

The Anglican Parish of Coffs Harbour



VACANCY CONSULTATION REPORT



*Compiled from a Parish Review conducted by
The Diocesan Archdeacon/Ministry Development Officer,
Gail Hagon. 22nd April, 2017*

THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF COFFS HARBOUR – VACANCY CONSULTATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

I. Background.

The basis of information used in this Vacancy Consultation was obtained from the Parish Review which took place on the 22nd April, 2017.

II. Participants:

38 people gathered to participate in this process.

There was a cross section of the community of faith represented.

The average age of those gathered was 68+

Those participating engaged enthusiastically with the material presented.

Whilst there were some differing opinions and viewpoints, the participants had a definite sense of belonging to the parish, its worship and its activities.

The focus of the consultation centered around four main areas:

- The Church NOW,
- The Church of the Future,
- Openness to change, and
- Skill sets.

CHURCH NOW.

The Parish of Coffs Harbour honours and celebrates its worshipping life. It values and appreciates the ministry of Lay people, and seeks ways in which to affirm and empower all those in ministry. It also actively encourages others to use the gifts that they have been given. The parish as a whole, appears to grasp the concept of *the Body in Christ*, and are able to affirm various ministries that are currently being exercised.

The parish looks for opportunities to share in fellowship with one another, and they believe that they are a community which offers support and nurture to one another

The Parish currently connects with the wider community through such ministries as:

- Op Shop ministry (and Garage Sales);
- Assisting with community needs
- Hospital Chaplaincy
- Ministry to the Nursing Homes and those in aged care facilities
- Ministry to, and with, refugee families. (Sudanese)

In more recent times they would like to give thanks for:

- The ordination of Carol Ford (Deacon), and Anne Goode (Assistant Priest)
- The appointment of a Young families person and growth of children's ministry
- Growth of the Op Shop Ministry

- Ministry with the refugees.
- The reforming of men's and women's fellowship groups
- Structural and aesthetical changes.

These things have all helped to enhance parish life.

BUILDINGS AND BUILDING PROJECTS

The Parish of Coffs Harbour is located on 4 and 6 McLean Street with a total area of 2024 square metres on which the Hall, Op Shop and a rented Cottage is located.

Over a number of years there has been much discussion around the development of this site. The current discussion revolves around the idea of building a larger Op Shop, Community facilities and approximately 25- 30 units for Affordable Housing.

Late last year Parish Council appointed a committee of three people to investigate the possibilities for the two blocks. The committee consists of Bob Chambers, David Ford and Richard Dubois.

Conversations are in the planning stage, with the committee working with Architects and Town Planners in the hope to provide a viable concept to present to the Diocese before the end of the year.

It is worth noting that the Hall is almost at the end of its economic life and the Op Shop is now the Parish's largest source of income.

CHURCH OF THE FUTURE

It is clear from the comments provided in the *raw data material* that the parish has a common goal of growing the church, especially growing ministries that are centred around Young Families and Youth Ministry.

Participants were able to affirm the work that has (and is) being done to ensure that the parish is a place of welcome for people of ALL ages. There is genuine excitement around the appointment of Clare Davies (Young families worker), and the emerging of a new family style worship service. [\(see edited note below\)](#)

Likewise the parish also desires to continue to support and honour its ministry to the aged and sick.

There also appears to be an interest in providing a wider variety of study options, and liturgical practices, than have been provided in more recent times.

There is genuine grief in the parish over the loss of some Sudanese families who have relocated to Melbourne.

The parish is in at a place in its history where strategic planning is critical; hence the next appointment would need to have gifts in this area.

Just recently, May 2018) the parish engaged in *the Talking Circles* methodology so as to prepare the way for the strategic planning process to proceed.

ANECDOTE TO EVIDENCE: 2011-2013

Some two and a half years ago now the Diocese engaged Archdeacon Bob Jackson, (UK) an Anglican priest and consultant on church growth, to explore ways in which we could grow the church in our Diocese. He talked about the 7 main characteristics of a healthy or growing church, *Anecdote to Evidence (2011-2013)*. Participants were invited to examine how healthy their parish was in relation to these 7 characteristics.

The Three **major** strengths in the Parish were identified as (in order of priority):

1. Lay involvement
2. A place for ALL ages
3. Good Leadership

Three **major** areas that needed attention were: (in order of priority):

1. Growing disciples
2. Establishing a clear mission and purpose
3. Providing good welcome and follow up.

OPENNESS TO CHANGE: The majority of those present believed that they had the ability to reflect, adapt, change and grow.

Participants believed that as long as the parish family was:

- Invited to be part of change;
- Change was clearly communicated from its inception;
- Explained and discussed
- Planned

then change was most likely to be embraced and to succeed. There was an overwhelming affirmation of a willingness to embrace change.

SKILL SET -LEADERSHIP

The raw data material overwhelmingly affirmed and respected the ministry of the whole people of God and the variety of gifts and talents that exist in the life of the parish. They saw this as a great blessing and gift. The ministry of the LLM's (Licensed Lay Ministers) were especially affirmed. There was a general feeling that there was still more that they lay people could do.

Whilst the parish recognises and respects the significant pastoral care ministry that it offer, the majority of those gathered believed that a major focus for the next three years needed to in establishing and growing its ministry to young families. They are

keen to continue the work in this area that has occurred in recent times, including introducing an *All age worship service*.

As such the parish believes that they are looking for someone who is a:

- Visionary
- Strategic planner
- Team player
- Clear communicator
- Relationship builder.

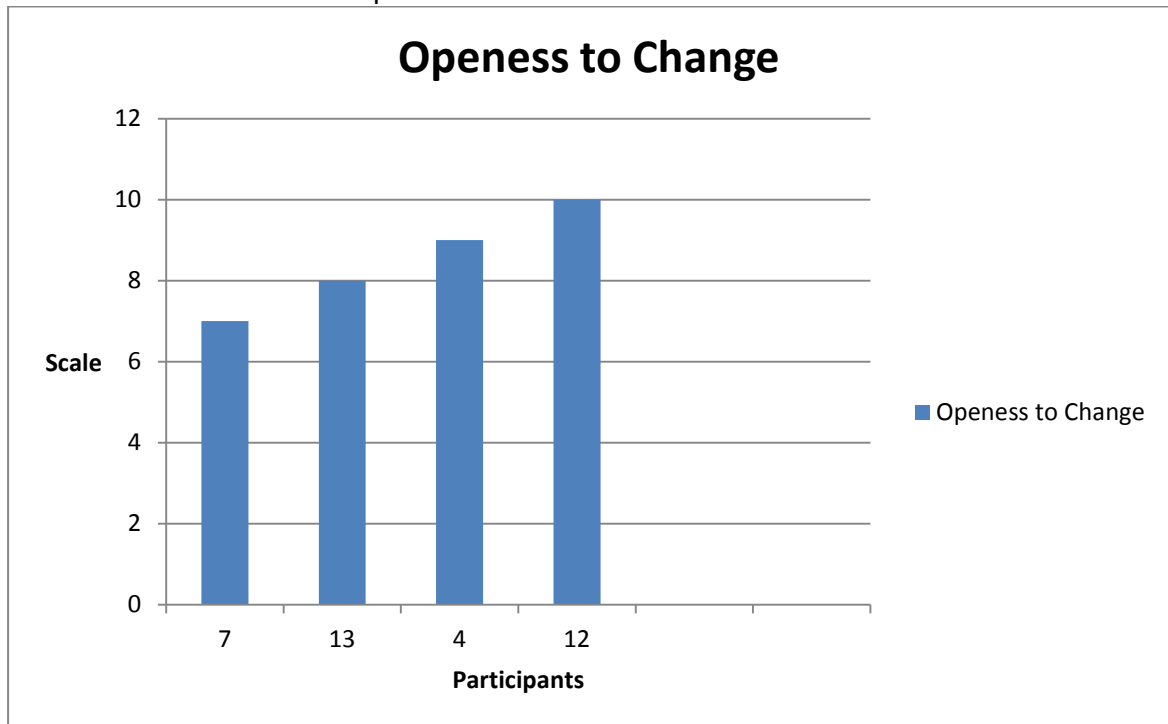
This report has been prepared by:
Archdeacon Gail Hagon

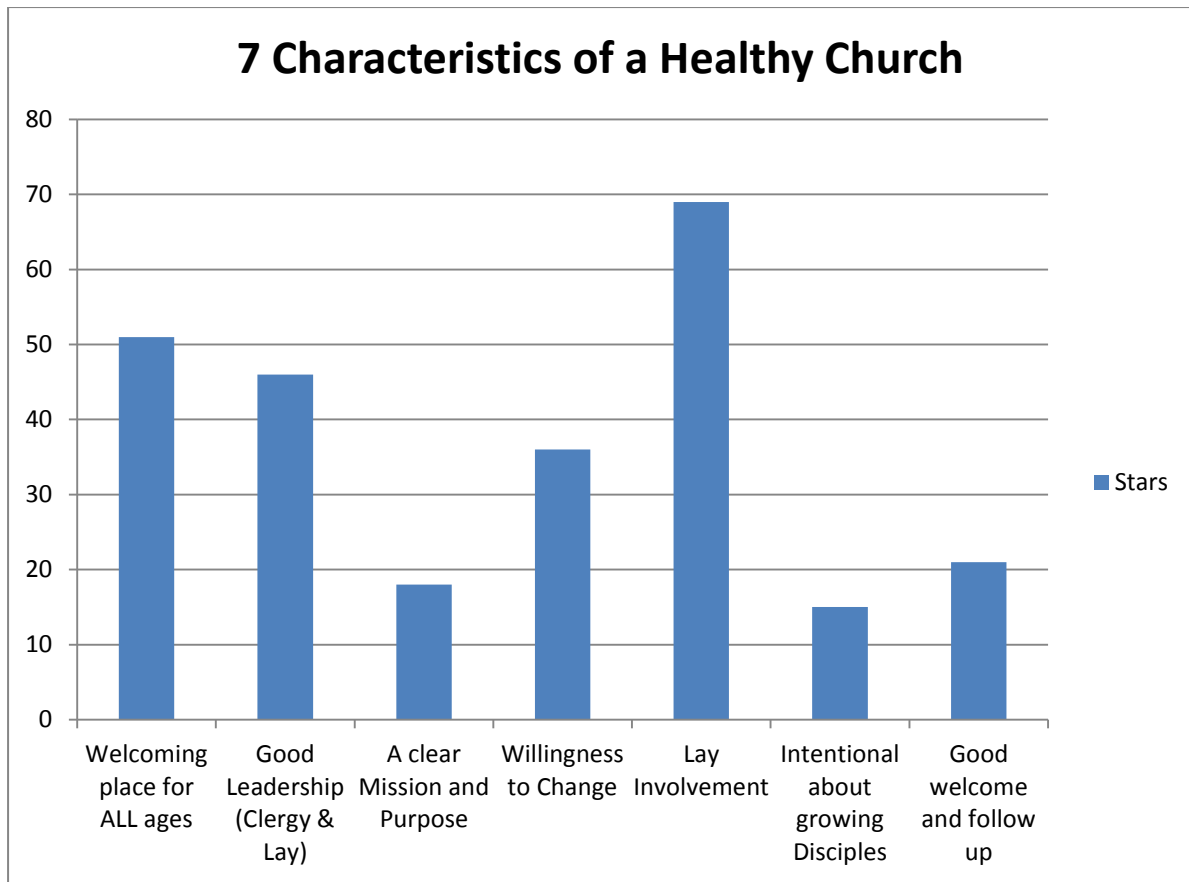
Raw Data Material held in the Diocesan Office.

RAW DATA MATERIAL

Exercise One: ANECDOTE TO EVIDENCE: 2011-2013

Welcoming place for ALL ages	51 stars
Good Leadership (Clergy & Lay)	46 stars
A clear Mission and Purpose	18 stars
Willingness to Change	36 stars
Lay Involvement	69 stars
Intentional about growing Disciples	15 stars
Good welcome and follow up	21 stars





Exercise Two

OPENNESS TO CHANGE

Openness to change 1-10 10 being completely open – 1 being totally resistant

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

OPENNESS TO CHANGE

12	10
4	9
13	8
7	7