

Ginger Group meeting 2015-02-07

Attendees

Fr. Richard Rowe (parish priest), Sara Booth (retired, palliative care), Patrick O'Brien (retired, judge), Phoebe Walsh (NQT), Philip Slater (lawyer), Damian Walsh (change management consultant), Fiona Walsh (children's liturgy catechist), Janet Tyson (retired, schoolteacher), John Tyson (retired, self employed clothing distribution, decorating), Matt Foster (retired, teacher), Conor McDonagh (building surveyor, project manager), Roger Pettett (IT director), Josie Pettett (photographer), Joe Butler (finance and estate management in state sector), Pauline Butler (retired, teacher FE college), Robina Debnam (semi-retired), Nelion Ridley (microbrewer)

Quinquennial report in due course about the state of the building

The aim of the Ginger Group is to evaluate options for running a sustainable parish, working in tandem with other working groups and the parish council.

There is a possibility of having a new building should the current premises be found unfit. Consolidate to Thaxted English Martyrs, or sharing the Anglican churches. Shared churches is strong possibility but details would need to be properly sorted out.

We also need to take into account diocesan strategy.

- 86 priests active in the diocese
- 4 candidates in training
- Many religious orders.

Can we set up systems within the parish to account for changes in diocesan direction? Propose ways to deal with these possible changes, plans to maintain a lively parish.

Presently we are secure with the presence of fr. Richard (73) and ~2.5 years away from having to resign.

We should push to build effective lay leaderships. Combined congregation. Dedicated to active life within the parish even if strategy removes the resident priest e.g. visiting priest.

Working groups within the parish involving as many as can be in different areas.

Get ahead of the challenges and offer ideas.

Chairman volunteered (RP).

Terms of reference for this group:

- **To build a model for a self-sustaining parish**
- Account for clergy, human element rather than physical buildings.
- Account for constraints of physical buildings
- To look forward, resilience planning for the future.
- Mapping dependencies between groups within the parish - define what distinguishes this parish from others?

RR requesting for guidelines from the diocese regarding ecumenical sharing of premises.

Suggestion to examine the different reasons everybody has for being part of the parish community with an eventual view to conducting a survey? General parish census to ascertain skills and talents within the community. Last census conducted some time ago.

Building Observations:

- Flat rental - £100k costs to make habitable. Currently costing rates.
- Thaxted virtually nil cost to run- almost only electricity (no water).
- The problem is the current church building in Bardfield - flat, repairs.

Outcomes:

- What scenarios can we imagine?
- Capture options, including radical ones
- What are the constraints which limit those options, e.g. commitment to Sunday Mass
- Evaluate affordability, deliverability within timeframe, sustainability
- Joining with another parish? Previously with Dunmow, Hatfield Broad Oak.
- Discussion of survey/questionnaire.
- Whiteboard, post-it facilitated session next meeting
- RP to collect initial thoughts about why parishioners enjoy being part of this parish community

Upcoming meetings

- 2015-02-18 Fire training (Ash Wednesday)
- 2015-02-19 Finance committee meeting
- 2015-02-28 Ginger Group