

The 453 Churches Reorganisation



Background - Why are we having this discussion?

When I was appointed to our 5 Churches in May 2011, I was appointed as Priest-in-Charge; as was my predecessor Steve Osman when he came to Gotham in 2000, and in 2002 when he was given responsibility for the other 4 Churches. Priest-in-Charge is the title for a minister who is appointed to parishes which are to undergo some kind of reorganisation; in our case the Bishop wants us to decide how our 5 Churches are to be organised and administered under one Rector.

To aid this process, 4 possible options are presented, and we are looking to understand the pros and cons for each option and how they might help or hinder growth in each community. These options will be discussed by the Churchwardens and PCCs initially but there will also be a number of opportunities for the wider Church community to give their views over the coming year. There will inevitably be a number of questions that arise as we go through this process and answers will need to be sought. Eventually we will need to take a vote on our preferred option which will then be put forward to the Bishop and if he is in agreement the legal process will then begin with the Church of England nationally to bring that into effect. This is not going to be a quick process.

Please be assured that the aim of this reorganisation is not to seek to close any church building (the Bishop has publicly stated, as have I, that we do not want to see any Churches closed) but to consider how we might be best organised in order to release resources, including time and energy, to help us in our vision to see all 5 of our Churches grow; and so it would be helpful for you to consider how each option helps or hinders our 5 year vision and beyond; a summary of which is included.

Whilst we are asking you to prayerfully consider the pros and cons for each option please do make sure to include any other questions or comments regarding each option that you have. Please include your name, in case we need to clarify anything with you, and please let us have your initial thoughts and comments by 1st August 2016. At some later point I will meet with the Bishop to clarify the legal process we need to follow and there will then be further rounds of discussion before we can even consider reaching a conclusion.

Please do pray for this process and for the discussions throughout the year that we would be guided by the Holy Spirit to discern the right way forward and that in all our conversations that we would exercise grace and patience towards one another.

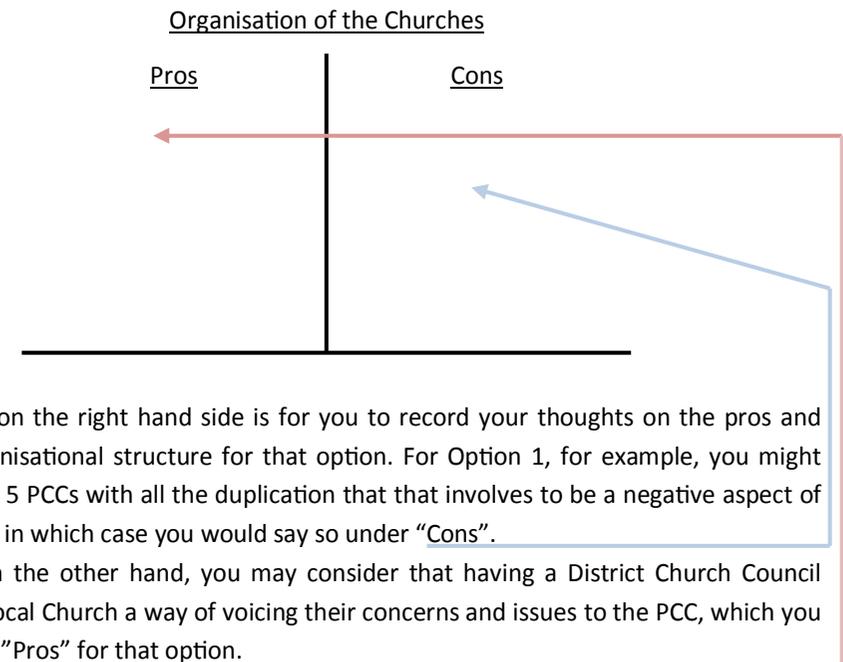
If you have any questions or concerns then please do come and speak to me.

Thank you.

Richard

How to use these sheets

You should have 4 sheets giving some basic detail on each option on the left hand side with space for you to write what you consider to be the pros and cons for that option on the right. You can cut the sheet along the dotted line and just hand in the right hand side so that you can keep the left hand side for information, or you can hand the whole sheet in.



The top section on the right hand side is for you to record your thoughts on the pros and cons of the organisational structure for that option. For Option 1, for example, you might think that having 5 PCCs with all the duplication that that involves to be a negative aspect of the organisation, in which case you would say so under "Cons".

For Option 4, on the other hand, you may consider that having a District Church Council (DCC) gives the local Church a way of voicing their concerns and issues to the PCC, which you would put under "Pros" for that option.

The bottom section on the right hand side is for you to record your thoughts on the pros and cons of how that organisational structure helps or hinders growth; what opportunities for growth might that option give rise to (the pros) and what opportunities might be missed with that option (the cons).

5 Year Vision (2013 - 2018)



In 2012 we took some time to construct a 5 year vision for our 5 Churches. Whilst there are things that are specific to each Church, there are also some common elements which I have reproduced here.

Research has shown that there are 10 factors which are essential if Churches are to grow:

1. having a leader who has a clear vision for the direction of the Church and is not prevented from making changes by factions within the Church.
2. contemporary worship that is culturally relevant so that services are more accessible and less alienating to those who have not grown up in Church.
3. having a leadership team not a one man show.
4. having caring relationships with one another that are genuine.
5. where children and youth work is a priority, and services are family friendly.
6. regular targeted outreach into the local community through evangelistic courses and direct involvement in the community.
7. a reliance on the Holy Spirit through prayer, and an expectation that God will make a difference to people's lives through the preaching of His Word and prayer.
8. strongly Biblical preaching that is relevant, applied to daily life, and non-intellectual.
9. staff recruited in order to resource further growth, and adding resources.
10. lay people mobilised to use their gifts in the service of God and His Church.

Taken from "Church Growth Dissertation", Melvin Pereira, May 2004, available from The Sheffield Centre, Church Army's research unit.

Our 5 Churches all agreed that:

We want to see our Churches as communities of fully devoted, deeply spiritual Christ followers thirsting to develop an ever deeper relationship with God.

John 15:1-8

We want to see every member of our Churches understanding their God-given gifts and using them joyfully to serve in our Churches.

1 Corinthians 12

We want our Churches to be places where feedback is always constructive and where the truth is always spoken, and received, in love.

2 Timothy 2:22-25

We want every member of our Churches to be fully surrendered to the Holy Spirit and totally committed to making disciples of all nations.

Matthew 28:18-20

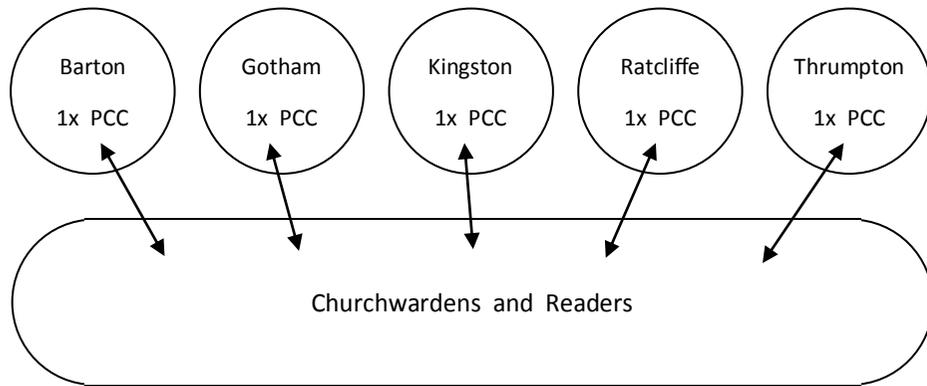


We want to be a body of people of every age, race and colour putting their relationship with God before all else and desiring to meet together regularly to share in worship that glorifies God and draws us to each other.

Hebrews 10:19-25

We were then encouraged to consider how we can play our part in helping to bring this vision to fruition.

Option 1 - Remain as we are, as 5 separate parishes with no change.



With this option, whilst we would become a United Benefice under one Rector, we would continue our current practice of working together informally with Churchwardens and Readers meeting together once a quarter to discuss patterns of services and other matters that affect us as a group. The East Leake United Benefice is organised as 5 separate parishes.

With this option we would still continue to have in each parish:

- 1x PCC
- 2x Churchwardens
- 1x Treasurer
- 1x PCC Secretary
- 1x Electoral Roll Officer

Each parish would continue to be responsible for its own finances and fabric and, as now, is largely independent of the other 4 churches except where they have decided to co-operate together on matters of mutual concern. Such matters tend to be generally, but not exclusively, discussed in the Churchwardens and Readers meeting.

Name: _____

Option 1 - Remain as we are, as 5 separate parishes with no change.

Organisation of the Churches

Pros

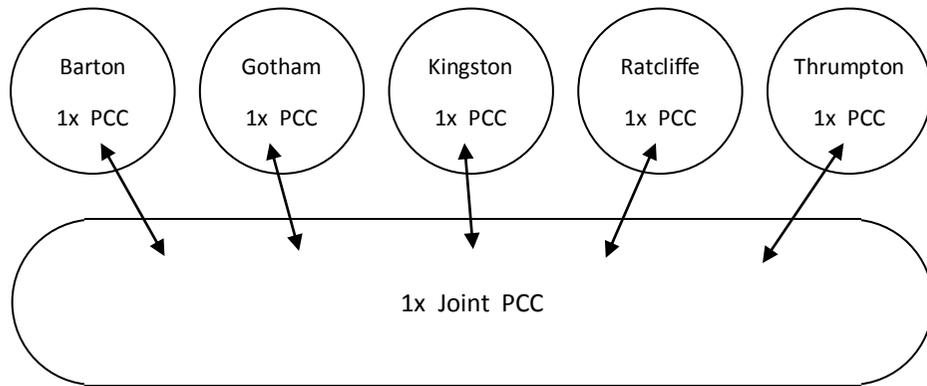
Cons

Opportunities for growth with this option

Pros

Cons

Option 2 - Remain as we are, as 5 separate parishes but establish a Joint PCC.



With this option we would become a United Benefice under one Rector but we would formalise our current informal arrangements through the creation of a Joint PCC to which each PCC would delegate certain powers and authority to; for example patterns of services, Messenger, the web site, etc.; things that affect us as a group of parishes or where economies of scale might benefit us as a group, insurance as one example. With this option there would need to be a discussion later on as to who will be on the Joint PCC and which PCC functions are delegated to it.

With this options we would still continue to have in each parish:

- 1x PCC
- 2x Churchwardens
- 1x Treasurer
- 1x PCC Secretary
- 1x Electoral Roll Officer

Each parish would continue to be responsible for its own finances, or it may be possible (because it is a PCC) for the Joint PCC to assume responsibility for the finances, thereby only requiring one Treasurer instead of 5, but, for example, to keep the money from each Church restricted for that Church. It may also be possible to have all the money in a single account to be used as required by all 5 Churches under the responsibility of the Joint PCC. There would need to be a later discussion on which PCC functions are delegated to the Joint PCC - finances would be one of those discussions.

Name: _____

Option 2 - Remain as we are, as 5 separate parishes but establish a Joint PCC.

Organisation of the Churches

Pros

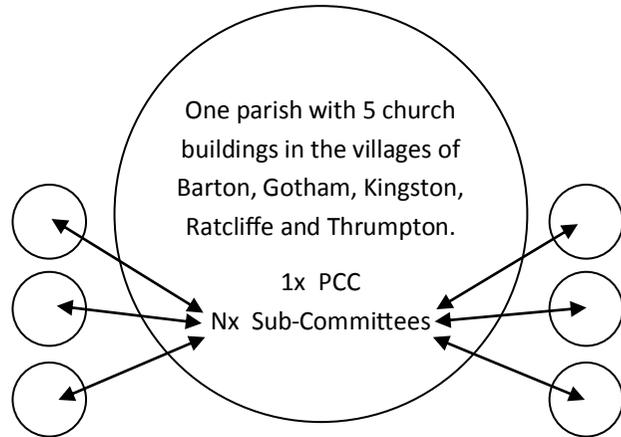
Cons

Opportunities for growth with this option

Pros

Cons

Option 3 - Become one parish with one PCC and sub-committees



With this option the current parish boundaries between our 5 churches would cease to exist and we would be organised as one large parish covering all 5 villages.

With this option we would have:

- 1x PCC with Nx Sub-Committees
- 2x Churchwardens
- 1x Treasurer
- 1x PCC Secretary
- 1x Electoral Roll Officer

whose role is to organise and administer all 5 villages with the aid of a number of sub-committees which would be given responsibility for the various functions of the PCC, some of which could be mandated, such as finance and fabric, whilst others created and dissolved as required by the PCC. There would need to be a later discussion on which sub-committees are required and how they will operate. With this option there would clearly need to be quite a bit of delegation; so for example, the 2 Churchwardens could delegate some of their powers and responsibilities to one or more Deputy Churchwardens in each Church. There would need to be a discussion on which responsibilities are delegated and how the finances of the Churches are to be held centrally by the PCC.

It is important to note that with this option the members of the PCC, and sub-committees, although they may reside in a village, they are not there to promote their particular village/ church building but are to take responsibility for all 5 villages/buildings and to consider the welfare and growth of the parish as a whole over all 5 villages. This is a very different way of operating than our Churches are used too.

Name: _____

Option 3 - Become one parish with one PCC and sub-committees

Organisation of the Churches

Pros

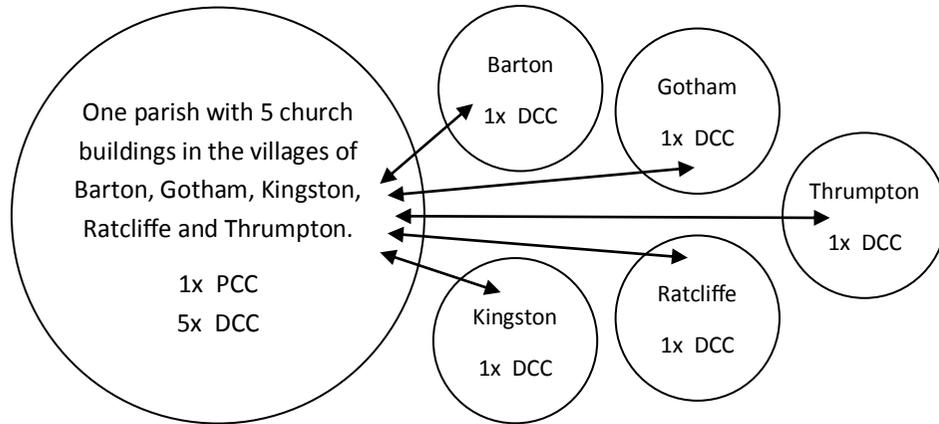
Cons

Opportunities for growth with this option

Pros

Cons

Option 4 - Become one parish with one PCC and five DCCs



With this option, as with Option 3, the current parish boundaries between our 5 churches would cease to exist and we would be organised as one parish covering all 5 villages.

With this option we would have:

- 1x PCC assisted by 5x DCCs
- 2x Churchwardens
- 1x Treasurer
- 1x PCC Secretary
- 1x Electoral Roll Officer

whose role is to organise and administer all 5 villages and not to focus solely on their own village/building.

With this option the current PCC in each parish would be replaced with a District Church Council (DCC) which would have various PCC functions delegated to them. In this way, whilst the PCC has responsibility for all 5 villages in a single large parish, the concerns and needs of each village would be dealt with directly by the DCC in that village.

As with Option 3, Deputy Churchwardens are likely to be needed to assist the 2 Churchwardens; and, whilst it would be the PCC who would assume responsibility for the finances of all 5 Churches, there would need to be a later discussion on how those monies are handled. There would also need to be discussions on who will be on the DCCs and which PCC functions are delegated to them.

Name: _____

Option 4 - Become one parish with one PCC and five DCCs

Organisation of the Churches

Pros

Cons

Opportunities for growth with this option

Pros

Cons