

Joint Parochial Church Council
Meeting at The Methodist Chapel, Brighstone
Saturday 18th April 2015, 9am

Meeting opened with prayer

Present: Rev'd Helen O'Sullivan (Chair), Guy Acland (B&M), Gill Bradbury (B), Norma Bradley (B), Anna Davidson (Sec), Alan Edwards (B), Yvonne Hide (S), Rodney Hogg (B&M), June Horsfall (B), Michael Kier (B&M), Didi Nicholson (B&M), Keith Plater (B), Brenda Rowe (S), Stephen Sutcliffe (LLM), Jean Wavell (B), Yvonne Willoughby (S), Felicity Adams (B&M).

Apologies: Peter Johnson (E-O), Susannah Seely (B&M)

1. Introduction of new and existing PCC members

2. The One Island Plan – Initial Discussion

Helen asked the JPCC to set the agendas for the next year with the Archdeacon's One Island Plan in mind.

The full report can be found on the churches' website, on the PCC page.

Page 3 of the plan looks at the principals and values we ought to be working towards – the Archdeacon hopes ministry will be ordered by these.

Helen began the discussion by presenting the following information:

- Generally people want to support their local church but there may be many reasons why they don't wish to worship there.
- Fifty years ago all churches offered the same thing: Matins, Holy Communion, Evensong.
- Now there is a wide breadth of tradition, however sometimes people can't find what they want in their own church. What does this mean?
- There should be a breadth of opportunities for worship of different styles within the cluster and this should be seen as a strength. We need to work together and rejoice in the diversity. There are a number of church members who choose to attend other churches outside of their parish but are embarrassed by this.
- Some churches are concerned by loss of potential income which could arise from sharing congregations. Helen feels it is important therefore to encourage members to sign up to a direct debit to their local church, therefore the churches are not reliant on their congregation numbers.

Response from PCC members:

- A question was raised about the feasibility of joining up the benefice finances. Helen felt that in her experience people become very protective about money resulting in a lot of 'reserved' funds.
- The first step is to come together as a community, then financial commitment will follow. The community should be seen as the Benefice.
- Helen mentioned there are different reasons why people choose a church: style of building and worship etc. From her time moving between the churches she senses antagonism/insecurity/competition between them. People don't know each other well enough to accept each other's differences.
- With perseverance, acceptance would come. The churches have already moved a long way in their thinking.

- People worshipping at different churches shouldn't be seen as out of the ordinary or a problem as we are all part of the same team.
- The next hurdle is moving out of our Benefice into the Cluster.

Helen felt that visiting each other's churches doesn't necessarily help. Each Church needs to feel more confident and less threatened by other churches. For instance, Shorwell has had some angst for many years over the loss of families and children to Brighstone. Now the Moot has begun causing some tension as every third Sunday, many of the Brighstone regulars now go to Shorwell instead – this has a financial impact as well.

Not all PCC members were aware of what The Moot is:

Third Sunday of each month.

A relaxed half an hour of refreshment, fellowship and chat, followed by half an hour of worship including a talk.

It is held either at the village hall or another local location, open for anyone, aimed specifically at those who find it difficult to cross the threshold of a church.

The Moot is succeeding in building up a previously lost following of families with children.

Further Points Raised:

- Brook and Mottistone have moved between the two churches for many years and have worked together for the past 40 years.
- It's only relatively recently that Shorwell and Brighstone are having to think collaboratively.
- Shorwell people will often go to the Methodist Chapel in Shorwell or Chale church as they feel a greater affinity with them.
- It shouldn't matter where/how people worship as God isn't worried about it – the important thing is to meet together.

Summary by Helen O'Sullivan:

- **Each church needs stronger individual identities**
- **Each church needs to more effectively and corporately signpost these identities.** The churches need to be clearer about what is on offer and ensure the wider community know about it.
- **Sorting out Stewardship is imperative to alleviate anxieties over finances.** Losing collections cannot rule what we do.

3. Group Discussions:

The JPCC split into own church groups and were given the checklist from The One Island Plan, asking them to discuss their churches 'state of health'.

4. Feedback Summary from Group Discussions:

Brook and Mottistone – Rodney Hogg

- B & M have made progress in communicating to non-churchgoers within the community, what the churches are about.
- More needs to be done to inform tourists and other groups of what both churches are offering and their identities.

- The churches are well-served by the ordained ministry but lay/local ministry needs more work. One idea is to divide B and M into four sections geographically and have a named 'triage' person for each section who can be approached before the ordained ministry are involved.

Helen mentioned that the USP of the Church of England is its concern for all the community, not just its church members.

Brighstone – Gill Bradbury

- Brighstone are good at initiating ideas and at risk taking but perhaps needs to focus on doing less, better.
- Need to work at seamlessly relating the Church to the community.
- No coordinated pastoral service for the community is in place.
- Inclusion of teenagers needs to be looked at. Some church members feel threatened by them or have age relation issues. The church needs to make sure teenagers have a place to go.

Shorwell – Steve Sutcliffe

- Low congregation numbers are a problem. There has been a significant period of stagnation and unwillingness to change
- Shorwell is a well-loved church and there is a closeness within the church family which needs to be extended to the wider community.
- AgeUKIW project has extended to Shorwell and through that will offer more opportunities to liaise with the rest of the community.

5. The Exchange

A discussion was held about the lack of use of the Exchange. A person is needed to run it and move forward with it as it is currently not fulfilling its potential.

Keith Plater has put together a proposal for wifi but funding is needed for it – approximately £500 per year. A PCC member offered to underwrite this for two years.

June Horsfall volunteered 5 hours a week, one per morning to spend promoting the Exchange and increasing its usage.

It was raised that although the Exchange cannot be sub-let, we can ask for donations to cover costs, and it was mooted that these donations could be used to fund a coordinator in the future.

6. The Meeting closed with the grace at 12:05pm.

The next JPCC meeting is scheduled for the 17th September 2015, venue tbc.