



**Upper Ichen Benefice**  
**Mission Audit Report 2008**

Mission Audit Team

March 2008

## Contents

<b>Section</b>	<b>Page</b>
Table of Contents	2
Acknowledgements	3
Background	3
Upper Itchen Benefice - Population and Electoral Roll Summary	4
Mission Audit - Report Summary	5
Mission Audit - Results with Action Points	9
Graphical Presentation of Scores from Electoral Roll Questionnaires	18
Resume of Quotations from Questionnaires	24
- <i>Responses from Electoral Roll Questionnaire</i>	24
- <i>Responses received from the General Questionnaire</i>	38
Mission Audit Process & Methodology	42
Church Electoral Roll Letter	43
Church Electoral Roll Questionnaire	44
Non-Electoral Roll (General) Letter / Questionnaire	48
Supplemental Information - Benefice Statistics	50
Contact Details - Mission Audit Team	54

# Upper Itchen Benefice - Mission Audit Report 2008

## **Acknowledgements**

The Mission Audit Team would like to thank everyone who has been able to contribute to the Mission Audit process and especially to all those people in the Benefice who completed one of the questionnaires or attended one of the meetings held to discuss issues relating to the Mission Audit.

## **Background**

In 2007 our churches in the Upper Itchen Benefice were invited to take part in a "Mission Audit. This was a wide-scale exercise across the Winchester Diocese to help us identify how our churches engage with and serve the local community.

The aim of the process was to listen to people across the whole Benefice to help understand where we are and identify our strengths, weaknesses and what could be improved to help us be more effective as Christians in this community.

Support and guidelines provided by the diocese helped clarify the purpose of the audit through a "Statement of Purpose' and in terms of Why, What, How and When?

In summary, these were articulated as follows:

## **Statement of Purpose -**

"To pay attention to the world in which we live in such a way as to enable the local church to discern the shape of God's call to mission for this church, at this time, in this place"

**Why?** - to encourage us to:

Plan for growth

Share together in mission

Be mutually supportive and accountable

***Emphasising that*** - Mission is not just another activity for the church to engage in. Mission is the central purpose of the church in the world.

**What?** - to help:

Provide an analysis of where we are, then . . .

Discern what we are called to do, then . . .

Decide how we can achieve it, then . . .

Make it happen

**How?** - by using resource 'tools' available to:

Listen to and engage with the wider community

Focus on Strengths & Weaknesses

Sharpen Vision

Develop Mission Action Plans

**When?** - within a framework that allows each parish/benefice to:

Complete the audit and share the results by Pentecost 2008

## **The Upper Itchen Benefice**

### **Population and Electoral Roll Summary**

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Households</b>	<b>Electoral Roll</b>	<b>Electoral Roll Households</b>
<b>Beauworth</b>	100	40	23	16
<b>Bramdean</b>	400	212	59	34
<b>Cheriton</b>	650	265	89	53
<b>Hinton</b>	100	(inc Bramdean)	16	11
<b>Kilmeston</b>	214	110	37	24
<b>Tichborne</b>	134	77	40	28
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1598</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>166</b>

## Mission Audit - Report Summary

*"Feed my lambs... tend my sheep...feed my sheep." John 21:15*

The Upper Itchen Benefice is the result of the combination in 2001 of the two rural benefices of Cheriton, Tichborne and Beauworth together with Bramdean, Hinton Ampner and Kilmeston.

In that time, greater unity of purpose has been achieved between the seven churches (including Bramdean Common's church in the Wood), under the guidance of the Rector, the Revd Canon Graham Hendy, plus for some of that time the Revd Canon Ray Guymer, now retired, and latterly three licensed Readers, but much more remains to be done.

By formulating two questionnaires in late 2007- one seeking the views of parishioners on the church electoral rolls- and a second delivered to all other homes in the villages to gauge the views of the wider community- we now have a more accurate picture of the opinions, desires and hopes of a wide cross-section of local residents. This has provided us with most of our information. We have been keen to solicit and listen to views from all quarters.

People's concept of "church" varies; some see it principally as the building. Others talk solely in terms of services, while others regard church as a body of people who try to live out their faith not just on Sundays, but in every aspect of their lives.

Putting it simply, there are several divergent streams present among both churchgoers and infrequent church visitors alike. On the one hand there are those who do not wish to see any change and who cherish the traditional church services, preferably drawn from the Book of Common Prayer.

On the other there are those who favour less formality and are frustrated by a lack of more contemporary, adventurous, worship incorporating a wider repertoire of music.

In the middle ground are people who are quite happy with Common Worship, appreciate the greater diversity on offer in recent years, can switch from one tradition to another and who acknowledge that less formality makes church more welcoming to young families and teenagers. While young families are better catered for than for some time there is still an urgent need to provide worship and spiritual learning opportunities for teenagers.

In 2008 our villages now include families whose local roots go back many generations, and are often involved in agriculture, as well as "newcomers" who have moved to the area attracted by the employment opportunities within easy commuting distance, and the quality of life in the countryside.

There is a high proportion of retired and elderly people, as well as a growing number of younger families and middle-aged households. A higher than the (national) average number of residents have received higher education and hold professional qualifications. The Upper Itchen Valley is perceived to be an "affluent" area but that should not disguise the numerous people on fixed and limited incomes, particularly the elderly, disabled and part-time workers.

In the course of this Mission Audit the following signs of progress have been noted, as well as priority areas identified for further development in future:

- A collaborative ministry team has developed, with laity and Readers also sharing ministry of home groups, home communion and extended communion services.
- Children's work has begun to develop, with potential for growth. And work with teenagers must become a priority.
- A parish visitors team has been introduced and the bereaved, particularly, report very positive reaction to the help and support they have received.
- Diversity of services has increased successfully.
- New Benefice Communion services have been introduced which have brought people together, and refreshments after services are much appreciated.
- The healing ministry, with laying-on-of-hands, has been introduced and warmly received by many.
- Supper Talks have begun - three have been held to date.
- A successful large fundraising campaign in Cheriton for church restoration has been completed. This included the provision of new side chapels, with their focus on reservation of communion and of the holy oils.
- Introduction of support for mission partners - Jason and Tracey Day - and we've been encouraged to look wider than this small Benefice.
- Service booklets and sheets have improved immeasurably.

- Significant strides forward have been made to draw the two Benefices into one, not least by publishing weekly pew leaflets and creating the benefice website.
- Other cross benefice groups have developed e.g. refectory volunteering, Winchester Night Shelter cooks team.
- Quality Lent courses and a Marriage Course have been introduced.
- A larger number of people have been encouraged to come forward for confirmation and to be baptised.

The benefice still faces the challenge of making its "governance" better suited to the working in concert of six parishes. Experience has shown that the present administrative structure of six PCC's and one benefice council is unwieldy. Some efforts to introduce a single parish structure have provoked acrimony and created division, which has been a source of sorrow to many feeling the "body of Christ" should not be at odds in this way.

More work is continuing to resolve these difficulties and find a solution amenable to the majority. There is a growing consensus that as a matter of urgency administration must be streamlined so as to attract, and then facilitate the work of, just one ordained member of clergy in this benefice.

A certain "defensiveness" which has been a feature of the past is slowly but surely being transformed into a united team of clergy, licensed ministers and other laity who can best reach out and fulfil the needs of our communities and serve the historic church buildings, of which we are privileged to be users and custodians.

Those lay people engaged in pastoral efforts are better focused now than for some recent years on the work of God in this place. There is a greater sense of the need for unity of purpose and of dedication to "feeding his sheep;" certainly a longing to be fed was expressed in different ways in many of the written replies.

While there is acknowledgment that no-one can *make* people want to know Christ better or grow spiritually, there is also a recognition of what the task involves: to encourage the young and the more mature to explore what faith offers, to provide suitable pasture- in terms of nourishment from God's word and opportunities to grow- as well as to care for the wounded and the weak.

The image of Jesus Christ as the Chief Shepherd, especially in our rural setting, is one readily understood. In a sense we are the "under shepherds." Jesus commissions ALL his people to "feed his sheep." While no-one should

underestimate the scale of the task, with *God's* help and a constant focus on prayer, we are beginning to see how much can be achieved, and more in future than we might ever have dreamt possible.

## Mission Audit – Results with Action Points

This section includes positive suggestions for Now and the Future - drawn from the Mission Audit Questionnaires -

The objectives and practical points listed below represent the majority of the positive suggestions made in the mission audit questionnaires received from the Upper Itchen Benefice electoral roll members and wider villagers.

The points are grouped here under the headings of the Anglican Communion's Five Marks of Mission.

1. Proclaiming the Good News
2. Teach, baptise, and nurture
3. Responding to human need by loving service
4. Seeking to transform unjust structures of society
5. Strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

Obviously there were also negative and critical points made on questionnaires. These are not included here as this is a list of ideas for ways forward for the Upper Itchen Benefice and its 6 church communities - to help it survive and grow. The negative points are represented in the list of sample quotations from questionnaires, and summarized in the Mission Audit - Report Summary.

### KEY & COLOUR CODE TO CATEGORY LISTINGS USED BELOW

Headings 1-5 = the 5 marks of mission of the Anglican Communion

- A. = Key areas for attention
- B. = Aims - drawn from Mission Audit Questionnaires & meetings
  - Objectives - drawn from Mission Audit Questionnaires & meetings
  - Specific action point examples to meet objectives - suggested in questionnaires/meetings

## 1. Proclaiming the Good News

### A.1. Worship/Services:

- B.1. Sustain a broad mix of Church Services and Worship patterns across the Benefice
- Promote and rejuvenate range of existing services offered across the Benefice within the parish churches - fresh ideas for existing services:
    - Rekindle the successful Bramdean/Kilmeston/Hinton Family Service
    - Visiting preachers on themed 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays at Cheriton;
    - Focus on Benefice services and Festivals to bring people together with a real sense of worship across the communities/benefice
    - Stronger promotion for all services - expanded monthly pew flyer for all church activities & wider circulation, shop, C&V, website etc
  - Add new services to the mix to expand diversity
    - Evangelical style All Age Worship service
    - Healing service
    - Youth service
    - Taize / other
    - Choral Eucharists
  - Ensure individual village churches are served with worship and festival celebration opportunities in their village church where resources allow
    - Re-look at Easter, Christmas, Harvest, Patronal and other festivals and promote or explain what services are available for each parish church
  - Broaden the focus from just Sunday services to worship opportunities throughout the week
    - Add Saturday evening service? Mid-week services?
- B.2. Involve and welcome all ages in worship
- involve children and others within the services
  - give young children a space in church to feel comfortable during the service
    - re-design area for children at back of churches (including the new area now created at Cheriton), and help them to participate in church
  - introduce all age worship/family services where the whole family, not just the very young, are encouraged to worship together

- develop more opportunities for the 12-25 age group to worship, learn and meet
  - Introduce Youth Service, build on Sunday Clubs and Sunday School
- Help elderly not to feel isolated by changes in worship
  - Retain a mix of BCP and CW services in the Benefice.
- Rekindle the sense of enjoyment in worship together
  - Focus on warm welcome by sidesmen, clergy and church members
  - Develop gatherings afterwards over coffee
  - Involve people in worship where they wish to
  - Keep up welcoming critical mass numbers at benefice worship together

## **A.2. Sharing & Proclaiming Faith Together**

- B.1. Be openly inclusive and strong enough as a church to encourage and promote the diversity of faith styles/forms of church that exist throughout the benefice
- Offer different forms of church and teaching to appeal to and embrace diversity:
    - eg Matins and all-age-worship evangelical services; Alpha and Emmaus courses, and theologian lecture series; social suppers and house/bible study groups
  - Learn from each other and the diversity, offer something unique in rural church
  - Expand opportunities for sharing and proclaiming faith with each other
    - Action points included in teaching/learning action points below
- B.2. Evangelism - getting alongside people and sharing personal faith
- B.3. Be more effective pray-ers -
- Provide guidance in prayer through sermons, study groups/courses.
  - Increase prayer walks and other opportunities
  - Perhaps introduce a Julian or other form of meditation group
- B.4. Discern the gifts of others for service and encourage them
- enable ideas and offers of help and expertise to come forward
    - Through open village church meetings every other month
    - Via individual voices being heard by ministry team, council and church members

### A.3 Reaching out into the Community to Share Faith

#### B.1. Develop close links within the community (see also 'church serving the community' section below)

- Work towards the local church becoming a hub in the community - energising, inclusive, supporting the vulnerable and isolated, 'a beacon of light', providing space in the social map which is beyond the separate groups and concerns of the rest of social village networks - and promote the local church as such
- Give clear sense (to church members and to the outside world looking in) of where the local church is going, its priorities, focus and work
  - Publish and communicate mission audit findings (every few years?), strategy and ongoing activities and work - via monthly flyer, C&V etc
  - Clear and low-key governance structures which do the background work
- Reach out and welcome newcomers and those excluded in the community
  - Pastoral visiting from lay team and clergy, and church members
  - Expanded village/benefice/church welcome booklet
- Initiate a new programme of youth work and youth worship, involving the 12-25s and those already experienced in project elsewhere.
- Encourage those seeking marriage/baptism in church; supporting bereaved

## 2. Teach, Baptise, and Nurture

### A.1. Teaching, Learning and Exploring in Faith

#### B.1. Nurture and support non/new believers; nurture, support and challenge old believers:

- Introduce new courses:
  - Alpha style course - for those new to exploring faith
  - Y course - for those wishing to ask key questions
  - Lent 2008 course
  - Marriage course
  - Autumn/Advent course?
- Introduce New Talks & Lectures
  - Autumn lecture series by theologians/specialists in their field

- Supper Talks
  - Promote lectures & courses hosted elsewhere in diocese
  - publish sermons on benefice website
- Introduce House Groups
  - Bible study / prayer groups - continue Cheriton weekday, add new group elsewhere weekday evening?
  - House groups developing from lent course groups or other?
- Coordinate opportunities for quiet group reflection and exploration
  - Benefice quiet day
  - Pilgrimage & retreats
- B.2. Make greater use of resources available to engage and develop peoples' faith:
  - Books - build new church benefice library for adults (Cheriton church)
  - Courses & events - promote Upper Itchen benefice and other local opportunities
- B.3. Introduce or Develop new children's & youth programme:
  - Teach and foster young people in our churches & church communities
    - Continue to develop Sunday schools and Sunday clubs
    - Encourage the 12-25s who are missing at present to start youth group?
    - Attend to confirmation candidates once they've been confirmed to support them and encourage them to remain part of the church

### 3. Responding to Human Need by Loving Service

#### A.1. Church Serving the Community

- B.1. Build strong and obvious links between church and community
  - Link to other village groups and help them where needed (eg getting volunteers)
    - Good Companions help, & other groups struggling
  - Establish the church as the vibrant hub of the village communities
  - Build closer relationships - with the school, the elderly and lonely, etc
    - Focus on support for vulnerable individuals/groups in the benefice
    - Develop closer role and relations with the school, particularly during the interregnum

- Highlight & coordinate areas where people can help and give to people in need.
  - Lunch club for elderly once a month in at least one village hall
- Regular visiting in the community - visitor team and pastoral care visiting
  - Reach out to disabled and vulnerable at home.
- Connect to non-benefice groups, communities, causes.
- Reach out to the young families in the villages
  - Mother & toddler coffee group.
- Ensure the church is openly visible in the daily life of the parish
- Make clear the church community is a core source of willing volunteers for the community and wider world
  - Service & create a channel via church to other communities, charities eg Winchester Churches Nightshelter, Cathedral refectory, Christian Aid, etc
- B.2. Offer the community entertainment, learning opportunities, and social benefits
  - Fetes and other social and fundraising events - for whole community
    - Fetes x 6, Harvest supper/lunch, Quiz Nights, etc
  - Music - run workshops, concerts, courses, singing groups, Benefice choir, etc
    - Develop benefice choir for joint services, and encourage individual parishes
    - Develop musical talents - perhaps a benefice orchestra
    - Run music workshops and other chances for participation and learning
  - Talks, courses, study groups etc - run by the church and open to all
  - Expand Benefice website as hub for community links
- B.3. Use of church building - serving the community
  - Open the churches up for wider use by church communities and village communities:
    - eg Church libraries, Music groups, Coffee mornings / lunches in church space, Art/music groups use of church space, Art exhibitions, Concerts, Author readings, use by village groups for meetings/events, etc

## **A.2. Social Church - Serving the Church Community**

- B.1. Exploit wider use of Benefice & Village Fundraising Events
  - use as an opportunity to bring the church communities together in social setting

- use as an opportunity to draw people in for new friends, new roles, new skills
- B.2. Care for those within church community
  - Introduce/continue way of meeting after church (eg coffee after services)
  - Ensure people feel valued, and thanked for what they are doing/done
    - Church helpers' social
  - Ensure older members feel valued and cared for and not sidelined by changes all around them.
  - Demonstrate unity of the benefice and actively encourage a community of each church/village as a whole within the benefice - 6 different members of one loving family.
  - Support clergy and ministry team
- B.3. Run streamlined, transparent, open and low-key church benefice management structure to minimise distractions, administrative labours & concerns for clergy, church and wider communities

*NB: points in this section include positive suggestions only to sort out the current problems of church governance/administration, drawn from questionnaires and points made at meetings. Some questionnaires also suggested keeping the governance structures as they are - with 6 PCCs and a Benefice Council - and these views are not included below as this is the present situation so all know those pros and cons already. Most questionnaires merely stressed that the internal arguments on this topic are very unattractive and must stop as soon as possible, and they were not so concerned which path is taken.*

- provide opportunities for all to speak openly, to know about new ideas and plans, and include the input of others at all levels
  - Introduce open village church meetings for anybody to come to, instead of (or as well as) closed PCCs
  - Away days for discussing church priorities etc
  - Close 2-way communication lines between village committees & benefice committee
- Communicate constantly within church community and to outside communities
  - Promote and communicate initiatives through central flyer/other means
  - Encourage and uplift people in church community and in their life of service
- Streamline the administration and need for volunteers for church offices and open up the debates and church priorities discussions to all

- Single parish benefice with 6 village church open committees and 1 fully representative benefice committee which has excellent representatives and service to key benefice wide issues, as well as representation of each village community, and minimal formal church officers
- Grow an inclusive church with a firm base on which to grow - achieve unity with diversity, and innovation with tradition

## 4. Seeking to Transform Unjust Structures of Society

### A.1. Help to transform unjust structures in local community

- Support the more vulnerable, weak, and isolated within the local community.
- Ensure church works and welcomes and supports across the social networks and divides - be a peaceful space in the social map, open to all
- Build an outward and caring focus in the church and village communities

### A.2. Help to transform unjust structures in national/global society

- More from the pulpit about social justice locally and globally.
- Create a channel via church to charities, other communities, and people in need
  - Promote to church/village communities charity work, issues, and giving opportunities
  - Church become a better ambassador for giving.
  - Prompt volunteers for work at Winchester Churches Nightshelter, Cathedral Refectory, Christian Aid, etc
  - Continue support to mission partners
  - Continue guest speakers on various causes for sermons
  - Talks on justice and peace

## 5. Strive to Safeguard the Integrity of Creation and Sustain and Renew the Life of the Earth

This area was not covered by the questions on the questionnaire, and very few points on the questionnaires fell into this category with their responses. The kind of areas where the Upper Itchen could perhaps build and grow under this category might include:

**Fair Trade Parishes** - most churches in the parishes have already agreed to use Fair Trade products for coffee after services and other refreshment occasions where possible.

**Lower carbon footprint for the church buildings** - this is quite difficult for historic buildings which leak heat through windows etc, but new low energy electrical fittings/bulbs in St Michael's Cheriton have been introduced and changing to low energy bulbs in the other churches would be a help. Greater attention to replanting and caring for trees would also help.

**Mission Partners** - the Benefice is already supporting the medical work in which Jason and Tracy Day (our CMS partners) are involved in Nepal.

## Graphical Presentation of Scores from the Electoral Roll Questionnaires

Before any attempt can be made to interpret the audit feedback results it must be pointed out that an exercise like this has never been carried out in these parishes before. There can therefore be no comparative process with the past, but the results should encourage our church to go forward into the future.

The graphical results are complex and cannot be looked at in isolation as the 'scores' are very much a personal perspective at a particular point in time. Each individual who responded has a different spiritual and social need and thus in many respects we are not comparing like with like. The graphical data must be considered in conjunction with the written responses and from that shared evidence, trends and areas for growth in mission can be discerned.

The complexity of the results is illustrated in the fact that many of the plot lines exhibit a 'double hump'. This will be due to a combination of things. It may be a product of differing age groups within the church membership, each having a different perspective on the same subject, or it may be produced by separate parishes having slightly differing views. These are just two possibilities, there are probably more.

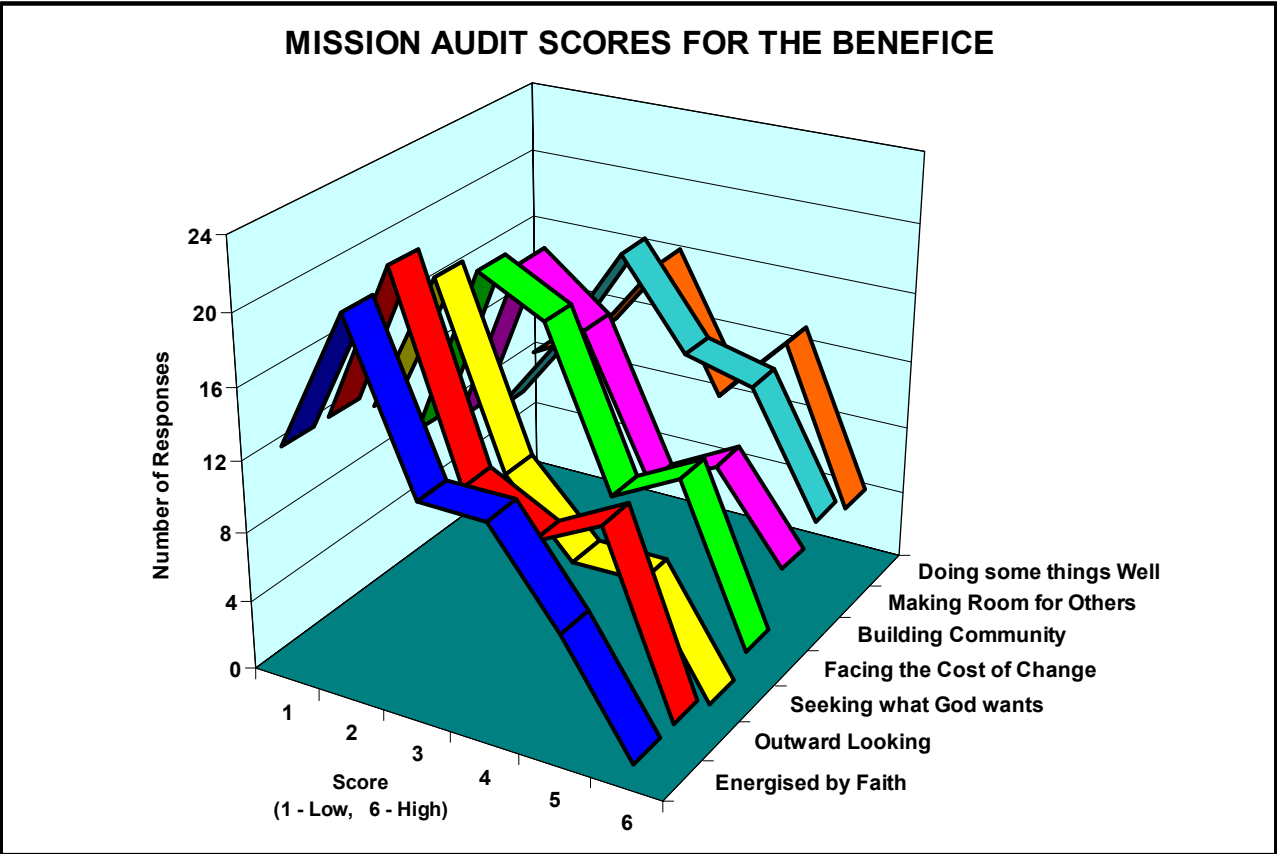
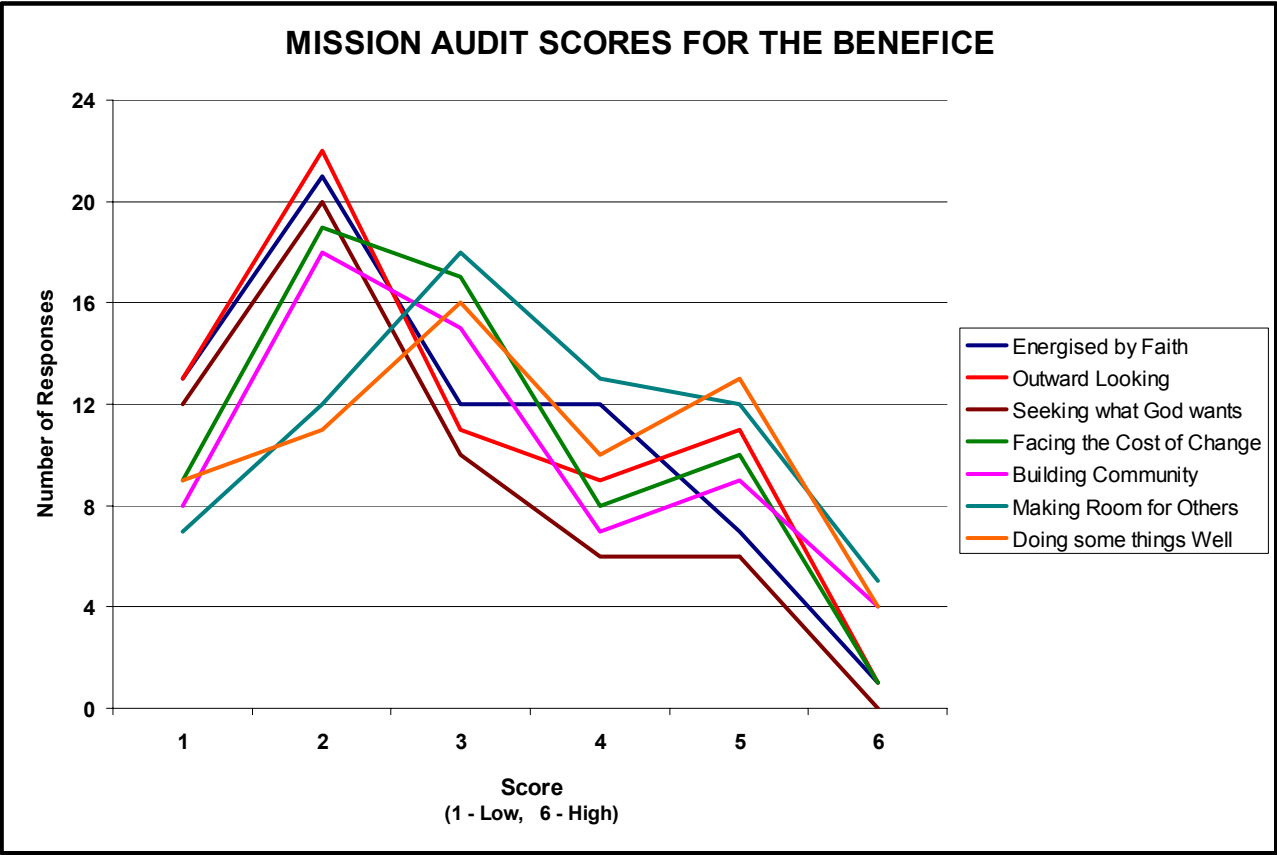
The first pair of graphs which are found on page 2 represent the total of all the data collected for each section of the questionnaire. The same data has been plotted in two different formats, a line graph and a 3D ribbon plot, in order to provide clarity of presentation.

For those who are interested in a more detailed breakdown of the 'scores', the 3D column plots on pages 3 to 6 of this annex show the individual parish responses to each of the questions asked in the audit questionnaire.

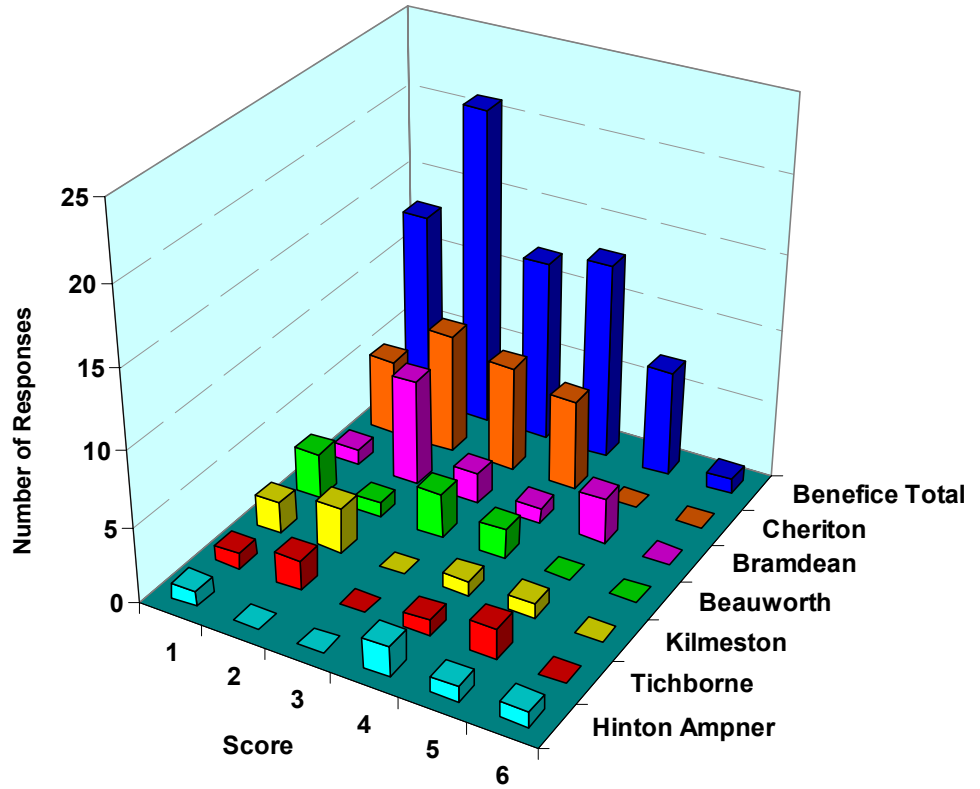
### Overall Summary of Responses

	No sent out	Responses
Electoral Roll Questionnaire	264	84
Non-ER (General) Questionnaire	538	31

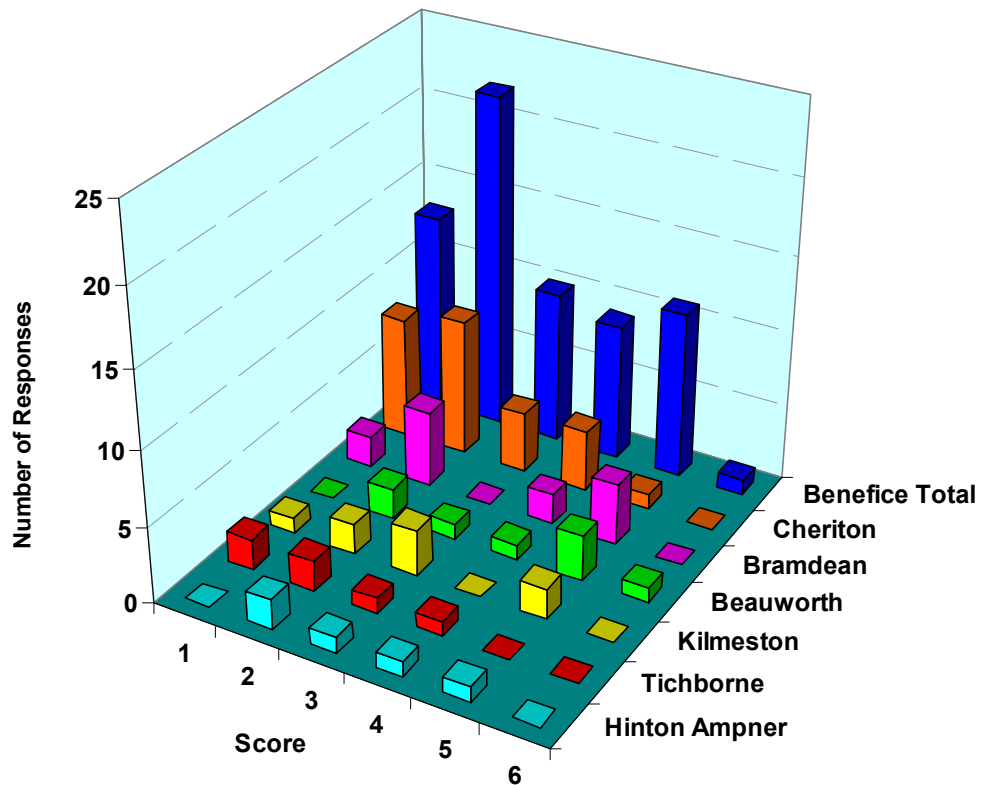
The graphs shown below present a graphical representation of the results obtained from the Electoral Roll questionnaires.



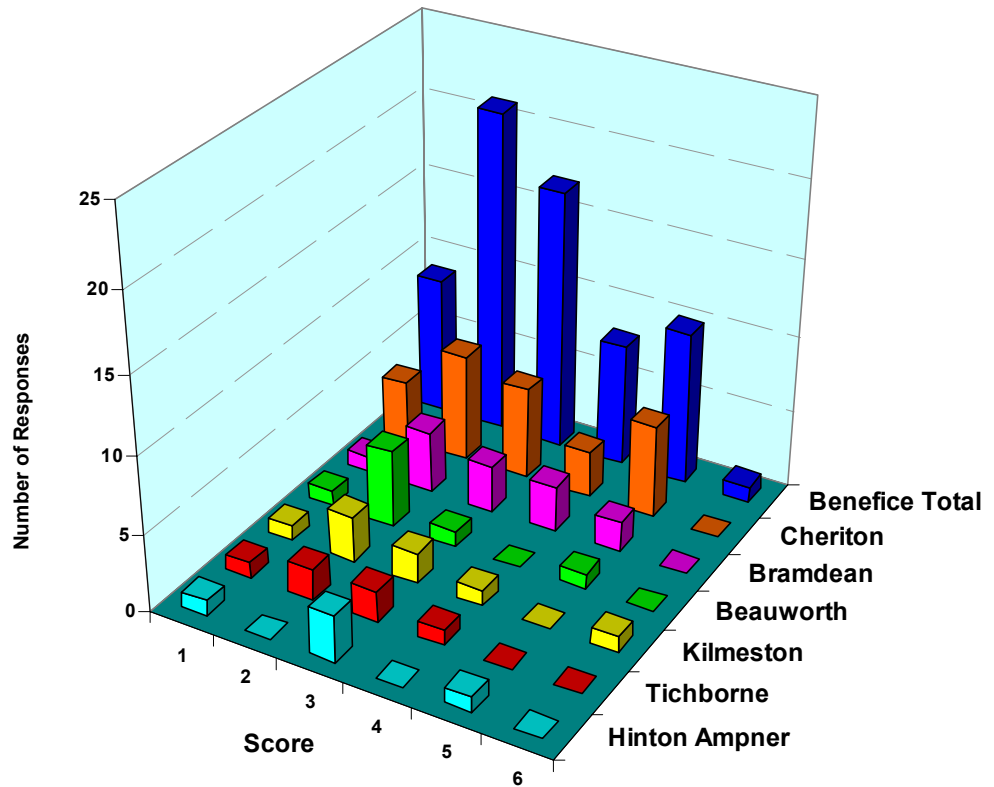
### IS THE CHURCH ENERGISED BY FAITH?



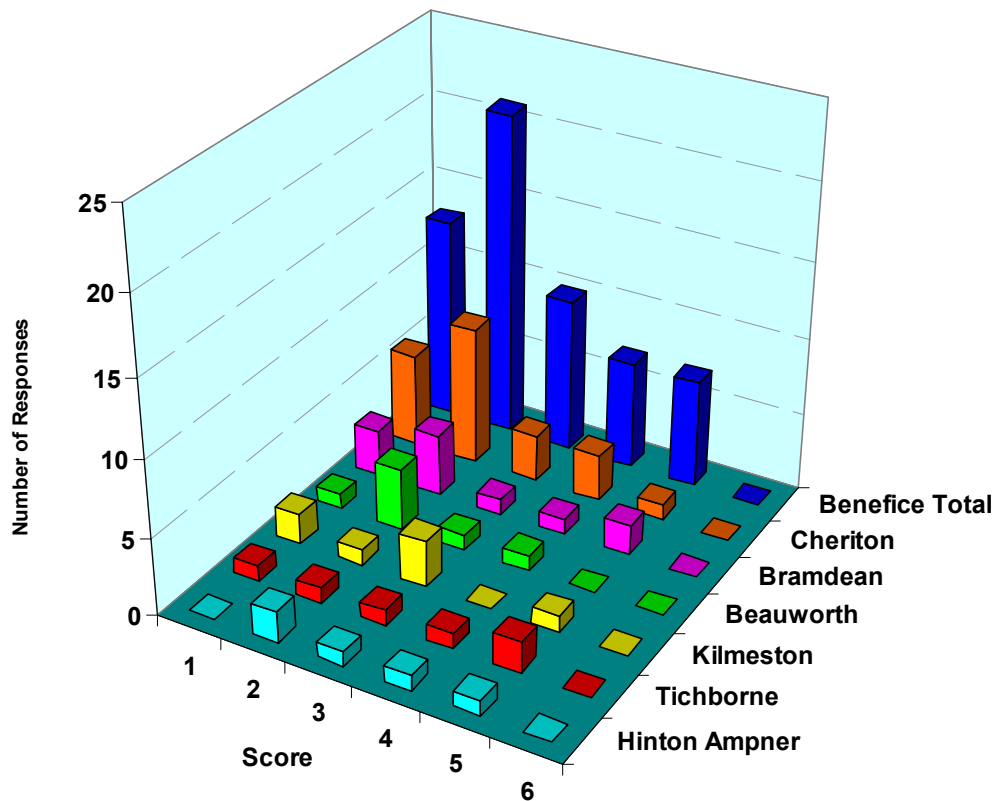
### IS THE CHURCH OUTWARD LOOKING?



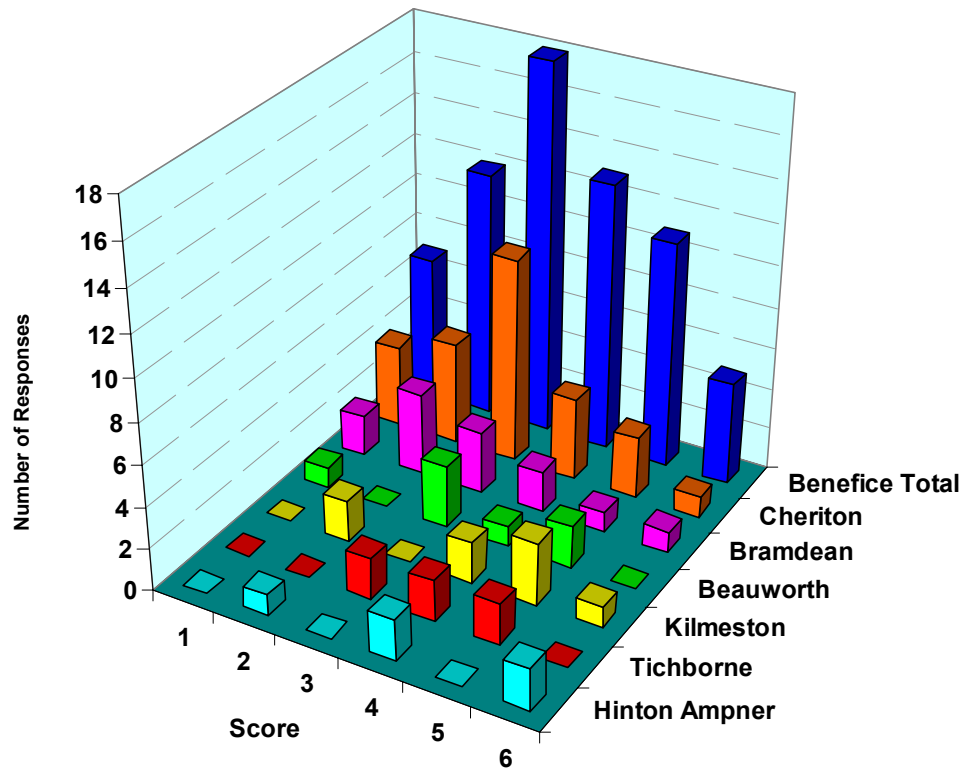
### IS THE CHURCH FACING THE COST OF CHANGE AND GROWTH?



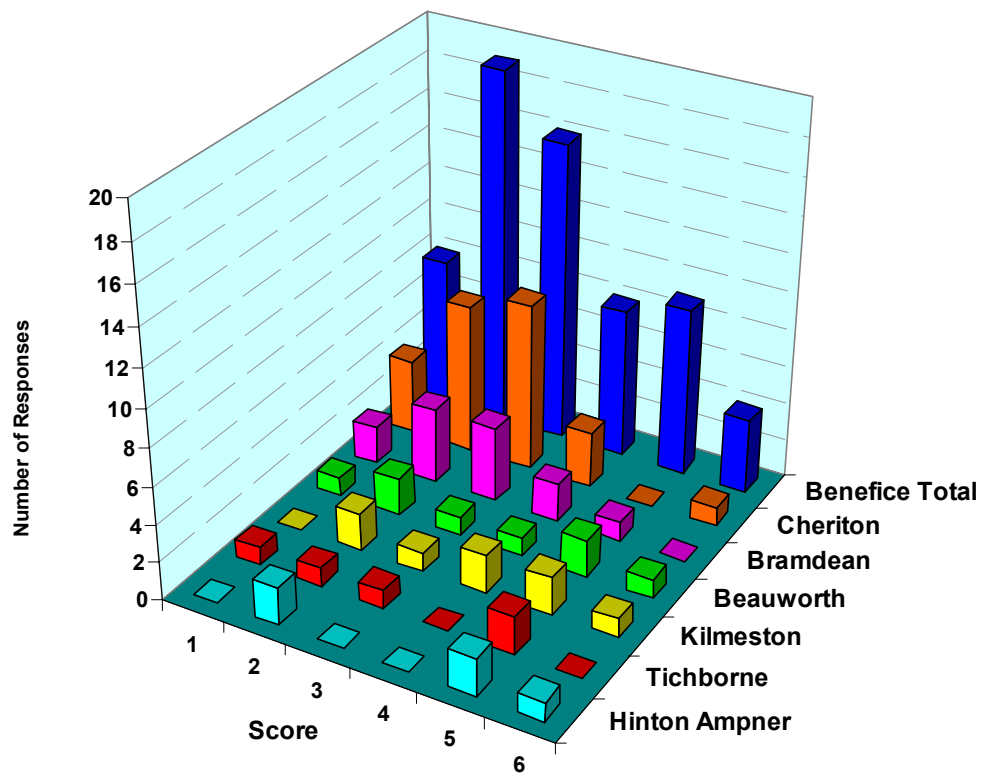
### IS THE CHURCH SEEKING TO FIND WHAT GOD WANTS?



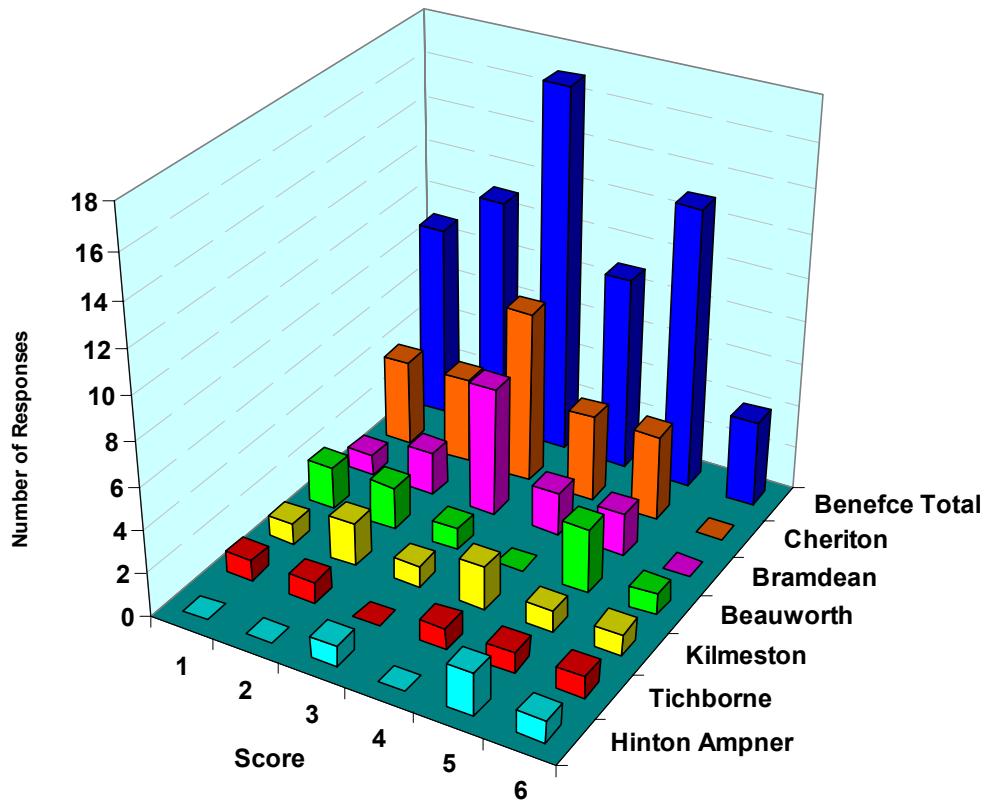
### IS THE CHURCH MAKING ROOM FOR OTHERS?



### IS THE CHURCH BUILDING COMMUNITIES?



### IS THE CHURCH DOING A FEW THINGS WELL?



## Resume of Quotations from Questionnaires

The selection of quotations shown below have been taken from comments made on both the Electoral Roll and General Questionnaires.

### *Some of the responses from Electoral Roll Questionnaire:*

These responses have been divided up into three sections representing Positive, Negative and Constructive comments.

#### **POSITIVE**

"At its best the worship can be inspirational. The best is often the benefice service."

"The church is deeply rooted in the community."

"individuals have great strengths which could be developed further."

"have Sunday school twice a month- about right."

"Pastoral care quite good ...backed up by the formal support of the parish visitors."

"Stewardship- good or even excellent."

"Administration-good."

"Alpha and Marriage courses are good."

"Range of services within the benefice is good, administration also good."

"Benefice services do seem to be bringing together a real sense of worship as well as other specials."

"The quality of our services remains high and on occasion so moving as to be spine-tingling... the churches are beautifully cared for...the hard work put into raising money is most impressive."

(Cheriton) provides an excellent venue for music concerts."

"Sunday school is delightful and very motivated... we have a great organiser in Mike and are lucky to still have a choir and talented, devoted choir mistress."

"Wonderful buildings still lovingly maintained... a great base from which to grow...Present worship does seem to move and motivate but sometimes negated by negativity of church members and their insecurities about church attendance... I'm sure this attitude looks set to change soon... I think there is finally a jolt of life starting now. "

"Good pastoral support for the bereaved, weddings funerals and special services, bible fellowship, Bramdean Sunday Club... Greater publicity of work and news... would be a big start in refocusing on things being done well... the most crucial thing is to move forward with some well publicised new initiatives (most crucially in faith education).. for everyone to get involved in and which can reach out to involve a wider range of people."

"The pew leaflet is a great idea...service sheets are now well-structured... "

## **NEGATIVE**

"(apart from the benefice services) other services can lack inspiration or focus. At their worst you begin to wonder if anything useful is being achieved. Services aimed at children are probably the worst."

"The services are often too long."

"(the church) can be less than welcoming to members of the local community seeking baptism or marriage and that has caused enormous damage."

"Some less than tactful comments by the Rector have also caused damage."

"Not much sense of where we are going."

"Not sure we have much mission, let alone priorities."

"Too much change for some."

"We have moved from being fairly low church to being quite high church. The emphasis on form rather than content, which is inherent in this, is deeply regrettable."

"Not much external evidence of team work."

"(children) don't appreciate being talked down to."

"Welcome to church not structured and therefore too dependent on individuals who happen to be on duty."

"No proper welcome at the beginning of each service."

"Lent courses have sometimes been disappointing for the lack of focus (and sometimes for the lack of preparation and insight from those leading them."

"Little energy present in this church which seems to serve the needs of a few fairly elderly middle/upper middle class parishioners. Cheriton now has many "young marrieds." One rarely sees any of them in church."

"It does not have an outward focus."

"Whoever designed this questionnaire has rarely set foot in a small parish church."

"It's not always admitted when change is not working."

"The intercessions are often long and repetitive, helping to lose concentration."

"not sure we reach out enough to the disabled at home."

"I regret so much effort devoted to fund raising- but necessary to keep our lovely old buildings- and not enough to discussing worship and the bible itself."

"Is the church interested in visiting families who do not attend church?"

"Pastoral care in some areas is very weak."

"Some.. as non-communicants feel excluded by the communion service."

"Harvest festival used to be packed but when the service fails to take the subject seriously there is little reason for people to come."

"I now feel spiritually exhausted, for all the various political issues have overshadowed any thoughts and discussions about faith for so long."

"I believe the benefice services are not a success... don't appear to encourage the cross-fertilisation that was envisaged."

"I have a strong distaste for the Peace in the middle of the service...It is superficial and insincere and makes me feel quite uncomfortable. At the start of a service would seem more appropriate."

"still a VERY middleclass church."

"pastoral care only seems to deal with the sick."

"we seem to lack the ability or will to connect with non-benefice groups, communities or causes... stubbornness amongst some elements of the congregation will make any change... very difficult. If the Anglican church is to grow and survive we need to accept we cannot continue as we are."

"(need) less internal conflict."

"too often a wide gap between real life and how the Scripture is interpreted."

"the church in this parish has become inward-looking. It conveys to those who attend the message that 100 per cent commitment is required otherwise you are not a full and possibly not a genuine member of the congregation for which the clergy is seeking."

"I doubt if many members... feel valued."

"The church... is becoming more and more exclusive by creating a feeling of them and us."

"Much of the worship is well handled but the range of services is very biased. I am certainly not convinced my views are necessarily the only correct ones. It would be appreciated if others could demonstrate some flexibility in their approach."

"Generally far too inward-looking."

"Little appreciation of the wide range of resources available locally in terms of books, courses, and events which could engage people's interest and develop faith."

"Little from the pulpit about social justice locally or globally."

"(I feel) drained and negative. The only time I feel energised is when a bishop visits- they seem to be inspired and energised." I find a complete lack of concern between the church and the community it's almost as if it's too much effort!"

"I think it's a pity that parishioners only feel able to speak honestly and openly in a questionnaire when it's anonymous. Speaking openly does not seem to achieve anything at all. It's all very well having a beautiful church to visit but if there aren't enough people in it what's the point?"

"I don't feel there are any strong relationships at all. It's a bit like a minefield trying to be diplomatic between the church and village organisations."

"If as much effort could be put in at a higher level by our church leaders as was put into the church restoration by the village people then maybe we would feel enthused. There seems to be such a void."

"allowing Church and Village magazine to be used as a forum for the display of anger and incorrect information regarding the amalgamation of the parishes was a sad mistake. Those not involved with the church must have seen this as another instance of the C/E not able to get its act together."

"older members perhaps feel side-lined?"

"I do not feel the church IS fulfilling its calling to bring people to Christ- witness the dramatic fall in numbers attending church compared with a few years ago... I sense a great longing amongst people for more than the materialistic world around us. The church in Cheriton is sadly not the hub of the village- it is more likely the village shop where everyone is known by name and many share their joys and sorrows with Sandy and Martin."

"Most services lack a feeling of joy in the Spirit and yearning to learn more."

"Views and feelings of the congregation are ignored and there is too much top down management. Things happen without any of us being asked. ..People vote with their feet."

"Somehow recently I find myself questioning certain aspects (re faith) and feel something is missing...a certain apathy seems to be creeping in.... very few of the teenage group "

"I wouldn't say there is much enjoyment within this church. That is part of the problem- busy people want to enjoy themselves in their spare time- unless you have a strong faith most services are to be honest boring."

"Some sermons are too cerebral."

"At times the preaching is a little too academic."

"Denying individual churches, with little discussion, what they regard as festivals fundamental to their faith eg (Midnight) Christmas Eve seems counterproductive."

### **CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM**

"It would be good to involve (children) in some services (e.g reading)

"There is far too little opportunity for assistance in spiritual growth- bible study, prayer, meditation and retreats etc..."

"It must attract and reach out to the young "marrieds" of which there is a growing number in the village."

"Villagers on the periphery of church life might be attracted in to our church if the services were shorter and less controlled by the "Common worship" pattern all the time."

"Confirmation candidates are often never seen again. Why?"

"(we need to work on) communication, not relying on the computer, not everyone uses this medium."

"We need at least one modern happy clappy type service as at Christchurch, Winchester."

"and more involvement in the local community- as well as the primary school e.g bless the cricket pitch, football pitch, beer festival and balloons."

"services and sermons need to be shorter and to the point and with popular hymns familiar to people."

"if it were more charismatic/relevant ...score of those attending would be higher."

"change has improved with the new service in modern English and women priests/readers."

"Alpha groups bring new people in and even enliven the faith of those already part of the community."

"Some way of meeting after church say once a month would be good as so many people live on their own."

"(need) sermons relevant to their lives. If they are too theory-based people will plan Sunday lunch during them!"

"More emphasis needed on faith rather than form of worship. Too many want THEIR form of service and forget that it is worship that matters not its form."

"some room for more outward-looking ministry."

"definite need to think more about what God wants from our church rather than what we want."

"while some changes have been made very successfully there is still a tendency to be backward-looking."

"(need to be)... more out-going and friendly towards those outside the immediate church community, particularly in encouraging those wanting marriage or baptism in church.. going out to welcome newcomers."

"family services should have the potential to make provision for all age groups but sadly seem only to have attracted the very young."

"this is a rural parish and appropriate services should reflect with sincerity on the meaning and importance of the seasons for the community."

"One area which I feel could be explored a great deal more is the ministry of music."

"(need) a mixture of BCP and modern or less formal services in one parish... people should be catered for within their own parish without the need to migrate...and sermons that give the whole family something worthwhile to talk about over Sunday lunch."

"there still must be services to encourage young families to worship together i.e all age worship. (We need) house groups, prayer days, quiet

days, healing and mission partner get together and opportunities for sharing faith experiences."

"there needs to be some opportunity for e.g an away day when the priorities of our being "church" can be shared, discussed, so that TOGETHER God's family can be sure of where it is going and become a beacon of light in the community."

(Need) activities beyond services such as pilgrimages, study groups, quiet days to build strength in community and faith... to be more inclusive, willing to accommodate people's needs and accept change where necessary."

"(Need to) acknowledge openly the individual churches. Demonstrate the unity of the benefice and actively encourage a community of each church as a whole within the benefice. Six different members of one loving family."

"(need to) do more to discern the gifts of others for service and encourage them, nurture the faith of those people who already come, more bible study, house groups, and prayer groups, and use our imaginations in designing services so the formats include the unexpected."

"(need to) congratulate people more for what they are already doing and help people see how much more could be achieved... and always give people constructive feedback. A pat on the back works wonders."

"We certainly need to teach and foster young people in our churches. Maybe we should be seeking partnership with other benefices to undertake this?... and we need to be more effective pray-ers."

"it is beneficial to have a variety of types of service in each parish so that everyone has the chance to feel uplifted."

"(need) sermons which are relevant, brief and loving with less emphasis on the shortcomings of human beings and more positively on their strengths."

"...perhaps something like a lunch club for the elderly, once a month in the village hall, talks in the church on justice and peace.... Communication is crucial... e mails shouldn't take the place of a telephone call or face to face discussion...frequent expressions of gratitude... making it all fun.. people need to feel appreciated, encouraged and uplifted."

"It is so important for the church to be to be openly visible in the daily life of the parish. Faith is not taught but caught... I am always so impressed by the young mums who take Sunday school and present the results of their

morning to the congregation.. invaluable...but they are so few in number considering the young families in the village.... perhaps a mother and toddler coffee morning once a month in the village hall with prayer and an open discussion on faith, its joys and difficulties?... perhaps a prayer group could be started in the evening...The more we can meet discuss and have fun together could bring the church back into the life of the village which it is not now."

"falling numbers fairly consistently over the last year...suggest we should "double up" with services that are not attracting congregation or (be) changing in some way the usual format- in other words a different service. Obviously with discussion in sensitive areas."

"Flag up before a service that it is... trying something brand new- and then go for it- if it doesn't work so be it, you tried!"

"How about a "lost my faith or confused about religion? Workshop"...held in village hall not church... Count the number of 11-19 year olds in church and ask yourself if you have this aspect covered."

"Get some non-church people in to preach...real life people... Did Jesus always preach from a pulpit, no, he moved amongst people and often got them to do the teaching."

"(need) courses, bible study, chances to debate ways forward.. then energy (will be)...restored and people's focus will switch to how the church community can best serve God and each other."

"For many years it's been seen as the responsibility of the parish priest to set everything in place. In today's world of diverse and extensive demands from all sides it seems impossible for one priest to meet all demands; the energy and activity needs to come from all to support the priest/ministry team and embed the church in the community."

"a few of the more vocal members of churches giving the impression of a church in on-going internal arguments- this is very unattractive to those within church and outside considering becoming involved or even just looking in...this has grown into people blaming others for the situation, which has only made the church body seem smaller more isolated, and internally focused. The mission audit open discussion meetings have shown people are thinking much more seriously about the situation and coming up with ideas and ways they can now support... it seems likely that a much more united and motivated church could start to grow now and help people grow and share their faith."

"(need) to serve our community and to serve God... look to support the more vulnerable weak or more isolated parts of the community not just chase the stronger, larger, more visible members of the community in order to strengthen and grow itself."

"Church should be a much better ambassador for giving and being seen to practise what we preach...(more) opportunities for prayer and stillness. This mission audit process looks likely to be huge step forward - with many people having a forum for airing their views... people seem keen to make sacrifices and participate once new ways forward are suggested and adopted."

"Our local church would be much stronger if it could embrace different personal accents of faith more openly, learn from each other..."and need to streamline cumbersome administration across the parishes which is blocking ministry team and lay members' potential to move forward.."

"Children need to be allowed and encouraged to walk around church during services and explore and feel comfortable in what can be an imposing building."

"it would be helpful if the vicar got out and about more locally rather than in the diocese."

"(Need) Communication, especially with young people 12-25 years. This is the "lost" generation.." Get out among the parishioners not just the chosen few... Children's homes are their roots and the village church should be part of that and not treat them as "leavers."

"need to look to the future....SOME modernisation might be in order... we would have to be prepared to upset and be upset- nothing is for ever and change is inevitable, otherwise our church will die."

"we need to find a way to develop better relationships with .. particularly the school and the elderly/lonely... a coffee morning on a regular basis?"

"We all want our church, it is a very special symbol in each village and holds many valuable memories BUT that doesn't mean we cannot also work together, combine strengths and ensure the future of our parishes and their mission."

"Extend prayer and discussion groups."

"I would love to see a vibrant church in Cheriton. I hope that this Audit will help pinpoint areas where we can improve and give to the people what they need and want... most of us have busy lives and many commitments BUT if the church fulfils its role. I would hope that people would put the church back into their priority list- high- and meet the challenge halfway. It is our responsibility as well as the churches to restore our church to its full potential."

"The church (building) needs to be for the whole village.. Use it as a meeting space. Encourage everyone to visit it for whatever reason. Rector and Readers to VISIT in the village... everyone should have a visit at least once a year? ... Regular surgery in the pub? Just being there with a pint once a week might make a huge difference. Avoid them and us."

"Consider trying to become involved with Cherry Tree playgroup... inject some new blood/ideas into Good Companions .. elderly people who would welcome more opportunities to socialise."

"services could be more lively, short, punchy and stimulating, children more involved...be passionate about things like justice and peace...Give me short service , good hymns, a strong message and a decent cup of coffee any day... pay a visit to people and enquire as to how they might be able to contribute to the life of the parish."

"would be good to see a traditional harvest festival followed by a harvest supper to which anyone and everyone was invited... how about asking completely original people, including children to read the lessons or to give a thought for the day talk instead of a sermon? I would like to see AT LEAST one traditional service each month...I know I can go to another church in the benefice for this but I want to go to Cheriton as the centre of my particular community."

"Does basics quite well but worship quality has suffered due to continual changes. Now need a period of consolidation."

"(let's) value and use the church building and churchyard as a spiritual place for the whole community e.g. meetings, local history meetings, nature walks etc.."

"I suspect that a lot of time is spent on bureaucratic processes that add very little. Can any of this work be centralised without losing our identity as a parish?"

"What are the priorities and plans for the future? I would like to know."

"cheerful sermons for cheerful occasions."

"employment of a youth leader to revive Wayfarers or similar."

"annual service for those recently confirmed."

"away day led by an expert in faith development for potential participants and leaders to identify what could be done to boost confidence."

"hopefully this mission audit will allow us to listen, discuss, prioritise and move forward with a common purpose."

"retreats/quiet days"

"I understand there are several prayer groups in the benefice. As far as I'm aware only one is advertised. Should we not be aware of the others?"

"Worship should include more worship songs and we should use piano and guitar as well as the organ."

"There are some serious social issues in our community which need to be addressed- particularly with respect to forgiveness- enmities go on for years and years."

"we should also be standing against snobbery in the church."

"I believe that we need to start by learning some of the basics of Christianity. I would suggest that all the church officers and as many of the rest of the congregation as possible - at least all the churchwardens and all the PCC members - be encouraged to attend a course in basic Christianity"

"Prayer in the church (and at church meetings) is generally formulaic and appears not to be open to the Spirit...We need a lot more prayer going on- particularly extempore prayer as the Spirit leads."

"some do not appear to be able to deal with change except with anger and back-biting... If we were united in Christ changes would obviously be necessary and although we might disagree as to how to change we would do so in a loving manner."

"there is an opportunity to develop a pub ministry for men- a discussion group over a pint for example and we can get speakers."

"We need to make our churches more welcoming- young people move to the countryside for the fresh air not to return to the 1950's."

"the Rector's recent sermons ...have been biblical and have addressed today's issues... more of the same and more so please."

"The way in which the Single Parish issue has been responded to, demonstrates that we are the bad news and this cannot fulfil our mission unless we change."

"We have all the resources in place to have a Spirit-filled church...we have enough believers. We have a huge blessing in a full time clergyman and Readers ...We have no excuse for not being a strong church leading our community by example... If we stand against unchristian behaviour in ourselves and others and tell the gospel I am convinced that God will do something spectacular here."

"We need to bring singing worship up to date so there is a mixture of hymns and contemporary music."..."less formality."...(more) evangelising courses."... "there could be "bring a friend" services to encourage diversity."..."My personal view is radical...my vision would be to have one main church where there is an "all age" worship service every week...all the other churches used for early communion, youth services, evensong, christenings etc.. Then I believe we could achieve a united church community that could really think about mission."

"I believe the future lies in the incumbent giving more pastoral care and the admin being taken over by others."..."more teaching."

"I fear that the Single Parish idea could be an excuse for people to do less in their own churches because fewer people will be needed on the committee running the benefice. This could cause retrenchment rather than expansion of the church community."

"I think the members of the PCC's should set a good example and attend church regularly...new inhabitants could be visited by members of the PCCs...let's build on what we have rather than change everything too much."

"We need as a group to focus on "love," walking Jesus way, asking for his guidance in what he wants of us."

"(more) discussion/worship on how to live life as a good Christian in a modern context"..."I think the church is listening and evolving. In the 10

years we have lived here in the village a great effort has been made to encourage young families by adopting a more informal approach... maybe we could have more guest speakers... (more) informal discussion within the context of a service a good way of engaging the congregation?"

"to welcome change, but to respect the past history and all the inheritance thereof."

"Engage with villagers...show leadership. Don't allow church to be driven by administration."

"Would not the aim be to have 90 per cent at least attached to house groups? And across the benefice rather than the participants being from one church only!!"..."organise a monthly lunch club for the elderly... mens and ladies' breakfast group, coffee for mums and toddlers, Sunday evening youth group"..."with prayer the right people will come forward."..."there can be no real reason for people not to travel the mile or so to any of the churches for any event."

"Would be great to be alive and led by the Spirit."

"need a new, younger, experienced Rector...make sure the benefice worked properly and efficiently."

"I do feel the church (in Beauworth) needs to embrace the modern worship rather than traditional, if you want to include and encourage younger people, children to come to the church."

"(we need to work on) Christ's teaching. There are too many irrelevancies."

## ***Some of the responses received from the General Questionnaire:***

### ***(Note)***

The majority of respondents indicated that they were not of any faith. Six indicated that they were from a different tradition. Most remained anonymous and most did not indicate their parish.

### **General comment shared by many -**

Wished good luck - It is nice to be asked what I think because sometimes you get the impression that everything is done by the same few and we don't know what many think!

### **The Church's main priority in the Community was seen as:**

- To be there for everyone - To be the heart of the village - For encouragement of all to be involved - Pull the community together and be a focus - Maintain Christian tradition and involvement in the community
- Obviously worship - Maintenance of church services - Provide opportunities for worship both traditional and more modern - Provide worship but also to spread the gospel by whatever means
- Faithful preaching of the gospel and leading people to Jesus Christ
- Support for vulnerable and grieving - Comfort for the elderly, frail and sick - Available when individuals have serious setbacks/disasters in their lives - To be of help (spiritual and otherwise) when it is needed - Parish visiting of sick and elderly
- Venues for weddings, funerals, etc
- Encourage moral and emotional health - Engaging with families and helping the young to avoid the pitfalls of life - Attracting younger people

### **The kinds of services people wanted were often diametrically opposed:**

Some wanted things as they were -

- Traditional, although I am not a churchgoer - Traditional services using King James edition. As it always was - Keep to the traditional services - don't try to change them - Traditional services - Easter Christmas Harvest - I am a traditionalist and enjoy and appreciate services that have been formed over the years

More wanted contemporary worship

- Services for all villagers - beyond the rigid traditional style services - Good friendly services with well-known hymns - Family services - Happy, lively, focussed services at times - To entice 'non-attenders' - a simple service of a few hymns, readings, and a lesson once a month? Continuation of matins/Evensong? - Family services and child-friendly

services - More services that would attract outsiders, more family participation - Shorter services - not full communion sometimes - Services around youth and more in touch with the 21<sup>st</sup> century

Some extra suggestions -

- Activities relevant to modern living - services that are modern. How God can be related to our lives - lectures, courses, etc - Interest in healthy lifestyle - Would be pleasant to hold more concerts - It might be nice to have a mid week evening service. Weekends for household maintenance - Short relevant services

### **Overall impressions also varied considerably:**

Positive statements included (sometimes with qualifications) -

- Excellent - Active - Good, very active within the villages. Pretty villages, welcoming to all - Best I have ever visited. Most welcoming and un-modern in the best traditional way (Bramdean) - Good and caters for all ages but needs more outreach events - Well attended by a minority of the community - Strong community spirit - more from participation of congregation than rector - Struggling but well supported by a small part of the community; this is evident in the well maintained churches and graveyards - Like to hear the bells - Place to sit quietly and reflect - As dynamic as it can be - A beautiful church but it appears too many people do not participate and perhaps feel excluded - Lively friendly church, not much rector contact - Great at traditional worship - Friendly but dated

Negative statements included (sometimes with qualifications) -

- Those who attend seem to be conservative and older - Out of touch - Old fashioned and out of touch. However, recent fund-raising initiatives for the church have brought it back into the community - Distant, resistant to change - Kept going by a few faithfuls. Most churchgoers are interested in maintaining the fabric of the building but rarely interested in knowing Jesus Christ - Little reaching out or contact - Old fashioned - Not been visited by our rector - Solid and traditionalist - A local landmark not spiritually - Unwelcoming - Hit by disagreements, some unkind attitudes to the clergy who have a difficult job to do; it does not celebrate differences enough - In decline - struggling to attract numbers - Services not always of broad appeal - Poor, services fail to contact with the majority of the potential congregation

### **How much would the local church be missed?**

Probably this comment reflects many other - Surprisingly very much

There were positive comments of the 'National Trust' variety -

- Miss the church buildings - important part of the social/architectural heritage - Has been for centuries an essential

part of the community - Quite a bit because it provides continuity with the past - It is a beautiful church which I believe is visited more by visitors than the locals - It's a pillar of English society - Only on high days and holidays - I would miss it a lot, a backward step

There were others who saw it in terms of the community -

- Focal point for the community - The community would be bereft - A lot. I would miss the focus that it brings even if I am not a regular churchgoer - Loss of a point of focus within each community - Don't ever close it

Others admitted -

- Not much - At this moment not too much - Would welcome the opportunity to go to a church where everyone is 'on fire' for Jesus

### **What is changing and how might the church respond?**

Some of the issues raised included

- Affordable housing - People stay a shorter length of time and move on; we have a much younger community than 20 years ago; their needs should be more catered for - Everyone is so driven and because the majority of people in the benefice are so affluent and successful they do not see the need to anchor their lives in Jesus - To be reminded that life isn't all material possessions and ambitions - Many people now work on a Sunday - The villages are expanding constantly, possibly the churches need to rely less on rich and elderly parishioners and appeal to younger incomers more - Busy lives; need to keep reminding people of what is going on in the church - For working people life is pressured; perhaps alter times of services to suite people - In a world of constant change, any change in church should only happen when really necessary - Weekends are no longer days of rest

Solutions suggested included

- More things to bring community together - By showing that it can engage in everyday issues you may generate interest in your religion - Should involve the whole family and be very relaxed - Should be more clear that all are welcome and not just traditional CofE - Are we providing user friendly worship? - What about welcome service or annual get-together for new people in the area. Does everyone receive a magazine or welcome pack? - A calendar for all in the area of events for Harvest suppers, etc - Use of computers to keep people more informed - emails, etc

A few expressed their own spiritual needs and how they were or might be met

- Encouraging us to grow spiritually - Support in times of stress and sorrow - I often call into the church to offer a quiet prayer or when I need to reflect -Like to be a member of a bible study group

**Additional comments and suggestions:**

- Times of real praying and waiting on the Holy Spirit
- I feel that since 6 parishes were united there is less focus on our immediate community and the rector appears to be overwhelmed and burdened by the volume of work involved
- You have to evolve to survive
- Need to pray that the Holy Spirit will set this benefice on fire for Jesus or the congregations will wither and die (as most of the current members are elderly)
- Have been grateful for the church holding a funeral service (for a relative)
- How to bring the church into the lives of the parishioners
- Let's have a woman priest!
- Surprised not to have had a visit from clergy or church representative
- There is a huge spiritual need in today's society
- When you have the Christmas services, welcome everyone - not so much welcoming was evident last year
- Could to see Cheriton School still comes to the church to share their celebrations
- More needed to get the young involved (teens)
- The CofE needs to hold its nerve

## **Mission Audit Process & Methodology**

### Schedule of Events

February/March 2007

Taster Days to assess Audit Tools available

May/June/July 2007

Meetings of members of Mission Audit working party to confirm Audit resource to be used and plan process - (Growing Healthy Churches)

September 2007

Article explaining what Mission Audit is and how it will progress... in September issue of Church and Village. Same article put on benefice website.

Early October 2007

Delivered letter and ER questionnaire to all people on electoral rolls of churches in the Benefice (264). Forms to be answered anonymously and returned in stamped addressed envelope provided. Forms to be marked with a code to identify which church recipient belongs to.

Early and Mid October 2007

Two meetings open to all electoral roll members - one at Cheriton, another at Kilmeston village hall to discuss questionnaires and issues raised.

November 2007

Responded to feedback and created a different (general) questionnaire which was sent out to all other (non-electoral roll) households in the Benefice (538) and made available at back of all churches. Forms to be answered anonymously and returned in Freepost addressed envelope provided.

January 1 2008

The deadline for all questionnaires to be returned. Information was then collated and interpreted by working party - according to the principle of: asking, listening reflecting, transforming.

March/April 2008

Presentation and feedback to Benefice Council on 12<sup>th</sup> March. Final open meeting to feedback on audit findings and communicate future vision.

May 12 2008

Submit report to Diocese, and by July 2008, share with the Deanery:

(a) One area of mission that, in our calling under God, we do well and want to celebrate and share.

(b) One area of mission that we've identified as one, in our calling under God, we believe we should seek to develop (and for which we may need help and encouragement).

## **Church Electoral Roll Letter**

### **Upper Itchen Benefice - Mission Audit**

Dear Friend,

Our churches here in the Upper Itchen benefice are taking part in a wide-scale exercise across the whole Winchester diocese to LISTEN to people. It's called a "Mission Audit" and it's about identifying what's good, bad and could be improved about church life where YOU live.

As a member of your Church Electoral Roll you're among the FIRST PEOPLE we'd like to hear from. Please find time to read the enclosed questionnaire and complete it. We're seeking your views anonymously; so you can be completely honest about what you think. The only identifying mark is a small code at the top right hand corner of the first page which tells us to which church you belong. If you actually attend another church most of the time please be kind enough to indicate this by the code.

Do feel free to add a separate sheet(s), if you don't think you have sufficient space on the printed form to say all you wish. Your opinions are valuable and will help inform our response to the diocese. Through this the diocese will gain an overview of how the churches are working, and most importantly the exercise will help US PLAN for the future.

The form is based on tried and tested methods of assessing the health of churches and discerning the calling of churches, and will inform what happens for decades to come. Above all it is a LISTENING process. We want to listen to you, and to listen to what God is calling us all to reach out and do.

There'll be meetings in Cheriton on Wednesday October 3 at 8pm and Kilmeston on October 17 at 8pm for those on the Electoral Roll. You are welcome to attend one or the other, and another public one will be held in the New Year. Those villagers not on the electoral roll, but who would like to add their views will also be welcome to fill in questionnaires which we'll gladly supply, so the widest possible variety of views are canvassed. We'd like to receive all the COMPLETED FORMS, (which you can post back in the stamped addressed envelope provided), as soon as possible, but by November 1 2007 at the latest please.

When we've collated all the findings and formulated the overall vision for the future, we'll hold a final meeting next March to set out all that's been discovered through this process of ASKING, LISTENING, REFLECTING AND, we hope, TRANSFORMING. This is a precious opportunity to examine what we do and see what God may be calling us to undertake locally. "Mission," it's said, is "about finding out what God wants and joining in." Please pray for the success of this endeavour and BE PART of this important process - we REALLY want to hear from you.

With best wishes,

The Mission Audit Working Party.

*(Debbie Thompson, Bruce Newson, Sarah Lloyd, Steve Higgins,  
Maggie MacIsaac, Richard Horder, Margaret Hendy and Chris Jarman)*

# Church Electoral Roll Questionnaire

## Upper Itchen Benefice - Mission Audit Questionnaire

THERE ARE MANY SIGNS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH - HERE ARE SEVEN KEY ONES. BY RINGING THE MOST APPROPRIATE NUMBER ON THE SCALE, AND ADDING YOUR REMARKS, TELL US WHETHER YOU THINK YOUR CHURCH .....

### 1. IS ENERGISED BY FAITH

*(rather than just keeping things going or trying to survive. Does the worship move people to experience God's love, motivate people to serve God and one another, engage with Scripture in creative ways that connect to life, and help people to grow in and share their faith?)*

**Low    1    2    3    4    5    6    High**

What needs working on?

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### 2. HAS AN OUTWARD-LOOKING FOCUS?

*(with a "whole life" rather than "church life" concern? Is it deeply rooted in the local community, working in partnership with other denominations, faiths, secular groups and networks? Is it passionate and prophetic about justice and peace, locally and globally? Is it making connections between faith and daily living and responding to human need by loving service?)*

**Low    1    2    3    4    5    6    High**

What needs working on?

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### 3. SEEKING TO FIND OUT WHAT GOD WANTS?

*(rather than letting our own preferences set the church's agenda? Is it open to its vocation; to its calling to being led by the Spirit, in terms of what it should be, and do? Does it have vision when it comes to developing and communicating a shared sense of where we are going? Are there mission priorities evident both in the immediate and long term? Is it able to call for, and willing to make sacrifices of time, effort, money and personal preferences to live out its faith in a Christ-like way?)*

**Low      1      2      3      4      5      6      High**

What needs working on?

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### 4. FACING THE COST OF CHANGE AND GROWTH?

*(rather than resisting change and avoiding failure? Is it, while embracing the past, daring to take on new ways of doing things, taking risks and admitting when things are not working and learning from the experience? Does it respond creatively to the challenges that face the church and community? Are positive experiences of change, however small, built on and affirmed?)*

**Low      1      2      3      4      5      6      High**

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## 5. BUILDING COMMUNITY?

*(rather than functioning as a club or religious organisation? Are relationships nurtured so people know they are part of a community of faith (often through small groups) with opportunities for service? Is the lay and ordained leadership working as a team to develop appropriate expressions of all seven marks of a healthy church? Are the different gifts, experiences, and faith-journeys of all people valued?)*

**Low    1    2    3    4    5    6    High**

What needs working on?

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## 6. MAKING ROOM FOR OTHERS?

*(being inclusive rather than exclusive? Is it working to welcome and include newcomers into the life of the church? Are children and young people being helped to belong, contribute and be nurtured in their faith? Are inquirers encouraged to explore and experience faith in Christ? And are people coming from varied social and ethnic backgrounds, and those with mental or physical disabilities and age differences, valued for their diverse contributions?)*

**Low    1    2    3    4    5    6    High**

What needs working on?

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## 7. DOING A FEW THINGS, REALLY WELL?

*(is it focused rather than frenetic? Does it do the basics well, especially public worship, pastoral care, stewardship and administration? Does the range of services make sense and communicate faith? Is the local church "good news" both in terms of its attitude and ways of working? And is it evident that people are enjoying themselves? Is it one you would want to bring a friend to?)*

**Low    1    2    3    4    5    6    High**

What needs working on?

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Is there anything else you would you like to add.... particularly about how we may grow in our witness to God's love and Christ's redeeming work through the power of the Holy Spirit, in the life of all the churches of the Upper Itchen benefice?

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# Non-Electoral Roll (General) Letter / Questionnaire

## Upper Itchen Benefice

### WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK . . . . .

The Church of England welcomes everyone, and has a responsibility for everybody in each parish. You may come to church often, seldom or never at all but the churches in the Upper Itchen Benefice - Cheriton, Bramdean, the Church in the Wood on Bramdean Common, Tichborne, Beauworth, Kilmeston and Hinton Ampner - would very much like to know your views.

We would be most grateful if you could please take time to read and answer the questions below. That way you can be part of a huge process going on throughout the diocese of Winchester called "The Mission Audit." Your views could help shape the future of our historic churches and influence their character. We want to reach out and serve the local community in the best ways we can, so please tell us what you think.

Please indicate if you are a member of another faith or denomination (yes/no) \_\_\_\_\_

*(if yes, please state which)* \_\_\_\_\_

**1. What do you think the church's main priority should be in this community?**

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**2. What kind of services or church activity would be of interest to you?**

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**3. What's your overall impression of church in your area?**

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**4. How much would you miss it if it weren't there?**

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**5. Our villages are changing all the time in terms of population, work patterns etc... and sometimes we don't always identify new needs quickly enough - what do you think is changing and how might the church respond?**

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**6. How might you put into words your own spiritual needs, if any?**

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**7. Would you like to learn more about the Christian faith?**

(yes/no) \_\_\_\_

*(if yes, please add your contact details in the section below)*

**8. Would you like to know more about our Sunday Clubs for under 11's?**

(yes/no) \_\_\_\_

*(if yes, please add your contact details in the section below)*

**9. Is there anything else you'd like to add?**

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*\*If you wish, do add your name and contact details (address/phone number) here:*

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You can find more information, and print off any extra forms, from our website [www.upperitchen.org](http://www.upperitchen.org)

Please return this form before January 1<sup>st</sup> 2008, by sending it freepost in the envelope provided, or by dropping it into The Rectory, (opposite the Flower Pots Inn) in Cheriton.

Thank you from everyone on the Mission Audit working party - Margaret Hendy, Bruce Newson, Debbie Thompson, Maggie MacIsaac, Sarah Lloyd, Chris Jarman and Steve Higgins, and we wish you . . . **"a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."**

## Supplemental Information - Benefice Statistics

This section contains supplementary material relating to church membership and service attendance.

### Church Membership

This is based on the Electoral Roll of each parish:

Beauworth	23
Bramdean	59
Cheriton	88
Hinton Ampner	16
Kilmeston	37
Tichborne	40

In the table below these figures have been translated into averages.

There are few under 30 except for the adult children of church families. There are three churches whose membership includes at least 50% over 60. But some churches are more evenly spread than others. Overall some parishes include significant numbers of younger people.

	<b>16-30</b>	<b>30-45</b>	<b>45-60</b>	<b>60-75</b>	<b>75 plus</b>
<b>Beauworth</b>		22%	26%	43%	9%
<b>Bramdean</b>	7%	34%	24%	27%	8%
<b>Cheriton</b>	12%	22%	23%	33%	10%
<b>Hinton</b>		44%	6%	19%	31%
<b>Kilmeston</b>	5%	27%	27%	30%	11%
<b>Tichborne</b>		25%	17%	42%	16%

## Church Attendance

Below please find a summary of Church Service attendance over the last seven years.

SERVICE ATTENDANCES													
CHURCH	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005		2006		2007
	<i>from Benefice</i>		<i>vacancy</i>				<i>Benefice HC</i>						
	<i>overview</i>		<i>GAH 1 month</i>				<i>introduced</i>						
<b>Beauworth</b>	2 HC(BCP) 8.30	7		8		8	1 HC(BCP) 8.30		9		8		10
	MP(BCP) 11.00	8		8		8							
							HC(BCP) 9.30		17		18		15
	FW 11.00	23		17		27		14	MW	13			
											5th MW	33	35
<b>Bramdean</b>	FW 11.00	40		29		33		23		23		18	21
	FC 11.00	30		20		16	HC(BCP) 11am	11		10	50%	16	14
	MP(BCP) 11.00	12		10		11		13		13	50%	15	16
<b>Cheriton</b>	2 HC(BCP) 9.30	59		51		47		41		34	2 FC	43	45
	2 MP(BCP)+SS 9.30	59		54		42	MP 1 (BCP)	44		37	5th MP (BCP)	40	36
	5th FW 9.30	62		57		46							
					Monthly FW 11am	42		42		39		33	only 6
													3rd special (3)
							EP	18	only 2	26			41
<b>Hinton</b>	HC(Trad) 8.30/11am	9		8		10	5th HC	11		9		8	6
	5th FW 11.00	53		32		53							
							Monthly FW	35		28		26	24
<b>Kilmeston</b>	FW 11.00	43		37		33		25		28		24	20
	HC(BCP) 8.30	12		13		11		7		9	HC(BCP) 11am	20	18
<b>Tichborne</b>	HC(BCP) 8.30	15		12		14		16		14		15	14
	3 EP(BCP) 6.30	20		20		22	2 EP(BCP)	18		15		15	1 EP (BCP)
							5th FW	43		32		23	25

2001 are the figures which appeared on the parish profile during the last vacancy

2002 includes the a period of five months between the two rectors, and already shows a general decline  
It represents the baseline with which later figures may be compared

2003-2007 represents the five full years of the present incumbency  
2004 was the year when the present pattern of services was introduced

## Festival Attendance

Below please find a summary of Festival attendance over the last seven years.

FESTIVAL ATTENDANCES															
EVENT	CHURCH	2001	HC	2002	HC	2003	HC	2004	HC	2005	HC	2006	HC	2007	HC
EASTER	Beauworth	28	23	8	8	15	15	21	19	36	29	19	16	14	13
	Bramdean	120	42	21	21	90	55	78	45	53	35	98	58	76	58
	Cheriton	144	64	105	90	109	95	105	73	68	57	102	94	90	75
	Hinton Ampner			FS 78		6	5								
	Killeston	74	34	35	23	56	30	72	48	74		82	40	49	30
	Tichborne	35	31	19	19	20	20	25	25	23	22	15	15	25	24
HARVEST	Beauworth	33		34		37		19		Bap70		33		34	
	Bramdean	20		33		26		85		72		46		44	
	Cheriton	188		88		64		68		51		49		54	
	Hinton Ampner	120		66		23		43		29		42		30	
	Killeston	63		51		38		45		33		26		32	
	Tichborne	52		42		65		51		55		60		36	
REMEMBRANCE	Bramdean			27		33		65		52		42		44	
	Cheriton	210		162		?		162		130		136		112	
CAROLS	Beauworth	39		51		55		53		50		60		34	
	Bramdean	120		86		80		82		82		120		122	
	Cheriton	137		99		94		96		73		74		63	
	Hinton Ampner			68		48		37		25		28		39	
	Killeston	66		75		64		71		74		85		95	
	Tichborne	60		62		72		70		68		70		61	
CHRISTMAS EVE CHRISTINGLE/CRIB	Cheriton			185		205		180		152		115		93	
FIRST HC	Cheriton			99	89	83	66	84	73						
	Killeston			25	25										
	Hinton Ampner									156	90	165	98	115	79
CHRISTMAS DAY	Beauworth	22	19	26	19	20	15	32	24	33	25	30	17	22	14
	Bramdean	70	25	140	12	81	44	80	40	120	25	130	63	88	48
	Cheriton	294	83	195	34	166	64	126	97	103	82	99	85	98	70
	Hinton Ampner			21	18	18	12	22	16						
	Killeston	68	28	25	25	57	28	68	38	58	34	83	45	74	22
	Tichborne	29	25	33	28	28	28	22	21	31	28	25	21	18	18

The last First Communion at Bramdean was in 2000 - 25 (15 communicants)

The two charts indicating Weekly Average Attendances and Festival Attendances provide an indication of the attendance pattern over recent years. There has been some decline in common which much of the country, but the pattern is not uniform.

## Reflections

- The number of small (largely traditional) services have varied little, and in the case of two (at Beauworth and Kilmeston) changing the time to later in the morning has produced an increase.
- With reference to Cheriton. The Parish Communion has reversed the downward trend of traditional communion, although not all ground has been made up. Newly introduced Family Services were a bonus, and recognition that these were in need of revision has led to the current 3rd Sunday specials are initially encouraging.
- There has been significant decline in the three established Family Services at Hinton, Kilmeston and Bramdean. One factor relating to this is that as existing children have grown older they have not been replaced.
- There is some indication that quarterly services (such as Beauworth and Tichborne, and originally at Hinton) work well as it is possible to put in much extra preparation on an occasional basis.
- There is evidence that festivals produce large numbers in most if not all the churches, but this does not often translate into more regular commitment.
- Benefice Communion, which many value, have experienced some decline since they were introduced, and it may be that introducing a third venue may have had an influence on attendance.

2004 - at Cheriton 73, at Hinton 70,	average total 72
2005 - at Cheriton 69, at Hinton 61,	average total 65
2006 - at Cheriton 72, at Hinton 58, at Bramdean 44,	average total 53
2007 - at Cheriton 57, at Hinton 50, at Bramdean 47,	average total 51

## **Contact Details - Mission Audit Team**

Should you have any queries concerning the Mission Audit Report, please contact one of the Mission Audit Team or the Rector at:

The Rectory  
Cheriton  
Alresford  
Hampshire  
SO24 0QH  
Tel: 01962-771226

## **Upper Itchen Benefice - Mission Audit Team**

Margaret Hendy, Bruce Newson, Debbie Thompson, Maggie MacIsaac,  
Sarah Lloyd, Chris Jarman and Steve Higgins