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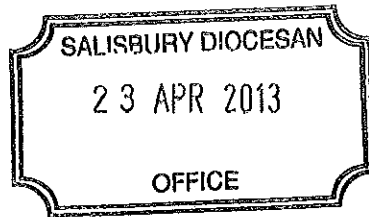
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19 APR 2013

9 APR 2013

The Rectory,
4 Dragons Hill,
Lyme Regis
DT7 3HW

19th April 2013.



Dear Bishop Nicholas,

RESPONSE TO "LET'S TALK" QUESTIONS: GOLDEN CAP TEAM.

The churches of our Golden Cap Team are now submitting their response to your 'Let's Talk' invitation. It is contained in the enclosed booklet.

In the middle of 2012 our Minister's Team (mainly Lay Worship Leaders, plus Jane and myself) decided to undertake a "SWOT" analysis for each of our 12 churches. We felt this would be a good way to encourage our church PCCs to build on their Strengths, and explore their many varying Opportunities in a reasonably structured manner. Each of our PCCs talked through their special features during the Autumn of 2012, and then refined them over the Winter.

When we received the "Let's Talk" powerpoint and questions I felt that we could develop our SWOT discussions to include your own, so as to produce a more integrated response. Our Team Council approved this suggestion in the Spring of 2013. We have added 3 Priorities for each church to focus upon over the next year or two, and the 'Personality' of each church also. In the light of further discussions we have also added our overall Priorities for the Golden Cap Team, and an attempt to describe the overall (heterogeneous) Character of our Team.

These have been presented to each of our 12 A.P.C.M.s over recent weeks and our Team Council A.G.M. earlier this week. We are of course working with lay people to 'action' these 36 Priorities over time! We realise that this is a huge number for a Benefice with only two stipendiary clergy and no non-stipendiary clergy, but it has proved impossible to reduce to say only one, the Priorities for each church.

I hope you find this Booklet helpful, and of course welcome any comments you may wish to offer, along with suggestions of assistance from the Diocese for implementing any of these Priorities.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen Skinner".

Revd Stephen Skinner, Team Rector.

Golden Cap Team

“Let’s Talk!”

Corporate Character

Strengths,

Opportunities

& Top 3 Priorities

for each Church

& the whole Team

Spring 2013

The Golden Cap Team Benefice

Overall Personality and Character

The overarching character of this Benefice lies in its heterogeneous nature! The parishes lying along the Jurassic Coast, South of the A35 Trunk Road are more 'suburban' in nature, with many residents having settled in the area from further afield. Many of these 'incomers' are comfortably off but there are some people who are the original 'locals' who are not so well off. The huge influx of holiday makers into the many caravan parks and campsites has major impact upon the area and our churches for a large part of the year.

The parishes lying to the North of the A35 can be radically different in nature and personality. The Marshwood Vale, making up most of this area, is traditional agriculture – predominantly cattle farming, with other livestock present such as sheep and horses. The character of this larger geographical (but more sparsely populated area) is much influenced by rural interests and local families who have lived there for generations. There are a few 'hidden poor' in this area, but also some very wealthy people. Most of this area is in West Dorset, but the character of our East Devon parish is proud to be different!

The 'Churchmanship' (church theology and practice) varies also across the Team. Some churches are relatively 'high church' (bordering on Anglo Catholic) e.g. Lyme Regis and Marshwood. Some are 'country spirituality', e.g. Monkton Wyld and Bettiscombe. Some are relatively 'low church' (conservative evangelical) e.g. Charmouth and Chideock.

GOLDEN CAP TEAM

"LET'S TALK!" PERSONALITY / CHARACTER OF EACH CHURCH

*A "broad brush" attempt by our Ministers Team and PCC's
to assess all 13 parishes – including Pilsdon!*

BETTISCOMBE:

A close knit church with established relationships amongst the farmers that go back generations. A fairly self-sufficient and self-governing church. The church comes particularly 'alive' at the major festivals and at other special social occasions – usually including food in the Village Hall next door.

CATHERSTON:

A very caring fellowship of churchgoers, who clearly enjoy each other's company, both within the Services and afterwards over coffee. The attendees particularly come because they love the Book of Common Prayer, and the setting of a 'cosily' small church, handy but distinct from Charmouth.

CHARMOUTH:

A church with some real 'stalwarts', who have stood by the church through some difficult periods when some other Christians have 'deserted' to other churches. The church members are nicely open to new forms of worship, and the reordering of the building to serve outreach to the community.

CHIDEOCK:

A church that has established very effective relationships within this coastal village, undeterred by the A35! People of this church meet each other in a variety of social settings, especially through a strong "Friends" group. People describe themselves as: Dedicated, Intelligent, Caring, Warm and Idiosyncratic!

FISHPOND:

A very small church located in a small hamlet, the tiny committed core group manage to run three Services a month, through a high level of lay leadership in their 'congregational' Services. The church is managed on very straightforward and flexible lines, which suits the personalities of the membership.

HAWKCHURCH:

This church prides itself in being the only one in Devon in Salisbury Diocese, and this is reflected also in their very independent spirit. There are many strong personalities in the church, and they organise a whole range of events very capably. In this close knit village, Pub, Hall & Church work together quite well.

LYME REGIS:

Very different from every other church in the Benefice, because of St Michael's size and location in a seaside town of 3500 plus children and many visitors. It is a self-absorbed town and church, which relate well at the civic level. Most members would not see the relevance of being in the wider Benefice.

MARSHWOOD:

The character of Marshwood Church is closely linked to the Church School, which is next door, and uses the multi-purpose church building for many activities. Without doubt the core of this church is in the weekly Eucharist, which the PCC are committed to continuing without variation.

MONKTON WYLD:

This is a fiercely independent and eclectic church that has no desire to relate to the rest of the Team! The church is proud that it is "a bit different", and is neither 'churchy' or 'religious' – this character will be accentuated through its strengthening link with the Monkton Wyld Court, Sustainable Living Centre.

PILSDON:

The Church of St. Mary's Pilsdon is located in the Pilsdon Community, run by a totally independent Charitable (and religious) Trust. It offers accommodation & sustenance to 'Wayfarers'. The clergy are regularly involved in practical work and Sunday Eucharists. The Parish itself is part of Bettiscombe.

STANTON ST.GABRIEL (MORECOMBELAKE):

This tiny church beside the A35 doesn't look particularly distinguished, and is easily overlooked. The congregation is very elderly and small. The PCC are trying to enliven the Services and make the interior of the building to be more attractive. The PCC have a formal "Sharing Agreement" with the United Reformed Church.

WHITCHURCH:

This church is very special – ancient, grand and with an almost unique healing shrine to St.Wite, visited by many pilgrims. This building shapes the character of the church life and priorities. A small, hard-working and very professional team strive to maintain this church through a new "Friends" Group and improving integration with the Hall and Pub.

WOOTTON FITZPAINE:

This church of St. Paul's is located a mile out of the village and down a driveway by the Manor House – this position helps shape the corporate personality of the church. The church is very well regarded within the village but very few attend, except at major festivals. Most Services are 'Prayer Book', with a preference usually for a formal style.

GOLDEN CAP TEAM PRIORITIES FOR 2013 – 2014.

- 1: See the "SWOT" priorities make substantial progress to realisation – 3 per church (The Team can help with support centrally, and between churches).
- 2: "E.L.M." (Energizing Lay Ministry) Diocesan pilot involvement to grow via lay training & development. (Working also where possible with our Evreux twin at Gaillon).
- 3: Production of Benefice Pilgrimage Trail Leaflet, linking all our churches, and other spiritual sites. (We aim for a special launch for this at the end of June 2013).
- 4: "Lead Academy" two year Learning Community Project with several other multi-parish benefices around U.K. (The aim is to aid mission & growth, e.g. Seekers Group, Church Cafes).
- 5: Website development for the whole Team.
(Linking up existing church sites, and enabling those with no 'page' to be represented).
- 6: Support efforts to develop our children's work, in conjunction with our Primary Schools.(e.g. Messy Church expanded beyond Marshwood to Hawkchurch and Lyme Regis). Also develop Family Services, Church School Curriculum Days and "Open The Book" programme.
- 7: Developing some Pastoral Care Teams, to supplement existing pastoral visiting.
(Target particular churches such as Lyme Regis, Chideock, and Whitchurch). Training for those involved in pastoral care (with Deanery Training Officer).
- 8: "Abundant Art" Project to be developed, in liaison with Uplyme Church.
(This to include travelling arts exhibitions around churches, working with local arts groups and benefice art competition).
- 9: Run a Christian Enquirers Course for possible Confirmation Candidates and others interested in exploring the Christian faith (e.g. "Puzzling Questions", "The Big Ask" or "Alpha Express").

Bettiscombe

Strengths

Excellent people in PCC & Wardens

Regarded as "Peoples Church" in local farming community

Very welcoming

Well supported at festivals

Village Hall next door

"Open Group" based in Parish

Financial help from a Benefactor in Building Repairs

Farming ties, what will interest / attract them? – Special services (do it very much their way)

Opportunities

Do an open air Bluebell Service (folk group)

Connect more with Pilsdon, e.g., open air service at Pilsdon Pen

Social events are very well attended – run more of these

Local and family connections are strong including young people

Quiet location, good for "Day Retreats"

Build St Stephens own sense of commitment further - from existing strong pastoral base

Priorities

- 1 Agricultural Season Services: Plough Sunday, Harvest – Lammas, Rogation etc.
- 2 Use for Art Exhibitions: Run a weekend with refreshments, and Jane's (and others) Art Displays, and organise a Benefice Art Competition!
- 3 Involve young farmers group in running of special services using their musical and drama expertise

Catherston

Strengths

Loyal, even if smallish congregation

Love of good B.C.P (Prayer Book) services

Strong sense of friendship, nurtured by coffee after service at Eric & Doris Cornish

Friendly PCC – supportive and involved

Good and committed Wardens

Building and churchyard in good state of repair

Sweet and pleasant building (but hard to find!)

Opportunities

To attract more who love BCP services – Connect formally with Prayer Book society

Good building for small Meditational Services, especially at Advent, Epiphany etc.

Pilgrimage Trail Leaflet

Good building for small “Occasional Offices Services”

More social events with human interest, (e.g. illustrated talks) in Charmouth

Good place for LWL’s to lead worship and develop good links with parishioners

Signpost & advertise the church much better, if possible from Charmouth, on main village

Notice boards, campsites and end of driveway

Could gain more visitors from active involvement in Pilgrimage Trail

Priorities

- 1 Currently the church at serious risk of closure; needs to become viable financially. Small outgoings, so would be fairly financially stable if can get a higher amount of regular Planned Giving and more donations
- 2 Needs stronger Governance: New Warden, Secretary and PCC members
- 3 Alternate with Wootton’s BCP services. Try one at each church in spring and see how it goes! 26th May, Wootton joining Catherston at 9.30am, 4th August, Catherston joining Wootton for 11am service. (No service on 28th July at Catherston)

Charmouth

Strengths

Central & public position on main street

By bus stops, visitors pop in whilst waiting for buses along the coast

Regular weekly services

Open to new ideas for worship, e.g. Family Services, Songs of Praise and so on

Strong committed PCC and Wardens

Financially paid "Share" for the last 8 years

Team Rector lives nearby & often in the village

School and amenities

2nd largest population centre in the Benefice

Opportunities

Socials (dances) at St Andrew's Community Hall run for benefit of whole community

Working well with URC – more mission together, but sensitively in a village which is wary of proselytising!

Holiday makers & 2nd home owners, some semi-regulars, have occasional 'get together' socials with them

Bible study, Prayer, groups for all church going Christians, explore bringing together Christians who worship at Uplyme with existing church members at St Andrew's (working with Vicar of Uplyme)

Concerts of a 'lighter' nature e.g. Folk, Jazz and Swing Bands

Priorities

- 1 Re-development of interior for greater use (Chapel, Book Stall, Young Peoples 'area, Exhibitions). Renovate servery and new disabled toilet to be built
- 2 A few young mums and a dad getting involved – encourage and involve them in 3rd Sunday Family Services and run with their help a monthly café after the Service
- 3 New Christian head at local school – liaise over for example, Special Services of interest to younger people (e.g. Animal Blessings) and encourage use of church by school for services and lessons (e.g. Easter and Leaver's Service)

Chideock

Strengths

Very welcoming church

Sizeable congregation - nearly all from the village

Full Lay participation in services, e.g. Intercessors, readings.

'Friends of St Giles' financial support and many social events

Village see it as 'their' church – natural support by most

Active and good robed choir

Outstanding PCC: Supportive, creative, united and hard working

Attractive building and in good position & good state of repair

New bells and work on bell tower completed

Opportunities

Holiday makers and caravan sites. More Songs of Praise including in Open Air (beachside?)

Concerts and exhibitions of interest to visitors, especially travelling Art Exhibitions

Chideock website used better via a PR person on PCC or in church

Village Services for those less keen on Communion. Simplified service leaflet

More fellowship opportunities, e.g., Village Lunches (for lonely and especially the elderly)

'Planned Giving Scheme', for all of community

New Children's Corner as part of church re-ordering, to assist encouragement for families attending

Grow the Bible study further, ecumenically, especially with Roman Catholics

Priorities

- 1 Improve building with toilet, kitchen, for more usage for the village and Fund Raising Events (Medium term – next few years)
- 2 Ecumenical services & study & social care (worldwide) with local Roman Catholics at North Chideock (e.g., Bimonthly Songs of Praise)
- 3 Discussion groups or other activities in local pubs, start a Seekers Course – "Puzzling Questions", "Alpha Express" or "The Big Ask" (With the whole team)

Fishpond

Strengths

Small, plain, attractive and bright cosy interior

Peaceful position 'off the beaten track'

Inexpensive to maintain

Beautiful views over the Vale to the sea from churchyard

Adaptable for moving pews easily e.g. for Lent Lunch

Financially comfortable – good Reserves

Good catering skills can be drawn upon

Congregational Services. Led by different local Lay people

Very sweet and caring membership, including 2 Wardens who are very loyal

Opportunities

Travelling Art exhibition? Try this in the Summer

Fund raising talks by various people, e.g. clergy

Quiet days for benefice and beyond

Small Size & location make it very suitable for group meetings, solitude & prayer

A simple chemical toilet would be very helpful, and a sink for hand-washing and washing up

Informal Services, including 'Fresh Expression' style, or Meditational

Occasional social events for community e.g. Village Beetle Drive?

Priorities

- 1 Interesting Window – include in a new Fishpond History Sheet
- 2 Stop off point for Pilgrims from Forde Abbey to get their fish. Highlight footpaths near church in Pilgrimage Leaflet
- 3 Good for small team services. Bluebell Service (including also Whitchurch and Bettiscombe). Need better car parking area surface with all-weather surface on road by the church

Hawkchurch

Strengths

Good position in village

Well cared for church with teams of cleaners

Good regular organist

2 energetic and experienced Wardens and a fabulous Treasurer

Committed and strong PCC, 3 good Lay Ministers, and 2 servers

Bells

Own magazine

Flowers – Kay

Wonderful building – Grade 1 listed.

Hawkchurch Group – through Jane Tombs originated from church. Small, cosy and know each other well, phone calls. Flow of information: church, pub is a hub in the village

Opportunities

Occasional Offices, follow up to many of these

School nearby, Messy Church, Family Services. Children used to coming to church. Open The Book.

Less formal morning worship, capitalise – written invitations.

More challenges in preaching to intelligent congregation, historical content of Bible Text.

Study group and Discussion Evenings in the pub.

Fund raising to a supportive village

Involvement of local groups at the pub and hall

Priorities

- 1 Bells – on completion of re-hanging: service and celebrations
- 2 Music – negotiate and compile varied programme, emphasising participation
- 3 Develop a visiting team

Lyme Regis

Strengths

Seen as the Civic Church of the town, so used for Civic occasions with Chaplain-normally the Team Vicar

Large volume of visitors to the church in the week and some on Sundays

Impressive building with historical interest

New and highly impressive organ with good organists

Largest population and attendance by far in the Team

Very well organised with well-functioning rotas

Own magazine and weekly notice sheets and website

Bells and bell ringers very highly regarded

Hall adjacent for hospitality after services with letting opportunities

Large and committed PCC with excellent Warden (and Deputy)

Opportunities

Closer connections with church school (e.g. 'Open The Book')

Variety of events and festivals with town

Joint sharing of facilities between hall and "Hub"

Enrichment of church life through variety of churchmanship membership and denominations

Pastoral care groups and new Bible study groups

Care home visitations shared by even more in the church

Ecumenical Songs of Praise with other Lyme churches

New fund raising group emerging from Organ Appeal Group

Ministry and support to rest of Benefice from its strength

Help in rest of teams commitments e.g. Website, publicity materials

New work amongst young families

Priorities

- 1 Pastoral Care Group organised
- 2 Better use of space in church (facilities, sink area on left)
- 3 Baptism families – liaise

Marshwood

Strengths

Very faithful involvement of committed worshipers

School and church partnership (Governors and shared building)

Goodwill in village towards the church, but not well supported in practice at Sunday Services

Good physical condition of building

2 energetic and experienced Wardens

Regular weekly Eucharist that is very well organised, with loyal and reasonable level of support by a faithful congregation

Opportunities

Social events in village

Link with Bettiscombe and Fishpond – Marshwood came to Bettiscombe for Remembrance Service. Share a monthly study group

Use as village hall (if toilet and kitchen can be built in the current storeroom, vestry at west end)

New affordable housing scheme

Building repairs to be completed (next priority is the Tower windows)

Beautiful churchyard and view! A little Pilgrimage Trail garden (links in with the school).

New plinth to show landscape view of all places that can be seen in the area (via the National Trust, to include heights of hills and so on)

Tell story of Marshwood in a booklet about the church and village (history, customs etc.)

Invite Ali Cameron to help: (she is a well-known local historian)

Priorities

- 1 Coffee and tea after services maybe monthly, to develop fellowship (Kettle, rota required). Say on the 2nd Sunday of the month
- 2 Develop a small group to lead Intercessions (trained and ready for monthly involvement initially). To be trained by the Deanery Training Officer
- 3 School Invited to:-a) "Open the Book" project with church – with small local team, including from St Mary's if possible
b) School Services at Marshwood on Sunday Morning inviting and involving the school (twice a term, like Lyme Regis)

Monkton Wyld

Strengths

- Beautiful grade 1 listed church, (especially the exterior, churchyard and chancel/sanctuary)
- Church in overall good condition
- Quiet position, yet close to A35
- Special services at Festivals e.g. Flower Festival, with refreshments afterwards are quite well supported
- Good committed and caring PCC and Wardens
- Publishing of Annual Programme of Services and events
- Church and its fellowship 'attract' some attendees from elsewhere (Eclectic as well as local congregation)

Opportunities

- Clean up the current Vestry, it looks miserable
- Improve links with Monkton Wyld Court – to invite to our services and maybe they use for Meditation? (If came as a group regularly, then would expect a charge!)
- Group to explore 'Spirituality' with Monkton Wyld Court and others interested in such newer expressions of spirituality (especially environmental or even inter-faith)
- Develop room by Vestry for meetings of different kinds, including a toilet and small kitchen
- Encourage more visitors by making access easier (from front or side gate) – investigate possible ways to enable church to be open in the daytime

Priorities

- 1 Publicity of church events (and position on Pilgrimage Trail) in Tourist Information Centres, campsites and so on would help bring more visitors (but the keys need to be easier to obtain)
- 2 Lovely venue for Occasional Offices, special weddings. This needs promoting via a joint leaflet with Monkton Wyld Court. (Collaborating more with them in other ways too-dependending upon future leadership at the Court)
- 3 Holding more Songs of Praise or Meditational Services for those who aren't "religious" but are "spiritual" and "sociable" (especially outside winter period!)

Stanton St Gabriel

Strengths

Prominent position right beside A35, but with severe parking problems

Very committed Warden and wife

Small and hard-working PCC

'Friends Group' for fund-raising

Entrance area now looks very good

Monthly or bi-monthly Songs of Praise services

St Gabriels Ruins and St Wite's Well

Shared building with URC

Opportunities

Small flower festival, Music/drama (Sue H)

Pilgrimage Centre (with Ruins, Well, Path to Golden Cap & Whitchurch). Produce Tourist Leaflet (with National Trust)

Community choir for Benefice (Alan)

Fund raising in village, at the hall and Charmouth Monday market with "Friends" Group

Tourist Information point

How can we engage with those using the James Hargreaves Hall? Local groups, 'Knit & Natter', could be persuaded to use church for small meetings (if warm and cosy!)

More publicity through doors for church events/services (Judy)

Priorities

- 1 Improve building with: a) Removal of rear pews for meeting area, b) better welcome area at rear, c) self-composting toilet, d) improve inside appearance with re-decoration.
- 2 More shared worship with URC, who share the building formally (beyond only at Major Festivals)
- 3 Engagement with artists (e.g. Jane) in area, hold travelling Art exhibitions with Lyme / "Abundant Arts" Project

Whitchurch

Strengths

Outstanding Grade 1 listed church – 1000 years old with very special shrine

A Pilgrimage Centre: Olympic trail began there

Very fine tower, set of bells and bell ringers

'Friends of St Candida' – newly formed for fund raising for fabric

Café Church (FreeXchange) How develop further, and build on excellent relationships?

Purcellian Concerts

Musical tradition – established choir – choral evensong

Highly regarded for good number of Weddings and Funerals

The 'Mother Church' of the Marshwood Vale – Build closer links especially with Stanton St Gabriel

"Saints and Pirates", young people activities (Ros)

Opportunities

Further ministry with Sue Langdon, St Wite's Community

Healing Services and 'Exploring Spirituality' gatherings/meditations

Develop website in relation to team also

Centre of new proposed Benefice Pilgrimage Trail

Use for Day Retreats, Quiet Days

Outreach further with hospitality to many visitors and pilgrims

More special services (e.g. Pets/Animals, Agriculture Year e.g. plough, lammas)

New History Booklets (or update old ones) and more on Pilgrimage Promotion and Rationale

Offer better Pastoral Care to those we minister to arising from Occasional Offices through a Pastoral Visiting Team. Needs support and training by Rector

Priorities

- 1 Less heavily liturgical services to be discussed by PCC urgently, which appeal to younger people or those who want a "lighter service"
- 2 More services for youngsters via playgroups. (Build on scripture, Christmas to Easter, Summer, Harvest, "Saints and Pirates" etc.)
- 3 Support each year a Local, and an International Charity: with various Fund Raising events or other events/services by donation (e.g. Good Friday Concert)

Wootton Fitzpaine

Strengths

Building in good state of repair

Very pleasant and kindly congregation (involved in many community organisations)

Excellent support from the Bradbury's at 'The Manor'. Good support within the village for more 'Secular' occasions e.g. Harvest Supper, Fair

Some new Songs of Praise Services at Festivals are attracting some younger people and parents/grandparents

A lot of traditional 'respect' to church and clergy

Opportunities

Build on huge 'Goodwill' to church in village

Quiet 'uninterrupted' church for solitude and prayer

Involve Laity more in helping in services (e.g. Intercessions, Servers)

Better signposting to church, and publicity of services

Use of building for young people's concerts?

Joint fund raising events, liaising and sharing with Village Hall

Priorities

- 1 Excellent Village Hall –use for some special services e.g. at Festivals or with young people. "Short and Sweet" family service. Liaise with local Playgroup through Louise, Jennifer and Tara. Maybe hold on the 1st Sunday in the month at 9.30/10am
- 2 B.C.P. services – linking more with Catherston perhaps (try this idea out after Easter with one Eucharist at each church). Perhaps also with Monkton Wyld?
- 3 Develop the new PCC Team, with new Officers and Wardens, into a strong team to move the church forward in conjunction with the villagers and so do more than survive!