

Church Commissioners

Mission, Pastoral and Church Property Committee

Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011

**Benefices of Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint; St Germans; and
The Rame Peninsula Benefice
(Diocese of Truro)**

Note by Rex Andrew

Summary

- (i) We have received two representations against a draft Pastoral Scheme providing for: (i) dissolving the current three benefices of Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint; St Germans; and The Rame Peninsula Benefice; (ii) transferring the parsonage house of Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint to the Truro Diocesan Board of Finance for diocesan purposes; and (iii) creating two new benefices of (a) Maker with Rame, Millbrook, St John and Torpoint; and (b) St Germans with Antony and Sheviock, naming their first incumbents, their places of residence and for the future patronage arrangements for the new benefices. (An out of time representation in favour of the draft Scheme was also received).
- (ii) Both representors consider the proposed reorganisation to be driven by the need to reduce the number of stipendiary clergy in the deanery and see the proposals as resulting in an unbalanced workload for the clergy: the larger benefice, including Torpoint where they say the work is more demanding, would have some 6,600 people per priest, whilst the smaller would have some 3,800. They also think that the proposed housing arrangements have been driven too much by the needs and wishes of the clergy in post, who in any event they believe should not have been named as first incumbents of the proposed new benefices, but should instead have applied in the usual way.
- (iii) The Bishop says that the growing awareness of the cost of ministry within the deanery and a vacancy in the St Germans benefice led to a deanery plan, involving the loss of a stipendiary priest. The proposed new benefices would have seven and six churches respectively, and their differing needs have been taken into account, with the larger to have a house-for-duty priest providing clerical assistance to the incumbent. He is satisfied that both of the current incumbents should be named as incumbents of the proposed new benefices.

Recommendation

The Committee is invited to consider the representations and the issues set out in this report and, in the light of these, whether or not the draft Scheme should proceed.

Background

1. The Parish Information Forms supplied by the seven parishes subject to the proposed reorganisation give the population and electoral roll figures as below:

	<u>Parish</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>ER</u>
(i)	Antony	500	22
(ii)	Sheviock	646	56
(iii)	St James, Torpoint	8,364	98
(iv)	St Germans Group Parish	1,450	58
(v)	Maker with Rame	977	65
(vi)	St John	391	24
(vii)	Millbrook	2,214	34

2. Based on these, the proposed two new benefices would have the following population and electoral figures:

(i)	Maker with Rame, Millbrook, St John and Torpoint	11,555	221
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(there are currently eight church buildings in the area of the proposed new benefice, one of which, Millbrook Mortuary Chapel, is about to be closed and appropriated to a new community/heritage use).

(ii)	St Germans with Antony and Sheviock	2,596	136
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(there are six church buildings in the area of the proposed new benefice).

The proposed Scheme designates the first incumbents.

3. The draft Scheme carried the following "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."

It also explained the intention with regards the parsonage house of the benefice of Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint as follows:

The parsonage house at Torpoint

"It is the diocesan intention that this house will be used for a house for duty priest providing clerical assistance to the incumbent of the new benefice of Maker with Rame, Millbrook, St John and Torpoint. This house is currently occupied by the

Reverend Lynn Parker who, should the proposed Scheme take effect, will move to the St Germans parsonage house."

4. Attached are:

- Appendix A:** A copy of the draft Pastoral Scheme;
- Appendix B:** A scaled map of the area;
- Appendix C:** Parish information forms for the seven parishes;
- Appendix D:** Copies of the representations;
- 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.

5. The two representations against the draft Scheme are 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; and
- (ii) Mr Roy Bright, a Reader in the Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint benefice, church treasurer at Maryfield church; and a member of the East Wivelshire Deanery Synod.

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

Summary of the representations against the draft Scheme

- 6. 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 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.
- 7. 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 clergyperson (equating the proposed House for Duty post as 0.6 of a full-time post) and St Germans with Antony and Shevioc having only 3,819. Mr Bright points out that St Germans also has three Readers and Mr Benson says the work in Torpoint is more demanding.

8. 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 arrangements have been driven too much by the needs and wishes of the clergy: to give the 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, even though most of the work and opportunities for growth are in Torpoint. Mr Benson says that the house recently purchased for the curate in Torpoint will no longer be available.
9. 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.
10. Mr Bright points out that although Millbrook and Rame may look close to Torpoint on a map, geographically and taking into account the road connections through the Antony parish, 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 Downton; 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.
11. 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.
12. 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 in favour

13. Sir Richard Carew Pole says he supports the views of Antony and Sheviok PCCs (*both PCCs voted unanimously to accept the Bishop's proposals*).

The Bishop's views

14. The Bishop of Truro explains that all deaneries in the Diocese have been charged with developing a plan for sustainable mission and ministry across their parishes and have also been given responsibility for deciding how Parish Share (known as the "Mission and Ministry Fund" or "MMF") is allocated across the parishes. He says that the current proposals originated with the deanery of East Wivelshire, and not the archdeaconry or DMPC, and assessment of the demographic information and the missional needs of the parishes was undertaken at the deanery level.
15. He says that the proposals are finance-driven to the extent that the East Wivelshire deanery is well aware that it is not currently covering its ministry costs and he provides the MMF calls and payments for the parishes affected by the draft Scheme in 2018, which he says show that the parishes which struggle the most financially are Millbrook and Torpoint. He says that the growing awareness of the cost of ministry within the deanery, and the vacancy in 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.
16. The Bishop says that the Diocese undertook a comprehensive consultation process with representatives of the deanery and the individual parishes and provides a summary of this. The deanery plan was discussed with treasurers and church wardens from the relevant parishes on 17 February 2018 at a special meeting which followed the MMF new calculation planning meeting. The deanery plans were also fully discussed at PCC-level and were made public.
17. He says that Mr Bright, as a member of the Torpoint PCC, has been part of all the discussions and consultations in the parish from the outset and Mr Benson, as the regular organist and a member of Maryfield church, would have been aware of these proposals. As a result of the concerns raised by them in their representations, the rural dean met 20 people from the Torpoint and Maryfield congregations on 11 February 2019 to discern the extent to which the views expressed by the representors were held by others. Both representors were present and appeared to be supported by three others. The remainder recognised the scheme as something which is needed.

18. The Bishop acknowledges that the population of the proposed Maker with Rame, Millbrook, St John and Torpoint benefice, at some 11,700, will be significantly larger than that of the proposed St Germans with Antony and Sheviock benefice with 3,500, and says this is the reason for allocating the house-for-duty priest to the former. He says that workload is not solely a matter of population size, but takes into account the number of church buildings, seven and six respectively, and the area of the proposed St Germans with Antony and Sheviock benefice which will require more time for its priest to get around. He adds that St Germans church is a large and significant historic one which has entered into a lease with the St Germans Priory Trust, an arrangement which needs to be bedded-in effectively, following the illness and subsequent retirement of the previous priest.
19. The Bishop feels that the alternative proposals put forward by the representors only take into consideration the needs of their own parish and not the needs of the other parishes. He says that having a house-for-duty priest for the current St Germans benefice had been considered but it was felt it needed the benefit of a full-time priest, albeit shared with Antony and Sheviock. He says that splitting the St Germans benefice between the other two existing benefices would result in dismembering the now established St Germans Group Parish with its four churches. There would be considerable financial complications from this and Donderry and Hessenford are also not obviously part of the Rame Peninsular from a social or geographical point of view.
20. He says that the parishes were fully involved in the appointment of both of the current incumbents. Advertising the new incumbent posts has been considered but was ruled out because of concern for the well-being of the clergy currently in post. The process 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. He says that the PCC representatives from all the parishes concerned would be involved in the appointment of a house-for-duty priest for the new Maker with Rame, Millbrook, St John and Torpoint benefice.
21. Regarding the proposed clergy housing provision, the Bishop says that it was influenced by the current clergy only to the extent that the Reverend Michael Brown believes that the parsonage at Millbrook is better located in the centre of the proposed benefice. It has far better parking facilities, working and meeting space compared with the parsonage at Torpoint. The Diocesan Property Department has been aware for a number of years that the Torpoint house is far from ideal in terms of its size, layout and facilities, but finding a suitable replacement has not been successful to-date. If such a property is found in future, consideration may be given to housing any future incumbent there on Mr Brown's departure.
22. He explains that if the parsonage houses at Millbrook and Torpoint were both sold to provide a new parsonage in Torpoint, there would no longer be a property available for a house-for-duty priest. He says that the DBF owns the house occupied by the former assistant curate in the current benefice of Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint, which is currently being renovated whilst its longer-term future is determined. This does not preclude a curate being placed there in the future.

23. The Bishop says that a meeting had been arranged on 7 March for Mr Brown to meet Torpoint and Maryfield people to outline his vision for the parish and address the representors' view that, if living in Millbrook, he would not have any real concern for the Torpoint parish.

(The Archdeacon of Bodmin subsequently reported that Canon Lynn Parker had informed her that around 35 people attended this meeting. Mr Brown had fielded a lot of questions ranging from those about the logistics of the new benefice, to interest in his personal calling to the priesthood. Feedback afterwards was said to be good and the evening had an optimistic feel about it.)

24. The Bishop believes that the Deanery has given due consideration to the mission needs as well as the cure of souls in the area concerned. It believes the new arrangement 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. Working towards the proposed plan has already generated better relationships between clergy and better knowledge of local parishes by the laity.

The sifting group's decision

25. The case has been examined by the Committee's case sifting representatives who felt that there was sufficient information in the written representations for the Committee to make a decision, and that it would not be assisted by hearing from the representors or Diocesan representatives, and therefore recommended that it should not be afforded a public hearing.

Information for the Committee

26. If the two incumbents currently in post (Canon Parker and Mr Brown) had not been designated in the draft Scheme as the first holders of the two proposed new benefices they would be dispossessed from their current offices and entitled to compensation (of one year's stipend, pension contributions and housing) whether or not they were subsequently appointed to new offices.
27. The Committee could decide that the draft Scheme should proceed in its current or an amended form, that it should not proceed, or that it should be referred back to the Bishop for further consideration.

Issues

28. The main issues for the Committee are
- (i) Has the consultation process fulfilled the statutory requirements and been otherwise satisfactory? Were the interested parties given sufficient information about the proposals and were they based on a proper assessment of the mission needs of the area?

- (ii) Are the proposed structural changes an appropriate response to the financial situation of the parishes and the availability of stipendiary clergy?
- (iii) Will the proposed new benefices be out of balance in terms of workload for their clergy? Should further consideration be given to the alternative arrangements proposed by the representors?
- (iv) Are the provisions for designating the incumbents appropriate?
- (v) Do the housing arrangements for the clergy in the proposed reorganisation make best use of the houses at present available? Should further consideration be given to selling the present Torpoint and Millbrook parsonages and buying a new parsonage in Torpoint?
- (vi) Are the diocesan proposals likely to make better provision for the cure of souls in the area and in the diocese as a whole and further the Mission of the Church of England?

Recommendation

29. The Committee is invited to consider the representations and the issues set out in this report and, in the light of these, whether or not the draft Scheme should proceed.

Church House
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3AZ

3 April 2019



(Signed) Rex Andrew

Appendix A

A copy of the draft Pastoral Scheme



SUMMARY OF MAIN PROVISIONS OF DRAFT SCHEME (NOT PART OF THE DRAFT SCHEME)

This draft Scheme provides 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

in the diocese of Truro.

DRAFT

PASTORAL SCHEME

This Scheme is made by the Church Commissioners this day of 2011 in pursuance of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011, the Right Reverend Christopher, Bishop of Saint Germans, duly appointed in that behalf pursuant to section 14 of the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007, having consented thereto.

Dissolution of benefices and transfer of parsonage house

1. (1) The benefices of Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint; Saint Germans; and The Rame Peninsula Benefice in the diocese of Truro shall be dissolved.

(2) The parsonage house of the benefice of Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint (known as The Vicarage, 3, Grove Park, Torpoint, PL11 2PP), together with the site and appurtenances thereof and the grounds usually occupied and enjoyed therewith, shall without any conveyance or other assurance be transferred to the Truro Diocesan Board of Finance Limited for diocesan purposes.

Creation of new benefice of Maker with Rame, Millbrook, Saint John and Torpoint

2. (1) A new benefice which shall be named "The Benefice of Maker with Rame, Millbrook, Saint John and Torpoint", which shall be a rectory, shall be created in the diocese of Truro, and the area of the new benefice shall comprise the parish of Maker with Rame, the parish of Saint John, the parish of Millbrook and the parish of Saint James, Torpoint, which parishes shall continue distinct.

(2) The new benefice and its constituent parishes shall belong to the archdeaconry of Bodmin and the deanery of East Wivelshire.

(3) If immediately before this Scheme comes into operation the Reverend Michael Brian Brown holds an ecclesiastical office in The Rame Peninsula Benefice he shall be the first incumbent of the new benefice.

(4) If immediately before this Scheme comes into operation any person holds an office of assistant curate (however described) in any of the benefices referred to in clause 1(1) hereof he, she or they shall as consequence of the dissolution of benefices effected by the Scheme hold such office or offices subject to the same terms of service in the new benefice of Maker with Rame, Millbrook, Saint John and Torpoint created pursuant to clause 2(1) hereof and/or the new benefice of Saint Germans with Antony and Sheviock created pursuant to clause 3(1) hereof, as the Bishop shall direct.

(5) The parsonage house of The Rame Peninsula Benefice (known as All Saints Vicarage, Newport Street, Millbrook, Torpoint, PL10 1BW) shall without any conveyance or other assurance be vested in the incumbent of the new benefice in his corporate capacity as his official residence.

(6) Subject to clause 2(3) hereof, the right of presentation to the new benefice shall be exercised alternately with the first turn belonging to Her Majesty in right of Her Crown; and the second turn jointly by the Bishop of Truro in his corporate capacity; the Right Honourable Robert Charles Edgcumbe, the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe; and Sir John Richard Walter Reginald Carew Pole, of Antony House, Torpoint, PL11 2QA.

Creation of new benefice of Saint Germans with Antony and Sheviock

3. (1) A new benefice which shall be named "The Benefice of Saint Germans with Antony and Sheviock" shall be created in the diocese of Truro, and the area of the new benefice shall comprise the Saint Germans Group Parish, the parish of Antony and the parish of Sheviock, which parishes shall continue distinct.

(2) The new benefice and its constituent parishes shall belong to the archdeaconry of Bodmin and the deanery of East Wivelshire.

(3) If immediately before this Scheme comes into operation the Reverend Canon Lynn Parker holds an ecclesiastical office in the benefice of Antony with Sheviock and Torpoint she shall be the first incumbent of the new benefice.

(4) If immediately before this Scheme comes into operation any person holds an office of assistant curate (however described) in any of the benefices referred to in clause 1(1) hereof he, she or they shall as consequence of the dissolution of benefices effected by the Scheme hold such office or offices subject to the same terms of service in the new benefice of Maker with Rame, Millbrook, Saint John and Torpoint created pursuant to clause 2(1) hereof and/or the new benefice of Saint Germans with Antony and Sheviock created pursuant to clause 3(1) hereof, as the Bishop shall direct.

(5) The parsonage house of the benefice of Saint Germans (known as The New Vicarage, 17 Quay Road, Saint Germans, Saltash, PL12 5LY) shall without any conveyance or other assurance be vested in the incumbent of the new benefice in her corporate capacity as her official residence.

(6) Subject to clause 3(3) hereof, the right of presentation to the new benefice shall on each occasion be exercised jointly by the Bishop of Truro in his corporate capacity; Sir John Richard Walter Reginald Carew Pole, of Antony House, Torpoint, PL11 2QA; and the Dean and Canons of the Queen's Free Chapel of Saint George within Her Castle of Windsor.

Coming into operation of this Scheme

4. This Scheme shall come into operation upon the first day of the month following the date of it being made by the Church Commissioners.

In witness whereof the Church Commissioners have caused their Common Seal to be hereunto affixed.

SIGNED by the Right Reverend Christopher,)
Bishop of Saint Germans.)

Executed as a Deed by the affixing of the)
Common Seal of the Church Commissioners)
in the presence of:-)

AUTHENTICATING OFFICER

Notes by the Diocesan office (not forming part of the draft Scheme)

The rationale behind the diocesan proposals is as follows:

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.

Publication of this draft Scheme has been approved by the Church Commissioners but does not mean that they have taken a view on the merits of the diocesan case.

If they receive representations against the draft Scheme, the Commissioners will send all representations, both for and against, to the Bishop whose views will be sought. Individual representors will then receive copies of the Commissioners' correspondence with the Bishop (including copies of all the representations) and they may comment further in writing to the Commissioners in light of the diocesan response if they so wish.

If there are no representations against the draft Scheme, the Commissioners will make the Scheme and arrange for it to be brought into effect.

The parsonage house at Torpoint

1. It is the diocesan intention that this house will be used for a house for duty priest providing clerical assistance to the incumbent of the new benefice of Maker with Rame, Millbrook, St John and Torpoint. This house is currently occupied by the Reverend Lynn Parker who, should the proposed Scheme take effect, will move to the St Germans parsonage house, as per the provisions contained in clause 3(5) above.

Patronage arrangements for the proposed new benefices

2. The affected benefices' historic patronage arrangements are being reflected as much as possible under the proposed arrangements.

Status of churches etc

3. This Scheme does not alter the existing status of any of the churches, chapels of ease or licensed places of worship in the affected parishes.

Clauses 2(4) and 3(4)

4. The above clauses have been included to ensure that any person holding an office of assistant curate (however described) shall as consequence of the dissolution of the benefices effected by the Scheme hold such office or offices subject to the same terms of service in the new benefice(s) as the Bishop shall direct. Although there is currently no such office holder in post, these clauses are included in case any such office holder is appointed before this Scheme comes into operation.