

AMD - A CASE STUDY

The Quayside Benefice

The Quayside Benefice has been growing and discovering in all sorts of ways since it was formed. The incumbent asked to participate in Accompanied Ministry Development (AMD) and soon afterwards the *bishop visited* the parish to explain what is involved.

AMD is a spiritual journey that starts in one place and ends up in another. To see what terrain has been covered the benefice uses the 'Our Church' survey to find out what prayer is happening in the churches and how people are engaged in the community right at the beginning of the journey. (They could also have looked at other features of church life).

The priest was a little apprehensive about meeting colleagues at the first **Clergy College**, but enjoyed the presenters and soon discovered that the Colleges were excellent Professional Development. She found the Action Learning Group discussions with other incumbents especially helpful - they helped her work out how to link the Colleges with what went on the benefice. The *AMD Advisor* who met with her a week or so after the College to help her reflect on what went on was also a great support.

The priest had gathered a *Ministry Development Team* from the benefice to look at the same themes as the Colleges. These are God's People, God's Reconciliation, God's Good News, Living for God and Worshiping God. Having other people in the benefice who knew about the themes meant the priest was not a 'voice in the wilderness'. And the group gave coherence to spiritual leadership within the benefice.

The *Parish Programme* provided new resources for small groups, youth work and worship, all available on-line. Many were produced or coordinated by Church House staff. People said it was great to be able to talk about their faith in new ways.

During the *first year of AMD*, the benefice clergy and lay leaders were especially drawn to the idea of 'welcome,' one of the topics touched upon during a Clergy College. They also decide to start a 'Messy Church,' and work among students with the neighbouring parish.

The benefice looks again at their *Our Church* markers; and the *Clergy MDR* informs CMED throughout the year.

At the beginning of *Parish Planning*, the priest and the benefice Ministry Development Team meet with the *Archdeacon of Cornwall* and a member of *Church House*. The benefice say that they already have the resources to develop their welcome over the next few months, but that they need help with Messy Church and student outreach.

For the *Bishop's Conference* the *Church House* team agrees training and resources for Messy Church (the resources funded by the benefice in this case; the training sourced by the diocese). At the meeting, the benefice agree a launch date for Messy Church and the 'welcome' work. The Bishop, however, gently challenges the benefice to be more ambitious and specific about the impact of their 'welcome' initiatives; the plans are revised and agreed at the *Bishop's Conference*. As a result of good Parish Planning, everyone recognises that lots of input and coordination within the deanery is necessary if the student outreach is to be successful. The *Bishop's Conference* agrees the action and timetable for the individual churches, benefice, deanery and diocese.

The **Head of Church Growth Development** coordinates the consultants required to deliver the agreed support.

The benefice embarks upon their chosen **Parish Projects** (welcome, Messy Church and student outreach). The **Archdeacon of Cornwall** takes a particular interest in the joint planning for student outreach, which is also supported by **Church House** and works with a neighbouring parish. The Messy Church project is supported by the Discipleship Team, which visits the benefice three times over the year (once to help plan and train, to accompany the first event, and then to refine).

At the **Six Month Review** the **Bishop's Staff Meeting** receives a statement from the **Archdeacon of Cornwall**. They observe that the welcome work has gone well; and that the deanery student project is on course. However, Messy Church has been resisted by some within the congregations who agitate for more Eucharistic worship. Bishop's Staff suggest that the benefice be offered the support of a change management / reconciliation / worship consultant. The **Head of Church Growth Development** speaks with the parish and this help is organised. Tension and resolution over worship traditions, and creative work with students across the deanery lead the benefice to work on **Shaping Ministry Teams** with the Bishop's staff; broader lay-led ministry teams begin to develop responding to the outreach work with students and developing new forms of worship outside the Sunday morning slot and across benefice and parish boundaries.

The parish continues to implement the agreed projects as well as starting a new Lent Bible study.

At the end of Year 2, the **Bishop's Review** assesses the outcomes of each project using information provided by the Church Growth Team.

To be continued...