

**Joint Parochial Church Council**  
Meeting at the Methodist Chapel, Brighstone  
Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30pm

**1. Meeting opened with prayer**

**Present:** Nick Dorley Brown (B&M, Chair), Felicity Adams (B&M), Guy Acland (B&M), Gill Bradbury (B), Norma Bradley (B), Chris Bull (B&M), Anna Davidson (Sec), Kathy Davis (B), Alan Edwards (B), Yvonne Hide (S), Rodney Hogg (B&M), June Horsfall (B), Alison Mascarhenas (B), Rev'd Helen O'Sullivan, Keith Plater (B), Susannah Seely (B&M), Pat Spittles (B), Stephen Sutcliffe (LLM), Jill Thomas (S), Jean Wavell (B), Jan White (S), Yvonne Willoughby (S)

**Guest Speaker:** Archdeacon Peter Sutton

**Apologies:** Roy Carter-Jones (S), Jill Downer (S), Peter Johnson (E-O), Michael Kier (B&M), Chris Pain (S), Brenda Rowe (S), Sarah Lang (B&M), Mary Tester (S)

**2. Minutes of the last meeting:**

No comments, approved.

**3. The One Island Plan – Archdeacon Peter**

Key Points:

- At present there is no plan, only the *Living Together* document (available to read on the PCC page of the Five Churches website). However we are nearly at the point where there can be a plan.
- The idea is to become a church that will attract competent and gifted ministers in an environment when there are fewer clergy being ordained than there are retiring, and fewer people wanting to come to the Island than to other parts of the country.
- By 30<sup>th</sup> September, we will know if the IW is likely to become one deanery. If we are, it will be inaugurated on 20<sup>th</sup> January, and part of that will include a written version of what the plan is likely to be.

Peter encouraged and praised our group of churches for modelling many of the principles to be striven for in the plan, such as: collaboration; open and welcoming churches; engagement with the community; and the development of new forms of ministry (Steve).

Over the next six months much development will be made in enabling clusters to become more effective. Peter hopes that meetings such as deanery synods will become occasions people look forward to as providing opportunities for encouragement and inspiration.

Significant dents are being made in the parish share shortfall which is positive. Peter is confident that although stipendiary clergy will reduce gradually, alongside that, vocations to self-supporting ministry and other forms of ministry will increase. Pastoral reorganisations will enable parishes to function in new ways, e.g. it will become possible for a group of churches to share a treasurer.

There is a movement within the national church for change; the need to say 'yes' instead of 'no' and the need to enable churches to do what works for them. This has stemmed out of crisis.

Peter will be spending two days in October drafting the official plan. There will be no imposition of the plan but it is hoped people will follow it.

### **Peter invited questions from the JPCC.**

Nick Dorley-Brown asked what is meant by 'self-supporting ministry'.

*PS: A minister with no stipend and often not full-time. The church has become too reliant on paid vicars. Sweden operates a church tax so the church is affluent and well-resourced. Seven or eight people may be employed within a parish the size of Brighstone. However the downside to that they cannot find volunteers because people leave it to the paid people. Peter recognises that you need good leadership to model and lead.*

Chris Bull asked why ordained ministers don't wish to come to the Island.

*PS: There are practical reasons such as poor schools and the fact that we are an Island therefore more isolated. The north of England experiences a similar problem. There can be an implication that if you are sent to the IW, it is because you have done something wrong.*

Susannah Seely asked whether the parish share is ever written off or is this always outstanding.

*PS: It never gets written off and can become an enormous debt. There was a thought by the Area Deans that all outstanding parish shares should be written off, however the Deanery Finance Officers said no as this would non-incentivise those parishes who do pay. There has been an idea to employ someone for two years to come to the IW to help organise money, finances and stewardship – to aid parishes to restructure if they are in a back log.*

Rodney Hogg asked if there had been much opposition to the one deanery idea.

*PS: It looks like it will go ahead. There has been very little opposition. It should enable an 'Island view'. Two deaneries worked when there were 35 stipendiary clergy across the island, but not now there are only 17/18.*

Alan Edwards asked for more information about Lay Ministers and Pastoral Assistants across the IW.

*PS: There are now three local ministers on the island now, including Steve Sutcliffe. Tony Richards at St Blasius, Shanklin and Sylvia Beardsmore at Seaview. Nineteen pastoral assistants were commissioned last night. The church is getting better at listening to parishes and at developing ideas that come from parishes.*

Sir Guy Acland asked whether any other deaneries in the UK are uniting.

*PS: Parish boundaries are always changing and occasionally even dioceses merge (Yorkshire). In Wales, all deaneries and parish boundaries are gone, replaced with mission areas based around school catchment areas. The parish will always be important even if the boundaries go. The question is how to serve that in a structural way.*

Helen O'Sullivan asked about the leadership role of the stipendiary clergy?

*PS: They should be facilitators not controllers. Their role is to enable people to become what they are called to be. Peter felt the clergy selection process of the C of E is fundamentally flawed and needs looking at in order to attract a more diverse and colourful clergy.*

Sir Guy Acland asked if there was a risk of losing the spiritual inspiration of our leaders if they are replaced with managers.

*PS: There needs to be a balance between administrative and pastoral roles. Peter mentioned that he had written homilies for others to deliver in the past for Niton in their time without an incumbent. Niton had also looked at the possibility of having sermons recorded and played during services. The quality of teaching is very important and there will be training in place over the next year looking at this.*

The focus of the next JPCC meeting will be to look at this again and discuss any issues arising.

#### **4. Round up from the individual churches.**

##### **Brighstone – Gill Bradbury**

- Three Pastoral Assistants have now been commissioned and one more will soon be.
- The PCC has been looking at roles and functions of people within the church and a plan is being drawn up.
- Parish Giving: this is going well with the majority of regular donors switching. It eases the burden of collecting the money and that which is gift aided has the tax back in the church account swiftly. It gives donors the option of increasing their giving in line with inflation and also of giving anonymously. It is hoped the wider community will sign up and there is a meeting soon in Ryde to promote this.
- The West Wight Deanery has approved our application to the Mission Opportunity Fund for a grant to install a toilet at The Exchange.
- A 'Friends of St Mary's' group has been set up and it is hoped the wider community will become involved to either offer skills or finance.
- The quinquennial report compiled by Jeremy Pole is excellent and well worth the money.

##### **Shorwell – Steve Sutcliffe**

- The recent Flower Festival reached out to the village and organisations with success.
- 'Pitch up at the Pub' is proving increasingly successful. Judith Stratton (AgeUK Worker) initiated this and it is now run by Jan White. This has been shortlisted for an award.
- For the church, the toilet and kitchen project is now the priority focus.

##### **Brook and Mottistone – Rodney Hogg**

- Friends of Brook and Mottistone is going well. At the next PCC it would be useful to look through the list of roles and functions drawn up by Brighstone, to see if it is relevant for B and M.
- The Warrior Trail is an initiative led by the IW Tourist Board. Signage etc. is now up. It is too early to quantify reactions however the process has enabled the church to think about how it can be relevant to non-churchgoers and how to ask for donations. The Seely family tree is now hung in the Cheke Chapel, thanks to Diana Nicholson. Hopefully in a year, it will be possible to gauge success (visitor book, prayer book, tourist board).
- A pew has now been moved from the Cheke Chapel at Mottistone in the hope of providing extra movable seating.

#### **5. The Meeting closed after compline at 9pm.**

**The next JPCC meeting is scheduled for the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2015, venue tbc.**