



The Edgemoor Group of Parishes

Charles.HighBray.NorthMolton.Twitchen.BishopsNympton.Mariansleigh.RoseAsh.Knowstone.EastAnstey.WestAnstey.Molland.



Reshaping the Edgemoor Group of Parishes

*Freeing Church
to be Church*

Consultations throughout the Edgemoor Group

Clarity and Direction

Affirming and Supporting

Spring 2021

*There are varieties of gifts,
but the same Spirit.*

*There are varieties of service,
but the same Lord.*

*There are different kinds of working,
but the same God is at work in all.*

*There is one body,
one Spirit,
one hope in God's call;
one Lord,
one faith,
one baptism.*

*There is one God, Father of all,
over all and in all,
to whom Christ ascended on high.*

*And through his Spirit he gives us gifts:
some are apostles, some are his prophets;
evangelists, pastors and teachers he gives us,
so that we can minister together
to build up his body,
to be mature in the fullness of Christ.*

First, to thank you all who took time to pause, pray and consider a future direction for our Churches.

When setting out we did not of course envisage the severity and length of the pandemic and there is no doubt that this has made discussion and consultation difficult. There is a natural tendency to prefer to keep things as they are and nothing beats face to face when proposing and putting forward options for change. Adding to this is the natural anxiety, which many are feeling currently, and in difficult times we all perhaps prefer to cling to what we know.

Some seeds have now been planted, we continue to encourage PCCs to think creatively, proactively about the future as we move forward now with care and consideration.

God of Mission,
Who alone brings growth
to your Church.
Send your Holy Spirit to bring
Vision to our planning,
Wisdom to our actions,
Faith to our lives,
Hope to our communities,
And love to our hearts.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The following pages list the replies we have received. For each PCC we now ask you to consider your collective responses to arrive at a single aim to work towards in the next months ahead.

Included at the back of this booklet is a summary of the survey regarding the future administration of the Parishes along with the aims that the Ministry Team will be working towards.

It is important to mention that this consultation will be invaluable when bringing together information to create a Profile to fill the pending vacancy. Formal work on this Profile will start in August in consultation with the Archdeacon, Bishops, Churchwardens and PCCs.

Dates:

Full Team meeting:

Wednesday 7th April 2.30pm – 3.30pm Zoom

Wednesday 7th April 7.00pm – 8.00pm The Old School NM

****Please let Wendy know which session you are able to attend.***

Full Team meeting:

Wednesday 11th August 7.00pm – 9.00pm The Old School NM

Full Group of Churches:

The weekend of October 30th & 31st. *Times & Venue tba*

*Our Care & Prayers,
The Ministry & Planning Teams*
www.edgemoorparishes.org.uk

Charles					
	Stay as we are	Form cluster with 2 or 3	Move to informal Benefice Council	Move to formal Joint Council	Become Festival Church
Yes	2		2		
No	1	2	2	4	
SC	3	3	1		3
	SC	SC	SC	No	SC

Main issues for the church to address in next 8 months:

May be little we can do in 8 months, if restrictions still apply. Main issue is to re-establish regular services to suit community and encourage visitors to the church. Normality! Post pandemic, we need to regroup as a community and plan for services, events, celebrations I think contribution to the Parish Share should be addressed as it seems a huge burden to our small rural churches. There is also a danger of losing in a small church (like Charles) & community of its “uniqueness” & identity – as we all have individual qualities. Post pandemic return to services and maintain our churches independence. The spiritual content of the services for an adult congregation. Centralising the work of the PCCs has a deleterious effect on the fringe population, they no longer have a personal responsibility & interest depleting once again that serious core.

Ministry Team to consider:

Training and mentoring for lay ministry. Funding sources to promote the Benefice to visitors and grow congregations? Should we limit tome expected for key PCC posts e.g. no more than 10 years for CWs etc.? Explore combined insurance policies. Key people to lead people in worship within their own community- including lay (focal point). Finances to stay in individual churches e.g. weddings, funeralsetc. Sharing the “retired” clergy resident in the area, and other suitably experienced folk from other parts to “adopt” an outgoing parish, or report in / and out as necessary.

The Old School at North Molton is being explored as an administrative centre. Suggestions as to alternatives?

Could have ‘pop-up’ admin centre in Methodist Church in NM or Brayford? Or in village hall(s) including BN.
 The Old School is the obvious place.
 North Molton in the Old School seems the most central place for administration for the full benefice.



Knowstone					
	Stay as we are	Form cluster with 2 or 3	Move to informal Benefice Council	Move to formal Joint Council	Become Festival Church
Yes	3				
No		2	3	3	3
SC		1			
	Yes	No	No	No	No

Main issues for the church to address in next 8 months:

Once the church re-opens, finding ways to bring more local residents to our church services (communication, events etc.)
 Attraction back to church once Covid 19 us over.

Ministry Team to consider:

Having experts to guide PCCs on building insurance and faculties.

The Old School at North Molton is being explored as an administrative centre. Suggestions as to alternatives?

The Old School with its proximity to the Vicarage is a good idea.

High Bray					
	Stay as we are	Form cluster with 2 or 3	Move to informal Benefice Council	Move to formal Joint Council	Become Festival Church
Yes	9				
No		9	9	9	9
SC			1		
	Yes	No	No	No	No

Main issues for the church to address in next 8 months:
<p>Re Q1 The High Bray PCC members together will vote to have HBPCC retain all of its singular, traditional and legal authority, duties and responsibilities within HBPCC, while its members continue to offer assistance to other parishes and PCCs in the Team in overcoming any administrative and fundraising difficulties they might have. Re Q2 No, at this point. 1.Reairs to the tower</p> <p>We would like to address the nomination of a clergy member to provide pastoral care and a presence in our community, perceived to be missing since Reverend Richard's retirement. Opening the Church for regular services when regulations allow. We would wish to start lay-led services, as the clergy are very pushed in their time.</p>
Ministry Team to consider:
<p>As the clergy are pressed for time, and we have people in our parish who want and could lead lay-led Services, we wish the Ministry Team to consider and act upon such a proposal. We also wish to retain our monthly joint three church Service with the Brayford Chapel and Charles, in addition to our current two Services per month in High Bray.</p>

The Old School at North Molton is being explored as an administrative centre. Suggestions as to alternatives?
<i>Left blank</i>

North Molton					
	Stay as we are	Form cluster with 2 or 3	Move to informal Benefice Council	Move to formal Joint Council	Become Festival Church
Yes	1			1	
No	3	1	1	3	4
SC		3	3	1	
	No	SC	SC	No	No

Main issues for the church to address in next 8 months:
<p>Restoration Programme</p> <p>At this moment in time the main issue is to return to some sort of normality</p> <p>Some kind of return to “normal” services with singing and being able to stay and talk after the service.</p> <p>Repairs to the tower. Repair leaks in the tower</p>
Ministry Team to consider:
Left blank

The Old School at North Molton is being explored as an administrative centre. Suggestions as to alternatives?
As an alternative venue Village Hall Bishops Nympton

Twitthen					
	Stay as we are	Form cluster with 2 or 3	Move to informal Benefice Council	Move to formal Joint Council	Become Festival Church
Yes		1			1
No					
SC		3		1	4
		SC		SC	SC

Main issues for the church to address in next 8 months:
(Re Q5 replaced ‘seriously’ with ‘possibly consider’ & added parking a major problem) Sorting tree & electrical problems & the occasional service. (Re Q2 With North Molton) The huge beech tress ...made safe!! Re Q2 Need more information about this
Ministry Team to consider:
The foregoing is enough I think!

The Old School at North Molton is being explored as an administrative centre. Suggestions as to alternatives?
If such a move would be self funding ... grants or whatever; But NOT if further financial burden on the Group.

Bishops Nympton					
	Stay as we are	Form cluster with 2 or 3	Move to informal Benefice Council	Move to formal Joint Council	Become Festival Church
Yes		1	2	2	
No	5	3	2	4	5
SC	2	4	4	2	
	No	SC	SC	No	No

Main issues for the church to address in next 8 months:

People hold back from participating in services. Training opportunities might address this and increase confidence. (Re Q2 & Q3, an 'or' written in between the ticks)

Continuing contact with parishioners, visits, phone calls. Keeping the church and churchyard welcoming to all who come to the village with the porch perhaps still having small and meaningful displays depicting days of the church calendar for people to ponder over (as they have done during Christmas and last Easter) a connection to all who pass through. PCC must work together with others.

Funding for repairs Bringing the congregation back to the Church after Covid (Re Q3 Possibly) Maintaining congregation when Alistair retires. Having strong lay input. Repairing tower.

Once Alastair leaves we will need to work hard to build up our team again (after Covid). We need to build on the success of Breakfast Church & Budding Bishops to draw in the younger families in the parish to our Christian Community. Establish a regular pattern of services. Training up of laity to assist ordained ministers & to expand development of church's ministry. Comprehensive repairs to Church Tower and Churchyard wall.

(Re Q2 Cluster with Rose Ash & Mariansleigh suggested)

Re-start family friendly services, activities, groups which ceased with lockdown.

Ministry Team to consider:

Continuation of Zoom Bible Studies/ Reflections / Prayers as these are best led by a member of the Ministry Team and enable more people to join than when held in small groups. Needs only one leader for whole group.

To continue, if possible, Zoom meetings so that people can be brought together even if miles apart – if connection not great, hard copies of services have been invaluable to some who do not normally go to church.

During Covid we have relied heavily on modern technology to keep us going. In the process, we have nearly lost some of the elderly who have not been able to cope with it. Please can these people be considered in some way? Within the pastoral work of the Group? Re Q5 – If one of the smaller churches became a Festival Church, who would be responsible for the upkeep?

Improve communication with congregation, not just PCCs.

Pastoral fall out if too much change too quickly, especially in the light of Covid related angst everyone has had to deal with.

The Old School at North Molton is being explored as an administrative centre. Suggestions as to alternatives?

I think The Old School at North Molton is quite suitable to the Benefice as an Administration Centre (large meetings, Bishops Nympton Hall has the space and car parking)

I think the Old School in N Molton is the best and most central venue. It's such a shame that the Old Rectory in B Nympton with its grounds and range of buildings couldn't have been given to the Group. Maybe the Methodist Chapel at Bish Nym. They have ceased services, but I don't know what they plan to do with the building.

Community Office, Bishops Nympton Parish Hall.

None. NM best place as Rector lives there.

Mariansleigh					
	Stay as we are	Form cluster with 2 or 3	Move to informal Benefice Council	Move to formal Joint Council	Become Festival Church
Yes	2		1		
No		1	2	2	2
SC		2	1	1	2
	Yes	SC	No	No	SC

Main issues for the church to address in next 8 months:

Following Covid, firstly to welcome back our loyal supporters and to work towards encouraging new people to attend services.

Fund raising also to be a main objective

Getting more people to church

Like so many others the main issue will be restarting the church & organising fundraising activities to get back to where we were.

Opening the churches back up! Getting money coming back in.

Ministry Team to consider:

I think they have considered the main problems.

Look at cost to churches – insurance, electric etc. – maybe doing it jointly getting a better deal!

My concern with hiring NM School. How will it be funded? Funding opportunities very few!!. How will an administrator be funded. Lack of congregation equals lack of funds.

The Old School at North Molton is being explored as an administrative centre. Suggestions as to alternatives?

Repeated from above as relevant here.

My concern with hiring NM School. How will it be funded? Funding opportunities very few!!. How will an administrator be funded. Lack of congregation equals lack of funds.

Rose Ash					
	Stay as we are	Form cluster with 2 or 3	Move to informal Benefice Council	Move to formal Joint Council	Become Festival Church
Yes	4	1			1
No			3	3	3
SC		2	1	1	
	Yes	SC	No	No	No

Main issues for the church to address in next 8 months:

Re Q3 & 5 crossed out 'seriously' replaced with 'maybe'
 Who will be our next vicar when Alastair retires? Repair to coping stones & bells. Fundraising & general funding. Lack of services!
 (* Re Q2 added question '11 churches with 2 or 3 PCCs or individual clusters of the 11? Re Q3 crossed out 'seriously' and added 'Proposal not clear') The replacement of our vicar and investing in our ministry
 (*Re Q1 & 2 Inserted 'or' between these questions) Losing Alistair Forman To have regular services in the church, as before Covid.

Ministry Team to consider:

Group Church Insurance, Group Church oil & electricity supplier, Group Church builds – all to cut costs. Group Architects & Group faculty applications. Try to have less admin (red tape) & to have more local power! 1. Properly challenging the Diocese to reduce bureaucracy which is at a level that is beyond a joke. 2. Admin needs to be reduced then costs will reduce. I consider that if the church is going to survive in Rural Parishes, there must be regular services in church.

The Old School at North Molton is being explored as an administrative centre. Suggestions as to alternatives?

Why is an administrative centre being considered given the present state of funding?

Molland					
	Stay as we are	Form cluster with 2 or 3	Move to informal Benefice Council	Move to formal Joint Council	Become Festival Church
Yes		2	1	1	
No	3				2
SC		1	2	1	1
	No	Yes	SC	SC	No

Main issues for the church to address in next 8 months:
Reconnecting with community as COVID restrictions ease. To get to know & encourage to attend church, new people in the village. (Re Q2-4, arrows from PCC cluster to informal BC to formal JC) Is it really viable? Getting people to come back to the Sunday services once the Covid 19 restrictions have been lifted.
Ministry Team to consider:
<i>Left blank</i>

The Old School at North Molton is being explored as an administrative centre. Suggestions as to alternatives?
Do not know of any other that would be suitable. Any financially viable option in any Edgemoor Parish. This seems to be the most central venue for this.

West Anstey					
	Stay as we are	Form cluster with 2 or 3	Move to informal Benefice Council	Move to formal Joint Council	Become Festival Church
Yes		2			
No	2		1	5	1
SC			1		
	No	Yes	-	No	No

Main issues for the church to address in next 8 months:
<p>Re Q2 East & West Anstey Becoming more of an asset to the area. By doing this increasing our income. Improving access & facilities. The setting up of Outdoor Church. To encourage families to come along and continue building the relationships between the village (Yeo Mill) and the Church. (After the success of the Christmas Nativity Horsebox)</p>
Ministry Team to consider:
<p>If you want to remove admin from the rectory you could always try a portacabin in the garden. Every church needs a loo if it's to compete with village halls. To consider how the online ministry (zoom) after the restrictions are lifted can continue to be used.</p>

The Old School at North Molton is being explored as an administrative centre. Suggestions as to alternatives?
<p>Since when have we had money to burn on renting. Use West Anstey as church and office. Keep the money within the church. I think the Old School at N Molton would be ideal.</p>

East Anstey					
	Stay as we are	Form cluster with 2 or 3	Move to informal Benefice Council	Move to formal Joint Council	Become Festival Church
Yes	6		1	1	
No	1	4	5	5	10
SC	1	4	5	2	
	Yes	-	SC	No	No

Main issues for the church to address in next 8 months:

We are probably going to involve the village and try and find out what they want by sending out a letter as we are certain that the Church must be kept and not go like the pubs & village shops. The reinstatement of 4 services a month by clergy or lay involvement with input from the village as to their wishes.

(Re Q3 Our PCC would wish to delegate only some of our responsibilities so we can continue to function as an individual PCC)

The opening of our church and building a larger congregation. Post Covid to restore regular services and rebuild the congregation and finances. A greater focus on developing the congregation and putting on services and events to draw in a wider range of individuals and families

The opening of our church Covid allowing – concentrating on working within our parishes. For East Anstey: welcome pack for people new to village: quarterly “special” services widely advertise to all in the parish: re-starting our village coffee morning. (Re Q5 Need full info & implications of this.)

A return to some clergy input (Covid has caused a severe break, but this must not be perceived as an opportunity to take away the clergy from our parish) (Re Q2 ringed 2 – with W Anstey. E & W Anstey do quite a lot together. Keep joint services, one a month.)

Find out what younger members of the village would like in a service. Penny & Rachel’s plans for children at W Anstey would provide a great many younger families to target.

Several people have said how much they miss the coffee mornings so when we can we must quickly get back to doing these.
Re E Anstey finding a solution that satisfies the wishes of the congregation without overstretching/burning out the resources of the clergy team. A bit of an 'us & them' mindset exists in some quarters of the congregation which creates a negative energy. Far better that we all work together.

Ministry Team to consider:

Our Church has worked exceedingly well with 3 services a month and a very well attended joint service alternately with WAnstey. Establishing how Zoom can be best used alongside to complement and not 'compete' with 'live' services. I think the team has done very well during the coronavirus. I have enjoyed listening to the zoom services. I do not know if they are part of our future.

To take on board that only by concentrating on the parish will effective mission be accomplished. If all we do is concentrate on the benefice, we will only be looking after those who are already coming to our churches, We need to look at what will be most effective, not on what will be most efficient.

We need further input from trained clergy in justification of the Common Fund that we pay. We have/had a strong and committed following at E Anstey – but this will break down if we have no input from the Church. Better organization and distribution of resources are needed. Self preservation of the MT has to be a No 1 priority. Burnt out clergy will lead to much greater problems further down the line. The only solution I can see is to offer E Anstey Church greater autonomy so that it organizes & runs 2 services a month from within its own resources, In return for this it should be willing to accept a radical overhaul of the current PCC set up.

The Old School at North Molton is being explored as an administrative centre. Suggestions as to alternatives?

The Methodist Church in B Nympton is currently empty (I think) so might be an alternative

Where ever must be easy for David Baker to get to.

Perhaps a room more centrally placed? What would be the costs involved? How would these be met?

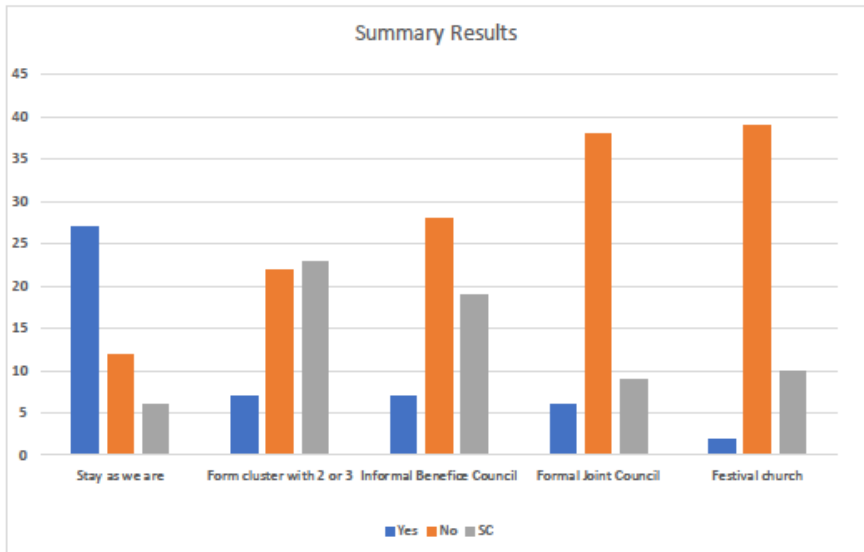
The Old School appears a good potential option as long as it is affordable and until costing's are available, this is difficult to assess. Sounds a good idea the Old School but not enough information in respect of cost, security etc. How much would this cost each parish? I do not know what the Old School is going to cost and perhaps other opportunities need to be looked at. A wooden shed like Alastair's in your garden could be an alternative



SUMMARY and OUTOCOMES

Summary

	Stay as we are	Form cluster with 2 or 3	Informal Benefice Council	Formal Joint Council	Festival church
Yes	27	7	7	6	2
No	12	22	28	38	39
SC	6	23	19	9	10



The pattern of PCC meetings will stay as they are with a small number piloting an informal cluster.

Further, 3 churches to explore becoming a Festival church.

The Ministry Team with your help aims to work towards in the next months ahead:

1. Ministry Team - MT			
What	Why	When	Who
Clergy, Readers, Lay Leaders. To share oversight of Ministry.	To explore 'Living in Love & Faith' / Wellbeing / Outdoor Church / Virtual Church / Pastoral & Mission work / Finance, Lay, Planning Teams advice & recommendations.	Ongoing	Clergy, Readers, Lay Leaders.
To meet fortnightly or as required.			

2. Planning Team - PT			
What	Why	When	Who
To re-form the Planning Team 3/ 4 members to advise the MT / PCCs	To explore / Festival churches / Church clusters / Support Hub <i>Old School NM</i> / To carry through 'ReShape' consultation.	7 th April	MT to appoint in consultation with PCCs
To meet 6 times a year or as required. Appointments time limited to 2 years.			

3. Finance			
What	Why	When	Who
To form a Finance Team 3/ 4 members to advise the MT / PCCs	To review Group Insurance / Team Expenses / Common Fund Payments / Grants & Fund Raising /Support Hub <i>Old School NM</i>	7 th April	MT to appoint in consultation with PCCs
To meet 6 times a year or as required. Appointments time limited to 2 years.			

4. Lay Ministry			
What	Why	When	Who
To form a Lay Ministry Team 3/ 4 members to advise the MT / PCCs	To review Guidance & Criteria / Training & Support / Safeguarding	7 th April	MT to appoint in consultation with PCCs
To meet 6 times a year or as required. Appointments time limited to 2 years.			

The Plan is not complete - the work with the schools, Open the Book, our relationships within the villages, our relationship with our Methodist sisters & brothers, our Prayer life and worship.
But the plan offers a framework of direction and vision.

God Bless