

St John the Baptist Westbourne

- Mission Action Plan 2022
27 July 2022
- Implementation Plan 2023



What should be in the MAP?

- Why the MAP matters
- Feedback on previous MAP
 - What have we learnt from the current MAP?
- Approach to this exercise
 - Gathering feedback from churchgoers and the wider parish
- The three “pillars” of our MAP
 - Spiritual life
 - Community
 - Growth

“The Mission Action Plan is a document which outlines and develops your church’s vision for the future, and the practical steps your church is going to make towards achieving those goals.”

Assumptions

- The MAP cannot be an exhaustive list of all initiatives and deliverables
- Instead, the MAP should articulate a vision for the future and set a framework for determining what we want to achieve and how we will achieve it
- This should include a governance structure to enable the PCC to prioritise and drive forth initiatives

Feedback from parishioners

How does our church enhance our community?

Churchgoer

As a cultural centre where one can meet people, worship God, gain support if needed and possibly offer to volunteer to help others.

(i) It gives the village identity - a meeting place, and a centre of worship. (ii) It provides a link to the history and heritage of people who lived in the village over the centuries. (iii) It offers a centre of Christianity and faith providing ceremonial services for special times in our lives, the nation and our village. (iv) It provides fellowship, music, bells, reflection and beauty.

Parent

Important as a place of worship but also as a hub of the community. It can be a place for people to meet and socialise, somewhere for people to reach out to in a time of crisis and somewhere to bring the community together- this can be in celebration, in charity work/fundraising or just generally to give the village part of its identity.

In an ever changing world where shops and services change/move and following a period of enormous unpredictability during Covid, the church has remained a touchstone of permanence and a focus for the community.

Parishioner

The village needs the church as a central focus, and for weddings, funerals and baptism.

It is a focal point for the village and a place that people can gather to celebrate life and death. It is a place for people to be quiet and an acknowledgement that there is somewhere for you to go in a time of need.

It is our link to our historical past. A place of peace, so necessary today.

What does our church mean to you personally?

Churchgoer

Opportunity for spiritual renewal.
A feeling of community.

I go to church as an expression of faith and to seek a place for quiet reflection.

Worship is uplifting. It is good to meet and talk to people, especially being on my own much of the week.

Parent

We love the community spirit and feel.

My daughter loved that she got to play the organ, great it was interactive.

I like the peacefulness and reflectiveness of the quieter church services but what I enjoy the most is helping to bring young people and families into the church community. I also enjoy seeing the choir develop so much.

Non-churchgoer

An opportunity to support family at funeral of a friend.

I particularly enjoyed the evening talks followed by supper.

(I go) to revisit the interior architecture and sense of peace.

What words sum up our church? How might this inform our vision?



What more would you like to see?

Community outreach

- Link with Parish & County Councils to find out what needs exist
- Fun and Joyful events bringing a range of people in the village together e.g., Greening, Businesses, self employed, Pubs, School North and South villagers, e.g., Jubilee Fun Day
- Increase distribution channels for church news and ensure in plain English
- Meals for older people- linking with Age UK
- Liaise with local schools- what would they like church to offer them?
- Initiatives to build fellowship with families
- Drop-in on more days

Pastoral

- Support for anyone in need e.g., practical, spiritual and emotional “someone to talk to”
- Easy to understand intro to the church, services etc
- Pastoral groups- what should these look like? Some kind of outreach/ caring group
- More interactive services for children
- Bible study groups as well as seasonal groups e.g., for Lent and Advent

Events

- Lunches, afternoon teas
- More evening talks
- Christmas party
- Cookie bake and delivery to seniors – deliver some sweet treats around town
- Family scavenger hunt – around the village family fun around the community.
- Movie, games afternoons.
- BBQs gatherings.
- “Christians Against Poverty” course to assist those benefitting from the food vouchers

Building improvements

- Create a community space in the church or hall e.g., to create IT facility for public
- Link IT/ library facility to WSCC library to create lending hub
- Tea & coffee facility in church
- Investigate how to resolve parking challenge
- What impact would better lighting have on church’s atmosphere and flexibility of space?
- Can we make church’s history more visible to attract visitors?

Youth

- Youth club
- Involving young people more in services- ad hoc or in formal roles
- Clubs (youth charity projects/Art/Lego- draw the crowd in with their interest and link to Christian faith, events.
- Drama group for youngsters
- More interactive services
- Fairy story readings
- Youth disco
- Messy church
- Picnics and games in the hall.
- Car wash fundraiser for youth – clean cars are a great mark of summer

What does this feedback tell us about how to grow?

- Tradition: The sense of continuity and tradition are strengths and core to many churchgoers. How do we retain this while appealing to the broader community?
- Music: Music is a huge strength. How can we capitalise on this?
- Youth: More needed for children and teenagers. However, green shoots are appearing- more families have joined the church and 6 children are being confirmed this May. How do we serve the needs of this group to keep them coming and attract more children and young people?
- Buildings: The buildings are huge assets but the church is cold & seating inflexible. How can we retain the church's beauty and peaceful atmosphere while making the space work better for the community?
- Access: Car parking is an issue for community event organisers. What options do we have?
- Inclusion: How do we demonstrate our sense of inclusivity to the community?
- Those in need: How do we best serve those most vulnerable in our community?

"I think that the church should be more "open" and "accessible" to the whole village. (...)I believe it is perceived as being there for the chosen few."

"Often (..) those not familiar with the liturgy (..) get lost and bored. More guidance to follow the service and shorter sermons."

"Youth is a missing cohort."

"Andrew's Tots Time Services were fantastic. If we could find a way of reaching more people and getting more numbers it would be great.."

"Fun and Joyful events bringing a range of people in the village together."

MAP framework

Can we sum up our church in a single statement?

At a special PCC devoted to the MAP in June 2022, two options emerged as the preferred strapline for our church with the PCC deciding to adopt the below in July 2022:

St John the Baptist Church, Westbourne
Open to all for peace, worship and fellowship

Our vision... spirituality; community; growth

2018-21 MAP Vision:

- To share the experience of Christian faith with others
- To grow our Christian faith and community together
- To reach out to people in Westbourne and further afield



2022 MAP Vision:

- **To nurture and grow our faith by including and catering for all people young and old, from all backgrounds and with differing needs**
- **To ensure the church's land and buildings meet the needs of the people of Westbourne now and in the future**
- **To meet the challenges of change with confidence and enthusiasm**

Delivering on our vision: big questions

Spiritual life

- How do we evolve our worship?
- How do we provide opportunities for learning?
- How do we make services more accessible?
- How best could we nurture and grow our faith as a church community?

Community

- How do our buildings support our mission? What works well?
- How might we make the church building easier to use for community and church events? What benefits would arise?
- What more should we offer existing churchgoers and the wider community?
- Fabric, events, access...

Growth

- How do we ensure our financial viability?
- How do we grow our numbers?
- How do we ensure our numbers reflect the diversity of the parish?