

Ginger Group meeting 2016-01-23

Present: RP, RD, PoB, NR, DW, RR, FW, CS, JY, LW, AW,
Apologies: CMcD, JB, PB

RR:

Started last march, with a dream, to plan. RR thought he would be the last parish priest of this parish, as that was the last understanding from the last bishop. RR's vocation was to build up the congregation in spirit. Thought dreamed, planned and updated the situation - much more positive and possible. Diocese pleased with Ginger performance ("fed with hopefulness").

Thought, dreamed and planned around vision / imagination and hope. Need to move into action mode. From liability to asset, to guide our further hopeful consideration.

Assets:

- Bardfield building with real possibilities.
- Surrounding land with adjacent milk yard site.
- Fr. Richard - in that he doesn't need the priest's house - otherwise there would likely be a resident priest
- Community - willing and eager to handle the jobs required
- Diocese - encouraging parishes with their own growth
- English Martyrs' site, less of an asset but serving its purpose well in its decline

Improving and letting the priests' house is less imaginative than the possibilities available.

Plan 1:

If we want to be a modern, forward looking parish we need a place where things can be done and developed - a centre, a parish office with means of production and communication. Meeting rooms for groups to meet, talk and grow. Greater and wider local community involvement. A place to meet and use as an eager and encouraging place with facilities for letting and hire.

Plan 2:

Complete refurbishment of Our Lady's house as a priests' house. Provide money for necessary and wider development. To make us wiser stewards of the assets available. May require the building of two ramps

2016 will be a year of decision, commitment and hard work.

There will not and cannot be financial support from the diocese. Lots of fundraising required.

The finances of building an entirely new site put such a plan beyond the means of parishes of our size. The proposed plans for improvements at the existing site.

Next steps:

Professional advice - a) to Render our lady's house habitable again and
b) to satisfy diocesan requirements for the priest's house

DW:

A feeling of hijacking the process with an imposed plan.

Original liability was £350,000 from quinquennial report. Diocesan stated we needed to think about 5x plate value of £33,000.

What is the new situation regarding clergy demographics and money - we seem to be ignoring issues raised in quinquennial and diocesan projections

Do we still have a problem with money - yes or no

Do we still have a problem with priests - yes or no

Fr. AH did state we need to consider restructuring in the wider context of a North Essex super parish.

The current surplus is a short term solution - we wouldn't do that with our own finances for a short term solution.

PoB: The proposal fulfils the requirement for the short term plan whilst not impinging on the longer term / wider plan.

NR: The bigger picture super-parish should really be a Diocesan vision / planning process, not so much a parish or deanery one. Proper valuations of site, land etc. need to be obtained to enable planning. However one of the original ideas of the group was not to be driven or held back by Diocesan process.

Clearer actions & order

- Health and safety
- Improvements to Our Lady's house
- Kick off communication with neighbouring parishes about wider long term. Parochial planning there is irrelevant until that engagement

7th/8th Feb - all clergy are meeting for the bishop to announce Stewards of the Gospel. Meet on a Saturday every 6 months for training - Ginger-group-like process learning how to explore - a model.

The process was for GG to make recommendation to the Parish Council. If GG is moving too slowly let's say so and get on with shaping the proposal to the PC. We shouldn't have two competing parallel processes.

LW: Suggestion is for the PC to be short term tactically responsible for the site and GG for

the long term strategic / super-parish vision & site moves

Must improve communication between GG & PC.