

New churches on the cards

AMBITIOUS plans to plant new churches in Wecock and the proposed new development to the west of Waterloooville are part of the Havant deanery's Kairos vision.

The Cowplain, Hart Plain and Denmead cluster suggested employing an expert in church planting, who could work in Wecock, then switch to Waterloooville.

Those parishes also suggested employing two lay people for five years as community liaison officers, based at Wecock; an evangelistic carol concert featuring the speaker J John this Christmas; and a 'listening service' based at the Queenswood GPs' surgery, which would involve 30 volunteers being trained in Christian listening.

Another idea is a youth bus, which would serve as a mobile youth café to serve youths who currently have nowhere to meet. There would also be an expansion of the work at the Wecock community flat.

Included in the Kairos plan are ideas to develop the 'Messy Church' after-school club held monthly at St Wilfrid's, Cowplain, and the 'Thirst Day Club', an after-school event at Westbrook Hall in Cowplain.

The Northern cluster, which includes Blendworth, Chalton, Idsworth, Catherington and Clanfield, hopes to improve publicity, develop the pastoral care within their existing congregations and fringe members, and to create a voluntary group that could maintain links with those living in remote areas.



The Wecock community flat was opened by the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, in 2002

Havant

Worshippers would like to create a community café to provide a friendly meeting place for people in Catherington and Clanfield, launch a coffee morning in Blendworth, Idsworth and Chalton, hold more music concerts at St Michael's, Chalton, and provide toilet facilities at St Hubert's, Idsworth.

The Bedhampton, Leigh Park and Rowlands Castle cluster suggested a two-part project in which they survey the views of the local community, and then make changes within their churches to enable more community members to engage with Christianity.

And the Portsdown, Crookhorn, Waterloooville and Purbrook cluster envisages a partnership with Havant Borough Council to identify appropriate community projects

to contribute to. Also planned are co-operation across the cluster, including sharing in worship and fellowship; running appropriate training courses; and publishing contact details for relevant community services and organisations.

And Emsworth, Havant and Hayling Island worshippers want to appoint a youth and children's worker to provide Godly play, outreach and schools work across the cluster.

They also suggest improving their ministry of welcome, expanding their pastoral teams to visit the housebound or ill, and improving communication so local authorities and agencies know what the church can offer and congregations know how to get involved in the community.

The deanery plan involves creating a rural dean's support team so that a half-time clergy post can be saved. Some consultation will be needed before more suggestions can be made.

Flagship project: part one is done

IT'S been a flagship project, echoing Kairos thinking from the start. And the first phase is now complete.

The ambitious vision to convert St Cuthbert's Church, Copnor, into a GPs' surgery, community rooms and a new worship area has taken a massive step forward.

Doctors, nurses, reception staff and patients from the nearby Baffins surgery moved into their new premises at the end of May, as the first third of the £3.4m building project was completed.

Their three-storey complex is now housed where the church's old chancel and lady chapel used to be at the north end of the building. The new surgery is double the size of its previous premises on nearby Hayling Avenue. It boasts a total of 15 rooms where patients can be examined and treated, compared with seven in the previous building.

There is an impressive blend of the old and the new, with newly-plastered walls interspersed with brick arches and columns from the original building. And a new glass foyer has been created at the surgery's entrance on Lichfield Road.

Bishop Kenneth will open the new surgery in a ceremony on July 18, commending the project for pioneering the concepts of serving the local community and working in partnership that have been at the heart of Kairos thinking.



Practice manager Mike Turner said: "There had been a surgery in Baffins since the 1920s and it moved to its previous address about 30 years ago. It was about the size of a three-bedroomed house. Despite two major extensions, we only had five consulting rooms and two treatment rooms, serving 8,000 patients. We had to have a rota for certain rooms, so that when a doctor went out on visits, a health visitor might take over his room while he was out!

"We'd outgrown it by the late 1990s, and the idea of moving into the church came about when one of our partners was talking to the vicar. It was a God-ordained, chance conversation.

"Our practice has always had a Christian ethos. The partners are all Christians, so the idea of coming into the church had a huge attraction. We now have double the space, including areas for staff to relax in, as well as complying with disability discrimination legislation.

"Most of the patients' comments have been: 'Wow! It's big!', and there have been lots of positive things said about the blend of old and new. It's also given us a chance to revamp our professionalism, with new uniforms and a better image."

The GPs will now sell their old building, which will be converted into housing.



Staff from the Baffins surgery outside their new, modern glass entrance

The new surgery was developed by Primary Health Care Centres, a company specialising in building new clinical premises, who have a long lease agreement with the church and rent the surgery to the practice. This provides income to the church, while providing the actual finance to develop the premises.

The first phase of the project has also included the creation of a parish hall above the surgery, which is now the new home for The Corner Pre-School. It will expand its provision from 18 children per session to 24.

The second phase of the project will involve demolishing the existing church hall, which will be converted into flats for the over-55s. And work to create a four-storey complex in the middle section of the 1915 building, and a worship area for 200 people in the south section of the building should all be completed by Christmas 2006. The church needs to raise only another £500,000 to complete the project.

Worshippers will continue to meet for Sunday services at Langstone Junior School until building work is finished.

Parish may be re-drawn

KAIROS plans in the Petersfield deanery could ultimately involve a re-drawing of diocesan boundaries.

It might prove to be better to cluster worshippers in Whitehill with their neighbours in St Marks, Bordon in the Guildford diocese, rather than with St Matthew's, Blackmoor. It depends on exactly where new homes are built over the next few years – and that depends on which pieces of army land are sold in the area.

It's one of the ambitious plans put forward by the Blackmoor, Liss and Liphook cluster, which also involves designing events for wedding couples and activities for parents and toddlers in Blackmoor and Whitehill, and maintaining a St Matthew's presence on community groups in Bordon.

In Liphook and Bramshott, the plans include reviewing baptismal practice to enable unchurched families to get involved in church life, expanding youth and children's work, and developing the church centre in Liphook for community activities.

And in Liss, the aims are to provide meaningful worship for all sections of the community, develop a more comprehensive scheme for welcome, nurture and support of families, and to engage with the local com-

Petersfield

munity through a network of 'street wardens' and a Christian listening service.

In the Greatham, Empshott, Hawkley, Steep, Froxfield and Privett cluster, the priorities are to break down the barriers between church and community, make churches more welcoming and attractive, to expand every-member ministry and nurture links with the local C of E school.

The plans in the Petersfield, Buriton and Sheet cluster include mutual support and the development of existing links with Ghana and Sweden.

Putting the maintenance of St Mary's Church on a sound footing, developing the role of the laity to provide administration support and pastoral care, and outreach via the parish magazine, special services and the school are Buriton's plans.

And St Peter's, Petersfield, will look at ways to share buildings and facilities with other denominations, improve its support for the bereaved, housebound, disabled, sick, elderly and lonely, formalise its system of offering lifts to those without cars, and broaden existing outreach initiatives.

Meanwhile, improvement of communications, creating toilet facilities in church, more support for ecumenical projects and

providing courses to help outreach and evangelism are on the cards at St Mary Magdalen Sheet.

And the plans for the West Meon, Langford, East Meon and Langrish cluster include better provision for families and children, the development of non-Eucharistic and midweek worship, and the better use of space within the church at East Meon. The creation of a meeting space in the north aisle and a welcome area at Langrish is also planned.

Across the whole Petersfield deanery, worshippers want to develop better communications between churches, offer more training and resources for lay and ordained people and ensure better co-operation on resources and worship patterns.

The deanery hopes to identify and foster five full-time ministers, five non-stipendiary ministers and five Readers by 2010, and doesn't envisage reducing its number of clergy before that date. Clergy and synod will also discuss the possibilities for creating group ministries, and hope to develop links with west Africa further.

Five lay people from the deanery have also submitted suggestions for changes at diocesan level that have been considered by the diocesan structures review group.

Slashing red tape is on the agenda

AMONG the ideas from the Bishop's Waltham deanery are plans to slim down church bureaucracy by reorganising three parishes that already share a priest (Droxford, Meonstoke-with-Corhampton and Exton) into a single parish.

Other Kairos proposals from the Hambleton, Soberton-Newton and Bridge cluster include the re-ordering of Exton church, co-ordination of youth ministry and working together to deepen adult faith. There's also a suggestion about working across deanery boundaries with the parishes of West Meon and Warnford.

The Botley, Bishop's Waltham and Upham cluster wants to help local schools, provide facilities for the carers for the disabled, and provide parenting courses in Bishop's Waltham. A feasibility study into providing facilities for teenagers there – and perhaps across the whole deanery – is also part of the plan.

Engagement with children and young people, through providing church crèches and per-

Bishop's Waltham

haps employing a youth worker, is top of the agenda in Botley, Curdridge and Durley. Improvements to the community's use of church buildings, the ministry of welcome, pastoral care, communications, and worshippers' spiritual lives are also suggested.

And the parishes want Christian basics courses, more systematic teaching on Sundays and in home groups, and will look again at providing styles of worship relevant to the whole community.

In the Shedfield and Swanmore cluster, Shedfield's plans include creating more reflective services, providing practical support for children to develop faith, providing courses in parenting, Christian basics and confirmation, and developing further links with schools.

And at Swanmore, the aim is to help meet community needs by engaging with teenage culture, providing affordable credit facilities, developing pastoral care and supporting family life.

The parish also hopes to foster vocations, deepen the church's spiritual life and respond to ecological challenges, as well as developing collaboration with parishes in Shedfield and Wickham.

And the Wickham, Boarhunt and Southwick cluster's proposals include using church land to provide affordable housing, experimenting in worship, improving communication, and pursuing the idea of providing a youth centre in Wickham.

There are also plans to reconfigure the inside of St Nicholas' Church, to campaign for a pedestrian crossing to link the church with the village, to identify the skills within the congregation and to develop relationships across denominational boundaries.

Work is still continuing on the deanery plan, but it could involve changes to the deployment of clergy in five of its parishes. The themes of training for lay people and working ecumenically have also been recognised and should be implemented across the deanery.

Work on real partnership

AFTER a self-confessed rocky start to the Kairos process, worshippers in the Fareham deanery are now starting to dream ambitious dreams with a real focus on collaborative ministry.

A day conference for all the clergy of the deanery was the start of the process, and both its clusters are now focused on working together in partnership.

In Fareham East, that should involve developing links with schools and involving more church members in schools work.

Providing support for lone parents, children's activities, parenting skills courses, debt management education, marriage preparation, enrichment and renewal and drop-in facil-

Fareham

ities for youngsters are all on the agenda.

The group aims to review its use of buildings, including the major re-development of St Columba's Church, greater use of churches by the community and a review of ministry at both St Francis, Funtley, and St Edmund's, Stubbington in terms of their relationships with their parish churches and geographical communities.

And the plans include exploring a deanery-wide teaching programme, and exploration of Christian spirituality.

In the Western Wards cluster, a partnership group has been created to bring together

each parish to work on common areas.

The initial plans will see them working on Christian listening, counselling and marriage preparation together, but ultimately could involve co-operation on leadership training, Alpha, youthwork, evangelism and music.

And the deanery plan is designed to facilitate collaborative working by significantly restructuring the deanery synod to provide vision, support and oversight to the clusters, while at the same time fulfilling its legal responsibilities.

The new partnership arrangements should also enable the loss of one stipendiary priest from each cluster over the next 10 years.

Monthly outreach in local pub

ONE of the Kairos aims is to meet people where they are – and Bembridge worshippers are doing just that by organising a monthly meeting in a local pub. The idea is to combine outreach into the community with a social evening for the congregation.

Other plans in the Bembridge, St Helens and Seaview cluster include helping to provide a replacement minibus for Bembridge village, and working with the parish council to upgrade the present church hall in Seaview and convert it into a community centre for the whole village.

In St Helens, the proposals include upgrading the church building to modern standards of comfort and reaching out into the community by having a presence at the village car boot sale and taking part in the annual village fayre.

There are also plans to visit the lonely and support the less affluent. The cluster parishes hope to work together on

East Wight

youth events for 12 to 16-year-olds.

In Sandown Bay, the parishes of Shanklin and Sandown hope to form a group ministry and then start equipping lay people for pastoral care, baptism and wedding preparation, mission and evangelism.

And the Ryde cluster's plans include the re-development of the vestry at St John's to house an office for the Ryde East Community Association, and working together in support for the elderly and youth work.

Holy Trinity and St Michael's Churches hope to work more closely together, as do St John's with Binstead and Havenstreet.

The Brading cluster aims to promote the church at Arretton by putting it on the tourist trail, holding more user-friendly services, and keeping the church open for prayer and exhibitions.

At Brading itself, work with young people is a priority, while improved communications are planned at Yaverland.

And Newchurch's Kairos proposals include a scheme to welcome newcomers with a welcome pack, a service for singles and services for children aged 11 and over.

And the cluster group based around Ventnor has already highlighted the need to train lay people, set up an administration office to serve the parishes and possibly other denominations, and evaluate worship across the parishes.

This cluster has also suggested that the diocese discusses the development of a possible Locally Ordained Minister scheme.

The East Wight deanery plan suggests a possible reduction in clergy working in Ryde and Sandown, and suggests an alternative way of supporting the rural dean, which would free up the half-time clergy post of rural dean's assistant.