

OUR CHURCH PLAN

Smarden and Biddenden Benefice

July 2016

Our Church

Our Church is first and foremost seeks to be a community of Christian Action.

Our Challenges

Chaos. Busy lives, full of distraction, mean we all struggle to make time and space for reflection and nurture. When do we find time for worship – we need to make it as powerful and personal as possible.

Isolation. Rural living means that transport and communication can be hard to organise it can be tough for some people to make friends and find support.

Scarcity. As a benefice, we must support each other by sharing resources across two villages – especially our time and expertise - while respecting individual village identities. We have limited resources and limited money.

Our Continuing Vision

We will grow a Church that is **open** to all.

We will develop and display **confidence** as Christians.

We will seek to **serve** the community

Our Mission

To provide a warm **welcome (W)**

To support each other in our **spiritual** growth **(S)**

To be visible, capable and available as Christian helpers in our **community (C)**

To encourage the spiritual development of **young people. (Y)**

Biddenden's Church Plan Objectives for 2016

- › *Finance, remove the deficit.*
- › *2. Encourage establishment of a Friends Group*

- › 3. Continue development of Active Church, and ministry for children.
- › 4. Continue development of lay ministry.
- › 5. Making better use of the Tilden Patterson space.

The Church Plan August 2015

What needs to Happen?	Alignment What mission goals does it support?		Status Red, Amber, Green? (Reviewed Quarterly)	Owner Who is responsible?	Outcomes Key Achievements to date - and impact?
1. To adapt our forms of worship to suit our Church's changing needs – including connecting outside the church buildings.					
Host a benefit retreat	S, C		Amber,		
Simplify service times	W, S		Amber,		
Develop lay preaching in Smarden & Biddenden.	W, S		Green		
Trial lay led services in Smarden.			Red		
Extend Active Church to Biddenden	Y		Green		
Host outdoor services	W, C, S, Y		Red		
Encourage young people	Y, W		Red		

to participate through serving, choir, collection-carrying, reading and even leading services					
Provide Christian introduction courses	S, C		Red		
Develop / grow the existing House learning group.	S, C		Amber		
Experiment with non pulpit preaching	S, W		Green		
2. To use our talents to make worship ever more accessible and engaging – acknowledging that we are a diverse community.					
Provide training to lay worship leaders including Active Church leaders	S, Y		Partially completed		
Review the libraries and display resources more effectively, including childrens' materials	W, Y		Amber		
Review and revise Church welcome packs for village newcomers	W		Amber		
Create materials for 'Active Homes' [i.e. active church at home,	Y		Red		

for non Active Church weeks, or for missed weeks					
Encourage personal spiritual growth	Y, S, W, C		Amber		
Promote Reflective material such as Bible Study notes and prayer material to congregations	S,		Amber		
Continue to develop the excellence of parish magazines	S, W, C, Y		Green		
3. To make our churches ever more vibrant spaces in which people want to spend time – not just on Sundays.					
Ensure that fair trade coffee and foods are bought consistently featured strongly	W		Amber		
Sides people to encourage people to front.	W, S		Amber		
Plan to install Glass inner doors in churches	W		Red		
Trial nave-altar services	W, S		Red		
Improve our prayer spaces	W, S		Amber		

Maintain physical infrastructure	W		Amber		
Review service booklets			Amber		
4. To foster stronger connections to other community groups – including other churches.					
Review the ongoing need for food and care within the villages and determine the potential role of our church, and any role for shared worship within that care.	C		Amber		
Assess the potential crisis role of specific church volunteers and teams and develop plans as needed.	C		Amber		
Develop an ‘ecumenical’ plan to share resources and learning with other churches, including faith insights and worship formats.	C, S		Red		
Offer a summer youthcare facility in conjunction with other churches.	Y, C		Red		
Test new community social activities	C		Amber	Julie Lupton	Advert placed in parish magazine
Ensure that church finances are on a stable	W, C, S, Y		Amber		

and sustainable footing to allow for delivery of our plan.					