

The Church

The Village Plan Action Group omitted to include the Church in its consultation process but, at the same time, recognised the historic importance of the Church in village life. Accordingly, the Church was invited to contribute to this report so that its role could be embraced in the final proposals.

St Michael's Church, Seavington St Michael, is the last of the churches in the Seavingtons to remain open for regular worship. Five churches were lost during the Middle Ages and St Mary's Church, Seavington St Mary, was declared redundant in the early 1980s.

St Michael's is currently a parish church within the united benefice of "South Petherton with the Seavingtons". The Church Council of the whole benefice is advised on Seavington matters by a local committee, so the church has a fair amount of autonomy.

The St Michael's Seavington Church Trust is an autonomous body which raises funds for the upkeep of the Church and has raised and spent some £18,000 on various essential items in the past four years.

For some time the aim of the church has been survival and the preservation of its fabric. In recent years, however, a regular pattern of Sunday worship has been re-established and the congregation has grown. Some 10% of the population of The Seavingtons now regularly attends services on Sundays. The style of worship is largely traditional with occasional gentle ventures into the more adventurous. The pace of change is determined by the local population.



Larger congregations usually gather for special occasions during the year – including occasional services at St Mary's. Several of these have a clear aim at affirming the work of the community such as Rogationtide, Harvest and the Christmas carol service.

Future diocesan plans involve the creation of a “local ministry group” of parishes centred on South Petherton and the onus of developing the work of the church in the community will devolve even more on the local community. The current policy of the parish as a whole is aimed at equipping and affirming the local congregation to fulfil this task. A potential non-stipendiary priest is currently in training from the parish and it is hoped that, in 2006, a team of pastoral assistants will be trained for work in the Seavingtons.

Recently, a number of “story keeper” parties have been held for young people in the parish and it is hoped to develop this work further with the appointment of a part-time youth worker, part of whose time would be spent in the Seavingtons.

As the oldest organisation in the two villages the Church wishes to serve the local community in a non-obtrusive way.

Proposal

No	Proposal	Proposed Actionee
M 1	Work with the SPFA and PCSG to coordinate provision of youth facilities in the Seavingtons	Benefice of South Petherton with the Seavingtons

