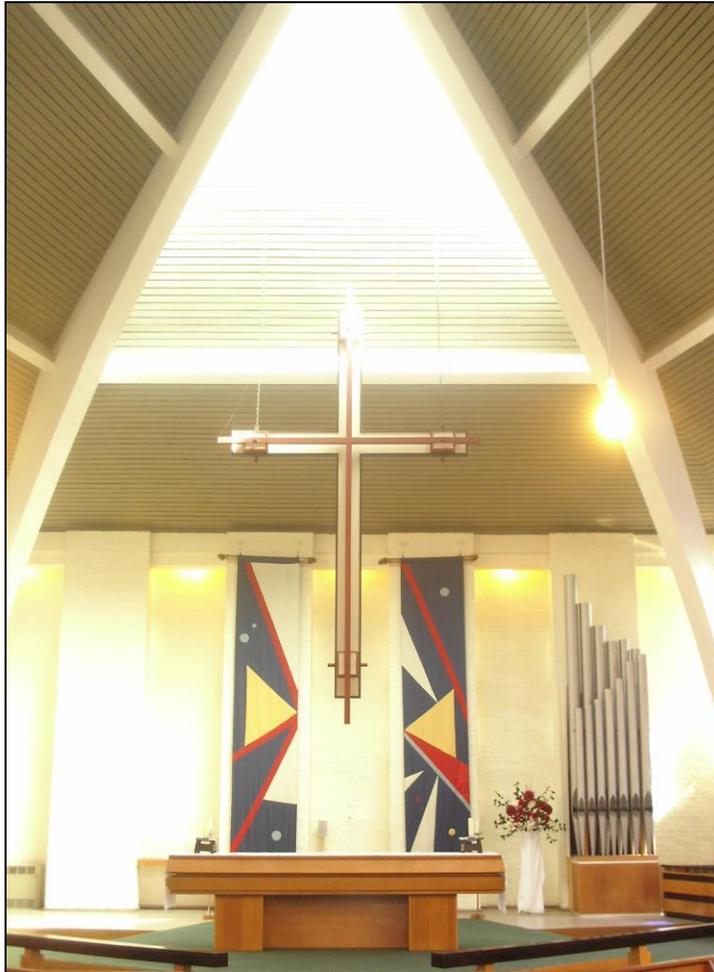




St Mark's Wimbledon



Mission Action Plan

St Mark's Wimbledon Mission Action Plan

"A 'Mission Action Plan' is a document which outlines the mission activities that a local church is going to do in the coming months and years. It is built on a clear sense of God's 'vision' for the church—what God is calling the church to be and to do. So a MAP provides exactly what it says on the tin—an action plan for mission."¹

Background

In November 2012, Southwark Diocesan Synod approved a document called *Strategy for Ministry* which states that when a clergy vacancy arises in a parish:

"a parish is requested to submit to the Archdeacon a paper outlining its existing plan for mission and ministry, how this plan is being implemented and developed, and how it relates to the proposed role description of the new incumbent. We recommend that the Bishop's Staff will not normally move to fill a vacancy unless such plan is in place."

St Mark's Church Committee started forming this plan in May 2013. We convened a Steering Group² to oversee the process. We consulted the congregations about the project and encouraged them to participate in it, including asking them to pray for it. We broadly followed the process outlined in *How to do Mission Action Planning: A Vision-Centred Approach* by Mike Chew and Mark Ireland. Our Mission Action Plan is based on the template in *Appendix 2 Version 1*.

From the start, the Church Committee has been wholeheartedly behind the process, seeing it as an important tool in growing the Church, rather than a box ticking exercise to be performed 'because the Diocese told us to'.

We started performing some of the actions in Stage 3 while refining Stage 2. That is why some of the actions have already been completed. The Annexes to this document may be collected separately from the back of St Mark's.

¹ From 'How to do Mission Action Planning' by Mike Chew and Mark Ireland.

² The membership of the Mission Action Plan Steering Group has varied and has included Clive Gardner, Paula Thorvaldsen, Bethan Jenkins and Emma Watt Smith.

Stage 1: Review

Our Strengths (“Isn’t it good that...”)³

1. Our church has started growing in numbers since the autumn of 2013. This is against a background of broad slow decline since 2006.
2. Our church is growing spiritually.
3. We have a strong commitment to being inclusive.
4. People value the Sunday 10 am services.
5. People value the sermons.
6. Our children and young people’s provision is a strength.
7. Our pastoral support is very good.
8. People find our social events enjoyable.
9. The demographics of our congregation are improving:
 - o Our congregation is getting slightly younger.
 - o St Mark’s is more ethnically diverse.
 - o St Mark’s is becoming more of a local church, with a higher percentage of people living nearby.
10. We have strong links with our local Church School (Bishop Gilpin) and improving links with Wellington School.
11. We give a large proportion of our income to charities.
12. Many individuals within the church are involved in acts of service outside of the church (including *The Wimbledon Guild* and local schools)
13. We have improved in all seven areas necessary for growth according to *The Healthy Churches’ Handbook*.

Our Weaknesses (“Isn’t it a pity that...”)

1. There has been a high turnover in people who come to the 10 am service. Some people have moved away (this area of London does have a transient population), but others have simply stopped coming.
2. Fewer men are coming to our services.
3. There is a trend of people coming to church less frequently.
4. Our financial giving is low compared to other churches.

³ The points noted under *Our Strengths* and *Our Weaknesses* are mainly from a congregational survey conducted in spring 2014. See Annex 1.

Our Geographical Community (Hillside Ward)⁴

1. We are an international community:
 - The top two countries of birth are: UK (58%), South Africa (5%), Eastern Asia (not China or Hong Kong) (3%), India (3%), Ireland (2%).
 - The regions of birth are: UK (58%), Other Europe (15%), Middle East and Asia (13%), Africa (8%), Americas and Caribbean (4%), Australasia (3%).
2. 79% white, 21% black, Asian and ethnic minority.
3. We are healthy: 90% have good or very good health.
4. Average age is 39 years. 50% of people aged 25-44.
5. We have the smallest population of 10-14 year olds in the borough (265 children).
6. 1/3 of households have one person.
7. 1/3 of households have one family with no dependent children.
8. Well-educated: 65% have a degree or equivalent.
9. 79% economically active, 21% inactive.
10. The top three occupations are:
 - Business, research and administrative professionals
 - Business, finance and related associate professionals
 - Functional managers and directors
11. 62% of people live in flats, 22% in semis.
12. 56% Christian, 27% no religion, 8% not stated, 4% Muslim, 3% Hindu, 1% Jewish, 1% Buddhist.

What does our Church Value?

At an Away Day in March 2014 our Church Committee looked at the values we hold as important.

We looked at how we want to *be* (rather than what we want to *do*). It was a combination of what we value at the moment and where we would like to be.

We considered 3 areas regarding values and then voted on which values were most important to us. These are the top results:

⁴ The points in this section are mainly from a community profile drawn up by Paula Thorvaldsen in spring 2014. See Annex 2.

A. Growth in faith (our relationship with God):

<u>Value</u>	<u>Votes</u>
Inspiring	7
Challenging	6
Affirming	4
Uplifting	4
Genuine	4
Prayerful	4
Relevant	3
Wider knowledge of the Bible	3

B. Growth in love (our relationship with fellow church members):

<u>Value</u>	<u>Votes</u>
Welcoming	7
Supportive	7
Forgiving	5
Caring	4
Inclusive	4
Tolerant	4
Loving	3

C. Growth in service (our relationship to groups and individuals outside the church):

<u>Value</u>	<u>Votes</u>
Adding real value to people's lives	10
Outward-looking	7
Exploratory of new approaches	6
Compassionate	5
Supportive	4
Open	3

Stage 2: Choose

What we are about

St Mark's: The Church at the Heart of Wimbledon

Our mission statement, purpose, and reason for being here:

- To be enriched by the love of God
- To extend the welcome of God
- To express the compassion of God

Our vision statement (what we believe God is calling us to become in five years' time):

In five years' time we want to be a community of Christians where:

- The 'spirituality indices' (from the 2010 and 2014 surveys) have improved by 10%. (See annex 3.)
- We have regular communicants at our services of 100 people per week.
- Every member serves in the community/church in some way.
- The diversity of the local community is better reflected in the church, in two specific ways:
 1. Gender balance: increasing the proportion of men to at least 40%.
 2. Age: the average age of adults in London is 51 years. We would like this to be reflected in the average age of adults within St Mark's.⁵

The above four points are all measurable. In addition, St Mark's aspires to be the sort of church...

where people leave services feeling pleased that they came along	where no one, not one, is ever turned away	where relationships are healthy, supportive, authentic, and sincere
where we are generous with our time, money, love and care	where our worship is heartfelt and genuine, helps us connect with God, and sets us up for the week	where we go the extra mile for our neighbour, and we bear one another's burdens

⁵ For the purposes of our surveys, an adult is defined as being aged 20 years or more. According to the Office of National Statistics, as of Jan 2015, the average life expectancy of Londoners is 84.1 years for women and 80 years for men. We have estimated therefore that the average age of Londoners is 51 years.

where simplistic answers are gently put aside, and hard questions are welcomed	where each member sees themselves as part of Christ's body in this place—neither undervalued nor indispensable	where the lonely find friendship, the needy find hope, and the joyful are able to give thanks
where we wait for the Lord and renew our strength, mounting up with wings like eagles, running and not being weary, walking and not being faint (Isaiah 40:31)	where we get enthused with the strong tender love of God, and share that love in the wider world by our words and deeds	where unbelievers discover they can forget about the god they don't believe in and find the God who believes in them
where the church is a major reason people grow in their lives	where we forgive one another and don't let problems fester	

Stage 3: Plan for Summer 2014 to Summer 2015

Actions	Who	Completed by when
1. Integration of new people		
(a) Church Committee to take the lead in introducing themselves to people they don't know at services (suggested two new people per service)	Church Committee	July 2014
(b) Use of name badges by church committee and other officer	Church Committee and other officers	July 2014

Actions	Who	Completed by when
(c) Ensuring there is at least one well-known hymn per 10 am Sunday service	Hymns Group	August 2014
2. Ministry for men		
(a) Men's group	Lead person: Andrew Edgar	Began June 2014
(b) Continue to develop annual Father's Day service in June	Vicar	June 2014
3. Improve our finances		
(a) Hold Stewardship campaign	Finance Committee	May 2015
(b) Centralise more administration of finances to the Administrator	Vicar, Treasurer and Administrator	December 2014
(c) Shop around for utilities supplier for Church and Hall	Finance Committee	December 2014
(d) Review rental rates	Finance Committee	May 2014 and September 2014
(e) Consider improving Chapter Room to let it as a small business meeting room	Church Committee	November 2014

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