

**St Albans
Consultation on Building and Facilities options**

Notes from workshop 1 – 26 February 2017

On 26 February, about 45 people from St Albans parish gathered at the Wellesley School hall to progress the next steps in their consultation on building and facilities options

These notes record main points from the discussion



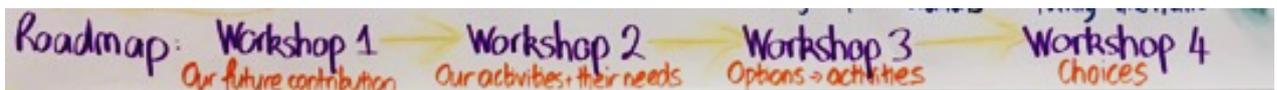
Agenda for the workshop



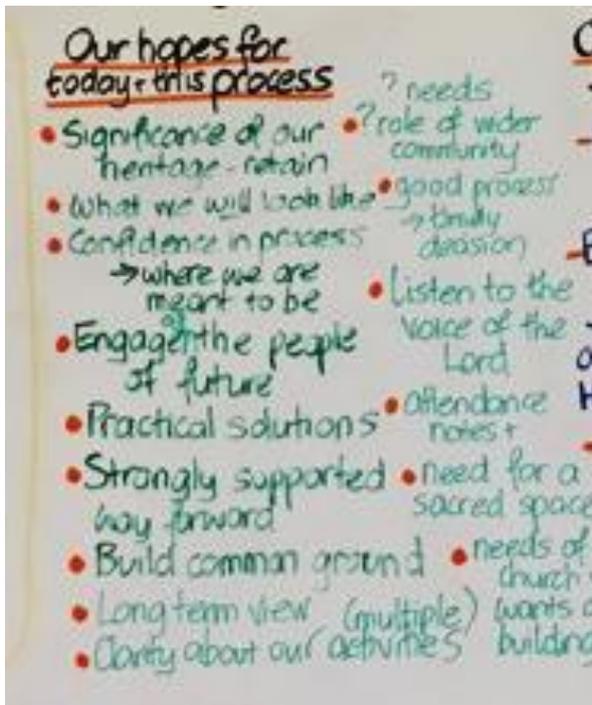
After opening with prayer, the workshop explored:

- People's hopes for the day
- The place and contribution of St Albans in the Eastbourne community and beyond
- Our vision of our best possible future
- The shape of the future Eastbourne community
- Our main questions about options and pathways for the future

We noted that the workshop is the first step in a consultation process that will involve a series of workshops

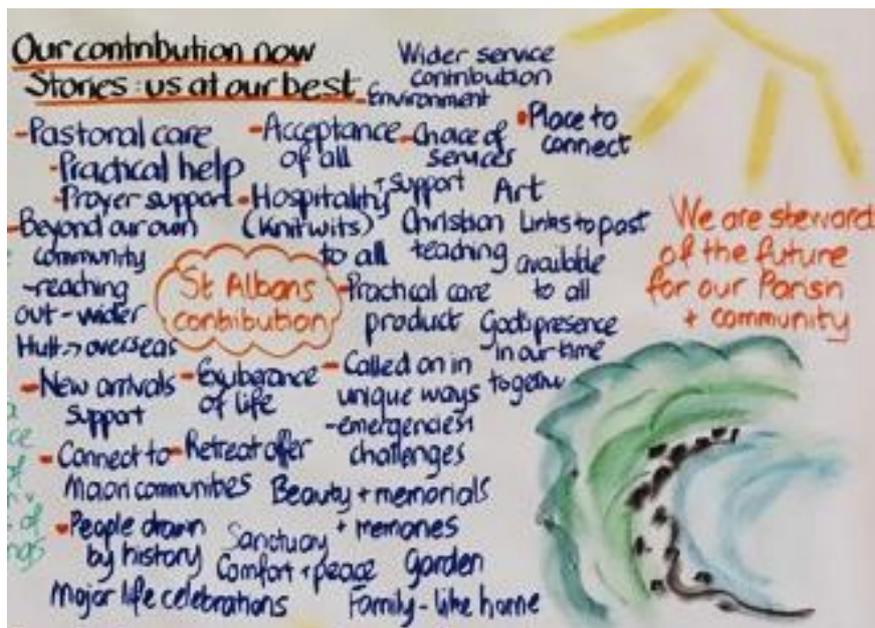


Our hopes for today – commonalities and diversity



- Significance of our heritage – retain
- What we will look like
- Confidence in process- where we are meant to be
- Engage all the people of the future
- Practical solutions
- Strongly supported way forward
- Build common ground
- Long term view
- Clarity about our multiple activities
- Needs and role of wider community
- Good process – timely decision
- Listen to the voice of the Lord
- Attendance notes
- Need for sacred space
- Needs of church v wants of buildings

Our contributions: stories of St Albans at our best



We described the positive contribution that St Albans makes through stories about highlights of recent time.

The stories were wide ranging, and many of them reflected personal experiences of the positive impacts of being part of the St Albans community.

Highlights included:

- Pastoral care: practical help and prayer support
- Beyond our own community
- Reaching out - wider Hutt Valley – overseas
- New arrivals support
- Connect to Maori communities
- People drawn by history
- Major life celebrations
- Exuberance of Life
- Acceptance of all
- Hospitality (knitwits)
- Choice of services
- Place to connect
- Christian links to past
- Retreat offer
- Sanctuary/comfort/peace
- Beauty/memorials/memories
- Garden
- Teaching available to all
- Practical care
- Product
- God' presence in our time together
- Called in unique ways
- Emergencies challenges
- Wider service contribution
- Environment
- Family – like home

Recognising the highlights, and the current process, the workshop recognised that WE ARE STEWARDS FOR THE FUTURE FOR OUT PARISH AND OUR COMMUNITY

We reminded ourselves that the process involves exploring:

OUR CONTRIBUTION - OUR ACTIVITES - WHAT'S NEEDED/OPTIONS--CHOICES ABOUT OUR FACILITIES

The future: options for our best contribution looking out 20 years

Because the choices made now will create opportunities for the next generation, the workshop explored the future by considering “what will a successful faith community of 2037 look like”.



The group worked in small teams to come up with specific descriptions of what would be happening, what the community would be like, what people would be doing.

The ideas fell into some broad groupings, though we noted that many ideas were interconnected.

The ideas included:

Active involvement of the 30-50 years group (we would be an all age community)

- Vision: to target 30-50-year-old parents
- More involvement with young families
- All ages; a sustainable community

Positive pastoral presence

- A church that continues pastoral with practical help and offers sanctuary
- Outreach: community hospitality/afterschool care for working parents
- Meeting pastoral care needs superbly-relationships

Place and sanctuary

- Always a need for sanctuary
- A stable sanctuary of beauty and grace and God's presence in a continually shaky world – global warming
- Memories of celebrations
- Residential retreat centre/sanctuary hosted by church members. – hospitality team –with rhythm of prayer
- Successful seminars with accommodation available
- Promoting St Albans as special wedding venue
- From experience of meeting in school halls and small group of people still met for over 50 years but it was not a working church.

Christian community

- The worship to be recognisably Anglican worship
- The possibility of an ecumenical church in Eastbourne

- Church “without walls “– welcoming
- We need also to accept what we do not have and learn from others outside.
- To see a variety of ages/stages/included/involved in our worship
- A whole lot of disciples making new disciples
- Ecumenical community in Eastbourne
- Each person’s spiritual gifts be mobilised and utilised
- Every family in the Bays is connected with a Christian family
- Focus on Christian teaching
- Offering a variety of Christian worship eg contemplative/reflective/louder music/praise and worship to connect with different needs and desires
- Develop series of mini leaders to head activities and to relieve vicar and other staff.
- Vibrant Christian fellowship 24/7 daily rhythm of prayer, community
- People drawn in to the reality of God’s love for them by our (St Albans) presence.
- Being a beacon of hope for all and everyone and being helpful for the community in any way necessary

Community hub

- A place that feels like a drop in centre.
- St Albans location as vibrant community hub
- Multi-functional attractive venue with sacred space
- Plus more eg café – or place to make teas /coffee, counselling room, library, play apparatus
- Church more accessible and used daily for variety of activities
- A vibrant place or hub that draws people in.
- St Albans part of a vibrant community

Community continuity

- Importance of our own building for sharing weddings, funerals, baptisms, a place to always come back to,
- Inter faith community – building, opportunities to come together in common purpose/dialogue
- Making God’s love understandable to those outside the faith community by living lives of love (actions and words)
- Services at home and on the big screen. More by technical means than by word of mouth. We need to move with the times.

Reaching older people

- Allow older people to remain in the community in an integrated way
- Church-led community based elder care/pastoral
- Filled with a mix of all ages
- Members of our faith community, caring and praying for and with others especially at “end of life” stages, affirming the dignity of life, recognising God’s presence and anointing

Our questions

Having heard the workshop's aspirational views of a flourishing future (ideal future) and some of the changes and factors affecting the Eastbourne community of the future, the workshop went on to discuss "what do we need to explore to progress our thinking".



The following questions were identified as topics to be worked through to clarify what activities St Albans should aspire to be part of in the future. Some of the questions asked were also about the consultation process, and what needs to be included.

- What really are the needs of others?
- What about those not here eg young people, those not of faith community?
- If we choose a "direction", how would we staff it?
- What facilities would we need to achieve our expectations, and those of others?
- What will be the place of Christian education in schools?
- How do we relate to "alternative spirituality"?
- How do we best communicate with others?
- How do we grow leaders?
- How do we integrate our faith community with the wider community? (outreach)
- What is a "hub"?
- How can we attract others?
- What more should we/can we do to reach the lost the last and the least (lonely?)
- Can a community hub and a place of sanctuary co-exist?
- What does sanctuary mean?
- What would the diocese ask us to do?
- How can we" keep "our older people here?
- Who can we partner with?
- HOW DO WE LISTEN TO GOD'S NUDGES AS WE NAVIGATE/WHAT DOES GOD WANT?

The meeting concluded with an update on next steps, and a proposed second workshop for Sunday 19 March, which would focus on needs that we would want the parish to meet and the activities that would be part of doing this.

WORKSHOP 1	WORKSHOP 2	WORKSHOP 3	WORKSHOP 4
Our future contribution	our activities/their needs	options + activities	choice
