

Appendix D

Copies of the representations



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Torpoint
Cornwall
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Mr Rex Andrew
Pastoral Division
Church Commissioners
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3AZ

Mr
31/12/2018

26th December 2018

Dear Commissioners and to whom it may concern,

Re: Pastoral Reorganisation affecting the benefices of Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint; St Germans; and The Rame Peninsula

I am a member of Maryfield Church in Torpoint but not on the Torpoint PCC. I wish to express my total opposition to this proposal as it currently stands. Of course almost any proposal would benefit some churches and disfavour others. But my objection is principally on the grounds of what it means for Torpoint; however I do also believe that it is bad for the majority of the area as a whole.

There are numerous ramifications of the proposed reorganisation, and they really demand detailed examination. But the necessity to be brief in this final opportunity to object will inevitably limit what can be said here.

I would like to make clear that I am not concerned with the personalities of any incumbents, diocesan officers or church members involved – I respect and like all of them! It is the principles, process and practicalities regarding the proposed reorganisation that concern me.

1) A brief description of the area:

11 village churches plus 1 larger town church (Torpoint) are spread over a somewhat linear (East / West) area, surrounded both by sea and estuary for a fair proportion of its perimeter. Torpoint might be considered the hub but it is at the far eastern end. The total population is about 14,397 of which Torpoint alone (8,500 population) is about 60% of that total.

The villages are obviously spread out and there is considerable commuting in cars and busses for work, school, and shopping much of it towards Torpoint, and through Torpoint to Plymouth via the chain-ferry link.

Torpoint is a cohesive little town. It has numerous small businesses, a large Naval training base (HMS Raleigh, with its own 3 churches), a large new NHS facility, business park, dentists, shops, garages, 3 schools, old people's homes, library, a busy town council, the vital chain ferry link with Plymouth, numerous community organisations, and of course 2 Church of England churches as well as a Methodist / URC church, a Roman Catholic Church and an independent 'New Life' church. There is a strong community feel to the place. It is a gateway town from Devon into Cornwall.

2) Description of the state of the churches:

I have no personal experience of the churches in the villages outside the present Torpoint / Antony / Sheviock cluster. However it is clear that the proposed reorganisation is in response to a deteriorating situation, made plain by financial pressures. Only Torpoint has, up to this time, just about managed to pay its way. We are all up against it, morale is not high, vision for how growth

will happen (let alone stability at present levels) is not apparent. We in Torpoint have just lost our curate; she will not be replaced.

I wonder if decision-makers have had a look at the websites of the churches involved? Even the most cursory visit to the websites of both the Torpoint and Rame groups of churches will reveal a stark lack of basic information and mission-focussed items. In fact there is almost nothing at all on either website. This is not necessarily a comment on hard-pressed incumbents; but it has to be said that these websites present an abysmal picture to any visitor – they offer nothing with even the remotest chance of engaging an enquirer's interest or offering a welcome.

But it has to be said that the demographics of Torpoint show huge scope for mission amongst all ages, notably young families and their children. However, once things have spiralled down to the 'barely surviving' level, the vision, personnel, time, and energy easily fall out of reach. Has the proposed reorganisation addressed this situation in detail, and what is its strategy for turning things around? The Millbrook incumbent has indicated that he would try to maintain Sunday services as they are but would need administrative assistance to keep things going – not a vision for the kind of growth needed to stem decline.

3) The basic flaws in the proposal:

In general it has been shown that attendance in churches corresponds quite noticeably with the proportion of clergy to population. That's hardly surprising. It does therefore have something to say to those who come up with pastoral reorganisations that dilute the presence of clergy.

In summary, the proposal in question seeks to redistribute clergy more thinly across the churches in order to cover for the non replacement of an incumbent in the 4 St Germans area churches. (Why was a replacement never recruited?) It takes the incumbent from Torpoint (which has paid its way despite its incumbent also overseeing Antony and Shevioc) and gives her to St Germans which hasn't paid its way. Antony and Shevioc will also be attached to the new St Germans group.

As mentioned in 2), Torpoint is to receive oversight from the incumbent in Millbrook whose existing duties will be unchanged in that area. A 'House for Duty' is proposed (but is not yet recruited), as a part time assistant to him, to live in the present Torpoint vicarage. Apparently the curate's house (only purchased a few years ago) will no longer be available for parish use?

In plain population terms, the proposed distribution of population per clergy (generously assuming the HFD = 0.6 clergy) is grossly uneven:

Millbrook and Torpoint (6 churches, 1 incumbent, 1 HFD): 1 clergy for 6,611 population
St Germans (6 churches, 1 incumbent): 1 clergy for 3,819 population

4) So my objections are:

The above statistic on distribution of populations, bad as it is, takes no account of the much more demanding nature of the work (and scope for growth) in Torpoint compared with the rural villages. Frankly: one incumbent is being offered a rest cure, the other will receive relentless hard labour if the job is to be done effectively.

A hard point needs to be made here. Any committed incumbent will find Torpoint endlessly challenging and demanding. But it cannot be right that reorganisations are done to suit the particular preferences of incumbents for a lighter load or a nicer rural vicarage. However, the welfare of our Christian brothers and sisters is important: if health or age or wish for fresh challenges present a need for relief from demanding or relentless situations, that should happen, as in all employment situations, through retirement or redeployment (where possible) but not at the expense of the organisation as a whole. (And churches survive largely on the sacrificial giving of time and money by ordinary lay people.) In all walks of life people have to find alternative employment for themselves when they're looking for new challenges or to lighten their load; sometimes that will involve a change in the type of work.

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So the first question is why the 'House for Duty' (when will he / she be recruited?) is not being located in the perfectly good vicarage in St Germans? He / she would have the relatively light duties of covering 4 village churches. The Torpoint incumbent could remain full time to run the present Torpoint cluster.

The Millbrook incumbent has voiced his reluctance to move to Topoint which would be by far the busiest area he will have to oversee. He likes his situation in Millbrook, he was recruited to rural ministry there (why should he be forced into a situation he never applied for?); the Torpoint vicarage (a very poor choice for a vicarage) is no comparison. But at face value it would make far more sense for the HFD to be located in Millbrook...

There's a sense that the needs of Torpoint come last. There's also a question of matching incumbents to churches: city/town/village, churchmanship, age, particular interests and gifts. We're not dealing with identical robots here.

Can we assume that any potential candidates as HFD will first be interviewed by the Torpoint PCC for suitability? If not, why not? What happens if a suitable HFD cannot be found to move in as soon as the Torpoint incumbent vacates the vicarage? What happens if no HFD can be found for many months or years? What happens if a lazy or uninterested HFD is found? Who is in charge of the HFD? How much independent decision-making would he/she have? Would he/she be at home with our churchmanship ('middle of the road' / evangelical)? How many hours are expected?

There are many more human and spiritual considerations here than matching bodies to houses to churches.

Given these points and the likely fall in the morale of the Torpoint churches which see themselves as being downgraded on account of flawed reasoning, it would seem inevitable that Torpoint's financial contribution will fall. What may appear to be a way of keeping things financially afloat over the area as a whole could turn out to be a very short term remedy. If ever there were a hub from where growth could restart, it would be Torpoint. Yet it seems that opportunity is being not being considered.

5) The process:

Firstly, the handling of the proposed pastoral reorganisation has left much to be desired. I can't go into it here as I might wish; it's become personal at times for us in Torpoint, due partly to a divergence of interests but also a lack of openness and full information. To this day, we have been given few firm details of anything. One meeting which some of us in Torpoint requested in order to discuss the particular issues of Torpoint was opened out to people from the whole area: thus Torpoint's concerns could not be satisfactorily aired. They never have been since. There has been a common attitude, not least from PCC members, that 'there's no point objecting to this because they're going to do it anyway.' That is a pretty unsatisfactory way for conducting church business.

Secondly there's no sense that there has been any in-depth assessment of the spiritual needs and potential for mission and growth of the area. Certainly plans were announced (sort of) but with no evidence of visits to the area and talking to church members generally. There's certainly been no plan of how growth is to happen: as is frequently said, failure to plan for growth amounts to planning for decline.

Thirdly, if we are to lose our incumbent from Torpoint, we are in a de facto interregnum. It is not right that another incumbent be appointed by the diocese with no national advertising, no interviews by the Torpoint PCC and no opportunity to veto an unsatisfactory candidate. Both the last 2 incumbents were appointed in this way; advertising was forbidden by the previous archdeacon. It was fair to no one involved, not least the incumbents themselves. The Torpoint churches are on the verge of a very steep decline unless they find leadership with fresh vision, spiritual depth, ability to engage with the community and present the Christian Gospel with confidence and energy. In human terms we're right on the edge if only due to the demographic profile of our congregations. And in

those terms alone the process and results of the proposed reorganisation could hardly be more dispiriting.

Fourthly, Torpoint has 2 church properties, neither directly under the control of the local church. The sale of both, followed by the purchase of a more suitable house as a vicarage would be highly desirable. Yet there appears to be no readiness to study this option. Why not?

6) Alternative suggestions:

There has been astonishing rigidity in what has been proposed. And yet there are a number of different ways of approaching the issue. Please consider the following:

- 1) Recruit a HFD to live at St Germans and be responsible for the 4 churches in that group
- 2) Or give oversight of Donderry and Hessenford to the Millbrook and Rame group incumbent, and oversight of St Germans and Tideford to the Torpoint group, HFD to live at St Germans, or vice versa with Lynn Parker at St Germans until she retired, with understanding that the next incumbent will once again live in Torpoint
- 3) Sell both Torpoint properties and buy a much more suitable vicarage in Torpoint
- 4) If the original plan is to go ahead, and Lynn Parker is to move to St Germans, there should be national advertising for a new incumbent at Millbrook and Torpoint for which Michael Brown would be invited to apply if he wished; interviews for all candidates by Torpoint and Millbrook PCCs

7) A final appeal:

Bishop Philip Mounstephen will be formally welcomed to Truro on 12th January. I think it would be particularly helpful if he were given the opportunity to look at this proposed reorganisation with fresh eyes before an irrevocable decision is taken. This is surely a test case for the new vision he will be bringing to the diocese and I can imagine it exemplifies the kind of issue which will be at the top of his priorities for turning the diocese around. It would be a sad start for us in this area and for him if what is proposed fails to get his attention by only a few days.

With kind regards



Don Benson

[REDACTED]
TORPOINT
[REDACTED]

18 December 2018

Rex Andrew
Pastoral Division
Church Commissioners
Church House
Great Smith Street
LONDON SW1P 3AZ

Dear Sir

I am strongly against the proposal to reorganise the benefices of Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint St Germans and the benefice of Maker with Rame.

I am a Reader in the Torpoint Antony Sheviock benefice and also Church Treasurer of Maryfield Church and a member of the East Wivelshire Deanery Synod.

The reasons for my objection are that the current proposal does not address the needs of Torpoint, the largest centre of population in the area, and the reasons for the proposal are dubious. I believe these to be

1. To reduce the number of priests in the East Wivelshire Deanery
2. Not voiced openly, but is the intention to deliberately reduce the work load of one priest?
3. The church of St Phillip & St James, Maryfield is still in the civil parish of Antony and Wilcove.

The need to reduce the number of priests may be a regrettable necessity but to make structural changes to the parish structure in order to redress work load and responsibilities is not appropriate. The motivation may indeed be one of duty of care but surely that is not sufficient to make such drastic changes to the parish structures.

An alternative solution has been proposed but I am not aware of any consideration that has been given to this proposal.

1. To combine the Benefice of Antony with Sheviock, and Torpoint with St Germans.
2. To appoint a house for duty priest, probably housed in St Germans, to assist the Vicar of the Torpoint cluster.

This would increase the population of the Torpoint cluster by 2672 but St Germans are endowed with 3 Readers and a house for duty in St Germans would distribute the load more evenly. I believe that this would then be less disruptive to all and would not disrupt the relationships already established between the parishes. No reason has been given as to why this proposal has been rejected.

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Millbrook and Rame may look close to Torpoint on a map, but geographically and road connections, which in fact then of necessity have to go through Antony Parish and past Antony Church, do not invite close working or relationships or connections.

The current proposal moves Torpoint from the care of one priest to another, of whom the parish have no say in the appointment. With such drastic changes of parish I believe that both newly created posts should be advertised with full involvement of the parishes and PCC's.

Sadly the Torpoint PCC did vote a majority of people in favour but it was said by some that "It's not point objecting because they will do it any way." That comment is probably the saddest aspect of this affair

Yours sincerely

Roy Bright

FROM SIR RICHARD CAGN ALE

TEL: ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
ANTONY
TORPOINT
CORNWALL
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

Out of time
/A
31/1/2019

Your ref EP/KAN/Torpoint/P1000

31 January 2018

Dear Mr Andrew

Mission and Pastoral Review 2011

Benefices of ① Antony WINTSHEVOLT

and Torpoint

As the Patron of the living for Strevock and Antony I very much support the views that have been submitted by you. I know that you is considerable concern for Torpoint which I hope will receive close attention.

Yours sincerely ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~



Appendix E

A copy of the letter referring the representations to the Bishop of St Germans together with a copy of the reply from the recently appointed Bishop of Truro





 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

CHURCH
COMMISSIONERS

The Rt Revd the Bishop of St Germans
Lis Escop
Feock
TRURO
TR3 6QQ

Rex Andrew
Pastoral

Our ref: NB39/2c

11 February 2019

Dear Bishop

**Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011
Benefices of Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint; St Germans; and The
Rame Peninsula Benefice
Proposed Pastoral Scheme**

Following the publication of the draft Pastoral Scheme providing for:

- (i) the dissolution of the three benefices of Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint; St Germans; and The Rame Peninsula Benefice;
- (ii) the transfer of the parsonage house of the benefice of Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint to the Truro Diocesan Board of Finance for diocesan purposes;
- (iii) the creation of two new benefices of: (a) Maker with Rame, Millbrook, St John and Torpoint; and (b) St Germans with Antony and Sheviock, together with the appointment of their first incumbents, their places of residence and for the future patronage arrangements for the new benefices

we received two representations against the draft Scheme from:

- (i) Mr Don Benson, a member of Maryfield church (of St Philip and St James) in the parish of Torpoint, but not on its PCC;
- (ii) Mr Roy Bright, a Reader in the Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint benefice, church treasurer at Maryfield church in the parish of Torpoint; and a member of the East Wivelshire Deanery Synod;



and

- (iii) an out of time representation in favour of the draft Scheme from Sir Richard Carew Pole, the alternate patron of the Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint benefice (the Bishop of Truro being the other patron).

I enclose copies of all the correspondence.

The draft Scheme carried the 'diocesan rationale' as a footnote:

The deanery of East Wivelshire is working on a deanery plan for sustainable mission and ministry. The post of vicar of St Germans was previously a full-time stipendiary post. As part of the deanery plan, this proposed reorganisation of parishes allows for a better distribution of ministerial provision. The planned appointment of a house for duty priest to live in Torpoint would also provide a resident priest in a highly populated area.

Summary of the representations against draft scheme

Mr Benson describes the area affected by the proposals as having 11 village churches plus one larger town church at Torpoint spread over a somewhat linear (East/West) area, surrounded mainly by sea and estuary. He says the area has a population of 14,397, 60% of whom live in Torpoint, which is a cohesive town with a strong community feel and is a gateway town between Devon and Cornwall Devon through which many residents commute to Plymouth. He lists its main facilities and says that it has two Church of England churches, but there are also three churches within the large naval Training Base situated in the parish. He says that morale in the parishes is low and that only Torpoint, which has just lost its curate who is not to be replaced, meets its parish share.

Both he and Mr Bright consider that the proposed reorganisation is driven by the wish to reduce the number of stipendiary clergy in the East Wivelshire deanery. Mr Benson says that there is a correlation between the number of clergy and church attendance and Mr Bright says that even if there are fewer clergy this should not be addressed by structural change. Both say that the two proposed new benefices will be unbalanced in terms of workload for the clergy with Maker with Rame, Millbrook, St John and Torpoint having 6,611 people per clergy person (equating the proposed House for Duty post as 0.6 of a full-time post) and St Germans with Antony and Sheviock having only 3,819. Mr Bright points out that St Germans also has three Readers and Mr Benson says the work in Torpoint is also more demanding.

They are also concerned about where the clergy would live in the proposed new arrangement. They say that the incumbent of Torpoint should live in the town and not in Millbrook; that the House for duty post should be located in St Germans; and that consideration should be given to selling the Torpoint and Millbrook parsonages and replacing them by a more suitable house in Torpoint. They think that the proposed housing arrangement have been driven too much by the needs and wishes of the clergy: to give current incumbent of Torpoint a



lighter duty post at St Germans; and to allow the current incumbent of the Rame Peninsula to carry on living in the parsonage at Millbrook, although most of the work and the opportunities for growth are in Torpoint. Mr Benson says that the house recently purchased for the curate in Torpoint will no longer be available.

The two representors also both express concern about the lack of opportunity for the Torpoint PCC to have a say in the appointment of the first incumbent of Maker with Rame, Millbrook, St John and Torpoint. They say that both the last two appointments have been made by the Bishop without advertising and that Mr Brown, who is named in the draft Scheme as the first incumbent was recruited to the Rame Peninsula for rural ministry and that the new post should instead be advertised with him invited to apply. Mr Benson is also concerned about what will happen if it proves difficult to recruit a House for Duty priest or the wrong one is chosen.

Mr Bright points out that although Millbrook and Rame may look close to Torpoint on a map, geographically and taking the road connections, through the Antony parish, into account they do not invite close working or relations. He and Mr Benson suggest the following alternative arrangements which they say have not received sufficient consideration:-

- (i) to retain the existing benefice structures, but to have a House for Duty priest living at St Germans looking after its four churches;
- (ii) for Donderry; and Hessenford to receive oversight from the Millbrook and Rame group's incumbent and the St Germans and Tideford churches from the Torpoint group; the House for Duty person again living at St Germans, or if Canon Lynn Parker is to live there initially for future incumbents to live in Torpoint.

Mr Bright also objects to the draft Scheme because the proposed reorganisation would leave the church of St Phillip and St James Maryfield in the civil parish of Anthony and Wilcove

Both Mr Benson and Mr Bright express concern about the process which has led to the current draft Scheme. They say there has been insufficient detailed information, no assessment of the mission needs of the area, no visit by members of the DMPC and a lack of evidence to support the proposals. They both say that although Torpoint PCC voted in favour of the draft Scheme some of its members said there was no point objecting to these proposals because they are going to happen anyway. Mr Benson also says that a meeting requested to discuss issues relating particularly to Torpoint was opened to all meaning Torpoint's concerns were not satisfactorily aired.

Summary of the out of time representation

Sir Richard Carew Pole says he supports the views of Antony and Sheviock PCCs (*I have ascertained from Canon Parker that both PCCs voted unanimously to accept these proposals*).



If you wish the Scheme to proceed as drafted notwithstanding the representations against it, it will be necessary for our Mission, Pastoral and Church Property Committee to consider the matter. In that case, I should be grateful for your comments on the representation in general and on the following points:-

1. Please set out the background to your proposals and the process by which they were arrived at. In particular, did they form part of a deanery review or did the initiative come from the parishes themselves?
2. Please set out the consultation process followed, indicating any meetings held with the interested parties. Please confirm the level of support, or otherwise, for what was being proposed during the local consultation process and how any concerns raised during that stage were addressed.
3. Please comment on the representors' view there has been insufficient detailed information, no assessment of the mission needs of the area, no visit by members of the DMPC and a lack of evidence to support the proposals.
4. Please comment on the view that the workloads of the clergy in the proposed new benefices will be unbalanced.
5. To what extent, if at all, were the housing arrangements for the clergy in the proposed reorganisation influenced by the wishes of the current post-holders? Would you expect these to change when the current post-holders leave?
6. Would you be prepared to amend the draft Scheme to name the Torpoint parsonage rather than the Millbrook parsonage as the place of residence for the incumbents of the proposed new benefice of Maker with Rame, Millbrook, St John and Torpoint? Would you be prepared to consider disposing of both houses and providing a new parsonage for the benefice in Torpoint?
7. Who owns the house occupied by the former assistant curate in the benefice of Antony with Shevioc and Torpoint? Is it intended to dispose of this house or will it be retained for a possible future assistant curate appointment?
8. To what extent were the PCCs concerned consulted about the original appointments of Canon Parker and Mr Brown as priests-in-charge of the benefices of which they are currently the incumbents and their subsequent appointments as incumbents? Why were these posts not advertised?
9. Would you be prepared to advertise the proposed new incumbent posts rather than name the first incumbents in the draft Scheme? To what extent was concern about the possible payment of compensation a factor in deciding to name the current post-holders as the first incumbents? To what extent would the PCCs be involved the appointment of a House-for duty priest?



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10. Are all the parishes financially viable? Do they meet their parish share commitments? If not, what level of subsidy is required from the deanery/diocese? To what extent are the proposals finance-driven?
11. Were the alternative proposals put forward by Mr Benson and Mr Bright considered and, if so, why were they rejected? If not, would you be prepared to consider them now?
12. Please explain how you expect the draft Scheme to further the mission of the Church and provide for the better cure of souls in the area concerned.
13. Are there any other factors which the Commissioners should be aware of in their consideration of these representations?

In considering what information to include in your reply, I should be grateful if you would bear in mind that the Commissioners are required to consider the representations under the quasi-judicial process laid down by the 2011 Measure. A legal challenge may arise from the Commissioners' decision if, among other things, it is based materially on incorrect information. In some cases, this might necessitate the withdrawal of the Scheme. Of necessity, the Commissioners rely on others to provide the information to assist their deliberations and to this end I should be grateful for your help.

The next two meetings of the Mission and Pastoral Committee at which this case could be considered are due to be held 10 April and 15 May 2019. If the matter is to be considered at the meeting on 10 April, **we will need to receive your response by Friday 1 March 2019, please**. This is to allow time for this letter and your reply to be sent to the representors, for them to make any further comments and, if necessary, for you to respond. As you know we also ask representors whether, if there is to be a hearing, they wish to speak to their representations at the Committee. In that event there will also be an opportunity for you or a diocesan representative to attend and speak in favour of the proposals. The diocesan representative may be any appropriate person (e.g. the Chairman or a member of the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee or an Archdeacon) but should not be the Diocesan Registrar or other legal representative. We do not wish the Mission and Pastoral Measure process to take on the characteristics of an adversarial tribunal and have advised the representors that they too should not be legally represented.

We would normally expect the representations to be considered at the earliest opportunity but please let me know if you are unable to meet the timetable for the April 2019 meeting or wish to give the matter further consideration or undertake further local consultations before replying. Once we have informed the representors of the meeting date (which we will do when sending them a copy of your reply) we would hope not to have to defer it. However, all parties will have the right to ask us to defer the matter to a subsequent meeting if justifiable reasons arise.



I am sending a copy of this letter to both Archdeacon Audrey and Katie Wright at the diocesan office for their information.

Yours sincerely



Rex Andrew

Encs



Handwritten mark or signature in blue ink, possibly initials or a stylized symbol.



Rex Andrew
Pastoral
Church Commissioners
Church House
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3AZ

Our Reference NB39/2c

28th February 2019

Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011
Benefices of Antony with Shevioc and Torpoint; St Germans; and The Rame Peninsula Benefice
Proposed Pastoral Scheme

I write in response to your letter of 11th February setting out summaries of the representations you have received in respect of the Proposed Pastoral Scheme. It is my wish that the scheme should proceed as proposed and on that basis I would offer the following responses to the question raised in your letter.

1. The background to the proposal is that the deanery of East Wivelshire, in common with all deaneries in the diocese, has been charged with developing a plan for sustainable mission and ministry across its parishes. At the same time, deaneries have been given responsibility for deciding how Parish Share (known locally as the 'Mission and Ministry Fund') is allocated across their parishes. The growing awareness of the cost of ministry within the deanery, and the vacancy within the benefice of St Germans, led to the development of a deanery plan which involved the loss of a stipendiary post and a reallocation of clergy across the southern-most parishes of the deanery. This plan was agreed by a meeting of the deanery synod on 26 April 2018.
2. The diocese undertook a comprehensive process of consultation with representatives of the deanery and the individual parishes. The following gives a summary of the process that has taken place.

The Rt Revd Philip Mounstephen
Bishop of Truro

Lis Escop
Feock
Truro
TR3 6QQ

Telephone **01872 862657**
Email **bishop@truro.anglican.org**
Website **www.trurodiocese.org.uk**

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2018:	
17 February	The Deanery Plan was discussed with treasurers and church wardens from the relevant parishes at a special deanery meeting which followed the MMF new calculation planning meeting.
13 March	Canon Parker explained to the PCC the possible changes within the deanery and how they would affect Torpoint Parish.
1 June	An article about the possible pastoral reorganisation was published in the Torpoint parish magazine.
4 June	A special Torpoint PCC meeting was called to discuss the possible pastoral reorganisation
6 June	Deanery plan discussed by Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee and approved
14 June	Mr Brown had an introductory 'informal conversation' with Torpoint PCC officers and church wardens with Canon Parker present at Torpoint Vicarage.
26 June	An informal meeting with the Rame Peninsular Benefice PCC officers and church wardens and Torpoint PCC officers and church wardens was held at Millbrook Vicarage.
20 July	An open social evening was held in Torpoint Parish Church for PCC members and congregations from all the churches involved in the proposed reorganisation.
July	A draft-draft of the proposed scheme was shared with all parishes, and discussed fully at Torpoint PCC meeting
Late July	The Archdeacon received three emails/letters expressing concerns from people within Torpoint parish and community, so arranged an open meeting (see below)
2 August	Shevioc PCC agreed unanimously to the draft-draft scheme and wrote to inform the Archdeacon
6 August	Canon Parker had an introductory 'informal conversation' with St Germans PCC officers (after which an indication of the PCC's approval of the proposed scheme was received)
15 August	The Archdeacon called an open meeting in Torpoint for any interested parties (in response to the above correspondence). It was originally intended for Torpoint people, but others involved in the scheme heard about it and came too. Much misunderstanding was able to be clarified. An email of thanks was received from one of those who eventually made representation.
23 August	Antony PCC wrote to the Archdeacon with approval
23 August	A letter to the Archdeacon from the Rame Peninsular Benefice church wardens and priest was generally approving but expressed concern over the proposed new benefice name 'Rame Peninsular with Torpoint' – not wanting Torpoint to be singled out. Informal communication arrived at an agreed name as per the current scheme.
28 August	Torpoint PCC discussed the meeting held by the Archdeacon on the 15 August and indicated that the views discussed at the meeting were not necessarily those held by the PCC. A paper vote was taken on whether to "accept the proposal for the reorganisation of Torpoint Parish". The results were Yes - 9, No - 4, and Abstain - 2.
Nov	A draft scheme sent to interested parties.
Dec	Two Representations were made from Torpoint parishioners.

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2019:

11 February

The Rural Dean met with Torpoint and Maryfield congregations (approximately 20 people attended) to discern the extent to which the views expressed in the representations were held by others. The two people who have made representation were present, and appeared to be supported by three others. The remainder recognised the scheme as something which is needed, some of whom were enthusiastic about it. One concern expressed is that the priest currently living in Millbrook parish, who would assume responsibility for Torpoint under the proposed scheme, would not have any real concern for the parish. A meeting has been arranged on 7 March for that priest to meet with Torpoint and Maryfield people to outline his vision for the parish.

3. The representors' express the view that no consideration has been given to the mission needs of the area, and that the DMPC have not visited the area and therefore lack evidence to support the proposal. In reality the plan has originated with the deanery, not the Archdeaconry nor the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee. It resulted from an assessment, at deanery level, of the demographic information and the missional needs of the parishes in question. The representors may not have realised that the Rural Dean has been involved as a member of the DMPC (as well as the Archdeacon). The plans have been fully discussed at PCC-level and have been made public (see notes above).
4. The comments made about the unbalanced workloads fail to take into account the full implications of the proposal. The population of the new benefice of Maker with Rame, Millbrook, St John and Torpoint (11.7k) will be significantly larger than that of St Germans with Antony and Shevioc (3.5k), this is the reasoning behind the allocation of the House for Duty priest to the former benefice. However, workload is not solely a matter of population size. The proposed benefices will contain 7 and 6 churches respectively. The church of St Germans is a large and significant historic building which has entered into a lease with the St Germans Priory Trust – this is an arrangement which still needs to be bedded in effectively, and has clearly suffered as a result of a lack of priestly leadership due to the illness and subsequent retirement of the previous priest. The physical size of the latter proposed benefice will be significantly larger than the former, which will require more time for travelling.
5. The proposed scheme has been influenced by clergy housing situations only to the extent that Mr Brown believes that Millbrook parsonage is better located in the centre of the proposed benefice. It has far better parking facilities, working and meeting space within it compared with the Torpoint parsonage. It would be possible for this to change when Mr Brown leaves, but only if a better property were obtained within Torpoint parish (see below).
6. The proposed scheme aims at making the best use of the parsonage properties available at the present time. The property department has been aware for a number of years that the parsonage in Torpoint is far from ideal in terms of its size, layout and facilities. Attempts to identify an alternative property within the parish have not been successful to date. It may be possible in the future to identify such a property, but we do not want to delay bringing about the scheme any longer than is necessary. If both Millbrook and Torpoint parsonages were sold to provide a new parsonage in Torpoint, there would no longer be a property available for a House for Duty priest to occupy.

7. The property previously occupied by the curate is owned by the DBF. It is currently being renovated with a view to sale or letting, a matter which is not yet decided. While there are no plans currently for a new curate in the area this does not mean that a curate will not be placed here in the future.
8. The parishes were fully involved in the appointment of both of the current incumbents. Canon Parker was suggested by the then Bishop of Truro to be considered for the role of priest in charge of Antony with Sheviock, and of Torpoint for her first incumbency in 2010, without the post having been advertised. She made a formal application, and was interviewed by the Suffragan Bishop and the PCC representatives. The interviewing panel were unanimous in their agreement for Canon Parker to be offered the post. The pastoral scheme completed in 2014 to bring about the new benefice of Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint, involved the consultation of all interested parties as required by legislation. There were no objections to Canon Parker being named as the first incumbent. The post of priest in charge of Maker with Rame, Millbrook and St John was advertised in 2012. There were three applicants and all were interviewed by the PCC representatives, and Mr Brown appointed. The pastoral scheme completed in 2018 to bring about the benefice of the Rame Peninsular, involved the consultation of all interested parties as required by legislation. There were no objections to Mr Brown being named as the first incumbent.
9. The option of advertising the proposed new incumbent posts has been considered but actively ruled out. This has not been because of the possible payment of compensation, but because of concern for the well-being of the clergy currently in post. The process of seeking to bring about this proposed scheme has been unsettling enough for the clergy in question, without appearing to call into question their ministerial ability by asking them to apply for these posts. It would be intended that PCC representatives from all the parishes in the benefice of Maker with Rame, Millbrook, St John and Torpoint would be involved in the future appointment of the House for Duty priest in that benefice.
10. The proposals have been finance-driven to the extent that the deanery is well-aware that it is not currently covering its own ministry-costs. The parishes which struggle the most financially are Millbrook and Torpoint. The shortfalls have been covered by the DBF, rather than the deanery.

The Mission and Ministry Fund call and payments for 2018 were:

	Call (£k)	Payment (£k)
Antony	6.4	0
Maker w Rame	27.7	21.6
Maryfield DCC	12	9
Millbrook	16	5
Sheviock	18.9	18.9
St Germans	30	30
St Johns	10.6	9.6
Torpoint	18.2	10.6

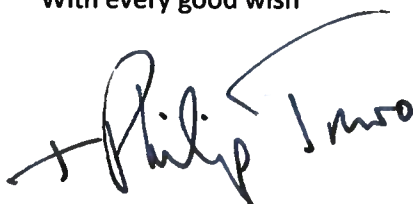
11. In considering the alternative proposals put forward it should be noted that both representors are only taking into consideration the needs of their own parish and do not appear to taking into consideration the needs of other parishes. The representatives have raised these same issues on several occasions. The reasons for the plan, and rejection of alternatives, have been discussed at length. I would make the following comments on the alternatives proposed by Mr Benson and Mr Bright.

- Alternative (i) retain the existing benefice structures, and have a House for Duty priest serving the current St Germans parish. This has been considered, but it is felt that since the St Germans parish has been effectively vacant for almost 2 years (due to illness and retirement), it needs the benefit of a full-time priest (albeit shared with Antony and Sheviock).
- Alternative (ii) Donderry & Hessenford become part of The Rame Peninsular Benefice, and Tideford and St Germans part of St Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint Benefice, retaining existing clergy deployment. The St Germans group parish (4 churches and one parish) has taken a while to establish and there is reluctance to dismember it. There would be considerable complications financially in seeking to do so. It is also to be noted that Donderry and Hessenford are not obviously part of the Rame Peninsular from a social or geographical point of view.

12. In developing the proposal the deanery has given due consideration to the mission needs as well as the better provision for the cure of souls in the area concerned. It believes the new grouping lends itself to working better together with common aims and demographics which will enable support and encouragement to the more rural areas with their smaller congregations. The working towards the proposed plan has already generated better working relationships between clergy and a better knowledge of local parishes by the laity. The intention is to enable this arrangement to enable all the parishes to know they are loved and cared for by their priest, the church and by God.
13. It may be helpful for the Commissioners to be aware of how Mr Bright and Mr Benson relate to the parish, and how they have been involved in the consultation process. Mr Bright is a member of the Torpoint PCC and is fully aware and has been part of all the discussions and consultations in the parish from the outset. Mr Benson has never been a member of the PCC and therefore may not have been as aware of the earlier discussions at deanery and PCC level. However as the regular organist and a member of Maryfield church he would have been aware of all the notifications from the pulpit, the weekly sheets, the monthly magazine and the public and parish discussions.

I hope that I have answered the questions you have raised and provided you with the information necessary to enable the Commissioners to reach a decision about the proposed scheme. If you would like any further information or clarification please do not hesitate to get in touch.

With every good wish



Cc Archdeacon Audrey, Katie Wright

