

'ALL SAINTS FORWARD' TAKES SECOND STEP

The Core Group set up to progress the All Saints Forward project has taken a second step. The project began in February with four days of interviews with a wide cross-section of the congregation and community. People were asked about 'church life' in Winterton as it is now. The whole enquiry is expected to take until January 2010 so as to allow plenty of time for involvement and discussion.

The second step was to consider the future sustainable Purposes of All Saints' Church at a workshop led by Alastair Simmons, the facilitator and consultant engaged from TASKSCAPE ASSOCIATES Ltd. This took place in two stages on 24-25th April with meetings on the Friday evening and Saturday morning.

The Core Group first worked in small groups to picture what the Parish church is like NOW and what it could be, for the Parish, in the FUTURE. Also to be considered were the BARRIERS which might prevent this coming to fruition. The Group was very grateful to Gail Summerfield for representing views from the community in the Friday evening session.

On Saturday morning, the many paradoxes which arose from the Group's earlier deliberations were investigated. For example, the Group felt that "All should be welcome" but for much of the time "the church door is 'locked'", 'locked' representing, perhaps, more than just the physical locking of the door. By considering a number of these paradoxes, and how they might be resolved, the Group began to create a Statement of Purposes for All Saints. In time, this statement will inform key decisions and help with a route forward, to which the church can work towards in the future.

This draft statement of purposes is now being clarified by the Core Group and developed by circulating it amongst them. The intention is to provide an agreed statement to which all members can subscribe.

Step three for the Group, later in the summer, will involve a consideration of these draft future Purposes in the light of the findings from the interviews held in February. This will allow the Purposes to be refined and help to ensure that the comments from the wide cross-section of our congregation and community are taken into account. At that stage there will be the chance for the Purposes to be shared more widely and further input made by members of the congregation and community.

The enthusiastic involvement of the Core Group in the discussions to date and the very evident continuing interest and support from the wider community bodes very well for the outcome of this project. Thanks to all for the time which has already been given.

If you would like to know more about this project, please enquire – in the first instance – to Robin Shawyer, Treasurer of the PCC and Chair of the core group [tel: 01724 734285 or e-mail: rdshawyer@gmail.com]