

Barncroft Primary School

Park Lane
Havant
Hampshire
PO9 3HN

Tel: 02392 482331

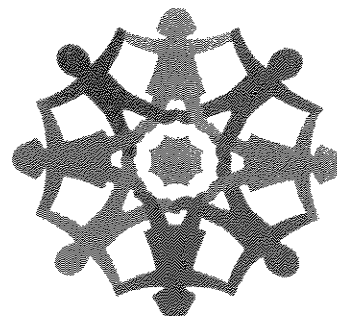
Fax: 02392 492853

Email: adminoffice@barncroftprimary.hants.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Julia Roberts

Business & Admin Manager: Mrs Sally Blackhall

*Mr
24/5/2019*



This letter is available in larger print format if required

20th May 2019

Dear Mr Andrew

Proposed pastoral reorganisation

As previously shared, the communities' voice is very anti the proposed changes and the way in which things have been handled. I attended the very first public meeting and people were very angry and concerned with the new plans for the three churches in Leigh Park, one of them being St. Francis. Father Johnathon is highly esteemed and is a strong pillar to his congregation and the wider community. In the years I have known him I can confidently say that he is genuinely respected for all he does. People trust him and he has spent years of service building that trust. He meets people at their level and especially when they are in need. He is a humble man and does far more than the eyes can see. He is an active and well-loved part of the community.

From a school perspective Father Johnathon conducts several assemblies on various topics. The children love his animated stories and drama. He also comes into class and teaches specific R.E topics linked with Christianity, such as special clothes and the paschal candle.

For two years running Father Johnathon has set up a reflection/prayer space with various stations. The children could choose which stations they wanted to participate in and this was enjoyed by staff and children, many who do not come from religious backgrounds. A questionnaire was conducted about the event and out of the results, it was requested that the prayer/reflection room should be set up more often as it had such a calming effect on the school. We all loved the experience!

We often enter our children into the Park Community Talent Show and each year he spends the day helping and hosting the event.

He also organised a workshop session around the passion of Christ. The lead actor came and worked with our children and then some of the teachers and children joined the community event, "Passion in the Park" at Havant.



The Barncroft Vision: To be an inclusive school in which all children enjoy an outstanding learning experience, make good progress and leave us as responsible happy citizens.

250



He's invited to our school productions and always attends. Father Johnathon has spent years building strong foundations within the Leigh Park Community. The number of people attending church may be few but the good he does within the community is so vast it cannot be measured. He reaches out to the people, he is amazing! Things would not be the same without him. We are grateful for all of his time, effort and care that he brings to our school. I truly believe removing him from his post would have a detrimental effect on our school and the whole of the Leigh Park Community.

Yours faithfully

C.A. Bradshaw

C. Bradshaw

R.E Leader

Bancroft Primary School



The Bancroft Vision: To be an inclusive school in which all children enjoy an outstanding learning experience, make good progress and leave us as responsible happy citizens.

251



St Michael and All Angels Catholic Church
Leigh Park, Havant, Hampshire PO9 5BD

Parish Priest: Canon Gerard Flynn

The Presbytery, 83, Bramdean Drive, Leigh Park, Havant, Hampshire, PO9 4RR

~~01253 2418 0918~~

~~gerard.flynn@portsmouthrcdiocese.org.uk~~

Portsmouth Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust Registered Charity No 246871

Ger
22/5/2019

18th May 2019

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

St Francis, Leigh Park & St Clare, Warren Park, Hampshire

We, the Parish Priest and many of the parishioners of St Michael and All Angels Catholic Church, Leigh Park, write in opposition to the proposed scheme of reorganisation in our neighbouring Church of England Parish, St Francis, Leigh Park & St Clare, Warren Park.

We presume to do so because our parishes have worked hard together for many years in joint efforts to bring the Word of Jesus Christ to the people of this area. There are very particular spiritual, social, pastoral and economic needs locally. There is a very high level of non-belief in comparison with other areas nationally. Our opposition to the proposals is on the grounds that they fail to build on the firm foundations that St Francis, Leigh Park & St Clare, Warren Park have tried to establish across all aspects of life on the wider Leigh Park Estate.

Please be assured that we write in a spirit of Christian fraternity and gratitude. For many years we have been glad to work harmoniously and effectively in Christian Mission with our Church of England companions in this area. It has always been encouraging to know of immediate, practical and significant aid to our own work from the local Anglican clergy and congregations.

On a personal note, during my nearly four years in this Parish I have experienced directly the willingness of Rev Jonathan Jeffery and Rev Karina Green to join in the work that we share, while respecting the traditions that distinguish us and, most emphatically, to serve the whole local community in the name of Jesus Christ. This has been exemplified by united worship when opportunities have presented, shared social activities enjoyed by many parishioners and a mutual commitment to Christian witness in a world where it is not always immediately welcome but where it is so evidently necessary.

We hope and pray that the work of the Church of England and its ministers in this area will continue to build on its years of experience in dealing with very particular demands and expectations. These hopes are shared by many of our own parishioners. We join in prayer for the work of the Church of England as it reviews how best to serve God and our neighbours here in Leigh Park and West Leigh.

Yours in Christ,

Gerard Flynn

St Francis, Leigh Park & St Clare, Warren Park, Hampshire

Name	Telephone number	Email
M. S. Long		
K. O'Connell		
K. McCartney		
Th. McCartney		
Tony & Jane Fellows		
P. McEachern		
Joyce Dalaba		
Dennis Dalaba		
JOHN TOOKEY-DICKSON		
K. Sadler		
E. Maddock		
Monica McDowell		
Dr Hazell		
Beck Suss		
Blive Buss		
Angela Buss		
Shirley O'Neill		
Jenny Verke		
John Sebastian Kuznetsov		
Matt Olin		
Sebastian Venghus		
CHRISTINA MARTIN		
Tanya Collins		
Colin Flanagan		
Angel Rayford		
NEIL HEATH		

2-

3

4

ila
con
mer
co

bre
co

b.i
two
co

m.

m

St Francis, Leigh Park & St Clare, Warren Park, Hampshire

Name	Telephone number	Email
M. O'Shea		---
J. Sendall		
C Mulreany		
A Mulreany		
L Dixon		
A Alexander		
J. CANNON		

St Francis, Leigh Park & St Clare, Warren Park, Hampshire

Name	Telephone number	Email
Lorraine Morgan		
Marie Macdonald		
A. J. Dawns		
J. Hulme		
J. Fleming		
Jana Fleming		
ERIN LAWRENCE	C	
Carol Wilson	C	
Michael Hannich		
MARIE HANNICH		
STEVAN MURPHY	C	
Clare McNeill	611	
JOE McNEILL		
MARK DIXON		
DEIRDRE TREACY		
PATRICIA KEANE		
L. Duncan		
LESLEY SPARKS		
DEREK MOIS		
RITA DEVEREUX		
TIM COLLINS		
R.C. Smith		
R.C. [Signature]		
Ellen McHEATH		
COLIN COOPER		
Jay Newman		
N. PETRIE		
NICK O'NEILL		
MARIA O'NEILL		
JUDY STRANGER		

St Francis, Leigh Park & St Clare, Warren Park, Hampshire

Name	Telephone number	Email
Pat Mitchell		
MIKE CARROLL		
ANN CARROLL		
Mrs J Payne		
M I Payne		
Mrs J Tooke-Skipson		
Mrs V Margreaves		
Judy Clang		

The Ven. Peter Sutton
The Vicarage
Hawkley
GU33 6NF

The Church Commissioners Pastoral Committee
Mr Rex Andrews
Church House
Great Smith Street
London.
SW1P 3AZ

29th May 2019

Dear Rex,

Mission and Pastoral Measure
Diocese of Portsmouth
Benefices of St Francis, Leigh Park; Warren Park St Clare; West Leigh, St Alban.

I write to express my concern about the Pastoral Reorganisation for the parish of St Francis Leigh Park and formally with sadness to object to it.

My objection is not primarily about the proposed outcome which may have merit but about the process which has led to it. I am not opposed to pastoral reorganisation per se, indeed it as a vital and necessary tool as the Church adapts to changes in society. My concern is that the process itself will cause long term damage to the Church in this community.

I believe that the diocese should listen more carefully to the experience and wisdom of the parishes involved. I write as a friend of Revd Jonathan Jeffery and his family having supported him informally over a long period of time and was his former training incumbent when he was a curate at St Faith's Lee-on-the-Solent. I have previously made representations on Jonathan behalf but these have been dismissed. I have three points:

1. The diocese's approach has not been conducive to obtaining the best result for the parishes and will result in a lack of trust of diocesan structures in Leigh Park and beyond.
2. The failure of the archdeacon to engage in any meaningful conversations with the parish priest for approximately three years or to engage in a process of mediation as recommended by me to restore a working relationship with him has resulted in a proposed reorganisation which is top down and uncompromising.
3. The statement in the draft scheme that this parish is a 'declining/static church' is not true. Mission statistics below will contradict this.

Mission Statistics

Statistics can be used to support any argument but here I compare St Francis Leigh Park with seven of the larger, better resourced and what might in the contemporary business model of church be perceived as 'successful' parishes in the Diocese of Portsmouth.

Baptisms

	St Francis Leigh Park	Church of the Good Shepherd Crookhorn	St Mary, Alverstoke	St John's Locks Heath	Holy Rood, Crofton	S James, Emsworth	St Faith's, Lee-on-the-Solent	Harbour Church
2018	37	3	25	9	7	12	9	21
2017	58	1	21	7	16	18	26	15
2016	43	0	34	20	14	16	23	1
2015	46	3	39	35	11	26	30	n/a
2014	34	6	60	36	19	21	25	n/a
Total	218	13	179	107	67	93	113	37

Over a five year period, St Francis Leigh Park has baptised more people than any of the larger, better resourced or as are perceived 'successful' churches. Only two of these big churches baptised more people in one year (marked in red). We believe that these statistics demonstrate a significant engagement by the parish priest and by the parish church in an area with a high incidence of deprivation. People in this context are less likely to come to Church on a Sunday but they will for key moments in life; baptism is, or should be, the primary focus for the making of disciples.

School Assemblies

The Revd Jonathan Jeffery has been deeply involved in the schools of the parish. His wife Carolyn is a dedicated Chair of Governors and all of their children have attended schools in the parish. In terms of conducting collective worship in schools none of the larger, better resourced or perceived as 'successful' parishes come near to this level of engagement. Some might argue that their failure to engage is an issue of concern.

	St Francis Leigh Park	Church of the Good Shepherd Crookhorn	St Mary, Alverstoke	St John's Locksheath	Holy Rood, Crofton	S James, Emsworth	St Faith's, Lee-on-the-Solent	Harbour Church
2018	Usually more than once per week	Usually once a fortnight	Usually once a week	Usually once a month	Never	Usually once a week	Usually once a week	Once or twice a term
2017	" "	" "	" "	" "	" "	Usually once a fortnight	" "	Never
2016	" "	Usually once per month	" "	Never	" "	Usually once a week	" "	Never
2015	" "	" "	Usually more than weekly	Usually once a month	" "	" "	Usually once a month	N/A
2014	" "	" "	Usually once per month	" "	" "	" "	" "	N/A

People attending special services held specifically for civic organisations or schools

Over a five year period more people attended special services held at St Francis specifically for civic organisations or schools than at any of the bigger, better resourced or 'successful' churches. Community engagement in Leigh Park is earthy and authentic; it is about Christmas processions with camels through the streets of deprived

neighbourhoods; it is about a parish pantomime that draws together hundreds of people who in small steps increase their connection and involvement with the Christian community.

	St Francis Leigh Park	Church of the Good Shepherd Crookhorn	St Mary, Alverstoke	St John's Locksheath	Holy Rood, Crofton	S James, Emsworth	St Faith's, Lee-on-the-Solent	Harbour Church
2018	1820	425	1180	898	0	112	0	0
2017	1740	375	1585	1300	0	82	400	0
2016	1760	584	1580	1405	0	92	400	0
2015	1940	470	1640	4	0	96	400	N/A
2014	2674	360	2100	800	0	90	1000	N/A
Total	9934	2214	8085	3407	0	472	2200	0

How many people joined your worshipping community? Adults/(Children)

Over a five year period 25 adults and 19 children have joined the regular worshipping community. Most of the larger, better resourced and perceived as 'successful' churches can claim better – and so they should; their mission field is different. That said, an additional 44 people in the worshipping community is a success under any criteria and still more than two of the other churches in this comparison.

	St Francis Leigh Park	Church of the Good Shepherd Crookhorn	St Mary, Alverstoke	St John's Locksheath	Holy Rood, Crofton	S James, Emsworth	St Faith's, Lee-on-the-Solent	Harbour Church
2018	5 (6)	6 (7)	10 (12)	16 (4)	24 (11)	2 (0)	28 (10)	90 (10)
2017	7 (6)	5 (2)	18 (12)	13 (4)	40 (0)	6 (0)	13 (3)	? (?)
2016	4 (2)	2 (3)	18 (12)	12 (5)	23 (7)	2 (0)	36 (12)	? (?)
2015	6 (2)	2 (0)	10 (12)	? (0)	12 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	N/A
2014	3 (3)	8 (8)	12 (20)	18 (3)	6 (0)	0 (0)	2 (2)	N/A
Total	25 (19)	23 (20)	68 (68)	59 (16)	105 (18)	10 (0)	79 (27)	90 (10)

I have been selective in choosing these areas for comparison but believe that they do demonstrate a Church which is effectively and authentically, and at enormous cost to the parish priest and his family, living out the Diocesan hope to live, pray and serve its community. Fr Jonathan is not perfect and he doesn't have all of the gifts for his task – none of us do – and what is needed here is better Diocesan support.

I suggest that we have failed to support the parish priest over a long period of time and that we should work consultatively and collaboratively with the parish without resorting to a hostile process of dispossession of the parish priest. There is a time and place for using this mechanism but I do not believe this is it. There is a sense that the diocese has overstretched itself and its resources with three major reorganisations seeking the benefits of Strategic Development Funding when the lead archdeacon is leaving on account of preferment. I urge a more pastoral approach. The diocese should seek to heal its relationship with the parish and work constructively with the PCC before rushing to a scheme which may damage both Church and community for years to come and in doing so crushing a much loved, authentic, hardworking and loyal parish priest.

If my diary permits I would be willing to be represented at a meeting of the Pastoral Committee.



Peter Sutton.

Rex Andrew

From: christine cattermole
Sent: 28 May 2019
To: Rex Andrew
Subject: Opposing the

My name is Mrs Christine Cattermole and I am writing to oppose the merger of the three churches. I am 65 years old and have been attending St Francis Church Leigh Park since the age of 7 years. I cannot believe that you intend to combine the three churches into one. We have a lovely community spirit at St Francis and the whole community pull together. The Reverend Jonathon Jeffery and his family work so hard to include the community of Leigh Park in all aspects of the church family. You have stated that the Harbour Church would include so much more for our community and our parishioners but Jonathon and Carolyn have already under taken everything that you have mentioned. Scout Groups, School Assembly, Messy Monday, Buzz, and so so much more.

When Jonathon first told of your proposals I actually couldn't believe that this would happen but speaking to other parishioners the feeling is that you have already made up your mind and we are wasting our time. I am sorry to say that if this proposal goes through I don't actually feel that I would be comfortable attending the Harbour Church when all the community and parishioners have opposed this organisation scheme from the beginning.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Christine Cattermole

Sent from my iPad

From:
Sent: 08 May 2019 07:11
To: Rex Andrew
Subject: Draft scheme representation submission

Submitted on Wed, 08/05/2019 - 06:38

Submitted by:

Submitted values are:

1. Query or comment?

2. Which Scheme or Order?

Which case is your representation regarding?
Leigh

3. Write your submission

Your Name (required)
Karen Davidson

Nature of interest in case
Removal of my local vicar, father Johnathan

Is your representation for or against the draft scheme or order (required)
Against

Representation:

I have lived in Leigh park for 50 years. Born and bread. Leigh park is a unique place, we are classed as a deprived area, but people happily get on with life and struggle through life. St Francis has always Been my local church for all our weddings, baptisms and funerals and as a family has been attended by family members on Sundays for over 35 years. I have seen many vicars come and go and have all been very lovely, however none so involved in my community as father Johnathan and he's family, I might add.

He is the heart and soul of our community and could not imagine it without him. He's not only the vicar at f St Francis he is the cogs of our community keeping peoples faith and lives going.

He is heavily involved in so much in my community that removing him would devastate so many peoples lives . Children absolutely adore and respect him . These children are our future of our church and he's already got their trust and understanding and involvement . Trust me that's not something easily done in my community, that takes a certain special individual to gain that .

Father, also does a lot of work with the local food banks in our area too. Something else that's a big part of my

community. These people know and trust him at there most vulnerable times of there lives.

I have personal reasons too, like when my mother was suddenly taken into ICU . As a family we did not know where to turn or what to do, but father was there with regular visits to see mum and right up until she passed , three weeks later. The service he did was absolutely beautiful and everyone who attended was blown away and spoke highly of father. Some had never met him before as they don't live local, but still passed comment.

There are plenty more stories like this whose lives father helps on a daily basis . Not just our church but our community would never be the same without him.

I'm not against support of helping our church and community, but I am against the proposal of removing father Jonathan from St Francis. These are big shoes to fill and to gain community respect and trust as he has would take a life Time. I really hope and pray that you make the best decision for our community. God bless Karen Davidson

Rex Andrew

From: ELMES PETER
Sent: 24 May 2019 ()
To: Rex Andrew
Subject: Pastoral Reorganisation of Leigh Park

I am **AGAINST** the proposed pastoral reorganisation affecting the benefices of St Francis, Leigh Park; Warren Park St Clare; and West Leigh, St Alban in the Diocese of Portsmouth.

I should perhaps start by pointing out that I am no longer a member of the Church,, having served as a Reader at St. Alban's Church in the past. However, I am a member of the local community, was the first person confirmed at St. Francis and have lived here for 68 years. I care very much about what is happening to us.

I have no problem with the amalgamation of St Clare and St Francis churches – they serve very closely together, share a priest and are widely recognised locally as sister churches. In a time of falling resources and falling numbers of clergy it would seem to be a good way forward. However, the issue of amalgamating with St Alban is a very different issue - the practical problems of merging with a very different community, West Leigh, divided from the other two by a major dual carriageway with no pedestrian crossing places, appears not to have been considered.

West Leigh is a very different community and is not, and never has been, the same as or part of Leigh Park, with whom there is very little interaction. It perhaps needs someone who has lived in this area a while to understand the difference – which started because historically it belonged to Havant while Leigh Park belonged to Portsmouth, and it was a daughter church of St. Faith in Havant. People from West Leigh will not easily see themselves as part of Leigh Park – which, of course, they are not.

I have grave misgivings about the fairness of the process so far. For Jonathan and Karina to be summoned to Peninsular House and be presented with what, to a lay person, is effectively their redundancies without any prior warning, discussion or consultation is disgraceful. It may be legally acceptable but I think most people found it morally wrong. There is always another, gentler, kinder way of breaking this sort of news but not to those two priests. I understand that they were told that they could apply for one of the new posts but may not be appointed.

The Diocese announced there would be a 'Consultation Meeting' at which everyone was welcome. It was then announced that it would not be held on the estate but further away on what the Archdeacon referred to as 'neutral territory'. After some complaints, it was agreed that the Diocese would provide a coach to pick people up and take them to the meeting. However, this still meant, because of timings, that a large number of people who wanted to be present were not able to be. This was seen by many as a means of ensuring that a lot of people were unable to attend or be heard.

However, at the meeting it became clear that the idea of consultation was just a sop to the community. We were repeatedly told 'we are going to...' or 'what will happen is ..' There was no

room for real discussion as decisions had been made. I asked how long the people from the Diocese including the Archdeacon, had actually spent on this estate or at West Leigh other than in church – seeing how the estates functioned and the value people from outside the church placed on their priests – the answer was one of them had spent one afternoon! A lot of very valid points were made by members of the audience but they were just brushed aside as either ‘you didn’t understand’ or ‘not what we are trying to achieve’. Frankly we were all left feeling patronised and ignored. The notes of the meeting which were eventually produced were not minutes in any sense and had been over-edited to remove some of the most valid points and make it sound like we were an ill controlled mob.

I have to say that the body language and rudeness of the Archdeacon told us all we needed to know – the feeling after the meeting was that it would happen come what may and Jonathan would not be getting a job.

Interestingly there was a change on the Diocese website after the meeting, when it changed from ‘... Investment to provide new ministry posts, caring for existing congregations while also planting new churches, and developing pioneering approaches to engaging with children and families.’ It then said, ‘increasing the staffing levels from three posts to five, with a mix of clergy, pioneering and operations staff’. Why can this not mean maintaining Jonathan and Karina in post with the Mission Partner, and this would still leave a place for ‘operations’?

In the local Portsmouth News on Saturday 20th October, the Bishop had written a piece explaining the plan and he said “What we offer will depend on what these communities want”. The community of Leigh Park wasted no time in rallying to this call and wrote to him, to the press, to the local Radio Station all expressing the same thought – this is not what we want and it will not work because of the way it has been handled. There was a petition, letters from all the local schools (with whom Jonathan has an excellent relationship and visits regularly); from our Christian friends at the local Roman Catholic Church; from dozens of individuals – all saying the same thing – this is not what we want! Anyone who looked on the Facebook Page ‘Save Leigh Park St Francis church’ could be in any doubt as to the strength of feeling here.

Census reports, detailed studies and figures just cannot give you the feeling of the community of Leigh Park. It is a community built in hardship in the late 40s and early 50s and has many areas of severe deprivation. Leigh Park is perhaps unlike a lot of other estates, partly in its size but more about the feelings of community which pulls together in every crisis which exists here. Yes, we are a working-class area, with low family incomes – but we are not all ill-educated, uncaring or feckless nor is it that we don’t understand what you are trying to achieve - but we just cannot accept the proposal.

We have always been taught that the church is not buildings but people and yet the declared intention (by the Archdeacon at the meeting) is to increase the numbers of worshippers in church. Perhaps if our Priests had more help where and when they need it, this might happen but there is much more Christianity in Leigh Park than you know about – just not in church on a Sunday. It is a much more down-to-earth form of Christianity, reflecting the original church, where people share what little they have and support each other in practical ways – running a food bank, cash responses to appeals, child minding, looking out for the elderly and more. We have also to remember the other active churches in the area who are not affiliated to the Anglican or any other ‘mainstream’ Church – the Calvary Church, the Endeavour Church, The Beacon Church, as well as mainstream Roman Catholic and Baptist.

People who feel the need to worship in church will do just that – but not necessarily in the Parish Church, and certainly not after all that has occurred here and the bad feeling towards the Diocese that now exists.

Why is it so difficult to build on what is already in place and working well? Instead of throwing the baby out with the bathwater and getting rid of the driving force that is Jonathan, why not put in place more people to help him, both ordained and lay?

I spoke to the Bishop when he took the service at St. Francis a couple of months ago and he told me that, in the next ten years, there will be a real crisis of ordained clergy with a lot of them reaching retirement age and fewer ordinands coming through training so I asked why not leave an experienced, loved priest doing God's work seven days a week to carry on. He is of the opinion that new blood will revitalise the parish, bring in new ideas and attract new people to the church. He may find this backfires of course and that the existing congregation will move to either worship elsewhere or not worship at all, such is the feeling of disenchantment.

I apologise for the length of this letter but feel that someone needs to understand the strength of feeling, the hurt, and bitterness caused by this plan, introduced without any warning and managed so badly.

I may only be a retired, working class woman but I understand this community because I live here – can foresee the consequences of this action, and it breaks my heart.

Chris Elmes (Mrs)

Rex Andrew

From:
Sent:
To: Rex Andrew
Subject: Proposed reorganisation of the Churches in Leigh Park

Dear Rex Andrew,

I am writing to oppose this scheme.

Leigh Park is an estate that was built after the 1939/45 war to rehouse the people of Portsmouth who lost their homes in the bombing.

It was one of the largest Council Estates in Europe and I am very proud of it.

However, even after all of these years, there is still an apparent lack of leadership.

My ward (Warren Park) is one of the most deprived in the South of England.

In our local school one third of the pupils have special needs.

We depend on Jonathan for so much. He is well known and liked by the Community who seek his advice and support.

He chairs the local Sure Start nurseries. The Church is very active and supports young people and a food bank.

The people trust him. He has created a firm foundation We need his support

Leigh Park is an area where very little happens.

Jonathan and his wife Carolyn have brought interest and sparkle to the area with their Christmas pantomimes,

which involve many residents and, most memorable of all, the Christmas Nativity play, when we had live camels,

ridden by wise men riding up the hill to St Clare's Church, sheep and donkeys taking part !

The proposal that the parishes of Leigh Park and St Alban's Church in West Leigh should amalgamate seems neither viable

or efficient to me. The areas are separated by a busy dual carriageway. Originally Leigh Park was a Portsmouth Council

estate (although situated in the Borough of Havant) and West Leigh was the Havant Council Estate.

Although the Havant

estate was (sadly) sold on to Housing Associations the two communities have never worked together. They have separate

facilities and organisations. I think that there is little probability of the congregations of the two Parishes joining

together to make one stronger, livelier mission .

I understand that you will pass my comments to the relevant interested parties.

With thanks,

Beryl Francis Cllr
Warren Park Ward



I OPPOSE THE SCHEME.

Rex Andrew.

I am writing in connection to my Church
St Francis High Park.

We would like to keep our Church as it
the centre of our community changes I know have to be
made, but every thing recommended we already do
food bank activities in the hall Scouts and many
other things

People of High Park get married have their
children baptised and funerals we also have a
remembrance garden Father Jonathan does more of
these services than anyone else in the area.

His school visits are loved by the
children they look forward to him coming.

Elderly people will have difficulty
getting to any other Church.

Yours Sincerely

Ann Goddard.

Rex Andrew

From: Mandy Hawke
Sent: 22 May 2019
To: Rex Andrew
Subject: St Francis Leigh Park
Attachments: Chuch Commisioneers .docx; Church comm questions .docx; just the vision.docx
Importance: High

Dear Sir

Please find attached letter, questions and Vision re above appeal.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Regards

Mandy

MandyHawke

Dear Sir,

It was with a heavy heart we heard the news that the Portsmouth Diocese decided not to change the draft plan for the pastoral re-organisation for Leigh Park and Warren park.

I am a parishioner of St Francis Church, Leigh Park and also on the PCC, and strongly object to the proposals. We are not opposed to change but are opposed to the way the proposal has been put in place. If we had been consulted before the proposal was put in place we could have made suggestions about the best way forward and what could be a good way to move forward to bring the work of The Lord to more people.

The PCC had spent a lot of time in the autumn of 2017 coming up with our vision (attached) and as you will see it was close to what was in the proposal. We knew our vision would be a challenge but it did not deter the PCC from having this to work with as the best way to continue to build on the work that was already being done in the community. The only thing we are short of is resources and finances; something we have been asking for for some years.

If the diocese had bothered to find out more, at the time, about our Vision, it would have been obvious that there were many plans in place to extend ways of reaching out to the community. Yet it appeared that the strategic team were unaware of these ideas; we constantly asked why they had not come into the community to see what was already happening and what more was planned before deciding we were a "failing" area (this was quoted by the Bishop in the local paper!). Maybe if this consultation or interest had happened first we could all have moved forward with renewed resources, of money and people – something we had been asking for for a long time.

I would, also, like you to know that Jonathan has a wonderfully supportive wife who does a lot of the parish and administration work. They operate as a very strong team and Carolyn does a lot of "behind the scenes" work. They have no outside administration support at all, which seems an additional amount of work to their already heavy workload.

Father Jonathan runs two parishes. He visits the five primary schools on a regular basis; runs prayer spaces in schools, is involved in many community projects and organisations. The parish has a high amount of funerals, weddings and baptisms, serving the local community on a very personal level. There are many people who hold him and his pastoral care of them in very high esteem. He is the "Church" to many people and a wonderful role model of being a good Christian. Father Jonathan does much of the "donkey work" for the above, as to achieve what he does he has no choice; there are no other people to do it!

Jonathan has been in post since 2001 and during that time has built a wonderful foundation to build on for the development of new ideas and for furthering our vision and our counter proposal. We have constantly asked that he has a designated post in the new plan so that the foundations he has laid can be built on. (There are 5 post to be filled and only 2 personnel doing the work at the moment).

Jonathan has worked hard to gain the respect and trust of the local community. Trust and respect are both hard earned qualities. It would seem to be a waste of Jonathan's hard work if this foundation of trust and respect was ignored.

During the process of the informal and formal consultation there were many meetings to be able to put forward the plans and ideas we had already set in motion. We meet twice with strategic team and twice the Bishops Council there was a feeling of not being listened to. There were many false accusations about what Jonathan had said or done, despite evidence to disprove these allegations but still a sense of hostility prevailed. There were questions that I asked but did not get adequate answers to. (see attached list)

During the informal consultation we were given just nine days to inform the community about the pastoral re-organisation, before the open meeting. This public meeting was held out of area. This clearly demonstrated the lack of understanding, by the strategic team, that for the community this venue was impossible to get to on public transport, even if people could have afforded the fares. The diocese did provide some transport, after persuasion, but refused to change the venue to more local location to enable more people to attend. This informal consultation with the community was a clear indication about how the community was feeling and we have to wonder why this seemingly had no bearing on the proposals as it was evident that the community had spoken! We were told by the strategic team that they were listening but it really appears that they had not heard! One community member said the diocese proposal would "tear the heart out of the community".

At all times the diocese set the dates and times of meetings; one being 9pm on the vicar's day off! The time frame we had to work to was very tight but one that the diocese changed when it suited them to extend it. These time frames were over the Christmas period, which, of course, is a very busy time for clergy.

These proposals have been very stressful in the way they have been handled. I am particularly concerned that Jonathan and his wife were given no pastoral care or support. There is a history of the Archdeacon (Venerable Joanne Grenfall) and Jonathan not getting on; however, I feel that someone else should have offered that care if she couldn't. At the strategic meetings and the Bishops Council meetings we all spoke about our concerns regarding the lack of care that Jonathan and Carolyn were being given yet still, to date, no-one has picked up the phone to just see what help they may have needed or how they were coping. (I am sure that had Jonathan treated a parishioner in this manner he would rightly be held to account, but this has not been the case regarding his lack of support).

Please could you reconsider the proposal, bearing in mind our vision and our counter proposals?

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Yours faithfully

Mandy Hawke

Is this "informal consultation and then formal consultation" just a tick box process? How can we be reassured that our views will be considered or that they will really matter?

The community turned out in full despite the venue being of the area- this made getting to the meeting a challenge for many as public transport made it impossible to get there. The diocese did provide some transport but it was only after a lot of protest from the parishes.

What detailed studies have been carried out to arrive at the decision that this area is part of the project?

No one could answer this.

Can you confirm that the local community's views were taken into consideration in this study? Who has been to see what happens in the community here? Have local schools, groups etc been consulted in this study?

No one had been to speak to members of above groups. The diocese did not seem to know what was already happening on the estate.

What has led Leigh Park and The Warren to fall into this plan? The dioceses web page implies a sense of failure that it has not engaged with the local community – this is a very unpleasant feeling and dismissive of all the work that already happens across the estate by the church.

Has anyone from the Diocese been here and spoken to community groups about where the local church fits with what they do? Has anyone spoken to local heads at the schools? Has anyone found out about how the PO9 Food Bank operates? Have you seen the evaluations from The Prayer Spaces In Schools? Are you aware of the community involvement in the annual Christmas play led by the church?

No one had been to speak to members of above groups. The diocese did not seem to know what was already happening on the estate

What are the details of the new posts being created? I assume you are well aware of the two vicars' strengths by now and would automatically encourage them to be part of the new project to ensure these strengths are used and built on. Please can you clarify the plans you have for them?

At no time did anyone reassure us that the two vicars' strengths were valued and could be used in the new plan.

Presumably to be able to submit an application to the national church for some of the funding you have had to outline numbers of personnel needed. It would be helpful to know what these posts are in broad outline so we have some idea of the "bigger picture" for those of us already on our faith journey.

All we were told was that the team vicar and team planting vicar would decide what was needed once in post and it would possibly be within two years of their appointment.

It seems the Bishop already endorses this multi-million pound project as he has launched it on the web site. How can he be impartial and able to make the final decision if this is the case?

No response to this question.

Who is responsible for the pastoral care of the two vicars? Can we be reassured that they are making sure the vicars are getting the level of care they need at this very difficult time? Can we be reassured that this care will be impartial and appropriate to their needs?

We were told that phone calls had been made- that was not true. A booklet of counsellors was given to Jonathan and his wife that they could use to get six counselling sessions. This is not what we meant by pastoral care.

Our Shared Vision

OUR SHARED VISION
We will share
the Good News that people are
made by God, known by God
and loved by God –
transforming the way they think about themselves,
others, their community,
the world around them
and God.

1. SPIRITUALITY

We will provide holistic and seamless opportunity for reflection on the mysteries of the world and our part in them and so encourage spiritual maturity and a developing understanding of the fullness of life.

4. SOLIDARITY NOT CHARITY

We will stand in solidarity with our neighbours as we face life's challenges together.

3. CREATIVE USE OF OUR SACRED SPACE

We will create space for encounter with each other and with God.

2. WORSHIP

We will create authentic worship which is true to our aim and communicates it
- peaceful, embracing, encouraging, joyful, meaningful, making connections; holding its integrity; true to the people we serve and to God.

5. COMMUNITY COHESION

We will work with, alongside and for our neighbours and community partners to create a community of nurture, learning and opportunity where all can flourish and grow.

Heart of the Park
St Francis, Leigh Park and St Clare, Warren Park

Rex Andrew

From: norma hunt <r
Sent: 26 May 2019 13:11
To: Rex Andrew
Subject: NORMA HUNT

I am a Church Warden at St.Francis. I oppose the proposed scheme being put before the Church Commisioners. Firstly because even after all our meetings with Bishop Council, no one seems to understand what we are saying. Leigh Park is a very particular type of Community. Secondly, we have a thriving Church at St.Francis, led by Rev.Jonathan Jeffrey. We have very close links with the Community, which is much of our Mission work. We were the first to take Prayer Space into our local schools.Our Church Hall is used every day, sometimes twice. Everyone in the local Community knows, Jonathan and his very hard working wife Carolyn. Their three children attend the local schools.They are always there, even for non-Church goers. Thirdly, you will be missing out on a good oppportunity, whose put 19 yrs into fostering good relations.,if you don't see how to make a place for Jonathan at St.Francis and Rev. Karina at St.Albans. We gave the Bishop Couincil at least 3 venue's for a Church Plant.

Yours faithfully Norma Hunt

From: Amber Hurry
Sent: 26 May 2019 16:57
To: Rex Andrew
Subject: Against proposalsfor St Francis

Dear Church Commissioners,

I am writing to you to let you know how upset I am with the plans for my local church and more importantly Father Jonathon.

I am 12 years old and have known Father Jonathon all my life and also he christened me and has supported me and my family through the good times and the bad. Recently I have moved to secondary school and the mission statement is unity, community and opportunity, in connection to this I would like to you to answer consider these questions: Is your decision right for the community? Is it uniting the community? And finally, are you giving Father Jonathon an opportunity? If you are struggling to answer these questions listen to me and the community. st Francis without Father Jonathon is like a body without a heart it just doesn't work but it isn't only church services that Father Jonathon organizes he also organizes community pantomimes, Christmas fayres, summer fayres, arts and crafts on Christmas eve, harvest festivals and many more fun and exciting events for all the family if you get rid of Father Jonathon I will never go to church again and I would lose faith getting rid of Father Jonathon would break the community. Me and my brothers are the future of st Francis, so I urge you to listen to my views.

Yours sincerely,
Amber Hurry

Rex Andrew

From: Kieran Hurry <
Sent: 29 May 2019 13:04
To: Rex Andrew

Dear Church commissioners,

I am writing to tell you my feelings on the change that has been suggested for my church St Francis in Leigh Park. I do not agree with the reorganisation that has been proposed.

My name is Cameron Hurry and I am 10 years old and I have been going to St Francis Church all my life.

I was baptised by Father Jonathon and I want you to know that he does more than just take our service on Sundays. He works in my community and comes to our school all the time.

Everybody I know likes and trusts him and we don't want him to go. He teaches all about Jesus and how we should live our lives as God would want us to.

He is part of the community and builds trust in the community. His door is always open and he brings our community together.

I am against the proposal because it will mean we lose the Vicar we all trust and love.

Please listen to me.

Kind Regards and God Bless

Cameron Hurry (10 years old)

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10


Rex Andrew

From: Claire Hurry
Sent: 24 May 2019 14:08
To: Rex Andrew
Subject: AGAINST proposals for St Francis Church

Importance: High

Dear Rex,

I am writing to you to have my voice heard with the plans for re organisation for my local parish of St Francis in Leigh Park in Havant and to state that I am AGAINST the plans.

I feel very upset at the plans as I feel they do not take into consideration the work that has been done by Father Jonathan and his family and parishioners. Father Jonathon is an icon within the community and has built up an immense amount of trust and faith within the community. If the plans go ahead and he is removed from post the community will collapse as the faith and trust built up by Father Jonathan will be lost.

I have been around in a number of situations where children will call out to him in the street because they are so genuinely pleased to see him and want to talk to him - what more could you want for the future of the church to have those children that are growing up to know where to turn before it is too late should they need help and guidance.

Leigh Park is a unique community and although not everyone will go to church on a regular basis the strength of support within the community shows that just because there isn't a bum on a seat the faith isn't there.

Father Jonathan and his family work hard to support the community and have even in the last few years arranged and produced a community pantomime, my family have also been involved with this and has helped my children to be less shy through the work that they did within this production. The whole community was involved whether that be behind the scenes, performing or just coming along to watch the performances.

After reading our local newspaper on the 20th October where Bishop Christopher was interviewed and stated within this that "what we will offer will depend on what these communities want" however after the consultation period and the numerous letters, emails and petitions sent in the plans remained unchanged which meant they had not listened to the community and have not offered "what the community want"

I challenged this point direct with the diocese on their facebook page to which they responded that what he meant was for this second stage.

It feels all along this process that the full details have not been communicated and stories seem to change to suit the needs of the Diocese. I really feel that the community has not been listened to and if like was quoted in the evening news we will do what the community wants these plans will not go ahead and Father Jonathan will remain in in post. If however the plans do go ahead then the promise of doing what the community want will have not been kept and again the community will have been lied to.

Faith and trust will be lost if this goes ahead.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards
Claire Hurry



Virus-free. www.avg.com

George Hurry

Mer
10/5/2019

PH

Dear Church Commissioners,

I am writing this letter in response to the presentation given on the Portsmouth Diocese Resourcing Growth project given at the start of the informal consultation period for the deanery of Havant and in response to the draft proposal. My parish church is that of St Francis and as such my points are made with this church and Father Jeffery in mind.

After listening to the presentation and subsequent reading on the Diocese website I am focusing on the three questions that you have asked us all to consider:

1. What do you like about the ideas that we have outlined so far?
2. What concerns you?
3. What have we not considered that we might need to look at further?

I shall break these considerations down into their component parts for clarity.

Firstly, what do I like about the ideas outlined so far? You state in your proposal that you *"want to free people from the burdens of finances, administration, and buildings so that rather than only maintaining the existing church they will also be able to support new projects, opportunities, and communities"*. I fully embrace and welcome the fact that the diocese recognises the fact that Father Jeffery is overburdened with the administrative tasks involved in running the parish. Giving him this support will allow him to continue his ministry within my community of which he is an integral part.

I am not ashamed to say this is the only part of the proposal that I can see any positivity in. This brings me onto what concerns me.

I will first and foremost address my most worrying concern, and that is the fact that there will be the possibility of losing Father Jeffery from St Francis and our community. I understand that this is a genuine possibility as he has already been told that he may lose his job within its current being.

I tell you now with all the confidence that I possess, if you remove Father Jeffery from his current post and take him out of the community in Leigh Park you will single handedly cause irreparable reputational damage to not only the diocese but the church of England. The trust that Father Jeffery has built up with the people of Leigh Park is a feat that no-one else in my 43 years of living on the estate has ever achieved and by removing him would be short sighted and damaging.

You say that by working with more children and families this leads to growth. This is already being done by Father Jonathan. There is not a child on the estate that does not know him by name and will not call out to him in the street. At a time when the relationship with young people and the harm caused by certain individuals in the church against young people is being addressed, are you prepared to destroy this trust and faith in the church (gained by Father Jeffery) by removing such a trusted member of the clergy. If you do you are further pushing the youth away from the church and not encouraging growth.

When you say that where churches relate to local need- e.g. debt, food poverty, housing, carers, loneliness-then they can also help people grow in faith, I take this as a personal insult that you do not realise Father Jeffery is here in the community doing exactly that. He lives in this community, serves this community walks amongst the community, is the community. His family are part of the community and he understands and relates more to the community of Leigh Park than anyone in the diocese. If you do not realise this, then your proposals are flawed from the very start in the fact that you are prepared to decide to remove the Christian trusted rock of the community and replace him with someone who cannot relate to the people because they do not know the people. Leigh Park is a place where trust is hard earned, Father Jeffery has achieved this.

You also say that it is more likely that you will attract those who have never gone to church before by also providing new, accessible, child friendly worship services. Yet again you have failed by your assumption that this is not already happening. It is happening at St Francis but then you would know this if you did as Father Jeffery does and be there for the youth of Leigh Park on a regular basis. If you remove Father Jeffery you will not attract more people to church (and by church I don't mean the physical building, I mean the family of the church) you will achieve the opposite and push people away. Father Jeffery has baptised all three of my children at St Francis, being there on the start of the journey into the Christian faith, guiding them to be good Christians on a weekly basis both in church and at school, teaching them to follow the right path. If you remove him from St Francis, my children have all told me that they will never go to church again and would worship God from home as will I. This is not getting more people into church this is destroying their faith. I will go a step further and inform you that after 43 of me being a Christian Father Jeffery baptised me at St Francis on 28/04/19, such is the ability he has to draw people to faith.

The final aspect is the question of what you have not considered. Well the answer to this question is quite simple. You have not until this point considered what the People of Leigh Park want from the diocese, and this is quite simple.

We want to keep Father Jeffery as our priest, and if you keep your word that you will do what the people want you will keep him in post, you will not rip the heart of the Christian ministry out of the estate.

Father Jeffery is all things to all people on the estate, in a word of uncertainty he brings Gods love and hope to everybody he meets, he is always there to listen, to help, to guide and to teach the way of the Lord.

By removing him from the community and the people of Leigh Park you are taking away their hope and their faith in the Church of England.

In conclusion I do not agree or support the draft proposal for the re-organisation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Hurry', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

George Hurry

Jennifer Hugg

Mr
24/5/2019

101
23 May 2019

Dear Rex Andrew,

I would like to say that I am against the proposals for St Francis, St Clares and St Albans churches in Leigh Park.

I agree that a tremendous amount of money put into the area would be amazing and most welcome.

When a meeting was held last October to discuss the reorganisation of the churches, we were told that people ie the congregations and many other people who are helped and supported by the church

would be listened to. Clearly this was not the case. For myself and many others I feel that this was already a done deal by the Diocese.

My family have lived in Leigh Park since 1951, before St Francis was built. My late father laid the parquet floor in the original church of St Francis. Over the years the church has been my mainstay for weddings, christenings and funerals, not forgetting family parties. This is true for many other Leigh Park families.

More than 100 people attended the meeting in October, which for some reason was held outside the parish. I think all these people realise that the church must change, but in what way?

③
£9.1 million available to be invested plus an extra £1.4 million over 5 years.

What I would say is that 756 signatures to keep the jobs of our vicars must count for something.

What I don't understand is with all this money available why ~~is~~ Father Jonathon facing redundancy?

Father Jonathan and his family are at the heart of the community in Leigh Park. People of different religions that I talk to, my friends and neighbours cannot believe that the Church of England is being so heartless.

Father Jonathan is a modest, full of integrity man of God. The work he does in the community, without a doubt is the work

46
that I believe the Lord would want him to do.

All the children from the schools that he goes to acknowledge him in school and out of school. He makes every person in his congregation feel that they matter, especially important if they are alone and lonely as are many people today, not matter what age they are.

Father Jonathan works with the P09 Foodbank and Munch at Park Community School.

I think that all these things are what the church is working towards in this day and age. So if the church would build and expand on what there already is I believe that Father Jonathan is

the right man of God to do the
Lord's work in this way.

I apologise if I have rambled on
somewhat but I feel so strongly
about this. I pray to the Lord for
a good outcome from this for everyone
concerned

Yours in Faith
J E Hurry

Rex Andrew

.k.com>

From:

Sent:

26 May 2019 17:14

To:

Rex Andrew

Dear church commissioners,

I am writing to tell you how disappointed I am with your proposal concerning father Jonathon and St Francis which I am completely against. I have known father Jonathon my whole life, he also christened me and it would be a huge loss for him to leave, father Jonathon does a lot more than you know and this wonderful man shouldn't lose his job and house because it isn't just him you are affecting it is his whole family, so please consider this when you are making your decision. He also organises fun events like summer and Christmas fayres, arts and crafts at Easter and Christmas, every year he also organises a community pantomime, which I was lucky enough to be part of last year, which I believe brings the community closer together. Also if you get rid of father Jonathan I will never go to church again, this affects me as well as the 252 other people in the community.

Yours sincerely,

Kieran Hurry

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

From: David Paice
Sent: 29 May 2019 14:27
To: Rex Andrew
Subject: pastoral Re -organisation st Francis church Leigh park

We Oppose these plans

We are writing to oppose these plans, because having a service every three weeks, and not our style of worship is no good for my wife and I.

I have been going to this church for over 55 years as you can imagine it is very hard to change.

Our priest Fr Jonathan knows the schools and Leigh park like the back of his hand and has the support and trust of the whole community.

This has been gained over many years. Many vulnerable people have found comfort and strength from coming to our services every week. This routine should not be broken.

Over the past few months these plans have caused great distress to all concerned. I'm sure this was not the intention but I think you should consider this in your decision

We pray that God will give you the strength to make the correct decision .

With love

Pam & Dave Paice

To treat someone who has done so much good for the
Deanery, Diocese and community in this manner is
shortsighted, dismissive and disgraceful —
"Shame on you Church of England"

There was no reply from the Diocese to this 'Facebook'
posting.

Whatever the outcome of this exercise & should my Son-in-law
and his family have to move on, he will know one thing —
that the sign of his defeat, will also be the sign of
his triumph — of the love & respect of the people he served.

You will be glad to know that this is to set before
you my thoughts on the final stage of the process.

"The Outcome of the Public Consultation".

Yours sincerely
With Best Regards

Jim Dewar

Rex Andrew

From: Matthew Pik
Sent: 24 April 2019 12:37
To: Rex Andrew
Subject: Benefice of St Francis, Leigh Park

Reference: NB29/53b/RA

Good afternoon,

I write regarding the above reference number, which relates to the draft Pastoral Scheme affecting the Benefices of St Francis, St Clare and St Alban.

My name is Matthew Pike, I am 33 years of age and live in Leigh Park which is predominantly served by St Francis Church and our wonderful Father Jonathan Jeffery.

I have a deep connection to this church as my family members have attended services here since it was built in 1963.

Family baptisms, weddings, funerals and even birthday parties have all been held here.

I myself was not baptised as a child, my parents wanted it to be a path that I chose on my accord if I so wished.

I am proud to say that I was baptised on 22nd May 2016 in a private service held by Father Jonathan.

Speaking of which, Father Jonathan is not only a devout Christian but also a fantastic human being.

He does so much for our community here in Leigh Park and really does "go the extra mile" to make sure everything is done as it should be.

His sermon during Midnight Mass is always a highlight of my year and I always leave the church with a warm feeling.

Learning of the proposed reorganisation of our parishes deeply saddened me.

Father Jonathan is a pillar of our community here and a lot of people rely on his words, wisdom and gentle approach.

More than you may think.

I personally believe that the proposed reorganisation is the wrong decision and I am firmly against it.

St Francis Church is at the heart of our community and we need to keep our own identity as new generations grow up within Leigh Park.

Lots of messages against this proposal were sent to the Diocese of Portsmouth over the last few months and we were told that they would take the community opinion into account.

This has not happened and a lot of the community feel very let down.

Therefore, I am sending this message today to give you a better understanding of how it will affect our whole community here.

I really hope these plans aren't put into place and that our Parishes can stay as they are.

The old saying is "don't fix what isn't broken." We certainly aren't broken, but run the risk of breaking if these plans are motioned.

Thank you for your understanding, I hope this has been helpful reading.

God bless.

Best regards,
Mr Matthew Pike.

Rex Andrew

From: Paula Jeffrey-Powell <...>
Sent: 27 May 2019 05:17
To: Rex Andrew
Subject: Opose to Diocese of Portsmouth Parish Reorganisation

Date: Sunday 26th May 2019

Dear Church Commissioners,

I write to you to express my wish to oppose the Diocese of Portsmouth's proposal for Parish Reorganisation In Leigh Park, Warren Park and West Leigh.

Right from the very beginning the whole process has felt extremely inadequate and unfair.

To begin with our vicar was called to a meeting to be told of these proposals and offered a compensation package for loss of post should it go ahead aka redundancy. He had no prior warning as to what this meeting would entail.

Following this meeting an announcement was made between him and the vicar of West Leigh addressed to the congregation jointly. He was then accused of misleading and forcing the hand of the other vicar with regards to the announcement. This has since been found to be untruthful and his name has since been cleared. Following the meeting no one got in touch with him to see how he and his family were, in fact he was called a liar by an Archdeacon at one of our PCC meetings and accused of stirring the whole situation up. We were also told at this meeting that we were the only ones causing problems and that everyone else had accepted what was to be. It clearly was not just us as others emerged from the other areas affected.

Following the announcement in the church of the proposals, a member of the Church uploaded the notice onto Social Media and a group of support to both vicars in our area was formed - by a member of our community who does not attend church services I hasten to add, but the ministry our vicar serves within our community has had a profound affect on her life to the point she has fought for him throughout this process.

She is not the only member of this community to do so. Other matters which have taken place include an online petition which was set up and reached hundreds of signatures from far and wide, petitions from our ecumenical friends, letters from schools and so forth,

In October the diocese offered a Public Meeting for people to attend, however, this meeting was placed away from our community in a hard to reach area where people had difficulty attending. After I had been in touch with the diocese they agreed to lay on transport, but still, people were unable to attend i.e. people like my mother who would have been able to attend had the meeting been local but due to her having severe rheumatoid arthritis she was unable to board a coach and so was unable to attend the meeting. She, like me, has attended our church for as long as I have so she found it particularly upsetting that she could not attend this meeting. There were many people in this very same situation due to illness, disability and elderly age who felt extremely excluded from the meeting for this reason. Although we tried to reason with the diocese and request for a meeting to be held in a neutral place locally so all people could attend i.e. in a school, we were refused. And so the true scale of attendance that should have been at that meeting, in fact were excluded. This is so very wrong. However. On the night of the said meeting well over 100 people did turn up in support of our vicar and that of St Albans. They were accused of being a 'rowdy group' rude, shouting and inconsiderate, when in fact they were passionate about why they were there and wanted their voices

heard. The people in my community have been let down so many times over the years by those in authority and are more often than not overlooked and looked down upon. They are used to rejection and often feel their voice does not count. To us at St Francis and St Clare's their voice DOES count! And we would like their voices to be heard on this occasion. They wanted their voices heard by the diocese too and felt once again, after each time the diocese made their decisions, their voices did not count when the diocese chose to go forward to you with their decision. My community are very much angry and upset by what has taken place so far.

The notes following the meeting were also not a true and accurate account of the meeting.

Being the social Media Coordinator for St Francis and St Clare's Church, throughout the whole of this process from the beginning until now on the public page to 'Save the Vicars' which was set up by a member of the public - as previously stated - I have helped to guide people through and clarified church terminology to them. They have opened up to me about their experience of the ministry to which our vicar serves so lovingly and dedicated. They see him as not only their vicar at the church within the community but also their friend. A lot of people may not attend our Church Services but they are connected to the church through the ministry of which our vicar serves and he does so with Jesus very much in his heart.

His ministry within our community is not a light one. He is one vicar with two Churches to run single handily. In the public media the bishop of Portsmouth is quoted as saying this proposal is for those areas where we fail to reach their communities especially young people.... Well if that is the case then he has certainly chosen the wrong church to associate this with. As far as young people go, our vicar is extremely active in all the local schools and attends regular assemblies and assists with school work. The children on the estate know him by name and acknowledge him as do their families. This is a very close relationship between the Church and the young people of our estate which the 'Church' cries out for... and we deliver in abundance. Add to this he, along with others from our church, is actively involved with Prayer Spaces in Schools. Some of our schools are considered some of the most deprived in Hampshire. For the children to interact with events such as Prayer Spaces in Schools and to enjoy it... that is an amazing achievement. This is due to the kind of relationship our vicar has built up over time within his ministry. We also have Food Bank which runs from our church - Which at the public meeting the diocese informed us we did not have, their information was not up-to-date with what our Church provides within our community.

The Church ministers to various local groups as well as having very strong relationships with our ecumenical partners within our community, such as our local Roman Catholic friends whom we share our Easter preparations with to name but a few examples.

Within our community we have eleven different denominations all within very close proximity to one another. Our Roman Catholic Friends are two minutes away, we have a 'Family Church' five minutes away. There is an evangelical church, again five minutes away as Baptist, Methodist, as well as many others. It would seem many attend church within our community but there are such a vast amount of denominations for them to attend too. We have very close ties to these mainly thanks to the ministry offered by our vicar.

The relationship between the 'Church' and the community has never been as strong as it is at present. I can vouch personally for this as I have been at St Francis for 38 years...I began as a 7 year old child and my children now attend (my daughter is now that 7 year old and son about to turn 13). I have watched so many clergy come and go throughout those years. I have watched so many things tried and tested...some have worked others have not. But throughout all of this thus far, never has our Church had the close relationship with our community as it does now.

The fact that so many turned out to the public meeting in support of our church proves this. Our Church was also packed to standing room only when the Bishop came to visit recently because the community came to support us. The diocese are a fool to suggest we are failing with our relationship between the Church and our community. It is the strongest I have ever known it to be. Yes, statistics may show low attendance from time to time - this is happening throughout the whole Church -, but I was brought up to believe that the 'Church' was the people of God. I was brought up to believe that we go to wherever God calls us to be and that calling is to serve 'HIS' people wherever they may be. This is what we do. We take God to HIS people within our community to those to whom he sends. Our vicar is central to the ministry of that role with the relationship he has built up with them over the many years of living amongst us. Many people in our community find it hard to trust people but they now trust him with their lives.

We were told at meetings with Archdeacon (who incidentally was not the one from our area she has not been seen since the public meeting). We were told that we were not to look at this proposal process in a personal way...but it is a

personal way because it is affecting the lives of priests and is an attack on their ministry. It is also personal to their families too who support them, and it is an attack on our Church and community who value their ministry as a whole. At the public meeting we were told that a team from the diocese had made their decision to reorganise us based on the outcome of a meeting in the vicarage which took place for one afternoon. You CANNOT base a decision on something as huge as this on the outcome of one meeting! I work in a hospital and the Care Quality Commissioners visit the work place over a period of consecutive days / weeks before they make the slightest decision in how to improve the place and even then they involve staff 'on the shop floor' with the decision process. School Governors are the same, so how on earth do the diocese feel they can make such an important decision with possible detrimental affect based on one afternoon's meeting is ludicrous. Add this to the fact we were also told at the public meeting by diocesan staff, that the diocese would visit our community within 6 months (or possibly weeks?) following the meeting, to liaise with our community to get their thoughts and feelings on the proposals and to see what they want, after all the bishop was again quoted in the paper as say we will do what the community wants.. This has not taken place. At a recent meeting they changed their answer and said they would visit our community to see what they would like once the legal part of the process had been formally completed. This is in complete contrast to what was first stated at the public meeting. In fact, throughout the whole of this process so far, every meeting I've attended as a member of the Church Council with the diocese's team I have more often than not found many irregularities in their replies. They seem to change every meeting so there is no real clarification of what is proposed. We were also requested by members of the Bishop's Council to come up with a vision of our own, and so we did. Members from the Diocesan team listened to it and said how much they enjoyed it. We have tried to explain, our five year vision - which we as a PCC and put together before the proposals existed - were not that much different to what was being proposed. We were also questioned on how would we feel if our vicar decided one day to leave for ministry elsewhere in the future and what the difference would be to them going now through this proposal. Our reply is simple and loud, that would be 'his' decision to leave and we would accept that, whereas, as it stands at present he is being forced from his post and his place within our community.

Which brings me on to my next point... The legislation. According to the Legislation in the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011, clergy affected by reorganisation (to my understanding) can and should be designated to the new created posts unless good reason. Our vicar is being made redundant though this decision is not what the Legislation envisages for the process. To make clergy redundant is not in the spirit of the legislation. Having sat as a member on the PCC, the Deanery and Diocesan Synods I have heard many people's reactions to this and they are not fully aware of the true implications of this process. I hear what is said at Synods and compare it to what is said by the diocesan staff to the local Church Council. Above all of this people have often told me that other dioceses are watching in disbelief because it is unheard of to make clergy redundant - removed from posts.

Another aspect the Church of England focus on are the lack of young children within our churches and the fact that most are infant school age. At our Church we run a B'uzz club once a month and when altogether, we have around 20 children most of whom are teenagers. These children are the Church of Today. These children are needed to keep the Faith alive for the future of the Church. These young people have built up their lives in the church. These young people are upset and threatening to leave the 'Church' as a whole due to the way their vicar has been treated throughout this whole process and due to the way his ministry is being targeted. The Church of England are trying to reach out to these youngsters and they are going to lose them because the sort of 'Church' the diocese is portraying with the removal of priests is not the Church they know and love, yet the diocese are wanting a different kind of ministry to reach out to young people such as these.

Our young people are not the only ones questioning the reputation of the church. Our community is criticizing the reputation of the 'Church' too. They have seen the Church as always being there for them, listening to them and allowing them to have their voice heard. The 'Church' listens to them (at least they do in our community!). These, again, are the very people you - the Church - are trying to reach out to. These are the very people the diocese are pushing away because they refuse to listen. The community have spoken in such loud voice how they value the ministry of their vicar and they wish that to continue. But, once again, sadly their voices have counted for nothing. They know this and the name of the Church of England is once again being dragged through the mud.

Our 'Church' is thriving. It is growing. It is reaching out to those who need us the most. It is meeting people 'where they are, in all times and places. This was what St Francis was told to do when Jesus told him to 'Build up my Church'... This is what we do. This is what our vicar does in abundance.

Throughout the whole of this long drawn out process there has been one rather huge issue of importance which has struck a cord. That being a lack of compassion from the diocese for those affected by this process. The fact that no one had been in touch with our vicar and his family to check in and see how they were following their shocking news. At the Chrism Mass the clergy affected by the reorganisation were not mentioned. It's as if they did not exist. The only contact our vicar and his family have had (to my knowledge) was through them being the ones to request the help. Not one person checked in on them. This is wrong on so many levels. It is emotionally draining for them, it is frightening to not know where their future lies. It is upsetting for their children who are not sure if they will have a roof over their heads once all this ends. Yet no one checked in on them to follow up their well-being. It has been a battle to find answers to this point. The one reoccurring answer has been 'we are learning from this experience for the next time.

I come onto my next point in that the geographical area is not suitable for this reorganisation proposal. We are happy to change to help the 'Church' move forward, but the plans proposed form problems in that St Alban's is too far for some people. It also has a dual carriageway running right between the parishes. People have said they will stop attending permanently rather than to attempt crossing over this road. A lot of people who would normally attend would be unable to do travel here due to their age, illness or disability. This would discriminate those who would otherwise normally attend.

This will not produce growth in the church but more decline regardless what posts are put into place.

As I mentioned earlier in this email, the diocese staff at the public meeting has some very inaccurate information relayed to the public. One example of this was suggestion from them that for a Food Bank to run. The problem with this was that we already operate a food bank from within our church which is run by a member of our community. Just one example. Also whilst presenting their presentation they talked of pioneer ministers but when we informed them ours had left earlier in the year they looked bewildered.

My concern is where is the Sacredness of Priesthood through out the whole of this process? People who are called to priesthood spend many a day - some even years - examining a call from God to priesthood. Some tried to avoid God's calling until they no longer could and then it takes an awful lot of courage to speak to your parish priest let alone go through the process of Director of Ordinands, Vocation Advisors, examination panels and the Bishop's Advisory Panels. This is a very long and nerve wracking process to be a part of. Then following acknowledgement from the Bishop's advisory panel and the Bishop himself, you then begin the years of training and finally Ordination. Before Ordination the Bishop and his team have to discern if you have a true calling from God to priesthood. This is not like the secular world whereas you go for an interview and start the job the next day. This is the 'Church' who process is very thorough and lengthy. So through all of this very long period of discernment and training the priest stands before the people in ordination and has to have his/her calling publicly announced. So my question is throughout all of this when the priest's heart has been searched thoroughly and tested and the bishop publicly declares a true calling from God, how can the bishop now turn around and say these priests must be removed from their posts and make them feel their ministry is a failure. Is he admitting he got their calling wrong...Does that actually happen!?...

My vicar has very recently repeatedly said he feels very strongly God calls him to remain in our community and I feel that calling should be adhered to.

So again I ask, where in all of these proposals does the sacredness of priesthood belong?

At one of the meetings with the Bishop's staff one of the members told my vicar, his wife and all of us present regarding why he should not stay as a part of this new style of ministry that to do so would like be putting 'New wine into old skins'. This was not acceptable.

The way I look upon all of this is...

This new reorganisation proposal can either be like the foolish man who built his house upon the sands, where the foundations were removed and when the storms came in it collapsed to the ground. Now these 'foundations' that were removed are those of our vicar and that of St Albans. If their ministry from over the years is completely wiped out and new ministry brought in from scratch, it will not withstand the test of time.

However, if this reorganisation were to be like the man who built his house upon the rocks, on solid foundations and it stood the storms and test of time. Reorganisation can work this way. Keep the foundations in place which is the ministry known and loved by the community, and build on those foundations with other people forming part of the team in the allocated slots. This would be such a strong and firm ministry within our community and enable the Gospel to be shared and heard loud and clear. We need these foundations to remain for the Church to flourish. We need these people who are well and truly established within their ministry in our community. Build on this! Build something strong and which withstands the test of time. A 'Church Planting Vicar' - which the diocese is asking for - is good but we have three allocated posts in our area with only 2 filled. Why can the main legal part of the proposals be that of Team Rector, Team Vicar responsible for Pastoral Ministry, and the third post that of the Church Planting vicar. It would make so much more sense, then people can be designated to the new posts. When the official paperwork arrived from the Bishop's Council after their first decision, four or five positions were created on that piece of paper to be decided by the bishop and his council. However, when the most recent decisions were publicly announced the diocese chose Team Rector and Team Vicar (Church planting vicar. This announcement was made very public on Social Media. The diocese had the opportunity to make the Church Planting vicar as the third post rather than the second, but they have chosen one which they know would not fit for our vicar.

On another point... Our vicar has single handily run two churches single handed i.e. with no other clergy to assist. The parish of Leigh Park is in itself a HUGE estate...to combine it with West Leigh too and make the Parish even larger is absolutely crazy! If one vicar struggled with two there' no way one priest can cover that vast amount of space. It would therefore make more sense to allocate Team Rector and Team Vicar for Pastoral with Church Planting vicar based at third church and other local areas within our community. It would make more sense to combine St Francis and St Clare's Church, as not only are they already joint benefice and work very closely together as well as being in very close proximity to one another, but their Saint's they are named after are linked to one another.

So I now end this letter with my formal objection to the proposals from the Portsmouth Diocese regarding Parish reorganisation, on the grounds that the whole process from start to finish has been disorganised, misinformed, misleading, uncompassionate to those affected, inconsiderate, unfair and the fact the Parish size will become too large.

Along with this email, I have also sent a letter version of what I write here.

With kindest regards

Paula Jeffrey-Powell

--

Paula Jeffrey-Powell

****My Greatest Wish is that my kids always know how much I love them and they walk through the rest of their lives knowing that I'll always be there for them whenever they need me****



Virus-free. www.avg.com

1/11
20/5/2019

TO REX ANDREW

"IN OPPOSITION"

I AM making it known that I am
against the Proposals being put forward
by the Church COMMISSIONERS and the
Bishop of Portsmouth.

The "Pastoral Scheme" being proposed
will certainly not be of any benefit
to the Council Estate of Leigh Park or
the Parishes of "The WARREN" or
"West Leigh" "The Bishop" or the
Commissioners just do not understand the
Complexity of these Parishes. They are
not like city areas where things are
right on your doorstep passing trade as you
might say.

Everything done here at Leigh Park
has been done by hard work of our
Parish Priests - Katrina and the most hard
working priest we have ever had Father

Jonathon Jeffrey. - and he was not
even included in the consultations for
297

YES we know there must be change but do not forget the Church is about the love of God. Love your neighbours and so to continue in that faith let us keep those in whose faith and love we have been guided by these past 19 years Father Jonathon & Carolyn Jeffrey and family. Phoebe-Jem & Gabriel

How come, you can even think of "turfing" them from the vicarage and probably replace them with no one of any experience of "Council estate working"

Why tear down "foundations of love-faith. Love of Anglican traditions - and replace with "shifting sands" because that what it seems to all of us, (as we do not know what the future will become) at our Church at St Francis Leigh Park

I know Rex Andrew you will have been informed of all the things done in our Community - and Church Prayers in School - Starlight Festival all our Xmas Fairs - Summer Fairs - Wedding - Funerals. Baptism - all done and may I say done with the "Love of Christ" at the heart of it all. Please make sure you really consider all our proposals - led by Father Jonathon Jeffrey

Yours Sincerely

Beryl Frances Jones

These new proposals - Surely the parish priests should have been included in talks and at least asked their opinions on actions to be taken.

A team ministry to be established for the area for the "New Benefice" What will the team "ministry" as said - Know anything whatsoever of "Leigh Park Community" and "Estate". This estate is the most "Unique" in any of the Hampshire County.

We are not like "Harbour Church" or St Margarets Highland Road having a constant public passing by the doors. Harbour Church is in any area right near Portsmouth City Centre - Universities - plus homeless - in the streets. Straightway there is a ready made "souls" to be welcomed in to a ministry.

Here in Leigh Park we have worked hard to achieve our "church congregation" and our most exceptional "Community Spirit" and that has been done by having such hard working leaders.

Why would you want to take that away by putting in people that know nothing of our estate or church - never attended a "church service" here or any of our activities which we put out to the "Community" and are looking for help and most of all finding LOVE OF JESUS coming from our Church.

FRANCIS RIDERS LANE LEIGH PARK
299