

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC
SURVEY OF THE DIOCESE OF OXFORD

Final report
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Introduction

This survey was planned in the summer of 2009, following a similar exercise in the Guildford Diocese, to which we are indebted for their experience. It followed other surveys done in 1985 by the Berkshire Organists' Association and Berkshire RSCM Committee 2004 (Berkshire only). Previous surveys were concerned only with the music of our Churches whereas this one was also seeking information which might be of interest to the Worship, Prayer and Spirituality group appointed under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Reading. The survey was sent out around 31 March 2010 with a request that it should be returned by 30 April after each Church's Annual Parochial Church Meeting. It is not surprising of course that in the event this was unduly optimistic and at the time of writing at the end of July 2010, only 359 Churches had responded. Since then further responses have been received, totalling 403. However on further examination 12 of these were excluded for various reasons, leaving a total of 391.

This Final Report is primarily an update of the Interim Report. The latter has, it is believed, served the purpose of drawing attention to the operation and resulted in the further responses.

The Diocese

The Diocese of Oxford is the largest Diocese in England by quite a long way, covering approximately the three civil counties of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. It covers an area of 2,221 square miles with a population of around 2.5 million. The area is largely rural but has several urban cities and towns including Oxford, Milton Keynes, Reading, and Slough, plus other smaller towns, and including their surrounding suburban commuter areas.

In the Diocese there are three Archdeacons of Oxford, Berkshire and Buckingham, which together have 29 Deaneries. There are 295 Benefices comprising 815 Churches¹, varying in size from large town Churches with up to 500 on their electoral rolls and regular services every day, to small country village chapels and mission rooms of perhaps half a dozen on the roll and services once or twice a month. The Archdeacons do not correspond with the civil counties of the same names.

The Survey

The survey was conducted entirely by email, subject of course to a good many telephone calls to elucidate difficulties, and occasionally returns were received by post. Email addresses for an individual in practically every Church in the Diocese were obtained from the current Oxford Diocesan Year Book, usually those of a Churchwarden, secretary or treasurer, the requirement being that the person concerned must have an email address and a telephone. (It was noted that a considerable number of these had elected not to have personal details published, which in many cases restricted the number of individuals who might be selected.)

¹ Summary Diocesan Statistics 2007 : Lincoln, the next largest, has 641.

In some cases, usually small chapels attached to a main local Church, no names were given and therefore someone in the main Church was selected. This resulted in some individuals being requested to respond in respect of more than one Church. However it was made clear that the individual addressed might transfer the request to someone else. Twelve Church representatives declined to take part.

The Response

Many respondents spent a great deal of time in obtaining information to present a full description of their Church, congregation and activities. This included some with a relatively small band of regular worshippers who nevertheless had some pride in their activities. At the other extreme a few respondents treated the operation as an unnecessary chore and spent ten minutes on it. There were also some problems where respondents did not have Microsoft Word or had difficulties with the Form format, and returned it either in a different format or by post, both of which involved re-typing entries.

It is appreciated that many of the questions were not relevant to smaller Churches and to some extent those with a relaxed and informal style of worship. Respondents were invited to qualify answers if they considered that the options provided were not relevant, and many did.

In some cases the standard of the replies was disappointing with many questions ignored and others contradictory. For example 26 stated that their choir sang every week but there was no indication of their membership.

Overall, the survey, supplemented by information from web sites and personal visits, confirmed the very broad range of Church worship styles, some being practically indistinguishable from Roman Catholic to others which were barely recognisable as being Anglican at all.

Congregations

The size of congregations varied enormously from half a dozen to several hundred. Several of those who declared themselves as “Evangelical” or “Charismatic” had some of the largest congregations, but there were several small Churches who also claimed to be “Relaxed and Informal”.

Respondents were asked to classify their Church as Rural, Commuter village, Suburban, Urban or Town/City Centre. Some did not answer this but details were assumed after examination of geographical information and other sources.

30 did not indicate the average size of the congregation.

SMALL RURAL CHURCHES, CONGREGATION UP TO 10

Berks	Bucks	Oxford	Total
6	13	19	38

Over half of them wanted better music, either an organist, an organ or a choir, or just “better singing”. Probably all three.

One Church with a congregation of seven has an occasional visit from their Benefice choir of ten members but none of the others have a choir.

Twelve Churches have Karaoke machines to provide music. Several thought that they were too small for the RSCM to be interested or give any help.

LARGER RURAL CHURCHES, CONGREGATION 11 – 30

Berks	Bucks	Oxford	Total
34	35	50	119

13 organists are needed. There was little interest in the RSCM.

RURAL CHURCHES WITH CONGREGATION OVER 30

Berks	Bucks	Oxford	Total
21	20	18	59

Seven organists are needed. One organist would like 25 boy choristers! Requested help included singing training days. Two requested a Music Advisor. Only two had weekly Sunday Schools.

COMMUTER VILLAGES 12 – 40

Berks	Bucks	Oxford	Total
1	9	3	13

Seven would like a choir or a larger choir, but only two would hope for a (better?) organist.

COMMUTER VILLAGES OVER 40

Berks	Bucks	Oxford	Total
17	14	13	42

Fourteen Churches would like a choir, a better choir and/or better choir training and four would like a regular organist. Most Churches have a regular weekly Sunday School.

SUBURBAN UP TO 40

Berks	Bucks	Oxford	Total
5	3	1	10

Four organists or musicians are needed. Other suggestions include a Course for Clergy and an Internet Forum for organists, etc. “which should not be too technical”.

SUBURBAN MORE THAN 40

Berks	Bucks	Oxford	Total
18	8	4	30

Three were seeking organists or Directors of Music. Several requested singing courses, and one suggested a Newsletter from RSCM.

URBAN

Berks	Bucks	Oxford	Total
8	8	10	26

Wants included more information about courses, a “Find your voice” day, and help in finding organ scholars. Eight would like a better / larger choir and three need an organist. Three would like a music group.

TOWN / CITY CENTRE

Berks	Bucks	Oxford	Total
18	11	12	42

Two Churches would like assistant organists and one would like an organ scholar. Several Churches would like more members in their choirs. Six Churches would like a new or larger music group and several would like more young people involved.

Structure of Congregations

A question was asked about the age profile of congregations, and while this was only sought as a general indication it did not in every case support the popular impression that the Church of England has an ageing congregation, though individual estimates varied widely. 71 Churches did not give any information, often because the congregation was so small that any age distribution would be meaningless.

Organs and Organists

The organ is the traditional instrument for leading worship and the fact that so many are still in use is an indication of their reliability. However they do need maintenance and so often this is ignored until major attention is required at which point a congregation with limited resources can find great difficulty in raising funds. Some described as “good” were somewhat suspect in view of other answers, and there was a suspicion that the respondent, and probably the congregation, thought that it was in much better condition than in reality because of the skill of the organist in covering up defects! Some respondents did not appear to know what “manuals” and “stops” were, which might suggest that Church leaders and indeed the whole congregation could consider taking more interest in the most expensive item in their building.

State	Number
Good condition	221
Temperamental	34
Being restored	4
(No organ)	105

The shortage of organists will not come as any surprise. There were indications that 43 were wanted, but most Churches who do not have an appointed organist would appear to get by with freelancers. 19 Churches said that they had someone learning the organ. Two Churches were seeking an organ scholar. One respondent who was persuaded into playing the organ over 20 years ago would like some organ lessons.

[It is interesting to note that half of the 73 choristers (from 23 Churches) at the Oxford Easter 2010 Three-Day Course were learning the piano, and there would seem to be an opportunity for their Churches to offer positive encouragement to learn the organ, even though a good many of them are probably not yet up to around Grade 5 which is commonly regarded as about the level to start learning the organ.]

Choirs

163 Churches have choirs though this term is probably an overstatement

in some cases, for example two Churches had a “choir” of 2 sopranos. 23 claimed that they have choirs who sing every week but did not indicate their membership. 114 have at least one junior treble in the choir but only 42 have two or more.

111 Churches have four-part choirs and of these 27 also have two or more junior trebles. In total there are :

Trebles	438
Sopranos	874
Altos	474
Tenors	342
Basses	383

It is encouraging that there are so many trebles in our Churches but equally it is essential to maintain their interest and development. Experience from the Three Day Course suggests that around 25% of trebles are boys. The question of maintaining the enthusiasm of trebles comes back to that of recruitment, training and support of organists and choir directors.

Around 150 Churches would like to have a choir or a larger choir, and this desire is not confined to smaller Churches.

Psalms are sung by 53 choirs every week, 23 two or three times a month, and 33 once a month. 66 choirs sing anthems weekly and 14 fortnightly.

Most choirs were robed.

Hymnbooks

This table shows the relative use of hymnbooks. Most respondents appeared to be happy with the books they have, and since the majority of frequently sung hymns appear in most books this is probably to be expected. Several expressed a dislike of *Hymns Old and New*.

First hymnbook		Second hymnbook	
Ancient & Modern ²	190	Mission Praise	35
Hymns Old and New	92	Ancient & Modern	23
Mission Praise	37	Songs of Fellowship	21
Songs of Fellowship	29	Celebration Hymnal	6
Common Praise	20	Songs of Praise	6
English Hymnal	13	The Anglican Hymnbook	5
Songs of Praise	8	100 Hymns for Today	5
The Anglican Hymn Book	4	Ancient & Modern New Standard	8
BBC Hymnbook	3	Hymns for Today's Church	3
New English Hymnal	31	Junior Praise	8
Ancient & Modern New Standard	31	English Hymnal	7
Hymns & Psalms	3	Hymns Old and New	12
Others including OHP	51	New English Hymnal	4
		Various and own collections	60
		No others	187

² It was not clear in many cases which edition was used.

24 did not specify. There was no discernable pattern either of hymnbooks or type of area. It would be interesting to know the number of hymns in each book which are never used – probably there are a lot.

Styles of Worship

Styles of worship claimed were mainly traditional but show a substantial range.

Style of worship	Number
Anglo Catholic	19
Modern Catholic	17
Evangelical	21
Relaxed and informal	35
Charismatic	5
Ecumenical	13
Traditional	254

Settings

There was a wide variety among Churches on the use of settings for Eucharistic services with perhaps a little surprise at the number still using Merbecke and Shaw.

Settings in use were :

Settings	Main	Alternative
Gregory Murray	33	5
Merbecke	16	6
Thorne St Thomas	14	4
Grayston Ives	7	
Addington	7	4
Archer	2	2
Nicholson	2	
New English Folk Mass	8	
Rutter	1	1
Salisbury	3	
Shaw	1	3
Selection from various settings	53	
Own settings or selection from various others	231	
No settings	60	

Who chooses hymns?

This question followed some correspondence in Church Music Quarterly³ to which several clergy responded, though not all replies were published.

Those who replied to the question answered as follows :

Clergy	142
Organist and Clergy	69
Organist	65
Committee	22
Choirs	6

³ CMQ June 2009 p.42.

Others	44
Unspecified	43

Twenty did not give any indication.

Junior Churches

In this section “Junior Churches” refers to all children’s groups whether of the traditional Sunday School style or more modern equivalents.

While the survey was not directly concerned with Junior Churches, these questions were directed at getting an appreciation of the younger element of Churches, since this obviously has an influence on all aspects of the Church in the longer term. Out of the 325 Churches results were :

Weekly	141
Fortnightly	24
Monthly	26
Occasional children’s meetings	33
About to restart	1
No Junior Church	143
No reply (probably “No”)	23

Details were not specific enough to draw any statistical comparisons but it was noted that in general there was no Junior Church in Churches where average attendance was below 30. The largest Junior Churches were in Churches which described themselves as “Evangelical” or “Charismatic”.

The relevant point for consideration is the extent to which provision for children may lead to recruitment into the choir and possibly onto the organ bench.

“Magic Wand” wishes.

Respondents were invited to say what would be their wish if a magic wand could be waved. Summarising answers to this question would be very difficult so all replies appear in Appendix A.

RSCM

138 claimed to be affiliated, though this number does not correspond with information from Headquarters. 66 responded to the question about courses and these suggestions appear in Appendix B. Replies to the question about the use of “Sunday by Sunday” were :

Use it	110
Don’t use it	147
Don’t know about it	102
Didn’t say	32

In answer to whether members attended RSCM events replies were :

Attend (if only rarely)	108
No	192
Didn’t know	11
Didn’t say	80

Regarding use of RSCM resources :

Claimed to use (if only rarely)	103
No	183
Didn't know what is available	30
Did not reply	75

Mission Statement

Churches were asked whether they displayed a mission statement outside their Church. 95 said they had a statement but only two who confirmed this with photographs were in fact outside. It appeared that the remainder interpreted this as whether the statement was on their web site. Some were quite short but one ran to nearly 150 words. One replied “No, but we ought to”.

The question which might be considered by others is whether all Churches should have a statement of their purpose on an outside notice board (in addition to notices about events) since there are many in our community today who do not know!

Conclusions

Some aspects of Churches mentioned earlier may well be of interest to others concerned with worship, outreach and effect on their communities, but these conclusions are those related to the work of the RSCM.

1. Music is an important element of worship. While few people would disagree, the fact that so many Churches would like to improve their music and singing amply supports this statement. Small Churches in particular would appreciate help.
2. Some Churches in Berkshire would like major events such as festivals to be held in their Archdeaconry, and others in North Oxfordshire, and Buckinghamshire would like more local events. One response requested more events in West Oxfordshire and specifically a pre-Festival rehearsal to encourage participation.
3. A recurring theme, particularly from Churches with a regular congregation of 20 or less in small rural villages, was the need for an organist. Few small Churches have choirs or make any provision for children or young people and most of their congregations are elderly.
4. Small Churches who have some instrumental support nevertheless would welcome and benefit from congregational singing practice. RSCM could consider the possibility of Deanery congregational practices for such Churches.
5. Choir training is a problem in many Churches – if the choir is not led by an enthusiastic organist / choirmaster the music will not be as inspiring as it could be. More courses for choir trainers would seem to be a priority.
6. Organist training is probably an even more difficult problem. To be a reasonably competent Church organist you need (a) an early start at the keyboard, say by 14; (b) an instrument at home; (c) parents willing to pay for lessons and put up with the practice!; and (d) obviously, an interest in music. (The same of course applies to any other instrument apart perhaps from guitar strumming.) Individual

Churches should do anything they can to support any child or young person who shows an interest, though in practice it is apparent that many Churches rely on finding someone from outside. Unfortunately it must be said that in many Churches the playing and the state of the organ are insufficiently inspiring to encourage others to become involved.

7. In view of all the above it is surprising, to say the least, that the Diocese displays so little interest in music. The Annual Articles of Enquiry for example do not include any reference to the organ or choir though many worshippers might regard these as more important than whether an overhead projector or plasma screen is used.

Web sites

Although not part of the main survey, the opportunity was taken to link Churches to their web sites and some interesting contrasts emerged. Most people will know of the “Church near you” series of web sites which covers every parish in the country. Although provided centrally, it is up to the individual parish to register with its site and to include whatever information it wishes, under the headings of :

QuickTime™ and a decompressor are needed to see this picture.

Around half rely only on their CNY website and about 100 have not even been registered. The remainder have set up their own sites and some contain a great deal of information about the Church and its mission and activities, including the text or recordings of recent sermons. One Church even shows a video recording of an infant baptism. Many give details of their parish team including clergy, Churchwardens, secretary, treasurer and youth workers, though somewhat surprisingly the organist or director of music is rarely mentioned.

It is appreciated that there are many who, even in these days of Government encouragement, are not computer literate. Observation however indicates that most primary school children now have considerable practice in computer skills, and one wonders whether it might be practical, where there are links with schools, particularly Church schools, for students to be given a “real” project to work on. It would of course be essential to ensure that any web site is accurate and up to date (a feature not always evident even in some of the more elaborate Church web sites).

Some final thoughts

After several months since the interim report, and following more reminders, almost half the Churches in the Diocese have responded to this survey. In terms of surveys generally this might be regarded as a good response, but it shows a disappointing lack of interest in what is to many people a fundamental part of worship.

Individual Churches appear not to be the only section of the Christian community to have an obvious lack of regard – as noted above, even the Diocese, in its annual Articles of Enquiry shows no interest.

Note on the reference numbers

It was decided and stated initially that individual Churches would not be identified, and reference numbers were attached to each Church. It should be noted that Churches are not numbered in any particular consecutive order, and in fact there are gaps in the numbering anyway.

However it may be useful to know the following :

Berkshire	1 – 310 and 1020, excluding 253 and 284
Buckingham	284 and 311 – 669
Oxford	253 and 670 – 991

APPENDIX A

Responses to the question “if you had a magic wand?”

- 8 More people in the congregation to enable better singing!!!!
- 13 Increase numbers in the choir so that we could develop the musical range and skills of them all. The music group to become more prominent in services in which they participate
- 16 Upgrade existing organ - increase attendance, but this is very difficult as there is no foreseen housing growth in the village
- 19 Choir to be able to extend range - anthems, psalms, evensong, matins, etc. plus re-introduction of youth orchestra for family services.
- 22 a larger congregation and a proper all-age choir
- 23 A community of people that love one another. A welcoming atmosphere. Outreach to young families. A desire to serve our community. Music that is relevant to today and inclusive rather than exclusive. A choir that supports the worship of the congregation.
- 25 We are fortunate in having a weekly service - we should not want this to change. We are also blessed with having a minor share of a Vicar who has one other parish, and who therefore understands and knows everyone in the benefice. His inclusive character, and the way he interacts with the local community, have created a special relationship between Church and the non-Church-going population. My wish would be for this situation to continue, and for the needs of small rural Churches to be understood better by the Diocese when they plan strategy.
- 27 Evidently we'd like to have a choir and regular children again. We are trying to resume youth work on a modest scale (occasional Saturdays) and it would be good to develop that further. We'd also like the building to serve the community with concerts, and that is in progress.
- 30 Replace failing electronic organ with used one (£5-8,000) or rebuilt pipe organ (£7,500).
- 31 Remove A & M Revised and substitute something like Hymns Old & New. Remove pews from Churches
- 32 Although regularly maintained, our organ is now in need of some refurbishment, we should also like to get a good regular piano for use in the Church (we have an elderly electronic one) We should like more males in the choir (especially tenors) and hope that our talented junior choir now singing once a month will start to augment the regular weekly choir. We hope to continue singing with other local choirs in concerts and oratorios, cathedral visits and in Trafalgar Square at Christmas. We hope our assistant organist gains an organ scholarship at university. We would also like to see bigger congregations each month at Choral evensong. now the junior choir are making solid progress using Voice for Life" material we hope some will attend the RSCM courses as our trebles did in the past. We hope to make more outreach into our community and beyond as we approach the celebration of our

- 150th anniversary in 2014. We would also like to make all our buildings more eco-friendly and encourage an increase in our weekly giving.
- 36 Modern catholic Eucharistic music
- 41 A). inclusion of modern worship songs as well as traditional hymns. B). Other musical talent as well as organist i.e. keyboard worship band. 3. sound system for playing CDs etc during reflective services also to enhance sound/music quality.
- 43 a) We hope to refurbish the organ for continued use over the next 50 years. b) We are also currently exploring the possibilities of developing our contemporary music by seeking the appointment of an "organist equivalent". We are looking for someone who would take a weekly rehearsal and be available to lead the music teams in our services on Sundays. We see this as a positive next step, which may - or may not in the future - lead to the appointment of a person in a more full-time role who might take responsibility for both ancient and more modern music.
- 51 More people to sing in a monthly choir at Evensong
- 52 Musically - a committed and wide taste musical director/organist/pianist to enthuse and inspire without dominating. Growth in commitment and numbers.
- 55 More musical diversity and more to attract people to join us. With a proper magic wand I would move the Church to where the people are, and totally redesign and rebuild it!
- 58 We hope to re-order the Church, beginning with heating, lighting, seating and sound system changes. It would be wonderful to have live musicians and singers on tap.
- 60 To find a permanent organist
- 66 More organists, a choir, more musicians to create multiple worship groups to enable spirit filled worship at all services. More passion in the congregation to be Jesus to those in need in our community - in and out of the building.
- 67 A new Church with proper PA system
- 80 A new organ that we could afford, and a better supply of choristers, especially young people.
- 83, More boys and men in the choir"
- 84 100% from the choir each Sunday! 'Sleep-overs to be outlawed by the next parliament. An enlarged vestry and better storage particularly for music.
- 96 Restore and develop the building and the organ and beef up our programme of events.
- 98 The pattern of services does not fit conveniently into the boxes in this form. We have a monthly Sunday Xtra" non-eucharistic service in the adjacent Parish Hall while the weekly Eucharist is held in the Church. This Eucharist is not normally a whole Parish Eucharist because the two Churches. All Saints and St John the Baptist, normally worship separately. The weekly Eucharist held at All Saints becomes a (whole) Parish Eucharist on a small number of occasions in the year when the two congregations combine e.g. on All Saints Day. The statement that we "Never" hold Evensong is not strictly true. Evensong takes place once or twice per year. The statement that no concerts are held is not strictly true. Concerts take place very occasionally. It is regretted that information is not currently available on numbers of places at Church schools and related questions.
- 105 Average attendance EXCLUDES major festivals and baptisms. We have one Organ Scholar in addition to our Organist/Director of Music. We share the Village website with the Parish Council. In "Communion settings" I would have preferred to NOT ANSWER the 'next most used' section as we do not use Martin Shaw any more
- 107 Sound Enhancement System & Sunday School Building
- 113 In respect of the music this is not really applicable, we are a small rural Church

- in a benefice of seven Churches. Our choir goes between four of these Churches in a rotation each month. Obviously we are always looking to introduce other members to our congregation, but as we only have two services a month in our Church, there is not a regular weekly congregation in our Church.
- 120 More involvement, particularly from younger worshippers
- 124 New heating and lighting systems so that we could have more concerts and productions. Toilets and running water would be a help! The dream of the Vicar and me (Churchwarden) would be to have a community production of Murder in the Cathedral in our Church. Fundraising from this would be a bonus.
- 130 we need a new heating system and better lighting
- 133 A drummer and more young families.
- 143 A larger choir and especially more members of the junior section
- 147 New choirmaster recently appointed so the music situation at the moment is good. The Church is undergoing a renewable energy project, aiming to be the first carbon neutral Church in the UK.
- 155 A much greater interaction with young people.
- 159 The organ to be fully renovated so we can hold recitals
- 160 For the organ to be fully restored so that besides for services it could be used for recitals
- 161 Music of more interest to young people.
- 170 To replace our current organist seamlessly and to have some more members in the choir. We would like a bequest to complete the development of our hall into a centre for the whole community
- 171 identify a suitable new hymnbook for the congregation
- 173 At our recent music team meeting the ideals we set out were: (a) we seek in all our worship and music integrity, inclusion and depth; (b) the breadth of St Nicolas' congregation reflected in the breadth of music; (c) music to be the best we can achieve in music words and delivery; (d) music appropriate to the moment and service; (e) music that is inclusive and inviting; (f) a variety of traditional and contemporary; (g) as many people engaged as possible in playing and singing.
- 174 To maintain our current standards of traditional Anglican worship.
- 175 That people would abandon themselves to worshipping God in response to his love, and that everyone would seek much more their true identity in Christ.
- 176 Better organ or electronic keyboard
- 181 No magic wand. But our vision is for a deepening heart of worship in the musical 'communities' which serve our worshipping community; more creative liturgical expression (music style, other art-forms); better theological understanding of worship and the dynamics thereof.
- 182 Voluntary choir, rebuilding of the pipe organ and we'd like a refurbished hall.
- 185 Better facilities in Church and a re-vamped area for children's activities would be a priority.
- 186 More, younger choir members
- 189 After our previous Organist had to leave for health reasons we are working towards appointing a regular Organist and Choirmaster.
- 192 An organ scholar, more money to buy music and robes
- 193 Increase in regular choir members.
- 194 As far as music is concerned to continue to introduce and enjoy modern hymns and songs in a good mix with older and traditional hymns and to encourage talented young musicians to play for services. In the Church in general to plan and provide continuing opportunities for Church members to deepen their worship and faith life and to encourage others to come into the Church family.

- 195 according to my musicians: a set of drums / bongos
- 198 A new Hall
- 200 Younger members in the choir. More time to rehearse. Music group
- 201 Larger congregation, more musicians, more time to practice, more storage space to keep our stuff" at the rented hall we use."
- 208 More musicians so that we could have more services where the music group plays. It'd be great to have some people who could lead the singing.
- 214 Wider range of musical style and musical instruments. More young people to become involved in all aspects of Church life.
- 219 A choir that would sing for every appropriate service, To be able to develop a music group for some services. and a good sound and projection system
- 224 More singers willing to commit themselves to joining the choir. A good band of instrumentalists to form a music group for family services.
- 225 A good pianist and music group to make the music come alive.
- 227 Ensure our services are respectful, contemporary, meaningful and welcoming to all ages, including both new and existing members and encouraging the growth of a stronger group of musicians willing to get involved in taking the lead in this task.
- 230 more growth in the choir - we work on a shoe string of 20 members
- 235 More in the choir, more at Sunday School, more at Youth group, more young families at Church - but I'm sure that's the case for every parish in the land.
- 236 Re-establish Junior Choir with boys as well as girls in more or less equal numbers. Recruit another half dozen adult singers e.g. 2 sopranos, 2 altos 1 each bass & tenor. Complete overhaul of the Staniland 1870 organ (it has a BIOS Historic Organ Certificate). Completion of the planned extension to provide lavatories, kitchen & meeting room. (Recently approved but funds still to be found.)
- 238 more singers and instruments
- 240 To have a full choir, capable of singing a wide range of music, obviously mostly suitable for our mixed range of Sunday services, but a choir able to sing to, rather than just sing with, the congregation. To have fully operational piano, and a resident Organist preferably aged under 65.
- 241 Continuing increase in outreach and witness; more young people and families to join; more people to join the choir especially sopranos (!)
- 242 More adult singers to enable us to expand repertoire and core numbers each week
- 243 To have a reliable PA sound system with more volunteers to control it, to include a wider variety of genres of music in our worship, to encourage more people to be actively involved in the life of the Church, to explore the possibility of having our own building to use for various activities throughout the week.
- 244 Anther regular organist (one is being trained at the moment but commitment is a problem). Regular attendance by members of the choir, musicians and some of the congregation. All too often rehearsed music has to be dropped on a Sunday morning through lack of singers. We are competing with other attractive events and with parents who want a day out with the family. Many Church folk are regular on a once a month basis.
- 247 Don't believe in magic
- 248 A bigger congregation that could support a Church choir
- 253 Better choir tuition, through which more members would be encouraged to join. More choristers of all parts would mean a wider variety of Church music could be attempted, and this would possibly make the choir a more attractive proposition for newcomers.
- 255 To encourage more people, and particularly young families, to take part in

- Church services and events.
- 258 Youth worker & director of music
- 260 The magic wand would need to produce a large rise in congregation sufficient to raise a proper choir. Other than that would like access to lessons for myself as organist...after all I took over as organist in the early 80s (1980s that is) with no organ tuition. That works well on an organ with one manual and horrible pedals but doesn't add to my overall skills.
- 264 A room (separate from the Church itself) and toilets would allow many more activities to take place, including music.
- 270 youth worker
- 275 More congregation - and us all to sing in tune (me included!)
- 279 A regular small band of young musicians playing modern hymns and music.
- 284 A Choir
- 287 The Church is working towards extending the building and therefore encourages other musical events for public use.
- 298 Would love to have a full Church with an active Sunday School and choir, a music group, regular sung Eucharist and anthems, and Songs of praise style modern worship songs.
- 299 To continue and expand what we do now. A former rector is a first rate organist and, as we are now in interregnum, we are hoping for an increase in numbers when our new man comes, musical or not. We are still too few to form a choir and keep a congregation.
- 303 Music group with young people involved
- 305 To increase the number of singers in the choir - thus being able to extend out repertoire. To use the outreach opportunities of music by integrating local singers/players on a more regular basis.
- 307 To reinstate a Sunday School, have a standing choir, to adopt the Thorne St. Thomas Mass setting of the Communion Service, more bell ringers, an effective low-cost heating system, oh, and a new roof.
- 312 I would like more people available for the choir. As well as the 10 regulars we have a further 10-12 who sing on special occasions but are not available regularly. I would also like to see more children so we could develop a children's choir that could feed into the main choir
- 328 A larger choir, more use of the building for concerts.
- 329 To create a worship group & involve more teenagers in activities for their age group.
- 330 A good sound system but also very easy to use so recruiting volunteers isn't so difficult!
- 333 No wish list for music. We are seeking to take 'Church' out into the community, rather than stay huddled inside! It's a brave new world....
- 337 A larger choir and larger congregation AND a resident priest.
- 341 In terms of music, it would be good to have more variety in the songs and hymns we could use. A music group or a small singing group which could rehearse new songs and teach them to the congregation would make quite a difference to our worship, I feel. In terms of the make-up of the regular Sunday congregation, we seem to be missing families on a Sunday morning. (Parents of our Sunday children's workshop do not generally attend worship, although we have tried inviting them). Our congregations generally seem to be made up of people aged 50+ and we're missing many people below this age. We no longer have any youth work as many of our children from Sunday school 10 years + ago have drifted away (a few now go to other Churches). It would be great to have someone to focus on building up work amongst younger people. Another particular concern is the financial situation of our Church which is struggling in that area at the moment. We are undertaking a stewardship campaign at the moment.

- 344 None immediately perceived
- 353 I would like a new organist as ours is struggling to keep playing for us. I would also like access to a bigger music library as our Church has no music library.
- 357 A regular choir would be nice
- 359 It would be good to form a Church choir or a singing group able to lead singing on an ad hoc basis. But as ever there are considerable pressures on the availability of key musicians/singers. At present there is a good standard of singing from the congregation for the music we use. It would also be good to have a student organist to provide some continuity to develop and carry forward the skills necessary to play the chancel pipe organ. One of the reasons we purchased the Clavinova was to allow for some younger members of the Church to transition more easily from the keyboard etc. The piano is primarily used to support concerts/recitals and is our fall back should we for whatever reason lose electrical power.
- 361 Improved Audio Visual facilities.
- 365 More live music
- 366 We would wish that new people would come into our Church and enjoy our worship. We have a beautiful pipe organ and dedicated organists who provide us with music on a weekly basis, we would like more people to come in and enjoy it with us. We are lucky that our Vicar encourages us to enjoy our services, but encourages us to find other ways to use our Church building and encourage more people in.
- 368 To find a way of pleasing different age groups and traditions within the congregation!
- 386 Train more organists. Hold occasional concerts. Upgrade sound system.
- 392 More musicians to come forward and, to be honest, a larger congregation.
- 394 More children
- 401 A larger congregation
- 407 Creation of a music group for the family service.
- 411 A new organ. We have already started an organ fund to this end. We sadly lost our organist last year and it is always a struggle to find someone to play for our Communion service although we were lucky enough to find a replacement organist for the village worship service.
- 412 More music in Church and that might attract more people to Church.
- 416 We have an excellent organist and choir master - to enlist more choir members and offer more musical concerts. To renew our sound system to give us more options. To offer voice training for those who have no experience of choirs but enjoy singing.
- 419 more choir members, especially men, and higher average attendance and greater stability in attendance.
- 420 Musicians within the congregation.
- 423 Personally, a few more strong singers, for harmony and for learning more worship songs.
- 424 Would love a choir but not sufficient congregation to justify.
- 428 A new, well functioning, sound system & better lighting for the musicians to see their music. Better heating. We are currently looking at developing the interior of the Church and possibly Church room making them a more welcoming & useable.
- 429 Younger and more vibrant
- 430 More, beautiful voices, gifted instrumentalists
- 432 A new organ fit for purpose. An increase in the number and age range in the choir. more instruments in the music group (our trumpeter has recently left for university). More facilities for youth work. More outreach into the community

- and beyond. Greater mission giving.
- 438 More musicians and good musical director who is in tune with clergy and people's needs as well as ensuring good musical performance standard and being able to adapt as a service progresses depending on how the worship develops
- 441 A good organist/key board player who can encourage better musical input into services
- 445 Strong contemporary worship group.
- 448 A bigger choir - more spending on music
- 449 To have more younger people in the congregation and some musical members to lead worship and play instruments.
- 463 A dedicated organist. Better heating. Toilet facilities. Bigger congregations.
- 466 We would love to have the money to extend our repertoire of music with more contemporary song books. We need an improved sound system, microphones and a better keyboard for family services. The organ needs an overhaul and the funds to pay for more teenagers to learn how to play it. Overall we manage, our current 17 year old organist has gained a choral scholarship at university and his family feel that this is the result of the support he has received in Church.
- 469 We have a good p.a. system and we talk of reordering the Church with a nave altar, repositioned choir and electric keyboard.
- 488 - Larger and younger congregation - Larger choir with more youngsters - More funds to purchase music - More concerts - Approx 1/2 million pounds for maintenance and development of building.
- 506 We would like an inspirational and dedicated leader for our music. There is a plan to create a Partnership-wide youth choir serving all three Churches in the Partnership/Parish, but so far no one has been found.
- 510 Continue the way we are going.
- 519 We try to accommodate and accomplish our 'wish list' at all times. We listen to Church and community members and make move forward as necessary
- 526 A new organ, more organists, better sound system, more use of Powerpoint to save us from drowning in paper and to protect the environment, more people to share out the tasks, less time spent on maintaining the building more time for the heart and the soul, and sorry about this, but less Church bureaucracy and more action. I already work for the NHS and see more and more time spent on paperwork and less on patient contact. I don't want to see the Church go the same way.
- 532 An organ scholar or established organist. Embracing of traditional hymns at family services. Progress on building/restoration project to enable wider use of the Church building. Congregational cohesion.
- 533 More musical participation of young people.
- 534 A larger Benefice choir
- 535 I would like to see the choir reinstated full time and also the music group reformed
- 537 A new organ and more organists to supply our needs
- 539 Total overhaul of our lovely Hills & Son organ, more singers in the choir, and a resident organist with regular practice sessions for the choir
- 552 More choir members and more regular organist.
- 554 Greater youth involvement.
- 558 We had our wish granted when Barry Williams and the DAC approved the installation of the re built pipe organ last year, we had to ditch the Thomas Atherton organ as it was rotten. The only problem being the Church is cold and damp and this does prove a problem as keys stick as does one of the stops. We'd love to have our own choir again as we used too.

- 559 To have a Worship leader
- 560 Kitchen and toilet facilities urgently required.
- 567 To be waved over the young members of our community to encourage them to make the time to get more involved in the Church - to make music and sing - it is difficult, but we do manage to get the children together once or twice a year for Christmas and a Children's Service - they enjoy it very much - but only occasionally - too many outside distractions
- 569 To go back to sung communion and perhaps have a traditional Nine Lesson Service in alternate years. To have a permanent organist and choirmaster.
- 586 We would like to see a stronger links and support for the development of Church musicians and for those who lead groups such as our choir and bands, beyond that of our local Church. Which is why locally we are developing scholarships, youth events such as battle of the bands, and working with local schools and choirs.
- 593 It would be great to see an increase in congregation numbers. The PCC are very active in organising special events but not all are successful. The present incumbent has come from a large town Church and the services/sermons presented are not always in tune with a small rural congregation
- 598 We must grow the congregation first
- 613 Choir singing each Sunday, other musicians involved more varied musical input to services
- 617 Someone to run a choir and introduce new music into the Church.
- 620 More choir members, with some more enthusiasm for new things
- 623 A resident organist and choir practice, junior choir, youth leader,
- 625 Traditional music/hymns
- 628 An occasional service with a choir
- 646 Regain a group of young families. We have two or three but they are not very regular attenders.
- 648 A new organ, an organist and an automatic organ.
- 649 A good sized choir
- 650 Music and worship is excellent in our Church so no need for improvement, as is Bible teaching and cell groups.
- 651 The music in our Church is excellent and I would want to see what we have now being kept. I would love to see the nave altar being introduced and the pews being replaced by chairs. A more efficient heating system would also be most welcome.
- 653 A new sound system to replace the domestic one we currently use and an organist and/or musical director to play for us and maybe even to start a choir.
- 659 Continued growth in the young musicians group and more recruits to the choir; a growth in attendance from younger families; more effective work with young people; a further growth in leadership from within the congregation
- 661 a permanent worship group and a youth worker.
- 662 To re-instate the choir that stopped when our choir mistress had a family.
- 666 To be able to find continuation in terms of organist, and continued growth in the more contemporary style.
- 669 St. Mary's is used as the parish Pastoral Centre and not as a separate Church.
- 671 We should like to have a permanent organist. We have the help of one brilliant one once a month which is most inspiring. Our Churchwarden plays the flute for other services
- 674 None
- 676 We are fortunate in having a weekly service - we should not want this to change. We are also blessed with having a minor share of a Vicar who has one other parish, and who therefore understands and knows everyone in the

- benefice. His inclusive character, and the way he interacts with the local community, have created a special relationship between Church and the non-Church-going population. My wish would be for this situation to continue, and for the needs of small rural Churches to be understood better by the Diocese when they plan strategy.
- 679 New, larger organ, a sound system, new heating and lighting, 25 boy choristers (Choirmaster's request!), redevelopment of choir stalls, refurbishment of bells, replace pews
- 680 The choirmaster has written: We would love to recruit a reasonably youthful and capable Director of Music on an honorarium plus fees basis.""
- 686 As with most choir directors, a few more younger singers in each vocal part would be good, allied to a better level of singing and musical notational literacy taught throughout the educational system.
- 691 Another younger organist
- 694 A choir & other instrumentalists other than the organist
- 695 More organists, or more pianists to come forward and discover the pleasure of playing the organ. More families to bring their children to Church. We are currently looking for ways of encouraging our excellent school choir to participate in Church events.
- 698 It would be nice to have the money to maintain our organ on a regular basis rather than having to use most of our income to meet the Parish share. I would like to see the Church used more for concerts and also more music used for meditation especially during Advent and Lent.
- 700 To hold more services with hymns
- 701 Although the current organ is functional an equivalent replacement would be nice. The Church heating system will need replacing and finally creating toilet and kitchen facilities.
- 706 larger congregations
- 707 It would be wonderful to have a Choir in Church again
- 710 I wish we could attract more regular worshippers from the parish and beyond.
- 712 Enough people in the congregation to be able to form a music group
- 719 To have more people out of the village of 57 people who wish to come to Church and to have a regular organist.
- 720 a good four part choir
- 727 Because of the size of the Church it is difficult to fit the choir in where they can be seen and heard and they too can see and hear when the Church is full.
- 728 Larger choir with some younger members, wider use of Church of variety of musical events. Phase 2 of reordering which will involve removal of pews, renewal of whole floor area - resulting in versatile space for Church and community use
- 738 More choral services
- 743 Training and funding for amplification (allowing use of electric guitar, linking in with keyboard, also enabling CDs to be played when no organist is present), resources on modern worship songs
- 744 New roof, better or new heating, bell's make over some new settings.
- 750 Youngsters playing instruments at Church services
- 757 A rich benefactor or inspiration from above
- 765 More support from the village would mean more resources.
- 771 We have been trying to get a music group going but have consistently failed. It would be great if we could have a regular pianist at the 'informal' communion; our organist doesn't like to play worship songs. In a perfect world we would have the best of trad and modern music; what we need is a list of the best of each - I find the suggestions in Sunday by Sunday fairly traditional.

- 774 Wider instrument players available - regular percussionist.
- 776 A full-time choir to help our rather poor singing.
- 781 Regular organist and choir
- 782 More people to commit to a weekly service and practice
- 797 Given the small congregation, lack of an organ, no choir and occasional service there seems to be little alternative. However there is a just usable harmonium which could be updated if there was someone to play it.
- 799 We have the usual conflict between the "traditionalists" and the "moderns" - so it depends who you ask!"
- 806 A decent organ suitable for this ancient Church
- 807 Better congregational singing. (Some members of the congregation would like psalms and canticles sung to Anglican chants but this is not practical without a choir)
- 815 More choir members.
- 816 Overhaul of both organ and piano in the Church, as well as the revitalization of the choir. There's no reason why this should be in an old-fashioned format; it could just as easily work with a band of players or, for that matter, with a contemporary worship band. Whatever is done, it must be done well.
- 820 We might wish for a super weekly choir and also for an instrumentalist group accompanied by solid steady growth of younger people.
- 822 Depends who's supposed to be answering this!! Very controversial question at the moment
- 823 A larger choir
- 824 More singers, especially young people, more involvement of families, a decent piano in the Church for less formal services - possible development of instrumental group might follow
- 825 It would be good to have services that cater for different groups, such as all age worship and evening worship in Celtic and Taize style. It would also be good to have the Church open for the community during the week so that the sacred environment is accessible for nourishment of the whole person.
- 830 More members for our choir/a replacement choir master/organist for when our present one retires in the not too distant future/to improve the space inside our building and make it more appropriate to our uses and needs/to extend out Outreach work
- 836 Ditto
- 837 More singers able to read music. Another organist, guitarist.
- 842 Music: New Choir Stalls at back of Church; organ relocated near the choir; professional Director of Music.
- 845 More youngsters participating
- 846 Larger congregation
- 850 The organist would like a new electronic organ!
- 852 Barn dance and acts as Tea Room when required. The PCC will meet most requests. Church is very popular for weddings and X-enings from outside parish. The Church is more important to this small village than it was 20 years ago. However, as elsewhere, it is an uphill struggle to divert potential congregants from fulfilling the wishes of their children on Sundays - which do not include Church!
- 855 An organist
- 859 another organist, funds to complete payment of new organ
- 860 Currently on most of the services recorded music is used for introit, hymns etc. It would be very good if we had an organist for all services.
- 865 A local choir.
- 866 Just more people!

- 867 A regular organist and choir.
- 871 An upright piano to add more dynamics to our music making. Well, perhaps a grand piano.
- 874 I would wish for a choirmaster and organist. I would wish for more members (particularly younger ones) of both choir and congregation.
- 875 An organist!!
- 876 A continuing stream of young children joining the choir, staying and becoming Christians, and another tenor.
- 879 A greater number of young people, esp. reestablish Choir and Sunday School
- 880 A few more singers for the choir, who read music a bit; more flexibility in the format of services. Some instrumentalists (besides recorders). More money for the choir to buy music.
- 882 It would be great if we had a good organist who we could wheel out for special occasions. The chap we use is OK but is not a professional
- 883 A regular organist
- 884 Increased congregation leading to better singing.
- 886 to appoint an organist and to develop a children's choir & Church for the future. It is hoped this will be done in conjunction with an adult choir.
- 887 All junior choristers to experience life as an adult in the choir back rows. Too many leave at 18 or when voices change and they are not seen again. More solos, duets and trios to provide experience and add variety. Provide occasional choral works. More involvement by choir parents in Church life. Grow the congregation, especially in the 20 to 40 age range.
- 888 A resident professional Organist
- 889 I would like to have a regular choir with younger singers.
- 890 A regular organist.
- 891 Different kinds of musicians to play at some services
- 894 A full time choir
- 896 Toilet and kitchen facilities
- 898 Building is in need of development to maximise space and bring facilities up to 21st century specifications. Wishes for music are not high on the list of priorities.
- 899 For our musicianship and worship (and all else) to be increasingly under-girded by prayer.
- 901 An assistant organist, new toilets and kitchen, better lights.
- 909 I would like to reconfigure the current geography of the choir and organ. They are both somewhat tortuously shunted into the small north transept, and there is no acoustic help here. It's difficult to see what solutions there could be, particularly as the chancel is quite narrow, and the west end is effectively the tourist attraction, with a staircase leading up to a small gallery, and up further into the Saxon Tower, the oldest building in Oxford (1044). The choir sometimes sing from the gallery, but it is not ideal, as it's very small, and away from the organ. Unaccompanied works tend to be chosen for this purpose.
- 910 At present the choir is the main institution through which older children and teenagers remain active in the life of the Church; if anything, it is the non-musical aspects of what is a highly musical parish which require more attention
- 911 A small group of singers competent in traditional liturgical plainchant
- 917 Bigger choir - more adults and children again
- 919 To be able to have more music from a variety of instruments and musicians and to be able to have a warmer, less damp Church with better facilities (including disabled) to enable more use by the local school and wider community.
- 937 Musically: To have a bigger choir as we do at Christmas. Generally: To have the space to have children's activities taking place during services so families

- can be more readily included. And the time and opportunity to make good use of it.
- 938 We have a benefice choir and it would be good to have more services with their presence, currently the benefice service with choir is once per month and moves round the 12 Churches in turn, so for us is about once per year. Special services use the choir too.
- 939 Better organ possibly but our current one fits the bill
- 942 We are happy as we are and have been for the 51 years that I have been here for
- 946 To acquire at least 10 families with young children.
- 948 Recorded music so organists aren't a problem!
- 951 Enough money to finish the organ refurb + money to install kitchen and toilet facilities
- 955 Lots of organists who love to play, and I think an electronic organ so that we could have piano and other music.
- 956 More children in choir and more instrumental groups during services.
- 957 A magic wand would be brilliant to introduce new members to our dwindling choir; at the moment we have no sopranos or junior choir. Our organist and choir master has ill health and has now been signed off for at least six months so we are on a rota with organist in the area. We would like to also rebuild our Sunday School and Junior Church and bring more families back into St. Mary's; we have a feeling of new beginnings that we are excited about. We are also re-ordering the Church and working with Architects to bring the building to life so fundraising is making us think of new ideas; music is bringing the community into our Church with exciting events like the Witney Music Festival taking place with all genre of music being performed.
- 962 We would like involvement of younger people; Committed to Sharing Life we long to be Centred on God; Oriented towards the world and its needs; Connecting to people
- 965 Choir singing every week. Visits from other Church choirs; perhaps an itinerant group to help all rural parishes
- 969 A return to the original concept intended by those who funded and built the Church
- 970 Exterminate the bats (yes, I know they are God's creatures too but you don't have to clean the Church!). Move the Church into the village!
- 974 Redevelop the building to accommodate a congregation of 150-200 and classrooms for the Youth Work
- 982 More singers and more musicians
- 984 A large number of the village involved, particularly younger people.
- 987 more singers - including children!

APPENDIX B

Course Suggestions

- 19 workshops for organists/choirs & conductors closer to home i.e in local Churches in the vicinity
- 23 A residential singing course for adults
- 43 Exploration of interface between RSCM/traditional and contemporary music resources - we do both with integrity which clearly is not the norm. If somebody would like to contact us we would be happy to have a conversation.
- 67 Not sure - there was a extremely good weekend on leading worship led by John Bell from Iona at Douai some years ago.
- 96 We would encourage the RSCM to hold events in the church, taking advantage of town centre location, fine acoustics, large organ, tiered seating owned by the Church.
- 105 An adviser to visit Choir practice and a service.
- 174 Local (perhaps Deanery) workshops run by a leading organist / choir trainer?
- 181 bespoke organ training (worship context as opposed concert). Possibly also bespoke choral directing training.
- 182 Plainchant
- 193 More local events for choir singing and training (Reading area).
- 195 workshops for choirs and modern hymns
- 198 We need more information regarding available courses, meetings etc and their costs
- 215 The number and variety of events is about right. The Annual Oxford Diocesan Choirs Festival is always held either at Dorchester or Radley, i.e. up near Oxford. Even the nearest rehearsal for this is at Henley and so few choirs from the south of the Diocese attend. Could it not occasionally be held somewhere like Wellington College Chapel or the Sandhurst Memorial Chapel. The Oxford Diocese reaches down very nearly to Guildford and many very active RSCM choirs are located at Churches in this area.
- 219 Local evening singing workshops
- 227 We have a good number of events from the Oxfordshire Committee which we most often attend (including the choirs festival) as well as a few in Berkshire - we need the variety of workshops to continue as they give good opportunities for the choir members to try different things which we couldn't necessarily manage on our own.
- 238 The Choir have been on a few Choir days and used classical communion occasionally
- 241 Something that would be extremely helpful would be some sort of internet forum for organists, directors of music, choir trainers and particularly those of us who are willing amateurs and volunteers but who help with choosing music, running choirs etc to be able to bounce ideas around and discuss problems. There are such things but they tend to be very academic and there for the experts - I'd like somewhere where the ordinary people could ask questions and share experiences.
- 253 The annual festival in Dorchester Abbey is inspiring. It would be very helpful if choir workshops with professionals were available more than once a year. A course in choir training would be beneficial to our director of music. You may have such courses available, and I will look into this.
- 287 More deanery events for affiliated choirs, events that are more local.
- 303 local events
- 312 more activities closer to us - we seem to be located 'between' areas.
- 353 We would like to be able to attend training days. We also have some singers who would be useful in the Cathedral Singers.

- 357 I think that we are too small to participate in RSCM events
- 412 Difficult – we are a very small Church
- 420 A 'Find Your Voice' day?
- 432 Occasional newsletter. Singing coach who could visit, listen to the choir and advise on performance, practice etc.
- 506 Course for clergy on the types of music available for Churches where there is no choir.
- 526 Help to find organ scholars
- 569 We would like to have more events available in North Bucks. We always seem to have to travel quite long distances. This is very restrictive if it is an event which requires us attending rehearsals prior to the main event.
- 622 There are a lot of resources available to help in leading worship in a band environment from other groups.
- 686 More workshops / vocal training sessions for young and complete beginner singers might be useful
- 695 More day courses for converted pianists""
- 722 More day/afternoon courses for young people (or for mixed ages)
- 728 We enjoy any events which are relatively easy to travel to. We have hosted several events and our director of music has led events. We like any events which introduce new material and include eating and drinking!
- 804 Anything in West Oxfordshire! Have already suggested holding a rehearsal for the Oxford area festival this side of Oxford to encourage participation by singers over here.
- 814 Unsure - our organist is over 80 and has been playing for us since 1954 - no doubt we will need some aid on his retirement.
- 824 Newly formed choir came to Hymn-singing Day recently - would like similar events, or singing day with other small choirs of limited resources
- 836 More training, encouragement & support with the Voice for Life programme for both young people and adults.
- 871 Workshops for budding organists and music group leaders
- 880 An opportunity to browse RSCM publications at local training days; more localised training days. Opportunities for local Churches to get together to prepare for a service which is not Choral Evensong and which is too often delivered badly by a massed choir, many of whom seem to have done inadequate prior preparation.
- 887 Events run by newly appointed RSCM regional advisers at prestigious locations (e.g. Salisbury Cathedral)
- 962 A course, in Oxford, for young organists : day/two day course
- 641 Training on how to get the best from what we do?
- 600 Competently led occasional combined choral services at local Churches
- 633 More local festivals
- 632 More local festivals rather than the one large Diocesan festival

Appendix D

THE SURVEY PROCEDURE

The practical steps in the preparation of this Survey were as follows :

1. Decide the purpose and extent of the work. In particular the survey was to be of congregations rather than parishes or benefices.
2. For this survey, Filemaker was used, largely because it was already available. It is very easy not only to set up but also to modify as and when the need arises. It is also possible to link this directly to the web sites of Churches, and has a facility to send bulk emails individually addressed to recipients. There may of course be other programs specially designed for the purpose.
3. Obtaining a list of Churches in the Diocese of Oxford was not simple. The index of the current edition only has 724 entries but including daughter Churches and other congregations there are 812.
4. The next step was to search the Yearbook for names of an individual in each Church to whom the survey questionnaire could be sent and it was decided as a policy to look in the first instance for a Churchwarden. It was however surprising to find that quite a large number of Churchwardens' details were stated as "Personal details withheld". Although there may be good reasons in some cases for withholding it is not clear why so many had thus elected, since a Churchwarden is holding a legal and important office. In the absence of a Churchwarden's details the next person was the secretary and then the treasurer, and in some cases these had also withheld details. Finally, particularly in the case of small mission halls and chapels, it was necessary to look to the mother Church, with the result that sometimes one person could be selected for two or three Churches. Searching for around 800 names, email addresses and telephone numbers was spread over about three months in total.
5. In the meantime questions for the survey were being compiled and suggestions were discussed by members of the committee and sought from others. Since the survey was to be of assistance to the Bishop's Committee on Prayer, Worship and Spirituality, the Precentor was also asked for suggestions. By the time of the Committee meeting in February 2010 email addresses for every Church had been obtained and a Deanery Chaser for nearly every Deanery had been appointed.
6. Following the February Meeting an initial explanation and instructions were sent by email to every Church representative with two objectives, (a) to inform them of the forthcoming survey, and (b) to check that all the email addresses were in fact correct. A small number of emails bounced and addresses were then checked and corrected.
7. The questionnaire was set in Microsoft Word Form format which would enable replies to be exported to Microsoft Excel via Microsoft Word for analysis. A problem arose here because it was necessary to include instructions with the actual questionnaire, but the system allowed only one attachment. This involved sending two emails to each representative.
8. Thirteen replies were received by post and 14 others were not in the requested format, both of which involved re-typing the answers.
9. As replies were received the form data was extracted and saved as a Word file. This was then copied to an Excel spreadsheet and using the "Text to Columns" function was separated into column format. Finally the data was imported into Filemaker where it could be more easily analysed. However, because replies kept on arriving the Excel file was retained as the prime data record, and obvious corrections were made here before being imported into Filemaker.
10. Filemaker then allowed individual topics, for example the number and size of choirs, to be separated from the main file for examination and drawing conclusions.