

REPORT OF THE REVIEW GROUP

COMMISSIONED BY THE DIOCESE OF LICHFIELD
TO EXAMINE THE WORK OF THE BLACK COUNTRY
URBAN INDUSTRIAL MISSION

Aims of the review|

- To remind the Diocese of the importance of Mission in the Economy
- To give thanks for all that BCUIM has achieved
- To give an overview of the work being undertaken across the Diocese
- To look at choices for the future

June 2008

REPORT OF THE BCUIM REVIEW GROUP June 2008

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Church is a participation in the whole mission of God to the whole of creation. It follows that no aspect of the life of God's creation should be absent from the Church's prayer, attention and action. Part of the function of Church leaders and structures is to ensure that this is the case, as well as to establish and maintain an appropriate balance between the many things which compete for that prayer, attention and action.

This report has been commissioned by the Anglican Diocese of Lichfield, and, as such, focuses in particular on appropriate ways in which the Diocese, which covers Staffordshire, the northern half of Shropshire, Wolverhampton, Walsall and half of Sandwell, might best respond to the pressing economic issues and opportunities which so powerfully shape the lives of the two million people living within its 1800 square miles. In particular, our report is concerned with the work to be done and resources deployed in key centres of population in the Black Country (Wolverhampton, Walsall and Sandwell, Dudley being in the Diocese of Worcester), Stoke on Trent and Telford.

THE REVIEW GROUP'S TASK

The Review Group's Task was set out by the Bishop of Lichfield, after consultation with colleagues and the Black Country Urban and Industrial Mission (BCUIM), in August 2007 and the Review Group was assembled during the autumn. The Terms of Reference are contained in Appendix 1. The Aims were stated as follows:

1. To remind the Diocese of the importance of Mission in the Economy
2. To give thanks for all that BCUIM has achieved
3. To give an overview of the work being undertaken across the Diocese
4. To look at choices for the future

The desired Outcomes were stated as follows:

1. To set out ways in which the Church might take opportunities for engagement with the economic life of the region.
2. To lay out the different approaches open to us for the future and the rationale for and against such approaches.
3. To set out the implications for BCUIM and our ecumenical partnership.
4. To present these findings to some or all of the Bishop's Staff Meeting, the Bishop's Council and the Diocesan Synod.

MEMBERS OF THE REVIEW GROUP

The members of the Review Group responsible for this report are as follows:

Revd Chris Beales (Chair), Chief Executive, Afghan Action
Dr Mike Boyd, Technology Innovation Centre, Birmingham City University
Revd Peter Christie, URC Minister, Ecumenical Representative; Board member, BCUIM
Revd David Frith, Team Rector, Central Wolverhampton
Revd Richard Grigson, Vicar of Smallthorne, Stoke
Revd Ola Hayden, Chief Executive, Amazon Initiatives
Revd David Wright, Vicar of Donnington Wood, Telford

MEETINGS HELD AND PEOPLE CONSULTED

The Review Group met six times, on 3 December 2007 and, during 2008, on 11 January, 19 February, 17 April, 13 May and 3 June.

Members also met with each of the BCUIM chaplains and, in some cases, visited one or more of their projects or chaplaincies. On 19 February they met with the Board of BCUIM and were able to have a frank and open exchange with leaders and members of the various denominations represented on the Board. This was an important meeting and ensured that the ecumenical nature of BCUIM's work was properly acknowledged and recognised.

David Frith attended a BCUIM team meeting and Chris Beales met twice with the Bishop's Senior Staff. He also met, on separate occasions, with the Lichfield Diocesan Director of Education, the Bishop of Dudley and the General Secretary of the General Synod's Mission and Public Affairs Division.

As well as face to face meetings, there were numerous telephone conversations and email exchanges with people with an interest in or involvement with BCUIM and industrial mission.

A NOTE ABOUT THE BLACK COUNTRY URBAN INDUSTRIAL MISSION (BCUIM)

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CHAPLAINS' TEAM

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(Neil Perkinson (Darlaston) left the team and returned to New Zealand during the course of the Review)

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OFFICIAL SPONSORS

BCUIM is a partnership between:
the Anglican Dioceses of Lichfield (L) and Worcester (W),
the Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury Methodist District (M),
the United Reformed Church West Midlands Synod (URC), and
the Heart of England Baptist Association (B);
with the support of:
the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham, and
the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).
visit us on www.bcuim.co.uk
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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. being alongside people at work
2. promoting faith for work
3. empowering & transforming urban communities
4. challenging world values & being prophetic

CHAPTER 2

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Industrial Missions across the country are having to re-invent themselves in order to appear more relevant to the wider social and economic environment, which is shaped by such things as urban planning, development and regeneration, regional/national decisions in business development and investment, tourism, local industry, commerce and retail, education and training by local universities and colleges, corporate policy within a global context. Environmental issues of climate change and energy policy and their impact on the sustainability of economic development will become more pressing in future years. And there is a rural dimension which cannot be isolated from other aspects of economic activity.

How is mission in the economy currently expressed in the Diocese of Lichfield and the Black Country? The picture is complex, perhaps too much so, and our aim is to identify ways in which existing resources initiated, funded and supported by the Diocese and, in some cases, other denominations, might more effectively be deployed.

BCUIM is the most significant embodiment of the Church's mission in the economy. It is an independent charitable company with an ecumenical membership (the Bishop of Wolverhampton sits on the Board, although not *ex officio*). Its work is supported by a number of denominations through the provision of chaplains or funding for chaplains. The Diocese of Lichfield contributes 2.5 full time equivalent posts to the work of the charity (although part of one post, Olwen Smith's, includes work as the Diocesan Officer for Mission in the Economy). Along with a contribution towards office costs and a "Going for Growth" grant, the full level of Diocesan support is in the region of £100,000. For 2006 – 07 staff costs, please see Appendix 4.

There are also other important players in the overt economic engagement of the Church: for example, regeneration agencies such as the Mercian Trust and the Church Urban Fund (Lichfield); the Community Ministry Course; chaplaincies in schools, colleges, universities, prisons, hospitals, police, fire service - and, significantly, the Ministers in Secular Employment.

Of course, these complement the substantial and ongoing daily witness of thousands of Christian people in their daily lives, at home, at work, at leisure. The Diocese alone, not to mention all the other denominational Christian churches, has 583 churches and 427 parishes, and together the Church in the North West Midlands is by far the largest, best organised and most well resourced part of the "not-for-profit" sector in the region, with staff, active members and physical plant in every community. The economic value and potential of this should not be under-estimated. And to this should be added over 200 Anglican Church schools (serving nearly 45,000 pupils) and academies, as well as Catholic and independent, Church-linked schools. With the substantial land holdings and investments of the Church Commissioners and other ecclesiastical bodies in the region, it is clear that the Church is a major economic player – yet rarely has it recognised this and its influence is, therefore, less substantial than it ought to be.

The Review Group's remit has been mainly focused on the work of BCUIM, described above as "the most significant embodiment of the Church's mission in the economy". There is, therefore, an initial question to be asked: is the name "Black Country Urban and Industrial Mission" appropriate in a rapidly changing Economy, where, for example, educational institutions (schools, colleges and universities) are major economic actors in regeneration and redevelopment and manufacturing industries play a far smaller, albeit significant, role in local economic development? And how might BCUIM, and other agencies addressing economic and related issues, adapt or change its priorities in order to ensure that its "economic engagement" is responding appropriately to the significant economic forces shaping the area and region, in the light of the priorities and concerns of the Church?

WHAT DOES BCUIM ACTUALLY DO?

A summary (unpublished) of what the chaplains actually do was recently produced by the chaplains themselves as a way of describing the significant grass roots engagement and strategic networks with which they are involved. The scope is remarkable and demonstrates the ability of the Church to reach sections of society – often very influential in shaping the lives of huge numbers of people and communities – through such involvement. This is to be noted, though, of course, assessing the quality and impact of such engagement is hard to measure. The work reflects many years of building up trust and understanding, being alongside those on the shaping as well as those on the receiving end of economic change. BCUIM's DVD demonstrates, in the words of those at the receiving end of the Church's ministry in the workplace, just how valuable and valued this work is.

BCUIM's recently published Annual Report 2007-08 also contains valuable information about the work being done by the chaplains and lists the membership of the Board – which includes senior members drawn from business, trade unions, health, employment skills training, Government, the African-Caribbean Council of Churches, the Anglican Dioceses of Lichfield and Worcester, the Heart of England Baptist Association, the Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury Methodist District and the Birmingham and West Oldbury Circuit, the Warwickshire Monthly Quaker Meeting, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham and the United Reformed Church. Among the Church representatives, seven are Bishops, Superintendents, Regional Ministers and Church Leaders. The Chair of the Wolverhampton Primary Care Trust, senior business and trade union representatives are also on the Board and the Board's chair of trustees is the Chair of Rubery Owen Holdings. Few other Church organisations or agencies in the country can claim to have such a prestigious and influential group of people willing to commit to its work.

Its ability to be able to access such a cross section of society – and develop relationships of trust and understanding - is probably a unique feature of the Church's involvement in the nation's life. Such strategic involvement in the local and regional economy is directly due to the deployment of a small number of specialist people, industrial chaplains, by the Church. What they do and why they do it is outlined in what follows. It reflects both the pastoral and prophetic roles of the Church.

Members of the Review Group spent time with each of the chaplains in the BCUIM team, either visiting a local project or workplace with them or listening to them and their descriptions of what, how and why they do this difficult and challenging ministry. The brief reports below summarise what was observed and learned.

This section also includes descriptions of two parish based insights on engaging with local economic regeneration.

THE CHAPLAINS AT WORK – THE SCOPE OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT

WORKPLACE VISITING

Olwen Smith's work in Wolverhampton and, more recently, in Telford involves, in her own words, continuing "well-established chaplaincies sustained over many years". Her conversations with people in the workplace at all levels are "pastoral and prophetic", requiring "high levels of trust". In this context, "Christian presence/proclamation and Christian faith expectations" feature as a natural part of her ministry..

She visits several companies, including Marstons and M & S weekly and Beatties monthly. She is working with a team of volunteer chaplains to train them to take the retail chaplaincy forward. She also has oversight of workplace Chaplains' team in Telford and the "outcomes" towards which she is working include:

- Being part of FIT (Fairness; Integrity; Transparency) at Marstons;
- Companies recognising the value of “spiritual welfare”;
- Others being trained to sustain and develop chaplaincy work in Wolverhampton and Telford.;
- Relating issues back to churches

Andy Smith’s work in Walsall builds on the previous chaplaincy work of Martin Butt at Newman-Tonks (now I-Rand), chaplaincy at Chamberlin and Hill (close to church base in Walsall) negotiated 12 years ago. He visits regularly, holding conversations with people in the workplace at all levels, both pastoral and prophetic and sees his role as being a “Christian presence” and responding to “Christian faith expectations”.

Peter Sellick’s role in West Bromwich is about “enabling encounters with people at work”, giving “opportunities to hear and share their problems” and seeking to “input Christian language into their thinking”.

He visits Avery, Brockhouse on a weekly basis for an hour and Curtis Logistics fortnightly and aims to cover the whole spectrum of the business, noting significant conversations afterwards and following up necessary actions.

Outcomes include becoming an integral part of the business and feeding concerns into the churches.

Mike Fox works in Wolverhampton and South Staffordshire. The title of his work is: Engagement with the Wolverhampton-Telford Technology Corridor.

The background, he explains, is that the Black Country suffers from low educational achievement and this initiative has been established to raise the technical content of local workplaces and draw people into modern, high technology employment. His objective is to be alongside and affirm those who are involved in industries exploiting the latest Creative, Knowledge and Engineering techniques. He also provides chaplaincy support for local government (South Staffs District Council) and is available for listening to the development of local services and to support those who manage public resources. His third area of work is workplace chaplaincy in legacy manufacturing (GKN Autostructures Telford), where he is present to “respond to workplace pastoral needs and to experience, and prophetically challenge, the changing conditions required by the manufacturing process”. Maintaining traditional engineering manufacture becomes progressively more difficult as customer cost and quality pressures are increased – improving response and efficiency demands increasing skill levels and continual investment in new technology – a challenging and stressful experience for many working in such a situation.

Mike Coley’s aim is to offer a service of care to people in their places of work, in selected regions near Wednesbury ACP + Spine Road industries. This is part of an ongoing project now in its sixth year, funded by the Baptist Home Missions and Lichfield Diocese Growth fund (New Expressions of Church funding) within BCUIM.

Mike’s objective is to develop a new expression of Church, in order

- To develop opportunities for working people to realise that God is real and appropriate, both to their situation and to themselves as individuals;
- To provide the means of co-ordinating those expressing a desire to know more about Christ – that they may be encouraged individually and given direction in mutual support in the practicalities and values of a Christ centred lifestyle, across a variety of locations and situations;
- To seek out and help Christians at work to grow;
- To cement together through developing relationships;

- To look imaginatively at advocating company ownership of workplace chaplaincy, primarily to consolidate a firm foundation for Christian values in the workplace, and to seek alternative funding as current sources for post are uncertain beyond Aug 2009.

Christine Brown is chaplain at the Merry Hill Centre in Brierley Hill, building on the ministry and vision of various chaplains, the Diocese of Worcester and the Parish of St Augustine of Hippo, Holly Hall, Dudley for over fifteen years. The chaplaincy is linked to the Black Country Urban Industrial Mission, as well as its Worcestershire equivalent and Church Action Within Society, the Diocesan overarching body.

Her objectives include

- Providing a focus for raising awareness of retail and related ethical issues such as Fair Trade and work-based chaplaincy within the wider Church and community;
- Listening to those who seek out the support of the Chaplain and do what is possible to enable them and those they work for to make connections between faith, work and the Economy;
- Seeking to develop a team of Associate Chaplains to individual stores and companies so that the ministry develops and can be better sustained;
- Challenging the Church to support outreach in the workplace as a vital means of response to the Gospel and communities Christ calls us to serve.

EMPOWERING AND TRANSFORMING URBAN COMMUNITIES

Olwen Smith's long work in Wolverhampton has enabled her to become involved in strategic situations, in partnership with both secular and Church bodies – "in order to put the values of the Kingdom in places where decisions are made..".

She is a member of the Wolverhampton City Centre Company and its Retail Group and chairs and coordinates City Centre Churches Engaged. She holds a number of representative roles, including representing the Church on the Faith Cabinet for the Black Country.

Andy Smith's Town Centre work in Walsall began when the Borough was "in a state of political turmoil and becoming decreasingly effective at genuine consultation". His "concern to facilitate the re-empowering of local people" led to his becoming a member of the Walsall Community Empowerment Network and Strategic Partnership and of the Walsall Multi-Faith Forum (WMFF), the objective being to use his influence to facilitate change and transformation in partnership with others.

Practical work includes

- Working with the Multi-Faith Forum to eliminate racist extremism in local politics and develop community cohesion, with the production of a DVD to explain the work the WMFF and the reasons for trying to understand each other's faiths – to be distributed through Walsall Schools and other interested bodies. He is also involved in the preparation of the annual Holocaust Memorial Event at Walsall Art Gallery for purposes of community cohesion and the Annual Workers Memorial Service (in conjunction with local Trades Unions);
- Engagement with the Council and related voluntary sector bodies - to be the Church's voice on issues that affect the people of Walsall – is a key outcome.

Pat Nimmo's work focuses on Black Country-wide regeneration and local engagement in Brierley Hill.

She visits the Black Country Consortium monthly and works with the Chief Executive to form a network of Church and faith representatives to work with the Consortium, the outcome being to form a Faith Cabinet for the Black Country to support and enable the Faith Seat on the Consortium and on issues affecting faith communities in the future.

At the local, Brierley Hill, level, she aims to be strategically placed to bring about dialogue in partnership with public institutions and the churches and is a member of the Brierley Hill Regeneration Partnership Engagement, Vice Chair of Brierley Hill Community Forum, Chair of Black Country Churches Engaged and a member of Dudley MBC Economic Development and Regeneration Partnership.

An important part of her work has been working to provide youth training and life skills to young people in the Chapel Street area of Brierley Hill and she chairs the Brierley Hill Project trustees which has enabled the partnership between the Baptist Church and Amblecote Christian Centre to renovate the Baptist Church, employ staff and inaugurate training and youth facilities for 16-25 year olds on the estate. The Project has received sufficient funds since its inception two years ago to renovate the building and employ two workers and is about to open and begin community activities and training in life skills working with Stourbridge College.

She has a passionate interest in Faith and the Environment, aiming to enable a better relationship between faith groups and regeneration agencies in Brierley Hill focusing on issues of environmental concern. She coordinated and organised a Green Faith Day with the churches and faith groups in June 2008, aiming to roll out a small planning group through partnership groups and agencies.

Peter Sellick in West Bromwich works to encourage interface between different churches in the Borough and the public sector, especially around areas of regeneration and social concern – demonstrating “Christian concern for the wellbeing of society”.

Objectives include regular newsletters, an annual conference, town meetings and facilitating committee work.

PROMOTING FAITH FOR WORK

Chaplains use various ways of stating their reasons for “promoting faith for work”:

- “Christians find it difficult to make connections between faith and work, which the Church inadequately resources. Encouragement of individuals and congregations to see and make connections in daily discipleship and to have theological and practical resources for doing this”;
- “People often want to know a Christian perspective on different situations and issues even if not ‘owing’ their Christian faith, as well as those in Church who rarely hear teaching on issues to do with the economy and how to conduct themselves at work”;
- “Helping Christians shine the light of the gospel around their working lives to grow what is godly and challenge what is not”.

This involves

- preaching, writing articles, taking speaking opportunities;
- Linking in with other strategic objectives of all denominations, especially Lichfield Diocese’s “Going for Growth”;
- Linkage with the other departments within Lichfield Diocese, including Ministry;
- “Taking opportunities at Occasional Offices to speak to people about their real (economically based) concerns and other issues of faith”.

Outcomes include:

- More awareness of BCUIM's resources and of a theology of work;
- More integration of BCUIM with the mainstream strategies of denominations;
- Christians are made more aware of the need for 24/7 discipleship;
- The Church is made more aware of the need for mission in the Economy;
- Greater delight in role of work;
- Greater awareness of the ethical issues arising.

CHALLENGING WORLD VALUES AND BEING PROPHETIC TO CHURCH AND WORLD

For Olwen Smith, a vital practical way of promoting the work and raising the profile of BCUIM and mission in the economy has been through maximising BCUIM's DVD, both with churches (of all denominations) and with companies.

Andy Smith states that, to combat the widespread ignorance about Church and gospel, he is researching in the Black Country/ Birmingham Area the actual reasons why people leave the churches, with a view to publishing the results.

Pat Nimmo speaks of wishing to be able to influence matters of community cohesion and asylum, representing West Midlands Churches Forum on the Regional Cohesion Group in relation to refugees and migrants of the West Midlands.

Peter Sellick speaks of disseminating publicity about the opportunities and benefits of engaging in economic life and regeneration issues; visiting churches and synods to talk; training, helping to set up and support those who volunteer – and seeking more volunteer associates.

MEET THE CHAPLAINS

Review Group members spent time with each of the chaplains and short bird's eye views of what they encountered now follow:

REPORT OF CHRIS BEALES' VISIT WITH ANDY SMITH, 3 DECEMBER 2007

Andy Smith has been in Walsall for 12 years as industrial chaplain and parish priest of St Luke's Chuckery. Chris Beales visited one of the companies where Andy is chaplain, Chamberlin & Hill, a foundry employing 150 people, mainly making components for the automotive industry. We were taken round by the Sales Manager, who was very committed and enthusiastic about the work. The key issue, he said, is "having to keep ahead of the game by producing higher quality components than our competitors, providing a better service, being a good employer.. So we must treat our staff well, recycle waste products and be environmentally responsible". Andy is a former civil engineer and his relationships with people on the shop floor, of varying ethnicities and faith allegiances, were easy and natural, an important witness to the universal service offered by the Church.

In his parish, Andy is engaged in urban mission. St Luke's is part of a cluster of 5 local churches. An important part of his work is his involvement in the Walsall Multi Faith Forum.

Key issues arising in conversation with Andy were as follows:

- Why? His vision is rooted in Matt 25, Luke 4, John 10 v 10. "Helping people to become.." (McQuarrie). "As a fellow human, I can do nothing else..". In the factory, "I'm here because you're here. I listen and, when called on, answer questions. This work is part of the Church's care for those at work.

- “Industrial Mission has given me the vision.. – my passion is to spread the vision, in practical ways. Not enough people are aware of the Church’s social engagement. All clergy should be involved in this way..”
- Do you feel you’re making any difference? “In Walsall, I have a high profile and am on lots of bodies.. I have lots of good networks established over 12 years..”

REPORT OF MIKE BOYD’S AND CHRIS BEALES’ VISIT WITH OLWEN SMITH, 3 DECEMBER 2007

Chris Beales and Mike Boyd went with Olwen Smith to Marstons Brewery in Wolverhampton and met Derek Andrew, Managing Director (the pubs chain has 11000 employees across the country). Derek said: “I’ve been a fan of IM ever since I joined the company 27 years ago”. Spiritual welfare is as important as financial reports etc. I have lots of debate with Olwen which you can’t have with colleagues.. She’s a barometer.. a safety valve. The chaplain’s work is invaluable – but unquantifiable. She’s also a voice and an ear, open to all”. Derek worked previously in Hartlepool with the local industrial chaplain, Mike Cooke, in Camerons Brewery in the early 1990s.

Marstons operates within a set of values and an ethical framework, developed from consulting with workforce: FIT (Fairness; Integrity; Transparency). So, in competition with other companies, Marstons would not slash drinks prices or employ strippers to attract custom – as to do so would undermine its integrity. The company is seen as reliable, steady, a follower of trends rather than a trend-setter.. but there is considerable growth momentum. Turnover was £360m last year. It is a cash business with a widely dispersed workforce (pub managers etc).

The key, highly topical issue is alcohol consumption – pubs v supermarkets.

Marstons is responsible for sales and consumption (in pubs). 7 years ago, food was 20% of pub business – now it is 34%, 40% by 2010. Supermarkets have no responsibility for the actions of their customers. The Prime Minister called in industry leaders last week and said legislation will follow if they don’t get their act together to tackle drunkenness. [nb could there be a link with Asda chaplains to address this?]

What about IM? “The chaplaincy and Church need to sell themselves. Marstons can help promote chaplaincy to other companies. The BCUIM DVD will help. Most companies can pay more to mitigate costs” says Derek.

REPORT OF DAVID FRITH’S VISIT WITH PETER SELICK, 6 DECEMBER 2007

David Frith met with Peter Sellick, working in the Borough of Sandwell, part of which is outside the Diocese of Lichfield. Peter has a half-time BCUIM post alongside a half-time parish post in West Bromwich. He visits weekly Brockhouse Forging in West Bromwich. He clearly knew and was known by people there, many of whom are from other faith communities. Peter’s presence was warmly welcomed, although the terrific noise made pastoral conversation a little difficult. There are two other workplaces which Peter also visits regularly. In addition to this, his BCUIM post includes two other areas of work: seeking to build a team of associate chaplains to extend workplace visiting (although he feels this is rarely successful except amongst middle-class volunteers in shopping centres – and a recent training course for retail chaplaincy in Wolverhampton was poorly supported) and as Sandwell Churches’ Link Officer (with the Local Authority). Amongst the issues touched on in discussion were:

- How much should chaplains “do” as opposed to “enable”? The desirability of a greater focus on enabling was clear but Peter did not underestimate the difficulty of finding appropriate volunteers, and also felt there was a particular value to the visibility of a clerical collar and to the expertise that stipendiary chaplains accumulate;

- The “scandal of particularity”: only a very small proportion of workplaces are visited by BCUIM chaplains. Peter acknowledged this, although the proportion may not be very different to that between parishioners and parish priest;
- Since there is a fundamental economic problem here, how does or might the Diocese make decisions about allocating resources? The greatest need? The greatest opportunity?

REPORT OF CHRIS BEALES’ MEETING WITH PAT NIMMO, 17 APRIL 2008

Pat is a Minister of the United Reformed Church and works half time with a brief within BCUIM for regeneration and half time with a local brief to work in Brierley Hill. Pat’s post is one of the URC’s Special Category Ministers’ posts. “It is about mission” she says. “I started with a blank sheet. The URC funds my stipend and BCUIM and others my house and expenses”.

Her work engages with the Government’s “sustainable communities” agenda and she has a particular interest in green issues. “The Government wants to promote cohesion in local communities”, she says, and Pat focuses especially on faith communities and the green agenda. “Grassroots community cohesion – it’s what energises me.. along with helping people understand the significance of climate change”.

Her main work on the macro level across the Black Country has been with the Black Country Consortium and Pat was only clergy person involved – working with Council planners and others.

The Consortium’s Study divided the Black Country into sections in order to set out priorities for each area and the Consortium wanted a faiths group to bounce ideas off. BCUIM put in an initial submission and four chaplains turned up at the consultation – demonstrating how heavily BCUIM is plugged into this significant strategic process.

She also works at micro level in Brierley Hill and is involved in responding to the built environment – the new Brierley Hill Town Centre does not include the old hill or St Michael’s and it is crucial, in Pat’s view, to get them in, in order to access funding. She sits on the Brierley Hill Regeneration Partnership.

Pat also sits on Dudley’s Economic Regeneration Group (and works closely with the Bishop of Dudley, especially supporting the idea of a faiths cabinet for the Black Country Subregional Faiths Forum) and an important part of her agenda is tackling religious extremism. She is involved with Faithworks West Midlands and her vision for local church engagement is demonstrated by work she developed with a Baptist layman, which led to a commission on youth in Brierley Hill, where the local churches provide the majority of youth provision. Particular needs in the Chapel Street Estate for 16-25s led to a survey being conducted. The outcome has been exciting: the Baptist Church, working with a local House Church, has set up the Brierley Hill project in the restored Baptist Church building, with £250 000 raised. Pat chairs the management group. There is a part time fundraiser and two youth workers (doing basic life skills training, parenting etc). “We’d love to emulate the Walsall Vine Project” says Pat.

The Heart of England Baptist Association has a Mission Development Fund, to which an application is being submitted for further work.

“The way I’ve seen my job”, says Pat, “is initiating, enabling, chairing, challenging..”. The Church needs engaged people to critique society – that’s a “missional” focus and pivotal role. There is an urgent need for faith community engagement with the Black Country Consortium and other local organisations, including Stourbridge College and local schools and agencies, with whom she is involved.

REPORT OF CHRIS BEALES' MEETING WITH NEIL PERKINSON, 17 APRIL 2008

Neil has a dual role as Darlaston's industrial missionary and parish priest of All Saints Darlaston (population 3500), consisting of a mainly ageing and shrinking indigenous white working class community, 68% Pakistani Muslim, no Eastern Europeans. There are 3 Mosques, a well funded Islamic Study Centre, a Hindu Hall and a Jehovah's Witnesses Kingdom Hall. "As a church, we struggle, we're a church at risk" says Neil. Half of the congregation of 25-30 live in the parish. The town experienced large scale industrial closures between 60s and 80s and there is still much dereliction around.

However, in the Black Country Study, areas of total regeneration – regeneration corridors – are identified and Darlaston is the Walsall Strategic Corridor.

Walsall Council has had a difficult time and was put into special measures. Consultation has been going on through Local Area Network Agreements to identify local priorities, though it has been "pretty ineffective", according to Neil. The Council applied to the Government for a regeneration company, which was approved. The Government appointed the Board.

In the time of big industrial closures, DRAG was formed – Darlaston Redundancy Action Group. Rubery Owen gave its old apprentice training centre for community use and the ROAPP (Rubery Owen Apprentices) Hall project was formed to deliver training programmes. All Saints initiated this work and remained involved until the end of March 2008, when the project finally closed. The Leys Hall in Darlaston is going to take some of the training equipment and computers.

There is active work going on with young people in the community and Neil chairs the local youth centre (an ex Boys Club). There are issues to do with involving young Muslims.

Inter faith dialogue has not been easy. The Council, according to Neil, invited a Muslim to represent the faiths on Darlaston Strategic Partnership – but no contact with churches has been made. The Council values Walsall's Inter-Faith Forum (with which Andy Smith is involved).

"Chaplaincy work with local industries is very precarious in Darlaston" Neil concludes.

VIEWS FROM THE PARISH: DAVID FRITH'S DISCUSSION WITH CHRIS THORPE, TEAM RECTOR, BILSTON

Chris has developed a significant regeneration specialism within the Parish of Bilston. He credits this, in part, to having previously had on the parish staff someone who was also a half-time BCUIM chaplain. Chris says that having a specialist so readily available made a very real difference to the direction and success of the parish's mission. No doubt in response to this, the parish features in the BCUIM induction programme for clergy new to the Black Country. He was also very appreciative of the Team Leader's support which he described as 'very, very professional'. When he held a Songs of Praise service specifically for those who worked for the local firm, Thompson Bros, he found that many of the former workers had stories of the support provided to them by BCUIM.

The developments in the Parish of Bilston have led to this approach being seen as of model for others (not least by the Diocese), and Chris has often addressed groups about this, and found an enormous amount of interest in response. One group was an exception to this – a national conference on urban industrial mission. Chris recalls a silent response to his address on this occasion and that, when pushed, one comment came back from those present: "You've been talking about Church. That's not what we're about". For Chris, this attitude within Industrial Mission risks confirming the suspicion of others in the Church that it is "a para-church organisation with an agenda of its own". By contrast, Chris' own view is that "the only point of Industrial Mission (and the only way they'll get any money) is in resourcing parishes – enabling

and animating people in churches. [One particular resource which he identifies as being needed by parishes addressing regeneration issues is a central resource providing expert help for projects, especially in the areas of accounting and law].

VIEW FROM THE PARISH: RICHARD GRIGSON (PARISH PRIEST OF SMALLTHORNE, STOKE ON TRENT AND MEMBER OF THE REVIEW GROUP)

Richard's aim is to reflect on the Church's engagement with secular structures of regeneration and renewal in a situation where there are no central structures to facilitate and support this engagement.

As a local parish priest, Richard has had limited dealings with North Staffordshire Regeneration Zone (part of Advantage West Midlands) to renew part of the parish buildings by meeting NSRZ objectives of creating and safeguarding jobs. He did this by bidding for funding to improve and extend a parish church hall to enable a nursery to expand, create jobs, support families and release mothers into the workplace. The church was able to give the project added value by making the facilities available to a wider range of people than just a nursery. The church engaged with the process, not simply to support a nursery, but in order to grow contacts within the local community, and therefore to support mission. He writes unashamedly from the background of a situation in which participation in regeneration involves receiving and using regeneration funding.

The advantage of parish involvement, rather than specialist involvement, in regeneration structures is that parishes are able to deliver local interest and be responsive to local need. A further advantage is that local churches are likely to be able to deliver projects which link with a much broader cross section of the community than do self selecting clubs/societies, or simple business ventures. The non-profit ethos of local churches means that regeneration funders may get far better value from working with local churches than working with more distant organisations and profit making ventures.

Example: The Smallthorne church hall project delivered a relatively large number of jobs created and safeguarded for relatively small outlay. This is because the nursery business had identified a local need which, without expansion, it could not meet. The church did not directly seek a profit from the project.

The significant disadvantages are as follows:

- Local churches will not have a breadth of view necessary to interact with city or region wide regeneration. The parish system, with the encouragement to concentrate on a small geographical area, is not always aware of issues affecting wider areas, although (conversely) clergy and lay chapters may be very well placed to comment on wider issues on the rare occasions that those chapters are used creatively to look beyond the gathered church;
- Local churches will not necessarily have people with the gifts and skills necessary to put their case forward in the terms with which funders deal. This is the most significant reason to support engagement as a "central" activity. However, when central engagement becomes disengaged from, or oblivious to, the needs and opportunities of the local church it, it becomes, in that sense, useless and a drain on the local church.

Example: The Smallthorne church hall project came about because the parish priest sits as a (parent) governor at a local high school, where he happened to hear that NSRZ were seeking to meet targets towards the end of the financial year. In that sense it hit lucky (or Godly blessed). An active conduit for information, coupled with expertise support for bids, would remove the luck element, replacing it with the rather more biblical principles of discernment and mutual support.

BCUIM points, rightly, to its involvement with regeneration structures. It appears to represent the local church to regeneration structures. Richard is not clear that it represents regeneration structures to the local church.

Clearly the Church does need to be involved in the secular structures of regeneration where possible; whether this is the preserve of Urban Industrial Mission is a moot point – in lexical terms it most certainly is not. It may well be that “Mission in the Economy” is the better starting point for participation. The Church needs also to ensure that it participates in regeneration not merely by being present and commenting (thereby legitimising) but by participating and receiving.

CHAPTER 3

GOVERNANCE AND DIRECTION: THE BOARD OF BCUIM

The Board of BCUIM is a distinguished and potentially influential group of people drawn from the various denominations, industry and commerce and other walks of life. It is chaired by David Owen of Rubery Owen.

It is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee and its charitable objects are:

- the advancement of the Christian faith by ministering to individuals in both industrial and urban environments
- the relief of poverty and the advancement of education and training through initiating supporting and joining in partnership with regeneration projects and programmes; building capacity support and help for those in need of training for employment and training in business
- the advancement of education through the provision and support of information and training schemes - particularly but not exclusively within the geographical area known as The Black Country comprising the City of Wolverhampton and the boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall (the area of benefit) in accordance with the Basis of Faith of the Charity as set out in Schedule One of this Memorandum and also in accordance with the Aims of the Charity as set out in Schedule Two of this Memorandum.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

BCUIM's strategic objectives are stated as follows:

"BCUIM : REGENERATING FAITH IN THE BLACK COUNTRY

We are churches at the cutting edge of economic life in the Black Country, connecting Church and the Economy

We seek to bring values of the Kingdom to everyday life by:

- being alongside people at work ...
"Go to every part of the world, and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation" [Mark 16:15]
"My Father continues to work, and I must work too." [John 5: 17]
- promoting faith for work ...
"You are salt to the world ... you are light for all the world ..." [Matthew 5:13-14]
- empowering and transforming urban communities ...
"I have come that they may life, and may have it in all its fullness." [John 10: 10]
- challenging world values and being a prophetic voice to Church and world ...
"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me; he has sent me to announce good news to the poor..." [Luke 4:18]"

Behind these bold statements of intent are a cadre of able and committed clergy and lay people, including Church leaders with an understanding of the need for involvement with the complex and challenging issues raised by economic change in the West Midlands and a desire to engage – even though the agenda and means of engagement is not easy to articulate or enact. And also including lay people with the ability to “imagine” both in the “language” of business and commerce and the “language” of the Church. It is in these places that the Word truly becomes flesh and the resource represented by such a group and network should be valued and made full use of in mission.

When the Review Group met with the BCUIIM Board on Tuesday 19 February, it posed a series of questions which became the source of animated discussion and debate.

Those questions were as follows:

1. What do you think the sponsoring Churches want of BCUIIM?
2. How do their perceived wishes fit with your (the Board's) priorities and BCUIIM activities?
3. If more resources were available, how would you deploy them?
4. If resources were cut, what would you do?
5. Where could more resources be obtained?
6. Do chaplains have to be clergy?
7. Who are your/BCUIIM's main allies?

Following the meeting, the Board continued to work on these issues and produced a substantial paper setting out both its considered responses to the questions listed above and an impassioned theological argument for engaging rigorously in and with the world.

The Board's paper is available from BCUIIM and should be commended for its clarity and insights. It also speaks loud and clear of the commitment of lay Christian people to mission in the economy and articulates the importance of maintaining such a presence.

What follows is extracted from that response.

“The first two questions make a distinction between BCUIIM and the “sponsoring” Churches. It is important to stress two things at the outset. Firstly BCUIIM whilst being a distinct structure is a part of, and organ of, the sponsoring churches. Secondly, the constitutional structure of BCUIIM with its Board is significant. The Church (“area”, “district” and “area diocesan”) Leaders of the sponsoring Churches are actually members of the Board and Trustees. Hence there is a clear mechanism and ample opportunity through the Board meetings for the sponsoring Churches to say what they consider to be their priorities for BCUIIM and for a dialogue about the ways in which BCUIIM mission and the wider concerns of the sponsoring Churches fit. In addition to Board meetings the Board and the team held a combined away day to look at strategic priorities and the future of BCUIIM

1. What do you think the sponsoring Churches want of BCUIIM?
 - a. To some extent there are differences between the denominations (and Diocese) and they must each speak for themselves.
 - b. However, none of them would question the need to go out into all the world, especially being alongside supporting and sometimes challenging those hard at work earning a living as Jesus did for most of the recorded ministry that we have of him in the gospels. Exactly how is a matter of each denomination's own particular strategy and priority. Of course, BCUIIM works with each of the denominational strategies as far as possible.
 - c. A number of key points can be made:

i. The URC (through its Special Category Ministers posts) have a clear commitment to being closely involved with urban regeneration and all that this means – and with the "faith" response to and support for regeneration and economic development (thus inter-faith working becomes an important issue) – (see so-called "allies" below).

ii. The Methodists have taken urban issues very seriously which include working in the wider economy on work with firms but also regeneration and the unemployed and excluded.

iii. Worcester diocese has a strategy which is built around an extension of the five marks of mission and sees itself for those who are not or not yet members of the Church.

iv. Lichfield Diocese has a "Vision for Growth for Lichfield Diocese 2008 – 2010" which has a strategy: "Going for Growth" and which also reaffirms the four primary purposes of "Growing the Kingdom".

v. The Baptist Union and the Heart of England Baptist Association are strongly mission led.

2. How do their perceived wishes fit with your (the Board's) priorities and BCUIM activities?

- a. The priorities and activities that the Board tries to sustain are those agreed with the team:
- i. Being alongside people at work
 - ii. Promoting faith for work
 - iii. Empowering and transforming urban communities
 - iv. Challenging world values and being a prophetic voice to Church and world.
- b. We are committed to an ecumenical approach, the Churches working together
- c. We are committed to trying to cover the whole of the Black Country with a view to expansion — a presence in each Borough and if possible each town/community (The away day strongly recommended one FTE post in each Borough).
- d. We are committed to engagement with the regeneration of the whole area and hence supporting the role of the faith seat on the Black Country consortium, also engagement in specific projects as in Brierley Hill and other strategic centres. (For the strategic centres in the Black Country see the "Black Country Study" and vision).
- e. We are committed to supporting the work of co-ordinating and responding to regeneration by participating in the project with the URC, linking the churches of the Black Country to the Black Country Core Strategy.
- f. We are committed to supporting a presence for the Baptist Union (HEBA) – at present in partnership with the Lichfield Diocese Growth fund.
- g. We are committed to both the "old" industries and meeting the needs of the new – as in the Black Country Spine Road in-movers and in the Wolverhampton/Telford high tech corridor.

- h. As a Board our priorities are to ensure that the funds for expenses are available for the team to work fully, that there is good representation on the Board from both lay and ordained.
 - i. We see the absolute importance of increasing the engagement of the Christian faith in the world of work and the economy :
 - i.The world of work and the economy needs the Christian message.
 - ii.The Church needs to understand much better the world of work and the economy so that it can better serve and challenge that world.
 - iii.Christians need to be resourced for the demands of their working lives
3. If more resources were available, how would you deploy them?
- a. It depends upon the scale and length of time for which the resources are available.
 - b. If they were only at a very modest level: employ a part time administrator/manager to release more time from the team leader and team members to be “out in the world”.
 - c. With increased team size we would want to meet our commitment to cover the whole of the Black Country and to respond to the areas where there is significant and changing growth in population and in new investment, industries and types of job. We would want to ensure that we covered again all of the key areas that are not now closely served with mission (for example the Waterfront at Brierley Hill and W Bromwich town centre) and also replace some of those areas that we have lost or may in the future be under threat (e.g Bilston, Walsall and Darlaston). We would want to respond to the challenges and opportunities laid out in the Black Country Study.
 - d. Our commitment to covering the whole of the Black Country is reinforced by the fact that the Black Country Study has recommended the concentration of growth and development around 4 strategic centres: West Bromwich, Wolverhampton, Walsall and Brierley Hill.
 - e. To consider the longer term strategy and priorities.... we collectively defined three priorities and ways forward:
 - i. the development of a highly visible ecumenical presence and prophetic voice across the region, forming a unit on economics, ethics and industrial change which would brief the Church and its leaders...
 - ii. Moving from doing to enabling – supporting local action in local churches and communities which would be increasingly dependent on local volunteers and trained associates and work through the denominations’ own strategies...
 - iii. Building cells and networks to support scattered Christians in their own workplace locations..
 - f. If time limited funds were available then they would be devoted to specific projects (such as the spine road work, or the regeneration work)
 - g. If a very short term sum were to be available then employing a fund raiser to raise funds for new projects might be a sensible use of such “short term” resources.
4. If resources were cut, what would you do?

- a. We are already engaged in external fund raising for new work
 - b. The Board is clear that it cannot take responsibility for funding the stipends of ministers
 - c. The Board is able to look at fund raising for specific projects/activities
 - d. If stipends could not be resourced to BCUM work we would suggest that more of this work is taken up by parish ministers and some of the laity. However... there would need to be an explicit statement by the Diocese and other Church leaders that hard pressed parish people should divert some of their effort to this work – and there would have to be guidance and acceptance of what other work should be dropped elsewhere to allow time for such a change of priorities...
5. Where could more resources be obtained?
- a. We obtain funds from charities, trusts and donations.
 - b. We receive donations from firms with which we are engaged
 - c. We provide (fee paying) training and induction courses for the Churches
 - d. We are hoping to start an association of “friends” of BCUM...
 - e. We may be able to help raise funds for specific project work, for example from government schemes.
 - f. We are very aware of the dangers of becoming led by the need to find money rather than by the Spirit –
 - i. We cannot alter our mission just to obtain funding that might be available
 - ii. We need to be very aware of the implications of expecting a payment for everything we do – the concept of unconditional love and service so central to our faith needs to be nurtured and supported.
6. Do chaplains have to be clergy?
- a. No but
 - i. There are many occasions when an ordained person is called for (personal crises, accidents, leading public services, some pastoral work)
 - ii. They more clearly come from outside the structures of industry and commerce or of a particular firm and hence are seen as “independent” “honest brokers”
 - iii. The active presence of someone wearing the “dog collar” is a potent symbol and visible statement of the active service of the Churches in the world.
 - iv. Don't forget that the laity are hard pressed also
 - b. The team, with the support of the Board, are actively trying to promote the engagement of associate chaplains, but we are aware of the time pressures already on priests and

ministers with congregations to support – there is also a need for initial training and then on-going support for them.

- c. The Church in general is poor at resourcing lay people to do this kind of work – in most Churches very little is said on Sundays about the world of work and the economy - hence the need for BCUIM to be “prophetic” towards the Church . *It would require a sea change in the priorities of the individual Churches to start to recognise this and then a need for adequate training and continuing support for such a role.*
- d. The Board of BCUIM recognise the resource constraints on the Churches (both financial and personnel)...

7. Who are your/BCUIM's main allies?

- a. Most people who know us and know our work
- b. The companies we visit
- c. The agencies and partnerships we work with
- d. The Government and local authorities – with the increasing call for faith groups to be involved in community development, regeneration, etc.
- e. Local Area Partnerships etc – where our role as independent parties is seen as very valuable.
- f. Other faith groups who value strongly the role of BCUIM in resourcing and sustaining faith group activities in the communities (the faith seat on the Black Country Consortium, inter-faith working and presence in firms and with local authorities and hence civil society)
- g. Firms in need
- h. Trades unions and the Chamber of Commerce
- i. During the Board’s discussion with the review group the concept of the “customers” of BCUIM was raised. The Board felt that this question – “Who are the customers?” - needs addressing; and the Board would make three points:

- i. It was very forcibly put by the Board that the Church leaders, the Churches or the clergy are NOT the customers – and that should not be the view of the Church or its leaders.

- ii. The Board, and especially those lay Board members who are business people engaged in the commercial world, caution strongly against using the term “customer” – it is a business model concerned with transaction and paid exchange; whereas the Church and BCUIM should be about bringing a different model into the commercial world (nb comments made by the business people in the BCUIM video)

- iii. As expressed by members of our Board, the presence of BCUIM amongst those who need us is one of demonstrating agape or unconditional love; we are there to (freely) serve people, firms, organisations in the sub-region. This is the theological model to which the Team and the Board work..”

The Board paper continues to expound its rationale for engagement. It sets out the ways in which it is responding to the changes taking place in society:

“..this changing world throws up new challenges and opportunities for those who live in it and for BCUIM as it works alongside others. Changes and challenges to which we have responded by altering the way our mission is accomplished..”

The Board paper then lists and describes three key areas of change in the work of BCUIM: Changing Needs and Opportunities; Changing Patterns of Life; and Changing Pressures on the Church.

Finally, it concludes powerfully:

“What does the Board wish to hear from this review?”

1. It should be a part of the Church's strategic vision to step outside the four walls of church and more fully engage with the world of work and the economy; to open itself and respond to the needs of the world of work, and the invitations that that world is offering the Church. Here is where the need and opportunity are, here is where the seeds of the kingdom are ready to grow. .
2. We would hope that the Diocese will continue to be committed to the mission of BCUIM, seeing it as an important part of the Diocese's own mission. We think that it is vital that at the very least the current level of resources (especially personnel but also financial) is maintained. There is a need for increased resources to ensure that the work can cover properly each of the key strategic centres and Boroughs of the Black Country where there are increasing needs and opportunities for our Christian presence and ministry to an increasingly non-churched world.
3. Some stability in this forward view of resources so that we can plan for the next 10 years, with a 5 year rolling plan. A good outcome for BCUIM would include the security of knowing that we will be enthusiastically funded, maybe even to grow, and that this work will be embraced by and committed to by the Diocese, so that we can do the work to which God has called us.
4. An indication of how IM links in with Diocesan policy, structures, and particularly how we might be encouraged to engage with and link to parishes
5. An indication of how we might link in with and help to support the needs for IM and urban/regeneration mission in other parts of the Diocese of Lichfield.“

The Diocese should take careful note of the Board's views and concerns. To dis-engage from the economic life of the region is to risk marginalising the Gospel in relation to the main forces shaping and effecting the lives of human beings and the destiny of the world. The need for new priorities and emphases is accepted and must now be implemented. BCUIM is a vital instrument in the work of bringing Good News to the Black Country.

CHAPTER 4

MOVING FROM DOING TO ENABLING

It quickly became apparent during the Review that, whatever our conclusions about the quality and direction of BCUIM's work, there would be questions about use of limited resources and their proper deployment by the Diocese. We would need, therefore, to identify ways in which existing work could be sustained and new work developed, against a backdrop of limited resources and, from the Diocese's point of view, changing priorities. To some this could be seen as a threat and a devaluing of dedicated and difficult work on the margins between "Church" and "world", sustained – often against considerable odds – over many years by the team of chaplains and lay activists and supporters in parishes, communities and workplaces.

To its credit, BCUIM has seen the need for change. With congregations often feeling increasingly beleaguered and financial pressures growing (especially as patterns of work and employment opportunities alter and young people move away from areas of economic decline), BCUIM has recognised the need to move from "doing" to "enabling".

"..industrial mission is too important to be left to Industrial Mission!.. BCUIM can be 'mission enablers.... Moving from doing to enabling – supporting local action in local churches and communities..." [from BCUIM papers, 2005 and 2007]

Having said this, it is important not to dispense with the *doing*. BCUIM's credibility has grown over many years of "sticking at it" in situations long since deserted by the rest of the Church. The industrial workplace, noisy, dirty and dangerous in many of the manufacturing and engineering works still to be found in the Black Country, is the very context in which chaplains appear regularly to offer, unconditionally, a friendly conversation, an interest in the lives not just of fellow believers but of people of all faiths and none, non-partisan opinion about issues in the workplace, advice when requested about personal matters and, when the occasion arises, testimony to the One who has called them to this work.

This "gentle and generous" ministry can operate only on a tiny scale because chaplains are few. It is not unlike old fashioned parochial ministry at its best – and BCUIM's strategy of involving local clergy and appropriately licenced lay people in workplace visiting is to be strongly affirmed. Given the positive and affirmative statements on the BCUIM DVD made by some of the beneficiaries of this ministry – managers, supervisors, shop floor workers, men and women, people of different faiths – there is value in this ministry which extends beyond the immediate workplaces served and acts as a model of how to engage Christianly in a secularised culture in some of Britain's most diverse and deprived communities. Exactly the kind of place where we should expect to find Jesus!

So, the following matters need to be addressed:

- how to coordinate the rich diversity of expressions of mission in economy and society so that energy is not dissipated, and the mission is as effective as possible;
- how to assess what level of resourcing is necessary and sustainable for supporting and developing this mission, in the Black Country and across the whole Diocese;
- how to generate funding not only to sustain but to expand this work, ensuring that it also reaches young people, unemployed people, refugees and other groups – and opening up opportunities for lay (non clergy) people to work as chaplains and outreach workers etc;
- how to support BCUIM in transforming its focus from *doing* to *enabling* – and involving parishes and congregations more actively - whilst retaining a level of expertise derived from practical, hands-on experience.

CHAPTER 5

PROPOSALS

In order to affirm the wealth of experience and opportunities developed by BCUIM and to acknowledge the important role of other agencies and initiatives related to work and economy – whilst also recognising the Diocese’s need to redeploy scarce resources - the Review Group offers the proposal which follows. It is based on some key principles:

- The Church’s engagement with the Economy is fundamentally about *mission* – and the Church must not retreat from the difficult and demanding arena of work and economic life but remain overtly engaged, through Church members, chaplaincies and others;
- This engagement needs to be better structured in order to complement the work of people and organisations in related fields;
- Local clergy and lay people need to be identified, resourced and enabled to carry out some of the tasks largely done at present by BCUIM chaplains – it is essential that parishes and congregations become more actively involved in supporting new people to exercise their *calling* to chaplaincy;
- Additional external funding needs to be attracted to maintain and expand the work – this is unlikely to come from Diocesan resources, though Church funding can be used to lever in financial support. So appropriate skills need to be developed and deployed;
- The “culture” of engagement is one of enterprise and action – work on the margins is not for the faint hearted!
- Because it is, by its very nature, difficult and demanding, it is essential that Church leaders and parishes should be involved with and support those called to such work;
- Effective oversight (episcopal) and coordination of this specific and focused work requires the consent of participating agencies; there is no room for jealousy or pride if missionary engagement in the economy is to be effective.

We listed above (in Chapter 2) other important players in the overt economic engagement of the Church: for example, regeneration agencies such as the Mercian Trust and the Church Urban Fund (Lichfield); the Community Ministry Course; chaplaincies in schools, colleges, universities, prisons, hospitals, the police and the fire service and the Ministers in Secular Employment.

These all represent, in some sense, the “overt” engagement of the Church in various aspects of work and economic life. “Joined up” thinking and action is notoriously difficult to achieve and people involved in these ministries have enough to be doing without attending yet more meetings.

Alongside them and permeating (and permeated by) them are the parishes and congregations, whose members are in the front line of mission. Most of them are, have been or expect to be employed or active in the workplace and, as such, need equipping and supporting to live the life of Christ in their daily work. This is the proper responsibility – though much neglected – of the parish and congregation.

“Joining up” is an episcopal function – those charged with oversight have, by definition, the big picture, unavailable to people working at grass roots and local levels. Coordination is, therefore, a dynamic function of informing, linking up and sharing insights (largely on what civil servants call a “need to know” basis). But it requires not just professional participation – the ideas, insights and

issues of lay people living out their faith in the workplace must be brought in. they will, undoubtedly, act as leaven in the lump and will earth glorious visions and grand designs!

We spell out below ways of assessing what level of resourcing is necessary and sustainable for supporting and developing this mission, in the Black Country and across the whole Diocese and of generating funding not only to sustain but to expand this work: on this rests our whole thesis.

So, supporting BCUIM in transforming its focus from *doing* to *enabling* is already well underway and the active and committed members of the Board will play an important role in this work. Other related agencies will also be involved.

MISSION IN ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

We propose the following restructuring of the work of engaging in Mission in Economy and Society:

- i. Place responsibility for mission in the economy under the oversight of a new full-time Diocesan Director for Mission in Economy and Society (DMES) - akin to the Diocesan Directors of Education, Parish Mission, Ordinands, etc;
- ii. Develop key Mission in Economy and Society chaplains/officers in each urban borough/area, not only in the Black Country but also in Telford and Stoke/North Staffordshire. The primary function of such officers is *enabling* - facilitating local action as well as being an expert resource both to parishes and to senior staff;
- iii. Embrace links with other Church agencies working in regeneration, inter-faith work etc, bringing them strategically under the auspices (episcopate) of the DMES.

It is important to say that this is not an Anglican takeover of ecumenical projects. The Diocese of Lichfield – which happens to be a major provider of resources and is, therefore, entitled to a say on their use – wishes to get its own house in order. To realise its vision for mission in the economy (the Review Group proposes) requires it to appoint a senior officer (the DMES) to oversee the work. But for delivery – at local level, in ways which will make a significant difference in people's lives and in shaping the future of communities and localities – the DMES will need colleagues and agents. The best agents are those already existing and familiar with their territories and remits. BCUIM covers the Black Country. The BCUIM senior chaplain post will be absorbed by the DMES post. The BCUIM Board and team will determine themselves how best to convene and co-ordinate the specific work with which it is charged.

Structures are in place in Telford and Stoke and can be further developed. Church regeneration agencies cover some parts of the Diocese. Prayer and action networks exist and are supported by committed Christian activists, many of whom work in local businesses, offices, schools, hospitals and elsewhere. And congregations and Church schools are to be found in every locality. What a basis for engagement!

WHAT WE PROPOSE

- full-time Diocesan Director of Mission in Economy and Society (DMES)
- half-time research and development officer (something similar exists alongside the Director of Parish Mission)
- half-time BCUIM MES officer for Walsall
- half-time BCUIM MES officer for Wolverhampton
- half-time BCUIM MES officer for Sandwell
- half-time MES officer for Telford (in due course)
- half-time MES officer for Stoke (in due course)

Every post is focused on *enabling* and supporting parishes and others to take forward this broad aspect of the Church's mission. This may not all be able to happen at once – but a strategic approach, over the next few years, should achieve what is required.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION

So what might this mean? Existing work in companies is to be affirmed but now needs increasingly to be carried out by volunteer chaplains – local clergy and lay people of all denominations called to this ministry on the margins and trained and equipped by the BCUIM chaplains and others, under the auspices of the DMES.

Strategic work with Advantage West Midlands (the Regional Development Agency), the Black Country Consortium (involving Olwen Smith, Pat Nimmo and others), the Training and Enterprise Council and other wider sub-regional and regional agencies and groups, work with local boroughs and agencies all need to be maintained and developed. Chaplains are sometimes invited to sit on boards, committees and management bodies – where possible, these opportunities should be considered strategically and responded to accordingly. But consideration should be given to the limited time and availability of key personnel. Sometimes they have to initiate and open the doors (vital work in relation to secular bodies) before handing over to others. The role is essentially apostolic - that of the pioneer or entrepreneur, rather than the longer term sustainer and deliverer. So the *enabling* aspect of mission in the economy includes equipping and sustaining the saints for their strategic, theologically rooted involvement in regenerating (in the fullest sense) towns and areas which have suffered greatly in recent years and are undergoing massive change.

This means, logically, identifying those “economic drivers” which will shape the future of the Black Country, or Stoke, or Telford.. and engaging with them.

Ongoing and sustained work by the existing chaplains with local companies, therefore, must always ask the strategic question: does this work have wider significance? If it is a mainly pastoral involvement (pastoring of individuals as well as the company, working with people on their work issues as well as their personal concerns) and not much more, then it needs to be handed over to voluntary chaplains. If it has more strategic significance – such as Olwen Smith's work with Marston Brewery, through which the Church could be playing a role in addressing the growing problem of alcohol abuse and binge drinking – then it should be maintained and linked with the Church's work with young people, families, schools, colleges and health centres/hospitals.

The strategic observation is this: for whatever reasons, “we” the Church – in particular the ordained clergy – occupy a position of trust and respect in society and are, therefore, able to bring people together, ask the penetrating but essential questions others won't or can't. We recognise the intrinsic value of all human beings and are avowedly against deceit, manipulation or exploitation – which gives us a basis for becoming responsibly involved in society. BCUIM chaplains have built on this “spiritual capital” in many effective ways to establish themselves – and by implication the whole Church - as significant (if quirky and different) contributors to the common good. Ironically, it is often the secular structures and agencies which recognise and value this more than the sending churches.

RAISING THE PROFILE

The need for a far more dynamic and attractive web presence should be developed – using volunteers, interns and working with university, college and school partners – to highlight the Church's engagement in and contribution to economic and social issues. Networking sites (Facebook and others) will be pertinent to this and the involvement of young people will be a critical factor in its success.

This epitomises the need for BCUIM and other agencies to recognise the importance of breaking out of the stereotypical image of being mainly for the middle aged! The active participation of young people in the work – possibly through recruiting student interns and maximising the benefits of partnering with educational institutions (schools, colleges and universities) – will have major benefits for the whole Church.

The easiest next step to take should be to establish web links with as many churches and Church agencies as possible and to take the necessary steps for search engines to locate “mission in the economy”, “BCUIM”, “workplace ministry”, “Church and regeneration”, “faith and work”, “Faith cabinet” and other topics.

A particular example of what might be done is to be found in nearby Coventry, where the Cathedral and West Midlands Police Community Forum have successfully obtained over £250,000 for working with and mobilising young people, over three years, around fair trade. This exciting project could potentially be replicated across the West Midlands and discussion should begin as soon as possible in order to meet funding deadlines in the autumn (contact: David Williams at Coventry Cathedral).

Rather further afield, perhaps, is the work of a small UK organisation, Afghan Action. Formed in 2005, it grew from the work of a charity, Employment Focus, with refugees and asylum seekers in East London. Employment Focus was the outcome of the Churches’ 1997 report on “Unemployment and the Future of Work” and its founder Chair was the former Bishop of Wolverhampton, Mike Bourke.

Afghan Action works in Kabul, Afghanistan and currently employs over 100 young men and women, most themselves refugees and displaced persons, weaving handmade carpets for the UK market. With orders to supply Habitat and John Lewis, it is just breaking into mainstream retail markets. Inspired and led by Christians – with a team of paid staff and volunteers in its UK office drawn from Christian, Muslim and Jewish backgrounds, Afghan Action’s aim is to support local economic development through its factory and training school. It is now diversifying into IT training and working with the UK and Afghan Governments, businesses, NGOs and others. Its main market outlets for carpets have been through events in British churches and, with over 1000 people on its database, the links with churches, and, increasingly Church schools, have been the most significant factor in its survival and growth.

Examples such as these – and many more can be pointed to in the West Midlands and elsewhere – help to illustrate the ability of the Church to break new ground, work in difficult situations and create opportunities which will, in the future, become “mainstream”.

CHAPTER 6: LOCALITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT

WALSALL

In terms of deployment, the vacancy in Darlaston arising from Neil Perkinson's departure in April 2008 could be combined with the existing half time post of Andy Smith in Walsall, so that there is one chaplain/officer post (a half time post) for the Borough of Walsall. However, the needs of Darlaston – an area of considerable deprivation – are such that we would recommend that, for a period of 6 - 12 months, an assessment of Darlaston's needs should be made in order that appropriate funding be identified to take work forward. The Mercian Trust and BCUIM could work together on this. Maybe the savings from Neil Perkinson's post could be deployed to assist temporarily in providing consultancy or meeting other costs and expenses – based on the model of the "turnaround team" familiar to the Diocese.

Other work in Walsall might cluster around the development of a new Church of England Academy (and an Academy linked to Thomas Telford School – see below), which will bring substantial investment and an opportunity to develop new ways of working and engaging with young people. Undoubtedly, there will be a need for chaplaincy – and a coordinated approach involving BCUIM and the Diocesan Board of Education should be developed as soon as possible. Project funding for work with young people will be available or accessible.

Already, BCUIM chaplains – also in their capacity as local parish priests – have been significantly involved with people of other faiths and with inter-faith work. This work is of considerable significance. Funding is available both from Government and charitable trusts for developing such work. An opportunity exists to create innovative projects addressing diversity, training, employment and community issues, focused around faith.

Further Education is another area of particular significance for Walsall. Strategically, a connection with the College is of vital significance. There is a Prayer Room but no chaplain. The student community is extremely diverse in terms of ethnicity and faith. We recommend that links are established as soon as possible.

"Walsall's brand new Business and Learning campus is at the heart of Walsall's regeneration and has even been described as the dynamo behind this much needed transformation of the Borough, as without the vital skills and knowledge, investment will not feed into the Black Country. Work has now begun on the new College site in Littleton Street, and is due to be completed and ready for business in September 2009. A fundamental feature of the new College will be the provision of a series of highly equipped and specialised Academies... and the brand new Enterprise Academy which will offer specialist support to budding entrepreneurs..." (from Walsall College's website).

WEST BROMWICH/SANDWELL

The work of Peter Sellick to encourage interface between different churches in the Borough and the public sector, especially around areas of regeneration and social concern, needs to be continued and expanded. This is a vital test case for the arguments contained in this report – that, in the most difficult circumstances, the Church is not only to be present but bringing to bear creative and imaginative, often risky, ideas and energy for change. The population of Sandwell Borough is among the poorest and most deprived in the country and Church involvement in regeneration is the litmus test of whether "Good News" is relevant, fresh, exciting and challenging.

His situation is complicated by the overlap of borders with other dioceses, ecclesiastical areas and local authority boundaries. What he needs not to be doing is having to justify himself and his work to many different structures. A way forward may be to take the old fashioned Anglican idea of a "conventional district" – created to provide effective outreach and service on new housing

estates in existing parishes, but also used more recently for local ecumenical partnerships – and applying it to the area covered by Sandwell Borough, for the purposes of regeneration and economic engagement.

New opportunities exist in the Borough and a brand new, state of the art College is being developed in Sandwell and will be opening in 2010. The College currently operates on 3 sites in the Borough and has over 10,000 students This requires a major piece of work for the Church and strategic links should be built with the College.

With regard to school links, please see the Telford paragraph below and its reference to Thomas Telford School and the sponsorship of academies in Sandwell and Walsall

WOLVERHAMPTON

Olwen Smith's work over many years has laid sound foundations with local industries and businesses and the challenge now is to hand the work over to voluntary chaplains in order to maintain and expand it, in order to free up time for developing initiatives with the Wolverhampton Faith Regeneration Unit (which BCUIM played a crucial role in establishing) and others.

Olwen's work with Marston's Brewery should be used to launch a major programme of work to address alcohol-related issues. This will build on existing work, bring in new interested parties (including political, local authority, supermarket, youth work and other interests – and in particular link with the impressive work of St John's Wolverhampton, whose Street Pastors ministry with young people and the night time economy has led on to training programmes for young people).

Education links for BCUIM could become increasingly important as the regeneration of Wolverhampton is closely aligned to their presence and the investment they attract.

Wolverhampton College (the merger of Wulfrun and Bilston Colleges) is a significant economic and educational institution and new facilities are being developed.

There is to be a new C of E Academy in Wolverhampton and – as with other academies, there is substantial investment and a significant emphasis on community involvement and sustainability through income generation.

By bringing together its wealth of knowledge and expertise, the University of Wolverhampton's Centre for Regeneration Excellence (CoRE) sources a wide range of skills and services relating to key areas such as community, cultural, economic, physical and social regeneration with the overall aim of increasing skills levels and enabling the region to make an effective contribution to economic development. By taking a multi-agency approach, CoRE will be active in the delivery of generic and cross-occupational learning opportunities to reduce skill gaps within the regeneration sector and energise communities.

“Participating in regeneration and community renewal at sub-regional, regional and national levels, the Centre recognises the benefits of working with both individuals and groups who share the same values and common goals of creating sustainable communities. By networking at all levels including the greater 'global community', CoRE looks to influence new approaches and encourage innovation” (from the University's website).

BRIERLEY HILL

Pat Nimmo's work at local and wider levels is a good example of innovative and enterprising activity, bringing people together, breaking new ground, establishing mechanisms for sustaining work and handing over to others in order to move into new areas and issues.

She is already involved with Stourbridge College and her development work with local churches and a wide range of organisations both in Brierley Hill and across the region is to be commended. In particular, her engagement with the Black Country Consortium and with the Brierley Hill Regeneration Partnership are of strategic significance - and issues and intelligence arising from this work should, in due course, be taken forward with the proposed research and development officer, in order to ensure good briefing keeps Church leaders and members well informed.

Of particular significance in terms of Pat's contribution to the wider Church are her based organisations with the wider community.

This agenda needs to be developed further with young people – and Pat is already active in providing training for young people from the Chapel Street Estate and in the Brierley Hill Regeneration Partnership, where her ideas and insights bring the interests of young people to the table.

STOKE ON TRENT

Stoke has had many problems with the decline of its core industries and problems with rediscovering itself. However, the moment for change could now be here. The football team has gained promotion to the Premier League – a major achievement which could potentially have a significant impact on the morale and prospects of the town – and there is to be a new Church of England Academy, St Peter's, built on the site of the existing 6th Form College, near to the University and serving diverse and mixed communities.

An English Heritage survey of church buildings in Stoke and North Staffordshire might be built on to encourage conversion of buildings into other uses – from community facilities to homes.

The work of Ray Owen (Pastoral Auxiliary to the Bishop of Stafford) in 2004 painted an interesting picture and challenged the Church to find effective ways of engaging with the whole area, building on existing ministries in parishes and localities. BCUIM subsequently submitted a proposal for work in the Stoke Archdeaconry (which was unsuccessful), stating that

“Stoke on Trent is the largest concentrated area of urban deprivation in the Diocese. It has seen the collapse of its manufacturing base, a failure to invest in its infrastructure and the near collapse of its poorer social housing market. It has not benefited from the inward investment seen in other parts of the West Midlands region and it mirrors the Black Country as it was in the late 1970's and 1980's.

This is a 'Kairos' moment for North Staffordshire in terms of economic and social regeneration. The Regional Development Agency (Advantage West Midlands) has committed considerable resource to tackling the economic issues affecting the Stoke on Trent area and the new Minister for the West Midlands has made it a personal priority.

The Diocese has no coordinated Mission in the Economy activity in the area and this proposal would draw on the expertise of the BCUIM team and lay Board members to establish Industrial Mission activity in the Stoke Archdeaconry. Much ground work was done in 2004 by the Pastoral Auxiliary to the Bishop of Stafford. This proposal will build on that..”.

The work of the Saltbox Christian Centre in Stoke has been highly spoken of and should be an important resource for helping to create an appropriate way forward for Church and economy in Stoke. The Saltbox

- supports, encourages and promotes the work of Christian churches;
- provides a voice for faith groups to highlight the importance of their community work; and

- identifies potential partnership opportunities for faith groups with statutory, voluntary and community sector partners to help bring about community cohesion and transformation.

The Saltbox is currently advertising for a community chaplain. In December 2007, the Saltbox took over responsibility for the North Staffs Community Chaplaincy Project. This is a faith-based project which looks to help rehabilitate ex-offenders by providing mentoring and support as well access to housing provision. The initial focus of the Community Chaplain's post will be to work with ex-offenders discharged from prisons returning to North Staffordshire. In 2006, the Saltbox completed a faith action audit of the community care work undertaken by faith groups in Stoke-on-Trent. A Staffordshire County Faith Action Audit was undertaken separately:

"Stoke-on-Trent Audit Summary:

- 150 faith groups
- 63% response rate
- 300+ community initiatives
- 13,000+ users engaging weekly
- 2,000+ weekly volunteers
- 5,000+ weekly volunteer hrs
- £1.5M+ volunteers contribution p/a @ min wage

The audit has helped faith groups to begin to share good practice and has helped to explore providing more support and training opportunities. Statutory & other partners now see the value and extent of faith-based work and this has helped to stimulate more partnership engagement, especially in the Local Area Agreement" (from The Saltbox website).

For Stoke, regeneration is a priority and the Church has an important role to play in supporting this work. The City's economic vibrancy is important for its population of 250,000 and for the surrounding areas. £75 million is being invested in developing new FE College provision (there is no chaplaincy) and the University is becoming increasingly significant to the local economy.

The University of Staffordshire, with campuses in Stoke and Stafford and a co-funded University Centre in Lichfield, is a major player with whom the Church should be increasingly involved in relation to regeneration and economic development. It has a long-established network of further education colleges throughout Staffordshire and into Shropshire (known as SURF - Staffordshire University Regional Federation).

"Working to develop mutually beneficial partnerships between the University and the private and not-for-profit sectors and large and small organisations. Ongoing and sustainable regeneration, in the context of a knowledge and information based society, necessitates this.

All engagement will be based on the principle of 'partnerships of equals' recognising that if we combine our strengths and talents, the innovation and creativity will create long-lasting competitive advantage which, in one way or another, benefits the lives of all who live and work here" (from the University's website).

TELFORD

Telford has had industrial mission involvement for many years and had established structures for engagement with the economic and social life of the town, where much good work goes on. However, when the last industrial chaplain, Peter Cope, retired in 2007, he was not replaced and the voluntary chaplains he recruited and supported continue to maintain their work, but need support. There is active ecumenical co-operation in Telford both at a local level through the various associations of churches and across the town under the umbrella of Telford Christian Council (usually referred to as TXC). TXC is behind a number of community projects, such as

working with the homeless and those in need, and has an ecumenical dean who is able to represent TXC at civic or other events and who can act as a symbol of the unity amongst the different denominations.

A number of community partnerships operate in and around Telford, usually with the aim of local regeneration, and both clergy and lay Church members are involved. Those partnerships draw together both statutory agencies and voluntary groups as well as local residents. In some instances, the partnerships are used to channel grant funding into community projects.

In addition to the formalised industrial chaplaincy which goes on, there are also informal contacts between parish clergy and enterprises in their locality. As an example, a number of local clergy shop in the ASDA superstore in Donnington Wood and so have become well known to staff. Conversations of a pastoral nature occur as a natural adjunct to shopping trips. Whether such contacts could be formalised, or indeed would benefit from formalisation, would be an interesting issue to explore and it may be that issues surrounding time constraints and workload for parochial clergy would come into play here. Also, questions around enabling and equipping lay Church members to play a more structured, overtly Christian role in their interactions with the businesses where they work and shop could be worth exploration.

Thomas Telford School is one of the country's leading technology colleges, a City Technology College (based on an earlier model of the current Academies) at the cutting edge of IT development – and supported by one of the City of London's wealthiest and most innovative livery companies, the Mercers. Along with Thomas Telford College, the Mercers are sponsoring two new Academies in Sandwell and Walsall. The Mercers have a category for support called "Advancement of the Christian Religion". The guidelines are as follows:

"We aim to contribute to deepening understanding and acceptance of the Christian religion, and to developing its relationships between its denominations and with other world faiths. We seek appeals that:

- Develop understanding and tolerance between denominations and faiths.
- Help young people to learn about the Christian faith and develop their spiritual lives.
- Support clergy and help them to develop their outreach work.
- Provide spiritual training for clergy and lay people.
- Provide respite, recuperation and spiritual nourishment for clergy and their families.
- Improve the effectiveness of parish administration through support for core costs for key people."

The chairman of this committee is looking for innovative ways of promoting inter-faith activity, from a Christian perspective, and a link with Thomas Telford School and the new Academies – with the mission in the economy perspective - could be both useful and financially beneficial. Moreover, there is no Church of England Secondary School in Telford and strategically this could be a helpful relationship to nurture.

Shortly before completing this report, a heartfelt plea was received from the Chairman of the Telford Workplace Chaplaincy Committee, Ian Lawson. His full letter is to be found in the Appendices. Its contents should be noted.

"... We have an amazing opportunity via our chaplains to put the visual presence of the Church and Christian message into many work places. Many lives can be touched and seeds can be sown that may one day germinate. Surely, if not a fresh expression of Church, it is at least a realisation for people that there is still a living Church out there!

With the pressures from China, the credit crunch, debt issues, redundancy, productivity targets and inflation there is a multitude of pressures that people and families are now facing. Home affects work and work affects home. Many people have no one to talk to. They won't all consider talking to a chaplain but if we continue to be available and be salt and light in dark places and dark times (for some people) there can be great opportunities to share God's love.

There are no guarantees with chaplaincy and the fruits can take time to appear but that can also be the case with Alpha, mission days and guest services. With chaplaincies we already have permitted access to hundreds of unchurched people - how great is that!!! “

The Chairman of the Telford Workplace Chaplaincy Committee, Ian Lawson, has offered to do some scoping of what might now be necessary to support and develop the work of the Committee and chaplains in Telford, taking into account the funding constraints on the Diocese and exploring the possibility for attracting funding from other sources. The ideas outlined above may provide some possibilities for that exploration.

CHAPTER 7: AGENDA FOR MISSION

The previous chapters have described existing work and outlined appropriate structures for developing in new directions. In them we have argued that mission in the economy needs to be refocused in order to address current themes and issues at local Borough as well as wider sub-regional/regional levels. We have affirmed existing work but, recognising the severe constraints under which the Diocese and others funding the work have to operate, we have proposed new ways in which “the economic” can be addressed effectively and prophetically.

The aim of mission in the economy is to understand and interpret in order to challenge and change. The model we have in mind, referred to throughout this report, encompasses not only the existing work of BCUIM but the work of many others involved in “justice and care”. It overlaps with themes such as housing and education and clearly needs to be involved closely in some parishes where clergy and lay people are involved in regeneration or training etc. A range of concerns will be encompassed, which are outlined as follows:

INVOLVEMENT WITH PEOPLE AT WORK

As BCUIM's style of work moves from *doing* to *enabling*, existing chaplaincy commitments can no longer be sustained by the paid chaplains alone, but need progressively to be handed over to other clergy and lay chaplains. There will need to be different methodologies created and developed, including the pattern of regular visiting practiced to date alongside specific project-based work, almost like consultants – for which specific skills, training and qualifications may become appropriate. This is not, repeat not, a proposal for existing chaplains to change their spots! There are people around with a wide range of skills and expertise, including, for example, personnel and human resources, counselling, health and safety and project development. Could they be deployed to visit companies, in the name of the Church but bringing professional and practical skills to bear.

Appropriately trained and equipped clergy and lay people should be recruited to visit workplaces, where possible, to continue the chaplaincy model of “loitering with intent” and acting as pastors to individuals and institutions. BCUIM is already working in this way and the move fits well with its own vision for the future.

REGENERATION AND RENEWAL

The Black Country, Telford and Stoke are areas of particular need and opportunity in relation to regeneration. Richard Grigson in Chapter 2 raises the question of how specialist agencies might better support local parish involvement in regeneration. “Moral, But No Compass – Government, Church and the Future of Welfare”, the recent report commissioned by Stephen Lowe, Bishop for Urban Life and Faith, states that, in researching the Church's attitudes to and involvement in contracted service delivery, people were not generally aware

“.. of economic predictions that ‘public sector markets’ are set to grow or.. fully appreciated how extensive state purchasing power is. From school food provision to printing for the Ministry of Defence, from training for the unemployed to ministerial transport by plane..- the lines between what is ‘state’ and ‘private’ have been radically blurred in every department of state” (p.45).

What this means for the Church is: there is opportunity here to help shape the future, drawing on the ethos and values of Christian faith and discipleship – and there is money to pay for such involvement. To the objection that taking State money is to risk compromise and collusion, the response has to be: take the risk, be prepared to step away if necessary and remember that the Church is big and broad enough to be both a service deliverer and a prophetic challenger of injustice in service delivery. The role of the Mission in Economy and Society personnel – including BCUIM – is to be able to live with the contradictions and help others to make sense of

them. And, it goes without saying, to make the vital and distinctive differences that build the Kingdom of God.

WORKING WITH CHURCHES AND CONGREGATIONS

It is in working with churches, congregations and discussion/prayer groups (some in the workplace) that distinctiveness must be nurtured. The challenge for the Church is to “wean” its members off baby food and onto the stronger stuff (Paul called it meat – that may be too narrow a word nowadays!). Such weaning includes Worship (W), Equipping the saints for their work in the world (E), being an Active presence in the community (A) and – something the Church is exceptionally good at – Networking (N). The task of MES focuses in particular on the E and A, though W and N are also closely involved.

Clergy and theologically trained people can make an interesting contribution in supporting their members in their daily lives. Instead of starting with the scriptures and explanations of the “Christian position” on whatever it may be (the deductive approach), a listening (inductive) approach should be adopted, in which lay Christians (“lay” is such an inadequate word. It suggests inexpert, though its true meaning is derived from the Greek word *laos*, the People of God, which includes the clergy!) talk together about their daily working lives, experiences, issues and problems. The clerical/theological person acts as a cross between consultant and analyst, listening and, when appropriate, interpreting in the light of the Gospel, pointing out where the stories ring “biblical bells” and then seeing what the resources of the Faith can bring to bear on today’s situations.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The proposal outlined in Chapter 4 includes a specific post for a research and development person. That does not let other practitioners off the hook of being the best informed and most widely read people, always questioning, intellectually sharp and able to hold their own in the corridors of power and on the shop floor, in the most abrasive and cynical situations with people of all faiths and political persuasions and none.

The benefit of good, clear and frequent briefings, based on sound research, are obvious: mature development can take place. A simple framework for briefings is as follows:

- Issue – Recommendation – Timing - Background

A regular supply – weekly or monthly – of good briefings which provide both information and practical ways forward should be of benefit both to MES personnel and Church leaders – and maybe to local churches and congregations. For example, a simple make-believe idea:

- Issue: Stoke City FC has got into the Premier League
- Recommendation: all Church schools in Stoke organise events to celebrate, in order to
 - associate the schools and churches with Stoke City FC’s success,
 - raise the profile of schools/churches as proud members of Stoke’s community
 - involve the schools in promoting sport/healthy living etc
 - remind the wider community of who we are and what we offer
- Timing: July 2008
- Background: (this can be the longer, well researched information). There are x C of E Primary and Secondary Schools and y churches in Stoke... We take sport/health issues seriously because... the Stoke community can build on premiership success in order to improve the City.. etc

INNOVATIVE WORK

Good organisations are perpetually having to renew themselves in order to survive and prosper and what worked well yesterday may not be what today requires. Our whole argument is that, good though BCUIM has been in its work with companies and others, the growing pressure on diocesan funds cannot be ignored – so BCUIM (and MES) needs to align more clearly and positively with diocesan priorities.

As well as doing so, the case has to be convincingly put that mission in economy and society *is* a priority.

Mission in economy and society needs to be at the cutting edge – and, for the Church of England, especially if the Conservatives come into Government, the opportunity to provide contracted services – for example in the provision of community development, residential care, health and social services, employability programmes, work with asylum seekers and refugees and much more – could become a reality sooner rather than later.

“Moral, But No Compass – Government, Church and the Future of Welfare”, published in June 2008, recommends (to the House of Bishops and the General Synod) that

i. .. the Church should establish a new social enterprise/voluntary sector support and coordinating body to develop public advocacy and service provision engagement across the country, modelled on existing best practice in its work in education and on international counterparts.. . This body would encourage the support and continued development of the existing Anglican contributions [to welfare provision]. It would also encourage increased utilization and coordination of activities in the civic hubs of cathedrals and dioceses. It may have some ecumenical potential as well.. (p.98).

ii. That the Church develop a fresh conversation and the process of theological enquiry as to the appropriate nature, form and content of Christian principles for contracting. This could include bishops addressing these ‘principles’ while visiting chief executives.. or engaging in their myriad civic activities..” (p.99).

The case for good research and sound practical enablers – the MES personnel – to take responsibility for ensuring Church involvement is well thought out and achievable – is self evident. The MES role should be not to have to know and do everything – exactly the opposite – but to be able to identify who and where to obtain the expertise required. And considerable expertise, as the quotation above states, is to be found in the Diocesan board of Education, where contracting has become a significant aspect of work. Other potential allies include, for example, housing associations, who have a substantial asset base upon which to draw for regeneration purposes, care companies (eg Bupacare) with expertise in residential care and other services, Tomorrow’s People, Faith Regen, Faithworks and others with employment, training and other experiences of contact delivery and many more.

The distinctive contribution the Church can make will include its ability to reach and support the neediest people, its army of volunteers and its willingness to go the extra mile. And if someone else will handle the bureaucratic burden, the partnership potential is enormous.

The distinctive role of MES, BCUIM and other agencies in the MES network is to spot the opportunities, develop the partnerships, support them through the traumas of project development and bring in expert advice and resources as and when needed.

The niche opportunity for Lichfield Diocese is to get in there now – and establish a regional mechanism (working with other Dioceses and denominations and possibly other faiths also) to link with the national structure outlined above.

This could become a crucial way for the Church to rebuild its asset base – from which to be able to expand and develop in new and well funded directions.

STYLE AND APPROACH

The chaplains' work needs increasingly to be carried out by a network of clergy and lay people. The quality of what is being offered is of vital importance and those called to exercise this difficult ministry must have theological and spiritual tools in order to represent the Church in the economic sphere. BCUM already runs training programmes and these can be used and developed for equipping these new chaplains.

Some of the work will be ongoing, sustained involvement with companies or churches but, where possible and appropriate, it should be "packaged" as a specific project or programme. The model of the "turnaround team", identified for use in parishes needing to find new ways of being and operating, is applicable to mission in the economy. Deployment into new areas or problem areas of engagement may need a short term, highly energised initiative – which should itself lead to identifying routes to sustainability as appropriate.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We recommend that the Diocese restructure its existing models of engaging with economic and social issues with the following appointments:

- full-time Diocesan Director of Mission in Economy and Society (DMES)
- half-time research and development officer (something similar exists alongside the Director of Parish Mission)
- half-time BCUIM MES officer for Walsall
- half-time BCUIM MES officer for Wolverhampton
- half-time BCUIM MES officer for West Bromwich/Sandwell
- half-time MES officer for Telford
- half-time MES officer for Stoke

2. BCUIM should become one of the key delivery agencies for taking this work forward, covering Wolverhampton, Walsall and West Bromwich/Sandwell. Other agencies may be able to provide a similar role in other areas as well as bringing their specialist knowledge and skills to bear on the work.

3. The emphasis of the work should move from “doing” to “enabling” and local clergy and lay people should be recruited, trained and equipped for the ministry of visiting companies and developing programmes and projects related to the work. The key role of the Mission in Economy and Society officers/agencies will be oversight, co-ordination, networking, supporting and equipping. The practical work on the ground will increasingly be delivered in close partnership with parishes and churches.

4. Where necessary, the model of the “turnaround team” should be deployed to reinvigorate work, identify new resources and enable work to develop and grow.

5. The culture of enterprise needs to become a key feature of the work of MES – a “can do” attitude in the midst of struggling communities and deprivation is a significant contribution the Church can make through parish and congregational activities and chaplaincy involvement.

6. To this end, resources for supporting existing work, developing and growing new work need to be identified and obtained. Although this may not meet with universal approval, it is inevitable if the work is to continue and grow. So expert advice should be identified and made use of. Areas of deprivation are often eligible for funding from Government and trusts. Companies are often interested in education and training. Opportunities exist for aligning with new education initiatives at secondary, FE and HE levels.

7. Innovative approaches should include developing a policy and the practical structures needed for contracting with Government to deliver services.

8. The place of research and development in relation to economy and society should be affirmed and implemented as soon as possible, drawing on the practical knowledge and experience of chaplains and many others to brief Church leaders and churches with clear information and pointers to action.

9. The need for a far more dynamic and attractive web presence should be developed – using interns and working with university, college and school partners – to highlight the Church’s engagement in and contribution to economic and social issues.

10. Church leaders should acknowledge that “industrial mission is too important to be left to Industrial Mission” – and play an active part in engaging in dialogue with senior people in public sector, business, education and other fields in the region, informed by the grass roots

intelligence and contacts of chaplains, parish clergy and others. The Church comes to the table as a major economic player in the region – and its potential for influence should be recognised and developed.

11. The presence of large numbers of local people of different faiths and ethnicities should mean that inter-faith work becomes a major feature in the agendas of MES officers. This work needs to be practical and inclusive, with expertise and resources drawn in.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: REMIT OF THE BCUIM REVIEW GROUP

The Review Group's Task was set out by the Bishop of Lichfield, after consultation with colleagues and BCUIM, in August 2007 and the Review Group was assembled during the autumn. The Terms of Reference were stated as follows:

A. AIMS

- To remind the Diocese of the importance of Mission in the Economy
- To give thanks for all that BCUIM has achieved
- To give an overview of the work being undertaken across the Diocese
- To look at choices for the future

B. PROCESS

1. To meet Revd Olwen Smith and the Diocesan Secretary or Director of Finance to establish and clarify the governance and statistics:

- i. List the full- and part-time chaplains
- ii. List the funders and make clear their posts
- iii. Which posts are paid for by whom

2. To meet the BCUIM Board and chaplains and discover

- i. What is the vision and scope of the work
- ii. How many workplaces are visited and how often
- iii. Which parts of the work are going well and which are more difficult
- iv. What are the lines of accountability for BCUIM and its chaplains
- v. What expertise and opportunities would we lose if we did not replace our professional team
- vi. What would be the effects on those we serve and on our ecumenical partnership

3. To meet the Wolverhampton Area Team and establish

- i. Which posts are treated as part of the Area Budget
- ii. How this part of the budget is valued by the Area

4. To invite comment from across the Diocese, including from other Bishops and Archdeacons. Are the Parishes ignorant of Mission in the Economy?

5. To find out how other Dioceses, especially those of similar size, and our ecumenical partners have changed in recent years in their approach to Mission in the Economy and what means they are using to deliver this mission. For example, one Diocese runs a scheme in which industrial missionaries are all self financed; could this work for us?

6. To reflect on the work of Ann Morisey, Mark Green and the Ridley Hall "God on Monday" project in relation to our vision setting.

C. OUTCOMES

1. To set out ways in which the Church might take opportunities for engagement with the economic life of the region.

2. To lay out the different approaches open to us for the future and the rationale for and against such approaches.

3. To set out the implications for BCUIM and our ecumenical partnership.

4. To present these findings to some or all of the Bishop's Staff Meeting, the Bishop's Council and the Diocesan Synod.

APPENDIX 2: LETTER FROM IAN LAWSON TO DAVID WRIGHT, REVIEW GROUP MEMBER

Hi David,

I was asked by David Lavender [Telford's Ecumenical Dean] to add my bit as the chairman of the Telford Workplace Chaplaincy Committee. The amazing thing is that we are still operating. The other amazing thing is that the team is a voluntary, ecumenical mix that has the potential to meet hundreds of people every week.

With the removal of the post that was latterly filled by Peter Cope the team has soldiered on girded in prayer and wonderfully supported by Olwen Smith who has a pretty hectic work load before we got her involved in co-ordinating the Telford chaplains. This has meant that we have only been able to maintain the workplace contacts we have and not look to expand the work even though there is the potential to do this.

Losing that permanent management/pastoral/marketing role has made life difficult and with two chaplains moving on shortly, this puts extra pressure on already busy people to try and find replacements. This is something that Peter in his role had the time to do.

With the challenges of getting people into a church or even to consider a chaplain - and therefore think Church, God, Christianity – what's it all about? We have an amazing opportunity via our chaplains to put the visual presence of the Church and Christian message into many work places. Many lives can be touched and seeds can be sown that may one day germinate. Surely, if not a fresh expression of Church, it is at least a realisation for people that there is still a living Church out there!

With the pressures from China, the credit crunch, debt issues, redundancy, productivity targets and inflation there is a multitude of pressures that people and families are now facing. Home affects work and work affects home. Many people have no one to talk to. They won't all consider talking to a chaplain but if we continue to be available and be salt and light in dark places and dark times (for some people) there can be great opportunities to share Gods love.

There are no guarantees with chaplaincy and the fruits can take time to appear but that can also be the case with Alpha, mission days and guest services. With chaplaincies we already have permitted access to hundreds of unchurched people - how great is that!!!

I firmly believe that we need some body who can build the chaplaincy work in Telford since there are huge expansion and rebuilding plans that will only boost the economy and widen the industrial and commercial base of the town. Olwen has done a fantastic job but she would be the first to admit that due to other work pressures she has only been able to maintain/help us survive in our role as a chaplaincy team.

God Bless

Ian Lawson, Chairman, TWCC

APPENDIX 3: SCRIPT OF THE BCUIM DVD

Stephen Brooks: It is a joint ecumenical church response to meeting the needs of a very changing society

Steve Rowland: Having a chaplain within the business on a day to day basis the church is actually coming to the individual. If the church wants to grow and evolve it is a bridge, it is a way of getting a dialogue going.

Stephen Brooks: The church is working together in such a collaborative and visual way has a massive impact.

Sarah Middleton: We cannot deliver the regeneration that is required but through any single partner, we all have a key role to play.

Stephen Brooks: Oftentimes the church is seen as only done inside four walls. It is great to see the churches responding to people's everyday needs whether it be spiritually, emotionally or physically in places where they are at.

Derek Andrews: I think an industrial chaplain adds value to the business by the fact that it is a clear sign of intent from the company for other than the standard remuneration and rewards package. It is also interested in the pastoral and spiritual care of the various members of its team and to have that personal intervention that an industrial chaplain can bring is, I think, deeply encouraging and of great comfort to people.

Martin Hingley: Its nice to think I have the opportunity to talk to somebody other than my own family about what is going on in my life.

John Shepherd: To me the role of the chaplain is one of a very good friend. I think it is a wonderful opportunity to discuss issues and to discuss them in complete confidence and honesty.

Emma Hindes: The chaplaincy extends beyond Merry Hill and actually provides services to many of our retailers. In addition the chaplain will also help to commemorate and celebrate services throughout the year eg Easter, Christmas and Remembrance Day.

Bob Smith: Human Resources has gone more systemised We don't have the time, we don't spend the time with people as much as we ought and having the chaplain come in fills a big gap for us.

Caroline Crolley: We have found them absolutely invaluable, they can go in and not only talk to people within the workplace that are feeling stressed but can actually speak to the families

because we forget that when that person goes home and has to tell their wife or husband that they are going to be out of work the effect that has of devastation on the whole family.

Richard Frost: Industrial chaplains add value to the business by being a listening ear, by probably giving some guidance as well to senior management on any issues or challenges they may face in terms of workforce moral and the way the management of the business is perceived by the workforce.

John Shepherd: I think it has helped me when I discuss with my colleagues or my men issues I felt it helps me better understand their issues and react as I have seen the chaplain react. It brings a very calming, balancing influence on us all.

Arthur Janes: The main difficulty is the first impression people see the dog collar and it shows that chaplains/church have a interest in the people and workforce of its company

Hugh Williams: BCUIM plays an important role in the Black Country as a whole area has undergone huge change enormous impact on people who live

Stephen Brooks: This ministry is part of the church's outreach to extend the Kingdom values in the areas within decision making within our local councils, in the workplace and in many other areas of decisions outside of church walls.

Hugh Williams: Many people define themselves by the job they do when it is changing or going – huge impact on you personally, on your spirit that's why it is important that the church, perhaps through BCUIM, plays a role in being alongside people during this change, and actually saying that there are some unchanging issues about the love of God and love of each other, relationships that are there that have to weather through these changes.

APPENDIX 4:

EXTRACT FROM BCUIM AUDITED ACCOUNTS: NOTES ON STAFF COSTS 2006/07

6. Staff costs and numbers

The charity did not incur any salary costs during the year. However the services of a number of staff were provided as follows:

a) by the Methodist Church, at a cost of £16,771, the provision and expenses of a chaplain working within the area covered by BCUIM and the Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury Methodist District.

b) by the Diocese of Lichfield, at a cost of £69,806, the provision of chaplains working within the Diocese. Salary and pension costs of the BCUIM secretary amounting in total to £4,352 were also met by the Diocese.

c) by the Diocese of Worcester, at a cost of £13,852, the provision of a chaplain working within the Diocese.

d) by the United Reformed Church, at a cost of £12,389, the provision of a chaplain working in the area covered by BCUIM.

In addition BCUIM contributed to the stipend of a Baptist chaplain .

The total costs associated with these staff were:

| | 2007 £ | 2006 £ |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Wages and salaries | 96,363 | 100,796 |
| National Insurance | 8,183 | 7,362 |
| Pension costs | 25,006 | 15,441 |
| Expenses payments | 3,715 | 7,175 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| | 133,267 | 130,774 |
| | ===== | ===== |

No employee earned more than £60,000 per annum.

The average number of full-time equivalent employees (including part-time staff) during the year was made up as follows:

| | No. | No. |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Administration | 1/4 | 1/3 |
| Outreach work | 5 and 2/3 | 4 and 2/3 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| | 5 and 11/12 | 5 |
| | ===== | ===== |

Having no paid employees of its own, the charity does not operate any pension scheme.