



Parish Consultation Workshop 2

19 March 2017

Project Roadmap
Notes from Workshop 1
Information on current and potential future activity areas

Project Roadmap

Month	Consultation/ consideration steps	Notes	Phase
January/ February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft consultation plan (facilitator) • Agree consultation plan (SEAT) • Endorse consultation plan (Vestry) • Agree implementation responsibilities (SEAT/ facilitator/ others) • Communicate roadmap to parish 	<p>Also, agree scope and timing of assessment/ investigations work - needs to be reflected in SEAT's overall project plan</p> <p><i>Roadmap and aims and principles could be summarised into a communications piece for parish and community</i></p>	Phase 1
February (second half)	<p>First consultation workshop: Parish Directions <i>To involve: St Albans parish Possibly also other contributors from community Appreciative inquiry approach – our contribution, celebrating our strengths, how can we contribute for the future</i></p>	<p><i>Aim – introduce relevant demographic and other background information Outcome: confirm current and future activity areas for St Albans, with parish Vision, Mission and Values as a key reference point</i></p>	
March (first half)	<p>Second consultation workshop: Activities assessment <i>To involve: St Albans parish and stakeholders (potential focus groups) Information: some basic information about the Eastbourne community and its future would be useful here</i></p>	<p><i>Aim – examine the activities in detail and their risks, priorities, and co-dependencies Outcome: Describe the buildings, facilities and other requirements that result from the priority activities Brainstorm criteria to be considered in solutions</i></p>	
March (second half)	<p>Small group work Initial development of solutions concepts for meeting requirements (brainstorming)</p>	<p><i>Recommended that some pre-work be done – perhaps by SEAT – to brainstorm solutions concepts & develop criteria for assessing</i></p>	Phase 2

April (early)	Third consultation workshop: Solutions concepts Further development and exploration of solutions concepts, leading to a long short list	<i>This could be small groups followed by larger group bringing it together</i> <i>Important to judge the pace so that creative ideas are explored, rather than rejected outright</i>	
April (later)	SEAT prepare initial report on information, consultation and description of options (including long list) and criteria Report completed & circulated by end April	<i>This step is important so that all can see their ideas recognised, in a more digested form that helps make choices. Definitive record of key information</i>	
May (mid)	Fourth consultation discussion/ workshop Review and feedback	<i>Small or large groups?</i> <i>Parish and community</i> <i>Decision group involved</i>	
Late May	Decision Committee meets to short list/ commission detailed assessments	<i>Timescale may depend on issues raised by feedback and/or need for further investigation</i>	Phase 3
	“Short list” is socialised with Diocese		
tbc	Detailed technical costings etc.		
tbc	Decision Committee selects prepared option		

This booklet collects together information and material on current and potential future activity areas for St Alban’s as identified in the first workshop.

This information should be read in the light of the parish Vision, Mission and Values, and the Diocesan Property Principles outlined in the first information booklet.

Hall and Kitchen Use

Hall Use – General

During the two years before its closure in August 2016, 11 groups had used the hall. These included long-term user groups with regular weekly bookings, groups with regular but less frequent bookings and one-off or occasional bookings.

During the years since the hall became available, there has usually been one or two key users and a number of casual users. Both key and casual users have changed over time.

Vestry monitors hall charges and regularly updates charges for use by day, half-day, evening or regular bookings.

Use of main hall by ballet and dance groups

The two most regular recent users of the hall for adult and children's dance, commented favourably on the size of the space, the indoor- outdoor flow, doors able to be open in summer, area of carpet so people could exercise on the floor and the availability of the piano.

Changes they would appreciate, or areas less favourably commented on, were the lack of a sound system (necessary for dance lessons, so having to be brought to each session) and the lighting which could be improved. One adult group commented (a bit tongue in cheek!) on the lack of proximity to coffee.

Both groups commented favourably on the idea of a community centre/hub or multi-purpose space. The possibility of two spaces able to be used together or separately was suggested, where perhaps one could be set up with tables.

It was suggested maybe a staged development could be considered.

Kitchen Use - general

The commercial kitchen attached to the hall was hired by seven groups in the two years up to August 2016. Generally there has been one key tenant, using the kitchen several days or mornings each week. Often there has been a

second key tenant using the kitchen on the balance of the days. Other less regular users have been seasonal (eg honey extraction), or shorter term.

Use of the Kitchen

The present key tenant indicates the kitchen works very well for him. He is a “start up business”, running two days a week and employing local staff. He is planning to expand his business and will shortly be talking to St Alban’s about extending his lease.

He would like to have additional roasting space, but recognises this is unlikely in a commercial kitchen available for general rather than specific business use.

Muritai School

Muritai School has not previously made use of St Alban’s hall facilities. The school has its own hall, which of course is well used during school/term time and is used for after school and holiday programmes. The hall is also well used by the community.

The school does not envisage being a future St Alban’s hall user.

Pop in and Play, Families with Pre-schoolers in Eastbourne

Kate Brownsword:

Positive features of the St Alban's hall

- Easy access to beautiful outdoor space
- Excellent storage space within hall (although cupboard was damp)
- Outdoor storage space
- Good layout with x1 large room and x1 smaller connected room
- Functional bathrooms
- church office on site
- current location at St Ronans hall is echoey, used for storage for other events and not cosy

Negative features of the St Alban's hall

- no permanent fence surrounding outdoor space
- issues with dog poo in the garden because of this
- needs improvements in heating and insulation in winter
- multiuse small kitchen and bathrooms mean children have access to cleaning products and toilet brushes
- location of welcome table awkward because ideal location would block access to hall and bathroom
- if a community hub was created, it could clash with Ministry of Education guidelines about child safety if there were concurrent users of the same facility. Pop 'n Play would need exclusive use of the facility at a set time

Possible future facilities

- a multifaith community centre which provides a facility like the current Eastbourne library where anyone can drop in any time, stay, feel at ease, have something to do there, is safe and inclusive, a space for all the community, provides activities that help to build relationships
- a facility for pre-schoolers in physical proximity to St Albans church.
- Plunket rooms may be a better location for a community hub

Other comments

- Providing activities for pre-schoolers in Eastbourne is important for support and connections especially for families new to the area. Pop 'n Play plays an important role because it is inexpensive and doesn't require a commitment by families. It provides a place of belonging and acceptance and a link to the St Albans faith community.
- Over the past 10 years there has been a noticeable increase in mothers returning to work after one year's maternity leave

Young Adults / Youth

Ana Negrulescu:

Positive features of current hall for use by youth:

- suitable for a large group
- layout good

Negative features:

- back room good size for smaller group but did not have relaxed atmosphere with couches and beanbags

Future facilities:

- could have a stage and microphone

Other comments:

- difficult to build numbers of youth attending youth group
- need a threshold of regular attenders to encourage others to go.

Partnering in Ministry with Wellesley College

Reflections from focus group questions with members of the Senior Leadership Team of Wellesley College.

The Wellesley College vision is that every boy has opportunity to excel in body, mind and spirit. A partnership with St Alban's parish is central to enlivening that vision.

The questions here focus on the connections with St Alban's church, rather than chaplaincy within the College itself.

What is important about a connection with St Alban's parish?

- St Alban's provides a permanently set apart space of worship that we don't have at Wellesley College. Our chapel exists within a multi-use space, which needs to be used for all those different uses within a school day. There is great wealth for us in connecting into a sacred space of spiritual growth that is always set apart for that purpose (this has always been deeply appreciated in the Leavers' Service held at St Alban's). Organisationally and logistically there are challenges with size of church space and the size of community at Wellesley.
- Connecting with a people and place of worship is important for our College life. There is enthusiasm for those links to be stronger. For example, the possibility of students interacting with St Alban's on a far more regular basis, such as daily or weekly connection for different groups of boys to come to St Alban's (as was beginning to happen, prior to the earthquake assessments).
- For many of the boys, coming to St Alban's church may be the only time they have ever been inside a church building. As an Anglican School, it is important that our boys gain an appreciation and understanding of the Anglican tradition.
- A connection with the service heart of the College and the ministry and mission of St Alban's is deeply valued and there is a very strong desire within the Senior Leadership Team for this to grow. For example, boys becoming part of the helpers' team for Take a Break. This is particularly valued in the way the school values of respect and empathy can be enlivened.

What do you think it is important to consider for St Alban's to help foster the connection in education of body, mind and spirit for the boys at Wellesley College?

- Child friendly and primary aged boy friendly environment
- Explicit focus on education that is practically engaging for boys so that we can help translate vision into fun, interactive, hands on constructive experiences for boys (for example, the Anglican Schools conference hosted examples of prayer spaces designed for hands on sacred encounter for primary children).
- There is enthusiasm for stronger shared use of space: seeing the facilities of Wellesley resources used for community hub ideas and connecting with St Alban's mission and ministry in before and after school possibilities.

“There is passion for a deepening integration of Wellesley College with St Alban's parish around a spiritual unity with one purpose and endeavour of spiritual growth, which is anchored to our Anglican foundation, yet open and welcoming to all.” *(Brendan Pitman, Principal)*

What might it mean for St Alban's to be a retreat parish?

Reflections from a focus group including members of Religious Orders and Contemplatives and those who have been leading our retreat hospitality: Reverend Canon Peter Stuart, Tony Martin, June Aslett, Jennie Lovell-Smith, Heather Malloy, Reverend Judith Wigglesworth, Reverend Canon Dr Eleanor Sanderson

To retreat means to set oneself apart in God for periods, sometimes prolonged periods, of abiding. Places of retreat are places dedicated to nurturing that abiding; they are places of particular closeness to God. Retreat places are set apart communities and places of sanctity in which the sacred encounter of God is expected and encouraged. In reflecting on the question of what it might mean for St Alban's to intentionally pursue the development of a retreat vocation and ministry, we reflected together on the following things:

Vocation

A vocation is a calling from God. When we reflect on our vocation we reflect on what we believe God is calling forth from us. We believe that it is important to ask, "is a retreat parish ministry St Alban's vocation?"

As we reflected on this sense of vocation together, both Rev Peter and Rev Ellie attest to experiencing this sense of vocation in a unique way for St Alban's, as distinct from other parishes and ministry settings to which they have belonged. We reflected on some of the historical connections and ministry partnership that existed between Frederick Wallis House (an Anglican retreat ministry centre in Lower Hutt, which closed in 2007) and St Alban's parish.

Hospitality is core to retreat ministry and yet hospitality is a Christian practice to which all are called. Our patron saint, St Alban, inspires a deep reverence for the practice of hospitality.

A retreat parish is a prayerful community of hospitality and sacred connection. It is not a venue to hire!

To be a retreat parish would mean to be a prayerful worshipping community to which others are generously invited to join, for as little, or as long, as they would like. Central to this community is a commitment to set rhythms of corporate prayer and worship, alongside other opportunities for contemplation or spiritual direction. For example, this might look like a team of people who anchor a rhythm of morning and evening prayer, alongside mid-day Eucharist or centering prayer.

We recognise a three-fold direction in retreat ministry.

- 1) We ourselves are people who retreat, who make space for God in our lives in intentional set-apart ways.
- 2) We offer hospitality to others for them to retreat with our normal sacred rhythms.
- 3) We create opportunities for people to experience God in retreat with them (as we have, for example, with our grief and healing retreats and our women in ministry retreat days). We are active and reactive in fostering these connections; requiring a team of hospitality and a team of ministry initiative and support so that we are a resource for our own and others spiritual journeys.

We cannot invite people on a spiritual journey that we ourselves have not committed to travel.

In what way might we speak and understand St Alban's as a Holy place, a place of sacred encounter?

When a place is sanctified it is set apart for God. Our church and its land is blessed as a place set apart for the ministry of God, proclaiming the Gospel of Christ and a place for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The life of God is present when the people of God exist in Christ-centered community; in submission to each other in Christ and in mutual dependency upon the Holy Spirit.

The Holy presence of God within St Alban's is tangible and attested to by people who come here and have been drawn here to encounter God. We recognise moments of Holy encounter, found, for example in kneeling at an altar rail, and yet we also recognise that we are discovering an increasing openness about encountering the Holy in this time of temporary relocation.

We reflected on the strong connection between the healing presence of God in the land, sea and bush and our parish location. To honour the sacredness of God, means to honour and connect to the particular gifts of Creation that imbue our parish.

Part of our vocation of retreat, if we believe that exists, could also be seen as a vocation for healing and restoration; where the children of God are restored to their Divine identity and inheritance. Our proximity to the gifts of Creation are honoured in this light. We are a place of healing for others who might live in places that make connecting with the Creator, Redeemer and Giver of Life more challenging. Our Garden is an important part of our sacred connection and encounter with God.

Is a retreat parish and a contemplative parish the same thing?

We believe that retreat ministry and contemplation overlap, but are not necessarily the same. People are called, not pushed, into contemplation. Contemplation grows in connection with religious orders, who are specialists in prayer. Contemplation requires stillness and silence and a contemplative parish community who are comfortable encountering silence in worship. There can be deep contemplative streams that run within a parish community, but not all in that community may feel called to contemplation. Children as well as adults can experience and enjoy the call of contemplation. Ellie, for example, runs a programme called The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd which is a contemplative programme for young children at Wellesley College.

Practically, what activities and therefore what facilities solutions begin to emerge from these reflections?

- People resource of praying, contemplative hospitality teams flowing from a community and worshipping congregation
- Places for groups to gather of different sizes and for individual retreat needs
- Places for quiet and places for community and connecting with others
- Places for individual retreat needs, such as prayer huts
- Overnight facilities for individuals and groups

Finally, we agreed together that there will always be spiritual opposition to the forming of places and communities of Holy and Sacred encounter. That *spiritual* opposition is to be expected and rebuked.

The present and potential impact of St Alban's ministry: Voices from our Anglican neighbours and Diocese

Ways that people have identified us as blessing their ministry:

- Sharing together in worship
- Resourcing retreats for others (such as the families retreat to Matiu Somes Island where we enabled three families from Taita Pomare to participate)
- "Ongoing phenomenal support to the St Matthew's Op Shop in the form of donated goods and loving support (especially from Elaine Parr). This is of immense value - the quality of the goods is wonderful and the encouragement from Elaine is valued. The outflowing of the Holy Spirit from Eastbourne is hugely appreciated by us all at St Matthew's Taita."
(Rev. Robyn McLay)
- A place for regular accessible retreats and the welcome and prayer received when we have come *(St Michael's Kelburn)*
- Our Archdeaconry and cluster have met a number of times at Eastbourne as a place for retreat and to gather together for events and quiet days
- We have loved having Urban Vision group retreats at and with the parish. We valued the sense of warm hospitality, the interest shown in our lives and ministry, the garden and beauty of the place and input of those leading the retreat including the creating a sacred space for us to rest and listen to God.

In relation to our retreat ministry:

Factors influencing the choice of St Alban's for a retreat location:

1. The sacred place itself (a sense of the Holy Spirit)
2. The geographic location with its beach and bush setting
3. The geographic proximity

4. Relational connections within Archdeaconry and Cluster
5. The warmth of the parish community
6. The location of available spiritual directors

Ways that retreat experience with us could be enhanced:

- I think the experience would be enhanced if there was the availability of say ability to participate in midday prayer book with others (i.e. the ability to fit into a daily rhythm of worship). Having somebody to speak to as a spiritual director and/or to pray with the retreatant would be helpful too.
- Easy AV facility – data projector & pull down screen of 53cm hi res flat screen with sound.
- I guess if there was a granny flat that someone would be willing to spare at times, that could be helpful as a base for a retreatant
- a space for day or overnight retreats as a small group
- spaces for individuals or couples to come and rest overnight and be able to be independent and not have to be relationally engaged.

Is there a need for a community or retreat centre that could be a source of blessing for our shared ministry in the Hutt Valley?

- I am of 2 minds. I presently go to the Southern Star monastery, because I can get away for several nights, the accommodation's 5 star, and one can be involved in an intense rhythm of worship by fitting in with the monks. It is a 3 hour drive however.
- We certainly continue to think of St Albans as a venue for cluster, parish and archdeaconry quiet days. We do have our own All Saints location, which is also suitable for quiet days for up to 20 people
- There is a need for it to be financially affordable for people with little resources.

Reflecting on our ministry within the Hutt Valley context:

How could the people of Eastbourne parish could best serve the needs of the Kingdom of God in our wider community

- Having been involved in mission in Africa and interacting with church planting denominations in New Zealand I think we in the Anglican church can devalue the importance of having a physical church building in Hall to meet to worship in as a community. In other words we can overlook the immense blessing that has been bestowed on us in our tradition because we by and large do have a church building. They are worth their weight in gold in creating and sustaining a believing community (i.e. growing the kingdom of God). Without that hub the energy is all lost and dissipated. Without everything focusing around the worship of and presence of God we are not so much a church but something that resembles more rotary. So I am strongly in the camp of retaining worship centres, already building when the our earthquake risk in the present state. *(Rev James Coleman, Silverstream)*
- I think for Eastbourne to use the gift of their creative and beautiful environment and community with others would be great idea. To hone this by being good at praying with and for people, to offer group retreat spaces of different kinds and to offer a sense of warm welcoming family when you need it (particularly for those without warm welcoming family) would be great.
I also think by being a vibrant whole hearted community of prayer and hospitality to others in the neighbourhood is vital. Engaging neighbours in the wider issues of justice and engagement with the suffering world, offering opportunities for people to bring and use their skills and on the way meeting people's needs as they give and contribute. *(Jenny Duckworth)*

How do we serve the last lost and least best with our resources? Do you have any wisdom, insight from your perspective in our Hutt Valley ministry that you can help to answer this question?

- In my humble opinion the greatest blessing we can bestow on our community is connecting them to God. A healthy believing congregation makes that easiest spring board for connecting with the community and that's best nurtured and facilitated around a physical place like church
(Rev James Coleman, Silverstream)
- Day retreats for our people *(St Matthew's Taita)*
- By partnering relationally with other groups in the Hutt who are in poorer neighbourhoods, building friendships, doing things together. By offering free or cheap retreat spaces for people to come by the beach and bush to rest and renew. We would love to see the parish continue as a place where groups could come to receive refreshment and a held and hosted space of retreat. We would also love to send vulnerable people who need somewhere to come and rest and be sheltered. Sometimes this might look like an affordable place simply to be safely ignored at other times people may need care and attention of different kinds.
(Jenny Duckworth)

What does our Diocese want?

From Bishop Justin:

I encourage you to take seriously the missional imperative of this season in light of the projected future of the church. Ultimately, the questions should be: *how can this opportunity be used to help those who do not yet know Jesus' saving love?* and *how will this project facilitate the theology of transformation that is central to the Gospel?*

We are not here for ourselves but for those who will inherit what we leave behind. We need our church buildings to live beyond our immediate perceived needs and not to be burdens for future generations so I encourage you to be creative around flexible, easily repurposed options.

We also need to think seriously about the potential for the parish to grow into not only the local community but as part of a wider family. Are there creative ways that the parish could work more widely than its immediate geographic environs to bless the wider Hutt Valley with socio-economic problems that are often very different to its own? What does the last, the lost and the least look like for the Eastbourne community? What opportunities are already available for partnership in the local Eastbourne and wider Hutt Valley communities both within the Anglican Diocese and wider ecumenical body of Christ?

I think you've done a great job in your project "road map" to make sure you ask the right questions and are guided towards finding the right answers. What you have done can be a blessing to other parishes who may find themselves facing similar challenging situations.

Please make room to have the hard discussions. They are crucial to authentic and healthy community. Pray and break bread with each other and take every possible opportunity to spend time together in fellowship without agenda.

How do we listen to, and know, what the Lord is saying to us?

We are told that the children of God know the voice of God. Trying to know what God is saying to us, however, is not something that we all feel very confident about. From my experience, the best way to discern the voice of God, is to know the character of God. The more we have spent time learning and being with God, the more able we can recognise when God is speaking into our lives. Here are a few guides for us as we embark on this time of discerning what God is saying to us:

It is easier to hear from Jesus when you are following Jesus and walking closely where Jesus walks

A lot of Jesus' teaching with his disciples happened on the road together, living out the Kingdom of God, not just talking about it. Jesus didn't take his disciples off to a lonely place and explain the kingdom to them from scripture for three years. Jesus lived the kingdom life and taught the disciples about this life (including the way it brings understanding to scripture) in very practical, getting hands dirty kind of ways. The same applies to us.

For example, if we want to know how to enliven God's kingdom for young families in Eastbourne, spending time with our young families, inviting them to dinner, joining in the all age activity on a Sunday morning, are all opportunities where you might be more likely to hear Jesus speaking.

Or if you feel excited about the way our parish has supported St Matthew's Taita in the past, why not go to Taita and walk around the community and in that walk pray to Jesus and ask him to speak to you about His heart for this community and how we could further bless it. There was a craze a little while ago to wear wrist bands inscribed with W.W.J.D. What would Jesus do? Walk in Eastbourne. Come and sit in our church garden. Ask that Question at the same time as getting your hands dirty in community kingdom life and see what happens.

It is easier to hear if we are regularly praying and putting ourselves in a position where we could hear if God chose to speak

Our worlds are very noisy. It is hard to hear if there is no space for a new sound to be played. If we have regular morning and evening times where we come and sit at Jesus' feet, bringing him our hopes and fears, then we are more likely to hear Jesus speaking into our hearts than if we do not regularly do so. In fact, it is often exactly when we come into the regular patterns of prayer that we begin to realise just how much the silence of God is appropriate and that God is not ours to grasp at or pull upon or claim to know or understand.

Those whose lives are shaped by deep patterns of prayer are often the humblest in speaking about what they feel Jesus is saying. That is because we learn to see the echo of ourselves in our leaning into God, we touch our own ego in ways that others might not as easily; we come to think more of God and less of ourselves and therefore have a more patient and gentle conviction of God's call when it is discerned.

We can and should expect generous prophetic blessings from the Holy Spirit

The gifts of prophecy are clearly given to the Body of Christ to support and encourage us in our life and ministry. Prophecy can come in the form of words or pictures or dreams. Because the gift of prophecy is given for the building up of the Body of Christ, it operates safely in cultures of shared discernment and accountability.

For example, someone may receive a picture or a word, this is known as a *revelation*, and then that person shares it with the wider body. The wider body then *interpret* the revelation. Then in their structures of wisdom and eldership, that interpretation is discerned for *application*. So the prophetic operates in three phases: revelation, interpretation and application. Those phases involve the whole of the body of Christ and we submit to each other in that process. If you feel as though you have received a revelation, then it is appropriate to come and share that with our church elders who will then guide the interpretation and application.

When we ask a new question of discernment, we do so standing on the gifts and wisdom of our past

In our Anglican tradition, we speak of having four legs of solidity to hold us: scripture, tradition, reason and experience. New revelations, and insights, and calls from God can be tested and affirmed by the resonance that they have with those four solid pillars. This means that we have a solid foundation on which to build the future. God is always re-creating the world, but God is always God and we have a solid base in which we collectively perceive the character of God and therefore the voice of God's creative life-giving Spirit calling newness forth from us.

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'Little Blue' joining in last week's meeting of SEAT....