward for Joshua was not without its obstacles! We are not undertaking this task alone; it is possible to prepare for the future confidently, knowing that God will guide and help us make appropriate decisions.

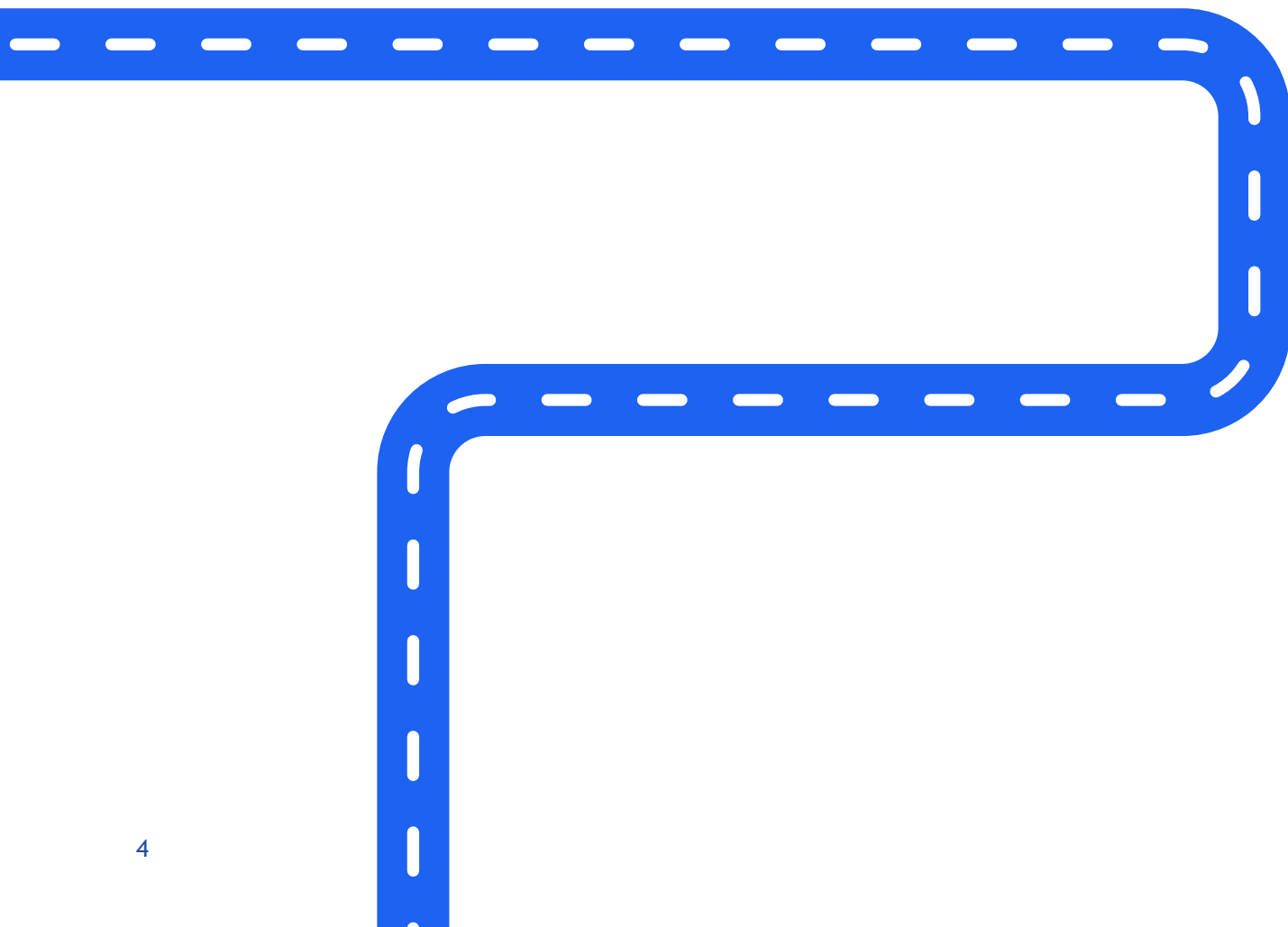
As Joshua prepared the next generation, so we must consider this our responsibility and legacy as members of The Salvation Army in the United Kingdom and Ireland Territory. Our focus should be on ensuring fruitful, impactful local mission in the years 2030, 2040 and beyond, building a stronger, sustainable Salvation Army.

The journey so far

In January 2024 divisional leaders identified the main concerns and priorities to guide future decisions, focusing on discipleship, leadership, culture, organisational burden, mission, and strategic and theological reflection. These priorities highlight the diverse challenges in stewarding God's work in our communities, where all activities are valued and it is difficult to determine where we place the investment of resources.

At that same time, the Territorial Leaders shared their priorities, focusing on mobilising the next generation, radical discipleship, vocational pathways, embracing diversity, and embedding the Mission Priorities and Values. They stressed the importance of aligning efforts and the need for unified, intentional action.

In September 2024 the General launched his strategic framework 'Compass' outlining three priorities of People, Mission, Legacy, all of which support and undergird this 'Blueprint'.



The call for strategic focus

In 2024 the Financial Sustainability Review Group brought further clarity to our collective need for an overarching strategic framework to guide choices. Until now there has been no practical or reliable way of assessing the performance of or comparing the merits of different activities.

The territory remains committed to its five mission priorities: to share the good news; to serve others without discrimination; to nurture disciples of Jesus Christ; to care for creation; and to seek justice and reconciliation. However, prayerful planning and discernment must be a key component of our stewardship responsibility.

There is no doubt that we are incredibly blessed. After all, we have a God whose generosity knows no bounds, and who promises us an abundant life; he gives us ‘immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine,’ (Ephesians 3:20 *NIV*), ‘...You will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others’ (2 Corinthians 9:8 *NLT*). However, that is not an encouragement to live beyond our means, and our available resources must be directed wisely if we are to be both sustainable and effective: ‘Wise people think before they act’ (Proverbs 13:16 *NLT*).



The goal is to see deepening relational change, both within us and in those we serve

The Financial Sustainability Review Group emphasised the importance of guiding prioritisation through both strategic and tactical choices - identifying what must remain, what can be de-prioritised, and where we need to be bold enough to stop things altogether. This approach is not about limiting innovation but directing our resources to areas where they will have the most impact.

At the heart of these efforts lies an unwavering desire to see local mission flourish. True success is not measured by the quantity of programmes or activities but by their transformative, lasting fruit.

The goal is to see deepening relational change, both within us and in those we serve, including a growing and personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

It is this vision that informs every aspect of the ‘Blueprint’.

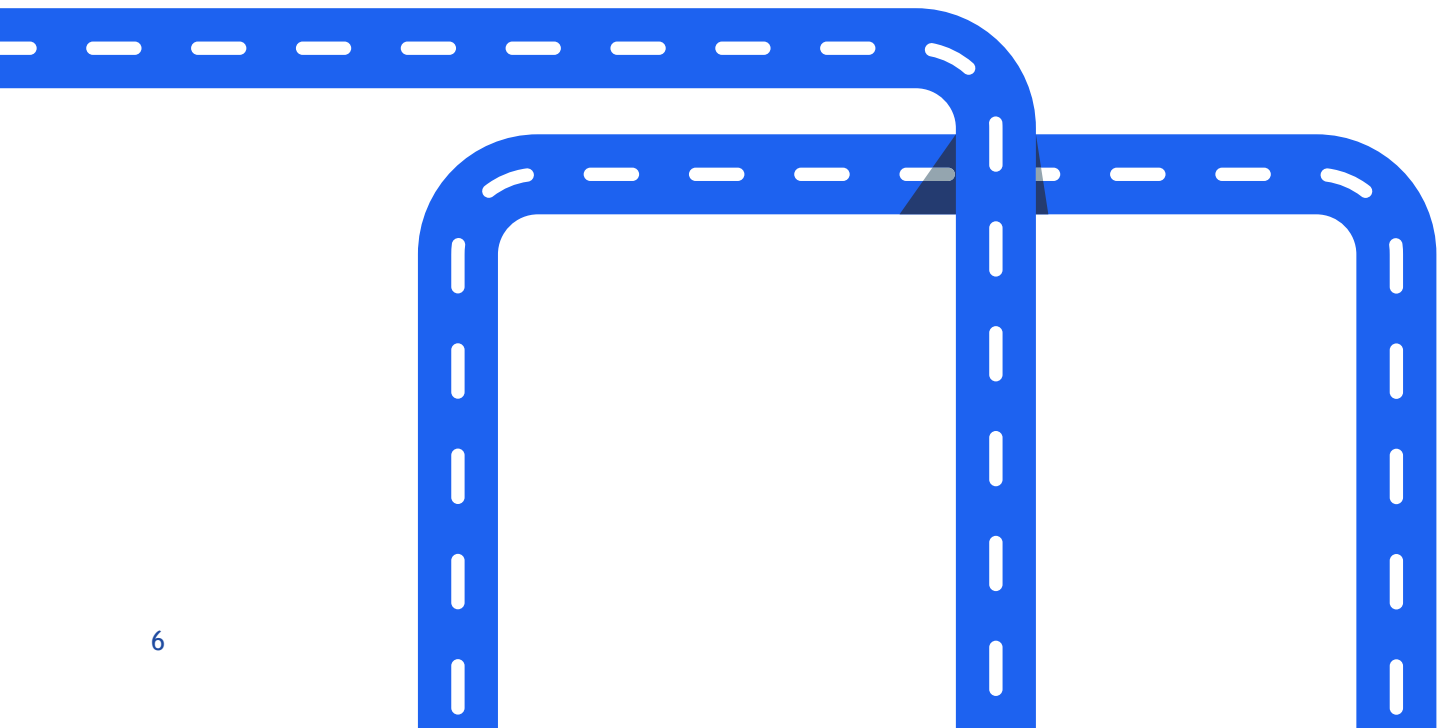
Blueprint for Better Choices

Drawing on insights from discussion groups, including sessions with senior leaders, key focus areas have been identified and brought together into the ‘Blueprint for Better Choices’.

This framework, underpinned by deep spiritual discernment, asks some foundational questions to help us make better, more impactful decisions:

- What is the unique or distinctive contribution of TSA in this area of work? Who else operates in this field?
- What is the impact you expect to see from this service and how will you measure this?
- What does the ‘fullness of life for all with Jesus’ look like for the people incorporated into this proposal or programme?
- What is God saying to us in this proposal? What steps have been taken in discerning this?
- What would you do if your budget increased (by 5 or 10 per cent) and what would you do if your budget decreased (by 5 or 10 per cent)?

‘Blueprint for Better Choices’ confidently builds on previous work like the ‘Fiscal Stewardship Principles’ (2020) which stressed careful management of resources, and the Structure, Coordination and Design Group (2022), aiming to improve local mission delivery with a focus on continuous improvement.



Local mission flourishing

The Structure, Coordination and Design Group (SCDG) underscored the necessity of focusing on the local context. It recognised that local communities are the primary setting for Salvation Army mission.

This emphasis on the local context remains vital. It is essential to pay close attention to the life of each community, discerning God's active presence and recognising the unique gifts, resources and relationships that exist there. By directing support and energy in this way, local mission is empowered to grow and thrive.

Key focus areas

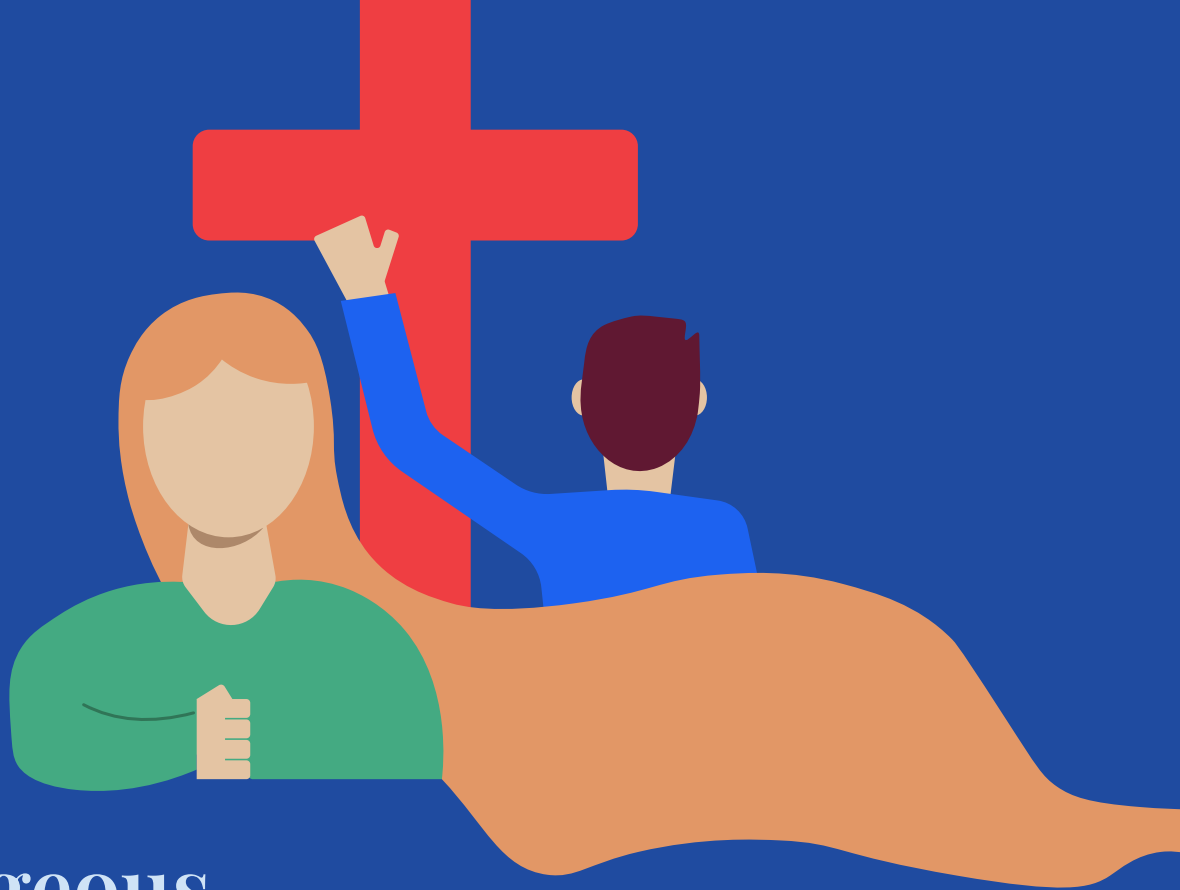
At the heart of this 'Blueprint' are the five key focus areas which we will commit to and which we believe are pivotal to the overall aim of enabling local mission to flourish and bear greater fruit in this next season. We believe that these focus areas will help us ensure that local mission can realise its full potential, supported, shaped and tested by this 'Blueprint':

- Courageous discipleship
- Prophetic voice
- Most marginalised, most excluded
- Children and youth
- Growing leaders

In the following pages we have set out a brief definition for each of these 'Blueprint' focus areas and some further questions to be taken into consideration when testing proposals. We need to examine how effective we are in these areas and hold one another accountable for the outcomes. To assist this process, we have set out what we can expect to see if we are doing things well.

There are some questions which should be asked about every proposal or programme:

- What does 'fullness of life for all with Jesus' look like for the people incorporated into this proposal or programme?
- Why is now the right time for this proposal or programme?
- How will we know when it is finished or is time to stop?



Courageous discipleship

To develop people who are bold and faithful followers of Jesus Christ, whose lives embody and enact the grace of God in every aspect of life.



How is this evidenced?

It is marked by a living relationship with God, as disciples who make disciples, and by faithful action in the world.



What questions should we be asking?

- How does this proposal make space for God's call to follow Jesus?
- In what ways does this initiative help to mobilise disciples?
- How does this work integrate spiritual life development with outward-facing mission?
- What is the intentional pathway that will offer opportunities for people to encounter God?
- How well are the current pathways working?
- How will you cultivate the seeds of discipleship?

Prophetic voice

To echo in public and private the just and righteous intentions of God for the whole of creation.



How is this evidenced?

It is marked by a call to personal and social holiness, and a striving for a world marked by justice and right relationships.



What questions should we be asking?

- What is prophetic about this proposal?
- How does this initiative reflect the pursuit of individual and corporate holiness?
- In what ways does this plan bring about justice and reconciliation?
- How have you incorporated 'creation-care' into your thinking?



The most marginalised, most excluded

To remain unreservedly committed to those most in need.
Predominantly this is grounded in socio-economic terms.



How is this evidenced?

It is marked by *being with* people rather than *doing to* them.



What questions should we be asking?

- How does this initiative connect with the most marginalised?
- In what ways does this plan move beyond 'meeting needs' to relational ways of working?
- How have the target group inputted into this proposal?
- How does this proposal or programme support the empowerment of individual people?
- How is this releasing and building on the strengths and gifts (assets-based approach) of individual people?



Children and youth



To focus on children and young people in corps, centres, and communities means ensuring they can be active participants in the whole life of The Salvation Army.



How is this evidenced?

It is marked by children and young people encountering God and following Jesus, discovering their gifts and being fully engaged in God's mission.



What questions should we be asking?

- How is this proposal encouraging children and young people to take responsibility for their faith journey?
- How will children and young people encounter and respond to God's love through this work?
- How do your plans enable children and young people to participate in God's mission and the whole life of The Salvation Army?
- How does this help us grow younger?
- How does this proposal recognise the important responsibilities of the wider corps and community in relation to encouraging children and young people?

Growing leaders

To identify, develop and work with people of all generations, genders and ethnicity, including leaders with a breadth and variety of gifts, experiences and styles.



How is this evidenced?

It is marked by including people and discerning individual pathways for them to develop and flourish.



What questions should we be asking?

- How is this proposal developing leaders?
- In what ways does this initiative embrace different kinds of leaders?
- How does this enable leaders to make leaders?
- Are there any groups that have been overlooked?



Looking ahead



**Our core mission:
to bring fullness of
life to all with Jesus**

As we embark together on this next chapter, the 'Blueprint for Better Choices' will serve as a guiding framework. It will encourage us to discern God's will carefully, to innovate boldly but wisely, and to focus on long-term relational change. While there will be new initiatives and opportunities, we must remain mindful of the impact of all we undertake, ensuring that every effort points back to our core mission: to bring fullness of life to all with Jesus.

Just as Joshua called on the people of Israel to 'sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you' (Joshua 3:5 RSV), so too let us move forward together, united in purpose, and as committed disciples of Jesus Christ.

We invite each of you to engage fully with this 'Blueprint', to reflect on its principles, and to prayerfully consider how it can lead to local mission flourishing across our territory.

Thank you for your continued dedication and faithfulness.

In his service,

Commissioners Jenine and Paul Main
Territorial Leaders





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Sanctify yourselves,
for tomorrow
the Lord will do
wonders among you.

Joshua 3:5



Love God
Love Others

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