

# Diocese of Hereford

Ledbury Deanery Presentation

On

2015 Onward

- Original Report
- Presented to Ledbury Deanery
- September 2008
- What will the Diocese look like in 2015?

- Feeding of the Five Thousand
- Luke 9. verses 10-17
- So much was achieved with so little

## Trends within the Diocese:-

- Changing patterns of worship
- Fewer stipendiary priests
- Growth of local ministry
- Greater involvement of lay people

## Trends within the Diocese:-

- Fewer Priests
- By 2015...
- Out of 98 stipendiary priests 45 can retire at 65.
- 16 non-stipendiary can move to “Permission to Officiate” at 70.
- Potential loss of licensed clergy:  $45+16=61$
- Can we afford / fill these vacancies?

## Trends within the Diocese:-

- Population – Expected to increase from 290,000 to 300,000 but numbers of under-16s expected to fall.
- Housing - An increase of 1600 households (predominantly single person).

## Trends within the Diocese:-

- Employment: rural deprivation a reality.
- Agriculture: diversified business and non-farming income will become more important.
- Tourism: Increasingly important as a source of income.
- Transport: major issue in rural areas.
- Social exclusion can be regarded as a reality within Hereford Diocese.

## Ledbury Deanery feed back to Diocese.

- Concept of overseeing several parishes puts too big a burden on priests who support themselves in other employment.
- Public perception will lag behind diocesan thinking.
- Future of church buildings.

- 2015 Follow Up Group
- Led by Rev'd Nick Read, Chaplain for Agriculture & Rural Life
- Addressed Ledbury Deanery Synod in January 2010 and asked for inputs

- 2015 Follow Up went into more detail.
- Emphasised the role of the deanery as a “unit of mission”
- No trend in original report challenged
- Report endorsed by Bishop’s Council
- Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee to have oversight but with a “light touch”

## Ledbury Deanery Working Group

- Appointed by the Rural Dean
- The Rev'd Prebendary Sue Strutt in the chair.
- Five others, one clerical and four laity.
- Four meetings August to October 2010.
- Report with 14 recommendations.
- Accepted by Ledbury Deanery Synod on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2010.

## The Five Marks of Mission

- To **proclaim** the good news of the kingdom
- To **teach**, baptise and nurture new believers
- To **respond** to human need by loving service
- To seek to **transform** unjust structures of society
- To strive to **safeguard** the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

## Guiding Principles

- Christ's Gospel to be preached everywhere.
- We go to where people meet rather than expecting them to come to us.
- People's gifts must be recognised and fostered. Stewardship is vital to ensure active discipleship by all church members in church and community.
- The more Ledbury Deanery can do for itself the better.

## Overall Priority

- To ensure the Church remains active, every parish should normally have a service of worship at the same time every Sunday.
- Therefore lay people have to be enabled to conduct services.

## Ministry

- Almost all of ministry can be shared between laity and clergy.
- A Local Ministry Development Group to enable laity and clergy to work together in every benefice / group of parishes
- A continuing and expanding role for Lay Readers

## Ministry (continued)

- Encouragement of vocations to all forms of ministry
- Include retired clergy and chaplains wherever and whenever they feel able to help
- Acknowledgement that laity will need to play a full part in delivering much of the traditional clergy role

## Administrative Support

- Vital that this should continue and, if necessary, be expanded.
- Presiding at business meetings: burden to be lifted from clergy where appropriate.
- Neighbouring parishes wishing to have one united PCC should be encouraged.
- Money: clergy should not be involved in day-to-day handling of Church money.

## Church Buildings

- We are not recommending closure, which is a last resort and is normally initiated by a PCC resolution.
- PCCs should consider what proportion of a church's resources should go to maintain Church buildings, particularly where these cannot be used for weekly worship.

## Church Buildings

- PCCs to examine alternative use of community buildings for worship.
- PCCs to examine diverse community use of church buildings.
- Booklet written by Bishop Alistair.

- Public Perception of 2015 Onward
- Why we are here!

## Where is the Diocese now?

- Fewer Stipendiary Priests:

2000 – 109

2008 – 95

2011 – 94 (currently in post)

2015 – 92 (anticipated)

To cover 356 parishes and over 400 church buildings

Appointment to vacancies is subject to finance and the availability of suitable clergy.

## Where is the Diocese now?

- The number of stipendiary priests is already reducing.
- Voluntary ministers are a wonderful resource, to be encouraged, but they cannot be expected to offer the same amount of time as stipendiary clergy for parish work.
- The Parish Share is still increasing (partly due to pension changes).
- Change is not something for the future – it is happening now.

## Further work

- To identify members of the laity to conduct services and undertake pastoral duties.
- To organise suitable training.
- To acknowledge the gifts of the laity and to foster active stewardship of time and talents.
- To encourage all parishes to establish a local ministry development group.
- To use *Mission Action Planning* as a way to help take this forward.