

 **‘GS2222: a proposal disenfranchising parish clergy and people’**

In January 2021, a Church of England document sent to its 42 diocesan secretaries, called ‘Money, People and Buildings’,was leaked.  It contained this line: *‘Many diocesan leaders believe that the financial challenges being exposed by the pandemic mean this is the moment to embark on radical changes to re-shape existing resource patterns and ministry structures.’*   As a Twitter commenter remarked, this *‘looks like management consultancy speak for selling churches and sacking vicars’*.

Both heart and head suggest that this is illogical, spiritually and financially. The pandemic illustrated the value of local communities.  A recent University of York report shows that, post-pandemic, even 75% of non-churchgoers want churches open as places of quiet reflection and comfort. Vicars are catalysts for parish donations, which fund the dioceses. Sacking vicars and amalgamating parishes into groups under one vicar (then selling ‘surplus’ parish-owned buildings, with the dioceses pocketing the proceeds) is like ‘selling the family silver’: unsustainable. The Church’s own official growth policy, ‘From Anecdote to Evidence’, shows that amalgamations doom those churches to decline.

However, there is a legislative proposal (numbered ‘GS2222’) for amendments to the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 (consultation closes on 30th September).  **This document mentions (para 27, bullet point 2) that dioceses are already currently planning to close up to 356 churches.**

**Please vigorously oppose GS2222.  If passed, it would make it easier, and quicker, for dioceses to sack parish vicars, close churches and sell them. Clergy and communities would have their rights of consultation and appeal much reduced.**

**We need as many objections as possible.** Please use your own words, but these attachments may be useful:

1. A short form guide ‘How To Oppose GS2222’ (the quick way to do so is to send your objection to the email address below, in as much or as little detail as you wish);
2. A sample longer objection made already (which also includes replies to the official questionnaire, for those who are willing to answer it in addition to emailing); and
3. GS2222 itself.

**Objections must be sent by 30th Sept,** tompm2011review@churchofengland.org

Please bcc (or forward) your objection to savetheparish@gmail.com