



The Rt Revd the Bishop of Southwark

By email only

Rex Andrew
Pastoral

Our ref: NB37/256b

30 October 2020

Dear Bishop

**Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011
Benefice and parish of All Saints, Spring Park; and parishes of St George,
Shirley; and Shirley (also known locally as St John, Shirley)
Proposed Pastoral Scheme**

Following the publication of the draft Pastoral Scheme providing for:

- (i) the dissolution of the benefice and parish of All Saints, Spring Park and the division of the area of its parish between the parishes of St George, Shirley; and Shirley (also known locally as St John, Shirley);
- (ii) the parish church of All Saints, Spring Park to become a chapel of ease in the parish of Shirley;
- (iii) the transfer of the parsonage house of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park to the Southwark Diocesan Board of Finance as diocesan glebe

we received 45 representations against the draft Scheme, 12 in favour, three letters of comment and five which were received out of time (one of which consists of photographs supplementing a representation made within time).

The draft Scheme carried the following as the diocesan rationale for your proposals:

As the result of ongoing concerns about the financial viability and capacity for governance and mission going forward, the Bishop of Southwark held a Visitation to the parish of All Saints, Spring Park in 2016. This was conducted by the Bishop and Archdeacon of Croydon. A series of Directions were issued as a result of this, designed to help the parish to address these areas. There has sadly been no evidence that this has been the case nor has the parish demonstrated the future capacity to do so.

In early 2019 the Archdeacon of Reigate (acting in her capacity as Assistant Archdeacon of Croydon) produced a report for the Croydon Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee (AMPC) outlining proposals for the best provision for ministry and mission in Shirley. The AMPC subsequently asked her to visit each of the three Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) to discuss this. Following the visits, she prepared a report for a meeting of the September 2019 AMPC reporting on her “Consultation on the Future of Church of England Ministry in Shirley” – with five possible options for the way forward. This was discussed with representatives of the three parishes and the members of the AMPC immediately before its meeting.

The AMPC considered the different options and unanimously agreed that Option 5 provided the best way forward in this area. This provided for the benefice and parish of All Saints, Spring Park being dissolved, and its parish divided along the A232 road between St George, Shirley and the parish of Shirley (known locally as St John, Shirley) with the current parish church of All Saints, Spring Park becoming a chapel of ease in the parish of Shirley. (Should this proposal come into effect there would be scope in due time to regularise the complete parish boundaries between Shirley (St John) and St George, Shirley along this main road).

Option 5 retained the All Saints church building as a resource for new forms of ministry going forward, exploring the possibilities of pioneer ministry in due course. Whilst a post of incumbent status would be lost, the Diocese is committed to ring-fencing the post for new expressions and forms of ministry under the supervision of the incumbent of Shirley (St John).

The effect of the proposal would:

- (a) enable the best provision for ministry and mission across Shirley;
- (b) be rooted in the strong and established governance at St John’s and St George’s
- (c) allow for innovative and creative pioneer ministry in Shirley
- (d) provide for a church building/centre for this purpose

It also carried the footnote footnotes:

Dispossession of the Reverend Yvonne Veronica Clarke

As a result of the proposed dissolution of the benefice and parish provided for in clause 1, the existing benefice and parish would cease to exist. As Mrs Clarke is the incumbent of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park and her benefice would be dissolved she would be dispossessed from her current post should the Scheme take effect, She would be entitled to 12 months of her current stipend and pension contributions as a lump sum, and to be housed in suitable accommodation for the same 12 month-period (or, by agreement with the diocese, to receive payment in lieu of any such occupation).

Clauses 2(2) and 3(1)

The Scheme includes provision for the parish church of All Saints, Spring Park to become a chapel of ease in the parish of Shirley. Banns of marriage may not be

called, nor marriages solemnized in the church from the date on which the Scheme comes into operation (unless the building is subsequently licensed under Section 20 of the Marriage Act 1949).

The representations came from:-

Against

- (1) The Rev Yvonne Clarke
- (2) Nikki Adesalu
- (3) Mr Mohamed Barrie – churchwarden All Saints
- (4) Mrs Felicia Barrie
- (5) Troy Bell
- (6) Joanne Byford
- (7) Mr Stuart Carey
- (8) James Clarke (Rev Yvonne Clarke's son)
- (9) Mr Brandon T Clarkson + TRANSCRIPT of video submission
- (10) Mr Mike Deacon
- (11) Whitney Desporte
- (12) Robert Dube
- (13) Bevan Fowler
- (14) Rikki Gorman
- (15) Nathon Guest
- (16) Marian Hardiman
- (17) Claire Hogg
- (18) Andrea Houlding
- (19) Neil Hughes
- (20) George Johnston-Hyde
- (21) Daniel Lay
- (22) Victoria Leaver
- (23) Amrika Lennard
- (24) Elizabeth Lomas
- (25) Mrs Susan Marshall
- (26) Ms Josephine Masama
- (27) Matt Morgan
- (28) Joe Noakes
- (29) Jamie O'Flaherty
- (30) Ms Emma O'Sullivan
- (31) Anthony Potter
- (32) Jason Purslow
- (33) Quartey family
- (34) Thomas Roberts
- (35) Ms Fay Ruddock
- (36) Simon Shepherd
- (37) Katherine Sandys
- (38) Phoebe Sleeman
- (39) Mrs Carol Smith
- (40) Mr Nigel Smith
- (41) Mrs Deloris Thomas (Rev Yvonne Clarke's mother)
- (42) Victoria Thomas
- (43) Ms Winsome Thomas (Rev Yvonne Clarke's sister)

- (44) Women and the Church (sent in by its Chair – Rev Canon Dr Emma Percy)
- (45) Miriam – no surname, but postal address only – sent in by James Clarke

For

- (1) Shirley (St John) PCC
- (2) Shirley St George PCC
- (3) 29th Croydon Scout Group
- (4) Mr and Mrs Aston
- (5) Lindsey Atkins – All Saints parishioner
- (6) Mr Andy Bebington
- (7) Liz Bebington – Reader + PTO (St George, Shirley)
- (8) Mrs Sheila Breen
- (9) Canon Dr Barry Goodwin
- (10) Mr Andrew Jones
- (11) Sheila Jones
- (12) Mr Michael and Mrs Teresa Wilson

Comments

- (1) Mrs Catherine Stevenson
- (2) Suzy Stoyel
- (3) Mrs Lesley Wells

Out of time representations

- (1) Sarah Jones MP
- (2) Millicent and Calbert Karanja
- (3) Mr Robert Milton (Commander (Rtd) of the Metropolitan Police)
- (4) Ade & Anu Ogunbambo
- (5) James Clarke with photos x 4 (his earlier representation against was received in time)

I enclose copies of all the correspondence, of which there have been redactions of some of the names referred to within the representations on the advice of our Legal Office.

Summary of the representations against

All but one of the representors against the draft Scheme are opposed to the dissolution of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park and the dispossession from office of the Reverend Yvonne Clarke. They believe that the proposals are motivated by racism and sexism and by a “land grab” of the All Saints property and are part of a vendetta against Mrs Clarke. They also have concerns about the consultation process and say that concerns about the finances of the parish are misplaced. The other representor says that the draft Scheme should include the closure of All Saints church.

The Reverend Yvonne Clarke

Mrs Clarke describes her background in the Church of England. She says that she was the first black deacon in the Church of England and the first and only black woman priest in the Diocese for many years. She thinks the proposed reorganisation is part of a personal vendetta against her led by the Bishop of Southwark and other senior clergy, the main grounds for which appear to be her race and gender. She says that All Saints has the only BAME representation to the Croydon Addington Deanery¹.

She says that she is trained in conflict resolution and management, pastoral care and counselling and gives examples of steps she has taken to enhance her leadership skills. She also gives examples of her involvement in community and inter-faith activities in her local area.

She says that the recently published draft Scheme came as a shock to her, and she asks that the Commissioners halt the current process until she and her PCC have had a chance to discuss the matter with them and find a mutually acceptable way forward. She particularly asks for the clause which she believes dispossesses her (clause 5 of the draft Scheme) be removed from any final Scheme.

(NB Dispossession of Mrs Clarke does not actually arise from clause 5 itself but from no provision being included in the draft Scheme for her to be the holder of a new office. Clause 5 is the mandatory provision which would delay the coming into effect of a Scheme which has the effect of dispossessing an office holder).

Mrs Clarke says that in 2016 she was the subject of a Visitation and Inhibition which resulted in her being suspended for some six months. She says that neither she nor her PCC has been given a copy of the 2016 Report prepared by the then Archdeacon of Croydon as part of the Visitation, despite their requests and asks that this is provided now². She says that this suspension destabilised the parish and also detrimentally affected its financial position and giving. She says that there was also a threat of a Clergy Discipline Measure action against her if she did not attend a particular meeting - said to be a Bishop's direction – when her son was sick in hospital³.

She asks why, if her performance is lacking, then appropriate assistance and training has not been offered to her in the same way it has to other white colleagues facing challenges, including being offered a chance to move to a different parish. She also questions why she has not been offered more senior posts in the Diocese or why other priests who have been seen as failing have not been subject to reorganisation or dispossession.

Mrs Clarke says she inherited a church with financial arrears and little fundraising but is aware that other parishes in a similar financial situation to hers have had a

¹ This is not the case. The Revd Dhanaraj Premraj was appointed priest-in-charge of St Edward New Addington in 2019.

² The report was sent to Mrs Clarke and four other parish officers by email and by post on 20th February 2017.

³ None of the senior clergy in the diocese recognise this as ever having happened to their knowledge.

helping hand from the Diocese or have had their debts cleared. She says that her parish's requests to have its Fairer Share scheme quota reassessed have been ignored by the Diocese. She asks why her parish is being treated differently and wonders if this has to do with her church having a high BAME membership. She says there has been a history of defamation of her and insinuations of financial impropriety. She says that in 2017 a newly appointed parish treasurer ceased to act after a meeting with the Diocesan Finance Secretary with no explanation to her or the PCC. She says that since the appointment of a new treasurer the PCC has continued to produce independently audited accounts to the archdeacon and Diocese⁴.

She says that the Parish, with outside professional help, has come up with viable development plans for the church hall and the vicarage which could generate an annual income of some £500,000 (a figure recently revised up to potentially some £1.5m+)⁵, but which has been rejected by the Archdeacon of Reigate who felt it would not get the approval of the Diocesan Advisory Committee. The development-plan meetings were all stopped when she was suspended. She also questions why repeated attempts to get a mobile phone mast installed at All Saints' were turned down whilst other churches were allowed to have one. She says a new nursery plan for the church hall was also blocked in 2014. All Saints' being listed will help with fundraising efforts, but help is also needed from the Diocese. She asks how the Bishop's proposals are any better than the Parish's as regards creating a community hub that would work with local communities including other faiths?

As regards the proposed reorganisation, she says the Archdeacon of Reigate's document entitled "Future of Church of England in Shirley" on two sides of A4 paper was inadequate as it took no account of changes in the parish and in the demographics of the area and of the church, in part due to "white flight". She points out that in her early years in the parish some BNP members attended All Saints and she gives examples of the obstruction and hostility which she says she faced from some members of the congregation and a Reader. She says that the then Bishop and Archdeacon expressed confidence in her potential to make mission and ministry work in Spring Park and to undertake the task of bring a "difficult parish" within the Church of England rather than continuing to operate as a congregational church⁶. She says All Saints is a unique parish and place of worship in terms of its congregation and place in the community.

She says that her ministry in the parish is already innovative and pioneering and asks how the neighbouring two (white) incumbents would fare any better doing this?

She also says that there is concern in the parish over what it means for All Saints' church to have its status changed from a parish church to a chapel of ease. Some have taken it to mean that it will close.

⁴ The Visitation Final Report notes that accounts had not been completed in several years.

⁵ The proposal suggested a maximum capital gain of £500,000, not an annual income – but see below on the reasons why this is not a true figure.

⁶ Reports on the enquiry conducted by the then Bishop of Croydon in the early 2000s paint a more nuanced picture of the situation at that time.

As regards the reorganisation process, as well as criticising the archdeacon of Dorking's report⁷, she says that the Area Mission and Pastoral Committee (from which she had previously been removed) included members who had left All Saints for other parishes. She says that the agenda for the AMPC meeting in September 2019 at which the reorganisation was discussed was to include all three benefices but only All Saints was discussed. She says this meeting was acrimonious and that the incumbents of the other two benefices had already agreed to plans for the division of her parish which she was only made aware of at the meeting. She says that there has been no engagement by the DMPC regarding points made in hers and the PCCs submission to the Committee (at its meeting on 27th February 2020), in particular regarding how many other parishes in the Diocese are subject to a similar process to downgrade the status of the church and dispossess the incumbent.

Mrs Clarke believes that the motives for the proposed draft Scheme include racism and sexism and the pursuit of a personal vendetta against her by you and other senior Diocesan clergy. She also thinks that the Diocese or the other parishes wish to gain the benefit from the valuable All Saints church hall site.

She says that there has been a history of side-lining, ostracising and socially excluding her and her twin sister (the Rev Jennifer Thomas, incumbent since 2002 of the Mitcham (The Ascension) Pollards Hill benefice in the same Diocese)⁸. As an example, she says that they, the only black women priested in the Diocese in 1994, were not invited to the 25 years celebration of women priests in the Diocese. She also says that her sister, Miss Winsome Thomas, was sacked as the Bishop of Southwark's Personal Assistant, for speaking up against the then Archdeacon of Croydon's proposals for the All Saints parish at the January 2018 PCC meeting. She also alleges that the Reverend Barry Hengist had to be restrained from hitting her sister at the September 2019 AMPC.

As part of her representation she includes a timeline, title reports to the church and hall sites; PCC minutes of 10 July 2019; the PCC's letter of 30 May 2019 to the Bishop of Croydon; the churchwardens' letter of 21 February 2019 to the Archdeacon of Croydon; the Development Plans produced by Ablett Architects in August 2018; and a letter from 'Reveal' project managers of February 2020 on using the re-created assets and gifting to provide funding for the parish in future.

Young All Saints Group

Twenty members of the Young All Saints Group write separately (as they are concerned that a petition will be classed as only one representation) to express their shock, disgust and horror at the proposal to divide the parish of All Saints and the treatment of the Reverend Yvonne Clarke especially the potential loss of her home. They say that All Saints needs a service every Sunday and question what it would look like as a Chapel of Ease.

They point out that the Church of England needs to connect with young people and say that the innovative services and programmes led by Mrs Clarke are lively and entertaining and inject life and enthusiasm into would-be worshippers. They

⁷ We believe this should read 'Reigate'

⁸ Revd Canon Jenny Thomas, a canon of Southwark Cathedral.

say she provides teaching, advice and guidance and a welcome for LBGT+ people which is lacking elsewhere in the Church.

They say the enjoyable youth events at the church and the vicarage allow them to come together from all over London, Portsmouth, Birmingham, Bournemouth and other areas to socialise and to integrate with the church of All Saints. They say that they also support the fundraising at All Saints by having such events, but many now only attend social events not the church and no longer wish to give money to the Church because of the way Mrs Clarke has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, bullying, segregation, victimisation and abuse of power by you and other senior diocesan staff.

Regarding the Mission and Pastoral Measure process they say that the Archdeacon of Reigate's report was inadequate by comparison with that produced for other reorganisation where there was no incumbent in post. They assert that some of the members of the AMPC have a conflict of interests as their parishes stand to gain from the reorganisation. They also suggest that you are conflicted as you are signing off on a proposal which originated with you.

They say that it is wrong to suggest that the parish has not demonstrated the capacity to improve its finances as it has developed a plan which it has not been allowed to use. They urge you to work with the parish to implement that plan rather than removing the Reverend Yvonne Clarke and allowing others to benefit from a "land grab".

They ask why Mrs Clarke has not been offered another parish or a more senior post and say that the way she, as the first black woman deacon in the diocese, has been treated is abhorrent. They say that because of this they will be drawing this case to the attention of the Black Lives Matter Movement.

Mrs Clarke's family

Mr James Clarke, the Reverend Yvonne Clarke's eldest son, gives details of her background and prominence as the first black woman deacon in the Church of England and also says that she has raised her children to be moral and fight injustice. He gives examples of the racism to which he says she and her family were subjected during the early part of her incumbency at Spring Park. He says that the changing demographics of the area have made it a more diverse community in which Yvonne Clarke has a prominent role but that there are still more covert forms of racism.

He refers particularly to a Reader who he says tried to undermine his mother's ministry and to the words and actions of individuals at particular meetings. He is concerned that one of the members of the AMPC who voted on the current proposals was someone who omitted black people from the electoral roll when he was responsible for it in the All Saints parish. He also asks why there has been no review of the ministry of the Reverend Lu Gale, who he says was unsuccessful in another parish?

He asks why, in 2016, the suspension period for Mrs Clarke was extended from 2/3 weeks to six months and why if there were thought to be issues regarding the parish finances they were not addressed then. He points out that she inherited a difficult financial position and also questions whether All Saints, in contrast to St George's, was not allowed a phone mast because of its BAME and LBGT+ congregation members.

Mr Clarke also says that maintenance of the vicarage at All Saints has been neglected, including issues relating to health and safety, and suggests that this might have been a means of applying pressure to his mother.

He considers the consultation process on the draft Scheme to be unsatisfactory in several respects. He says that at the PCC, at its extraordinary meeting attended by the Archdeacon of Reigate, was unaware that reorganisation rather than exploring ways of working with the other parishes was to be discussed. He says that the Archdeacon and then Rural Dean adopted a mocking attitude to members of the PCC at that meeting and that the Archdeacon gave a misleading impression to the AMPC, until corrected by him, that the PCC was not opposed to the reorganisation.

He says that the proposed reorganisation should not be progressed until an Equality Impact Assessment has completed and you have addressed the questions of what the financial plans for the All Saints building and its use as chapel of ease would be in the proposed arrangements and what plans there would be for the redevelopment of the church hall.

Ms Winsome Thomas, Yvonne Clarke's sister, reiterates that Mrs Clarke has had an innovative and pioneering ministry in Spring Park in particular in attracting members of the BAME community, who previously did not feel welcome there, to All Saints and supporting their development. She thinks this unique and distinctive ministry will be lost if the draft Scheme proceeds. She is concerned that the proposals are finance driven. She points out that, although Shirley is regarded as a relatively wealthy area, Spring Park has always been a poor parish and many of these newer and younger members of the congregation have less disposable income and reiterates that the parish has development plans to generate more income.

She also shares the concerns that some have tried to undermine her sister's ministry, that you are pursuing a vendetta against her and that the Archdeacon of Reigate's report was inadequate and ignored the views of All Saints.

Mrs Deloris Thomas, Yvonne Clarke's mother, also believes that you are trying to remove Mrs Clarke from the Church of England with no justification.

Mr Mike Deacon, of Asset Based Finance and Leasing Limited, says he has helped other religious organisations source funding for church building projects. He was invited by Mrs Clarke and Daniel Benson of Ablett Architects in 2018 to see if he could help in putting together a viable proposal for the parish: to build a community and interfaith hub to replace the current crumbling church hall. He introduced Reveal Projects, an experienced project management company, to Mrs Clarke and the PCC and, with Carter Jonas, assisting All Saints in their aspirations by seeking specific allocation of All Saints church for restoration and modernisation as part of Croydon Local Plan Review, to be enabled by between five and twelve new homes being built on part of the current hall/parsonage site. Like others he questions why the Diocese appears to have thwarted efforts by Mrs Clarke and the PCC over the years to redevelop the church estate at All Saints. He also says that it has neglected the maintenance of the hall, church and parsonage (*seemingly unaware that the DBF is not responsible for the hall and church*).

Mr Deacon also poses a series of questions (*some of which are based on the misunderstandings that All Saints, Shirley is currently in a plurality, that the draft Scheme includes provision for a team ministry and that there is an SDF project for this area*). He asks about the extent of the consultation process and whether the proposals derive from a deanery plan. He asks about the attendance figures for the three churches and how these compare with other parishes and the suggestion that increases at St John's and St George's have been as a result of worshippers transferring from All Saints. Like others, he questions whether the proposed arrangements will further mission in the area and asks why Mrs Clarke is not considered suitable to run a "mission hub" at All Saints and whether the main aim of the draft Scheme is to dispossess her.

Other representations against the draft Scheme

Other representors against the draft Scheme echo many of the points made above. Most give examples of ways in which the Reverend Yvonne Clarke has fostered their spiritual growth, provided pastoral care and acted as a leader in the community.

They oppose the division of the All Saints parish, the dispossession of Mrs Clarke and the change of status of All Saints church. Several are concerned that All Saints church will close or about how it would be used as a chapel of ease. They are concerned that this and the dispossession of Mrs Clarke will have a detrimental effect on the community and will cause some to leave All Saints and the Church of England. One expresses concern that some former white members of All Saints, who they say are racist, will return.

Several are concerned that the proposals are motivated by or are an example of institutional racism and about their effect on Mrs Clarke, whose ministry they say has been undermined by the comments and bullying of senior clergy and by the Visitation and Suspension during 2016 which had a destabilising effect. Several refer to the Archdeacon of Reigate's report which they say was inaccurate and ignored the views of the Spring Park PCC. Some say that the proposals are mainly concerned with finance and refer to the church hall redevelopment proposal. WATCH expresses concern that the Scheme is discriminatory towards Mrs Clarke and black women in the congregation.

One representor says that there are too many churches in the area, and that All Saints should not be financial drain on another parish and should instead be closed.

Summary of the representations in favour

St John, Shirley PCC supports the proposals but has concern about the potential financial liabilities (of the All Saints church and ancillary facilities) going forward.

St George, Shirley PCC says that the proposals are the culmination of a long, complex and painful process during which all other options have been exhausted. It is grateful to the St John's PCC for being willing to take on the legal and financial responsibility of the All Saints church buildings in a time of financial uncertainty. It is however saddened that some have characterised the proposals as a personal

vendetta against Mrs Clarke, which it says is unhelpful, misleading and a distortion of the facts.

Other representations in favour

The other representors in favour are mostly former worshippers at All Saints who say that Mrs Clarke has overseen a decline in the parish since her appointment in 1998. They say that concerns they expressed early in her incumbency were ignored or attributed to racism and that they and others have moved to worship elsewhere or ceased to worship altogether and no longer contribute financially to All Saints.

In particular, they say there has been financial mismanagement, that the maintenance of the church and hall has been neglected, links with schools have been lost and uniformed and other church organisations have been allowed to decline or move elsewhere.

The President of the 29th Croydon Scouts Group says that Mrs Clarke showed no interest in the Scout Group nor many of the expected duties involved in running the parish and that she is ill-equipped to perform her role. The Group has since moved to St John's where they are experiencing what should be expected in terms of Church-relationships.

Despite a Bishop's enquiry following complaints about her, the situation has not changed but at long last the Church authorities are invoking action to remove her from her post. Under her watch the hall has fallen into disrepair; it should be refurbished and brought back into service for the benefit of the community. It is hoped that the parsonage house can be used in connection with the new expression under the St John's incumbent.

The Section flags of the 51st Croydon Scout Group should continue to hang in the rear part of All Saints' church behind the font.

Mr and Mrs Aston say that initially they got on well with Mrs Clarke but subsequently she tried to take over the running of many things, including getting rid of the trusty hall secretary. She then fell out with the lay Reader who was only trying to help. They query the asking of payments for occasional offices to be made in cash only; the Treasurer found it difficult to balance the books. Mrs Clarke is said not to have visited sick parishioners or taken much interest in parish activities.

They query the involvement of her sister in letters written to then Bishop of Southwark – were these letters intercepted? The previous Bishop of Croydon had suggested wrongly that they were “a lot of malcontents” who were racist, which they found hurtful. Since 2000 they have worshipped at St Mary's, Addington as a result of all of this.

Lindsey Atkins a parishioner for nearly 34 years says she has witnessed the demise of the church which has been very upsetting. The local school connection has been lost and it is not family or children friendly. The deterioration of the halls, the

grounds, vicarage and the church should not have been allowed to happen. She is (*wrongly*) under the impression that the All Saints' church is to close but thinks the local community could attend St John's.

Mr Andy Bebington, who has connections with All Saints' for 45 years, worked for NatWest and has been treasurer for several small local charities, regrets not informing the Annual Parochial Church Meeting some years ago following seeing its annual accounts that the parish would be insolvent in just over a year's time and was living off its reserves. He says his approach following that APCM to the vicar, churchwardens and Treasurer to offer advice on financial matters was not welcomed. He stresses that he was concerned about their competency rather than their honesty, but he was seen as accusing them of dishonesty and being racist – they were all members of the BAME community; but did not appear to know that he had Caribbean ancestry.

He said on one occasion the gas supply to the church was cut off by bailiffs making it unusable by some parishioners and exacerbating the issues in the church hall. On another occasion a senior BAME member paid £1,600 to stop the threat of disconnection over an electricity bill; on seeking reimbursement he was 'thanked for his donation'. He left the parish and accepted he would be out of pocket.

Liz Bebington says that over the last 20 years some of the All Saints' parishioners do not attend church anymore but that most have moved to other churches, which in turn means less financial giving to All Saints' and also in person power to run various activities including fundraising.

The gas supply to the church and hall was cut off for non-payment of bills and the Hall became damp and cold as the roof leaks; this resulted in regular 'lets' moving elsewhere.

Mrs Sheila Breen says that when she attended All Saints' church for a Christingle service no-one else turned up and she and her family were ignored.

Canon Dr Barry Goodwin, who was the acting Archdeacon of Croydon ahead of his retirement, says that as a resident of the All Saints parish, but worshipping at St John's, he is totally in favour of the proposed Scheme. There had at one time been a consideration of a team ministry in the area, but he accepts that was not a good option. The Wickham Road is an obvious boundary and the proposed Scheme does not preclude future cooperation with St George's or with other denominations.

He says that including Spring Park in St John's will enable the area to be in one parish with All Saints' being used for new initiatives. It will also enable the church to work more closely with others serving the Shrublands estate.

Andrew Jones, now residing in Canada, says he moved out of the All Saints parish to go overseas eight years ago. He had seen All Saints' decline with disappointment and particularly at the state of the buildings/grounds. He says the incumbent has contributed substantially to the decline of the parish.

Sylvia Jones, an All Saints parishioner for 44 years, explains her previous long connection with All Saints'. When Mrs Clarke was appointed in 1998, they were all delighted to welcome someone younger with a young family – as their last two incumbents had both been coming up for retirement. The financial state of the parish at that time was good, with money from the sale of the curate's house and a large legacy just before the retirement of the previous incumbent.

However, very soon after that concerns were raised about financial and people management of the church; there was money being spent without any discussions at PCC meetings. There was only one Standing Committee meeting that year and many never knew what was happening. Long-term volunteers were "sacked"; the Treasurer resigned. Mrs Clarke had alienated a lot of the people and groups using the church and facilities.

Mr Michael and Mrs Teresa Wilson used to attend All Saints' from 1979 to 2001 but left because of Mrs Clarke. They say that closing the church (*which is not being proposed*) is the right action.

Comments

Mrs Catherine Stevenson says she has lived near All Saints' church for nearly 50 years, and that under the previous incumbent it was a vibrant church. Many of the activities there have now ceased, and she questions the reasons for this. She says the church is not welcoming anymore. She hopes it will not just close and crumble but contribute to the local community, and that the church hall will not become flats.

Suzu Stoyel has concerns over the future viability of All Saints' as a chapel of ease: who will maintain it? She asks if the plans for pulling the hall down (before it falls down) and the vicarage and replacing them with a development of new homes are still being pursued?

She says why have All Saints' church at all. – St John's and St George's are sufficient. Why not develop All Saints' too for new homes? She would like to see business plans for the way ahead so that All Saints' does not become a financial liability for others.

Mrs Lesley Wells, now a resident of Derby with past links with All Saints' church, including being married there in 1978, remembers a time when there was standing room only. She has concerns about where the Parish Registers will go under the current proposals.

Out-of-time representations – all against

Sarah Jones MP forwards an email Mrs Clarke sent to her asking that she write to the Commissioners on her behalf against the Bishop's proposals.

Millicent and Calbert Karanja make points already raised in other representations against the proposals.

Robert Milton says that Mrs Clarke's treatment by the Church of England at a time of Black Lives Matter considerations could be misinterpreted. Mrs Clarke should be offered a post where she can continue to be a beacon for BAME women.

Ade and Anu Ogunbambo ask what Mrs Clarke has done to upset the Bishop of Croydon. They ask that the Bishop meet with Mrs Clarke and the parish to come to a compromise that would work for all parties concerned. They appeal against the undignified treatment of Mrs Clarke and the blatant disregard of the All Saints' parishioners.

James Clarke submitted four photos of a local protest against the proposed Scheme.

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

1. What is the background to these proposals? Do they stem from a deanery plan? How would they provide for the better cure of souls and further the Mission of the Church in this area? Do they meet the needs, traditions and characteristics of the three worshipping communities?

The background is the financial and governance problems at All Saints Spring Park (ASSP) which extend back over the last decade and more. The financial issues in the parish came to the fore when creditors approached the diocese through the archdeacon re unpaid debts. The consequence of the financial issues has been that the PCC has not been able to engage missionally with the parish and has become unviable.

These proposals come after several other interventions through which the Diocese has sought to support the governance of All Saints, particularly in relation to its finances. During 2016, the parish's standing order of £250 pcm towards the Parish Support Fund was not paid on several occasions, indicating that the parish's bank balance had fallen to a low ebb. The diocese was also informed that the church's gas had been cut off for non payment of bills and was approached about non payment of a bill for repairs to the organ. Attempts by the Diocese to arrange meetings to discuss these issues met with no response from the parish. Eventually, the problems became so severe that, after consultation with the Diocesan Registrar it was judged that an Episcopal Visitation was necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the parish was bankrupt. The incumbent initially responded by seeking legal advice, and action included a meeting facilitated at the offices of the incumbent's legal advisers attended by the incumbent, diocesan officers and diocesan Registrar.

The report [Doc 1] was sent after opportunities had been given to the parish to comment on it but none were received. The report was also sent to parish officers. [Doc 3]

The results of the visitation are summarised in the report of February 2017:

- (a) The parish does not show evidence of financial viability and cannot meet its current debts. It is only one-off gifts and loans that have meant that some have been paid in recent months.
- (b) The parish has for the last ten years (or more) been sustained by its financial reserves which have now been all but expended and cannot be relied on in future.
- (c) The parish has no realistic possibility of being able to pay its Parish Pledge in 2016 and 2017 (notwithstanding significant arrears in Fairer Shares payments from previous years). The Pledge is noteworthy for being one of the very lowest across the whole Diocese.
- (d) There has been in the past a serious deficiency in financial record keeping which makes financial planning difficult and means that the PCC cannot exercise its proper oversight of this aspect of parochial life.
- (e) This deficiency may be one (but not the only) reason why in regard to an external contractor and to the Diocesan Office cheques have been written and direct debits issued with insufficient funds in the account for them to be cleared. Another contractor and an external adviser have also reported very late payment or non-payment of bills.
- (f) The incumbent and parish officers have not provided evidence of realistic ways in which the financial and wider life of the parish can be turned round.
- (g) There are serious questions about the capacity of the parish as life now stands to develop and grow. The congregation is small and old. There are discrepancies through 2016 as to how many attendees and communicants have been present on a Sunday.
- (h) The church plant is in a fragile state and the hall roof leaks badly and the electrical system may be dangerous. The parish have resisted an offer to have this inspected.
- (i) There are repeated themes of breakdowns in relationships (especially with Hall users) and difficulties in communicating with the Incumbent or Parish officers especially by phone or e-mail.
- (j) It has to be noted that in a lengthy discussion with church officers on January 17th 2017 the lead was taken by one of the Churchwardens and the Treasurer. The Incumbent made very few contributions and one Churchwarden was silent throughout.

Subsequent to the Visitation, Directions were given and signed by the parish [Doc 2] and an action plan was put in place, but the assistance offered was taken up only minimally. For example the parish giving officer visited at the invitation of Mrs Clarke and tried to work with the incumbent to develop an effective giving campaign but this was hampered by flawed financial information sent in advance, inaccurate attendance data and lack of engagement. The final report of the then Archdeacon of Croydon summarised progress made since the visitation and expressed concern about the ongoing financial matters. The parish remains, in the view of the Diocese, unable to sustain itself either in terms finance or in governance.

In view of this structural weakness, the proposals now before the Commissioners were developed, in order to provide a sustainable financial and governance structure which would support the church's ministry in the area presently covered by the ASSP parish. The parish includes a) prosperous suburban housing typical of the outer suburbs, b) the Shrublands Estate, former local authority housing with significant social need and c) the Royal Bethlem Hospital, part of the SLAM Mental Health NHS Trust. There is at present no evidence that any of these are being pastorally served by ASSP.

The Diocese is committed to Southwark Vision [Doc 14], a vision for growth, and it is with that in mind that these proposals are being advanced. The Diocese does not have deanery plans in the sense described in the Mission and Pastoral Measure, but it does regard deaneries as key foci for mission and ministry. The dysfunction of ASSP in financial and governance terms has had a deleterious effect on the mission and ministry in Addington Deanery: according to the former Area Dean, the problems of ASSP have effectively prevented the formation of a deanery plan for mission.

All three churches in Shirley are in the Liberal Catholic tradition. The current proposals have been agreed by the PCCs of St George and St John. The majority of the residential part of the parish, south of the A232, would be transferred to the parish of St John, along with the church building. The intention of the Diocese and of the PCC of St John's is to continue worship in the tradition of All Saints within the building and to seek growth with the appointment of a pioneer minister working with St John's. We do not believe that the present congregation of ASSP will be disadvantaged by this change; rather that the additional resources provided by St John's will enhance the worship and pastoral care for the congregation and for the former parish as a whole

- 2. Please set out the consultation process leading to the proposed draft Scheme, including any meetings held with the interested parties and the role of the Croydon AMPC. Please confirm the level of support, or otherwise, for what was being proposed during the local consultation process and how any concerns raised during that stage were addressed.**

Following the Visitation, it became clear that the problems in ASSP had not been resolved. After careful consideration, it became clear that there might need to be a pastoral scheme to remedy the financial and governance deficiencies in ASSP. As the then Archdeacon of Croydon had been very closely involved with the Visitation, and might be seen as prejudiced, the Archdeacon of Reigate (who also held a commission as Assistant Archdeacon of Croydon) was asked to lead on this process. Before any formal process began, a meeting was held on 21st January 2019 at which Mrs. Clarke, accompanied by two church members as supporters, met with the Bishop of Croydon and the Archdeacon of Reigate to discuss a possible pastoral reorganisation. [Doc 5]

Following that meeting, a paper entitled 'The Future of the Church of England in Shirley' was drawn up by the AD of Reigate, dated 8th February 2019

[Doc 7]. This described the three parishes and the PCCs of all three parishes and interested parties were invited to 'comment and propose solutions which would enable the church to offer consistent and effective ministry throughout the Shirley and Spring Park area'. This was circulated to the three PCCs and comments were invited before the meeting of the Croydon Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee (AMPC) on 28th February, where it was considered. The AMPC decided that the matters raised were significant and invited the AD of Reigate to consult with the PCCs. The paper was recirculated to the PCCs of the three parishes with a request that the AD of Reigate and the Area Dean of Addington be invited to attend the next PCC. [Doc 8]

The AD of Reigate and the Area Dean of Addington met with the 3 PCCs of the Shirley Churches to discuss the situation: St George on 29th May 2019, St John on 24th June 2019 and All Saints on 10th July 2019.

At their meetings both St John's and St George's PCCs recognised that proposals to address the finances of Spring Park were needed. Although St John's was aware of the challenges which having the Spring Park church in its parish would bring, its PCC suggested that they had more capacity for mission in the local area than the All Saints PCC had shown.

St George's was willing to accept that their parish would be enlarged, so that St John's could focus on the area around the Spring Park church should the proposals result in the All Saints, Spring Park Parish being dissolved.

The PCC at Spring Park was not happy with the possibility of dissolving the parish of ASSP, expressing the view that if they could redevelop the site it could become financially viable. This was made clear to the Archdeacon of Reigate at the Spring Park PCC in July 2019 for which no minutes have been received.

A paper with 5 options for the future was drawn up and circulated to the Croydon AMPC. The parishes were also sent the paper and their PCCs were invited to send representatives to the first hour of the AMPC meeting on 4th September 2019 to let the members of the Committee hear their views. The AMPC then discussed the paper and came to the view that the option now proposed was the most suitable. [Doc 8] Paper circulated to AMPC for 4 September 2019.

The paper was circulated to members of the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee [Doc 11] and representatives of the parishes were invited to attend the DMPC to give their views [Doc 10]. The incumbent and the PCCs of all the parishes involved were separately invited and the incumbent and member of the PCC of All Saints, Spring Park attended the DMPC on 27 February 2020, with their legal advisor. [Doc 13]

3. What input did the three incumbents and their parishes have in the formulation of the five options in the Archdeacon of Reigate's report considered by the AMPC at its meeting on 4th September 2019? Please send

a copy of this report and comment on the suggestions that it did not adequately describe the ministry at All Saints and did not accurately record the views of the All Saints PCC.

All three PCCs were invited to contribute. The PCCs and incumbents were invited to make comments to the AMPC, both written and verbal. In addition, the Archdeacon of Reigate attended their summer 2019 meetings. Based on what was suggested at these meetings the five options were drawn up for the Croydon AMPC to consider and the PCCs were invited to comment on them, in writing and in person at the September 2019 meeting.

The papers 'The Future of Church of England Ministry in Shirley' [Doc 7] and 'Consultation of the Future of Church of England Ministry in Shirley' [Doc 8] did not describe the current ministry activities at any of the churches. They describe the parishes' size, the congregational size and the financial robustness of each of the parishes. The matter considered was not the nature of the ministry exercised across the parishes, but what governance and financial structures would best enable the church's ministry for the future

4. Why did the AMPC recommend Option 5 and what were its reasons and those of the DMPC for rejecting the other options? Please comment on the assertions that some members of the AMPC had a conflict of interests and that the incumbents of Shirley St John and Shirley St George appear to have agreed a division of the All Saints parish in advance of that meeting with no input from All Saints.

Please see below an extract from the minutes of the AMPC, September 2019 [Doc 11].

1. Consultation on the future of C of E Ministry in Shirley

The meeting was joined by representatives of the three Anglican churches in Shirley for the first hour of the meeting for a discussion of the paper written by the Archdeacon of Reigate.

A note of this meeting is appended to the minutes.

In the discussion that followed these matters of clarification were offered

- i) A brief background was given to the Visitation and Inhibition in 2016-17 which had been about financial viability and governance. There had been no accusations of any financial impropriety: this had been explained at different stages to the PCC and to the congregation.
- ii) During the Inhibition the parish received appropriate pastoral care from the Revd Sandra Schloss, who was tasked by the Bishop of Croydon for this purpose.
- iii) The issues being raised were not about personalities but about governance and viability
- iv) It was recognised that there was a lack of clarity about whether the parish had the capacity to organise and fund a major development project. (Clear evidence would be needed of the identity and

capability of the suggested American sponsors before matters went any further).

- v) There had not been any suggestion from the Diocese that the church building at All Saints should be closed
- vi) It was stated that sale of the hall site for development and replication of the lost D1 facilities in the church building might be difficult to achieve. The church building had been unaltered since construction and is listed.
- vii) The meeting had not been told by the parish of All Saints, Spring Park how it had been addressing or might address the significant decline in numbers and giving in the last ten years.

In her paper the Archdeacon had suggested five possible options for consideration for ministry across Shirley. (These can be found on pages 2-3 of the report). The Committee considered each of these in turn and made the following response:

Option 1

There is little future in everything remaining as it is. External funding for a major project would take several years to acquire and for a complex project to be delivered, notwithstanding questions about capacity for governance and ongoing life in the present.

Option 2

This option proposes that parish boundaries are moved but it does not address any of the questions about capacity for governance or short, medium or long term financial viability.

Options 3 & 4

The current context and climate meant that it would not be possible to create a Team Ministry in the current context. This would not address or resolve the questions of capacity for governance or financial viability.

Option 5

It was recognised that this option was not without its own challenges but was considered the preferred option by members of the AMPC given the issues and factors raised in the discussion as detailed above in i) to vii) and outlined in the report.

The Revd Barry Hengist, as Incumbent of St George, Shirley and a member of the AMPC, had declared a conflict of interest and did not take part in the vote that followed.

The members of the AMPC voted nem con to recommend to the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee that Option 5 is the Committee's preferred option for the way forward for the provision of ministry across the Church of England parishes in Shirley.

A preliminary meeting took place in October 2018 with the incumbents of St John's and St George's, solely in order to confirm that they would not object in principle to any re-organisation that might affect their parishes. Had either of them done so, there would have been no reason even to initiate consultation.

As will be seen, one member of the AMPC declared an interest and did not take part in the vote. One other member of the AMPC is a lay member of St John Shirley.

5. Please confirm that the DMPC when deciding on its recommendation to you on 27th February 2020 also considered the other options presented to the AMPC. Are any of the AMPC members perceived by those at All Saints as having a conflict of interests also on the DMPC?

The DMPC considered all options [Doc 13].

Neither of the members of the AMPC with a connection to the Shirley parishes are members of the DMPC, nor do any other members of the DMPC have such a connection.

6. Please confirm that the formal consultation with the interested parties required by s.6 of the Mission and Pastoral Measure was carried out and, in particular, that the Reverend Yvonne Clarke was offered a meeting with the full DMPC as required under s.6(6), as her benefice would be dissolved, and that the other incumbents and PCCs were offered meetings the DMPC, or a sub-committee or representative under s. 6(6) and s. 6(5).

Yes, the formal consultation was carried out in full compliance with the Mission and Pastoral Measure. The incumbent and members of the PCC of All Saints Spring Park attended the DMPC meeting on 27th February 2020 and (through their legal representative) addressed the whole DMPC before the Committee deliberated on the issue and made its decision. The other incumbents and PCCs did not wish to meet with the DMPC.

7. Please comment on the conflicting views about Mrs Clarke's ministry at All Saints expressed by those opposing and supporting the draft Scheme: on the one hand that she has provided a more inclusive ministry attracting previously marginalised ethnic and minority groups and on the other that she has neglected established parish organisations and alienated many congregation members who have joined other churches. To what extent does the make-up of the congregation at All Saints reflect the demographics of the parish? Please also comment on the level of engagement with young people.

These matters are not related to the proposal to dissolve the PCC of All Saints, Spring Park which is due to financial and governance issues and the need to plan ahead for mission and ministry in Shirley.

However, we can comment as follows

All three churches are inclusive and diverse, all in the liberal catholic tradition. The Diocese is firmly committed to diversity and leadership representative of the communities it serves
All have regular worshippers from minority groups including minority ethnic Anglicans.

As the All Saints PCC had raised their particular concerns around BAME engagement, and since the returns for mission do not record the BAME attendance, the AD of Reigate went to all three churches on the same Sunday in February 2019 to observe the number and ethnicity of the congregants.

February 24th 2019

At St John's there were 65 adults and 10 children, 7 or 8 were BAME

At St George's there were 55 adults and 10 children, 13 were BAME and the service was led by a black priest

At All Saints there were 10 adults and 1 child, 7 were BAME, the service was led by a black priest.

The total number of BAME congregants at St George's was 13 while at All Saints it was 7.

The 2011 census shows that 34% of the All Saints, Spring Park parish population was Minority Ethnic. For St John's the figure is 28% and for St George's the figure is 29%.

Regarding engagement with young people there is no evidence of active engagement, whilst the loss of connection with uniformed organisations such as the Scouts, and the poor engagement with the parish in Christmas services for children and families are commented on in representations sent to you.

The Young All Saints Group referred to in the representations opposing the scheme appears to comprise people from outside the parish and outside the Diocese, based on a shared core letter. We are not aware of any organised youth work in or for the parish.

Mrs. Clarke also makes reference to her parish as LGBTI+ friendly. While we were not aware of any initiatives in this direction at ASSP, we are aware that both St John's and St George's are actively welcoming of LGBTI+ people. St George's is a member of Inclusive Church.

Southwark Vision [Doc 14] has an explicit, published strategic objective to have leadership and representation that reflects its diversity. Southwark Vision also has a strategic objective about the financial resilience and resourcing needed to effect its mission and ministry.

8. Please give attendance figures for the three affected parishes over the last ten years. How do they compare with those for other parishes in the deanery and across the diocese?

Doc 12 includes substantive demographic data and information on attendance figures taken from the data provided by parishes for the Statistics for Mission returns from 2010-2019. These have also been reviewed to show where these parishes' attendance figures sit in relation to the rest of the parishes in the diocese. Spring Park has the largest population of the three churches but the lowest level of attendance by a considerable margin, based on its own submission of statistical data. The data on Electoral Rolls reflects when the Electoral Roll was fully revised in 2019 (undertaken every six year).

Please note, however, that the numbers observed at worship at ASSP on several occasions have been considerably lower than these numbers (cf. the Archdeacon of Croydon's Interim Report following the visitation [Doc 4], and the Archdeacon of Reigate's observations noted in the answer above).

9. Please comment on the suggestion that concerns about Yvonne Clarke's ministry raised early in her incumbency were ignored. What were your reasons for initiating the Visitation in 2016 and suspending her from ministry for six months and why was the suspension then ended? Please comment on suggestions that she has not been offered the same level of support as other incumbents facing difficulties in their ministry.

After complaints about the incumbent in 2001, the then Bishop of Croydon ordered an enquiry into the issues which had been raised, and then visited the parish and sought to build unity and reconciliation.

The reasons for initiating the 2016 Visitation are fully set out in answer to question 1. Many areas of help which have been offered to the parish have been alluded to already. Practical financial support was also offered; in March 2017 the diocese paid for the electrical inspection and inspection report of the church and upon learning that the church hall was in an even poorer state, offered to pay for the electrical inspection and inspection report of the church hall as well. The Giving Adviser has worked hard to try and assist including visiting the parish on a Sunday at the invitation of the incumbent.

Mrs Clarke's ministry was not suspended. As was explained at the time and subsequently, an integral part of an Episcopal Visitation is that the incumbent's ministry is inhibited for the duration of the visitation. It had been hoped that only 2 or 3 weeks would be needed for the answers to the questions to be given. It took the parish 6 months to answer them, and for next steps to be agreed, and so the inhibition remained in place for this duration. On 19 December 2016, the then Archdeacon of Croydon explained this to the legal adviser to the incumbent:

Dear (legal adviser)

I acknowledge receipt of your e-mail of the late afternoon of Friday 16th December and reply as follows.

The notice of Visitation was served on 26th October and with it, a set of questions outlining the scope and nature of the enquiry and a list of the documents which would be required from the parish in order to provide initial answers to the questions.

The Visitation began on November 7th with an indication that it would take about a fortnight. On November 7th a number of registers and a document from the list was passed from the Incumbent and her PA to the Director of Finance and myself. I informed that I would need to contact the Treasurer for the other documents listed, I sent him an e-mail later the same day and with it an offer to collect documents if it expedited matters. A bundle of papers was handed over to me at the church on 13th November: unfortunately on sorting and inspecting these during the days following a large number of documents initially requested had not been produced. The Vicar, Wardens and Treasurer were e-mailed on the 18th November requesting these with suggestions as to how these might be collected or delivered (taking note of the fact that I was personally away from the Diocese for a week). One of the Wardens e-mailed me on 21st November (copied to the incumbent and other officers) saying that these papers were being collated and would be provided as soon as possible. I acknowledged this (to all parties) on my return on 28th November and again offered to collect papers if this would help matters. Having heard nothing by 6th December I contacted all the parties again, stressing that no one wished the Visitation to continue longer than it needed to. I asked for an update on progress and again offered help with practical arrangements for collection. The e-mail was acknowledged later the same day with an apology for the delay.

The next communication from the parish was late on the afternoon of 12th December informing me that papers had been delivered to the Diocesan Director of Finance earlier that afternoon. We were however informed that some financial documents from 2014 had previously been discarded during church cleaning and that some 2016 documents were not yet available. The Director of Finance has been working in the last few days to put information in response to the Visitation questions together in order to support a meaningful dialogue between the Bishop and myself and the parish.

I should point out that it has taken 33 working days since the request was made to receive a still incomplete set of documents requested. It is therefore inevitable and not surprising that the suggested time limit has been passed, but this has been out of our hands. The incumbent should also be reminded that if requests made earlier in the year to meet to discuss issues affecting the parish had been responded to positively we would not necessarily be where we are now.

Yours sincerely

Chris Skilton
Archdeacon of Croydon

The inhibition was lifted on 20 April 2017 [Doc 6 & 6.1].

In response to the letter announcing the visitation, Mrs Clarke decided to seek legal advice. Diocesan officers and the Diocesan Registrar met with the incumbent and her legal representative on 4th April 2017. The inhibition was ended when agreement was

reached regarding the level of supervision and choice of supervisor to support Mrs Clarke, the agreement having been reached at meetings between lawyers.

The Visitation questions were:

1. What is the current financial position of the parish as at 31st October 2016 and how does this relate to planned income and expenditure for the current year?
2. Have all receipts and payments been properly made through the PCC's bank account?
3. What other accounts does the parish have?
4. Given that the parish has not been able to maintain regular payments to the Parish Support Fund in 2016 as pledged nor made a pledge for 2017, what plans are in place to restore the financial viability of the parish?
5. What is the current position with regard to
 - (a) Payment for Insurance of the church and Hall (building, contents, liability)
 - (b) Payment for the provision of the supply of utilities to the church and hall?
6. What plans are in place to make payment to the organ repairer for work undertaken to the church organ in late 2015 and which remains outstanding?
7. How are decisions made (and by whom) about authorising expenditure?
8. What is the anticipated planned giving for 2016 and what steps are being taken to increase this?
9. How do the Vicar and Churchwardens lead on and use the MAP process (or equivalent) to develop the ministry and mission of the church?

From these it can be seen that the concerns were over the ability of the parish to manage its finances and to plan for Mission.

10. Was consideration given to the suitability of all three current incumbents for incumbent roles in the proposed two benefice arrangement and, if so, why were the other two preferred to Mrs Clarke? In what ways would you expect the pioneer ministry at All Saints envisaged in the proposed arrangement to differ from that offered by her and why has she not been offered this post? Would you be prepared to offer her, or accept her for, another post in the Diocese?

The proposed pastoral reorganisation has come about because of the potential bankruptcy of the parish of ASSP. Following years of such financial problems the only viable proposal is the one before you. This will continue to affirm parish-based ministry in churches where there is financial viability and provide the prospect of growth in the area currently the parish of ASSP. The proposed dispossession of Mrs Clarke is a direct result of the dissolution of the parish of ASSP. There is no similar reason to consider the dispossession of either of the other incumbents.

The Diocese has a target of 100 lay and ordained pioneer ministers as part of its vision for growth, across our Diocese and across all church traditions. Our view of Mrs Clarke's ministry is that she does not demonstrate the specific aptitudes which are necessary for a pioneering role. Nor do we consider that it would be appropriate for her to serve in her former parish as an assistant priest under the direction of the incumbent of St John's.

It is not possible to make a general statement about Mrs Clarke's ministry, nor is that the focus of this proposal. The vast majority of clerical posts in this Diocese are appointed by open process, and there is nothing to prevent Mrs Clarke making an application for any post to which she might feel that God is calling her.

11. To what extent were financial considerations a factor in the development of these proposals? Please provide the parish share figures for all three parishes since 2000 and the extent to which they have been met. How do you respond to the view that the Fairer Share contribution for All Saints has been incorrectly assessed?

Financial considerations are a major factor in the development of the proposals in the context of Southwark Vision.

The table below shows the relevant figures.

Fairer Shares was a parish share scheme in which parishes' quota was determined from a triannual assessment of individual income within congregations (based on the congregation's income survey) and the size of their regular worshipping membership. Sometimes these assessments were challenged and adjusted, as shown for each of the three parishes in the table below. Fairer Shares ended in 2015 and from 2016 parishes have been asked to pledge to a generosity-based scheme the Parish Support Fund). Under the PSF, parishes are informed of the share of total diocesan costs which is attributed to their parish, and asked to make a realistic and generous pledge, with the aim that most parishes will become self-sustaining, i.e. cover their indicative costs of ministry.

Parish Share Data requested for Shirley and Spring Park parishes for 2000-2020									
Data correct at time of preparation on 9/11/2020									
St George Shirley			St John Shirley			Spring Park, All Saints			
Fairer Shares:	Net Assessment	Payment	Notes	Net Assessment	Payment	Notes	Net Assessment	Payment	Notes
2000	33,244.23	33,244.23	2000 Adj'd \$	61964.55	61964.55		23,698.10	23,698.10	Up-to-date
2001	34,994.96	34,994.96		58148.21	58148.21		24,940.08	20,752.06	
2002	36,762.49	36,762.49		60772.13	60772.13		4,226.00	500.00	\$ Adj to 2001 +2002 assessments
2003	39,919.15	39,919.15		65612.57	65612.57		13,514.00	21,428.02	Up-to-date
2004	37,107.30	37,107.30		74260.55	74260.55		14,648.00	5,000.00	
2005	38,278.81	38,278.81	2005 Adj'd \$	83170.74	83170.74		10,840.00	15,648.00	2005 Adj'd \$
2006	38,836.14	38,836.14		81798.87	81798.87	2006 Adj'd \$	13,215.00	18,055.00	Up-to-date
2007	36,975.74	36,975.74		85701.12	85701.12		14,263.08	14,263.08	
2008	37,705.54	37,705.54		87411.97	87411.97		14,610.00	6,000.00	
2009	38,927.86	38,927.86		90229.5	90229.5		15,079.00	23,689.00	Up-to-date
2010	36,996.68	36,996.68		99255.34	99255.34		15,335.85	14,835.85	
2011	37,887.00	37,887.00		97175.6	97175.6	2011 Adj'd \$	15,773.00	6,500.00	
2012	38,605.83	38,605.83		78453	78453	2012 Adj'd \$	16,064.00	6,000.00	
2013	35,140.71	35,140.69	2013 Adj'd \$	72977.75	72977.75		16,633.67	6,000.00	
2014	36,484.88	36,484.88		75780.14	75780.14		17,261.41	5,750.00	
2015	37,037.78	37,037.78		77040.61	77040.61		17,548.83	2,000.00	£57,531 in arrears
Parish Support Fund	Pledge offered	Pledge payment	% of indicative costs covered by payment	Pledge offered	Pledge payment	% of indicative costs covered by payment	Pledge offered	Pledge payment	% of indicative costs covered by payment
2016	39,624	39,624	55%	79,000	79,000	110%	3,000	3,000	4%
2017	32,160	32,160	44%	75,000	75,000	101%	3,000	3,000	4%
2018	36,000	36,000	47%	78,000	78,000	103%	3,000	3,000	4%
2019	36,000	36,000	46%	80,000	80,000	102%	3,000	845	1%
2020	37,080	30,900	46%*	50,000	41,667	62%*	3,500	0	0%#
2021	38,280		48%	60,000		75%	0#		0%

Notes

\$ Where parish assessments were renegotiated for Fairer Shares these are shown with as the year date and "Adj'd". Each parish had three adjustments over this period of 15 years.

* Both St George's and St John's have paid 10/12 mths of their 2020 pledge; their indicative costs % are calculated on the basis that 100% will be paid

Spring Park All Saints have not paid any pledge during 2020, nor have they offered a pledge for 2021

Assessment only took place between 2000-2015 when the Fairer Shares scheme was in place. As can be seen by the charts, All Saints had their figures reassessed three times to reflect their concerns, as did St John's and St George's who also had re-assessments over this period. However, whilst St John's and St George's consistently paid the revised amounts, All Saints had a very erratic payment history for 2000-2009. This was despite holding considerable cash reserves at this stage (£173k in cash at 1.1.05 declining to £84k at 31.12.09).

The Diocesan parish finance officer consistently raised concerns with the parish over the level of congregational giving over this period. For example, he highlighted annually over the period from 2004-2010 that the personal giving from parishioners fell from 53% to 44% of their Parish Income Potential (assessed with regard to the Parish's own income survey) and this was in contrast to the Diocesan average of between 78% - 83% over this period. He also highlighted the need for the PCC to explore alternative

sources of income or restriction of expenditure, warning that their reserves would not last forever. Fairer Shares assessments did not take into account the hall income which All Saints received and could use to supplement any parish share contribution.

During the history of the Parish Support Fund (PSF), introduced in 2016, ASSP has consistently been one of the lowest PSF contributors of any parish with a full-time priest, covering around 1% of their costs of ministry in 2019. We have yet to receive any contribution for 2020, nor have the parish yet offered a pledge for 2021. The contributions for 2016 and 2017 were received retrospectively after the parish received a bequest of £30,000 in 2018. We believe the bequest was used for all three years' contributions.

12. Is the All Saints parish currently regarded as financially viable and how does its financial position compare with that at the outset of Mrs Clarke's incumbency? How much has its viability been affected by the changing demographics of the area and the congregation? To what extent, if at all, do you think the parish finances have been mismanaged and the maintenance of the church and church hall been neglected?

The answer above notes the capital position of the parish in 2005. The parish now has no reserves.

The parish is not seen as financially viable and the attendance figures both recorded and observed provide further concerns. The Diocese accepts that parishes will sometimes grow and sometimes decline and seeks to support parish ministry in changing circumstances but the seriousness of the situation at Spring Park is considered to render it unviable as a separate parish. The Visitation report [Doc 1] raises very serious concerns about financial governance. However, there is no evidence of financial misconduct.

The chart in the Visitation Report demonstrates the parish's decline into deficit as it has used the proceeds from the sale of the former curate's house to cover running costs. This change cannot be explained by changing demographics: the Shrublands Estate has always been an area of deprivation, and the surrounding suburban housing remains prosperous. Over time the percentage of parishioners from other faith backgrounds has of course increased, but not significantly compared to other similar parishes which have not experienced the same decline.

13. Please comment on the All Saints PCC's proposed redevelopment of the church hall and parsonage sites and whether this would significantly improve its finances. Why has the Diocese not supported these proposals to date and would you expect this or an alternative development to be pursued if the draft Scheme proceeds? Please comment on the perception that the draft Scheme amounts to a "land grab" by the Diocese or the St John's parish. Please also explain why proposals for a telephone mast at All Saints were not approved.

The parlous state of finances and governance over a number of years, set out in our answers to the questions above, and the documents referred to, provide a relevant context to questions of the viability, practicability and resilience of the proposals.

The Archdeacon reviewed the proposals carefully, but they were not considered viable in the context of the long standing difficulties, the length of time required, the attendance data and the financial situation. Most significantly, however, the plan as proposed could not legally be delivered. In the proposal from the parish the Diocese would need to bear the cost of both purchasing the land for a parsonage and building a new parsonage on it. The proposal from the parish also makes the assumption that the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) would finance repairs to the church, for which the DBF is not responsible.

Even if all of these were to happen, in my view the proposed project would not break even.

An extract from the Archdeacon's report gives further detail:

'In this connection it is important to recognise that All Saints PCC acknowledges that the Church Hall is at the end of its useful life and extensive work needs to be undertaken to the church building. The incumbent has raised concerns about the long-term future of the current parsonage in Bridle Road. The PCC have been working with Ablett Architects and discussed a draft scoping proposal with the Archdeacon of Croydon in December 2018. The parish are probably right in identifying that the best solution would be for some land to be sold for development (part Parsonage, part parish) – the sum of the whole probably being more than two separate parts. The parish envisage using their proceeds from a sale to fund repairing the church building and creating meeting facilities within the church building. The Diocese would be invited to buy a further section of PCC land to build a new parsonage.

'The scheme has some merit, given the state of the existing buildings. But significant concerns have been fed back to the parish that funding of the project is a serious issue given that the Diocese is not in a position to fund work related to the scoping or development of proposals. It is unclear how the parish would fund this work given the finances as reported.⁹

'The current ball-park estimate is that the parish will receive about £500k from the development: this is unlikely to be sufficient to fund repair of the church and replication of hall facilities inside the church building. It appears from the proposal, as developed so far, that this sum is based on the parish receiving all the benefit from the development, and does not include the costs of providing a new parsonage (to quote, "On our initial scoping outline appraisal, 9 houses (without building the vicarage) could deliver a modest receipt in excess of £500,000"). This would not be possible, as proceeds

⁹ More recently the firm of architects that assisted ASSP has become one of the suppliers stating that it is owed money by the parish.

from the sale of the vicarage would have to be paid into the Parsonages Fund. Equally ultra vires is the assumption that "on the sale of the land the SDBF will then automatically fund the repairs / extension works to the Church?"

'Given that the church is a listed building unaltered since it was built, there may also be difficulties with the heritage bodies in making serious interventions in it. The parish will need to respond to these concerns before it would be possible to go any further.

'Despite the desire to move forward that is expressed through this proposal, it reinforces rather than reduces the principal issue faced by the church in the Shirley and Spring Park area, the lack of organisational and financial robustness at All Saints, with a consequent lack of capacity to serve the parish in mission.' From the Future of the Church of England Ministry in Shirley. [Doc 7]

Given the current state of the hall building, and the responsibilities for the church, the idea that this project is a 'land grab' by either the DBF or St John Shirley is hard to sustain. The intention is to resource mission and ministry locally through pastoral reorganisation. This will see two healthy, viable parishes in Shirley, supported and sustained by a pioneer minister in a house that will be retained as Glebe property if the parish is dissolved and a church building that will be retained for worship, ministry and mission.

The Condition Survey of the parsonage was completed on 03 January 2019, and the Quinquennial Inspection of the church was carried out 03 July 2019. All parsonages are being reviewed to ascertain their condition as the diocese has moved away from replacing parsonages with new builds and is seeking to retain where possible. There has been no deliberate neglect of the parsonage, but it is one of a large number meriting improvement and the diocese is currently planning the prioritisation of these. There has been maintenance throughout, records show that contract instructions raised for work on the parsonage have been fulfilled, but there is no recorded contact from the incumbent regarding repair matters in 2020 to date.

An overview of the information available regarding what happened in relation to the telephone mast proposals indicates that the application in 2006 did not proceed due to the local authority not granting planning permission: possibly in light of significant objection from local residents. It was not due to opposition by the Diocese, and in fact there is, on file, a DAC Certificate recommending approval, together with the accompanying recommended plans. Since the formal petition was apparently not submitted by the applicants to the Registry, the DAC did follow this up, firstly with the telecoms company in 2007, and then informally with the vicar in 2013 to see if there was anything further on this matter. A review of the minutes of the DAC shows that there is no record of formal DAC discussions about telecoms at All Saints Spring Park after September 2006.

14. How would you expect the All Saints church building to be used as a chapel of ease in the enlarged St John's parish? How many and what type of

services would you expect to take place there? What would happen to the All Saints parish registers? Would the Scouts' flags be retained in their current position? Please comment on the concern that maintaining All Saints will impose too great a financial burden on the St John's parish and the suggestion that it should be closed altogether.

The Dean of Fresh Expressions and Director of Pioneering ministry will work with St Johns and the Archdeacon to enable missional growth in this area of the parish. However, we would envisage an ongoing Sunday morning service with the possibility of other services as Fresh Expressions take hold. There is no intention to close the church but to retain it for worship.

The All Saints Registers would be archived as other registers and so still available to view. The Scouts flags can be retained.

It will be a challenge for St John's but this is balanced with the possibilities of new forms of church being started in the building, the support from the Diocese as set out above and with a Pioneer Minister who will be part of the learning networks of pioneers already set up by the Director of Pioneering Ministry. St John's PCC gave careful consideration to the obligations that would be involved and were confident that they had the capacity to take this forward, with diocesan support.

15. All Saints' is said to have a good relationship with other faith groups; what steps will be taken by the St John's parish for these links to be maintained under your proposals?

We have no doubt about the commitment of St John's parish to good inter-faith relationships, and support is available from the Croydon Episcopal Area Inter Faith Adviser, and from the Bishop of Croydon (who is co-chair of the Inter Faith Network UK).

16. How do you respond to allegations that the proposals are motivated by discrimination based on the gender, race or sexuality of Mrs Clarke and/or members of her BAME-majority and LGBT+ friendly congregation or a personal vendetta by you against Mrs Clarke?

The extensive answers above and documentation should indicate this is evidently not the case. As a diocese we take with the utmost seriousness any reports of discrimination based on gender, race or sexuality. No complaints have been made by Mrs Clarke or any others of her supporters against any individual, nor are we aware of any evidence that would lead us to suspect such motivations. The Diocese is inclusive and committed to diversity. The whole senior leadership team has undertaken Unconscious Bias training.

Our BAME leadership includes an Area Bishop, an Archdeacon (female), Area Deans and the highest number of BAME candidates from any Diocese for BAPs with a vocations adviser leading on BAME. Lay appointments in the diocesan office also reflect this commitment. Within the Episcopal Area there are presently eleven BAME clergy (out of 86) serving at incumbent level or

above. Three are Honorary Canons of the Cathedral, of whom one is an Area Dean.

17. Please comment on the assertion that Mrs Clarke was threatened with CDM proceedings. Please confirm that dispossessing Mrs Clarke from her current office is not being used as a substitute for such proceedings and that dispossessing her is not the primary purpose of the Scheme. Please comment on how the draft Scheme sits with the advice in paragraph 2.13 of the Code of Practice to the Mission and Pastoral Measure (copy attached).

There have been no threats regarding a CDM from Diocesan sources of which the Diocese is aware. The purpose of the proposed pastoral scheme is to remedy the financial and governance deficiencies of the parish and to enable more effective ministry for the area presently covered by the parish of ASSP. Even if Mrs Clarke were to resign her post and move to another post, the scheme would still go ahead.

18. Please comment on the allegations that Mrs Clarke and members of her family have been subject to discrimination, harassment, bullying, segregation, victimisation and abuse of power by you and other senior diocesan staff as detailed by representors against the draft Scheme. Please comment particularly on the suggestions that Miss Winsome Thomas was dismissed as your secretary for opposing the proposals and that maintenance of the All Saints parsonage house has been deliberately neglected.

We do not believe there to be any substance to any of these allegations. The Diocese is inclusive and diverse and does not tolerate discrimination or bullying and has a Dignity at Work policy for Trustees and staff. Trustees include the Bishops and Archdeacons.

It is a fact that members of Mrs Clarke's family have been and are in significant positions as church officers, and so the proposals will be felt by members of Mrs Clarke's family but this is not intended.

The proposals are based on careful consideration of finance and governance issues, of trends over the years, of seeking to redraw the parish boundaries based on known residential patterns and road transport realities, and above all the future needs of this important part of the Croydon Area.

Miss Winsome Thomas was a DBF employee. The DBF suspended her whilst a complaint was investigated, and she was subsequently dismissed for gross misconduct. The Diocesan Bishop played no role in the decision to suspend, the investigation or the outcome. The grounds for her dismissal were not those suggested in the submission to the Committee.

Mrs Clarke has been supported in a range of personal development and training initiatives for her leadership development.

19. Are there any other factors which the Commissioners should be aware of in their consideration of these representations?

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

I am saddened that efforts to reorganise the parishes in Shirley to make them more effective for mission and ministry have been opposed on the grounds of unfounded allegations around discrimination. As Diocesan Bishop, I regret particularly that a Diocese where huge steps have been taken to embrace and encourage BAME and female leadership has been undermined in this way.

I am proud of the efforts we have made to encourage and enable BAME colleagues, but I am not complacent about the work still to do. I personally chair the Diocesan Minority Ethnic Anglican Affairs Committee (DMEAC) and we have three thriving Area MEACs. As a diocese we are in the process of drafting an anti-racism statement to renew our commitment in this area. I would note too that not a single member of the clergy has written to you opposing the pastoral reorganisation other than Yvonne herself.

This proposed pastoral reorganisation is about how we move forward. It reflects the failure of efforts to try and help the PCC with its financial woes and focuses on the future for serving the communities in Shirley. The documents you will see attest to the efforts made to try and help the PCC and incumbent and I have concluded that reorganisation is the only way forward.

The parish is not a poor parish within our Diocese. There are others that make extraordinary efforts to contribute a parish share worthy of them, to pay their ongoing maintenance bills and to seek Diocesan advice and assistance if they face difficulties. ASSP has, for some years, attracted the greatest level of subsidy across the whole Diocese and this is simply not sustainable. We believe that pastoral reorganisation will resolve the financial situation and will also provide the basis for growth through a new pioneer initiative.

I am saddened that the majority of the letters opposing the reorganisation appear to be based on the same core letter and whilst I am aware that Parish Officers including PCC Secretary, Treasurer and Church Warden are generally members of the family of Yvonne Clarke, I am disappointed that

so many of the letters opposing these proposals are limited to allegations rather than offering alternatives for me to consider.

These proposals have not been developed without huge efforts from many across the Diocese over many years to try and find a way of supporting the PCC and incumbent and to see a way forward for the area of Shirley. As a Diocese we are committed to sustaining as many stipendiary clergy as possible and to supporting the parish system across the Diocese. It is therefore with sadness that I commend these proposals to you.

I am hoping that this matter can be discussed the **16th December 2020** meeting of our Mission, Pastoral and Church Property Committee. If the matter is to be discussed at that meeting, we will need to receive your response by Tuesday **17th November** please. This is to allow time for this letter and your reply to be considered by our Sifting Panel, to determine whether the representors and diocesan representatives should be offered an opportunity to make oral representations to the Committee, and for them to be sent to the representors, for them to make any further comments and, if necessary, for you to respond. As you know we also ask representors if they wish to speak to their representations to the Committee.

If oral representations were to be heard, there would also be an opportunity for you or a diocesan representative to speak in favour of the proposals. The diocesan representative may be any appropriate person (e.g. the Chairman or a member or the Secretary of the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee or an Archdeacon) but should not be the Diocesan Registrar or other legal representative. We do not wish the Mission and Pastoral Measure process to take on the characteristics of an adversarial tribunal and have advised the representors that they too should not be legally represented.

Our normal practice is, as you probably know, for oral representations to be made at a public hearing. In the present circumstances that is, of course, not possible but it may be possible for representors and diocesan representatives to make presentations and answer questions by video conferencing. That would depend in each case on the practicability of whether all those concerned were contactable online and able to participate in a video conference. It would be helpful therefore if you would confirm whether you or your representative(s) would be able to participate in this way. Otherwise, if a hearing is not to be held, the case will be considered in private and you will be informed accordingly.

Please note that while the Committee is able to discuss cases by video conference it is not currently able to take decisions remotely. Decisions would have to be made by a subsequent correspondence procedure and there would therefore be a further two or three weeks after the 16th December meeting date before they could be announced.

We would normally expect the representations to be considered at the earliest opportunity but please let me know if you are unable to meet the timetable for the 16th December meeting or wish to give the matter further consideration or undertake further local consultations before replying. Once we have informed the representors of the meeting date (which we will do when sending them a copy of

your reply) we would hope not to have to defer it. However, all parties will have the right to ask us to defer the matter to a subsequent meeting if justifiable reasons arise. The following meeting dates for the Committee is **27th January 2021**.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Archdeacon Moira Astin and Ruth Martin for their information.

Yours sincerely

Rex Andrew

From the Code of Practice to the 2011 Measure

The Gaulby Judgement

2.13 *In 1999 the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council dismissed an appeal from the Reverend A F B Cheesman & others against a decision by the Commissioners to proceed with a pastoral scheme affecting the benefice of Gaulby in the diocese of Leicester. The issue was whether it was right to bring forward proposals to reduce the size of the benefice of Gaulby by pastoral reorganisation when pastoral breakdown procedures under the Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) Measure had been brought against the incumbent then discontinued. The Judicial Committee concluded that use of the then Pastoral Measure was appropriate in this case.*

The following points emerge from the judgement:

- *The need to have regard to the traditions, needs and characteristics of individual parishes in a proposed pastoral reorganisation can include consideration of 'interpersonal factors';*
- *Such consideration can include the relationships between parishes, between parishioners, or between clergy as well as the ability of particular incumbents to contribute to the better cure of souls;*
- *The organisation of the diocese into parishes is for the ease and benefit of the people and not the incumbent;*

*The justification for a pastoral scheme must be the better cure of souls (with due regard to the furtherance of the mission of the Church of England); if **the sole or dominant purpose** of a scheme was to punish an incumbent or deprive him or her of office solely to remedy a breakdown in the relationship with his or her parishioners, it could not be upheld*

There must be adequate evidence of any factors taken into consideration in a proposed reorganisation; any bad faith would invalidate a proposed scheme.

Spring Park, All Saints: documentation

Question 1	Doc 1 - Visitation report All Saints Spring Park 2017 Doc 2 - Signed Visitation Directions 2017 Doc 3 - Visitation Report Cover letter 2017.02.20 Doc 14 - Southwark Vision
Question 2	Doc 5 - Notes re meeting on 2019.01.21 Doc 8 - Consultation Report on The Future of the Church of England in Shirley Doc 7 - The Future of the Church of England in Shirley Doc 10 - 2020.02.27 DMPC Papers Doc 11 - Croydon AMPC Minutes 2019.09.04 (relevant excerpt) Doc 13 - DCT (20)M1 Approved Minutes (DMPC- relevant excerpt) 27.02.2020
Question 3	Doc 7 - The Future of the Church of England in Shirley Doc 8 - Consultation Report on The Future of the Church of England in Shirley
Question 4	Doc 9 - Notes of meeting prior to AMPC 2019.09.04 Doc 11 - Croydon AMPC Minutes 2019.09.04 (relevant excerpt)
Question 5	Doc 13 - DCT (20)M1 Approved Minutes (DMPC- relevant excerpt) 27.02.2020
Question 6	N/A
Question 7	Doc 14 - Southwark Vision
Question 8	Doc 12 - Croydon Addington Deanery data inc attendance (2010-19) & deprivation 2020 Doc 4 - 2017.12.16 - Interim Visitation Report by AD Croydon
Question 9	Doc 6 - 2017.04.20 - letter confirming inhibition lifted Doc 6.1 - CS to YC after inhibition has been lifted 2017.05.04
Question 10	N/A
Question 11	N/A - included in the answer
Question 12	Doc 1 - Visitation report ASSP 2017
Question 13	Doc 7 - The Future of the Church of England in Shirley
Question 14	N/A
Question 15	N/A
Question 16	N/A
Question 17	N/A
Question 18	N/A
Question 19	N/A

Visitation Report to the Bishop of Southwark

All Saints Spring Park February 2017

Background

The Bishop of Croydon acting with the Archdeacon of Croydon (as Commissaries for the Bishop of Southwark) gave notice on the 26th October 2016 of an Episcopal Visitation of the Parish of Spring Park All Saints, which would begin on 7th November 2017. The purpose of the Visitation is “to enquire into the current situation in the parish, to reviews its finances and administration and to consider its strategy for future mission and development”. The focus of the Visitation was around nine questions (Articles of Enquiry) and the responses to those from the commissaries and from the parish form the basis of the report.

Timelines

On November 7th 2016 the Incumbent and her PA met Mr Tony Demby (Diocesan Director of Finance) and the Archdeacon at the church and passed over to their keeping church registers but none of the administrative and financial documents that had been requested. A bundle of unsorted papers was handed to the Archdeacon on November 13th: on inspecting and sorting these in the following days it was clear that a number of documents initially requested had not been produced. The parish was contacted requesting these documents (and at the same time offers and suggestions were made for their delivery and/or collection to expedite matters). Further papers were then delivered to the Director of Finance on 12th December 2016. Some documents were still found to be missing (Question 2 below refers).

Having examined the papers the Director of Finance produced an initial report which was sent to the Incumbent, Churchwardens and Treasurer on December 21st 2016, with a request for a meeting to address the findings. The parish informed the Archdeacon that it would not be possible to meet until after January 16 2017. A meeting was arranged for January 17th which the Incumbent and Church Officers attended. The Archdeacon, the Diocesan Secretary and the Diocesan Director of Finance were present. Notes from the meeting were written up by the Archdeacon and sent to the parish for comment and amendment/agreement on 22nd January 2017. Receipt of the notes was acknowledged on 27th January 2017 with the promise of a response ‘as soon as possible’. As at 11th February 2017 no response had been received silence is taken as assent. A formal timeline is attached as Appendix A outlining the pattern of the response from the Incumbent and Officers, demonstrating that swifter co-operation would have expedited matters considerably.

Methodology

The full text of the questions is set out below. After each question a summary of the Director of Finance’s findings (where appropriate) is recorded. In each case this is followed by a summary of the discussion with the incumbent, wardens and treasurer and comments made at the time by representatives of the Diocese. The text of this has been agreed by the Diocesan representatives present but the parish have not yet responded. The response to each question is completed with the conclusions reached by those conducting the Visitation. These are brought together in a final summary.

1. What is the current financial position of the PCC as at 31st October 2016 and how does this relate to planned income and expenditure for the current year?

The Director of Finance reported that at 4 November 2016 the bank account at Nat West, West Wickham showed a balance of £774.19 and the statement covering the period up to 5 December 2016 showed a balance of £2778.42. The increase was due to three receipts made by electronic transfer from Winsome A Thomas, a Churchwarden, of £7328. The parish subsequently reported that these amounts were gifts made to the church to enable it to clear its debts. However it has been noted by the Archdeacon that the donations exceeded the amount of the specified debt to SWALEC.

The parish reported that the finances of the church were significantly overstretched in 2015 because the then gas supplier (SWALEC) asserted that £6000 was owing in unpaid gas bills. This had been an ongoing problem since 2010. A breakdown in communication with SWALEC had made it difficult to engage with them and it proved impossible to negotiate regular smaller payments. Even though some payments were made in 2015, bailiffs visited in October 2015 and cut off the gas supply and removed the gas meters. The church reported that the amount of the bills was unreasonable in their judgement but that they did not have the means to prove this. They also accepted that they had not sought help from the Archdeacon or the Diocesan Office in negotiating with SWALEC.

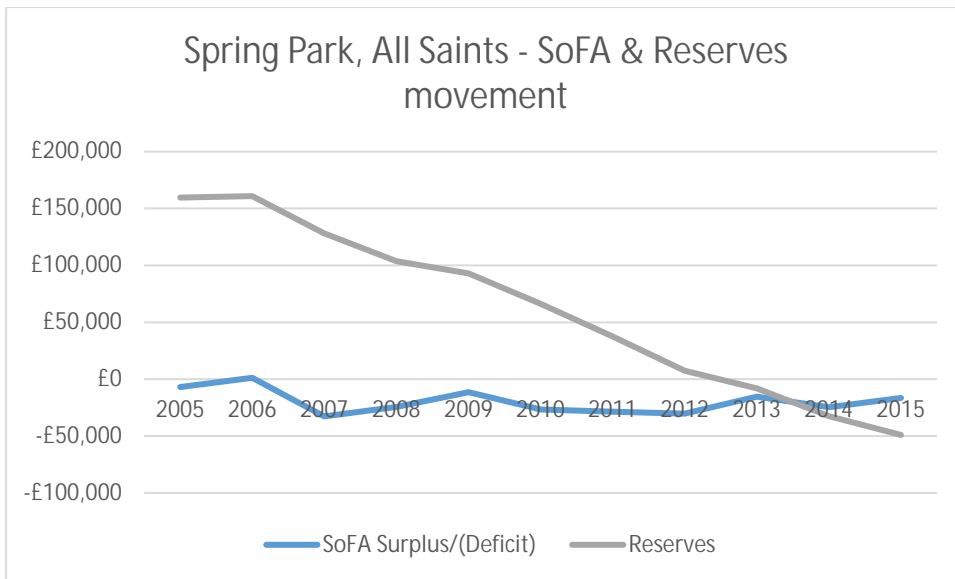
The parish reported that PCC members were asked if they could help with the honouring of payments. A previous churchwarden paid a gas bill of £1600 in early 2015 on the understanding that this was a loan but the church have not been able to repay this. Conversation with the former warden had suggested that failure by the parish to repay this had been a significant reason for him leaving the church.

The parish reported that it believed that finances were moving into a stable position where most commitments going forward could be honoured – especially payments for insurance, overheads and essential services.

Comment

Sadly there is no evidence of financial viability going forwards and the parish has not been viable for at least ten years. This has been masked by the use of reserves to keep the finances afloat and these have now been virtually used up and the parish has debts which it cannot afford to repay.

The parish leadership is unrealistic in its optimism regarding the future. The parish implied that the Visitation had halted critical turning points such as the installation of a mobile phone mast and refurbishment of the hall but no evidence was presented that these had been taken forward earlier in 2016. The parish is technically insolvent with negative reserves of £49,000 according to the draft 2015 financial statement. Since 2005 there has only been one year (2006) where the parish has recorded a SoFA surplus. The chart below shows the graphical movement of the SoFA and reserves.



2. Have all receipts and payments been properly made through the PCC's bank account

The Director of Finance's report highlighted significant gaps in the documentation provided; notably some bank statements from 2015 and 2016. The cash book has not been written up since June 2016 and the parish does not maintain a cash book for receipts. The practice of entering the bank paying in slip number in the collection record ceased from 15 February 2015. There is no evidence that the bank account is reconciled or that management accounts and cash flow forecasts are prepared. The parish does not have a systematic method of filing invoices. The records as presented do not allow for easy understanding of the finances of the parish despite the low volumes of receipts and payments in terms both of value and volume. The bank paying in book has not been used since 3 February 2016 although receipts have been paid into the bank but the accompanying detail has not been provided.

The parish recognised that some papers were missing, some had been mislaid in the Treasurer's home and that some had inadvertently been destroyed after having been left at the back of church waiting to be archived. The parish believed that in the appropriate year all papers had been sent to the auditor in the preparation of the accounts.

The parish recognised that more robust systems needed to be in place and that responsibility for counting and recording money, keeping paperwork up to date and banking money needed to be overhauled and responsibility for these tasks shared.

Comment

It is important to say that no specific allegation of financial misdemeanour or fraud was made but the extraordinary absence of proper records makes it impossible to prove that no such behaviour had taken place.

However there has been a catastrophic collapse of adequate financial recording and reporting. There was no evidence presented by the parish that robust financial practices are in place going forward. The poor visibility and lack of records from the parish was substantially attributed to one-off situations/accidents that pushed the boundary of reasonableness.

3. What other accounts does the parish have?

The Director of Finance reported that the PCC have two CBF Deposit Fund accounts with CCLA. The amount in these at the end of 2016 will need to be reported by the parish as soon as they are available but at December 2015 there was approximately £8000 in them.

Since the parish has used its significant reserves to meet current obligations over the last ten years the ongoing financial state of the parish has not been addressed. It has not been possible to discover ways in which these have been invested in mission and growth in the parish in this time.

Comment

Sadly the parish has reached a point at which these reserves are almost exhausted and there is no other means by which year by year deficits can be sustained by transferring money from the deposit accounts.

4. Given that the parish has not been able to maintain regular payments to the Parish Support Fund in 2016 as pledged, what plans are in place to restore the financial viability of the parish?

The Director of Finance reported that the PCC are not provided with regular management accounts or cash flows and there is no evidence that budgets have been prepared for the years 2014, 2015 or 2016. The lack of regular and reliable financial information makes the determination of a pledge to the Parish Support Fund very difficult for the PCC.

Officers at Trinity House were able to supply the following information about the Parish Support Fund/Fairer Shares history summarised in this table:

The payment history from 2014 is set out in the table below:

	£	£ paid	% paid	Indicative Costs
Fairer Shares 2014	£17,261	£5,750	33.3%	
Fairer Shares 2015	£17,549	£2,000	11.4%	
Pledge 2016	£3,000	£1,750	58.3%	71,800
Pledge 2017	£3,000	None	0%	73,900

In 2017 the pledge from the parish was the third lowest of the 317 pledges received by the Diocese. It represents 4% of the indicative costs of the parish. The average pledge for 2017, received to date is £51,158 and these parishes have averaged a 1.25% increase on their 2016 pledges.

According to the English Index of Multiple Deprivation the parish is ranked 152 out of our 293 parishes (1 being the most deprived).

In October 2016, prior to submitting their 2017 pledge, the Incumbent contacted the Parish Giving Officer for help with stewardship. It was agreed that the PCC would discuss first the 'Giving for Life' material and then this could be followed by a visit from the Officer to the PCC in 2017, date to be agreed, to discuss the results as they sought to undertake a stewardship campaign in the future. The PCC has not yet met to discuss the material that was sent.

Of particular concern was the fact that during late 2015 and 2016 a number of the modest monthly payments of £250 were returned because of insufficient funds.

The parish reported that All Saints is a multi-ethnic congregation set in an apparently affluent area, but the people that the church serves, notably from the Shrublands Estate, are low earners or non-earners

The parish described its plans to overhaul the Church Hall in order to provide a good income stream and to make it into a good local multi-functional venue. The parish stated that the Visitation had put this work on hold. In 2015 there was an initial discussion (at the parish's request) with Eric Greber (then the Diocesan Surveyor) and the Archdeacon about the possible development of the site.

The parish reported that regeneration of the Hall was a focus of the 2016 APCM. It needed to work with other groups and needs both funding and know-how in achieving this. The parish stated that Croydon Council have plans to regenerate a number of community facilities in Shrublands and wish to decant various groups into All Saints Hall whilst this is done.

The parish reported that the current users of the Hall are on very low and unrealistic rents. Many of these are uniformed organisations and sadly communication and relationships have broken down with a number of these and those who use the building are not paying their way.

The parish believe that the change from Fairer Shares to the Parish Support Fund has not helped the church although the Archdeacon pointed out that in the Pledge system a parish like All Saints could make and has made a pledge (in 2016 and 2017 of £3000) that they were more likely to fulfil than under the Fairer Shares system whereby an amount was asked for based on a formula (in 2015 for the parish £17,549).

The parish reported that in 2010 there was vociferous local opposition to the proposal for All Saints to be the site for a telephone mast, which would have brought in a regular stream of income. They noted that one had been installed in a neighbouring parish without controversy. The parish reported that it was seeking to pursue this avenue again in 2016 but this had been put on hold because of the Visitation.

The parish believes that it will take three years to turn things round completely but that the financial position is now stable.

The Diocesan Secretary reminded the parish that without a clear sense of financial planning and budgeting supported by robust paperwork it would be difficult to make progress. She also cited that there had been examples around the Diocese of development plans taking 7 – 10 years to come to fruition and said that the parish needed to be realistic about this.

The parish acknowledged that Sunday attendance figures have dipped because of the lack of heating in church but said that the parish sees new faces in church every week from the Shrublands estate. There are 95 on the Electoral roll and before the gas was cut off Sunday numbers were on average 40-45. (This number is questioned by some others who attended).

Comment

The parish has not demonstrated evidence that there are viable plans to restore the financial viability of the church. Failure to pay in full one of the lowest pledges in the Diocese in 2016 does not bode well for the future – especially as the parish is not located in one of the areas of deprivation in the Diocese.

Mention is made of aspirations for the installation of a telephone mast and of refurbishment of the Hall. Both were said to have stalled because of the Visitation but no evidence was presented that serious work on this was underway before October 2016. The parish did not follow up the visit by the then Diocesan Surveyor and the Archdeacon of Croydon in 2015. The Croydon Area Parish Development Adviser also visited in 2015 but repeated calls and messages seeking to follow up his visit went unanswered. The parish had reported that 'regeneration of the hall' was the main focus of the 2016 APCM but there is no evidence of this having been taken forward and no realistic ideas for funding have emerged.

Numbers have indeed been affected by the lack of heating. Since the debts were said to have been cleared in November 2016 it is a sign of a lack of capacity that heating has still not been restored by 5th February 2017. Numbers have been around 12-16 in recent months and there were 8 communicants for Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve 2016 and 3 for Morning worship on Christmas Day 2016.

The inspection carried out by the Area Dean in March 2016 reported that no communicant and attendance numbers had been entered into the Service Register for the year. These have subsequently been completed but do not tally with the lower figure suggested by the former churchwarden and for several Sundays in 2016 with a list of named attendees made by the Reader.

The Hall is in a fragile state and a very long way from being able to be rented out. The roof leaks and the building is wet. An electrical inspection and report of the Hall and Church were requested (at Diocesan expense). It is very disappointing that one of the Churchwardens cancelled the inspection (without informing the Archdeacon). This has been re-arranged for March 21st 2017 for the Church (by virtue of it being under faculty jurisdiction) and attempts will be made to persuade the parish that this should be undertaken for the Hall as well. More than one person has reported that the Hall is 'dangerous' and the parish have been alerted to the fact that this knowledge would invalidate their insurance if there was a fire through an electrical fault and that members of the PCC could be considered personally liable if injury or death occurred because of the electrics. The Churchwarden reported at the Morning Service on February 5th that the Hall is "out of action until further notice". No explanation or reasons for this were given.

5. **What is the current position with regard to**
(a) Payment for insurance of the Church and Hall (building, contents, liability)
(b) Payment for the provision of the supply of utilities to the church and hall

The Director of Finance noted from the records that he had been given that the current position was difficult to determine, given that significant documents for 2016 were missing (see Question 2 above). He also had noted that there is no systematic identification of income and expenditure relating to the church hall which makes it very difficult to determine whether the Hall is generating a surplus or deficit. Similarly within the records provided there are no copies of letting agreements to identify who the users are and what period receipts are for. Monthly payments for utilities and insurance were made in November 2016.

The parish believes that in 2017 it will be able to cover the costs of running the church and the Hall.

Comment

Whilst this may be a worthy aspiration there is no evidence that this will be possible. With planned giving estimated to be £6000 p.a. and the most recent draft accounts showing that that other giving in 2015 also amounted to about £6000 it is unlikely that all overheads can be covered given that the Hall is likely to produce very little income in 2017 (see Question 4 above).

6. **What plans are in place to make payment to the organ repairer for work undertaken to the church organ in late 2015 and which remains outstanding?**

The Director of Finance did not have the paperwork to examine the issues around this question.

The parish explained the background to this work: authorisation by the churchwarden was given for the work to be done but they did not believe that they gave permission for a start date. One of the churchwardens said that she explicitly asked the occasional organist (who had pressed for the work to be done) that it should not start in late October. Unfortunately the organ repairer did gain access to the church to undertake the work, gaining admittance to the building by the Reader.

At the time the work was carried out the parish did not have the funds in their account to make the payment and offered payment by instalments. The offer of £100 per month was not accepted by the firm. Subsequently three cheques were written for £520 each (in December 2015 and January and February 2016) and these were returned due to insufficient funds. The parish now accepts that these should not have been written. The parish have had no further contact with the organ repairer.

Comment

The arrangements concerning the engagement of the organ repairer are not wholly clear. Papers relating to this were requested in the original Notice of Visitation but have not been made available. The parish would imply that the occasional organist exceeded his brief. What is of concern is that officers of the church may have written a series of cheques (on three occasions in 2015/16) knowing that there were insufficient funds in the church account for them to be honoured. There was no communication with the Diocesan Office or Archdeacon from the parish alerting them to a very serious state of affairs, which could have ended up in the Small Claims Court. The organ repairer reported that on numerous occasions he tried to contact the parish but that e-mails and phone calls were not responded to which gave him little confidence in the ability of the parish to engage with a serious matter.

7. How are decisions made (and by whom) authorising expenditure

The Director of Finance reported that from the records provided (which did not include the PCC minutes, which were not requested) there is no recording of expenditure although cheque numbers are written on the invoices.

The parish reported that normally all decisions on expenditure are made by the PCC with the Standing Committee having authority to make payments of up to £1000 if necessary between meetings and all such expenditure is reported to the PCC.

Comment

There are issues about the nature of the financial reporting and practice that have already been noted. Examination of the PCC and Standing Committee Minutes was not part of the remit of the Visitation.

8. What is the anticipated planned giving for 2017 and what steps are being taken to increase this?

The parish estimate that Planned Giving for 2017 will be about £6000. The parish report that they would like to be in a position where they have a month's reserve in the bank but cannot achieve that at present.

A discussion with the Diocesan Parish Stewardship Officer is reported in Question 4 above.

Comment

It is not clear whether this discussion has yet taken place. One month's reserve in the bank would in itself be a very fragile position to be in but this is only an aspiration and it is difficult to know how this can be achieved in the current circumstances.

9. How do the Vicar and Churchwardens lead on and use the MAP process (or equivalent) to develop the ministry and mission of the church.

One of the Churchwardens (Winsome Thomas) reported that she takes the lead on this – with the Standing Committee and the Parish MAP Group. She reported that a SWOT analysis of parish life has been undertaken. The main current priorities were declared to be (a) addressing the Visitation and (b) resolving the issues with the heating.

Comment

When completing the Articles of Enquiry in 2016 the Wardens named a number of activities that were taking place in the life of the church but there is no evidence that any of these are currently being sustained. This raises significant issues about the capacity of the parish to move forward. The churchwardens and other officers have rarely been present on a Sunday since the Visitation began and certainly not before the start of the service. The day to day life of the parish has been kept going (and has been for some time) by the Reader. It was noticeable that in discussing this question the Incumbent was virtually silent (as she was for most of the meeting). Whilst it may have seemed prudent to allow the Treasurer and one of the Churchwardens to take the lead on addressing the financial questions (although this is far from ideal in the life of the parish) it was surprising that little contribution was offered by way of evidence in the leadership of the church in mission and ministry.

Summary

The comments made at the end of the discussion of each question lead to the following conclusions and concerns.

- (a) The parish does not show evidence of financial viability and cannot meet its current debts. It is only one-off gifts and loans that have meant that some have been paid in recent months.
- (b) The parish has for the last ten years (or more) been sustained by its financial reserves which have now been all but expended and cannot be relied on in future.
- (c) The parish has no realistic possibility of being able to pay its Parish Pledge in 2016 and 2017 (notwithstanding significant arrears in Fairer Shares payments from previous years). The Pledge is noteworthy for being one of the very lowest across the whole Diocese.
- (d) There has been in the past a serious deficiency in financial record keeping which makes financial planning difficult and means that the PCC cannot exercise its proper oversight of this aspect of parochial life.
- (e) This deficiency may be one (but not the only) reason why in regard to an external contractor and to the Diocesan Office cheques have been written and direct debits issued with insufficient funds in the account for them to be cleared. Another contractor and an external adviser have also reported very late payment or non-payment of bills.
- (f) The incumbent and parish officers have not provided evidence of realistic ways in which the financial and wider life of the parish can be turned round.
- (g) There are serious questions about the capacity of the parish as life now stands to develop and grow. The congregation is small and cold. There are discrepancies through 2016 as to how many attendees and communicants have been present on a Sunday.
- (h) The church plant is in a fragile state and the hall roof leaks badly and the electrical system may be dangerous. The parish have resisted an offer to have this inspected.
- (i) There are repeated themes of breakdowns in relationships (especially with Hall users) and difficulties in communicating with the Incumbent or Parish officers especially by phone or e-mail.
- (j) It has to be noted that in a lengthy discussion with church officers on January 17th 2017 the lead was taken by one of the Churchwardens and the Treasurer. The Incumbent made very few contributions and one Churchwarden was silent throughout.

Appendix A: Timeline of events

The context of initial requests for meeting with the Incumbent, Churchwardens and Treasurer was related (a) to draft annual accounts showing that the parish was in a parlous financial position and (b) to an alert from an external contractor that payments to him had been returned due to insufficient funds in the parish's account and (c) to the fact that several modest payments to the (then) Diocesan Fairer Shares Scheme had been declined for similar reasons.

2016

- 15th April A request was made to the Incumbent, Churchwardens and Treasurer to meet with the Archdeacon of Croydon, the Diocesan Secretary and Diocesan Director of Finance. The incumbent declines this – stating that she was prepared only to meet with the Archdeacon (alone). A request to reconsider this was ignored.
- 12th May A further request for a similar meeting to be held in June was made. The incumbent declined to attend – suggesting that the Churchwardens and Treasurer could do so. In the event, only one of the Churchwardens was available.
- 26th October Notification of an Episcopal Visitation was sent to the incumbent and included in the letter the outline reasons for the Visitation and with it a list of parish records, registers and documents which would need to be made available
- 7th November The Incumbent (with her PA) met the Diocesan Director of Finance and the Archdeacon of Croydon at the church and handed to them parish registers and the church keys, but none of the other documents.
- 13th November The Treasurer handed the Archdeacon of Croydon a bundle of unsorted papers. On sorting these the Director of Finance reported that a significant number of the items originally requested were still missing. Various requests were made for these again – including offers to help with collecting/delivering these if that expedited matters.
- 12th December One of the Churchwardens delivered a further bundle of papers to the Director of Finance at the Diocesan Office – although once these had been sorted several key documents were still found to be missing.
- 20th December An initial report based on the Director of Finance's scrutiny of documents as received was sent to the Incumbent, Wardens and Treasurer requesting a meeting to discuss the report as soon as possible in the New Year.
- 22nd December The Archdeacon of Croydon was informed that the Incumbent was about to leave that day for the States (until 9th January) as was one of the Churchwardens (who was not available under after the 16th January) and a meeting could only be arranged after that date.

2017

- 17th January A meeting of the Incumbent, Wardens and Treasurer with the Archdeacon, Diocesan Secretary and Diocesan Director of Finance was arranged for this day. It was explained that notes would be taken and written up from the meeting and then circulated to those present for agreement/amendment.
- 22nd January Notes from the meeting were sent to all parties present
- 27th January Receipt of the notes by the parish was acknowledged with a promise to respond 'as soon as possible'.
- 11th February The Bishop and Archdeacon of Croydon prepared a report for the Bishop of Southwark (on his return from a visit to Zimbabwe). As nothing had been heard from those present at the meeting, silence was taken as assent to its accuracy as 20 days since sending it had now elapsed.

Visitation Spring Park All Saints: Bishop of Southwark's Directions

These directions arise out of the Visitation Report and written consent to them will be seen as a pre-requisite for lifting the Inhibition and concluding the Visitation, as set out in an accompanying letter from the Archdeacon of Croydon.

1. The Report is given to the Incumbent, Churchwardens and Treasurer and discussed with them by whomsoever the Diocesan Bishop directs.
2. The Report is distributed to the members of the PCC and a PCC meeting is called at which the Archdeacon discusses the report with the PCC (the Area Dean also being present).
3. A supervisor is identified to work with the Incumbent, meeting at least monthly to oversee and direct their work for up to nine months.
4. The Archdeacon or Area Deanto attend meetings of the PCC for up to nine months to help facilitate the development of the effective working of the PCC, the Incumbent being in the Chair.
5. Officers at Trinity House work with and oversee officers from the parish to establish robust financial systems and reporting - including setting of a budget.
6. Monthly financial reports are provided to the Director of Finance (or his appointee) for scrutiny.
7. Within four weeks, information is provided as to the arrangements for
 - (a) The payment of utility bills for 2017
 - (b) The payment of insurance premiums for the church and hall for November 2016 onwards
8. Within four weeks an accurate report is provided of the current position as regards to the parish's financial reserves.
9. An electrical inspection of the Church Hall is carried out as soon as possible by a qualified and competent person, nominated by the Archdeacon. The Diocesan Office will bear the cost of the inspection and report. Until such time as this is completed and essential works undertaken the Hall should be out of use.
10. A clear and realistic plan for payment of the 2017 Parish Pledge of £3000 should be in place within three months and evidence of payment tracked.

11. Further directions may be issued as a result of matters that arise from the implementation of Directions 1 - 10 above.

A handwritten signature, possibly "W. Thomas", written in black ink.

H. Barrie

W. Thomas

A handwritten signature, possibly "R. Barrie", written in black ink.



The Diocese of
Southwark

Croydon Episcopal Area

The Venerable Christopher Skilton
Archdeacon of Croydon

St Matthew's House
100 George Street
Croydon
CR0 1PJ

s 020 8256 9633
e christopher.skilton@southwark.anglican.org

www.southwark.anglican.org

Revd Yvonne Clarke
All Saints Vicarage
1 Farm Drive
Croydon
Surrey CR0 8HX

20th February 2017

Dear Yvonne

Visitation - All Saints Spring Park

The Bishop of Croydon and I, acting as his Commissaries, have made a Report to the Bishop of Southwark following the Visitation and we have been supported in this process by the Diocesan Secretary and the Diocesan Director of Finance.

The Bishop of Southwark has now instructed me to send this Report to you and to the Churchwardens and Treasurer. He has issued a series of Directions which follow from the Report itself and these are also enclosed. The Bishop has asked for a written signed undertaking to abide by and co-operate with the implementation of these Directions. He will be prepared to lift the Inhibition within seven days of receipt of this undertaking.

This letter is being sent electronically to the circulation named below, with a hard copy posted today to yourself, the Churchwardens and the Treasurer. The Area Dean and I will be available to discuss the Report with you, the Church Officers and (following Direction 2) the PCC.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Skilton

Chris Skilton, Archdeacon of Croydon

c.c. Winsome Thomas & Mohamed Barrie, Churchwardens
Robert Dube, Hon Treasurer
The Bishop of Southwark
The Bishop of Croydon
Mr Paul Morris, Diocesan Registrar
Ruth Martin, Diocesan Secretary
Tony Demby, Diocesan Director of Finance

All Saints Spring Park – Interim Report following the end of the Visitation

The Visitation at All Saints Spring Park and the Inhibition of the Incumbent ended on 30th April 2017 and eleven directions were issued by the Bishop of Southwark to be implemented in the nine months following (i.e. January 31st 2018).

The Archdeacon and Area Dean met with the Vicar and Churchwardens on 21st May 2017 to discuss implementation and were assured that these were distributed to the PCC for their information. The Archdeacon and/or Area Dean have attended the subsequent meetings of the PCC. The Area Dean attended on July 9th and was informed that the Directions had been distributed and discussed and that there were no plans to discuss them that day. The PCC meeting of September 17th was subsumed into an Open Meeting being held as part of “Well Being and Revival of the Soul” and there is no record of business conducted at that.

There was an additional meeting of the PCC on October 1st to appoint a new Treasurer about which we were not informed.

A full meeting of the PCC was held on 19th November and the 2016 accounts were distributed with some brief explanation. The main focus on the meeting was a time of **Bible** Study for the PCC Members.

Church Attendance

Numbers remain low. Gabby Parikh (Stewardship Officer) had been invited to preach a Stewardship Sermon on 10th September. There were six in the congregation for the main part of the service: this rose to twelve by the end as some arrived for a Standing Committee meeting.

I attended worship (unannounced) on 19th November. For the majority of the service there were 12 adults and 2 children in church (2 of the adults and one child were present for the first time to enquire about a baptism). Another adult and child arrived just in time to receive communion and two further adults arrived for the blessing (both coming to the PCC). I have not had access to the register to see how many were recorded for each Sunday.

I also visited the “Autumn Coffee Morning” on 5th November for which fliers had been prepared. For the 45 minutes that I was there around 12.00 there were six other people present.

Supervision

Since May, the Incumbent has been meeting regularly at about monthly intervals with the AB of E Diocese. AB contacted me recently to say that she wished the December meeting (12th December) to be the last one as she was not sure where else she could take discussions. I agreed to this – although the Incumbent has the offer from AB to phone or arrange to meet if she would like to. Following that meeting, AB is going to write a report for me which I will forward when it is available.

Stewardship and Finance

The securing of parish finances got off to a slow start because CD was appointed as Treasurer at the APCM and didn't undertake the task and didn't meet with Tony Demby as repeatedly requested. He and the parish parted company in September and subsequently FG has been appointed and he did meet with Tony Demby on 31st October. Tony has been trying to secure a follow up meeting with

him. FG has overseen the production of the 2016 accounts – although there are a number of details arising from them which need clarification. The accounts are not helped by the fact that Fairer Shares arrears from 2012-15 are shown as a parish debt (which technically they are not) and investigation of other creditors needs to be clarified. It is understood (but not demonstrated) that insurance and utilities have been/are being paid.

In each of 2016 and 2017 (and again for 2018) the parish have made a PSF pledge of £3000. In 2016, £1750 was paid. As at 7th December this year, nothing had been received for 2017.

The parish accounts for 2014 and 2015 have been prepared and the parish have insisted that they have been signed off by their Independent Examiner (despite a statement to the contrary by the Finance Team at Trinity House). A phone call to the Examiner has confirmed that they have not been signed off by them.

A budget for 2018 is awaited but the parish are almost at the limit of their reserves and kept afloat in 2017 by one or two generous one-off donations. Gabby Parikh confirmed that the level of financial information at the time of her work with the parish was patchy and poor – although this was before the new Treasurer was appointed.

Buildings

There has been no substantial repairs to the Hall but willing volunteers have patched as best they are able. A full electrical report on the church and hall were made. The large hall is still out of use.

The parish have had a meeting with a firm of architects about the possibility of developing the Hall site, recognising that it is not fit for purpose. The architects have come back with a detailed proposal of what would be involved in getting to a successful planning application stage – which sets out costings of about £60k + VAT. There has been no evidence beyond the enthusiasm for this that the parish has any realistic idea of where the funding for this would come from and it would appear to be of a piece with the many unfulfilled dreams.

Note

I have resisted interventions at this stage because we explicitly gave the parish nine months to put into practice the processes and procedures which the Directions sought. However, it can be noted that several of them after seven and a half months remain unfulfilled.

Chris Skilton 16.12.17

**Meeting with All Saints, Spring Park
at the Croydon Episcopal Area Office
on 21.01.2019**

Present: The Rt Revd Jonathan Clark, Bishop of Croydon
The Venerable Moira Astin, Assistant Archdeacon of Croydon
The Revd Yvonne Clarke
AC - parish representative
CW - parish representative

Notetaker: Susan Wheeler, PA to the Archdeacons

Bp Jonathan: Need to have discussions around Shirley, and particularly All Saints which will be affected most. Referred to Bishop's Visitation and the issues around finances. Significant concerns around financial capacity of All Saints. Looking at the whole area of Shirley and CofE Ministry in the area. Attached briefing paper plus map and MAPs for St John's and St George's. All this documentation will go out for consultation. Papers handed out to those present.

Need to start conversations with incumbents, PCCs, CWs and Area Deans of the deanery and AMPC and DMPC. All responses will be considered, together with info from Visitation and they will consider whether there are any proposals they wish to make as a result of the consultation.

MA: Will be acting in CS place to chair AMPC in February which will kickstart the consultation. Then the whole church, diocese, archdeaconry, deanery and local churches will need to find a solution. Will consider how we address the need to minister in the area. PCCs will then be visited and then AMPC will meet again to consider findings/feedback. Not clear to MA that ASSP is financially viable in the long term. Charities commission does not allow non-viable financially supportive.

AMPC may then meet a 3rd time and make proposals to DMPC.

MA: we don't know what the outcomes will be, can't because consultation not been done yet. However, financial insolvency and costs of £79,000 for incumbent with ASSP only contributing £3,000. One solution could be for Shirley to have 2, not 3 incumbents. Post at ASSP could become redundant with compensation of stipend and housing payable for a minimum of 1 year. Pastoral measures indicate such a situation should be advised to any person possibly affected at the earliest possible stage.

On the timescales, if redundancy is an outcome, there is a six month delay before the 1 year minimum.

AC: What are the other solutions/outcomes possible.

Bp J: We don't know at this stage. Would like to hear from other parishes.

CW:

YC: When Visitation first came about, this was the feeling of the parish at the time and parish wondered what the Visitation was all about.

Bp J: There are significant queries about the proposal which I have about the

CW: This is not something yesterday, or a month ago, this was in place some time ago.

MA: We were still not clear that what was in place was a financial entity. Even if money freed up to do work on the church, it doesn't free up money to use ongoing. It would be possible to be a daughter church in one of the other parishes and share a priest. We cannot be in a situation where AD has to find money to pay bills.

YC: Want to be clear about the history. The Visitation done was awful. It was same year as MDR. People are still feeling hurt. Shrublands situation. It doesn't look good for the diocese and we need to be aware of that.

Racial thing was with Bishop Wilfred?

There was no Visitation about money.

MA: The recent Visitation involved trying to get the finances from the parish which took some time. Eventually when the Finance Dept obtained figures they advised it did not look financially viable.

CW: All this talking going on, people are being pushed away. People think Shirley is a rich place but ASSP sits between the rich and the poor with Shrublands on the doorstep. I don't see community being built up all I see is money being talked about. We need community to be brought back together as it was before.

Bp J: Up to now diocese is supporting ASSP up to £75,000 pa. It is the most financially subsidised parish in the diocese by a long way.

AC: No one has said how can we solve this problem together.

Bp J: This is a discussion document. Please

MA: Even if, as it stood, there was a certain amount of capital applied to make the building more useful (not sure planning permissions would be given) even if given, not aware of any church able to raise enough income from buildings to make themselves financially viable.

Bp J: There is no proposal. We need to mention

MA: We said no PCC of ASSP. As charity trustees, you have a direct liability of any costs incurred. As a diocese we have an important role to help you see this. There

is a whole issue around charity law as well as whether this particular PCC has the capacity to promote the mission in the parish.

YC: A MAP was sent in.

Bp J: Not one on diocesan records. Please send again.

YC: Was this on the cards at time of Visitation?

Bp J: No. The Visitation happened for various reasons. Mainly financial: PSF giving went down. £250 per month payment was bouncing. Diocese worried over this. Organ repairs; utility bills. Those were the reasons the Visitation happened. It lasted longer than we wanted because of the length of time taken by the parish to provide the paperwork requested.

CS report summarised serious concerns which Bp J read out.

After Visitation happened, and only after CS wrote his final report that the conclusion was drawn that this conversation needed to happen.

Bp J; Received or not, that's the reason this consultation is happening. Each new thing has been in response to what has happened before.

MA: Visitation Report was sent to YC in February 2017. Interim report written to Bp J. Final one written in Oct. 2018.

It's important to be clear about the situation. We don't have a particular solution but we know we need to have a solution. It's not viable at the moment, consultation needs to answer what can be done both financially and pastorally.

YC: You mentioned about the directions. Would this be in +C direction. This is the first time I've met with yourself and there are a lot of things pastorally, hurt and pain, which I have to deal with. People in the congregation are asking what is going on. Journalists are asking questions. We have to be very careful. Had we had a chance to talk about things during the Visitation, . . . care. I've asked over the years to talk about things and nothing has come.

I asked to see CS on a one-to-one basis. Never seen anyone in the past. Need to talk to the people, knowing what I know, having to preach. Some things about our giving is wrong. I asked if we could talk. In my MDR I said this. I said I wanted to talk to the Archdeacon and nothing. We asked Bp Christopher - nothing. I am speaking as a priest now.

CW: Coming up with what is written here, it's been a lengthy process of talking before the paper is put together. This is the first time for the Vicar seeing this. Other things mentioned today, not dealt with before. There are things coming out on both sides . . . Everything comes back to money concerns.

AC: General lack of care shown.

YC: This paper will be explosive at the PCC. I've never had a chance to talk to anyone. No one. I've been sitting down, organising meetings, looking at the sustainability of the parish. From the beginning I've said to the parish that they're not doing fundraising. The quota came up . . .

Bp J: Racism issue. The way it's recorded in the files, Bp Wilfrid records it as a Visitation.

YC: Interesting. People are hurt. Unity service - comments still being made. I heard them. From the time diocese said posts had to go - ASSP has been targeted all along.

Bp J: Can't dictate how people feel. Diocese doesn't need to cut posts now - they've already been done. In relationship to ASSP it's about whether it is financially viable as a parish. That's the evidence we've gathered from various quarters. Now we're starting a conversation. We're being open about where we're coming from. There is a whole process to go through with plenty of other people involved - CS, MA and I cannot dictate the outcome. We are starting a conversation. In terms of pastoral care, I'd be very happy to facilitate someone if you would like that - I understand MA and I may not be the right people for you at this present time.

At the moment, I want to say we want to have as open a conversation as possible so that we consider all the possible and different options.

YC: I can correct this information also?

MA: Absolutely.

CW: There is so much to say - I want to say.

AC: What happens if find some solutions -

MA: AMPC will consider this initial paper on 28 February. They have not seen this. We want to take a paper that's factual as possible. After that meeting, I will visit the PCCs. Then AMPC will meet again to consider any proposals put forward.

CW: Shrublands community consider ASSP their church. For it not to be there any more would be another matter altogether.

MA: There are all sorts of solutions which don't close the building itself.

YC: Just to be clear - even if the PCC was to get some money from somewhere, it still would not be a viable parish?

MA: What I'm saying is that the figures I see at the moment, and from the information in the Visitation does not show it's viable.

YC: At the end of the day blame has to lie somewhere.

Bp J: There are big problems.

AC: It just feels overly negative.

YC: I'll make sure MAP is sent through for ASSP.

AC: Can we have a copy of the final report.

Bp J: I would have to ask Bishop Christopher.

YC: MAP - given to Jenny Rowley with Articles of Enquiry. Not dated.

AC: Not togetherness.

YC: Will send you the MAP.

MA: Next meeting is AMPC on 28 February. The report needs to be correct by then.



The Diocese of
Southwark

The Bishop of Southwark

The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun

Trinity House
4 Chapel Court
Borough High Street
London
SE1 1HW

t 020 7939 9420
f 0843 2906 894

The Revd Yvonne Clarke
All Saints Vicarage
1 Farm Drive
Croydon
Surrey CR0 8HX

e bishop.christopher@southwark.anglican.org
www.southwark.anglican.org

20 April 2017

Dear Yvonne

Conclusion of visitation

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of the signed copy of the Declarations which was received via the Archdeacon of Croydon on the afternoon of 19th April. I am now prepared to determine that the Visitation is concluded and the Inhibition will be lifted as from the date of this letter.

The matters which you raised in your letter of 18th April will be referred to the Archdeacon of Croydon who will reply in more detail on his return from leave at the beginning of May.

I understand that the Area Dean will preside at the service at All Saints on April 23rd at which she will announce that you will be returning to public ministry on Sunday 30th April. On that Sunday the Archdeacon will be present at the beginning of the service in order to read a statement which will have been agreed between the Diocesan Registrar and Catherine Shelley during the course of next week.

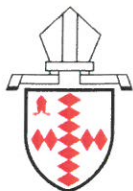
At the beginning of May the Archdeacon will arrange to meet with you and the Parish Officers to work through the implications of the Directions that I have issued. He and the Area Dean will also meet with the newly elected Church Council to talk through the Directions with them (as set out in Direction 2).

With best wishes

Yours sincerely,

The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun
Bishop of Southwark

Cc. Archdeacon of Croydon



The Diocese of
Southwark

Croydon Episcopal Area

The Venerable Christopher Skilton
Archdeacon of Croydon

St Matthew's House
100 George Street
Croydon
CR0 1PJ

s 020 8256 9633
e christopher.skilton@southwark.anglican.org

www.southwark.anglican.org

The Revd Yvonne Clarke
All Saints Vicarage
1 Farm Drive
Croydon
Surrey
CR0 8HX

04 May 2017

Dear Yvonne

Thank you for your letter to the Bishop of Southwark of 18th April which he has asked me to reply to on his behalf.

With the Directions having been agreed and signed it was good to be able to be at the church last Sunday (30th April) to confirm that the Visitation has been brought to an end and the inhibition lifted.

In response to the particular questions that you asked of the Bishop in your letter, there is no statutory code of conduct of the kind you request in relation to Episcopal Visitations, but the power of Visitation is long established in Ecclesiastical law. The Bishop of Southwark, the Bishop of Croydon and I have, of course, been advised by the Diocesan Registrar.

With regard to the possibility of further directions, it is always open to a Bishop to give directions to a member of the clergy. Sometimes this may be pursuant to a specific statutory power, and on other occasions it may be in keeping with the Oath of Canonical Obedience made by all clergy to their Diocesan Bishop.

I do hope your return to active parish ministry will be happy and fruitful.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Skilton
Archdeacon of Croydon

c.c. The Bishop of Southwark (by e-mail only)
Catherine Shelley, Lee Bolton Monier-Williams (by e-mail only)

The future of Church of England ministry in Shirley

The three parishes of St John and St George Shirley and All Saints Spring Park cover a single social entity, insofar as is ever possible in an urban environment. To the north and east the borough (which is also in part diocesan) boundary forms a natural limit. To the south and west there is primarily open land of various kinds. To the east The Beck marks the boundary between Shirley and West Wickham. The parishes are predominantly residential, mostly suburban detached and semi-detached houses with a former local authority estate at Shrublands, and the majority of the site of the Royal Bethlem Hospital, both in the parish of All Saints. The A232 runs through the middle of Shirley and is both a busy trunk route and the main location of shopping and local facilities. The following page briefly illustrates the geographical relationship of the churches and parishes, alongside some information on population and congregations.

Each parish has a full-time stipendiary incumbent. Reflecting its more prosperous population and higher attendance figures, St John's makes an annual contribution to the Parish Support Fund of £78000, with nothing outstanding. St George's and All Saints are demographically similar, and according to the figures provided their worshipping congregations are not extremely dissimilar (82 and 48 respectively). The difference in PSF contribution is dramatic: St George's contributed £36000 in 2018 (with nothing outstanding). All Saints made a contribution of £3000, and has £57280.91 outstanding.

All Saints Spring Park

According to the Parish Dashboard, the worshipping community figure at All Saints went from nearly 140 in 2015 to about 35 in 2016, and back up to just over 60 in 2017. During this time the Electoral Roll was virtually unchanged at just over 100. Over the same period the usual Sunday attendance declined from just over 60 to 48 (a number significantly higher than was observed in church by the archdeacon and diocesan stewardship officer, on separate occasions). Despite the enquiry conducted under the Bishop's Visitation in 2016-2017 the financial position of All Saints remains unclear. The parish continues to record an annual deficit, as it has every year since at least 2007, and appears to have no significant financial reserves. The final report on the Visitation concluded that 'there are serious financial concerns and questions which need to be put to the parish about a) financial viability going forward; b) capacity for the office of Treasurer and the associated tasks of accurate financial recording and monitoring and c) capacity within the PCC to set financial and missional goals which are related and sustainable.'

In this connection it is important to recognise that All Saints PCC acknowledges that the Church Hall is at the end of its useful life and extensive work needs to be undertaken to the church building. The incumbent has raised concerns about the long-term future of the current parsonage in Bridle Road. The PCC have been working with Ablett Architects and discussed a draft scoping proposal with the Archdeacon of Croydon in December 2018. The parish are probably right in identifying that the best solution would be for some land to be sold for development (part Parsonage, part parish) – the sum of the whole probably being more than two separate parts. The parish envisage using their proceeds from a sale to fund repairing to the church building and creating meeting facilities within the church building. The Diocese would be invited to buy a further section of PCC land to build a new parsonage.

The scheme has some merit, given the state of the existing buildings; the Property Department have been asked to bring forward the Conditions Survey of the parsonage to early 2019. The Quinquennial Inspection of the church is also due in 2019 and this will give a detailed description of the state of the church and what is needed to address those matters identified. But significant concerns have been fed back to the parish that funding of the project is a serious issue given that the Diocese is not

in a position to fund work related to the scoping or development of proposals. It is unclear how the parish would fund this work given the finances as reported.

Further the current ball-park estimate is that the parish will receive about £500k from the development: this is unlikely to be sufficient to fund repair of the church and replication of hall facilities inside the church building. It appears from the proposal as developed so far that this sum is based on the parish receiving all the benefit from the development, and does not include the costs of providing a new parsonage (to quote, "On our initial scoping outline appraisal, 9 houses (without building the vicarage) could deliver a modest receipt in excess of £500,000"). This would not be possible, as proceeds from the sale of the vicarage would have to be paid into the Parsonages Fund. Equally *ultra vires* is the assumption that "on the sale of the land the SDBF will then automatically fund the repairs / extension works to the Church?"

Given that the church is a listed building unaltered since it was built, there may also be difficulties with the heritage bodies in making serious interventions in it. The parish will need to respond to these concerns before it would be possible to go any further.

Despite the desire to move forward that is expressed through this proposal, it reinforces rather than reduces the principal issue faced by the church in the Shirley and Spring Park area, the lack of organisational and financial robustness at All Saints, with a consequent lack of capacity to serve the parish in mission.

St John Shirley

St John's is a robust parish which covers the full costs of its incumbent. Electoral Roll numbers have remained steady and high, though Sunday attendance has gradually declined. The parish primary school is an increasing focus for the parish's ministry. The parish does have a relatively small population, particularly for a suburban area (5100 in 2011), and the parish boundaries between St John's and St George's don't reflect the key dividing line of the A232. There is no natural boundary between St John's parish on its border with All Saints (the major residential part of which is also south of the A232).

St George Shirley

St George's has seen encouraging signs of growth in recent years, with small increases in Electoral Roll, worshipping community and usual Sunday attendance. While not as prosperous as St John's, its finances are sound and there is consistent investment in mission in the parish. The only issue that requires discussion is that of the parish boundary with St John's. The majority of the parish of All Saints which borders St George's is the site of the Royal Bethlem Hospital.

In the light of these factors, and any others that they may wish to bring forward, interested parties are invited to comment and propose solutions which would enable the church to offer consistent and effective ministry throughout the Shirley and Spring Park area. The Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee will consider this paper and responses to it at its meeting on Thursday 28 February 2019.

MA/sew
08.02.2019

Consultation on the future of Church of England ministry in Shirley

At the Croydon Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee on 28th February 2019, the attached paper on the future of the Church of England in Shirley (Appendix 1) was discussed. The meeting agreed to commission Ven Moira Astin, Archdeacon of Reigate and Assistant Archdeacon of Croydon, in the latter capacity, to meet with the PCCs of the three Shirley churches to get their views on the paper. These meetings were held during May to July 2019. At each both the Ven Astin and Revd Jenny Rowley the Area Dean of Addington Deanery attended.

As well as attending the PCC of each of the three churches to hear a discussion of the matters, the PCCs were invited to send a response or the minutes of the discussion. St George's Shirley and St John's Shirley sent through the minute of the discussion, but All Saints Spring Park have not done so yet. This paper is based on the written responses as well as the discussions.

St George Shirley, meeting 25/5/19

Questions about the paper included whether the right area was being considered, since many people worship in a parish other than the one they live in. Concerns were expressed about the clergy being accessible, and the needs of the Royal Bethlem Hospital.

After discussion the meeting agreed that limiting the consultation to the Shirley churches was fair, that the matter of clergy accessibility was more to do with the current housing for the St George's Vicar and that the ministry needs of the Royal Bethlem Hospital was a matter for the NHS in the first instance.

The meeting then discussed other ways of staffing the ministry of the Church of England in Shirley and suggested having two parishes, broadly north and south of the A232 which bisects Shirley. Stipendiary ministry of two incumbents and one Associate priest to assist in both parishes, or a Pioneer Minister were proposed.

St John's Shirley, meeting 24/6/19

The discussion covered the following points:

1. The current strength of congregation/PCC and financial position of All Saints is such that revitalising the parish of All Saints in its current form may no longer be an option, irrespective of assistance that could be provided by St John's and St George's.
2. Notwithstanding a dwindling congregation, to declare All Saints a redundant church is not a preferred option as it should be possible to maintain some form of worship there. There is a real need to look after, as one member put it, 'the forgotten' who had left the church over the past years and also the many others within the parish boundaries.
3. Given the likelihood that the existing hall at All Saints may have to be pulled down, it was suggested that the Church building be converted for multipurpose use. This appeared to have broad support within St John's PCC with concerns expressed re practicality given re the Grade Two listed status of the building and the funding needed. It was noted that redevelopment opportunities exist but these would have to exclude the Vicarage as it is a parsonage, and so any money coming from its redevelopment would need to go towards other parsonages, and not be available for local use.

4. The possibility of a realignment of parish boundaries was discussed with Shirley being divided into two parishes, St John's and St George's, with All Saints ceasing to exist in its own right. A logical geographical split would appear to be along the line of the A232 main road.
5. Should line mapping as described above take place, the position of Vicar of All Saints would no longer exist. It was suggested that a specialist youth worker may best suit the needs of the parishes within Shirley and that the input of St George's to the discussion would be welcomed.
6. It was recognised that if this happened St John's PCC would then have the responsibility for All Saints' church building, but it was felt that the PCC was strong enough to take on this responsibility, perhaps by having a sub committee, which could also have St George's members on it.

All Saints Spring Park, meeting 10/07/19

Discussion of the document included suggesting that financial measures are not the most important. Also the demographic of the parish has changed and is significantly more disadvantaged, and so the basis of the consultation document was flawed.

A discussion of what 'Mission' is followed, with various suggestions including offering legal support to people facing deportation.

It was important to the PCC of All Saints that the church was not closed for worship, but no particular proposals for a different way forward were made.

The Croydon AMPC is invited to receive and reflect on the suggestions made by the three PCCs and to make recommendations to the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee on the future of ministry in Shirley.

Possible ways forward include:

	Suggestion	Pros	Cons
1	No change to the current Parish Boundaries and Staffing	Avoids the financial and organisational costs of changing parish boundaries and re designating clergy posts Existing parishes continue with plans for growth and mission	This does not address viability issues at All Saints, and consequent questions about effective pastoral ministry in that parish It retains existing parish boundaries between St George and St John which do not reflect local geography
2	Just change the parish boundaries between St John's and St George's, to move the road in St John's Parish north of the A232	Avoids the financial and organisational costs of changing parish boundaries and re designating clergy posts	This does not address viability issues at All Saints, and consequent questions about effective pastoral ministry in that parish

		<p>Resolves the parish boundaries between St George's and St John's which do not reflect local geography, particularly the way the A232 cuts through Shirley</p> <p>Existing parishes continue with plans for growth and mission</p>	<p>St John's Parish becomes very small</p>
3	<p>Form a Team Ministry in Shirley with the parishes retained within it, with no parish boundary changes</p>	<p>Each parish still has a priest of incumbent status, to lead in mission</p>	<p>Viability of All Saints' PCC as a charity is not addressed</p> <p>It retains existing parish boundaries between St George and St John which do not reflect local geography</p>
4	<p>Form a Team Ministry in Shirley with only one parish, and one PCC, and DCCs for each church</p>	<p>With one PCC, the financial viability of the Church in the area is pooled</p> <p>The churches can share the expertise of the members across all the churches</p> <p>The boundaries of areas within the parish can more easily be changed</p>	<p>Challenge to decide which post would be the Team Rector's post</p> <p>Team ministries have a chequered history – laity and clergy often find it harder to relate to a team than to an individual church</p>
5	<p>Rearrange parish boundaries so that there are 2 parishes in Shirley: one to the north of the A232 - St George's and one to the south - St John's with All Saints Spring Park, with a Vicar in each parish and an Assistant Priest in St John's with All Saints Spring Park</p>	<p>Addresses the fact that Spring Park is not viable as a charity</p> <p>More clergy time focused on mission, since one clergy will not have the responsibilities of running a parish</p>	<p>Cost of re-organisation to the Diocese</p> <p>New Mission Action Plans will be needed for the newly organised parishes</p> <p>St John's alone would be the PCC which picks up the challenge of All Saints Spring Park building issues</p>

Appendix 1

The Future of the church of England in Shirley

The three parishes of St John and St George Shirley and All Saints Spring Park cover a single social entity, insofar as is ever possible in an urban environment. To the north and east the borough (which is also in part diocesan) boundary forms a natural limit. To the south and west there is primarily open land of various kinds. To the east The Beck marks the boundary between Shirley and West Wickham. The parishes are predominantly residential, mostly suburban detached and semi-detached houses with a former local authority estate at Shrublands, and the majority of the site of the Royal Bethlem Hospital, both in the parish of All Saints. The A232 runs through the middle of Shirley and is both a busy trunk route and the main location of shopping and local facilities. The following page briefly illustrates the geographical relationship of the churches and parishes, alongside some information on population and congregations.

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the church and what is needed to address those matters identified. But significant concerns have been fed back to the parish that funding of the project is a serious issue given that the Diocese is not in a position to fund work related to the scoping or development of proposals. It is unclear how the parish would fund this work given the finances as reported.

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St John Shirley

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In the light of these factors, and any others that they may wish to bring forward, interested parties are invited to comment and propose solutions which would enable the church to offer consistent and effective ministry throughout the Shirley and Spring Park area. The Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee will consider this paper and responses to it at its meeting on Thursday 28 February 2019.

Croydon Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee

4th September 2019

Summary of meeting held before the formal meeting of the Croydon AMPC

Context

The Archdeacon of Reigate chaired a meeting of the Croydon AMPC in February 2019 which started an exploration of the provision of Church of England ministry in Shirley (Addington Deanery). She was asked by the meeting to write a discussion paper for consideration at a future AMPC, having prior to this met with the PCCs of the three churches in Shirley (St George Shirley, St John Shirley, All Saints Spring Park). St John's and St George's subsequently sent copies of the minutes of those meetings in preparation for the writing of a paper. All Saints tabled an abridged version of their minutes at this meeting, pending their acceptance by the PCC later in September.

This meeting provided an opportunity for the three parishes to respond to the Archdeacon of Reigate's paper with the members of the Croydon AMPC present. The clergy of the three parishes were present at the meeting along with at least one churchwarden from each parish and representatives of the PCCs and congregations.

Discussion

The Archdeacon of Reigate briefly introduced her paper. In the discussion and questions that followed (lasting about an hour) the following points were made by the parishes:

All Saints Spring Park

- (a) Clarification was required about what constituted the "situation in Shirley" and the context for the enquiry. *(The Archdeacon of Reigate clarified that this arose from concern about PSF pledges and finances; about information from data dashboards; questions of governance)*
- (b) The data presented was inaccurate for All Saints and did not adequately represent the parish and figures needed to be revisited and verified.
- (c) An independent report with proper analysis needed to be commissioned
- (d) There had been systematic and systemic harassment of the Incumbent over the years, including an unmerited and unexplained Inhibition and Suspension – for which an apology had never been issued. This had had a serious impact on the morale and life of the parish
- (e) The church and its clergy were regularly excluded from Diocesan life (for example the 25th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood)
- (f) The transition from Fairer Shares to the Parish Support Fund had been unfair for parishes like All Saints as the new system was about wealth creation and having the means to pay.
- (g) Numbers and giving fell during the Inhibition/Suspension when the Reader was put in charge (who has subsequently left the parish)
- (h) The parish had not been properly supported by the Deanery and the Diocese for the last twenty years
- (i) The parish has plans for the redevelopment of the site (hall and parsonage) and has met with their architect and has potential interested investors in America to enable this to happen
- (j) Parishioners would consider it a travesty to remove the church from the community
- (k) There was ongoing hostility especially from St George's – focussed on a meeting about potential changes to Diocesan funding about five years ago.

St George's Shirley

The parish did not wish to add to the substantive points made in the report and recorded in the meeting of their PCC

St John's Shirley

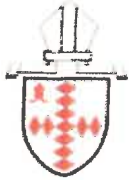
The parish made the observation that if

- (a) There are ways in which All Saints PCC can be supported going forward in their mission and ministry, St John's would be willing to be part of this;
- (b) It should be determined and discerned that there is no way forward for an independent parish, St John's would be willing to take on responsibility for the church building.

Conclusion

All Saints were asked to send in a copy of their PCC minutes as soon as possible after they had been agreed at their next PCC on September 18th.

Those who had attended on behalf of the three parishes were thanked for their attendance and their engagement in discussion. They then left the meeting and the formal meeting of the Croydon AMPC took place.



The Diocese of
Southwark

8 January 2020

To:

All Saints, Spring Park
Incumbent: The Revd Yvonne Clarke
PCC Secretary: Mr James Clarke
Patron: The Bishop of Southwark

Shirley
Incumbent: The Revd Lu Gale
PCC Secretary: Mr Tim Hastie
Patron: The Bishop of Southwark

Saint George, Shirley
Incumbent: The Revd Barry Hengist
PCC Secretary: Mrs Vivienne Windheuer
Patron: The Bishop of Southwark

Area Dean
The Revd Jenny Rowley

Deanery Lay Chair
Mrs Alice Hicks

The Bishop of Croydon
The Rt Revd Jonathan Clark

The Archdeacon of Croydon
The Ven. Christopher Skilton

The Archdeacon of Reigate
The Ven. Moira Astin

MISSION AND PASTORAL MEASURE 2011

Benefice of All Saints, Spring Park; Parishes of Shirley; and Saint George, Shirley

The Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee ("the Committee") is considering making recommendations to the Bishop under the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011. These may affect the benefice and parishes named above.

I enclose a copy of the preliminary draft proposals which the Committee has under discussion, with Notes which include a summary of what is proposed and the motivation behind the proposals.

Revd Canon Stephen Roberts
deputy diocesan secretary

Trinity House
4 Chapel Court
Borough High Street
London SE1 1HW

d 020 7939 9456
s 020 7939 9400
f 020 7939 9469

e stephen.roberts@southwark.anglican.org

www.southwark.anglican.org

Before deciding on its recommendations to the Bishop, the Committee is required to ascertain the views of all the interested parties. The Committee will consider the views of all interested parties before coming to a final decision on what, if any, recommendations it should make to the Bishop.

An incumbent or priest in charge affected by these proposals has the right under the Measure to meet representatives of the Committee or, if (s)he requests, the full Committee to present his or her views. (The Committee has a scheduled meeting on Thursday 27 February 2020 from 6 pm when it would be possible for those with a right to do so to meet the full Committee and present their views if they so desire.)

A Parochial Church Council or its appointed representative may request to meet the Committee's representatives to discuss its views.

The Area Dean and Lay Chair should note that the deanery synod is not itself an interested party but they are encouraged to keep the synod and the synod's standing committee informed about the progress of the proposals.

I should be grateful if views, together with any requests for a meeting with the Committee or its representatives, could be forwarded to me in writing as soon as possible and not later than by Friday 21 February 2020.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephen Roberts". Below the signature is a horizontal blue line.

The Revd Canon Stephen Roberts
Secretary to Southwark Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee

DIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK

MISSION AND PASTORAL MEASURE 2011

Benefice of All Saints, Spring Park; Parishes of Shirley; and Saint George, Shirley

These draft proposals provide for:

- *The dissolution of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park and its constituent parish*
- *The division of the area of its parish between the parishes of Saint George, Shirley; and Shirley (known locally as "St John, Shirley")*
- *The parish church of All Saints, Spring Park to become a chapel of ease in the parish of Shirley*
- *The transfer of the parsonage house of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park to the Southwark Diocesan Board of finance as diocesan glebe*

1. Dissolution of benefice and parish

The benefice of All Saints, Spring Park and its constituent parish shall be dissolved.

2. Alteration of areas

- i. All that part of the parish of All Saints, Spring Park which is hatched and lettered "A" on the annexed map shall be transferred to the parish of St George, Shirley.
- ii. All that part of the parish of All Saints, Spring Park which is cross-hatched and lettered "B" on the annexed map shall be transferred to the parish of Shirley.

3. Church of All Saints, Spring Park

The church of All Saints, Spring Park, being the parish church of the parish of All Saints, Spring Park, shall become a chapel of ease now in the parish of Shirley pursuant to clause 2(ii) hereof.

4. Transfer of parsonage house

The parsonage house of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park (known as All Saints Vicarage, 1 Farm Drive, Croydon, CR0 8HX) shall be transferred to the Southwark Diocesan Board of Finance as diocesan glebe.

5. Coming into effect of these proposals

If upon the date on which any Scheme arising from these proposals is made the Reverend Yvonne Veronica Clarke is incumbent of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park this Scheme shall come into operation six months thereafter; but if upon the said date the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park is vacant, or if it shall subsequently become vacant before the expiration of a period of six months this Scheme shall come into operation upon the first day of the month following the said date.

NOTES

Rationale

As the result of ongoing concerns about the financial viability and capacity for governance and mission going forward, the Bishop of Southwark held a Visitation to the parish of All Saints, Spring Park in 2016. This was conducted by the Bishop and Archdeacon of Croydon. A series of Directions were issued as a result of this, designed to help the parish to address these areas. There has sadly been no evidence that this has been the case nor has the parish demonstrated the future capacity to do so.

In early 2019 the Archdeacon of Reigate (acting in her capacity as Assistant Archdeacon of Croydon) produced a report for the Croydon Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee (AMPC) outlining proposals for the best provision for ministry and mission in Shirley. The AMPC subsequently asked her to visit each of the three Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) to discuss this. Following the visits she prepared a report for a meeting of the September 2019 AMPC reporting on her "Consultation on the Future of Church of England Ministry in Shirley" - with five possible options for the way forward. This was discussed with representatives of the three parishes and the members of the AMPC immediately before its meeting.

The AMPC considered the different options and unanimously agreed that the best way forward was for the parish of All Saints, Spring Park to be dissolved and the parish divided along the A232 road between St George, Shirley and the parish of Shirley (known locally as St John, Shirley) with the current parish church of All Saints, Spring Park becoming a chapel-of-ease of the parish of Shirley. (Should this proposal come into effect there would be scope in due time to regularise the complete parish boundaries between St John and St George along this main road).

The proposal retains All Saints Church building as a resource for new forms of ministry going forward, exploring the possibilities of pioneer ministry in due course. Whilst a post of incumbent status will be lost in the proposal, the Diocese is committed to ring-fencing the post for new expressions and forms of ministry under the supervision of the incumbent of Shirley (St John's).

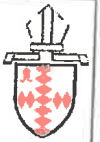
The effect of the proposal would

- (a) Enable the best provision for ministry and mission across the area of Shirley
- (b) Be rooted in the strong and established governance at St John's and St George's
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Dispossession of the Reverend Yvonne Veronica Clarke

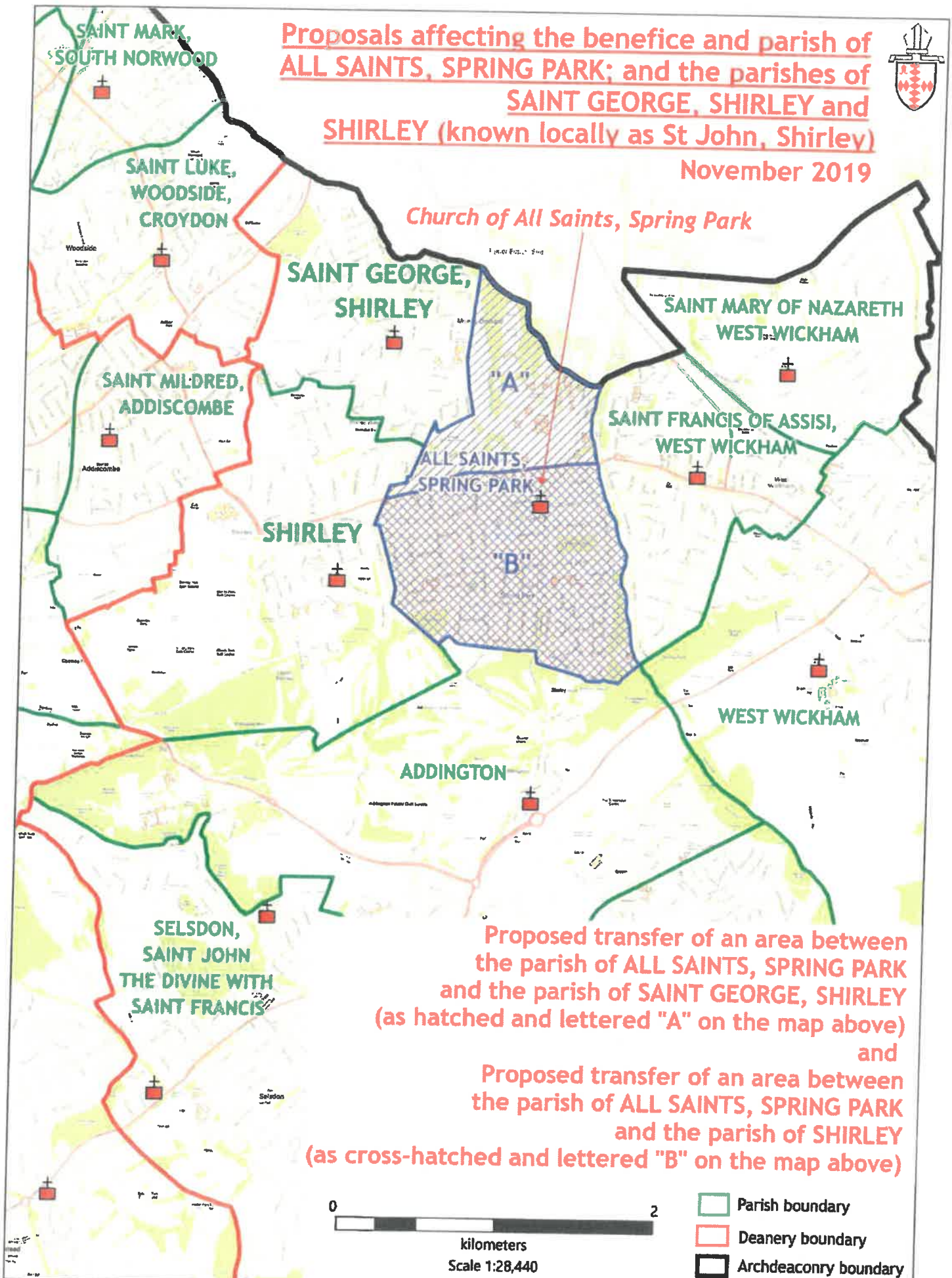
As a result of the proposed dissolution of the benefice and parish of All Saints, Spring Park as provided for in clause 1, the existing benefice and parish would cease to exist. As Ms Clarke is the incumbent of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park and her benefice would be dissolved she would be dispossessed from her current post should the Scheme take effect, and would be entitled to 12 months of her current stipend and pension contributions as a lump sum, and to be housed in suitable accommodation for the same 12 month-period (or, by agreement with the diocese, to receive payment in lieu of any such occupation).

Proposals affecting the benefice and parish of ALL SAINTS, SPRING PARK; and the parishes of SAINT GEORGE, SHIRLEY and SHIRLEY (known locally as St John, Shirley)



November 2019

Church of All Saints, Spring Park



Proposed transfer of an area between the parish of ALL SAINTS, SPRING PARK and the parish of SAINT GEORGE, SHIRLEY (as hatched and lettered "A" on the map above) and Proposed transfer of an area between the parish of ALL SAINTS, SPRING PARK and the parish of SHIRLEY (as cross-hatched and lettered "B" on the map above)



kilometers
Scale 1:28,440

- Parish boundary
- Deanery boundary
- Archdeaconry boundary

Relevant excerpt of

Croydon Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday September 4th at 7.30 pm at the Croydon Area Office

Present: Ven Chris Skilton (Chair), Steven Willmer, Revd Chidi Mbanude, Revd Barry Hengist, John Stephens, Alice Hicks, David Percival, Revd Jenny Rowley, Revd Paul Roberts, Steven Taylor, Indrani Balachandran, Revd Simon Foster
Ven Moira Astin (Items 1 – 3 only)

The Bishop's Pastoral Order for the transfer of the Deanery of Sutton from the Archdeaconry of Croydon to the Archdeaconry of Reigate had taken effect from 1st September 2019. AMPC members elected/appointed from Sutton Deanery would now be part of the Reigate AMPC.

1. Opening Prayer

The Archdeacon opened the meeting with prayer.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Revd Catherine Tucker

3. Consultation on the future of C of E Ministry in Shirley

The meeting was joined by representatives of the three Anglican churches in Shirley for the first hour of the meeting for a discussion of the paper written by the Archdeacon of Reigate. A note of this meeting is appended to the minutes.

In the discussion that followed these matters of clarification were offered:

- i) A brief background was given to the Visitation and Inhibition in 2016-17 which had been about financial viability and governance. There had been no accusations of any financial impropriety: this had been explained at its different stages to the PCC and to the congregation.
- ii) During the Inhibition the parish received appropriate pastoral care from the Revd Sandra Schloss, who was tasked by the Bishop of Croydon for this purpose.
- iii) The issues being raised were not about personalities but about governance and viability
- iv) It was recognised that there was a lack of clarity about whether the parish had the capacity to organise and fund a major development project. (Clear evidence would be needed of the identity and capability of the suggested American sponsors before matters went any further).
- v) There had not been any suggestion that the church building should be closed
- vi) It was stated that sale of the hall site for development and replication of the lost D1 facilities in the church building might be difficult to achieve. The church building had been unaltered since construction and is listed.
- vii) The meeting had not been told how the parish had been addressing or might address the significant decline in numbers and giving in the last ten years.

In her paper the Archdeacon had suggested five possible options for consideration for ministry across Shirley. (These can be found in pages 2-3 of the report). The Committee considered each of these in turn and made the following response:

- Option 1 There is little future in everything remaining as it is. External funding for a major project would take several years to acquire and for a complex project to

be delivered, notwithstanding questions about capacity for governance and ongoing life in the present.

- Option 2 This option proposes that parish boundaries are moved but it does not address any of the questions about capacity for governance or short, medium or long term financial viability.
- Options 3 & 4 The current context and climate meant that it would not be possible to create a Team Ministry in the current context. This would not address or resolve the questions of capacity for governance or financial viability.
- Option 5 It was recognised that this option was not without its own challenges but was considered the preferred option of members of the AMPC given the issues and factors raised in the discussion as detailed above in i) to vii) and outlined in the report.

The Revd Barry Hengist as Incumbent of St George's Shirley and a member of the AMPC had declared a conflict of interest and did not take part in the vote that followed.

The members of the AMPC voted nem con to recommend to the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee that Option 5 is the Committee's preferred option for the way forward for the provision of ministry across the Church of England parishes in Shirley.

APPENDIX

Croydon Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee

4th September 2019

Summary of meeting held before the formal meeting of the Croydon AMPC

Context

The Archdeacon of Reigate chaired a meeting of the Croydon AMPC in February 2019 which started an exploration of the provision of Church of England ministry in Shirley (Addington Deanery). She was asked by the meeting to write a discussion paper for consideration at a future AMPC, having prior to this met with the PCCs of the three churches in Shirley (St George Shirley, St John Shirley, All Saints Spring Park). St John's and St George's subsequently sent copies of the minutes of those meetings in preparation for the writing of a paper. All Saints tabled an abridged version of their minutes at this meeting, pending their acceptance by the PCC later in September.

This meeting provided an opportunity for the three parishes to respond to the Archdeacon of Reigate's paper with the members of the Croydon AMPC present. The clergy of the three parishes were present at the meeting along with at least one churchwarden from each parish and representatives of the PCCs and congregations.

Discussion

The Archdeacon of Reigate briefly introduced her paper. In the discussion and questions that followed (lasting about an hour) the following points were made by the parishes:

All Saints Spring Park

- (a) Clarification was required about what constituted the "situation in Shirley" and the context for the enquiry. (*The Archdeacon of Reigate clarified that this arose from concern about PSF pledges and finances; about information from data dashboards; questions of governance*)
- (b) The data presented was inaccurate for All Saints and did not adequately represent the parish and figures needed to be revisited and verified.
- (c) An independent report with proper analysis needed to be commissioned
- (d) There had been systematic and systemic harassment of the Incumbent over the years, including an unmerited and unexplained Inhibition and Suspension – for which an apology had never been issued. This had had a serious impact on the morale and life of the parish
- (e) The church and its clergy were regularly excluded from Diocesan life (for example the 25th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood)
- (f) The transition from Fairer Shares to the Parish Support Fund had been unfair for parishes like All Saints as the new system was about wealth creation and having the means to pay.

- (g) Numbers and giving fell during the Inhibition/Suspension when the Reader was put in charge (who has subsequently left the parish)
- (h) The parish had not been properly supported by the Deanery and the Diocese for the last twenty years
- (i) The parish has plans for the redevelopment of the site (hall and parsonage) and has met with their architect and has potential interested investors in America to enable this to happen
- (j) Parishioners would consider it a travesty to remove the church from the community
- (k) There was ongoing hostility especially from St George's – focussed on a meeting about potential changes to Diocesan funding about five years ago.

St George's Shirley

The parish did not wish to add to the substantive points made in the report and recorded in the meeting of their PCC

St John's Shirley

The parish made the observation that if

- (a) There are ways in which All Saints PCC can be supported going forward in their mission and ministry, St John's would be willing to be part of this;
- (b) It should be determined and discerned that there is no way forward for an independent parish, St John's would be willing to take on responsibility for the church building.

Conclusion

All Saints were asked to send in a copy of their PCC minutes as soon as possible after they had been agreed at their next PCC on September 18th.

Those who had attended on behalf of the three parishes were thanked for their attendance and their engagement in discussion. They then left the meeting and the formal meeting of the Croydon AMPC took place.



DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES
Minutes of the Meeting Thursday 27 February 2020
Newcomen Room, Trinity House

Members in attendance:	
The Bishop of Southwark	Dr David Keiller
The Revd Katie Thomas	The Revd Jonathan Macy
Mr Michael Hartley	Mr Alan Saunders
The Ven Simon Gates	Mrs Lotwina Farodoye
The Ven Alistair Cutting	Mr Joseph Goswell
Mrs Rebecca Chapman	Mr Philip Fletcher
The Revd Leslie Wells	Dr Nicholas Burt
Mr Colin Plant	Mr Bill Bishop
The Revd Peter Farley-Moore	Mrs Jacqueline Dean
Mr David Beamish	Ms Vasantha Gnanadoss
Mr Alex Helliwell	Ms Despina Francois
Mr John Dewhurst	Mr Adrian Greenwood

Apologies:	
Ms Solabomi Ogun	Mr Greg Prior
The Bishop of Kingston	The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett
The Bishop of Woolwich	

Officers & others in attendance:	
The Diocesan Secretary (Ruth Martin, Lay Canon)	The Revd Canon Stephen Roberts (Deputy Diocesan Secretary)
Kate Harrison (Interim Assistant to the Diocesan Secretary)	Anthony Demby (Director of Finance)
David Loft (Director of HR)	Jon Baldwin (Deputy Diocesan Registrar)
Jackie Pontin (Director of Strategic and Operational Projects)	Kate Singleton (Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor)
Chris Smart	The Revd Canon Dr Mandy Ford (Director of Discipleship and Ministry)

General (The Bishop of Southwark in the Chair)

1/20 Welcomes, Prayer and Apologies

1. The Chair welcomed those present and thanked them for coming.
2. He welcomed Jon Baldwin from Winckworth Sherwood, who had accepted Paul Morris' invitation to become Deputy Diocesan Registrar. He expressed thanks to Jon for his willingness to serve as Deputy Diocesan Registrar and for Paul's continued service until his retirement later in the year.
3. The Chair stated that Archdeacon Simon Gates would be chairing item number 12/20A and trustees would be briefed on the ground rules for this item before it commenced.

52. Alan Saunders passed the Chair to The Venerable Moira Astin for the DMPC section of the agenda.

11/20 Current list of suspensions

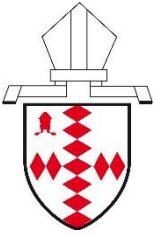
53. The comprehensive list of suspensions and restrictions was noted. The Chair asked that anyone with questions relating to any of them should contact the relevant Archdeacon.

12/20 Cases for Decision and Noting

**12/20A Shirley Area Draft Proposals for Pastoral Reorganisation
CONSIDER draft proposals for Pastoral Scheme**

54. Incumbents affected by these draft proposals had been advised of their right to meet the full committee to present their views should they wish to do so. (Please see attached consultation letter, dated 8 January 2020.)
55. The Venerable Moira Astin vacated the Chair for item number 12/20A. The Bishop of Southwark asked The Venerable Simon Gates to chair this item in her place.
56. The Venerable Simon Gates invited Stephen Roberts, as Pastoral Secretary, to speak. He began by explaining the process that was underway and which stage had been reached. At the October 2019 DMPC he had been asked to draw up draft proposals for a pastoral scheme. He had done so and had subsequently undertaken a formal consultation to interested parties on the draft proposals on behalf of the DMPC. St George's and St John's had not made submissions. Representations have been received on behalf of All Saints.
57. The Registrar, Paul Morris, had briefed trustees in October 2019 on the Episcopal Visitation, which had been followed by a comprehensive report on the state and condition of the parish. The committee had previously recommended that draft proposals for pastoral reorganisation should be drawn up to enable the benefice of All Saints Spring Park to be dissolved and for its parish to be divided between the neighbouring parishes of St John Shirley and St George Shirley. The incumbent of All Saints Spring Park was entitled to make representations to the full committee, as was the PCC. The Revd Yvonne Clarke and the PCC would be represented by a solicitor. A number of parishioners and the incumbent were in attendance.
58. The Venerable Simon Gates welcomed the party from All Saints and their solicitor, Mr Ian Blaney, to the meeting and thanked them for coming.
59. Mr Ian Blaney had written a submission which had been circulated to the members of the committee prior the meeting along with all other accompanying papers. He spoke to the submission and summarised the key arguments outlined within it.
60. A small number of questions of clarification were asked by committee members and answered by Mr Blaney and the incumbent.
61. The Venerable Simon Gates thanked the group for coming who then left.

62. A thorough discussion followed, including consideration of: serious concerns about the lack of capacity for governance and mission and ministry, notably financially, which had occasioned the Episcopal Visitation; the health and safety risk presented by the church hall; how the building plans presented by the parish do not respond to planning issues and do not take into account the ownership of the parsonage, a ministry resource vested in the Parsonage Board, rather than the PCC; the demography of the parish and statistics, including average Sunday attendance, which had been observed to be considerably lower than claimed; the nature of existing ministry, including in respect of ethnicity; how the proposals do not include any plans to close All Saints church; the potential for a fresh expression; how offers of mentoring had been made but had not been taken up.
63. In summary, the presentation on behalf of the incumbent and PCC had not offered sufficient reassurance in relation to a major reason for the scheme being introduced, namely the lack of capacity of the PCC to fulfil its financial responsibilities as a Church of England parish. The committee was not convinced that the mission to the Shrublands Estate in particular, which was a major focus of the presentation, was best served by All Saints continuing as a parish church, especially given the need to serve the remainder of the current parish.
64. The decision of the Committee was to recommend the draft proposals to the Bishop of Southwark. This was approved with one abstention.



Southwark Vision 2017-2025

Our vision is founded on mutual commitment from all who make up the Diocesan family to walk together in the pilgrimage of faith, supporting, encouraging and resourcing each other in our common task.

A pilgrim people

We are a diverse community of Anglican churches, schools and chaplaincies in the hugely varied area of South London and East Surrey, from our Cathedral Church at London Bridge to our retreat house in the Surrey countryside. We work hard to journey well together, united by our faith in Christ. We're discovering that God's love changes lives, transforms society and sets our hearts on fire with the love of Christ; and so we are working to enable others to experience that reality.

Journeying together

From the Archbishop's Charge given to Bishop Christopher in 2011, the Diocese of Southwark has been on a journey of discernment towards a shared vision which is now brought together from the themes and agreed outcomes described in the Strategy for Ministry adopted by Synod in November 2015, and Hearts on Fire Vision for Mission, with its commitment to the five marks of mission and the strategic goals, adopted by Synod in March 2016.

A fruitful future

We share a vision for the future in which we will see:

- growing churches, new worshipping communities and new Christians
- deepening discipleship: engaged, prayerful and informed Christians
- growth in vocations to existing and new ministries
- generous giving and prayer supporting all we do
- justice and peace built up, and violence challenged, in our local and global community
- a shared commitment to the integrity of creation
- a church for all which reflects our diverse community in membership and leadership.

Resources for our journey

The two key documents which inform our work as a Diocese are:

- the *Hearts on Fire* Mission Strategy, March 2016
- the *Strategy for Ministry* Final Report, November 2015

These two documents together explain the detailed thinking behind the summary of our Diocesan Vision.

Hearts on Fire restates our commitment to mission, grounded in prayer that the growth of the kingdom of God may be at the heart of all we do. In particular we will:

- serve our Communities
- share our faith with great joy and gladness
- be the Church; a people with hearts on fire, loving God, walking with Jesus and led by the Spirit.

Strategy for Ministry sets out how we remain focused on that vision and mission, through ongoing cultural change as a Diocese. We are committed to becoming a Diocese which is

- Adaptive - seeing a culture of risk taking, permission giving and experimentation becoming embedded in the life of the Diocese
- Diverse - with visibly increased diversity in every part of Diocesan life
- Accountable - with communication demonstrated through increased sense of engagement from parishes with Diocesan central structures
- Devolved - especially in building up deaneries and encouraging them to become viable centres for mission and ministry, but also in encouraging collaboration, team work, and leaders who can enable and form individuals and communities.
- Strategic - looking ahead, discerning new opportunities which align with our vision and mission
- Realistic - aligning resources to serve vision and mission.

Supporting each other on the way

Our Diocese is made up of the parishes and deaneries, chaplaincies and schools in which individual Anglicans work and worship. The Diocesan vision will be realised primarily in the shared life, mission, ministry and service of all the baptised, clergy and lay together.

Diocesan structures and programmes seek to serve the whole people of God, in the following ways.

Lead, Enable, Serve

Those who work across the Diocese as a whole are committed to working in accordance with the following aim: 'To serve, support, lead, and enable the mission of God as it is worked out in the parishes, deaneries, schools and communities of the Diocese of Southwark.' This keeps the focus of Diocesan-wide bodies and officers clearly on the mission as it is worked out across the whole Diocese.

Mission Action Planning

The Mission Action Planning process is a key means for ensuring that the Diocese as a whole is working towards our vision and mission. Parishes and other communities which produce Mission Action Plans are asked to do so in the light of this, and specifically to reference how their MAP will reflect all of the five Marks of Mission. MAPs in turn resource

those working across the Diocese as a whole with a richer vision of the potential areas for support and outreach.

Parish Support Fund

The Parish Support Fund exemplifies our mutual support in the Diocese most obviously through the sharing across the Diocese of the financial responsibility for our life and mission. Through its principles of generosity and accountability it enables all members of the Diocese to have confidence that resources are being generously given and effectively used.

Outcomes and Actions

The 2015 Strategy for Ministry Report identified a number of outcomes which we wish to see if the Diocese is to deliver on its vision and mission; the Hearts on Fire document emphasised our commitment to the Five Marks of Mission. Our commitment to the environment is expressed through the policy adopted by Diocesan Synod in 2013. Some outcomes have already been achieved, and others will become the focus of later objectives: we note particularly our commitments to the common good through attention to the needs of refugees, and responding to London's housing crisis. In order to focus our energies on an achievable number of these outcomes, we set ourselves the following objectives:

- to grow our average weekly attendance by 5% by 2025 partly through having each church develop a high-quality Mission Action Plan (MAP) which includes a course for evangelism and discipleship
- by 2025, to increase the number of worshipping communities with a primary focus on areas of population growth through investment in Fresh Expressions (fxC) in the areas where the data suggests the existing congregations are increasingly unrepresentative of the resident community and therefore unlikely to be successful in reaching them without intentional intervention
- to grow a financial resource base that allows investment in growth for the future. Key measurable include: annual financial surplus, working financial reserves equivalent to 6 months operating costs by 2020, 1% of Diocesan turnover annually dedicated to major Diocesan ministry and mission projects beginning in 2016, rising to 2% by 2020
- to grow the number of ordained and lay vocations by 50% by 2020 by enabling and discerning ordained ministers; by expanding opportunities for licensed and commissioned lay leadership; by affirming and growing other forms of lay ministry (e.g. worship leaders, family & youth leaders, spiritual directors); to offer relevant and enriching training, and create networks of support and celebration which reflect the diversity of the Diocese, our commitment to evangelism and discipleship, and delivers fully integrated and pioneering church growth and fresh expressions
- by 2025, to grow leadership and representation that reflects the rich diversity of our Diocese and especially focusing where the data suggests groups are currently underrepresented: through ethnicity, age (especially 18-40), educational opportunities, material well being, tradition.



The Rt Revd the Bishop of Southwark

By email only

Rex Andrew
Pastoral

Our ref: NB37/256b

30 October 2020

Dear Bishop

**Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011
Benefice and parish of All Saints, Spring Park; and parishes of St George,
Shirley; and Shirley (also known locally as St John, Shirley)
Proposed Pastoral Scheme**

Following the publication of the draft Pastoral Scheme providing for:

- (i) the dissolution of the benefice and parish of All Saints, Spring Park and the division of the area of its parish between the parishes of St George, Shirley; and Shirley (also known locally as St John, Shirley);
- (ii) the parish church of All Saints, Spring Park to become a chapel of ease in the parish of Shirley;
- (iii) the transfer of the parsonage house of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park to the Southwark Diocesan Board of Finance as diocesan glebe

we received 45 representations against the draft Scheme, 12 in favour, three letters of comment and five which were received out of time (one of which consists of photographs supplementing a representation made within time).

The draft Scheme carried the following as the diocesan rationale for your proposals:

As the result of ongoing concerns about the financial viability and capacity for governance and mission going forward, the Bishop of Southwark held a Visitation to the parish of All Saints, Spring Park in 2016. This was conducted by the Bishop and Archdeacon of Croydon. A series of Directions were issued as a result of this, designed to help the parish to address these areas. There has sadly been no evidence that this has been the case nor has the parish demonstrated the future capacity to do so.

In early 2019 the Archdeacon of Reigate (acting in her capacity as Assistant Archdeacon of Croydon) produced a report for the Croydon Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee (AMPC) outlining proposals for the best provision for ministry and mission in Shirley. The AMPC subsequently asked her to visit each of the three Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) to discuss this. Following the visits, she prepared a report for a meeting of the September 2019 AMPC reporting on her “Consultation on the Future of Church of England Ministry in Shirley” – with five possible options for the way forward. This was discussed with representatives of the three parishes and the members of the AMPC immediately before its meeting.

The AMPC considered the different options and unanimously agreed that Option 5 provided the best way forward in this area. This provided for the benefice and parish of All Saints, Spring Park being dissolved, and its parish divided along the A232 road between St George, Shirley and the parish of Shirley (known locally as St John, Shirley) with the current parish church of All Saints, Spring Park becoming a chapel of ease in the parish of Shirley. (Should this proposal come into effect there would be scope in due time to regularise the complete parish boundaries between Shirley (St John) and St George, Shirley along this main road).

Option 5 retained the All Saints church building as a resource for new forms of ministry going forward, exploring the possibilities of pioneer ministry in due course. Whilst a post of incumbent status would be lost, the Diocese is committed to ring-fencing the post for new expressions and forms of ministry under the supervision of the incumbent of Shirley (St John).

The effect of the proposal would:

- (a) enable the best provision for ministry and mission across Shirley;
- (b) be rooted in the strong and established governance at St John’s and St George’s
- (c) allow for innovative and creative pioneer ministry in Shirley
- (d) provide for a church building/centre for this purpose

It also carried the footnote footnotes:

Dispossession of the Reverend Yvonne Veronica Clarke

As a result of the proposed dissolution of the benefice and parish provided for in clause 1, the existing benefice and parish would cease to exist. As Mrs Clarke is the incumbent of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park and her benefice would be dissolved she would be dispossessed from her current post should the Scheme take effect, She would be entitled to 12 months of her current stipend and pension contributions as a lump sum, and to be housed in suitable accommodation for the same 12 month-period (or, by agreement with the diocese, to receive payment in lieu of any such occupation).

Clauses 2(2) and 3(1)

The Scheme includes provision for the parish church of All Saints, Spring Park to become a chapel of ease in the parish of Shirley. Banns of marriage may not be

called, nor marriages solemnized in the church from the date on which the Scheme comes into operation (unless the building is subsequently licensed under Section 20 of the Marriage Act 1949).

The representations came from:-

Against

- (1) The Rev Yvonne Clarke
- (2) Nikki Adesalu
- (3) Mr Mohamed Barrie – churchwarden All Saints
- (4) Mrs Felicia Barrie
- (5) Troy Bell
- (6) Joanne Byford
- (7) Mr Stuart Carey
- (8) James Clarke (Rev Yvonne Clarke's son)
- (9) Mr Brandon T Clarkson + TRANSCRIPT of video submission
- (10) Mr Mike Deacon
- (11) Whitney Desporte
- (12) Robert Dube
- (13) Bevan Fowler
- (14) Rikki Gorman
- (15) Nathon Guest
- (16) Marian Hardiman
- (17) Claire Hogg
- (18) Andrea Houlding
- (19) Neil Hughes
- (20) George Johnston-Hyde
- (21) Daniel Lay
- (22) Victoria Leaver
- (23) Amrika Lennard
- (24) Elizabeth Lomas
- (25) Mrs Susan Marshall
- (26) Ms Josephine Masama
- (27) Matt Morgan
- (28) Joe Noakes
- (29) Jamie O'Flaherty
- (30) Ms Emma O'Sullivan
- (31) Anthony Potter
- (32) Jason Purslow
- (33) Quartey family
- (34) Thomas Roberts
- (35) Ms Fay Ruddock
- (36) Simon Shepherd
- (37) Katherine Sandys
- (38) Phoebe Sleeman
- (39) Mrs Carol Smith
- (40) Mr Nigel Smith
- (41) Mrs Deloris Thomas (Rev Yvonne Clarke's mother)
- (42) Victoria Thomas
- (43) Ms Winsome Thomas (Rev Yvonne Clarke's sister)

- (44) Women and the Church (sent in by its Chair – Rev Canon Dr Emma Percy)
- (45) Miriam – no surname, but postal address only – sent in by James Clarke

For

- (1) Shirley (St John) PCC
- (2) Shirley St George PCC
- (3) 29th Croydon Scout Group
- (4) Mr and Mrs Aston
- (5) Lindsey Atkins – All Saints parishioner
- (6) Mr Andy Bebington
- (7) Liz Bebington – Reader + PTO (St George, Shirley)
- (8) Mrs Sheila Breen
- (9) Canon Dr Barry Goodwin
- (10) Mr Andrew Jones
- (11) Sheila Jones
- (12) Mr Michael and Mrs Teresa Wilson

Comments

- (1) Mrs Catherine Stevenson
- (2) Suzy Stoyel
- (3) Mrs Lesley Wells

Out of time representations

- (1) Sarah Jones MP
- (2) Millicent and Calbert Karanja
- (3) Mr Robert Milton (Commander (Rtd) of the Metropolitan Police)
- (4) Ade & Anu Ogunbambo
- (5) James Clarke with photos x 4 (his earlier representation against was received in time)

I enclose copies of all the correspondence, of which there have been redactions of some of the names referred to within the representations on the advice of our Legal Office.

Summary of the representations against

All but one of the representors against the draft Scheme are opposed to the dissolution of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park and the dispossession from office of the Reverend Yvonne Clarke. They believe that the proposals are motivated by racism and sexism and by a “land grab” of the All Saints property and are part of a vendetta against Mrs Clarke. They also have concerns about the consultation process and say that concerns about the finances of the parish are misplaced. The other representor says that the draft Scheme should include the closure of All Saints church.

The Reverend Yvonne Clarke

Mrs Clarke describes her background in the Church of England. She says that she was the first black deacon in the Church of England and the first and only black woman priest in the Diocese for many years. She thinks the proposed reorganisation is part of a personal vendetta against her led by the Bishop of Southwark and other senior clergy, the main grounds for which appear to be her race and gender. She says that All Saints has the only BAME representation to the Croydon Addington Deanery¹.

She says that she is trained in conflict resolution and management, pastoral care and counselling and gives examples of steps she has taken to enhance her leadership skills. She also gives examples of her involvement in community and inter-faith activities in her local area.

She says that the recently published draft Scheme came as a shock to her, and she asks that the Commissioners halt the current process until she and her PCC have had a chance to discuss the matter with them and find a mutually acceptable way forward. She particularly asks for the clause which she believes dispossesses her (clause 5 of the draft Scheme) be removed from any final Scheme.

(NB Dispossession of Mrs Clarke does not actually arise from clause 5 itself but from no provision being included in the draft Scheme for her to be the holder of a new office. Clause 5 is the mandatory provision which would delay the coming into effect of a Scheme which has the effect of dispossessing an office holder).

Mrs Clarke says that in 2016 she was the subject of a Visitation and Inhibition which resulted in her being suspended for some six months. She says that neither she nor her PCC has been given a copy of the 2016 Report prepared by the then Archdeacon of Croydon as part of the Visitation, despite their requests and asks that this is provided now². She says that this suspension destabilised the parish and also detrimentally affected its financial position and giving. She says that there was also a threat of a Clergy Discipline Measure action against her if she did not attend a particular meeting - said to be a Bishop's direction – when her son was sick in hospital³.

She asks why, if her performance is lacking, then appropriate assistance and training has not been offered to her in the same way it has to other white colleagues facing challenges, including being offered a chance to move to a different parish. She also questions why she has not been offered more senior posts in the Diocese or why other priests who have been seen as failing have not been subject to reorganisation or dispossession.

Mrs Clarke says she inherited a church with financial arrears and little fundraising but is aware that other parishes in a similar financial situation to hers have had a

¹ This is not the case. The Revd Dhanaraj Premraj was appointed priest-in-charge of St Edward New Addington in 2019.

² The report was sent to Mrs Clarke and four other parish officers by email and by post on 20th February 2017.

³ None of the senior clergy in the diocese recognise this as ever having happened to their knowledge.

helping hand from the Diocese or have had their debts cleared. She says that her parish's requests to have its Fairer Share scheme quota reassessed have been ignored by the Diocese. She asks why her parish is being treated differently and wonders if this has to do with her church having a high BAME membership. She says there has been a history of defamation of her and insinuations of financial impropriety. She says that in 2017 a newly appointed parish treasurer ceased to act after a meeting with the Diocesan Finance Secretary with no explanation to her or the PCC. She says that since the appointment of a new treasurer the PCC has continued to produce independently audited accounts to the archdeacon and Diocese⁴.

She says that the Parish, with outside professional help, has come up with viable development plans for the church hall and the vicarage which could generate an annual income of some £500,000 (a figure recently revised up to potentially some £1.5m+)⁵, but which has been rejected by the Archdeacon of Reigate who felt it would not get the approval of the Diocesan Advisory Committee. The development-plan meetings were all stopped when she was suspended. She also questions why repeated attempts to get a mobile phone mast installed at All Saints' were turned down whilst other churches were allowed to have one. She says a new nursery plan for the church hall was also blocked in 2014. All Saints' being listed will help with fundraising efforts, but help is also needed from the Diocese. She asks how the Bishop's proposals are any better than the Parish's as regards creating a community hub that would work with local communities including other faiths?

As regards the proposed reorganisation, she says the Archdeacon of Reigate's document entitled "Future of Church of England in Shirley" on two sides of A4 paper was inadequate as it took no account of changes in the parish and in the demographics of the area and of the church, in part due to "white flight". She points out that in her early years in the parish some BNP members attended All Saints and she gives examples of the obstruction and hostility which she says she faced from some members of the congregation and a Reader. She says that the then Bishop and Archdeacon expressed confidence in her potential to make mission and ministry work in Spring Park and to undertake the task of bring a "difficult parish" within the Church of England rather than continuing to operate as a congregational church⁶. She says All Saints is a unique parish and place of worship in terms of its congregation and place in the community.

She says that her ministry in the parish is already innovative and pioneering and asks how the neighbouring two (white) incumbents would fare any better doing this?

She also says that there is concern in the parish over what it means for All Saints' church to have its status changed from a parish church to a chapel of ease. Some have taken it to mean that it will close.

⁴ The Visitation Final Report notes that accounts had not been completed in several years.

⁵ The proposal suggested a maximum capital gain of £500,000, not an annual income – but see below on the reasons why this is not a true figure.

⁶ Reports on the enquiry conducted by the then Bishop of Croydon in the early 2000s paint a more nuanced picture of the situation at that time.

As regards the reorganisation process, as well as criticising the archdeacon of Dorking's report⁷, she says that the Area Mission and Pastoral Committee (from which she had previously been removed) included members who had left All Saints for other parishes. She says that the agenda for the AMPC meeting in September 2019 at which the reorganisation was discussed was to include all three benefices but only All Saints was discussed. She says this meeting was acrimonious and that the incumbents of the other two benefices had already agreed to plans for the division of her parish which she was only made aware of at the meeting. She says that there has been no engagement by the DMPC regarding points made in hers and the PCCs submission to the Committee (at its meeting on 27th February 2020), in particular regarding how many other parishes in the Diocese are subject to a similar process to downgrade the status of the church and dispossess the incumbent.

Mrs Clarke believes that the motives for the proposed draft Scheme include racism and sexism and the pursuit of a personal vendetta against her by you and other senior Diocesan clergy. She also thinks that the Diocese or the other parishes wish to gain the benefit from the valuable All Saints church hall site.

She says that there has been a history of side-lining, ostracising and socially excluding her and her twin sister (the Rev Jennifer Thomas, incumbent since 2002 of the Mitcham (The Ascension) Pollards Hill benefice in the same Diocese)⁸. As an example, she says that they, the only black women priested in the Diocese in 1994, were not invited to the 25 years celebration of women priests in the Diocese. She also says that her sister, Miss Winsome Thomas, was sacked as the Bishop of Southwark's Personal Assistant, for speaking up against the then Archdeacon of Croydon's proposals for the All Saints parish at the January 2018 PCC meeting. She also alleges that the Reverend Barry Hengist had to be restrained from hitting her sister at the September 2019 AMPC.

As part of her representation she includes a timeline, title reports to the church and hall sites; PCC minutes of 10 July 2019; the PCC's letter of 30 May 2019 to the Bishop of Croydon; the churchwardens' letter of 21 February 2019 to the Archdeacon of Croydon; the Development Plans produced by Ablett Architects in August 2018; and a letter from 'Reveal' project managers of February 2020 on using the re-created assets and gifting to provide funding for the parish in future.

Young All Saints Group

Twenty members of the Young All Saints Group write separately (as they are concerned that a petition will be classed as only one representation) to express their shock, disgust and horror at the proposal to divide the parish of All Saints and the treatment of the Reverend Yvonne Clarke especially the potential loss of her home. They say that All Saints needs a service every Sunday and question what it would look like as a Chapel of Ease.

They point out that the Church of England needs to connect with young people and say that the innovative services and programmes led by Mrs Clarke are lively and entertaining and inject life and enthusiasm into would-be worshippers. They

⁷ We believe this should read 'Reigate'

⁸ Revd Canon Jenny Thomas, a canon of Southwark Cathedral.

say she provides teaching, advice and guidance and a welcome for LBGT+ people which is lacking elsewhere in the Church.

They say the enjoyable youth events at the church and the vicarage allow them to come together from all over London, Portsmouth, Birmingham, Bournemouth and other areas to socialise and to integrate with the church of All Saints. They say that they also support the fundraising at All Saints by having such events, but many now only attend social events not the church and no longer wish to give money to the Church because of the way Mrs Clarke has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, bullying, segregation, victimisation and abuse of power by you and other senior diocesan staff.

Regarding the Mission and Pastoral Measure process they say that the Archdeacon of Reigate's report was inadequate by comparison with that produced for other reorganisation where there was no incumbent in post. They assert that some of the members of the AMPC have a conflict of interests as their parishes stand to gain from the reorganisation. They also suggest that you are conflicted as you are signing off on a proposal which originated with you.

They say that it is wrong to suggest that the parish has not demonstrated the capacity to improve its finances as it has developed a plan which it has not been allowed to use. They urge you to work with the parish to implement that plan rather than removing the Reverend Yvonne Clarke and allowing others to benefit from a "land grab".

They ask why Mrs Clarke has not been offered another parish or a more senior post and say that the way she, as the first black woman deacon in the diocese, has been treated is abhorrent. They say that because of this they will be drawing this case to the attention of the Black Lives Matter Movement.

Mrs Clarke's family

Mr James Clarke, the Reverend Yvonne Clarke's eldest son, gives details of her background and prominence as the first black woman deacon in the Church of England and also says that she has raised her children to be moral and fight injustice. He gives examples of the racism to which he says she and her family were subjected during the early part of her incumbency at Spring Park. He says that the changing demographics of the area have made it a more diverse community in which Yvonne Clarke has a prominent role but that there are still more covert forms of racism.

He refers particularly to a Reader who he says tried to undermine his mother's ministry and to the words and actions of individuals at particular meetings. He is concerned that one of the members of the AMPC who voted on the current proposals was someone who omitted black people from the electoral roll when he was responsible for it in the All Saints parish. He also asks why there has been no review of the ministry of the Reverend Lu Gale, who he says was unsuccessful in another parish?

He asks why, in 2016, the suspension period for Mrs Clarke was extended from 2/3 weeks to six months and why if there were thought to be issues regarding the parish finances they were not addressed then. He points out that she inherited a difficult financial position and also questions whether All Saints, in contrast to St George's, was not allowed a phone mast because of its BAME and LBGT+ congregation members.

Mr Clarke also says that maintenance of the vicarage at All Saints has been neglected, including issues relating to health and safety, and suggests that this might have been a means of applying pressure to his mother.

He considers the consultation process on the draft Scheme to be unsatisfactory in several respects. He says that at the PCC, at its extraordinary meeting attended by the Archdeacon of Reigate, was unaware that reorganisation rather than exploring ways of working with the other parishes was to be discussed. He says that the Archdeacon and then Rural Dean adopted a mocking attitude to members of the PCC at that meeting and that the Archdeacon gave a misleading impression to the AMPC, until corrected by him, that the PCC was not opposed to the reorganisation.

He says that the proposed reorganisation should not be progressed until an Equality Impact Assessment has completed and you have addressed the questions of what the financial plans for the All Saints building and its use as chapel of ease would be in the proposed arrangements and what plans there would be for the redevelopment of the church hall.

Ms Winsome Thomas, Yvonne Clarke's sister, reiterates that Mrs Clarke has had an innovative and pioneering ministry in Spring Park in particular in attracting members of the BAME community, who previously did not feel welcome there, to All Saints and supporting their development. She thinks this unique and distinctive ministry will be lost if the draft Scheme proceeds. She is concerned that the proposals are finance driven. She points out that, although Shirley is regarded as a relatively wealthy area, Spring Park has always been a poor parish and many of these newer and younger members of the congregation have less disposable income and reiterates that the parish has development plans to generate more income.

She also shares the concerns that some have tried to undermine her sister's ministry, that you are pursuing a vendetta against her and that the Archdeacon of Reigate's report was inadequate and ignored the views of All Saints.

Mrs Deloris Thomas, Yvonne Clarke's mother, also believes that you are trying to remove Mrs Clarke from the Church of England with no justification.

Mr Mike Deacon, of Asset Based Finance and Leasing Limited, says he has helped other religious organisations source funding for church building projects. He was invited by Mrs Clarke and Daniel Benson of Ablett Architects in 2018 to see if he could help in putting together a viable proposal for the parish: to build a community and interfaith hub to replace the current crumbling church hall. He introduced Reveal Projects, an experienced project management company, to Mrs Clarke and the PCC and, with Carter Jonas, assisting All Saints in their aspirations by seeking specific allocation of All Saints church for restoration and modernisation as part of Croydon Local Plan Review, to be enabled by between five and twelve new homes being built on part of the current hall/parsonage site. Like others he questions why the Diocese appears to have thwarted efforts by Mrs Clarke and the PCC over the years to redevelop the church estate at All Saints. He also says that it has neglected the maintenance of the hall, church and parsonage (*seemingly unaware that the DBF is not responsible for the hall and church*).

Mr Deacon also poses a series of questions (*some of which are based on the misunderstandings that All Saints, Shirley is currently in a plurality, that the draft Scheme includes provision for a team ministry and that there is an SDF project for this area*). He asks about the extent of the consultation process and whether the proposals derive from a deanery plan. He asks about the attendance figures for the three churches and how these compare with other parishes and the suggestion that increases at St John's and St George's have been as a result of worshippers transferring from All Saints. Like others, he questions whether the proposed arrangements will further mission in the area and asks why Mrs Clarke is not considered suitable to run a "mission hub" at All Saints and whether the main aim of the draft Scheme is to dispossess her.

Other representations against the draft Scheme

Other representors against the draft Scheme echo many of the points made above. Most give examples of ways in which the Reverend Yvonne Clarke has fostered their spiritual growth, provided pastoral care and acted as a leader in the community.

They oppose the division of the All Saints parish, the dispossession of Mrs Clarke and the change of status of All Saints church. Several are concerned that All Saints church will close or about how it would be used as a chapel of ease. They are concerned that this and the dispossession of Mrs Clarke will have a detrimental effect on the community and will cause some to leave All Saints and the Church of England. One expresses concern that some former white members of All Saints, who they say are racist, will return.

Several are concerned that the proposals are motivated by or are an example of institutional racism and about their effect on Mrs Clarke, whose ministry they say has been undermined by the comments and bullying of senior clergy and by the Visitation and Suspension during 2016 which had a destabilising effect. Several refer to the Archdeacon of Reigate's report which they say was inaccurate and ignored the views of the Spring Park PCC. Some say that the proposals are mainly concerned with finance and refer to the church hall redevelopment proposal. WATCH expresses concern that the Scheme is discriminatory towards Mrs Clarke and black women in the congregation.

One representor says that there are too many churches in the area, and that All Saints should not be financial drain on another parish and should instead be closed.

Summary of the representations in favour

St John, Shirley PCC supports the proposals but has concern about the potential financial liabilities (of the All Saints church and ancillary facilities) going forward.

St George, Shirley PCC says that the proposals are the culmination of a long, complex and painful process during which all other options have been exhausted. It is grateful to the St John's PCC for being willing to take on the legal and financial responsibility of the All Saints church buildings in a time of financial uncertainty. It is however saddened that some have characterised the proposals as a personal

vendetta against Mrs Clarke, which it says is unhelpful, misleading and a distortion of the facts.

Other representations in favour

The other representors in favour are mostly former worshippers at All Saints who say that Mrs Clarke has overseen a decline in the parish since her appointment in 1998. They say that concerns they expressed early in her incumbency were ignored or attributed to racism and that they and others have moved to worship elsewhere or ceased to worship altogether and no longer contribute financially to All Saints.

In particular, they say there has been financial mismanagement, that the maintenance of the church and hall has been neglected, links with schools have been lost and uniformed and other church organisations have been allowed to decline or move elsewhere.

The President of the 29th Croydon Scouts Group says that Mrs Clarke showed no interest in the Scout Group nor many of the expected duties involved in running the parish and that she is ill-equipped to perform her role. The Group has since moved to St John's where they are experiencing what should be expected in terms of Church-relationships.

Despite a Bishop's enquiry following complaints about her, the situation has not changed but at long last the Church authorities are invoking action to remove her from her post. Under her watch the hall has fallen into disrepair; it should be refurbished and brought back into service for the benefit of the community. It is hoped that the parsonage house can be used in connection with the new expression under the St John's incumbent.

The Section flags of the 51st Croydon Scout Group should continue to hang in the rear part of All Saints' church behind the font.

Mr and Mrs Aston say that initially they got on well with Mrs Clarke but subsequently she tried to take over the running of many things, including getting rid of the trusty hall secretary. She then fell out with the lay Reader who was only trying to help. They query the asking of payments for occasional offices to be made in cash only; the Treasurer found it difficult to balance the books. Mrs Clarke is said not to have visited sick parishioners or taken much interest in parish activities.

They query the involvement of her sister in letters written to then Bishop of Southwark – were these letters intercepted? The previous Bishop of Croydon had suggested wrongly that they were “a lot of malcontents” who were racist, which they found hurtful. Since 2000 they have worshipped at St Mary's, Addington as a result of all of this.

Lindsey Atkins a parishioner for nearly 34 years says she has witnessed the demise of the church which has been very upsetting. The local school connection has been lost and it is not family or children friendly. The deterioration of the halls, the

grounds, vicarage and the church should not have been allowed to happen. She is (*wrongly*) under the impression that the All Saints' church is to close but thinks the local community could attend St John's.

Mr Andy Bebington, who has connections with All Saints' for 45 years, worked for NatWest and has been treasurer for several small local charities, regrets not informing the Annual Parochial Church Meeting some years ago following seeing its annual accounts that the parish would be insolvent in just over a year's time and was living off its reserves. He says his approach following that APCM to the vicar, churchwardens and Treasurer to offer advice on financial matters was not welcomed. He stresses that he was concerned about their competency rather than their honesty, but he was seen as accusing them of dishonesty and being racist – they were all members of the BAME community; but did not appear to know that he had Caribbean ancestry.

He said on one occasion the gas supply to the church was cut off by bailiffs making it unusable by some parishioners and exacerbating the issues in the church hall. On another occasion a senior BAME member paid £1,600 to stop the threat of disconnection over an electricity bill; on seeking reimbursement he was 'thanked for his donation'. He left the parish and accepted he would be out of pocket.

Liz Bebington says that over the last 20 years some of the All Saints' parishioners do not attend church anymore but that most have moved to other churches, which in turn means less financial giving to All Saints' and also in person power to run various activities including fundraising.

The gas supply to the church and hall was cut off for non-payment of bills and the Hall became damp and cold as the roof leaks; this resulted in regular 'lets' moving elsewhere.

Mrs Sheila Breen says that when she attended All Saints' church for a Christingle service no-one else turned up and she and her family were ignored.

Canon Dr Barry Goodwin, who was the acting Archdeacon of Croydon ahead of his retirement, says that as a resident of the All Saints parish, but worshipping at St John's, he is totally in favour of the proposed Scheme. There had at one time been a consideration of a team ministry in the area, but he accepts that was not a good option. The Wickham Road is an obvious boundary and the proposed Scheme does not preclude future cooperation with St George's or with other denominations.

He says that including Spring Park in St John's will enable the area to be in one parish with All Saints' being used for new initiatives. It will also enable the church to work more closely with others serving the Shrublands estate.

Andrew Jones, now residing in Canada, says he moved out of the All Saints parish to go overseas eight years ago. He had seen All Saints' decline with disappointment and particularly at the state of the buildings/grounds. He says the incumbent has contributed substantially to the decline of the parish.

Sylvia Jones, an All Saints parishioner for 44 years, explains her previous long connection with All Saints'. When Mrs Clarke was appointed in 1998, they were all delighted to welcome someone younger with a young family – as their last two incumbents had both been coming up for retirement. The financial state of the parish at that time was good, with money from the sale of the curate's house and a large legacy just before the retirement of the previous incumbent.

However, very soon after that concerns were raised about financial and people management of the church; there was money being spent without any discussions at PCC meetings. There was only one Standing Committee meeting that year and many never knew what was happening. Long-term volunteers were "sacked"; the Treasurer resigned. Mrs Clarke had alienated a lot of the people and groups using the church and facilities.

Mr Michael and Mrs Teresa Wilson used to attend All Saints' from 1979 to 2001 but left because of Mrs Clarke. They say that closing the church (*which is not being proposed*) is the right action.

Comments

Mrs Catherine Stevenson says she has lived near All Saints' church for nearly 50 years, and that under the previous incumbent it was a vibrant church. Many of the activities there have now ceased, and she questions the reasons for this. She says the church is not welcoming anymore. She hopes it will not just close and crumble but contribute to the local community, and that the church hall will not become flats.

Suzu Stoyel has concerns over the future viability of All Saints' as a chapel of ease: who will maintain it? She asks if the plans for pulling the hall down (before it falls down) and the vicarage and replacing them with a development of new homes are still being pursued?

She says why have All Saints' church at all. – St John's and St George's are sufficient. Why not develop All Saints' too for new homes? She would like to see business plans for the way ahead so that All Saints' does not become a financial liability for others.

Mrs Lesley Wells, now a resident of Derby with past links with All Saints' church, including being married there in 1978, remembers a time when there was standing room only. She has concerns about where the Parish Registers will go under the current proposals.

Out-of-time representations – all against

Sarah Jones MP forwards an email Mrs Clarke sent to her asking that she write to the Commissioners on her behalf against the Bishop's proposals.

Millicent and Calbert Karanja make points already raised in other representations against the proposals.

Robert Milton says that Mrs Clarke's treatment by the Church of England at a time of Black Lives Matter considerations could be misinterpreted. Mrs Clarke should be offered a post where she can continue to be a beacon for BAME women.

Ade and Anu Ogunbambo ask what Mrs Clarke has done to upset the Bishop of Croydon. They ask that the Bishop meet with Mrs Clarke and the parish to come to a compromise that would work for all parties concerned. They appeal against the undignified treatment of Mrs Clarke and the blatant disregard of the All Saints' parishioners.

James Clarke submitted four photos of a local protest against the proposed Scheme.

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

1. What is the background to these proposals? Do they stem from a deanery plan? How would they provide for the better cure of souls and further the Mission of the Church in this area? Do they meet the needs, traditions and characteristics of the three worshipping communities?

The background is the financial and governance problems at All Saints Spring Park (ASSP) which extend back over the last decade and more. The financial issues in the parish came to the fore when creditors approached the diocese through the archdeacon re unpaid debts. The consequence of the financial issues has been that the PCC has not been able to engage missionally with the parish and has become unviable.

These proposals come after several other interventions through which the Diocese has sought to support the governance of All Saints, particularly in relation to its finances. During 2016, the parish's standing order of £250 pcm towards the Parish Support Fund was not paid on several occasions, indicating that the parish's bank balance had fallen to a low ebb. The diocese was also informed that the church's gas had been cut off for non payment of bills and was approached about non payment of a bill for repairs to the organ. Attempts by the Diocese to arrange meetings to discuss these issues met with no response from the parish. Eventually, the problems became so severe that, after consultation with the Diocesan Registrar it was judged that an Episcopal Visitation was necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the parish was bankrupt. The incumbent initially responded by seeking legal advice, and action included a meeting facilitated at the offices of the incumbent's legal advisers attended by the incumbent, diocesan officers and diocesan Registrar.

The report [Doc 1] was sent after opportunities had been given to the parish to comment on it but none were received. The report was also sent to parish officers. [Doc 3]

The results of the visitation are summarised in the report of February 2017:

- (a) The parish does not show evidence of financial viability and cannot meet its current debts. It is only one-off gifts and loans that have meant that some have been paid in recent months.
- (b) The parish has for the last ten years (or more) been sustained by its financial reserves which have now been all but expended and cannot be relied on in future.
- (c) The parish has no realistic possibility of being able to pay its Parish Pledge in 2016 and 2017 (notwithstanding significant arrears in Fairer Shares payments from previous years). The Pledge is noteworthy for being one of the very lowest across the whole Diocese.
- (d) There has been in the past a serious deficiency in financial record keeping which makes financial planning difficult and means that the PCC cannot exercise its proper oversight of this aspect of parochial life.
- (e) This deficiency may be one (but not the only) reason why in regard to an external contractor and to the Diocesan Office cheques have been written and direct debits issued with insufficient funds in the account for them to be cleared. Another contractor and an external adviser have also reported very late payment or non-payment of bills.
- (f) The incumbent and parish officers have not provided evidence of realistic ways in which the financial and wider life of the parish can be turned round.
- (g) There are serious questions about the capacity of the parish as life now stands to develop and grow. The congregation is small and old. There are discrepancies through 2016 as to how many attendees and communicants have been present on a Sunday.
- (h) The church plant is in a fragile state and the hall roof leaks badly and the electrical system may be dangerous. The parish have resisted an offer to have this inspected.
- (i) There are repeated themes of breakdowns in relationships (especially with Hall users) and difficulties in communicating with the Incumbent or Parish officers especially by phone or e-mail.
- (j) It has to be noted that in a lengthy discussion with church officers on January 17th 2017 the lead was taken by one of the Churchwardens and the Treasurer. The Incumbent made very few contributions and one Churchwarden was silent throughout.

Subsequent to the Visitation, Directions were given and signed by the parish [Doc 2] and an action plan was put in place, but the assistance offered was taken up only minimally. For example the parish giving officer visited at the invitation of Mrs Clarke and tried to work with the incumbent to develop an effective giving campaign but this was hampered by flawed financial information sent in advance, inaccurate attendance data and lack of engagement. The final report of the then Archdeacon of Croydon summarised progress made since the visitation and expressed concern about the ongoing financial matters. The parish remains, in the view of the Diocese, unable to sustain itself either in terms finance or in governance.

In view of this structural weakness, the proposals now before the Commissioners were developed, in order to provide a sustainable financial and governance structure which would support the church's ministry in the area presently covered by the ASSP parish. The parish includes a) prosperous suburban housing typical of the outer suburbs, b) the Shrublands Estate, former local authority housing with significant social need and c) the Royal Bethlem Hospital, part of the SLAM Mental Health NHS Trust. There is at present no evidence that any of these are being pastorally served by ASSP.

The Diocese is committed to Southwark Vision [Doc 14], a vision for growth, and it is with that in mind that these proposals are being advanced. The Diocese does not have deanery plans in the sense described in the Mission and Pastoral Measure, but it does regard deaneries as key foci for mission and ministry. The dysfunction of ASSP in financial and governance terms has had a deleterious effect on the mission and ministry in Addington Deanery: according to the former Area Dean, the problems of ASSP have effectively prevented the formation of a deanery plan for mission.

All three churches in Shirley are in the Liberal Catholic tradition. The current proposals have been agreed by the PCCs of St George and St John. The majority of the residential part of the parish, south of the A232, would be transferred to the parish of St John, along with the church building. The intention of the Diocese and of the PCC of St John's is to continue worship in the tradition of All Saints within the building and to seek growth with the appointment of a pioneer minister working with St John's. We do not believe that the present congregation of ASSP will be disadvantaged by this change; rather that the additional resources provided by St John's will enhance the worship and pastoral care for the congregation and for the former parish as a whole

- 2. Please set out the consultation process leading to the proposed draft Scheme, including any meetings held with the interested parties and the role of the Croydon AMPC. Please confirm the level of support, or otherwise, for what was being proposed during the local consultation process and how any concerns raised during that stage were addressed.**

Following the Visitation, it became clear that the problems in ASSP had not been resolved. After careful consideration, it became clear that there might need to be a pastoral scheme to remedy the financial and governance deficiencies in ASSP. As the then Archdeacon of Croydon had been very closely involved with the Visitation, and might be seen as prejudiced, the Archdeacon of Reigate (who also held a commission as Assistant Archdeacon of Croydon) was asked to lead on this process. Before any formal process began, a meeting was held on 21st January 2019 at which Mrs. Clarke, accompanied by two church members as supporters, met with the Bishop of Croydon and the Archdeacon of Reigate to discuss a possible pastoral reorganisation. [Doc 5]

Following that meeting, a paper entitled 'The Future of the Church of England in Shirley' was drawn up by the AD of Reigate, dated 8th February 2019

[Doc 7]. This described the three parishes and the PCCs of all three parishes and interested parties were invited to 'comment and propose solutions which would enable the church to offer consistent and effective ministry throughout the Shirley and Spring Park area'. This was circulated to the three PCCs and comments were invited before the meeting of the Croydon Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee (AMPC) on 28th February, where it was considered. The AMPC decided that the matters raised were significant and invited the AD of Reigate to consult with the PCCs. The paper was recirculated to the PCCs of the three parishes with a request that the AD of Reigate and the Area Dean of Addington be invited to attend the next PCC. [Doc 8]

The AD of Reigate and the Area Dean of Addington met with the 3 PCCs of the Shirley Churches to discuss the situation: St George on 29th May 2019, St John on 24th June 2019 and All Saints on 10th July 2019.

At their meetings both St John's and St George's PCCs recognised that proposals to address the finances of Spring Park were needed. Although St John's was aware of the challenges which having the Spring Park church in its parish would bring, its PCC suggested that they had more capacity for mission in the local area than the All Saints PCC had shown.

St George's was willing to accept that their parish would be enlarged, so that St John's could focus on the area around the Spring Park church should the proposals result in the All Saints, Spring Park Parish being dissolved.

The PCC at Spring Park was not happy with the possibility of dissolving the parish of ASSP, expressing the view that if they could redevelop the site it could become financially viable. This was made clear to the Archdeacon of Reigate at the Spring Park PCC in July 2019 for which no minutes have been received.

A paper with 5 options for the future was drawn up and circulated to the Croydon AMPC. The parishes were also sent the paper and their PCCs were invited to send representatives to the first hour of the AMPC meeting on 4th September 2019 to let the members of the Committee hear their views. The AMPC then discussed the paper and came to the view that the option now proposed was the most suitable. [Doc 8] Paper circulated to AMPC for 4 September 2019.

The paper was circulated to members of the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee [Doc 11] and representatives of the parishes were invited to attend the DMPC to give their views [Doc 10]. The incumbent and the PCCs of all the parishes involved were separately invited and the incumbent and member of the PCC of All Saints, Spring Park attended the DMPC on 27 February 2020, with their legal advisor. [Doc 13]

3. What input did the three incumbents and their parishes have in the formulation of the five options in the Archdeacon of Reigate's report considered by the AMPC at its meeting on 4th September 2019? Please send

a copy of this report and comment on the suggestions that it did not adequately describe the ministry at All Saints and did not accurately record the views of the All Saints PCC.

All three PCCs were invited to contribute. The PCCs and incumbents were invited to make comments to the AMPC, both written and verbal. In addition, the Archdeacon of Reigate attended their summer 2019 meetings. Based on what was suggested at these meetings the five options were drawn up for the Croydon AMPC to consider and the PCCs were invited to comment on them, in writing and in person at the September 2019 meeting.

The papers 'The Future of Church of England Ministry in Shirley' [Doc 7] and 'Consultation of the Future of Church of England Ministry in Shirley' [Doc 8] did not describe the current ministry activities at any of the churches. They describe the parishes' size, the congregational size and the financial robustness of each of the parishes. The matter considered was not the nature of the ministry exercised across the parishes, but what governance and financial structures would best enable the church's ministry for the future

4. Why did the AMPC recommend Option 5 and what were its reasons and those of the DMPC for rejecting the other options? Please comment on the assertions that some members of the AMPC had a conflict of interests and that the incumbents of Shirley St John and Shirley St George appear to have agreed a division of the All Saints parish in advance of that meeting with no input from All Saints.

Please see below an extract from the minutes of the AMPC, September 2019 [Doc 11].

1. Consultation on the future of C of E Ministry in Shirley

The meeting was joined by representatives of the three Anglican churches in Shirley for the first hour of the meeting for a discussion of the paper written by the Archdeacon of Reigate.

A note of this meeting is appended to the minutes.

In the discussion that followed these matters of clarification were offered

- i) A brief background was given to the Visitation and Inhibition in 2016-17 which had been about financial viability and governance. There had been no accusations of any financial impropriety: this had been explained at different stages to the PCC and to the congregation.
- ii) During the Inhibition the parish received appropriate pastoral care from the Revd Sandra Schloss, who was tasked by the Bishop of Croydon for this purpose.
- iii) The issues being raised were not about personalities but about governance and viability
- iv) It was recognised that there was a lack of clarity about whether the parish had the capacity to organise and fund a major development project. (Clear evidence would be needed of the identity and

capability of the suggested American sponsors before matters went any further).

- v) There had not been any suggestion from the Diocese that the church building at All Saints should be closed
- vi) It was stated that sale of the hall site for development and replication of the lost D1 facilities in the church building might be difficult to achieve. The church building had been unaltered since construction and is listed.
- vii) The meeting had not been told by the parish of All Saints, Spring Park how it had been addressing or might address the significant decline in numbers and giving in the last ten years.

In her paper the Archdeacon had suggested five possible options for consideration for ministry across Shirley. (These can be found on pages 2-3 of the report). The Committee considered each of these in turn and made the following response:

Option 1

There is little future in everything remaining as it is. External funding for a major project would take several years to acquire and for a complex project to be delivered, notwithstanding questions about capacity for governance and ongoing life in the present.

Option 2

This option proposes that parish boundaries are moved but it does not address any of the questions about capacity for governance or short, medium or long term financial viability.

Options 3 & 4

The current context and climate meant that it would not be possible to create a Team Ministry in the current context. This would not address or resolve the questions of capacity for governance or financial viability.

Option 5

It was recognised that this option was not without its own challenges but was considered the preferred option by members of the AMPC given the issues and factors raised in the discussion as detailed above in i) to vii) and outlined in the report.

The Revd Barry Hengist, as Incumbent of St George, Shirley and a member of the AMPC, had declared a conflict of interest and did not take part in the vote that followed.

The members of the AMPC voted nem con to recommend to the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee that Option 5 is the Committee's preferred option for the way forward for the provision of ministry across the Church of England parishes in Shirley.

A preliminary meeting took place in October 2018 with the incumbents of St John's and St George's, solely in order to confirm that they would not object in principle to any re-organisation that might affect their parishes. Had either of them done so, there would have been no reason even to initiate consultation.

As will be seen, one member of the AMPC declared an interest and did not take part in the vote. One other member of the AMPC is a lay member of St John Shirley.

5. Please confirm that the DMPC when deciding on its recommendation to you on 27th February 2020 also considered the other options presented to the AMPC. Are any of the AMPC members perceived by those at All Saints as having a conflict of interests also on the DMPC?

The DMPC considered all options [Doc 13].

Neither of the members of the AMPC with a connection to the Shirley parishes are members of the DMPC, nor do any other members of the DMPC have such a connection.

6. Please confirm that the formal consultation with the interested parties required by s.6 of the Mission and Pastoral Measure was carried out and, in particular, that the Reverend Yvonne Clarke was offered a meeting with the full DMPC as required under s.6(6), as her benefice would be dissolved, and that the other incumbents and PCCs were offered meetings the DMPC, or a sub-committee or representative under s. 6(6) and s. 6(5).

Yes, the formal consultation was carried out in full compliance with the Mission and Pastoral Measure. The incumbent and members of the PCC of All Saints Spring Park attended the DMPC meeting on 27th February 2020 and (through their legal representative) addressed the whole DMPC before the Committee deliberated on the issue and made its decision. The other incumbents and PCCs did not wish to meet with the DMPC.

7. Please comment on the conflicting views about Mrs Clarke's ministry at All Saints expressed by those opposing and supporting the draft Scheme: on the one hand that she has provided a more inclusive ministry attracting previously marginalised ethnic and minority groups and on the other that she has neglected established parish organisations and alienated many congregation members who have joined other churches. To what extent does the make-up of the congregation at All Saints reflect the demographics of the parish? Please also comment on the level of engagement with young people.

These matters are not related to the proposal to dissolve the PCC of All Saints, Spring Park which is due to financial and governance issues and the need to plan ahead for mission and ministry in Shirley.

However, we can comment as follows

All three churches are inclusive and diverse, all in the liberal catholic tradition. The Diocese is firmly committed to diversity and leadership representative of the communities it serves
All have regular worshippers from minority groups including minority ethnic Anglicans.

As the All Saints PCC had raised their particular concerns around BAME engagement, and since the returns for mission do not record the BAME attendance, the AD of Reigate went to all three churches on the same Sunday in February 2019 to observe the number and ethnicity of the congregants.

February 24th 2019

At St John's there were 65 adults and 10 children, 7 or 8 were BAME

At St George's there were 55 adults and 10 children, 13 were BAME and the service was led by a black priest

At All Saints there were 10 adults and 1 child, 7 were BAME, the service was led by a black priest.

The total number of BAME congregants at St George's was 13 while at All Saints it was 7.

The 2011 census shows that 34% of the All Saints, Spring Park parish population was Minority Ethnic. For St John's the figure is 28% and for St George's the figure is 29%.

Regarding engagement with young people there is no evidence of active engagement, whilst the loss of connection with uniformed organisations such as the Scouts, and the poor engagement with the parish in Christmas services for children and families are commented on in representations sent to you.

The Young All Saints Group referred to in the representations opposing the scheme appears to comprise people from outside the parish and outside the Diocese, based on a shared core letter. We are not aware of any organised youth work in or for the parish.

Mrs. Clarke also makes reference to her parish as LGBTI+ friendly. While we were not aware of any initiatives in this direction at ASSP, we are aware that both St John's and St George's are actively welcoming of LGBTI+ people. St George's is a member of Inclusive Church.

Southwark Vision [Doc 14] has an explicit, published strategic objective to have leadership and representation that reflects its diversity. Southwark Vision also has a strategic objective about the financial resilience and resourcing needed to effect its mission and ministry.

8. Please give attendance figures for the three affected parishes over the last ten years. How do they compare with those for other parishes in the deanery and across the diocese?

Doc 12 includes substantive demographic data and information on attendance figures taken from the data provided by parishes for the Statistics for Mission returns from 2010-2019. These have also been reviewed to show where these parishes' attendance figures sit in relation to the rest of the parishes in the diocese. Spring Park has the largest population of the three churches but the lowest level of attendance by a considerable margin, based on its own submission of statistical data. The data on Electoral Rolls reflects when the Electoral Roll was fully revised in 2019 (undertaken every six year).

Please note, however, that the numbers observed at worship at ASSP on several occasions have been considerably lower than these numbers (cf. the Archdeacon of Croydon's Interim Report following the visitation [Doc 4], and the Archdeacon of Reigate's observations noted in the answer above).

9. Please comment on the suggestion that concerns about Yvonne Clarke's ministry raised early in her incumbency were ignored. What were your reasons for initiating the Visitation in 2016 and suspending her from ministry for six months and why was the suspension then ended? Please comment on suggestions that she has not been offered the same level of support as other incumbents facing difficulties in their ministry.

After complaints about the incumbent in 2001, the then Bishop of Croydon ordered an enquiry into the issues which had been raised, and then visited the parish and sought to build unity and reconciliation.

The reasons for initiating the 2016 Visitation are fully set out in answer to question 1. Many areas of help which have been offered to the parish have been alluded to already. Practical financial support was also offered; in March 2017 the diocese paid for the electrical inspection and inspection report of the church and upon learning that the church hall was in an even poorer state, offered to pay for the electrical inspection and inspection report of the church hall as well. The Giving Adviser has worked hard to try and assist including visiting the parish on a Sunday at the invitation of the incumbent.

Mrs Clarke's ministry was not suspended. As was explained at the time and subsequently, an integral part of an Episcopal Visitation is that the incumbent's ministry is inhibited for the duration of the visitation. It had been hoped that only 2 or 3 weeks would be needed for the answers to the questions to be given. It took the parish 6 months to answer them, and for next steps to be agreed, and so the inhibition remained in place for this duration. On 19 December 2016, the then Archdeacon of Croydon explained this to the legal adviser to the incumbent:

Dear (legal adviser)

I acknowledge receipt of your e-mail of the late afternoon of Friday 16th December and reply as follows.

The notice of Visitation was served on 26th October and with it, a set of questions outlining the scope and nature of the enquiry and a list of the documents which would be required from the parish in order to provide initial answers to the questions.

The Visitation began on November 7th with an indication that it would take about a fortnight. On November 7th a number of registers and a document from the list was passed from the Incumbent and her PA to the Director of Finance and myself. I informed that I would need to contact the Treasurer for the other documents listed, I sent him an e-mail later the same day and with it an offer to collect documents if it expedited matters. A bundle of papers was handed over to me at the church on 13th November: unfortunately on sorting and inspecting these during the days following a large number of documents initially requested had not been produced. The Vicar, Wardens and Treasurer were e-mailed on the 18th November requesting these with suggestions as to how these might be collected or delivered (taking note of the fact that I was personally away from the Diocese for a week). One of the Wardens e-mailed me on 21st November (copied to the incumbent and other officers) saying that these papers were being collated and would be provided as soon as possible. I acknowledged this (to all parties) on my return on 28th November and again offered to collect papers if this would help matters. Having heard nothing by 6th December I contacted all the parties again, stressing that no one wished the Visitation to continue longer than it needed to. I asked for an update on progress and again offered help with practical arrangements for collection. The e-mail was acknowledged later the same day with an apology for the delay.

The next communication from the parish was late on the afternoon of 12th December informing me that papers had been delivered to the Diocesan Director of Finance earlier that afternoon. We were however informed that some financial documents from 2014 had previously been discarded during church cleaning and that some 2016 documents were not yet available. The Director of Finance has been working in the last few days to put information in response to the Visitation questions together in order to support a meaningful dialogue between the Bishop and myself and the parish.

I should point out that it has taken 33 working days since the request was made to receive a still incomplete set of documents requested. It is therefore inevitable and not surprising that the suggested time limit has been passed, but this has been out of our hands. The incumbent should also be reminded that if requests made earlier in the year to meet to discuss issues affecting the parish had been responded to positively we would not necessarily be where we are now.

Yours sincerely

Chris Skilton
Archdeacon of Croydon

The inhibition was lifted on 20 April 2017 [Doc 6 & 6.1].

In response to the letter announcing the visitation, Mrs Clarke decided to seek legal advice. Diocesan officers and the Diocesan Registrar met with the incumbent and her legal representative on 4th April 2017. The inhibition was ended when agreement was

reached regarding the level of supervision and choice of supervisor to support Mrs Clarke, the agreement having been reached at meetings between lawyers.

The Visitation questions were:

1. What is the current financial position of the parish as at 31st October 2016 and how does this relate to planned income and expenditure for the current year?
2. Have all receipts and payments been properly made through the PCC's bank account?
3. What other accounts does the parish have?
4. Given that the parish has not been able to maintain regular payments to the Parish Support Fund in 2016 as pledged nor made a pledge for 2017, what plans are in place to restore the financial viability of the parish?
5. What is the current position with regard to
 - (a) Payment for Insurance of the church and Hall (building, contents, liability)
 - (b) Payment for the provision of the supply of utilities to the church and hall?
6. What plans are in place to make payment to the organ repairer for work undertaken to the church organ in late 2015 and which remains outstanding?
7. How are decisions made (and by whom) about authorising expenditure?
8. What is the anticipated planned giving for 2016 and what steps are being taken to increase this?
9. How do the Vicar and Churchwardens lead on and use the MAP process (or equivalent) to develop the ministry and mission of the church?

From these it can be seen that the concerns were over the ability of the parish to manage its finances and to plan for Mission.

10. Was consideration given to the suitability of all three current incumbents for incumbent roles in the proposed two benefice arrangement and, if so, why were the other two preferred to Mrs Clarke? In what ways would you expect the pioneer ministry at All Saints envisaged in the proposed arrangement to differ from that offered by her and why has she not been offered this post? Would you be prepared to offer her, or accept her for, another post in the Diocese?

The proposed pastoral reorganisation has come about because of the potential bankruptcy of the parish of ASSP. Following years of such financial problems the only viable proposal is the one before you. This will continue to affirm parish-based ministry in churches where there is financial viability and provide the prospect of growth in the area currently the parish of ASSP. The proposed dispossession of Mrs Clarke is a direct result of the dissolution of the parish of ASSP. There is no similar reason to consider the dispossession of either of the other incumbents.

The Diocese has a target of 100 lay and ordained pioneer ministers as part of its vision for growth, across our Diocese and across all church traditions. Our view of Mrs Clarke's ministry is that she does not demonstrate the specific aptitudes which are necessary for a pioneering role. Nor do we consider that it would be appropriate for her to serve in her former parish as an assistant priest under the direction of the incumbent of St John's.

It is not possible to make a general statement about Mrs Clarke's ministry, nor is that the focus of this proposal. The vast majority of clerical posts in this Diocese are appointed by open process, and there is nothing to prevent Mrs Clarke making an application for any post to which she might feel that God is calling her.

11. To what extent were financial considerations a factor in the development of these proposals? Please provide the parish share figures for all three parishes since 2000 and the extent to which they have been met. How do you respond to the view that the Fairer Share contribution for All Saints has been incorrectly assessed?

Financial considerations are a major factor in the development of the proposals in the context of Southwark Vision.

The table below shows the relevant figures.

Fairer Shares was a parish share scheme in which parishes' quota was determined from a triannual assessment of individual income within congregations (based on the congregation's income survey) and the size of their regular worshipping membership. Sometimes these assessments were challenged and adjusted, as shown for each of the three parishes in the table below. Fairer Shares ended in 2015 and from 2016 parishes have been asked to pledge to a generosity-based scheme the Parish Support Fund). Under the PSF, parishes are informed of the share of total diocesan costs which is attributed to their parish, and asked to make a realistic and generous pledge, with the aim that most parishes will become self-sustaining, i.e. cover their indicative costs of ministry.

Parish Share Data requested for Shirley and Spring Park parishes for 2000-2020									
Data correct at time of preparation on 9/11/2020									
St George Shirley			St John Shirley			Spring Park, All Saints			
Fairer Shares:	Net Assessment	Payment	Notes	Net Assessment	Payment	Notes	Net Assessment	Payment	Notes
2000	33,244.23	33,244.23	2000 Adj'd \$	61964.55	61964.55		23,698.10	23,698.10	Up-to-date
2001	34,994.96	34,994.96		58148.21	58148.21		24,940.08	20,752.06	
2002	36,762.49	36,762.49		60772.13	60772.13		4,226.00	500.00	\$ Adj to 2001 +2002 assessments
2003	39,919.15	39,919.15		65612.57	65612.57		13,514.00	21,428.02	Up-to-date
2004	37,107.30	37,107.30		74260.55	74260.55		14,648.00	5,000.00	
2005	38,278.81	38,278.81	2005 Adj'd \$	83170.74	83170.74		10,840.00	15,648.00	2005 Adj'd \$
2006	38,836.14	38,836.14		81798.87	81798.87	2006 Adj'd \$	13,215.00	18,055.00	Up-to-date
2007	36,975.74	36,975.74		85701.12	85701.12		14,263.08	14,263.08	
2008	37,705.54	37,705.54		87411.97	87411.97		14,610.00	6,000.00	
2009	38,927.86	38,927.86		90229.5	90229.5		15,079.00	23,689.00	Up-to-date
2010	36,996.68	36,996.68		99255.34	99255.34		15,335.85	14,835.85	
2011	37,887.00	37,887.00		97175.6	97175.6	2011 Adj'd \$	15,773.00	6,500.00	
2012	38,605.83	38,605.83		78453	78453	2012 Adj'd \$	16,064.00	6,000.00	
2013	35,140.71	35,140.69	2013 Adj'd \$	72977.75	72977.75		16,633.67	6,000.00	
2014	36,484.88	36,484.88		75780.14	75780.14		17,261.41	5,750.00	
2015	37,037.78	37,037.78		77040.61	77040.61		17,548.83	2,000.00	£57,531 in arrears
Parish Support Fund	Pledge offered	Pledge payment	% of indicative costs covered by payment	Pledge offered	Pledge payment	% of indicative costs covered by payment	Pledge offered	Pledge payment	% of indicative costs covered by payment
2016	39,624	39,624	55%	79,000	79,000	110%	3,000	3,000	4%
2017	32,160	32,160	44%	75,000	75,000	101%	3,000	3,000	4%
2018	36,000	36,000	47%	78,000	78,000	103%	3,000	3,000	4%
2019	36,000	36,000	46%	80,000	80,000	102%	3,000	845	1%
2020	37,080	30,900	46%*	50,000	41,667	62%*	3,500	0	0%#
2021	38,280		48%	60,000		75%	0#		0%

Notes

\$ Where parish assessments were renegotiated for Fairer Shares these are shown with as the year date and "Adj'd". Each parish had three adjustments over this period of 15 years.

* Both St George's and St John's have paid 10/12 mths of their 2020 pledge; their indicative costs % are calculated on the basis that 100% will be paid

Spring Park All Saints have not paid any pledge during 2020, nor have they offered a pledge for 2021

Assessment only took place between 2000-2015 when the Fairer Shares scheme was in place. As can be seen by the charts, All Saints had their figures reassessed three times to reflect their concerns, as did St John's and St George's who also had re-assessments over this period. However, whilst St John's and St George's consistently paid the revised amounts, All Saints had a very erratic payment history for 2000-2009. This was despite holding considerable cash reserves at this stage (£173k in cash at 1.1.05 declining to £84k at 31.12.09).

The Diocesan parish finance officer consistently raised concerns with the parish over the level of congregational giving over this period. For example, he highlighted annually over the period from 2004-2010 that the personal giving from parishioners fell from 53% to 44% of their Parish Income Potential (assessed with regard to the Parish's own income survey) and this was in contrast to the Diocesan average of between 78% - 83% over this period. He also highlighted the need for the PCC to explore alternative

sources of income or restriction of expenditure, warning that their reserves would not last forever. Fairer Shares assessments did not take into account the hall income which All Saints received and could use to supplement any parish share contribution.

During the history of the Parish Support Fund (PSF), introduced in 2016, ASSP has consistently been one of the lowest PSF contributors of any parish with a full-time priest, covering around 1% of their costs of ministry in 2019. We have yet to receive any contribution for 2020, nor have the parish yet offered a pledge for 2021. The contributions for 2016 and 2017 were received retrospectively after the parish received a bequest of £30,000 in 2018. We believe the bequest was used for all three years' contributions.

12. Is the All Saints parish currently regarded as financially viable and how does its financial position compare with that at the outset of Mrs Clarke's incumbency? How much has its viability been affected by the changing demographics of the area and the congregation? To what extent, if at all, do you think the parish finances have been mismanaged and the maintenance of the church and church hall been neglected?

The answer above notes the capital position of the parish in 2005. The parish now has no reserves.

The parish is not seen as financially viable and the attendance figures both recorded and observed provide further concerns. The Diocese accepts that parishes will sometimes grow and sometimes decline and seeks to support parish ministry in changing circumstances but the seriousness of the situation at Spring Park is considered to render it unviable as a separate parish. The Visitation report [Doc 1] raises very serious concerns about financial governance. However, there is no evidence of financial misconduct.

The chart in the Visitation Report demonstrates the parish's decline into deficit as it has used the proceeds from the sale of the former curate's house to cover running costs. This change cannot be explained by changing demographics: the Shrublands Estate has always been an area of deprivation, and the surrounding suburban housing remains prosperous. Over time the percentage of parishioners from other faith backgrounds has of course increased, but not significantly compared to other similar parishes which have not experienced the same decline.

13. Please comment on the All Saints PCC's proposed redevelopment of the church hall and parsonage sites and whether this would significantly improve its finances. Why has the Diocese not supported these proposals to date and would you expect this or an alternative development to be pursued if the draft Scheme proceeds? Please comment on the perception that the draft Scheme amounts to a "land grab" by the Diocese or the St John's parish. Please also explain why proposals for a telephone mast at All Saints were not approved.

The parlous state of finances and governance over a number of years, set out in our answers to the questions above, and the documents referred to, provide a relevant context to questions of the viability, practicability and resilience of the proposals.

The Archdeacon reviewed the proposals carefully, but they were not considered viable in the context of the long standing difficulties, the length of time required, the attendance data and the financial situation. Most significantly, however, the plan as proposed could not legally be delivered. In the proposal from the parish the Diocese would need to bear the cost of both purchasing the land for a parsonage and building a new parsonage on it. The proposal from the parish also makes the assumption that the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) would finance repairs to the church, for which the DBF is not responsible.

Even if all of these were to happen, in my view the proposed project would not break even.

An extract from the Archdeacon's report gives further detail:

'In this connection it is important to recognise that All Saints PCC acknowledges that the Church Hall is at the end of its useful life and extensive work needs to be undertaken to the church building. The incumbent has raised concerns about the long-term future of the current parsonage in Bridle Road. The PCC have been working with Ablett Architects and discussed a draft scoping proposal with the Archdeacon of Croydon in December 2018. The parish are probably right in identifying that the best solution would be for some land to be sold for development (part Parsonage, part parish) – the sum of the whole probably being more than two separate parts. The parish envisage using their proceeds from a sale to fund repairing the church building and creating meeting facilities within the church building. The Diocese would be invited to buy a further section of PCC land to build a new parsonage.

*'The scheme has some merit, given the state of the existing buildings. But significant concerns have been fed back to the parish that funding of the project is a serious issue given that the Diocese is not in a position to fund work related to the scoping or development of proposals. It is unclear how the parish would fund this work given the finances as reported.'*⁹

'The current ball-park estimate is that the parish will receive about £500k from the development: this is unlikely to be sufficient to fund repair of the church and replication of hall facilities inside the church building. It appears from the proposal, as developed so far, that this sum is based on the parish receiving all the benefit from the development, and does not include the costs of providing a new parsonage (to quote, "On our initial scoping outline appraisal, 9 houses (without building the vicarage) could deliver a modest receipt in excess of £500,000"). This would not be possible, as proceeds

⁹ More recently the firm of architects that assisted ASSP has become one of the suppliers stating that it is owed money by the parish.

from the sale of the vicarage would have to be paid into the Parsonages Fund. Equally ultra vires is the assumption that "on the sale of the land the SDBF will then automatically fund the repairs / extension works to the Church?"

'Given that the church is a listed building unaltered since it was built, there may also be difficulties with the heritage bodies in making serious interventions in it. The parish will need to respond to these concerns before it would be possible to go any further.

'Despite the desire to move forward that is expressed through this proposal, it reinforces rather than reduces the principal issue faced by the church in the Shirley and Spring Park area, the lack of organisational and financial robustness at All Saints, with a consequent lack of capacity to serve the parish in mission.' From the Future of the Church of England Ministry in Shirley. [Doc 7]

Given the current state of the hall building, and the responsibilities for the church, the idea that this project is a 'land grab' by either the DBF or St John Shirley is hard to sustain. The intention is to resource mission and ministry locally through pastoral reorganisation. This will see two healthy, viable parishes in Shirley, supported and sustained by a pioneer minister in a house that will be retained as Glebe property if the parish is dissolved and a church building that will be retained for worship, ministry and mission.

The Condition Survey of the parsonage was completed on 03 January 2019, and the Quinquennial Inspection of the church was carried out 03 July 2019. All parsonages are being reviewed to ascertain their condition as the diocese has moved away from replacing parsonages with new builds and is seeking to retain where possible. There has been no deliberate neglect of the parsonage, but it is one of a large number meriting improvement and the diocese is currently planning the prioritisation of these. There has been maintenance throughout, records show that contract instructions raised for work on the parsonage have been fulfilled, but there is no recorded contact from the incumbent regarding repair matters in 2020 to date.

An overview of the information available regarding what happened in relation to the telephone mast proposals indicates that the application in 2006 did not proceed due to the local authority not granting planning permission: possibly in light of significant objection from local residents. It was not due to opposition by the Diocese, and in fact there is, on file, a DAC Certificate recommending approval, together with the accompanying recommended plans. Since the formal petition was apparently not submitted by the applicants to the Registry, the DAC did follow this up, firstly with the telecoms company in 2007, and then informally with the vicar in 2013 to see if there was anything further on this matter. A review of the minutes of the DAC shows that there is no record of formal DAC discussions about telecoms at All Saints Spring Park after September 2006.

14. How would you expect the All Saints church building to be used as a chapel of ease in the enlarged St John's parish? How many and what type of

services would you expect to take place there? What would happen to the All Saints parish registers? Would the Scouts' flags be retained in their current position? Please comment on the concern that maintaining All Saints will impose too great a financial burden on the St John's parish and the suggestion that it should be closed altogether.

The Dean of Fresh Expressions and Director of Pioneering ministry will work with St Johns and the Archdeacon to enable missional growth in this area of the parish. However, we would envisage an ongoing Sunday morning service with the possibility of other services as Fresh Expressions take hold. There is no intention to close the church but to retain it for worship.

The All Saints Registers would be archived as other registers and so still available to view. The Scouts flags can be retained.

It will be a challenge for St John's but this is balanced with the possibilities of new forms of church being started in the building, the support from the Diocese as set out above and with a Pioneer Minister who will be part of the learning networks of pioneers already set up by the Director of Pioneering Ministry. St John's PCC gave careful consideration to the obligations that would be involved and were confident that they had the capacity to take this forward, with diocesan support.

15. All Saints' is said to have a good relationship with other faith groups; what steps will be taken by the St John's parish for these links to be maintained under your proposals?

We have no doubt about the commitment of St John's parish to good inter-faith relationships, and support is available from the Croydon Episcopal Area Inter Faith Adviser, and from the Bishop of Croydon (who is co-chair of the Inter Faith Network UK).

16. How do you respond to allegations that the proposals are motivated by discrimination based on the gender, race or sexuality of Mrs Clarke and/or members of her BAME-majority and LGBT+ friendly congregation or a personal vendetta by you against Mrs Clarke?

The extensive answers above and documentation should indicate this is evidently not the case. As a diocese we take with the utmost seriousness any reports of discrimination based on gender, race or sexuality. No complaints have been made by Mrs Clarke or any others of her supporters against any individual, nor are we aware of any evidence that would lead us to suspect such motivations. The Diocese is inclusive and committed to diversity. The whole senior leadership team has undertaken Unconscious Bias training.

Our BAME leadership includes an Area Bishop, an Archdeacon (female), Area Deans and the highest number of BAME candidates from any Diocese for BAPs with a vocations adviser leading on BAME. Lay appointments in the diocesan office also reflect this commitment. Within the Episcopal Area there are presently eleven BAME clergy (out of 86) serving at incumbent level or

above. Three are Honorary Canons of the Cathedral, of whom one is an Area Dean.

17. Please comment on the assertion that Mrs Clarke was threatened with CDM proceedings. Please confirm that dispossessing Mrs Clarke from her current office is not being used as a substitute for such proceedings and that dispossessing her is not the primary purpose of the Scheme. Please comment on how the draft Scheme sits with the advice in paragraph 2.13 of the Code of Practice to the Mission and Pastoral Measure (copy attached).

There have been no threats regarding a CDM from Diocesan sources of which the Diocese is aware. The purpose of the proposed pastoral scheme is to remedy the financial and governance deficiencies of the parish and to enable more effective ministry for the area presently covered by the parish of ASSP. Even if Mrs Clarke were to resign her post and move to another post, the scheme would still go ahead.

18. Please comment on the allegations that Mrs Clarke and members of her family have been subject to discrimination, harassment, bullying, segregation, victimisation and abuse of power by you and other senior diocesan staff as detailed by representors against the draft Scheme. Please comment particularly on the suggestions that Miss Winsome Thomas was dismissed as your secretary for opposing the proposals and that maintenance of the All Saints parsonage house has been deliberately neglected.

We do not believe there to be any substance to any of these allegations. The Diocese is inclusive and diverse and does not tolerate discrimination or bullying and has a Dignity at Work policy for Trustees and staff. Trustees include the Bishops and Archdeacons.

It is a fact that members of Mrs Clarke's family have been and are in significant positions as church officers, and so the proposals will be felt by members of Mrs Clarke's family but this is not intended.

The proposals are based on careful consideration of finance and governance issues, of trends over the years, of seeking to redraw the parish boundaries based on known residential patterns and road transport realities, and above all the future needs of this important part of the Croydon Area.

Miss Winsome Thomas was a DBF employee. The DBF suspended her whilst a complaint was investigated, and she was subsequently dismissed for gross misconduct. The Diocesan Bishop played no role in the decision to suspend, the investigation or the outcome. The grounds for her dismissal were not those suggested in the submission to the Committee.

Mrs Clarke has been supported in a range of personal development and training initiatives for her leadership development.

19. Are there any other factors which the Commissioners should be aware of in their consideration of these representations?

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

I am saddened that efforts to reorganise the parishes in Shirley to make them more effective for mission and ministry have been opposed on the grounds of unfounded allegations around discrimination. As Diocesan Bishop, I regret particularly that a Diocese where huge steps have been taken to embrace and encourage BAME and female leadership has been undermined in this way.

I am proud of the efforts we have made to encourage and enable BAME colleagues, but I am not complacent about the work still to do. I personally chair the Diocesan Minority Ethnic Anglican Affairs Committee (DMEAC) and we have three thriving Area MEACs. As a diocese we are in the process of drafting an anti-racism statement to renew our commitment in this area. I would note too that not a single member of the clergy has written to you opposing the pastoral reorganisation other than Yvonne herself.

This proposed pastoral reorganisation is about how we move forward. It reflects the failure of efforts to try and help the PCC with its financial woes and focuses on the future for serving the communities in Shirley. The documents you will see attest to the efforts made to try and help the PCC and incumbent and I have concluded that reorganisation is the only way forward.

The parish is not a poor parish within our Diocese. There are others that make extraordinary efforts to contribute a parish share worthy of them, to pay their ongoing maintenance bills and to seek Diocesan advice and assistance if they face difficulties. ASSP has, for some years, attracted the greatest level of subsidy across the whole Diocese and this is simply not sustainable. We believe that pastoral reorganisation will resolve the financial situation and will also provide the basis for growth through a new pioneer initiative.

I am saddened that the majority of the letters opposing the reorganisation appear to be based on the same core letter and whilst I am aware that Parish Officers including PCC Secretary, Treasurer and Church Warden are generally members of the family of Yvonne Clarke, I am disappointed that

so many of the letters opposing these proposals are limited to allegations rather than offering alternatives for me to consider.

These proposals have not been developed without huge efforts from many across the Diocese over many years to try and find a way of supporting the PCC and incumbent and to see a way forward for the area of Shirley. As a Diocese we are committed to sustaining as many stipendiary clergy as possible and to supporting the parish system across the Diocese. It is therefore with sadness that I commend these proposals to you.

I am hoping that this matter can be discussed the **16th December 2020** meeting of our Mission, Pastoral and Church Property Committee. If the matter is to be discussed at that meeting, we will need to receive your response by Tuesday **17th November** please. This is to allow time for this letter and your reply to be considered by our Sifting Panel, to determine whether the representors and diocesan representatives should be offered an opportunity to make oral representations to the Committee, and for them to be sent to the representors, for them to make any further comments and, if necessary, for you to respond. As you know we also ask representors if they wish to speak to their representations to the Committee.

If oral representations were to be heard, there would also be an opportunity for you or a diocesan representative to speak in favour of the proposals. The diocesan representative may be any appropriate person (e.g. the Chairman or a member or the Secretary of the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee or an Archdeacon) but should not be the Diocesan Registrar or other legal representative. We do not wish the Mission and Pastoral Measure process to take on the characteristics of an adversarial tribunal and have advised the representors that they too should not be legally represented.

Our normal practice is, as you probably know, for oral representations to be made at a public hearing. In the present circumstances that is, of course, not possible but it may be possible for representors and diocesan representatives to make presentations and answer questions by video conferencing. That would depend in each case on the practicability of whether all those concerned were contactable online and able to participate in a video conference. It would be helpful therefore if you would confirm whether you or your representative(s) would be able to participate in this way. Otherwise, if a hearing is not to be held, the case will be considered in private and you will be informed accordingly.

Please note that while the Committee is able to discuss cases by video conference it is not currently able to take decisions remotely. Decisions would have to be made by a subsequent correspondence procedure and there would therefore be a further two or three weeks after the 16th December meeting date before they could be announced.

We would normally expect the representations to be considered at the earliest opportunity but please let me know if you are unable to meet the timetable for the 16th December meeting or wish to give the matter further consideration or undertake further local consultations before replying. Once we have informed the representors of the meeting date (which we will do when sending them a copy of

your reply) we would hope not to have to defer it. However, all parties will have the right to ask us to defer the matter to a subsequent meeting if justifiable reasons arise. The following meeting dates for the Committee is **27th January 2021**.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Archdeacon Moira Astin and Ruth Martin for their information.

Yours sincerely

Rex Andrew

From the Code of Practice to the 2011 Measure

The Gaulby Judgement

2.13 *In 1999 the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council dismissed an appeal from the Reverend A F B Cheesman & others against a decision by the Commissioners to proceed with a pastoral scheme affecting the benefice of Gaulby in the diocese of Leicester. The issue was whether it was right to bring forward proposals to reduce the size of the benefice of Gaulby by pastoral reorganisation when pastoral breakdown procedures under the Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) Measure had been brought against the incumbent then discontinued. The Judicial Committee concluded that use of the then Pastoral Measure was appropriate in this case.*

The following points emerge from the judgement:

- *The need to have regard to the traditions, needs and characteristics of individual parishes in a proposed pastoral reorganisation can include consideration of 'interpersonal factors';*
- *Such consideration can include the relationships between parishes, between parishioners, or between clergy as well as the ability of particular incumbents to contribute to the better cure of souls;*
- *The organisation of the diocese into parishes is for the ease and benefit of the people and not the incumbent;*

*The justification for a pastoral scheme must be the better cure of souls (with due regard to the furtherance of the mission of the Church of England); if **the sole or dominant purpose** of a scheme was to punish an incumbent or deprive him or her of office solely to remedy a breakdown in the relationship with his or her parishioners, it could not be upheld*

There must be adequate evidence of any factors taken into consideration in a proposed reorganisation; any bad faith would invalidate a proposed scheme.

Spring Park, All Saints: documentation

Question 1	Doc 1 - Visitation report All Saints Spring Park 2017 Doc 2 - Signed Visitation Directions 2017 Doc 3 - Visitation Report Cover letter 2017.02.20 Doc 14 - Southwark Vision
Question 2	Doc 5 - Notes re meeting on 2019.01.21 Doc 8 - Consultation Report on The Future of the Church of England in Shirley Doc 7 - The Future of the Church of England in Shirley Doc 10 - 2020.02.27 DMPC Papers Doc 11 - Croydon AMPC Minutes 2019.09.04 (relevant excerpt) Doc 13 - DCT (20)M1 Approved Minutes (DMPC- relevant excerpt) 27.02.2020
Question 3	Doc 7 - The Future of the Church of England in Shirley Doc 8 - Consultation Report on The Future of the Church of England in Shirley
Question 4	Doc 9 - Notes of meeting prior to AMPC 2019.09.04 Doc 11 - Croydon AMPC Minutes 2019.09.04 (relevant excerpt)
Question 5	Doc 13 - DCT (20)M1 Approved Minutes (DMPC- relevant excerpt) 27.02.2020
Question 6	N/A
Question 7	Doc 14 - Southwark Vision
Question 8	Doc 12 - Croydon Addington Deanery data inc attendance (2010-19) & deprivation 2020 Doc 4 - 2017.12.16 - Interim Visitation Report by AD Croydon
Question 9	Doc 6 - 2017.04.20 - letter confirming inhibition lifted Doc 6.1 - CS to YC after inhibition has been lifted 2017.05.04
Question 10	N/A
Question 11	N/A - included in the answer
Question 12	Doc 1 - Visitation report ASSP 2017
Question 13	Doc 7 - The Future of the Church of England in Shirley
Question 14	N/A
Question 15	N/A
Question 16	N/A
Question 17	N/A
Question 18	N/A
Question 19	N/A

Visitation Report to the Bishop of Southwark

All Saints Spring Park February 2017

Background

The Bishop of Croydon acting with the Archdeacon of Croydon (as Commissaries for the Bishop of Southwark) gave notice on the 26th October 2016 of an Episcopal Visitation of the Parish of Spring Park All Saints, which would begin on 7th November 2017. The purpose of the Visitation is “to enquire into the current situation in the parish, to reviews its finances and administration and to consider its strategy for future mission and development”. The focus of the Visitation was around nine questions (Articles of Enquiry) and the responses to those from the commissaries and from the parish form the basis of the report.

Timelines

On November 7th 2016 the Incumbent and her PA met Mr Tony Demby (Diocesan Director of Finance) and the Archdeacon at the church and passed over to their keeping church registers but none of the administrative and financial documents that had been requested. A bundle of unsorted papers was handed to the Archdeacon on November 13th: on inspecting and sorting these in the following days it was clear that a number of documents initially requested had not been produced. The parish was contacted requesting these documents (and at the same time offers and suggestions were made for their delivery and/or collection to expedite matters). Further papers were then delivered to the Director of Finance on 12th December 2016. Some documents were still found to be missing (Question 2 below refers).

Having examined the papers the Director of Finance produced an initial report which was sent to the Incumbent, Churchwardens and Treasurer on December 21st 2016, with a request for a meeting to address the findings. The parish informed the Archdeacon that it would not be possible to meet until after January 16 2017. A meeting was arranged for January 17th which the Incumbent and Church Officers attended. The Archdeacon, the Diocesan Secretary and the Diocesan Director of Finance were present. Notes from the meeting were written up by the Archdeacon and sent to the parish for comment and amendment/agreement on 22nd January 2017. Receipt of the notes was acknowledged on 27th January 2017 with the promise of a response ‘as soon as possible’. As at 11th February 2017 no response had been received silence is taken as assent. A formal timeline is attached as Appendix A outlining the pattern of the response from the Incumbent and Officers, demonstrating that swifter co-operation would have expedited matters considerably.

Methodology

The full text of the questions is set out below. After each question a summary of the Director of Finance’s findings (where appropriate) is recorded. In each case this is followed by a summary of the discussion with the incumbent, wardens and treasurer and comments made at the time by representatives of the Diocese. The text of this has been agreed by the Diocesan representatives present but the parish have not yet responded. The response to each question is completed with the conclusions reached by those conducting the Visitation. These are brought together in a final summary.

1. What is the current financial position of the PCC as at 31st October 2016 and how does this relate to planned income and expenditure for the current year?

The Director of Finance reported that at 4 November 2016 the bank account at Nat West, West Wickham showed a balance of £774.19 and the statement covering the period up to 5 December 2016 showed a balance of £2778.42. The increase was due to three receipts made by electronic transfer from Winsome A Thomas, a Churchwarden, of £7328. The parish subsequently reported that these amounts were gifts made to the church to enable it to clear its debts. However it has been noted by the Archdeacon that the donations exceeded the amount of the specified debt to SWALEC.

The parish reported that the finances of the church were significantly overstretched in 2015 because the then gas supplier (SWALEC) asserted that £6000 was owing in unpaid gas bills. This had been an ongoing problem since 2010. A breakdown in communication with SWALEC had made it difficult to engage with them and it proved impossible to negotiate regular smaller payments. Even though some payments were made in 2015, bailiffs visited in October 2015 and cut off the gas supply and removed the gas meters. The church reported that the amount of the bills was unreasonable in their judgement but that they did not have the means to prove this. They also accepted that they had not sought help from the Archdeacon or the Diocesan Office in negotiating with SWALEC.

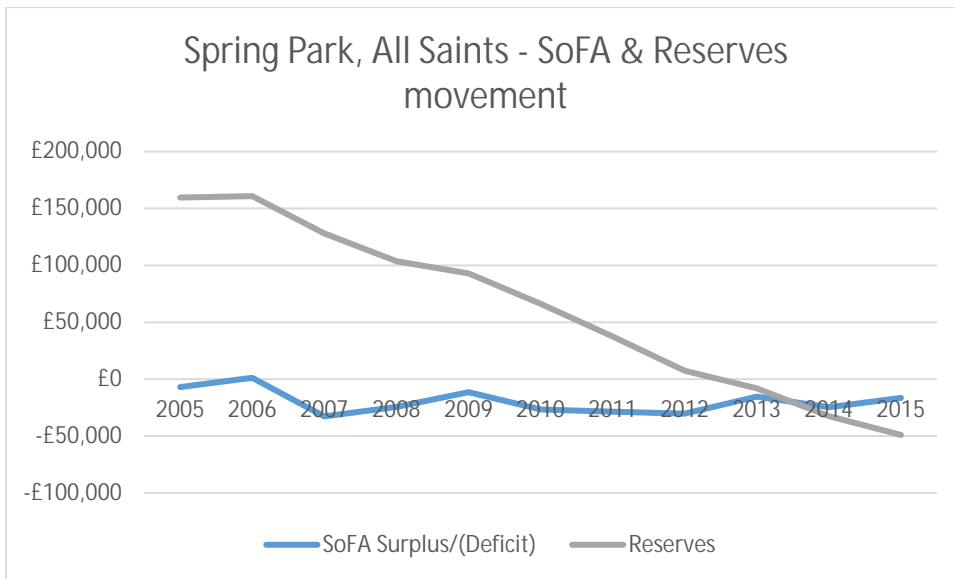
The parish reported that PCC members were asked if they could help with the honouring of payments. A previous churchwarden paid a gas bill of £1600 in early 2015 on the understanding that this was a loan but the church have not been able to repay this. Conversation with the former warden had suggested that failure by the parish to repay this had been a significant reason for him leaving the church.

The parish reported that it believed that finances were moving into a stable position where most commitments going forward could be honoured – especially payments for insurance, overheads and essential services.

Comment

Sadly there is no evidence of financial viability going forwards and the parish has not been viable for at least ten years. This has been masked by the use of reserves to keep the finances afloat and these have now been virtually used up and the parish has debts which it cannot afford to repay.

The parish leadership is unrealistic in its optimism regarding the future. The parish implied that the Visitation had halted critical turning points such as the installation of a mobile phone mast and refurbishment of the hall but no evidence was presented that these had been taken forward earlier in 2016. The parish is technically insolvent with negative reserves of £49,000 according to the draft 2015 financial statement. Since 2005 there has only been one year (2006) where the parish has recorded a SoFA surplus. The chart below shows the graphical movement of the SoFA and reserves.



2. Have all receipts and payments been properly made through the PCC's bank account

The Director of Finance's report highlighted significant gaps in the documentation provided; notably some bank statements from 2015 and 2016. The cash book has not been written up since June 2016 and the parish does not maintain a cash book for receipts. The practice of entering the bank paying in slip number in the collection record ceased from 15 February 2015. There is no evidence that the bank account is reconciled or that management accounts and cash flow forecasts are prepared. The parish does not have a systematic method of filing invoices. The records as presented do not allow for easy understanding of the finances of the parish despite the low volumes of receipts and payments in terms both of value and volume. The bank paying in book has not been used since 3 February 2016 although receipts have been paid into the bank but the accompanying detail has not been provided.

The parish recognised that some papers were missing, some had been mislaid in the Treasurer's home and that some had inadvertently been destroyed after having been left at the back of church waiting to be archived. The parish believed that in the appropriate year all papers had been sent to the auditor in the preparation of the accounts.

The parish recognised that more robust systems needed to be in place and that responsibility for counting and recording money, keeping paperwork up to date and banking money needed to be overhauled and responsibility for these tasks shared.

Comment

It is important to say that no specific allegation of financial misdemeanour or fraud was made but the extraordinary absence of proper records makes it impossible to prove that no such behaviour had taken place.

However there has been a catastrophic collapse of adequate financial recording and reporting. There was no evidence presented by the parish that robust financial practices are in place going forward. The poor visibility and lack of records from the parish was substantially attributed to one-off situations/accidents that pushed the boundary of reasonableness.

3. What other accounts does the parish have?

The Director of Finance reported that the PCC have two CBF Deposit Fund accounts with CCLA. The amount in these at the end of 2016 will need to be reported by the parish as soon as they are available but at December 2015 there was approximately £8000 in them.

Since the parish has used its significant reserves to meet current obligations over the last ten years the ongoing financial state of the parish has not been addressed. It has not been possible to discover ways in which these have been invested in mission and growth in the parish in this time.

Comment

Sadly the parish has reached a point at which these reserves are almost exhausted and there is no other means by which year by year deficits can be sustained by transferring money from the deposit accounts.

4. Given that the parish has not been able to maintain regular payments to the Parish Support Fund in 2016 as pledged, what plans are in place to restore the financial viability of the parish?

The Director of Finance reported that the PCC are not provided with regular management accounts or cash flows and there is no evidence that budgets have been prepared for the years 2014, 2015 or 2016. The lack of regular and reliable financial information makes the determination of a pledge to the Parish Support Fund very difficult for the PCC.

Officers at Trinity House were able to supply the following information about the Parish Support Fund/Fairer Shares history summarised in this table:

The payment history from 2014 is set out in the table below:

	£	£ paid	% paid	Indicative Costs
Fairer Shares 2014	£17,261	£5,750	33.3%	
Fairer Shares 2015	£17,549	£2,000	11.4%	
Pledge 2016	£3,000	£1,750	58.3%	71,800
Pledge 2017	£3,000	None	0%	73,900

In 2017 the pledge from the parish was the third lowest of the 317 pledges received by the Diocese. It represents 4% of the indicative costs of the parish. The average pledge for 2017, received to date is £51,158 and these parishes have averaged a 1.25% increase on their 2016 pledges.

According to the English Index of Multiple Deprivation the parish is ranked 152 out of our 293 parishes (1 being the most deprived).

In October 2016, prior to submitting their 2017 pledge, the Incumbent contacted the Parish Giving Officer for help with stewardship. It was agreed that the PCC would discuss first the 'Giving for Life' material and then this could be followed by a visit from the Officer to the PCC in 2017, date to be agreed, to discuss the results as they sought to undertake a stewardship campaign in the future. The PCC has not yet met to discuss the material that was sent.

Of particular concern was the fact that during late 2015 and 2016 a number of the modest monthly payments of £250 were returned because of insufficient funds.

The parish reported that All Saints is a multi-ethnic congregation set in an apparently affluent area, but the people that the church serves, notably from the Shrublands Estate, are low earners or non-earners

The parish described its plans to overhaul the Church Hall in order to provide a good income stream and to make it into a good local multi-functional venue. The parish stated that the Visitation had put this work on hold. In 2015 there was an initial discussion (at the parish's request) with Eric Greber (then the Diocesan Surveyor) and the Archdeacon about the possible development of the site.

The parish reported that regeneration of the Hall was a focus of the 2016 APCM. It needed to work with other groups and needs both funding and know-how in achieving this. The parish stated that Croydon Council have plans to regenerate a number of community facilities in Shrublands and wish to decant various groups into All Saints Hall whilst this is done.

The parish reported that the current users of the Hall are on very low and unrealistic rents. Many of these are uniformed organisations and sadly communication and relationships have broken down with a number of these and those who use the building are not paying their way.

The parish believe that the change from Fairer Shares to the Parish Support Fund has not helped the church although the Archdeacon pointed out that in the Pledge system a parish like All Saints could make and has made a pledge (in 2016 and 2017 of £3000) that they were more likely to fulfil than under the Fairer Shares system whereby an amount was asked for based on a formula (in 2015 for the parish £17,549).

The parish reported that in 2010 there was vociferous local opposition to the proposal for All Saints to be the site for a telephone mast, which would have brought in a regular stream of income. They noted that one had been installed in a neighbouring parish without controversy. The parish reported that it was seeking to pursue this avenue again in 2016 but this had been put on hold because of the Visitation.

The parish believes that it will take three years to turn things round completely but that the financial position is now stable.

The Diocesan Secretary reminded the parish that without a clear sense of financial planning and budgeting supported by robust paperwork it would be difficult to make progress. She also cited that there had been examples around the Diocese of development plans taking 7 – 10 years to come to fruition and said that the parish needed to be realistic about this.

The parish acknowledged that Sunday attendance figures have dipped because of the lack of heating in church but said that the parish sees new faces in church every week from the Shrublands estate. There are 95 on the Electoral roll and before the gas was cut off Sunday numbers were on average 40-45. (This number is questioned by some others who attended).

Comment

The parish has not demonstrated evidence that there are viable plans to restore the financial viability of the church. Failure to pay in full one of the lowest pledges in the Diocese in 2016 does not bode well for the future – especially as the parish is not located in one of the areas of deprivation in the Diocese.

Mention is made of aspirations for the installation of a telephone mast and of refurbishment of the Hall. Both were said to have stalled because of the Visitation but no evidence was presented that serious work on this was underway before October 2016. The parish did not follow up the visit by the then Diocesan Surveyor and the Archdeacon of Croydon in 2015. The Croydon Area Parish Development Adviser also visited in 2015 but repeated calls and messages seeking to follow up his visit went unanswered. The parish had reported that 'regeneration of the hall' was the main focus of the 2016 APCM but there is no evidence of this having been taken forward and no realistic ideas for funding have emerged.

Numbers have indeed been affected by the lack of heating. Since the debts were said to have been cleared in November 2016 it is a sign of a lack of capacity that heating has still not been restored by 5th February 2017. Numbers have been around 12-16 in recent months and there were 8 communicants for Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve 2016 and 3 for Morning worship on Christmas Day 2016.

The inspection carried out by the Area Dean in March 2016 reported that no communicant and attendance numbers had been entered into the Service Register for the year. These have subsequently been completed but do not tally with the lower figure suggested by the former churchwarden and for several Sundays in 2016 with a list of named attendees made by the Reader.

The Hall is in a fragile state and a very long way from being able to be rented out. The roof leaks and the building is wet. An electrical inspection and report of the Hall and Church were requested (at Diocesan expense). It is very disappointing that one of the Churchwardens cancelled the inspection (without informing the Archdeacon). This has been re-arranged for March 21st 2017 for the Church (by virtue of it being under faculty jurisdiction) and attempts will be made to persuade the parish that this should be undertaken for the Hall as well. More than one person has reported that the Hall is 'dangerous' and the parish have been alerted to the fact that this knowledge would invalidate their insurance if there was a fire through an electrical fault and that members of the PCC could be considered personally liable if injury or death occurred because of the electrics. The Churchwarden reported at the Morning Service on February 5th that the Hall is "out of action until further notice". No explanation or reasons for this were given.

5. **What is the current position with regard to**
(a) Payment for insurance of the Church and Hall (building, contents, liability)
(b) Payment for the provision of the supply of utilities to the church and hall

The Director of Finance noted from the records that he had been given that the current position was difficult to determine, given that significant documents for 2016 were missing (see Question 2 above). He also had noted that there is no systematic identification of income and expenditure relating to the church hall which makes it very difficult to determine whether the Hall is generating a surplus or deficit. Similarly within the records provided there are no copies of letting agreements to identify who the users are and what period receipts are for. Monthly payments for utilities and insurance were made in November 2016.

The parish believes that in 2017 it will be able to cover the costs of running the church and the Hall.

Comment

Whilst this may be a worthy aspiration there is no evidence that this will be possible. With planned giving estimated to be £6000 p.a. and the most recent draft accounts showing that that other giving in 2015 also amounted to about £6000 it is unlikely that all overheads can be covered given that the Hall is likely to produce very little income in 2017 (see Question 4 above).

6. **What plans are in place to make payment to the organ repairer for work undertaken to the church organ in late 2015 and which remains outstanding?**

The Director of Finance did not have the paperwork to examine the issues around this question.

The parish explained the background to this work: authorisation by the churchwarden was given for the work to be done but they did not believe that they gave permission for a start date. One of the churchwardens said that she explicitly asked the occasional organist (who had pressed for the work to be done) that it should not start in late October. Unfortunately the organ repairer did gain access to the church to undertake the work, gaining admittance to the building by the Reader.

At the time the work was carried out the parish did not have the funds in their account to make the payment and offered payment by instalments. The offer of £100 per month was not accepted by the firm. Subsequently three cheques were written for £520 each (in December 2015 and January and February 2016) and these were returned due to insufficient funds. The parish now accepts that these should not have been written. The parish have had no further contact with the organ repairer.

Comment

The arrangements concerning the engagement of the organ repairer are not wholly clear. Papers relating to this were requested in the original Notice of Visitation but have not been made available. The parish would imply that the occasional organist exceeded his brief. What is of concern is that officers of the church may have written a series of cheques (on three occasions in 2015/16) knowing that there were insufficient funds in the church account for them to be honoured. There was no communication with the Diocesan Office or Archdeacon from the parish alerting them to a very serious state of affairs, which could have ended up in the Small Claims Court. The organ repairer reported that on numerous occasions he tried to contact the parish but that e-mails and phone calls were not responded to which gave him little confidence in the ability of the parish to engage with a serious matter.

7. How are decisions made (and by whom) authorising expenditure

The Director of Finance reported that from the records provided (which did not include the PCC minutes, which were not requested) there is no recording of expenditure although cheque numbers are written on the invoices.

The parish reported that normally all decisions on expenditure are made by the PCC with the Standing Committee having authority to make payments of up to £1000 if necessary between meetings and all such expenditure is reported to the PCC.

Comment

There are issues about the nature of the financial reporting and practice that have already been noted. Examination of the PCC and Standing Committee Minutes was not part of the remit of the Visitation.

8. What is the anticipated planned giving for 2017 and what steps are being taken to increase this?

The parish estimate that Planned Giving for 2017 will be about £6000. The parish report that they would like to be in a position where they have a month's reserve in the bank but cannot achieve that at present.

A discussion with the Diocesan Parish Stewardship Officer is reported in Question 4 above.

Comment

It is not clear whether this discussion has yet taken place. One month's reserve in the bank would in itself be a very fragile position to be in but this is only an aspiration and it is difficult to know how this can be achieved in the current circumstances.

9. How do the Vicar and Churchwardens lead on and use the MAP process (or equivalent) to develop the ministry and mission of the church.

One of the Churchwardens (Winsome Thomas) reported that she takes the lead on this – with the Standing Committee and the Parish MAP Group. She reported that a SWOT analysis of parish life has been undertaken. The main current priorities were declared to be (a) addressing the Visitation and (b) resolving the issues with the heating.

Comment

When completing the Articles of Enquiry in 2016 the Wardens named a number of activities that were taking place in the life of the church but there is no evidence that any of these are currently being sustained. This raises significant issues about the capacity of the parish to move forward. The churchwardens and other officers have rarely been present on a Sunday since the Visitation began and certainly not before the start of the service. The day to day life of the parish has been kept going (and has been for some time) by the Reader. It was noticeable that in discussing this question the Incumbent was virtually silent (as she was for most of the meeting). Whilst it may have seemed prudent to allow the Treasurer and one of the Churchwardens to take the lead on addressing the financial questions (although this is far from ideal in the life of the parish) it was surprising that little contribution was offered by way of evidence in the leadership of the church in mission and ministry.

Summary

The comments made at the end of the discussion of each question lead to the following conclusions and concerns.

- (a) The parish does not show evidence of financial viability and cannot meet its current debts. It is only one-off gifts and loans that have meant that some have been paid in recent months.
- (b) The parish has for the last ten years (or more) been sustained by its financial reserves which have now been all but expended and cannot be relied on in future.
- (c) The parish has no realistic possibility of being able to pay its Parish Pledge in 2016 and 2017 (notwithstanding significant arrears in Fairer Shares payments from previous years). The Pledge is noteworthy for being one of the very lowest across the whole Diocese.
- (d) There has been in the past a serious deficiency in financial record keeping which makes financial planning difficult and means that the PCC cannot exercise its proper oversight of this aspect of parochial life.
- (e) This deficiency may be one (but not the only) reason why in regard to an external contractor and to the Diocesan Office cheques have been written and direct debits issued with insufficient funds in the account for them to be cleared. Another contractor and an external adviser have also reported very late payment or non-payment of bills.
- (f) The incumbent and parish officers have not provided evidence of realistic ways in which the financial and wider life of the parish can be turned round.
- (g) There are serious questions about the capacity of the parish as life now stands to develop and grow. The congregation is small and cold. There are discrepancies through 2016 as to how many attendees and communicants have been present on a Sunday.
- (h) The church plant is in a fragile state and the hall roof leaks badly and the electrical system may be dangerous. The parish have resisted an offer to have this inspected.
- (i) There are repeated themes of breakdowns in relationships (especially with Hall users) and difficulties in communicating with the Incumbent or Parish officers especially by phone or e-mail.
- (j) It has to be noted that in a lengthy discussion with church officers on January 17th 2017 the lead was taken by one of the Churchwardens and the Treasurer. The Incumbent made very few contributions and one Churchwarden was silent throughout.

Appendix A: Timeline of events

The context of initial requests for meeting with the Incumbent, Churchwardens and Treasurer was related (a) to draft annual accounts showing that the parish was in a parlous financial position and (b) to an alert from an external contractor that payments to him had been returned due to insufficient funds in the parish's account and (c) to the fact that several modest payments to the (then) Diocesan Fairer Shares Scheme had been declined for similar reasons.

2016

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 15th April | A request was made to the Incumbent, Churchwardens and Treasurer to meet with the Archdeacon of Croydon, the Diocesan Secretary and Diocesan Director of Finance. The incumbent declines this – stating that she was prepared only to meet with the Archdeacon (alone). A request to reconsider this was ignored. |
| 12 th May | A further request for a similar meeting to be held in June was made. The incumbent declined to attend – suggesting that the Churchwardens and Treasurer could do so. In the event, only one of the Churchwardens was available. |
| 26 th October | Notification of an Episcopal Visitation was sent to the incumbent and included in the letter the outline reasons for the Visitation and with it a list of parish records, registers and documents which would need to be made available |
| 7 th November | The Incumbent (with her PA) met the Diocesan Director of Finance and the Archdeacon of Croydon at the church and handed to them parish registers and the church keys, but none of the other documents. |
| 13 th November | The Treasurer handed the Archdeacon of Croydon a bundle of unsorted papers. On sorting these the Director of Finance reported that a significant number of the items originally requested were still missing. Various requests were made for these again – including offers to help with collecting/delivering these if that expedited matters. |
| 12 th December | One of the Churchwardens delivered a further bundle of papers to the Director of Finance at the Diocesan Office – although once these had been sorted several key documents were still found to be missing. |
| 20 th December | An initial report based on the Director of Finance's scrutiny of documents as received was sent to the Incumbent, Wardens and Treasurer requesting a meeting to discuss the report as soon as possible in the New Year. |
| 22 nd December | The Archdeacon of Croydon was informed that the Incumbent was about to leave that day for the States (until 9 th January) as was one of the Churchwardens (who was not available under after the 16 th January) and a meeting could only be arranged after that date. |

2017

- 17th January A meeting of the Incumbent, Wardens and Treasurer with the Archdeacon, Diocesan Secretary and Diocesan Director of Finance was arranged for this day. It was explained that notes would be taken and written up from the meeting and then circulated to those present for agreement/amendment.
- 22nd January Notes from the meeting were sent to all parties present
- 27th January Receipt of the notes by the parish was acknowledged with a promise to respond 'as soon as possible'.
- 11th February The Bishop and Archdeacon of Croydon prepared a report for the Bishop of Southwark (on his return from a visit to Zimbabwe). As nothing had been heard from those present at the meeting, silence was taken as assent to its accuracy as 20 days since sending it had now elapsed.

Visitation Spring Park All Saints: Bishop of Southwark's Directions

These directions arise out of the Visitation Report and written consent to them will be seen as a pre-requisite for lifting the Inhibition and concluding the Visitation, as set out in an accompanying letter from the Archdeacon of Croydon.

1. The Report is given to the Incumbent, Churchwardens and Treasurer and discussed with them by whomsoever the Diocesan Bishop directs.
2. The Report is distributed to the members of the PCC and a PCC meeting is called at which the Archdeacon discusses the report with the PCC (the Area Dean also being present).
3. A supervisor is identified to work with the Incumbent, meeting at least monthly to oversee and direct their work for up to nine months.
4. The Archdeacon or Area Deanto attend meetings of the PCC for up to nine months to help facilitate the development of the effective working of the PCC, the Incumbent being in the Chair.
5. Officers at Trinity House work with and oversee officers from the parish to establish robust financial systems and reporting - including setting of a budget.
6. Monthly financial reports are provided to the Director of Finance (or his appointee) for scrutiny.
7. Within four weeks, information is provided as to the arrangements for
 - (a) The payment of utility bills for 2017
 - (b) The payment of insurance premiums for the church and hall for November 2016 onwards
8. Within four weeks an accurate report is provided of the current position as regards to the parish's financial reserves.
9. An electrical inspection of the Church Hall is carried out as soon as possible by a qualified and competent person, nominated by the Archdeacon. The Diocesan Office will bear the cost of the inspection and report. Until such time as this is completed and essential works undertaken the Hall should be out of use.
10. A clear and realistic plan for payment of the 2017 Parish Pledge of £3000 should be in place within three months and evidence of payment tracked.

11. Further directions may be issued as a result of matters that arise from the implementation of Directions 1 - 10 above.

A handwritten signature, possibly "W. Thomas", written in black ink.

H. Barrie

W. Thomas

A handwritten signature, possibly "R. Barrie", written in black ink.



The Diocese of
Southwark

Croydon Episcopal Area

The Venerable Christopher Skilton
Archdeacon of Croydon

St Matthew's House
100 George Street
Croydon
CR0 1PJ

s 020 8256 9633
e christopher.skilton@southwark.anglican.org

www.southwark.anglican.org

Revd Yvonne Clarke
All Saints Vicarage
1 Farm Drive
Croydon
Surrey CR0 8HX

20th February 2017

Dear Yvonne

Visitation - All Saints Spring Park

The Bishop of Croydon and I, acting as his Commissaries, have made a Report to the Bishop of Southwark following the Visitation and we have been supported in this process by the Diocesan Secretary and the Diocesan Director of Finance.

The Bishop of Southwark has now instructed me to send this Report to you and to the Churchwardens and Treasurer. He has issued a series of Directions which follow from the Report itself and these are also enclosed. The Bishop has asked for a written signed undertaking to abide by and co-operate with the implementation of these Directions. He will be prepared to lift the Inhibition within seven days of receipt of this undertaking.

This letter is being sent electronically to the circulation named below, with a hard copy posted today to yourself, the Churchwardens and the Treasurer. The Area Dean and I will be available to discuss the Report with you, the Church Officers and (following Direction 2) the PCC.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Skilton

Chris Skilton, Archdeacon of Croydon

c.c. Winsome Thomas & Mohamed Barrie, Churchwardens
Robert Dube, Hon Treasurer
The Bishop of Southwark
The Bishop of Croydon
Mr Paul Morris, Diocesan Registrar
Ruth Martin, Diocesan Secretary
Tony Demby, Diocesan Director of Finance

All Saints Spring Park – Interim Report following the end of the Visitation

The Visitation at All Saints Spring Park and the Inhibition of the Incumbent ended on 30th April 2017 and eleven directions were issued by the Bishop of Southwark to be implemented in the nine months following (i.e. January 31st 2018).

The Archdeacon and Area Dean met with the Vicar and Churchwardens on 21st May 2017 to discuss implementation and were assured that these were distributed to the PCC for their information. The Archdeacon and/or Area Dean have attended the subsequent meetings of the PCC. The Area Dean attended on July 9th and was informed that the Directions had been distributed and discussed and that there were no plans to discuss them that day. The PCC meeting of September 17th was subsumed into an Open Meeting being held as part of “Well Being and Revival of the Soul” and there is no record of business conducted at that.

There was an additional meeting of the PCC on October 1st to appoint a new Treasurer about which we were not informed.

A full meeting of the PCC was held on 19th November and the 2016 accounts were distributed with some brief explanation. The main focus on the meeting was a time of **Bible** Study for the PCC Members.

Church Attendance

Numbers remain low. Gabby Parikh (Stewardship Officer) had been invited to preach a Stewardship Sermon on 10th September. There were six in the congregation for the main part of the service: this rose to twelve by the end as some arrived for a Standing Committee meeting.

I attended worship (unannounced) on 19th November. For the majority of the service there were 12 adults and 2 children in church (2 of the adults and one child were present for the first time to enquire about a baptism). Another adult and child arrived just in time to receive communion and two further adults arrived for the blessing (both coming to the PCC). I have not had access to the register to see how many were recorded for each Sunday.

I also visited the “Autumn Coffee Morning” on 5th November for which fliers had been prepared. For the 45 minutes that I was there around 12.00 there were six other people present.

Supervision

Since May, the Incumbent has been meeting regularly at about monthly intervals with the AB of E Diocese. AB contacted me recently to say that she wished the December meeting (12th December) to be the last one as she was not sure where else she could take discussions. I agreed to this – although the Incumbent has the offer from AB to phone or arrange to meet if she would like to. Following that meeting, AB is going to write a report for me which I will forward when it is available.

Stewardship and Finance

The securing of parish finances got off to a slow start because CD was appointed as Treasurer at the APCM and didn't undertake the task and didn't meet with Tony Demby as repeatedly requested. He and the parish parted company in September and subsequently FG has been appointed and he did meet with Tony Demby on 31st October. Tony has been trying to secure a follow up meeting with

him. FG has overseen the production of the 2016 accounts – although there are a number of details arising from them which need clarification. The accounts are not helped by the fact that Fairer Shares arrears from 2012-15 are shown as a parish debt (which technically they are not) and investigation of other creditors needs to be clarified. It is understood (but not demonstrated) that insurance and utilities have been/are being paid.

In each of 2016 and 2017 (and again for 2018) the parish have made a PSF pledge of £3000. In 2016, £1750 was paid. As at 7th December this year, nothing had been received for 2017.

The parish accounts for 2014 and 2015 have been prepared and the parish have insisted that they have been signed off by their Independent Examiner (despite a statement to the contrary by the Finance Team at Trinity House). A phone call to the Examiner has confirmed that they have not been signed off by them.

A budget for 2018 is awaited but the parish are almost at the limit of their reserves and kept afloat in 2017 by one or two generous one-off donations. Gabby Parikh confirmed that the level of financial information at the time of her work with the parish was patchy and poor – although this was before the new Treasurer was appointed.

Buildings

There has been no substantial repairs to the Hall but willing volunteers have patched as best they are able. A full electrical report on the church and hall were made. The large hall is still out of use.

The parish have had a meeting with a firm of architects about the possibility of developing the Hall site, recognising that it is not fit for purpose. The architects have come back with a detailed proposal of what would be involved in getting to a successful planning application stage – which sets out costings of about £60k + VAT. There has been no evidence beyond the enthusiasm for this that the parish has any realistic idea of where the funding for this would come from and it would appear to be of a piece with the many unfulfilled dreams.

Note

I have resisted interventions at this stage because we explicitly gave the parish nine months to put into practice the processes and procedures which the Directions sought. However, it can be noted that several of them after seven and a half months remain unfulfilled.

Chris Skilton 16.12.17

**Meeting with All Saints, Spring Park
at the Croydon Episcopal Area Office
on 21.01.2019**

Present: The Rt Revd Jonathan Clark, Bishop of Croydon
The Venerable Moira Astin, Assistant Archdeacon of Croydon
The Revd Yvonne Clarke
AC - parish representative
CW - parish representative

Notetaker: Susan Wheeler, PA to the Archdeacons

Bp Jonathan: Need to have discussions around Shirley, and particularly All Saints which will be affected most. Referred to Bishop's Visitation and the issues around finances. Significant concerns around financial capacity of All Saints. Looking at the whole area of Shirley and CofE Ministry in the area. Attached briefing paper plus map and MAPs for St John's and St George's. All this documentation will go out for consultation. Papers handed out to those present.

Need to start conversations with incumbents, PCCs, CWs and Area Deans of the deanery and AMPC and DMPC. All responses will be considered, together with info from Visitation and they will consider whether there are any proposals they wish to make as a result of the consultation.

MA: Will be acting in CS place to chair AMPC in February which will kickstart the consultation. Then the whole church, diocese, archdeaconry, deanery and local churches will need to find a solution. Will consider how we address the need to minister in the area. PCCs will then be visited and then AMPC will meet again to consider findings/feedback. Not clear to MA that ASSP is financially viable in the long term. Charities commission does not allow non-viable financially supportive.

AMPC may then meet a 3rd time and make proposals to DMPC.

MA: we don't know what the outcomes will be, can't because consultation not been done yet. However, financial insolvency and costs of £79,000 for incumbent with ASSP only contributing £3,000. One solution could be for Shirley to have 2, not 3 incumbents. Post at ASSP could become redundant with compensation of stipend and housing payable for a minimum of 1 year. Pastoral measures indicate such a situation should be advised to any person possibly affected at the earliest possible stage.

On the timescales, if redundancy is an outcome, there is a six month delay before the 1 year minimum.

AC: What are the other solutions/outcomes possible.

Bp J: We don't know at this stage. Would like to hear from other parishes.

CW:

YC: When Visitation first came about, this was the feeling of the parish at the time and parish wondered what the Visitation was all about.

Bp J: There are significant queries about the proposal which I have about the

CW: This is not something yesterday, or a month ago, this was in place some time ago.

MA: We were still not clear that what was in place was a financial entity. Even if money freed up to do work on the church, it doesn't free up money to use ongoing. It would be possible to be a daughter church in one of the other parishes and share a priest. We cannot be in a situation where AD has to find money to pay bills.

YC: Want to be clear about the history. The Visitation done was awful. It was same year as MDR. People are still feeling hurt. Shrublands situation. It doesn't look good for the diocese and we need to be aware of that.

Racial thing was with Bishop Wilfred?

There was no Visitation about money.

MA: The recent Visitation involved trying to get the finances from the parish which took some time. Eventually when the Finance Dept obtained figures they advised it did not look financially viable.

CW: All this talking going on, people are being pushed away. People think Shirley is a rich place but ASSP sits between the rich and the poor with Shrublands on the doorstep. I don't see community being built up all I see is money being talked about. We need community to be brought back together as it was before.

Bp J: Up to now diocese is supporting ASSP up to £75,000 pa. It is the most financially subsidised parish in the diocese by a long way.

AC: No one has said how can we solve this problem together.

Bp J: This is a discussion document. Please

MA: Even if, as it stood, there was a certain amount of capital applied to make the building more useful (not sure planning permissions would be given) even if given, not aware of any church able to raise enough income from buildings to make themselves financially viable.

Bp J: There is no proposal. We need to mention

MA: We said no PCC of ASSP. As charity trustees, you have a direct liability of any costs incurred. As a diocese we have an important role to help you see this. There

is a whole issue around charity law as well as whether this particular PCC has the capacity to promote the mission in the parish.

YC: A MAP was sent in.

Bp J: Not one on diocesan records. Please send again.

YC: Was this on the cards at time of Visitation?

Bp J: No. The Visitation happened for various reasons. Mainly financial: PSF giving went down. £250 per month payment was bouncing. Diocese worried over this. Organ repairs; utility bills. Those were the reasons the Visitation happened. It lasted longer than we wanted because of the length of time taken by the parish to provide the paperwork requested.

CS report summarised serious concerns which Bp J read out.

After Visitation happened, and only after CS wrote his final report that the conclusion was drawn that this conversation needed to happen.

Bp J; Received or not, that's the reason this consultation is happening. Each new thing has been in response to what has happened before.

MA: Visitation Report was sent to YC in February 2017. Interim report written to Bp J. Final one written in Oct. 2018.

It's important to be clear about the situation. We don't have a particular solution but we know we need to have a solution. It's not viable at the moment, consultation needs to answer what can be done both financially and pastorally.

YC: You mentioned about the directions. Would this be in +C direction. This is the first time I've met with yourself and there are a lot of things pastorally, hurt and pain, which I have to deal with. People in the congregation are asking what is going on. Journalists are asking questions. We have to be very careful. Had we had a chance to talk about things during the Visitation, . . . care. I've asked over the years to talk about things and nothing has come.

I asked to see CS on a one-to-one basis. Never seen anyone in the past. Need to talk to the people, knowing what I know, having to preach. Some things about our giving is wrong. I asked if we could talk. In my MDR I said this. I said I wanted to talk to the Archdeacon and nothing. We asked Bp Christopher - nothing. I am speaking as a priest now.

CW: Coming up with what is written here, it's been a lengthy process of talking before the paper is put together. This is the first time for the Vicar seeing this. Other things mentioned today, not dealt with before. There are things coming out on both sides . . . Everything comes back to money concerns.

AC: General lack of care shown.

YC: This paper will be explosive at the PCC. I've never had a chance to talk to anyone. No one. I've been sitting down, organising meetings, looking at the sustainability of the parish. From the beginning I've said to the parish that they're not doing fundraising. The quota came up . . .

Bp J: Racism issue. The way it's recorded in the files, Bp Wilfrid records it as a Visitation.

YC: Interesting. People are hurt. Unity service - comments still being made. I heard them. From the time diocese said posts had to go - ASSP has been targeted all along.

Bp J: Can't dictate how people feel. Diocese doesn't need to cut posts now - they've already been done. In relationship to ASSP it's about whether it is financially viable as a parish. That's the evidence we've gathered from various quarters. Now we're starting a conversation. We're being open about where we're coming from. There is a whole process to go through with plenty of other people involved - CS, MA and I cannot dictate the outcome. We are starting a conversation. In terms of pastoral care, I'd be very happy to facilitate someone if you would like that - I understand MA and I may not be the right people for you at this present time.

At the moment, I want to say we want to have as open a conversation as possible so that we consider all the possible and different options.

YC: I can correct this information also?

MA: Absolutely.

CW: There is so much to say - I want to say.

AC: What happens if find some solutions -

MA: AMPC will consider this initial paper on 28 February. They have not seen this. We want to take a paper that's factual as possible. After that meeting, I will visit the PCCs. Then AMPC will meet again to consider any proposals put forward.

CW: Shrublands community consider ASSP their church. For it not to be there any more would be another matter altogether.

MA: There are all sorts of solutions which don't close the building itself.

YC: Just to be clear - even if the PCC was to get some money from somewhere, it still would not be a viable parish?

MA: What I'm saying is that the figures I see at the moment, and from the information in the Visitation does not show it's viable.

YC: At the end of the day blame has to lie somewhere.

Bp J: There are big problems.

AC: It just feels overly negative.

YC: I'll make sure MAP is sent through for ASSP.

AC: Can we have a copy of the final report.

Bp J: I would have to ask Bishop Christopher.

YC: MAP - given to Jenny Rowley with Articles of Enquiry. Not dated.

AC: Not togetherness.

YC: Will send you the MAP.

MA: Next meeting is AMPC on 28 February. The report needs to be correct by then.



The Diocese of
Southwark

The Bishop of Southwark

The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun

Trinity House
4 Chapel Court
Borough High Street
London
SE1 1HW

t 020 7939 9420
f 0843 2906 894

The Revd Yvonne Clarke
All Saints Vicarage
1 Farm Drive
Croydon
Surrey CR0 8HX

e bishop.christopher@southwark.anglican.org
www.southwark.anglican.org

20 April 2017

Dear Yvonne

Conclusion of visitation

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of the signed copy of the Declarations which was received via the Archdeacon of Croydon on the afternoon of 19th April. I am now prepared to determine that the Visitation is concluded and the Inhibition will be lifted as from the date of this letter.

The matters which you raised in your letter of 18th April will be referred to the Archdeacon of Croydon who will reply in more detail on his return from leave at the beginning of May.

I understand that the Area Dean will preside at the service at All Saints on April 23rd at which she will announce that you will be returning to public ministry on Sunday 30th April. On that Sunday the Archdeacon will be present at the beginning of the service in order to read a statement which will have been agreed between the Diocesan Registrar and Catherine Shelley during the course of next week.

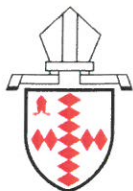
At the beginning of May the Archdeacon will arrange to meet with you and the Parish Officers to work through the implications of the Directions that I have issued. He and the Area Dean will also meet with the newly elected Church Council to talk through the Directions with them (as set out in Direction 2).

With best wishes

Yours sincerely,

The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun
Bishop of Southwark

Cc. Archdeacon of Croydon



The Diocese of
Southwark

Croydon Episcopal Area

The Venerable Christopher Skilton
Archdeacon of Croydon

St Matthew's House
100 George Street
Croydon
CR0 1PJ

s 020 8256 9633
e christopher.skilton@southwark.anglican.org

www.southwark.anglican.org

The Revd Yvonne Clarke
All Saints Vicarage
1 Farm Drive
Croydon
Surrey
CR0 8HX

04 May 2017

Dear Yvonne

Thank you for your letter to the Bishop of Southwark of 18th April which he has asked me to reply to on his behalf.

With the Directions having been agreed and signed it was good to be able to be at the church last Sunday (30th April) to confirm that the Visitation has been brought to an end and the inhibition lifted.

In response to the particular questions that you asked of the Bishop in your letter, there is no statutory code of conduct of the kind you request in relation to Episcopal Visitations, but the power of Visitation is long established in Ecclesiastical law. The Bishop of Southwark, the Bishop of Croydon and I have, of course, been advised by the Diocesan Registrar.

With regard to the possibility of further directions, it is always open to a Bishop to give directions to a member of the clergy. Sometimes this may be pursuant to a specific statutory power, and on other occasions it may be in keeping with the Oath of Canonical Obedience made by all clergy to their Diocesan Bishop.

I do hope your return to active parish ministry will be happy and fruitful.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Skilton
Archdeacon of Croydon

c.c. The Bishop of Southwark (by e-mail only)
Catherine Shelley, Lee Bolton Monier-Williams (by e-mail only)

The future of Church of England ministry in Shirley

The three parishes of St John and St George Shirley and All Saints Spring Park cover a single social entity, insofar as is ever possible in an urban environment. To the north and east the borough (which is also in part diocesan) boundary forms a natural limit. To the south and west there is primarily open land of various kinds. To the east The Beck marks the boundary between Shirley and West Wickham. The parishes are predominantly residential, mostly suburban detached and semi-detached houses with a former local authority estate at Shrublands, and the majority of the site of the Royal Bethlem Hospital, both in the parish of All Saints. The A232 runs through the middle of Shirley and is both a busy trunk route and the main location of shopping and local facilities. The following page briefly illustrates the geographical relationship of the churches and parishes, alongside some information on population and congregations.

Each parish has a full-time stipendiary incumbent. Reflecting its more prosperous population and higher attendance figures, St John's makes an annual contribution to the Parish Support Fund of £78000, with nothing outstanding. St George's and All Saints are demographically similar, and according to the figures provided their worshipping congregations are not extremely dissimilar (82 and 48 respectively). The difference in PSF contribution is dramatic: St George's contributed £36000 in 2018 (with nothing outstanding). All Saints made a contribution of £3000, and has £57280.91 outstanding.

All Saints Spring Park

According to the Parish Dashboard, the worshipping community figure at All Saints went from nearly 140 in 2015 to about 35 in 2016, and back up to just over 60 in 2017. During this time the Electoral Roll was virtually unchanged at just over 100. Over the same period the usual Sunday attendance declined from just over 60 to 48 (a number significantly higher than was observed in church by the archdeacon and diocesan stewardship officer, on separate occasions). Despite the enquiry conducted under the Bishop's Visitation in 2016-2017 the financial position of All Saints remains unclear. The parish continues to record an annual deficit, as it has every year since at least 2007, and appears to have no significant financial reserves. The final report on the Visitation concluded that 'there are serious financial concerns and questions which need to be put to the parish about a) financial viability going forward; b) capacity for the office of Treasurer and the associated tasks of accurate financial recording and monitoring and c) capacity within the PCC to set financial and missional goals which are related and sustainable.'

In this connection it is important to recognise that All Saints PCC acknowledges that the Church Hall is at the end of its useful life and extensive work needs to be undertaken to the church building. The incumbent has raised concerns about the long-term future of the current parsonage in Bridle Road. The PCC have been working with Ablett Architects and discussed a draft scoping proposal with the Archdeacon of Croydon in December 2018. The parish are probably right in identifying that the best solution would be for some land to be sold for development (part Parsonage, part parish) – the sum of the whole probably being more than two separate parts. The parish envisage using their proceeds from a sale to fund repairing to the church building and creating meeting facilities within the church building. The Diocese would be invited to buy a further section of PCC land to build a new parsonage.

The scheme has some merit, given the state of the existing buildings; the Property Department have been asked to bring forward the Conditions Survey of the parsonage to early 2019. The Quinquennial Inspection of the church is also due in 2019 and this will give a detailed description of the state of the church and what is needed to address those matters identified. But significant concerns have been fed back to the parish that funding of the project is a serious issue given that the Diocese is not

in a position to fund work related to the scoping or development of proposals. It is unclear how the parish would fund this work given the finances as reported.

Further the current ball-park estimate is that the parish will receive about £500k from the development: this is unlikely to be sufficient to fund repair of the church and replication of hall facilities inside the church building. It appears from the proposal as developed so far that this sum is based on the parish receiving all the benefit from the development, and does not include the costs of providing a new parsonage (to quote, "On our initial scoping outline appraisal, 9 houses (without building the vicarage) could deliver a modest receipt in excess of £500,000"). This would not be possible, as proceeds from the sale of the vicarage would have to be paid into the Parsonages Fund. Equally *ultra vires* is the assumption that "on the sale of the land the SDBF will then automatically fund the repairs / extension works to the Church?"

Given that the church is a listed building unaltered since it was built, there may also be difficulties with the heritage bodies in making serious interventions in it. The parish will need to respond to these concerns before it would be possible to go any further.

Despite the desire to move forward that is expressed through this proposal, it reinforces rather than reduces the principal issue faced by the church in the Shirley and Spring Park area, the lack of organisational and financial robustness at All Saints, with a consequent lack of capacity to serve the parish in mission.

St John Shirley

St John's is a robust parish which covers the full costs of its incumbent. Electoral Roll numbers have remained steady and high, though Sunday attendance has gradually declined. The parish primary school is an increasing focus for the parish's ministry. The parish does have a relatively small population, particularly for a suburban area (5100 in 2011), and the parish boundaries between St John's and St George's don't reflect the key dividing line of the A232. There is no natural boundary between St John's parish on its border with All Saints (the major residential part of which is also south of the A232).

St George Shirley

St George's has seen encouraging signs of growth in recent years, with small increases in Electoral Roll, worshipping community and usual Sunday attendance. While not as prosperous as St John's, its finances are sound and there is consistent investment in mission in the parish. The only issue that requires discussion is that of the parish boundary with St John's. The majority of the parish of All Saints which borders St George's is the site of the Royal Bethlem Hospital.

In the light of these factors, and any others that they may wish to bring forward, interested parties are invited to comment and propose solutions which would enable the church to offer consistent and effective ministry throughout the Shirley and Spring Park area. The Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee will consider this paper and responses to it at its meeting on Thursday 28 February 2019.

MA/sew
08.02.2019

Consultation on the future of Church of England ministry in Shirley

At the Croydon Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee on 28th February 2019, the attached paper on the future of the Church of England in Shirley (Appendix 1) was discussed. The meeting agreed to commission Ven Moira Astin, Archdeacon of Reigate and Assistant Archdeacon of Croydon, in the latter capacity, to meet with the PCCs of the three Shirley churches to get their views on the paper. These meetings were held during May to July 2019. At each both the Ven Astin and Revd Jenny Rowley the Area Dean of Addington Deanery attended.

As well as attending the PCC of each of the three churches to hear a discussion of the matters, the PCCs were invited to send a response or the minutes of the discussion. St George's Shirley and St John's Shirley sent through the minute of the discussion, but All Saints Spring Park have not done so yet. This paper is based on the written responses as well as the discussions.

St George Shirley, meeting 25/5/19

Questions about the paper included whether the right area was being considered, since many people worship in a parish other than the one they live in. Concerns were expressed about the clergy being accessible, and the needs of the Royal Bethlem Hospital.

After discussion the meeting agreed that limiting the consultation to the Shirley churches was fair, that the matter of clergy accessibility was more to do with the current housing for the St George's Vicar and that the ministry needs of the Royal Bethlem Hospital was a matter for the NHS in the first instance.

The meeting then discussed other ways of staffing the ministry of the Church of England in Shirley and suggested having two parishes, broadly north and south of the A232 which bisects Shirley. Stipendiary ministry of two incumbents and one Associate priest to assist in both parishes, or a Pioneer Minister were proposed.

St John's Shirley, meeting 24/6/19

The discussion covered the following points:

1. The current strength of congregation/PCC and financial position of All Saints is such that revitalising the parish of All Saints in its current form may no longer be an option, irrespective of assistance that could be provided by St John's and St George's.
2. Notwithstanding a dwindling congregation, to declare All Saints a redundant church is not a preferred option as it should be possible to maintain some form of worship there. There is a real need to look after, as one member put it, 'the forgotten' who had left the church over the past years and also the many others within the parish boundaries.
3. Given the likelihood that the existing hall at All Saints may have to be pulled down, it was suggested that the Church building be converted for multipurpose use. This appeared to have broad support within St John's PCC with concerns expressed re practicality given re the Grade Two listed status of the building and the funding needed. It was noted that redevelopment opportunities exist but these would have to exclude the Vicarage as it is a parsonage, and so any money coming from its redevelopment would need to go towards other parsonages, and not be available for local use.

4. The possibility of a realignment of parish boundaries was discussed with Shirley being divided into two parishes, St John's and St George's, with All Saints ceasing to exist in its own right. A logical geographical split would appear to be along the line of the A232 main road.
5. Should line mapping as described above take place, the position of Vicar of All Saints would no longer exist. It was suggested that a specialist youth worker may best suit the needs of the parishes within Shirley and that the input of St George's to the discussion would be welcomed.
6. It was recognised that if this happened St John's PCC would then have the responsibility for All Saints' church building, but it was felt that the PCC was strong enough to take on this responsibility, perhaps by having a sub committee, which could also have St George's members on it.

All Saints Spring Park, meeting 10/07/19

Discussion of the document included suggesting that financial measures are not the most important. Also the demographic of the parish has changed and is significantly more disadvantaged, and so the basis of the consultation document was flawed.

A discussion of what 'Mission' is followed, with various suggestions including offering legal support to people facing deportation.

It was important to the PCC of All Saints that the church was not closed for worship, but no particular proposals for a different way forward were made.

The Croydon AMPC is invited to receive and reflect on the suggestions made by the three PCCs and to make recommendations to the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee on the future of ministry in Shirley.

Possible ways forward include:

	Suggestion	Pros	Cons
1	No change to the current Parish Boundaries and Staffing	Avoids the financial and organisational costs of changing parish boundaries and re designating clergy posts Existing parishes continue with plans for growth and mission	This does not address viability issues at All Saints, and consequent questions about effective pastoral ministry in that parish It retains existing parish boundaries between St George and St John which do not reflect local geography
2	Just change the parish boundaries between St John's and St George's, to move the road in St John's Parish north of the A232	Avoids the financial and organisational costs of changing parish boundaries and re designating clergy posts	This does not address viability issues at All Saints, and consequent questions about effective pastoral ministry in that parish

		<p>Resolves the parish boundaries between St George's and St John's which do not reflect local geography, particularly the way the A232 cuts through Shirley</p> <p>Existing parishes continue with plans for growth and mission</p>	<p>St John's Parish becomes very small</p>
3	<p>Form a Team Ministry in Shirley with the parishes retained within it, with no parish boundary changes</p>	<p>Each parish still has a priest of incumbent status, to lead in mission</p>	<p>Viability of All Saints' PCC as a charity is not addressed</p> <p>It retains existing parish boundaries between St George and St John which do not reflect local geography</p>
4	<p>Form a Team Ministry in Shirley with only one parish, and one PCC, and DCCs for each church</p>	<p>With one PCC, the financial viability of the Church in the area is pooled</p> <p>The churches can share the expertise of the members across all the churches</p> <p>The boundaries of areas within the parish can more easily be changed</p>	<p>Challenge to decide which post would be the Team Rector's post</p> <p>Team ministries have a chequered history – laity and clergy often find it harder to relate to a team than to an individual church</p>
5	<p>Rearrange parish boundaries so that there are 2 parishes in Shirley: one to the north of the A232 - St George's and one to the south - St John's with All Saints Spring Park, with a Vicar in each parish and an Assistant Priest in St John's with All Saints Spring Park</p>	<p>Addresses the fact that Spring Park is not viable as a charity</p> <p>More clergy time focused on mission, since one clergy will not have the responsibilities of running a parish</p>	<p>Cost of re-organisation to the Diocese</p> <p>New Mission Action Plans will be needed for the newly organised parishes</p> <p>St John's alone would be the PCC which picks up the challenge of All Saints Spring Park building issues</p>

Appendix 1

The Future of the church of England in Shirley

The three parishes of St John and St George Shirley and All Saints Spring Park cover a single social entity, insofar as is ever possible in an urban environment. To the north and east the borough (which is also in part diocesan) boundary forms a natural limit. To the south and west there is primarily open land of various kinds. To the east The Beck marks the boundary between Shirley and West Wickham. The parishes are predominantly residential, mostly suburban detached and semi-detached houses with a former local authority estate at Shrublands, and the majority of the site of the Royal Bethlem Hospital, both in the parish of All Saints. The A232 runs through the middle of Shirley and is both a busy trunk route and the main location of shopping and local facilities. The following page briefly illustrates the geographical relationship of the churches and parishes, alongside some information on population and congregations.

Each parish has a full-time stipendiary incumbent. Reflecting its more prosperous population and higher attendance figures, St John's makes an annual contribution to the Parish Support Fund of £78000, with nothing outstanding. St George's and All Saints are demographically similar, and according to the figures provided their worshipping congregations are not extremely dissimilar (82 and 48 respectively). The difference in PSF contribution is dramatic: St George's contributed £36000 in 2018 (with nothing outstanding). All Saints made a contribution of £3000, and has £57280.91 outstanding.

All Saints Spring Park

According to the Parish Dashboard, the worshipping community figure at All Saints went from nearly 140 in 2015 to about 35 in 2016, and back up to just over 60 in 2017. During this time the Electoral Roll was virtually unchanged at just over 100. Over the same period the usual Sunday attendance declined from just over 60 to 48 (a number significantly higher than was observed in church by the archdeacon and diocesan stewardship officer, on separate occasions). Despite the enquiry conducted under the Bishop's Visitation in 2016-2017 the financial position of All Saints remains unclear. The parish continues to record an annual deficit, as it has every year since at least 2007, and appears to have no significant financial reserves. The final report on the Visitation concluded that 'there are serious financial concerns and questions which need to be put to the parish about a) financial viability going forward; b) capacity for the office of Treasurer and the associated tasks of accurate financial recording and monitoring and c) capacity within the PCC to set financial and missional goals which are related and sustainable.'

In this connection it is important to recognise that All Saints PCC acknowledges that the Church Hall is at the end of its useful life and extensive work needs to be undertaken to the church building. The incumbent has raised concerns about the long-term future of the current parsonage in Bridle Road. The PCC have been working with Ablett Architects and discussed a draft scoping proposal with the Archdeacon of Croydon in December 2018. The parish are probably right in identifying that the best solution would be for some land to be sold for development (part Parsonage, part parish) – the sum of the whole probably being more than two separate parts. The parish envisage using their proceeds from a sale to fund repairing to the church building and creating meeting facilities within the church building. The Diocese would be invited to buy a further section of PCC land to build a new parsonage.

The scheme has some merit, given the state of the existing buildings; the Property Department have been asked to bring forward the Conditions Survey of the parsonage to early 2019. The Quinquennial Inspection of the church is also due in 2019 and this will give a detailed description of the state of

the church and what is needed to address those matters identified. But significant concerns have been fed back to the parish that funding of the project is a serious issue given that the Diocese is not in a position to fund work related to the scoping or development of proposals. It is unclear how the parish would fund this work given the finances as reported.

Further the current ball-park estimate is that the parish will receive about £500k from the development: this is unlikely to be sufficient to fund repair of the church and replication of hall facilities inside the church building. It appears from the proposal as developed so far that this sum is based on the parish receiving all the benefit from the development, and does not include the costs of providing a new parsonage (to quote, "On our initial scoping outline appraisal, 9 houses (without building the vicarage) could deliver a modest receipt in excess of £500,000"). This would not be possible, as proceeds from the sale of the vicarage would have to be paid into the Parsonages Fund. Equally *ultra vires* is the assumption that "on the sale of the land the SDBF will then automatically fund the repairs / extension works to the Church?"

Given that the church is a listed building unaltered since it was built, there may also be difficulties with the heritage bodies in making serious interventions in it. The parish will need to respond to these concerns before it would be possible to go any further.

Despite the desire to move forward that is expressed through this proposal, it reinforces rather than reduces the principal issue faced by the church in the Shirley and Spring Park area, the lack of organisational and financial robustness at All Saints, with a consequent lack of capacity to serve the parish in mission.

St John Shirley

St John's is a robust parish which covers the full costs of its incumbent. Electoral Roll numbers have remained steady and high, though Sunday attendance has gradually declined. The parish primary school is an increasing focus for the parish's ministry. The parish does have a relatively small population, particularly for a suburban area (5100 in 2011), and the parish boundaries between St John's and St George's don't reflect the key dividing line of the A232. There is no natural boundary between St John's parish on its border with All Saints (the major residential part of which is also south of the A232).

St George Shirley

St George's has seen encouraging signs of growth in recent years, with small increases in Electoral Roll, worshipping community and usual Sunday attendance. While not as prosperous as St John's, its finances are sound and there is consistent investment in mission in the parish. The only issue that requires discussion is that of the parish boundary with St John's. The majority of the parish of All Saints which borders St George's is the site of the Royal Bethlem Hospital.

In the light of these factors, and any others that they may wish to bring forward, interested parties are invited to comment and propose solutions which would enable the church to offer consistent and effective ministry throughout the Shirley and Spring Park area. The Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee will consider this paper and responses to it at its meeting on Thursday 28 February 2019.

Croydon Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee

4th September 2019

Summary of meeting held before the formal meeting of the Croydon AMPC

Context

The Archdeacon of Reigate chaired a meeting of the Croydon AMPC in February 2019 which started an exploration of the provision of Church of England ministry in Shirley (Addington Deanery). She was asked by the meeting to write a discussion paper for consideration at a future AMPC, having prior to this met with the PCCs of the three churches in Shirley (St George Shirley, St John Shirley, All Saints Spring Park). St John's and St George's subsequently sent copies of the minutes of those meetings in preparation for the writing of a paper. All Saints tabled an abridged version of their minutes at this meeting, pending their acceptance by the PCC later in September.

This meeting provided an opportunity for the three parishes to respond to the Archdeacon of Reigate's paper with the members of the Croydon AMPC present. The clergy of the three parishes were present at the meeting along with at least one churchwarden from each parish and representatives of the PCCs and congregations.

Discussion

The Archdeacon of Reigate briefly introduced her paper. In the discussion and questions that followed (lasting about an hour) the following points were made by the parishes:

All Saints Spring Park

- (a) Clarification was required about what constituted the "situation in Shirley" and the context for the enquiry. (*The Archdeacon of Reigate clarified that this arose from concern about PSF pledges and finances; about information from data dashboards; questions of governance*)
- (b) The data presented was inaccurate for All Saints and did not adequately represent the parish and figures needed to be revisited and verified.
- (c) An independent report with proper analysis needed to be commissioned
- (d) There had been systematic and systemic harassment of the Incumbent over the years, including an unmerited and unexplained Inhibition and Suspension – for which an apology had never been issued. This had had a serious impact on the morale and life of the parish
- (e) The church and its clergy were regularly excluded from Diocesan life (for example the 25th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood)
- (f) The transition from Fairer Shares to the Parish Support Fund had been unfair for parishes like All Saints as the new system was about wealth creation and having the means to pay.
- (g) Numbers and giving fell during the Inhibition/Suspension when the Reader was put in charge (who has subsequently left the parish)
- (h) The parish had not been properly supported by the Deanery and the Diocese for the last twenty years
- (i) The parish has plans for the redevelopment of the site (hall and parsonage) and has met with their architect and has potential interested investors in America to enable this to happen
- (j) Parishioners would consider it a travesty to remove the church from the community
- (k) There was ongoing hostility especially from St George's – focussed on a meeting about potential changes to Diocesan funding about five years ago.

St George's Shirley

The parish did not wish to add to the substantive points made in the report and recorded in the meeting of their PCC

St John's Shirley

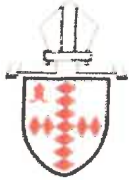
The parish made the observation that if

- (a) There are ways in which All Saints PCC can be supported going forward in their mission and ministry, St John's would be willing to be part of this;
- (b) It should be determined and discerned that there is no way forward for an independent parish, St John's would be willing to take on responsibility for the church building.

Conclusion

All Saints were asked to send in a copy of their PCC minutes as soon as possible after they had been agreed at their next PCC on September 18th.

Those who had attended on behalf of the three parishes were thanked for their attendance and their engagement in discussion. They then left the meeting and the formal meeting of the Croydon AMPC took place.



The Diocese of
Southwark

8 January 2020

To:

All Saints, Spring Park
Incumbent: The Revd Yvonne Clarke
PCC Secretary: Mr James Clarke
Patron: The Bishop of Southwark

Shirley
Incumbent: The Revd Lu Gale
PCC Secretary: Mr Tim Hastie
Patron: The Bishop of Southwark

Saint George, Shirley
Incumbent: The Revd Barry Hengist
PCC Secretary: Mrs Vivienne Windheuer
Patron: The Bishop of Southwark

Area Dean
The Revd Jenny Rowley

Deanery Lay Chair
Mrs Alice Hicks

The Bishop of Croydon
The Rt Revd Jonathan Clark

The Archdeacon of Croydon
The Ven. Christopher Skilton

The Archdeacon of Reigate
The Ven. Moira Astin

MISSION AND PASTORAL MEASURE 2011

Benefice of All Saints, Spring Park; Parishes of Shirley; and Saint George, Shirley

The Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee ("the Committee") is considering making recommendations to the Bishop under the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011. These may affect the benefice and parishes named above.

I enclose a copy of the preliminary draft proposals which the Committee has under discussion, with Notes which include a summary of what is proposed and the motivation behind the proposals.

Revd Canon Stephen Roberts
deputy diocesan secretary

Trinity House
4 Chapel Court
Borough High Street
London SE1 1HW

d 020 7939 9456
s 020 7939 9400
f 020 7939 9469

e stephen.roberts@southwark.anglican.org

www.southwark.anglican.org

Before deciding on its recommendations to the Bishop, the Committee is required to ascertain the views of all the interested parties. The Committee will consider the views of all interested parties before coming to a final decision on what, if any, recommendations it should make to the Bishop.

An incumbent or priest in charge affected by these proposals has the right under the Measure to meet representatives of the Committee or, if (s)he requests, the full Committee to present his or her views. (The Committee has a scheduled meeting on Thursday 27 February 2020 from 6 pm when it would be possible for those with a right to do so to meet the full Committee and present their views if they so desire.)

A Parochial Church Council or its appointed representative may request to meet the Committee's representatives to discuss its views.

The Area Dean and Lay Chair should note that the deanery synod is not itself an interested party but they are encouraged to keep the synod and the synod's standing committee informed about the progress of the proposals.

I should be grateful if views, together with any requests for a meeting with the Committee or its representatives, could be forwarded to me in writing as soon as possible and not later than by Friday 21 February 2020.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stephen Roberts", with a horizontal line underneath it.

The Revd Canon Stephen Roberts
Secretary to Southwark Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee

DIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK

MISSION AND PASTORAL MEASURE 2011

Benefice of All Saints, Spring Park; Parishes of Shirley; and Saint George, Shirley

These draft proposals provide for:

- *The dissolution of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park and its constituent parish*
- *The division of the area of its parish between the parishes of Saint George, Shirley; and Shirley (known locally as "St John, Shirley")*
- *The parish church of All Saints, Spring Park to become a chapel of ease in the parish of Shirley*
- *The transfer of the parsonage house of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park to the Southwark Diocesan Board of finance as diocesan glebe*

1. Dissolution of benefice and parish

The benefice of All Saints, Spring Park and its constituent parish shall be dissolved.

2. Alteration of areas

- i. All that part of the parish of All Saints, Spring Park which is hatched and lettered "A" on the annexed map shall be transferred to the parish of St George, Shirley.
- ii. All that part of the parish of All Saints, Spring Park which is cross-hatched and lettered "B" on the annexed map shall be transferred to the parish of Shirley.

3. Church of All Saints, Spring Park

The church of All Saints, Spring Park, being the parish church of the parish of All Saints, Spring Park, shall become a chapel of ease now in the parish of Shirley pursuant to clause 2(ii) hereof.

4. Transfer of parsonage house

The parsonage house of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park (known as All Saints Vicarage, 1 Farm Drive, Croydon, CR0 8HX) shall be transferred to the Southwark Diocesan Board of Finance as diocesan glebe.

5. Coming into effect of these proposals

If upon the date on which any Scheme arising from these proposals is made the Reverend Yvonne Veronica Clarke is incumbent of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park this Scheme shall come into operation six months thereafter; but if upon the said date the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park is vacant, or if it shall subsequently become vacant before the expiration of a period of six months this Scheme shall come into operation upon the first day of the month following the said date.

NOTES

Rationale

As the result of ongoing concerns about the financial viability and capacity for governance and mission going forward, the Bishop of Southwark held a Visitation to the parish of All Saints, Spring Park in 2016. This was conducted by the Bishop and Archdeacon of Croydon. A series of Directions were issued as a result of this, designed to help the parish to address these areas. There has sadly been no evidence that this has been the case nor has the parish demonstrated the future capacity to do so.

In early 2019 the Archdeacon of Reigate (acting in her capacity as Assistant Archdeacon of Croydon) produced a report for the Croydon Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee (AMPC) outlining proposals for the best provision for ministry and mission in Shirley. The AMPC subsequently asked her to visit each of the three Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) to discuss this. Following the visits she prepared a report for a meeting of the September 2019 AMPC reporting on her "Consultation on the Future of Church of England Ministry in Shirley" - with five possible options for the way forward. This was discussed with representatives of the three parishes and the members of the AMPC immediately before its meeting.

The AMPC considered the different options and unanimously agreed that the best way forward was for the parish of All Saints, Spring Park to be dissolved and the parish divided along the A232 road between St George, Shirley and the parish of Shirley (known locally as St John, Shirley) with the current parish church of All Saints, Spring Park becoming a chapel-of-ease of the parish of Shirley. (Should this proposal come into effect there would be scope in due time to regularise the complete parish boundaries between St John and St George along this main road).

The proposal retains All Saints Church building as a resource for new forms of ministry going forward, exploring the possibilities of pioneer ministry in due course. Whilst a post of incumbent status will be lost in the proposal, the Diocese is committed to ring-fencing the post for new expressions and forms of ministry under the supervision of the incumbent of Shirley (St John's).

The effect of the proposal would

- (a) Enable the best provision for ministry and mission across the area of Shirley
- (b) Be rooted in the strong and established governance at St John's and St George's
- (c) Allow for innovative and creative pioneer ministry in Shirley
- (d) Provide for a church building/centre for this purpose

Dispossession of the Reverend Yvonne Veronica Clarke

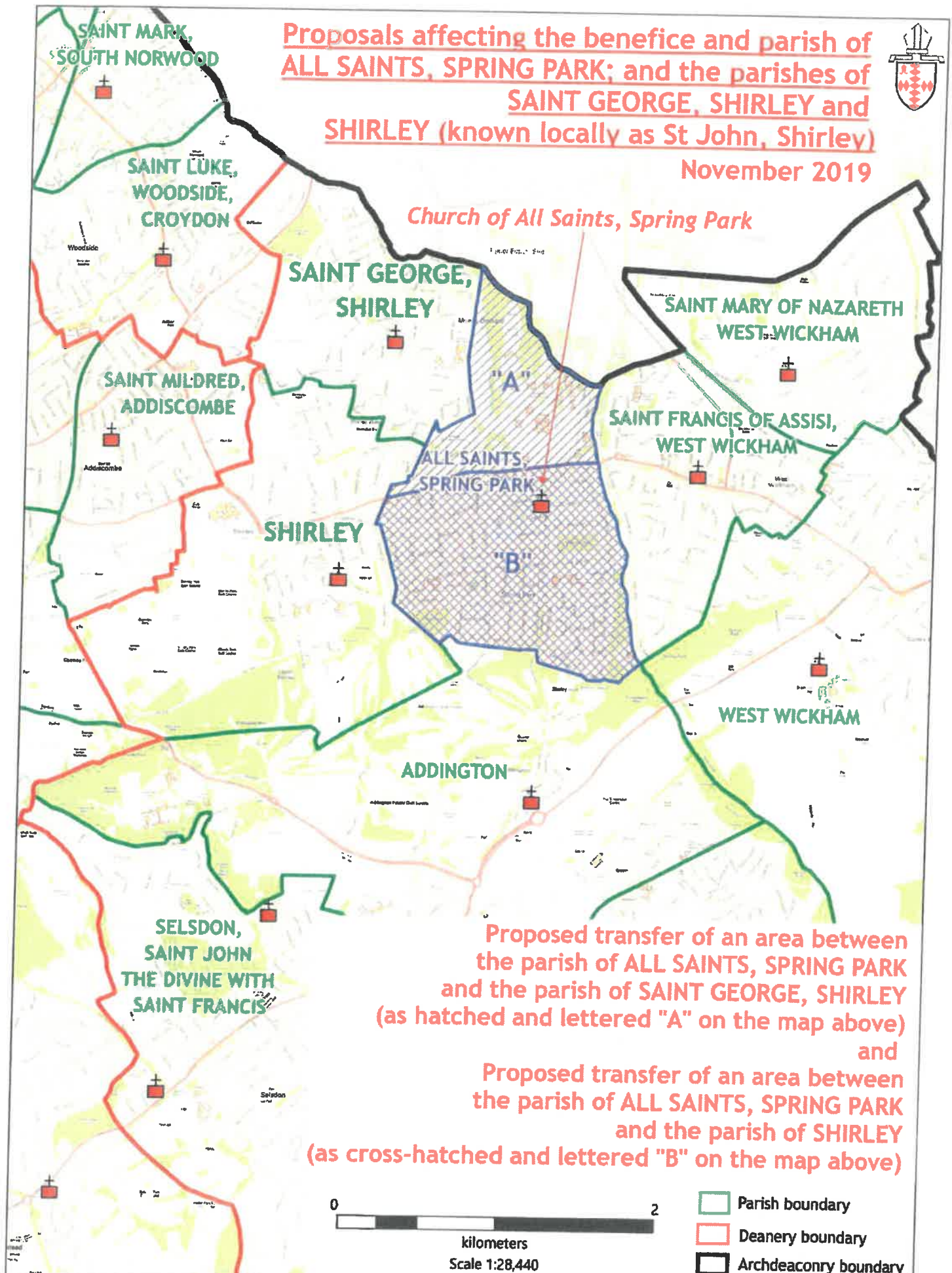
As a result of the proposed dissolution of the benefice and parish of All Saints, Spring Park as provided for in clause 1, the existing benefice and parish would cease to exist. As Ms Clarke is the incumbent of the benefice of All Saints, Spring Park and her benefice would be dissolved she would be dispossessed from her current post should the Scheme take effect, and would be entitled to 12 months of her current stipend and pension contributions as a lump sum, and to be housed in suitable accommodation for the same 12 month-period (or, by agreement with the diocese, to receive payment in lieu of any such occupation).

Proposals affecting the benefice and parish of ALL SAINTS, SPRING PARK; and the parishes of SAINT GEORGE, SHIRLEY and SHIRLEY (known locally as St John, Shirley)



November 2019

Church of All Saints, Spring Park



Proposed transfer of an area between the parish of ALL SAINTS, SPRING PARK and the parish of SAINT GEORGE, SHIRLEY (as hatched and lettered "A" on the map above) and Proposed transfer of an area between the parish of ALL SAINTS, SPRING PARK and the parish of SHIRLEY (as cross-hatched and lettered "B" on the map above)



kilometers
Scale 1:28,440

- Parish boundary
- Deanery boundary
- Archdeaconry boundary

Relevant excerpt of

Croydon Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday September 4th at 7.30 pm at the Croydon Area Office

Present: Ven Chris Skilton (Chair), Steven Willmer, Revd Chidi Mbanude, Revd Barry Hengist, John Stephens, Alice Hicks, David Percival, Revd Jenny Rowley, Revd Paul Roberts, Steven Taylor, Indrani Balachandran, Revd Simon Foster
Ven Moira Astin (Items 1 – 3 only)

The Bishop's Pastoral Order for the transfer of the Deanery of Sutton from the Archdeaconry of Croydon to the Archdeaconry of Reigate had taken effect from 1st September 2019. AMPC members elected/appointed from Sutton Deanery would now be part of the Reigate AMPC.

1. Opening Prayer

The Archdeacon opened the meeting with prayer.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Revd Catherine Tucker

3. Consultation on the future of C of E Ministry in Shirley

The meeting was joined by representatives of the three Anglican churches in Shirley for the first hour of the meeting for a discussion of the paper written by the Archdeacon of Reigate. A note of this meeting is appended to the minutes.

In the discussion that followed these matters of clarification were offered:

- i) A brief background was given to the Visitation and Inhibition in 2016-17 which had been about financial viability and governance. There had been no accusations of any financial impropriety: this had been explained at its different stages to the PCC and to the congregation.
- ii) During the Inhibition the parish received appropriate pastoral care from the Revd Sandra Schloss, who was tasked by the Bishop of Croydon for this purpose.
- iii) The issues being raised were not about personalities but about governance and viability
- iv) It was recognised that there was a lack of clarity about whether the parish had the capacity to organise and fund a major development project. (Clear evidence would be needed of the identity and capability of the suggested American sponsors before matters went any further).
- v) There had not been any suggestion that the church building should be closed
- vi) It was stated that sale of the hall site for development and replication of the lost D1 facilities in the church building might be difficult to achieve. The church building had been unaltered since construction and is listed.
- vii) The meeting had not been told how the parish had been addressing or might address the significant decline in numbers and giving in the last ten years.

In her paper the Archdeacon had suggested five possible options for consideration for ministry across Shirley. (These can be found in pages 2-3 of the report). The Committee considered each of these in turn and made the following response:

- Option 1 There is little future in everything remaining as it is. External funding for a major project would take several years to acquire and for a complex project to

be delivered, notwithstanding questions about capacity for governance and ongoing life in the present.

- Option 2 This option proposes that parish boundaries are moved but it does not address any of the questions about capacity for governance or short, medium or long term financial viability.
- Options 3 & 4 The current context and climate meant that it would not be possible to create a Team Ministry in the current context. This would not address or resolve the questions of capacity for governance or financial viability.
- Option 5 It was recognised that this option was not without its own challenges but was considered the preferred option of members of the AMPC given the issues and factors raised in the discussion as detailed above in i) to vii) and outlined in the report.

The Revd Barry Hengist as Incumbent of St George's Shirley and a member of the AMPC had declared a conflict of interest and did not take part in the vote that followed.

The members of the AMPC voted nem con to recommend to the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee that Option 5 is the Committee's preferred option for the way forward for the provision of ministry across the Church of England parishes in Shirley.

APPENDIX

Croydon Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee

4th September 2019

Summary of meeting held before the formal meeting of the Croydon AMPC

Context

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This meeting provided an opportunity for the three parishes to respond to the Archdeacon of Reigate's paper with the members of the Croydon AMPC present. The clergy of the three parishes were present at the meeting along with at least one churchwarden from each parish and representatives of the PCCs and congregations.

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- (c) An independent report with proper analysis needed to be commissioned
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- (g) Numbers and giving fell during the Inhibition/Suspension when the Reader was put in charge (who has subsequently left the parish)
- (h) The parish had not been properly supported by the Deanery and the Diocese for the last twenty years
- (i) The parish has plans for the redevelopment of the site (hall and parsonage) and has met with their architect and has potential interested investors in America to enable this to happen
- (j) Parishioners would consider it a travesty to remove the church from the community
- (k) There was ongoing hostility especially from St George's – focussed on a meeting about potential changes to Diocesan funding about five years ago.

St George's Shirley

The parish did not wish to add to the substantive points made in the report and recorded in the meeting of their PCC

St John's Shirley

The parish made the observation that if

- (a) There are ways in which All Saints PCC can be supported going forward in their mission and ministry, St John's would be willing to be part of this;
- (b) It should be determined and discerned that there is no way forward for an independent parish, St John's would be willing to take on responsibility for the church building.

Conclusion

All Saints were asked to send in a copy of their PCC minutes as soon as possible after they had been agreed at their next PCC on September 18th.

Those who had attended on behalf of the three parishes were thanked for their attendance and their engagement in discussion. They then left the meeting and the formal meeting of the Croydon AMPC took place.

Attendance Information 2010-2019

Taken from data provided by the parishes for the Statistics for Mission returns 2010-2

Parish Local Name	uSa (Adult) Attendance_2010
--------------------------	--

Addington: St Mary the Blessed Virgin	165
New Addington: St Edward	79
Selsdon: St. John the Divine w St. Francis	140
Shirley: St George	87
Shirley: St John	120
Spring Park: All Saints	0
West Wickham: St Francis of Assisi	70
West Wickham: St John	130
West Wickham: St Mary of Nazareth	45

Usual Child Sunday Attendance_2010

Addington: St Mary the Blessed Virgin	24
New Addington: St Edward	14
Selsdon: St. John the Divine w St. Francis	39
Shirley: St George	12
Shirley: St John	46
Spring Park: All Saints	0
West Wickham: St Francis of Assisi	3
West Wickham: St John	30
West Wickham: St Mary of Nazareth	4

Parish Local Name	Adult_AWA_2010
--------------------------	-----------------------

Addington: St Mary the Blessed Virgin	187
New Addington: St Edward	95
Selsdon: St. John the Divine w St. Francis	172
Shirley: St George	107
Shirley: St John	133
Spring Park: All Saints	0
West Wickham: St Francis of Assisi	145
West Wickham: St John	142
West Wickham: St Mary of Nazareth	50

Parish Local Name	Child_AWA_2010
--------------------------	-----------------------

Addington: St Mary the Blessed Virgin	25.75
New Addington: St Edward	18.75
Selsdon: St. John the Divine w St. Francis	42.75
Shirley: St George	22
Shirley: St John	45

Spring Park: All Saints	0
West Wickham: St Francis of Assisi	0.75
West Wickham: St John	42.75
West Wickham: St Mary of Nazareth	8.25

Parish Local Name	Adult_ASA_2010
Addington: St Mary the Blessed Virgin	172.5
New Addington: St Edward	88.5
Selsdon: St. John the Divine w St. Francis	170.25
Shirley: St George	96
Shirley: St John	133
Spring Park: All Saints	0
West Wickham: St Francis of Assisi	137.25
West Wickham: St John	142
West Wickham: St Mary of Nazareth	43.25

Parish Local Name	Worship Comm Age Tot_2010
Addington: St Mary the Blessed Virgin	0
New Addington: St Edward	0
Selsdon: St. John the Divine w St. Francis	0
Shirley: St George	0
Shirley: St John	0
Spring Park: All Saints	0
West Wickham: St Francis of Assisi	0
West Wickham: St John	0
West Wickham: St Mary of Nazareth	0

Parish Local Name	Electoral Roll, Current Year_2010
Addington: St Mary the Blessed Virgin	238
New Addington: St Edward	133
Selsdon: St. John the Divine w St. Francis	301
Shirley: St George	108
Shirley: St John	308
Spring Park: All Saints	94
West Wickham: St Francis of Assisi	145
West Wickham: St John	168
West Wickham: St Mary of Nazareth	94

Ranking out of 298 parishes in the diocese; 1 being lowest, 298 being highest

Parish Local Name	uSa (Adult) 2019
Addington: St Mary the Blessed Virgin	196

New Addington: St Edward	103
Selsdon: St. John the Divine w St. Francis	267
Shirley: St George	202
Shirley: St John	224
Spring Park: All Saints	42
West Wickham: St Francis of Assisi	120
West Wickham: St John	231
West Wickham: St Mary of Nazareth	90

2019

uSa (Adult) Attendance_2011	uSa (Adult) Attendance_2012	uSa (Adult) Attendance_2013	uSa (Adult) Attendance_2014
--	--	--	--

106	116	102	85
74	78	0	65
149	95	149	160
85	84	82	76
139	157	135	120
29	0	0	46
75	65	67	55
135	130	127	120
46	45	50	45

Usual Child Sunday Attendance_2011	Usual Child Sunday Attendance_2012	Usual Child Sunday Attendance_2013	Usual Child Sunday Attendance_2014
---	---	---	---

14	15	15	14
15	18	0	8
45	12	39	40
10	15	9	10
34	40	41	30
12	0	0	19
3	3	0	0
35	30	25	30
9	5	5	7

Adult_AWA_2011	Adult_AWA_2012	Adult_AWA_2013	Adult_AWA_2014
-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

204	178	150	224
80	110	34	65
203	137	195	185
104	118	116	77
137	140	145	171
31	0	0	33
99	94	89	76
132	148	98	128
45	44	73	40

Child_AWA_2011	Child_AWA_2012	Child_AWA_2013	Child_AWA_2014
-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

31.75	28.5	29	58.75
16	22.75	7.5	9.75
51.25	10.25	52.5	44
20	23	24	14
39	41	37	36

6	0	0	16
6.5	9.5	8	5
54.25	60	36	48.75
10.5	9.75	9.25	10.5

Adult_ASA_2011	Adult_ASA_2012	Adult_ASA_2013	Adult_ASA_2014
189.75	158.75	107.75	149.5
71	103.25	32	61.5
197.75	130.5	190.75	178.75
93	101	115	76
136	140	134	151
27	0	0	33
87	79.25	77	66
131.75	128.75	97.5	128
41	43.5	72.75	39.5

Worship Comm Age Tot_2011	Worship Comm Age Tot_2012	Worship Comm Age Tot_2013	Worship Comm Age Tot_2014
0	0	0	160
0	0	0	86
0	0	0	299
0	0	0	123
0	0	0	305
0	0	0	121
0	0	0	65
0	0	0	220
0	0	0	70

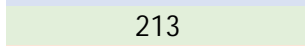
Electoral Roll, Current Year_2011	Electoral Roll, Current Year_2012	Electoral Roll, Current Year_2013	Electoral Roll, Current Year_2014
255	255	200	205
141	145	100	104
286	292	282	187
104	101	94	100
300	299	309	315
94	94	86	101
145	142	142	140
180	189	173	182
89	90	79	81

122

263



176



213



109

141

231

68

uSa (Adult) Attendance_2015	uSa (Adult) Attendance_2016	uSa (Adult) Attendance_2017	uSa (Adult) Attendance_2018
--------------------------------	--------------------------------	--------------------------------	--------------------------------

91	80	95	77
58	45	40	40
174	155	216	162
71	70	70	83
120	117	101	90
45	45	37	24
53	55	50	49
130	115	115	115
51	52	41	47

Usual Child Sunday Attendance_2015	Usual Child Sunday Attendance_2016	Usual Child Sunday Attendance_2017	Usual Child Sunday Attendance_2018
---------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

16	12	8	5
6	8	5	5
32	10	23	29
3	6	11	13
24	21	17	13
17	10	11	8
0	1	0	0
25	25	30	25
6	8	5	4

Adult_AWA_2015	Adult_AWA_2016	Adult_AWA_2017	Adult_AWA_2018
----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------

173	187	120	85
68	57	67	56
287	160	213	184
80	90	108	103
141	132	123	112
52	44	27	29
62	69	69	59
107	102	129	110
58	53	57	58

Child_AWA_2015	Child_AWA_2016	Child_AWA_2017	Child_AWA_2018
----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------

43.25	41.5	9.75	1.25
7	12	5.5	18.25
51.25	13.5	31.75	30.25
8	10	13	20
26	23	27	24

20	11	4	0
6.25	2	1.25	2.75
36.25	31.25	34.5	34
7	12.5	10.75	11

Adult_ASA_2015	Adult_ASA_2016	Adult_ASA_2017	Adult_ASA_2018
116.25	102.75	93.25	74.75
64	51.5	62	51.25
218.75	142.5	193	175.75
79	81	97	100
132	122	115	104
47	37	24	23
53.5	61	61.25	45.25
106	100.75	127.25	110
58.25	45.75	48.75	51.25

Worship Comm Age Tot_2015	Worship Comm Age Tot_2016	Worship Comm Age Tot_2017	Worship Comm Age Tot_2018
162	210	199	194
84	89	60	74
270	168	286	279
114	109	116	139
295	297	295	245
134	33	65	67
53	58	55	106
216	221	232	240
99	107	102	103

Electoral Roll, Current Year_2015	Electoral Roll, Current Year_2016	Electoral Roll, Current Year_2017	Electoral Roll, Current Year_2018
209	209	197	194
101	104	98	93
186	190	194	196
107	104	110	106
313	301	312	308
105	104	106	106
138	138	129	120
185	188	192	196
76	76	76	73

uSa (Adult) Attendance_2019	uSa (Adult) Attendance_2019 ranking
--------------------------------	---

78	5
45	7
158	1
80	4
95	3
30	9
50	6
102	2
42	8

Usual Child Sunday
Attendance_2019

10
6
26
12
12
8
0
18
4

Adult_AWA_2019

129
62
160
91
105
55
68
111
44

Child_AWA_2019

8.5
7.25
19.75
15
14

6
6.25
32
7

Adult_ASA_2019

103
55.5
149.75
77
99
51
63.5
110.5
38.25

Worship Comm Age

Tot_2019
196
69
306
143
250
90
85
225
101

Electoral Roll, Current

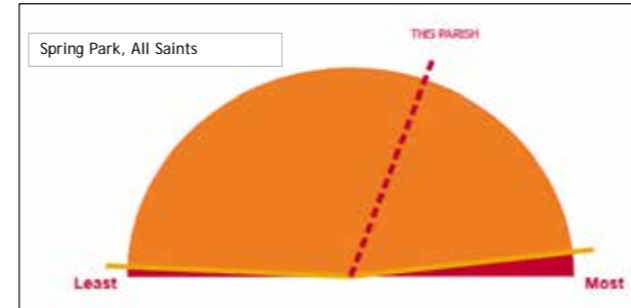
Year_2019
196
54
212
104
164
74
115
165
68

Parish Data - Spring Park, All Saints

Percentages and ranks	Least in Nation	Least in Diocese	This parish	Most in Diocese	Most in Nation
Child Poverty ?	<u>0.80%</u>	<u>1.70%</u>	18.10% Ranked 2178/12382	<u>34.70%</u>	<u>57.50%</u>
Pensioner Poverty ?	<u>2%</u>	<u>2.10%</u>	13.40% Ranked 3153/12382	<u>49.40%</u>	<u>72.70%</u>
Working age poverty ?	<u>0.50%</u>	<u>1.50%</u>	8.60% Ranked 3650/12382	<u>18.10%</u>	<u>43.70%</u>
Years	Highest in Nation	Highest in Diocese	This parish	Lowest in Diocese	Lowest in Nation
Life expectancy (boys) ?	<u>92yrs</u>	<u>84yrs</u>	81.4yrs	<u>73yrs</u>	<u>67.5yrs</u>
Life expectancy (girls) ?	<u>94yrs</u>	<u>90yrs</u>	87.3yrs	<u>77yrs</u>	<u>75yrs</u>
Percentages	Least in Nation	Least in Diocese	This parish	Most in Diocese	Most in Nation
No qualifications ?	<u>0.30%</u>	<u>5.70%</u>	19.20%	<u>34.50%</u>	<u>52.10%</u>
Social housing ?	<u>0%</u>	<u>1%</u>	24.40%	<u>68.60%</u>	<u>86.30%</u>
Lone parenthood ?	<u>0%</u>	<u>6.10%</u>	31%	<u>51.40%</u>	<u>58.70%</u>
People living on their own ?	<u>5.40%</u>	<u>16.80%</u>	21.70%	<u>49%</u>	<u>73.80%</u>
Older population ?	<u>0.50%</u>	<u>4.50%</u>	14.80%	<u>29.40%</u>	<u>58.90%</u>
Ethnic diversity ?	<u>0.50%</u>	<u>4%</u>	39.10%	<u>83.90%</u>	<u>96.60%</u>

Overall Deprivation

The population of this parish is 9776. It ranks 4854 out of 12382, where 1 is the most deprived parish. This means that the parish is **relatively deprived** compared with other parishes in the country.

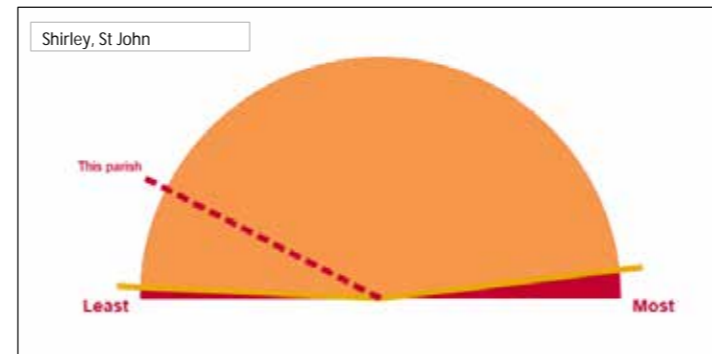


Parish Data - Shirley, St John

Percentages and ranks	Least in Nation	Least in Diocese	This parish	Most in Diocese	Most in Nation
Child Poverty ?	<u>0.80%</u>	<u>1.70%</u>	10.20% Ranked 5463/12382	<u>34.70%</u>	<u>57.50%</u>
Pensioner Poverty ?	<u>2%</u>	<u>2.10%</u>	7.60% Ranked 7524/12382	<u>49.40%</u>	<u>72.70%</u>
Working age poverty ?	<u>0.50%</u>	<u>1.50%</u>	5% Ranked 8144/12382	<u>18.10%</u>	<u>43.70%</u>
Years	Highest in Nation	Highest in Diocese	This parish	Lowest in Diocese	Lowest in Nation
Life expectancy (boys) ?	<u>92yrs</u>	<u>84yrs</u>	82.5yrs	<u>73yrs</u>	<u>67.5yrs</u>
Life expectancy (girls) ?	<u>94yrs</u>	<u>90yrs</u>	86.5yrs	<u>77yrs</u>	<u>75yrs</u>
Percentages	Least in Nation	Least in Diocese	This parish	Most in Diocese	Most in Nation
No qualifications ?	<u>0.30%</u>	<u>5.70%</u>	15.50%	<u>34.50%</u>	<u>52.10%</u>
Social housing ?	<u>0%</u>	<u>1%</u>	3.40%	<u>68.60%</u>	<u>86.30%</u>
Lone parenthood ?	<u>0%</u>	<u>6.10%</u>	16.50%	<u>51.40%</u>	<u>58.70%</u>
People living on their own ?	<u>5.40%</u>	<u>16.80%</u>	26.40%	<u>49%</u>	<u>73.80%</u>
Older population ?	<u>0.50%</u>	<u>4.50%</u>	18.80%	<u>29.40%</u>	<u>58.90%</u>
Ethnic diversity ?	<u>0.50%</u>	<u>4%</u>	34.80%	<u>83.90%</u>	<u>96.60%</u>

Overall Deprivation

The population of this parish is 5085. It ranks 10525 out of 12382, where 1 is the most deprived parish. This means that the parish is **among the wealthiest** in the country.

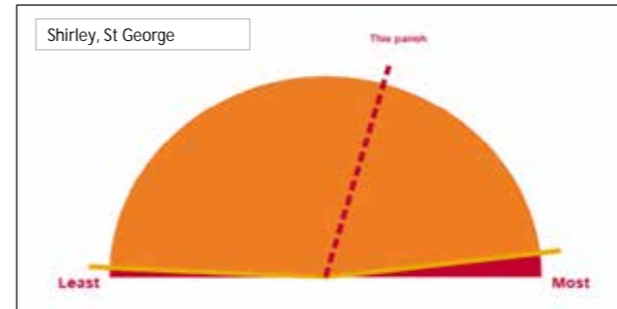


Parish Data - Shirley, St George

Percentages and ranks	Least in Nation	Least in Diocese	This parish	Most in Diocese	Most in Nation
Child Poverty ?	<u>0.80%</u>	<u>1.70%</u>	14.10% Ranked 3391/12382	<u>34.70%</u>	<u>57.50%</u>
Pensioner Poverty ?	<u>2%</u>	<u>2.10%</u>	14% Ranked 2946/12382	<u>49.40%</u>	<u>72.70%</u>
Working age poverty ?	<u>0.50%</u>	<u>1.50%</u>	7.50% Ranked 4545/12382	<u>18.10%</u>	<u>43.70%</u>
Years	Highest in Nation	Highest in Diocese	This parish	Lowest in Diocese	Lowest in Nation
Life expectancy (boys) ?	<u>92yrs</u>	<u>84yrs</u>	81.4yrs	<u>73yrs</u>	<u>67.5yrs</u>
Life expectancy (girls) ?	<u>94yrs</u>	<u>90yrs</u>	86.1yrs	<u>77yrs</u>	<u>75yrs</u>
Percentages	Least in Nation	Least in Diocese	This parish	Most in Diocese	Most in Nation
No qualifications ?	<u>0.30%</u>	<u>5.70%</u>	20.90%	<u>34.50%</u>	<u>52.10%</u>
Social housing ?	<u>0%</u>	<u>1%</u>	17.30%	<u>68.60%</u>	<u>86.30%</u>
Lone parenthood ?	<u>0%</u>	<u>6.10%</u>	31.30%	<u>51.40%</u>	<u>58.70%</u>
People living on their own ?	<u>5.40%</u>	<u>16.80%</u>	25.70%	<u>49%</u>	<u>73.80%</u>
Older population ?	<u>0.50%</u>	<u>4.50%</u>	17.50%	<u>29.40%</u>	<u>58.90%</u>
Ethnic diversity ?	<u>0.50%</u>	<u>4%</u>	34.50%	<u>83.90%</u>	<u>96.60%</u>

Overall Deprivation

The population of this parish is 7714. It ranks 5121 out of 12382, where 1 is the most deprived parish. This means that the parish is **around average** on the deprivation scale for parishes in the country.



Information taken from the Church Urban Fund website - 2020.11.10

CUF use the following data sources to create their graphs

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019

IMD 2019: Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index

IMD 2019: Employment Deprivation domain

IMD 2019: Income Deprivation Affecting Older People

ONS 2014: Health expectancies at birth and at age 65 in

IMD 2019: Adult Skills domain: adult skills sub domain

IMD 2019: Barriers to Housing and Services domain: wider barriers indicators

IMD 2019: Living Environment Deprivation domain: indoors living environment indicators

IMD 2019: Barriers to Housing and Services domain: geographical barriers indicator

Census 2011

Data

	Parish: Shirley: St George	
Deprivation rank (1=most deprived, 12,382=least deprived)	5,121	
Parish population (2011 census)	7,714	
Parish number of occupied households	3,102	
Area (square miles)	0.6	
Population density (people per square mile)	12,255	
% aged 0-4	5.9	
% aged 5-17	16.9	
% aged 18-29	14.2	
% aged 30-44	18.3	
% aged 45-64	27.2	
% aged 65 and over	17.5	
% White ethnicity	71	
% Asian ethnicity	9.7	
% Black ethnicity	12.5	
% Mixed ethnicity	5.6	
% Other ethnicity	1.2	
% Christian	60.6	
% Buddhist	0.3	
% Hindu	4.4	
% Jewish	0.3	
% Muslim	4.2	
% Sikh	0.6	
% Other religion	0.4	
% No religion	22	
% Religion not stated	7.2	

Data taken from online Church of England parish map: 09.11.2020

Description

Church of England churches and parishes, showing deprivation and census information

This map was produced by the Church of England Research & Statistics Unit. Comments and feed

You may reuse this information. Users should include a source accreditation to the Church of Eng

Data sources:

1. Parish, Benefice, Deanery, Archdeaconry, and Diocese boundaries as of January 2020. Data sup
2. Church locations taken from A Church Near You: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/> (updated
3. Church heritage web pages from the Church of England Online Faculty System and Church Heri
4. 2011 Census information taken from the Office for National Statistics: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/>

5. 2019 Deprivation Statistics taken from the English Indices of Deprivation, produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Census and deprivation statistics have been mapped onto parish boundaries. Since the boundaries

6. Schools. School location data taken from The Department for Education's register of education Data accessed January 2020. For each school, whether or not the Church of England has a role in

For more information, see the **Research and Statistics unit** web pages: <https://www.churchofengland.org/research-and-statistics>

Map produced: 19th May 2016.

Map updated: 5th September 2017.

Map updated: 30th January 2018.

Map updated: 3rd September 2018.

Map updated: 7th February 2019.

Map updated: 31st July 2019.

Map updated: 30th January 2020.

Parish: Spring Park: All Saints		Parish: Shirley: St John
4,854		10,525
9,776		5,085
3,612		2,018
0.9		1.2
10,368		4,122
7.1		4.4
19.1		14.7
14.6		14.2
16.9		16.8
27.6		31
14.8		18.8
66		72.2
11.1		14.4
16.7		7.6
4.9		4.9
1.3		0.9
60.5		62.9
0.3		0.9
4.3		5.9
0.2		0.5
6.8		4.7
0.3		0.4
0.5		0.5
19.2		17.1
7.9		7.1

back would be welcome: please email statistics.unit@churchofengland.org

land Research & Statistics unit - "Source: Church of England Research & Statistics unit" - and other accreditation as appropriate

applied by the Church Commissioners. It is important to note that parish boundaries change over time so these data will e

(January 2020)

tage (updated January 2020) Record: <https://facultyonline.churchofengland.org/>

census/2011census . Source: Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence.

ropriate from the information below.

eventually become out of date. The data may not be used for pro

ivation-2019. Note: Archive layers contain deprivation figures ba:

rose of parishes, all values should be treated as approximations.

➤/home.xhtml

ated are shown.

fit. Users should include a source accreditation to the Church of

sed on the 2015 Indices of Deprivation.

Data are not available for all parishes, e.g. those in the Isle of Ma

England Church Commissioners - "Source: Church of England Ch

an and the Channel Islands.

Arch Commissioners".



DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES
Minutes of the Meeting Thursday 27 February 2020
Newcomen Room, Trinity House

Members in attendance:	
The Bishop of Southwark	Dr David Keiller
The Revd Katie Thomas	The Revd Jonathan Macy
Mr Michael Hartley	Mr Alan Saunders
The Ven Simon Gates	Mrs Lotwina Farodoye
The Ven Alistair Cutting	Mr Joseph Goswell
Mrs Rebecca Chapman	Mr Philip Fletcher
The Revd Leslie Wells	Dr Nicholas Burt
Mr Colin Plant	Mr Bill Bishop
The Revd Peter Farley-Moore	Mrs Jacqueline Dean
Mr David Beamish	Ms Vasantha Gnanadoss
Mr Alex Helliwell	Ms Despina Francois
Mr John Dewhurst	Mr Adrian Greenwood

Apologies:	
Ms Solabomi Ogun	Mr Greg Prior
The Bishop of Kingston	The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett
The Bishop of Woolwich	

Officers & others in attendance:	
The Diocesan Secretary (Ruth Martin, Lay Canon)	The Revd Canon Stephen Roberts (Deputy Diocesan Secretary)
Kate Harrison (Interim Assistant to the Diocesan Secretary)	Anthony Demby (Director of Finance)
David Loft (Director of HR)	Jon Baldwin (Deputy Diocesan Registrar)
Jackie Pontin (Director of Strategic and Operational Projects)	Kate Singleton (Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor)
Chris Smart	The Revd Canon Dr Mandy Ford (Director of Discipleship and Ministry)

General (The Bishop of Southwark in the Chair)

1/20 Welcomes, Prayer and Apologies

1. The Chair welcomed those present and thanked them for coming.
2. He welcomed Jon Baldwin from Winckworth Sherwood, who had accepted Paul Morris' invitation to become Deputy Diocesan Registrar. He expressed thanks to Jon for his willingness to serve as Deputy Diocesan Registrar and for Paul's continued service until his retirement later in the year.
3. The Chair stated that Archdeacon Simon Gates would be chairing item number 12/20A and trustees would be briefed on the ground rules for this item before it commenced.

52. Alan Saunders passed the Chair to The Venerable Moira Astin for the DMPC section of the agenda.

11/20 Current list of suspensions

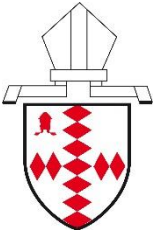
53. The comprehensive list of suspensions and restrictions was noted. The Chair asked that anyone with questions relating to any of them should contact the relevant Archdeacon.

12/20 Cases for Decision and Noting

**12/20A Shirley Area Draft Proposals for Pastoral Reorganisation
CONSIDER draft proposals for Pastoral Scheme**

54. Incumbents affected by these draft proposals had been advised of their right to meet the full committee to present their views should they wish to do so. (Please see attached consultation letter, dated 8 January 2020.)
55. The Venerable Moira Astin vacated the Chair for item number 12/20A. The Bishop of Southwark asked The Venerable Simon Gates to chair this item in her place.
56. The Venerable Simon Gates invited Stephen Roberts, as Pastoral Secretary, to speak. He began by explaining the process that was underway and which stage had been reached. At the October 2019 DMPC he had been asked to draw up draft proposals for a pastoral scheme. He had done so and had subsequently undertaken a formal consultation to interested parties on the draft proposals on behalf of the DMPC. St George's and St John's had not made submissions. Representations have been received on behalf of All Saints.
57. The Registrar, Paul Morris, had briefed trustees in October 2019 on the Episcopal Visitation, which had been followed by a comprehensive report on the state and condition of the parish. The committee had previously recommended that draft proposals for pastoral reorganisation should be drawn up to enable the benefice of All Saints Spring Park to be dissolved and for its parish to be divided between the neighbouring parishes of St John Shirley and St George Shirley. The incumbent of All Saints Spring Park was entitled to make representations to the full committee, as was the PCC. The Revd Yvonne Clarke and the PCC would be represented by a solicitor. A number of parishioners and the incumbent were in attendance.
58. The Venerable Simon Gates welcomed the party from All Saints and their solicitor, Mr Ian Blaney, to the meeting and thanked them for coming.
59. Mr Ian Blaney had written a submission which had been circulated to the members of the committee prior the meeting along with all other accompanying papers. He spoke to the submission and summarised the key arguments outlined within it.
60. A small number of questions of clarification were asked by committee members and answered by Mr Blaney and the incumbent.
61. The Venerable Simon Gates thanked the group for coming who then left.

62. A thorough discussion followed, including consideration of: serious concerns about the lack of capacity for governance and mission and ministry, notably financially, which had occasioned the Episcopal Visitation; the health and safety risk presented by the church hall; how the building plans presented by the parish do not respond to planning issues and do not take into account the ownership of the parsonage, a ministry resource vested in the Parsonage Board, rather than the PCC; the demography of the parish and statistics, including average Sunday attendance, which had been observed to be considerably lower than claimed; the nature of existing ministry, including in respect of ethnicity; how the proposals do not include any plans to close All Saints church; the potential for a fresh expression; how offers of mentoring had been made but had not been taken up.
63. In summary, the presentation on behalf of the incumbent and PCC had not offered sufficient reassurance in relation to a major reason for the scheme being introduced, namely the lack of capacity of the PCC to fulfil its financial responsibilities as a Church of England parish. The committee was not convinced that the mission to the Shrublands Estate in particular, which was a major focus of the presentation, was best served by All Saints continuing as a parish church, especially given the need to serve the remainder of the current parish.
64. The decision of the Committee was to recommend the draft proposals to the Bishop of Southwark. This was approved with one abstention.



Southwark Vision 2017-2025

Our vision is founded on mutual commitment from all who make up the Diocesan family to walk together in the pilgrimage of faith, supporting, encouraging and resourcing each other in our common task.

A pilgrim people

We are a diverse community of Anglican churches, schools and chaplaincies in the hugely varied area of South London and East Surrey, from our Cathedral Church at London Bridge to our retreat house in the Surrey countryside. We work hard to journey well together, united by our faith in Christ. We're discovering that God's love changes lives, transforms society and sets our hearts on fire with the love of Christ; and so we are working to enable others to experience that reality.

Journeying together

From the Archbishop's Charge given to Bishop Christopher in 2011, the Diocese of Southwark has been on a journey of discernment towards a shared vision which is now brought together from the themes and agreed outcomes described in the Strategy for Ministry adopted by Synod in November 2015, and Hearts on Fire Vision for Mission, with its commitment to the five marks of mission and the strategic goals, adopted by Synod in March 2016.

A fruitful future

We share a vision for the future in which we will see:

- growing churches, new worshipping communities and new Christians
- deepening discipleship: engaged, prayerful and informed Christians
- growth in vocations to existing and new ministries
- generous giving and prayer supporting all we do
- justice and peace built up, and violence challenged, in our local and global community
- a shared commitment to the integrity of creation
- a church for all which reflects our diverse community in membership and leadership.

Resources for our journey

The two key documents which inform our work as a Diocese are:

- the *Hearts on Fire* Mission Strategy, March 2016
- the *Strategy for Ministry* Final Report, November 2015

These two documents together explain the detailed thinking behind the summary of our Diocesan Vision.

Hearts on Fire restates our commitment to mission, grounded in prayer that the growth of the kingdom of God may be at the heart of all we do. In particular we will:

- serve our Communities
- share our faith with great joy and gladness
- be the Church; a people with hearts on fire, loving God, walking with Jesus and led by the Spirit.

Strategy for Ministry sets out how we remain focused on that vision and mission, through ongoing cultural change as a Diocese. We are committed to becoming a Diocese which is

- Adaptive - seeing a culture of risk taking, permission giving and experimentation becoming embedded in the life of the Diocese
- Diverse - with visibly increased diversity in every part of Diocesan life
- Accountable - with communication demonstrated through increased sense of engagement from parishes with Diocesan central structures
- Devolved - especially in building up deaneries and encouraging them to become viable centres for mission and ministry, but also in encouraging collaboration, team work, and leaders who can enable and form individuals and communities.
- Strategic - looking ahead, discerning new opportunities which align with our vision and mission
- Realistic - aligning resources to serve vision and mission.

Supporting each other on the way

Our Diocese is made up of the parishes and deaneries, chaplaincies and schools in which individual Anglicans work and worship. The Diocesan vision will be realised primarily in the shared life, mission, ministry and service of all the baptised, clergy and lay together.

Diocesan structures and programmes seek to serve the whole people of God, in the following ways.

Lead, Enable, Serve

Those who work across the Diocese as a whole are committed to working in accordance with the following aim: 'To serve, support, lead, and enable the mission of God as it is worked out in the parishes, deaneries, schools and communities of the Diocese of Southwark.' This keeps the focus of Diocesan-wide bodies and officers clearly on the mission as it is worked out across the whole Diocese.

Mission Action Planning

The Mission Action Planning process is a key means for ensuring that the Diocese as a whole is working towards our vision and mission. Parishes and other communities which produce Mission Action Plans are asked to do so in the light of this, and specifically to reference how their MAP will reflect all of the five Marks of Mission. MAPs in turn resource

those working across the Diocese as a whole with a richer vision of the potential areas for support and outreach.

Parish Support Fund

The Parish Support Fund exemplifies our mutual support in the Diocese most obviously through the sharing across the Diocese of the financial responsibility for our life and mission. Through its principles of generosity and accountability it enables all members of the Diocese to have confidence that resources are being generously given and effectively used.

Outcomes and Actions

The 2015 Strategy for Ministry Report identified a number of outcomes which we wish to see if the Diocese is to deliver on its vision and mission; the Hearts on Fire document emphasised our commitment to the Five Marks of Mission. Our commitment to the environment is expressed through the policy adopted by Diocesan Synod in 2013. Some outcomes have already been achieved, and others will become the focus of later objectives: we note particularly our commitments to the common good through attention to the needs of refugees, and responding to London's housing crisis. In order to focus our energies on an achievable number of these outcomes, we set ourselves the following objectives:

- to grow our average weekly attendance by 5% by 2025 partly through having each church develop a high-quality Mission Action Plan (MAP) which includes a course for evangelism and discipleship
- by 2025, to increase the number of worshipping communities with a primary focus on areas of population growth through investment in Fresh Expressions (fxC) in the areas where the data suggests the existing congregations are increasingly unrepresentative of the resident community and therefore unlikely to be successful in reaching them without intentional intervention
- to grow a financial resource base that allows investment in growth for the future. Key measurable include: annual financial surplus, working financial reserves equivalent to 6 months operating costs by 2020, 1% of Diocesan turnover annually dedicated to major Diocesan ministry and mission projects beginning in 2016, rising to 2% by 2020
- to grow the number of ordained and lay vocations by 50% by 2020 by enabling and discerning ordained ministers; by expanding opportunities for licensed and commissioned lay leadership; by affirming and growing other forms of lay ministry (e.g. worship leaders, family & youth leaders, spiritual directors); to offer relevant and enriching training, and create networks of support and celebration which reflect the diversity of the Diocese, our commitment to evangelism and discipleship, and delivers fully integrated and pioneering church growth and fresh expressions
- by 2025, to grow leadership and representation that reflects the rich diversity of our Diocese and especially focusing where the data suggests groups are currently underrepresented: through ethnicity, age (especially 18-40), educational opportunities, material well being, tradition.