

# 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?
<b>1. To adapt our forms of worship to suit our Church's changing needs – including connecting outside the church buildings.</b>					
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		<b>Red</b>		
Develop / grow the existing House learning group.	S, C		<b>Amber</b>		
Experiment with non pulpit preaching	S, W		<b>Green</b>		
<b>2. To use our talents to make worship ever more accessible and engaging – acknowledging that we are a diverse community.</b>					
Provide training to lay worship leaders including Active Church leaders	S, Y		<b>Partially completed</b>		
Review the libraries and display resources more effectively, including childrens' materials	W, Y		<b>Amber</b>		
Review and revise Church welcome packs for village newcomers	W		<b>Amber</b>		
Create materials for 'Active Homes' [i.e. active church at home,	Y		<b>Red</b>		

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		
<b>3. To make our churches ever more vibrant spaces in which people want to spend time – not just on Sundays.</b>					
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		
<b>4. To foster stronger connections to other community groups – including other churches.</b>					
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.					