

# **A discussion document**

**from  
the Archdeacon of Blackburn**

“The possible reorganization of the parishes of Samlesbury, Mellor, Balderstone, Salesbury and Langho into two United Benefices within a Group ministry.”

## **Introduction**

The Archdeacon presented the following as a possible pattern for the reorganization to a meeting of the present parish priests and churchwardens of the five churches on Monday 17th January 2011 .

### **A Group Ministry**

is where all the five parishes here keep their PCCs, and perhaps enter into two United Benefices within that Group Ministry (Samlesbury, Mellor and Balderstone as one Benefice, Langho and Salesbury as another Benefice).

These two Benefices would work together in a Group ministry which would have a Group Council, comprising representatives from each of the parishes along with the Clergy, who would also form a Group chapter.

### **The Benefice of Samlesbury, Balderstone and Mellor**

would have one full time stipendiary priest living in the vicarage at Mellor. The priest would be assisted by retired clergy, and by a commitment of time from Rev'd Dr Sue Williams (living in Samlesbury vicarage) and Rev'd Dr. John Darch (living at Mellor Brook).

The Parish Share presently £86,353 would be £6k less under the new arrangement of £80,173.

There is more than one possible way in which the Share could be shared out among the three churches: either according to the diocesan Share formula, or according to the Regular weekly attendance in each church, or according to what is thought to be the percentage of work time of the parish priest in each parish.

Service times may need to be looked at and changed if necessary to accommodate the need for the Parish Priest to be present as often as possible at the main Sunday services.

The total population is around 3,000 - 4,000.

*It would be perfectly possible to enter into a discussion about a House-for-Duty priest with the Bishop and the Archdeacon.*

## **The other Benefice**

would be Langho and Salesbury and would have one full time stipendiary priest living in the vicarage at Salesbury, with a possible House-for-Duty priest living in a house in Langho.

The Parish share at present is £103,039. It would reduce by nearly £20k if there was only one stipendiary priest, and by nearly £13,000 if there was also a House-for-Duty priest.

The Langho vicarage may be sold, and some of the proceeds of sale might be available for investing in a Mission Project in the Benefice or providing facilities lost by the sale of the Vicarage.

We would hope that the Billington part of Langho parish would be seceded to Whalley, if it makes 'mission' sense. The total population would then be in the region of 8,000 people.

Service times may need to be adjusted.

## **Since in both benefices**

there would be some financial saving on the Parish Share it would be hoped that some money might be available to create a Group Ministry administrator, and look at the possibility of other specialist workers such as a Youth, or Schools or Children's worker. This could be part funded by the parishes and other partners, and also by applying for grants from the diocese and other grant making bodies. It would be hoped that there would be the development of Ministry Teams and much more lay involvement in ministry across the Group.

The clergy team would hopefully work together on covering for each other across the Group whenever possible.

**These ideas need to be thoroughly discussed** at PCC level. The Archdeacon is happy to talk to any of the PCCs. It might be appropriate for the representatives of the parishes involved to talk to each other about these plans. The PCCs then need to make decisions as to how they wish to proceed.

## **And then what?**

If this way forward is accepted in principle - then a draft Pastoral Scheme would be written which would take into account comments made by the PCCs. It would then need to be approved by the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral committee as well as the PCCs and all interested parties, and then the actual Scheme would be consulted on and if approved would be sent to the Church Commissioners for confirmation.

## **Finally**

We need to take the opportunity we have now to make this reorganization because of the imminent vacancies at Samlesbury, Salesbury and Langho. We also need to recognize the coming into force of Common Tenure as a new way of employing and appointing clergy in the Church of England.

Archdeacon John 17/1/2011