

A HISTORY OF THE CLARENDON TEAM – from the perspective of the Dun Valley Churches (West Dean, East Grimstead, Farely and Pitton)

Prepared by Martyn Sanders

In the beginning...

The Rev David Hart was appointed as the Rector of the parish of West Dean with East Grimstead in 1970. Ten years later he also ministered to the parish of Farley with Pitton. Rev David Hart left these villages in July 1990, having begun the process of assisting the villages to work together by producing a newsletter/magazine that was delivered to and catered for, each of the four villages, establishing a coherent pattern of worship, and two or three years prior to his departure holding annual meetings of the churchwardens.

Towards the end of the 1980s it became clear that the national church, and likewise Salisbury Diocese, was experiencing a decline in the number of stipendiary clergy. Salisbury Diocese approach to this was twofold.

1. Clergy would be appointed according to the number of people on the parliamentary electoral role. Parishes needed at least 2,000 adults to secure a stipendiary clergyman. (Women were not ordained priests until 1994.) Where this was not possible parishes would share the ministry of a stipendiary clergyman.
2. In order to facilitate the allocation of stipendiary clergy to parishes (and in order to promote collaboration between parishes) ministry teams were being established. These teams comprised a number of parishes, each with their own or shared vicar under the leadership of a Team Rector (who also ministered to a parish or parishes).

The four villages, comprising of what we now call the Dun Valley, had a parliamentary electoral roll of less than 1,000 so, when it became clear the Rev David Hart would be leaving, it was thought very unlikely that he would be replaced. However, by forming a Team of the parishes of Alderbury, West Grimstead, Whiteparish, West Dean with East Grimstead, and Pitton with Farley there was a sufficiently sized population in total to justify a Team of three stipendiary clergy (one based in Alderbury, one in Whiteparish and one living in the vicarage at West Dean.)

The Alderbury Team

These parishes comprised the Alderbury Team, the formation of which effectively secured the replacement of Rev David Hart. Rev Philip Boshier was appointed as priest-in-charge to minister to the four villages and subsequently became Team Vicar, some six months or so later, on the formation of the Alderbury Team in 1991. The first rector of the Alderbury Team was the Rev Geofry Rowston who was also the Rector of Alderbury and West Grimstead.

Rev Philip Boshier worked hard to encourage the Dun Valley churches to work together and it was he who chose the name "Dun Valley" in order to give common identity.

There had been no formal advice from the Diocese, at that time or subsequently, as to what a team should be, how it should operate, or how the individual

parishes should relate to one another. Each Team was expected to work out what being a Team meant for them in their particular situation. Whether or not there was informal advice given to Rectors is only a matter for speculation.

The advantages and benefits to the parishes of membership of the Alderbury Team can be debated long and hard depending upon individual opinions and points of view. Since, in reality, the number and deployment of clergy had not changed as a result of forming the Team most parishioners did not notice any difference and many did not understand the importance of the Team or why it should make any difference to the life of the local church. However, it is a commonly held view that the Alderbury Team:

- secured three stipendiary priests
- enabled the congregations to meet together occasionally during the year and so be able to benefit from feeling part of something larger
- provided a valued support network for Team Vicars who would otherwise be working in isolation.

As the 1990s progressed the Church of England (together with other denominations) continued to experience a decline in the number of stipendiary clergy, as clergy retired but were not replaced with others responding to vocation. Whiteparish lost a full-time clergyman and gained a half-time post, although this was subsequently reversed with the appointment of Marion Clutterbuck. The Dun Valley lost their stipendiary priest when Rev Philip Boshier left in 1996. His post was replaced with a non-stipendiary, house for duty position that was filled by Rev Lois Cater. She continued to facilitate closer working between the Dun Valley villages.

Subsequently, Rev Geoffrey Rowston retired and was replaced by Rev Michael Ward as both the Team Rector and vicar of Alderbury and West Grimstead.

The Clarendon Team

In 1999, the first Deanery Plan was written. This essentially outlined how the Deanery would plan for the deployment of clergy and other authorised ministers for the period 2000-2005. Each parish within the Deanery was asked to contribute to, and consulted about, the Plan. Provision was made that, should the four Dun Valley Villages so wish it, the Deanery would support a move to unite these villages as one legal parish.

In order to maintain the parochial system teams would need to be established where they were not yet operating, and existing Teams would have to be expanded. A vacancy arose in Winterslow on the appointment of Rev Clive Cohen as Archdeacon to Truro Diocese. Whilst Winterslow was (and still is) larger than any of the existing villages in the Alderbury Team the Diocese was looking ahead to a time when each member of the rural clergy would have to administer to more than one relatively small village. The decision was taken to disband the Alderbury Team and form a new Team that comprised the Winterslows and the villages that had previously made up the Alderbury Team. Rev Nils Bersweeden was appointed as Team Vicar to the parish of Winterslow. The Clarendon Team was then formed in 2001.

The name "Clarendon Team" was chosen (mostly on egalitarian grounds) to avoid naming the new team after one of the parishes, Clarendon being a large (extra parochial) estate lying between Pitton and Alderbury.

Not long after the formation of the Clarendon Team, Rev Lois Cater began to explore the options for retirement. It then became clear that the Archdeacon was intending to abolish the non-stipendiary, house for duty post in the Dun Valley and was contemplating placing each village in the Dun Valley under the care of one or more of the stipendiary clergy. Whilst nothing was formally published it became known that the plan was for; West Dean to be linked with Whiteparish, East Grimstead with West Grimstead and hence Alderbury, Farley with Alderbury or Winterslow, and Pitton with Winterslow.

However, by the time Rev Lois Cater retired, Rev Diana Sanders, a resident in the Dun Valley since December 1983, (who had been ordained priest in 1999 and had completed her curacy) was able and willing to be licensed as non-stipendiary Team Vicar. Hence, a post was created for a non-stipendiary Team Vicar living in his/her own home, to minister to the four Dun Valley villages, within the Clarendon Team.

As was the case with the Alderbury team, the formation of the Clarendon Team left the number and deployment of clergy unchanged. Many parishioners did not recognise any need to change. The formation of the Team made sense to the Deanery. The Deanery Plan made provision for three teams, one in the Bourne Valley in the north of the Deanery, one in the south comprising Downton, Morgan's Vale, Redlynch, Landford, Bramshaw and Plaitford, and one in the middle of the Deanery – the Clarendon Team. However, it could be argued that certainly with respect to the Clarendon team there was no geographical cohesion. For example, Winterslow was ten miles from Whiteparish and residents in either parish had no reason to travel to the other. There are no cultural, economic, social or geographical links. As a consequence the Clarendon Team experienced prolonged birth pains.

Nevertheless,

- the Clarendon Team has worked together to produce common policies on matters such as marriage, baptism, the training of recognised ministers, and worship
- clergy and Readers do lead worship and preach across the Team from time to time
- with the help of retired clergy, all clergy sickness and holidays are covered from within the Team and have given considerable Sunday cover to the parishes in the Deanery experiencing interregnum or clergy vacations
- the clergy meet regularly and provide each other with support.

Over the years it has been discovered that the team works best by allowing each parish to operate autonomously, but that Teamwork is best where this enables each parish to do something extra or better by doing it with others in the Team rather than doing it alone. In 2004 the Team Council agreed that this was the preferred way of working.

2003-5

During 2003 and 2004 the Dun Valley PCCs considered at length the possibility of joining together to form one parish but decided that this was not the way in which they wished to work together.

In mid-2005 The Revd Marion Clutterbuck resigned her post as Team Vicar and left the Clarendon Team. In line with the Deanery Plan she was not replaced and there was a re-allocation of parishes amongst Team Vicars. The Revd Nils Bersweden took responsibility for the parish of Farley with Pitton and The Revd Diana Sanders took responsibility for Whiteparish. (Diana moved into the

Whiteparish vicarage in August 2005.) It was understood that when Dian's licence expires (in 2009) she would not be replaced and that her move to Whiteparish was an interim step to assist Whiteparish and the team to adjust to 2 full-time stipendiary clergy. In September 2007 the Team Rector, The Revd Canon Michael Ward retired.

The Team Council

All Team ministries within the Diocese are required to have a Team Council. The composition and powers of that Council are determined by the individual parishes that make-up the Team. The Clarendon Team Strategic Plan and Policy Statements outline the way in which the Team operates (see The Clarendon Team Ministry "The Strategic Plan".) This makes it clear that, whilst a Team in name and constitution the parishes will operate as a group. Each parish will have its own vision and give priority to local mission. There is agreement to worship together on a regular basis (in practice about three or four times each year plus additional summer evening worship), and that parishes will contribute their gifts to other parishes when requested.

Parishes have delegated few powers to the Team Council; these are, joint Sunday worship – dates and content, and acceptance and approval of candidates to be trained for NSM, OLM and Sarum Readers after recommendation of the sponsoring PCC.

In addition the Team Council recognise that the Team may be served by fewer authorised ministers (and particularly priests) in the future and so have agreed that parishes wishing to change worship times and patterns will required Team Council approval to ensure that worship within the parishes will be sustainable with fewer staff.

Each parish has one vote within the Team Council with respect to delegated powers. All other Team decisions much be supported by each of the PCCs.

Team policies include policies concerning:

- Joint Sunday morning worship
- Joint Sunday evening worship
- Pastoral care of parishioners
- Eligibility for marriage
- Re-marriage after divorce
- Baptism
- Eligibility to receive holy communion
- Fellowship, evangelism and discipleship
- Admission of children to holy communion
- Child protection
- Mission giving
- Training and deployment of OLMs & Readers during training
- Placements
- OLMs, Readers and LPA responsibilities

and

policies relating to communications, the conduct of meetings, decision making, finance and expenses.

Key Events in the life of the Alderbury and Clarendon Teams

Event	Date
Rev David Hart appointed as Rector of West Dean with East Grimstead	1970
Rev David Hart appointed as Rector of Farley with Pitton in addition to West Dean with East Grimstead	1980
Rev David Hart leaves the Dun Valley	July 1990
Rev Philip Boshier appointed as Priest-in-Charge to Dun Valley	Sept 1990
Alderbury Team formed Rev P Boshier made Team Vicar	1991
Rev P Boshier leaves Dun Valley. Full-time stipendiary Team Vicar Post replaced with non-stipendiary house for duty Team Vicar position Rev Lois Cater appointed as Team Vicar to Dun Valley	1996
Alderbury Team Rector Rev Geoffrey Rowston retired Rev Michael Ward appointed at Team Rector	1998
Alderbury Team disbanded Clarendon Team formed	31 Dec 2000 1 Jan 2001
Rev Lois Cater retired Non-stipendiary house for duty post in Dun Valley replaced with non-stipendiary living in own house	July 2002
Rev Diana Sanders appointed as Team Vicar	Oct 2002
Rev Marion Clutterbuck resigned and was not replaced	Summer 2005

Clarendon Team Authorised Ministers as at 1 January 2005

Name	Position	Location
		Please note that all are licensed to serve across the Team but have specific responsibilities in the parishes named*
Michael Ward	Team Rector Full-time, stipendiary	Alderbury & West Grimstead
Marion Clutterbuck	Team Vicar Full-time, stipendiary	Whiteparish
Diana Sanders	Team Vicar Full-time, non-stipendiary	Dun Valley
Nils Bersweeden	Team Vicar Full-time, stipendiary	Winterslow
Anthea Cochrane	OLM Curate Part-time, non-stipendiary	Alderbury & West Grimstead
Bill Thompson	Sarum Reader	Winterslow
Martyn Sanders	Sarum Reader	Dun Valley
Gill Morgan	Sarum Reader in Training to be admitted October 2005	Dun Valley
Cynthia Buttimer	Sarum Reader in Training to be admitted October 2005	Winterslow
John Sharp	Retired Clergy	Resides in West Dean

Roger Sharpe	Retired Clergy	Resides in East Grimstead
Gordon Mitchell	Retired Clergy	Resides in Alderbury
Christina Hunt	Retired Clergy	Resides in Alderbury

* Retired clergy have no specific responsibilities but may, and do, assist with priestly duties.

Clarendon Team Authorised Ministers as at 1 January 2008

Name	Position	Location
	Team Rector Full-time, stipendiary	Please note that all are licensed to serve across the Team but have specific responsibilities in the parishes named* Alderbury & West Grimstead
Diana Sanders	Team Vicar Full-time, non-stipendiary	Whiteparish, and West Dean w East Grimstead
Nils Bersweeden	Team Vicar Full-time, stipendiary	Winterslow and Farley w Pitton
Anthea Cochrane	PTO	Alderbury & West Grimstead
Bill Thompson	Sarum Reader	Winterslow and Farley w Pitton
Martyn Sanders	Sarum Reader	Whiteparish, and West Dean w East Grimstead
Gill Morgan	Sarum Reader	Winterslow and Farley w Pitton
Cynthia Buttimer	Sarum Reader (Training for ordained ministry)	Winterslow and Farley w Pitton
Roger Sharpe	Retired Clergy	Resides in East Grimstead
Gordon Mitchell	Retired Clergy	Resides in Alderbury
Christina Hunt	Retired Clergy	Resides in Alderbury
Pat Smith	Sarum Reader in training (2008)	Resides in Farley
Doreen White	Deacon in training (2008)	Resides in Alderbury
Jane Dunlop	NSM in training (2009)	Resides in Whiteparish
Linda Carter	Ordinand (2010)	Resides in Winterslow

* Retired clergy have no specific responsibilities but may, and do, assist with priestly duties.