

Ketso in a church context

“I found the Ketso approach to be excellent. It was a good way to involve everyone. Being sat round a table in a relaxed atmosphere meant that people from varied backgrounds and ages could contribute without feeling uncomfortable.

I was involved at one time in a massive management of change exercise which involved all levels of the work force from shop floor to management, Ketso I am sure would have been a very useful tool to have had available.” (Feedback from Participant at Parish weekend)

Background

All Anglican churches in the Chester diocese had in 2009 been asked to establish a Growth Action Plan (GAP) for the coming five years. At the time, Lower Peover Church identified the following as its key goals for GAP:

- opportunities for people to grow in faith
- a building fit for purpose
- a church living the gospel

One of the initial actions identified by Lower Peover Church was to hold a parish weekend away, giving space for members of the congregation to think about the goals of the GAP and to identify further actions which could be taken back to the Parochial Church Council for ratification and implementation.

The weekend took place at Rydal Hall in the Lake District – a Christian conference centre. 16 members of the church signed up for the weekend – a self selected group with a range of roles and connections to the church. While some were church officials, others held no particular responsibility. The group was made up of individuals from a variety of secular backgrounds, ranging from university academics to members of the farming community and included two children.

Planning

A small planning group met beforehand to devise a programme. It was clear that there needed to be time for people to get to know each other and time for people to relax while at the same time exploring key issues which would enable realistic proposals to be taken back to the Church Council. As one member of the planning team had been introduced to Ketso and has access to a kit it was agreed that the Ketso kit should be used to focus discussion. In planning the programme, it was agreed that the Saturday morning from 10.00 to 12.15 be allocated to workshop activity, the Saturday afternoon was set aside for free time, then the group would reconvene for further workshop activity from 4.00pm to 5.45pm.

Activity

Given the goals of the action plan, the planning group decided on the theme of welcome as an area to explore. The theme as a whole would be non-contentious and could be approached from a personal perspective. It related to the goals of the GAP, giving a means of identifying key issues for planning. By bringing in the personal in the first two stages, group members would be given a way of getting to know each other better, while further stages were to be use to move from the personal to the organisational. The workshop was introduced with a brief overview of the background to the development of Ketso.

Exploring ideas

Two groups were formed to explore the theme. The Ketso felts were set up with Welcome as a central focus. Three branches were labelled as People, Buildings and Finance. Two branches were left blank. The questions used were as follows:

Stage 1 Green Leaves: Think about a time when you attended an event or joined a group and felt welcome. What was it that made you feel welcome?

Stage 2 Grey Leaves: What worries might you have over joining a new group or attending a new place?

Stage 3 Brown leaves: What do we do at Lower Peover to make people welcome?

Stage 4 Yellow leaves: What ideas do we have for making that welcome better?

As the photographs show, ideas flowed.



Stage 1



Stage 2



Stage 3



Stage 4

Action Planning

Exploring the themes brought groups almost to the end of the morning session and before the lunch break, group members were asked to visit each others' tables, leaving one member at their own table. Using the markers they were asked to identify queries and surprises. Groups were asked to hold the ideas in mind as they went away for their informal activities in the afternoon and to start considering how some of the ideas could be implemented.

When the groups reconvened they were asked to identify three key actions to take forward. Both groups then joined together to start developing a structured action plan, using the grid and the questions Who?, What?, When? and How much?

Reflection

Ketso was an excellent tool for this activity. The groups taking part were very diverse. They included people with disabilities, people for whom English is a second language and who are not confident in their use and understanding of English, as well as one nine year old child (the other child having chosen not to participate). Everyone was able and willing to make a contribution and there was a great sense of listening as people were given time to present their own thoughts. The groups were facilitated by a non-participant, and the establishment of "rules" at the beginning contributed to a sense of game which engaged our youngest participant very effectively. It was interesting to see, as the maps grew, how gaps in provision became clearly identified through the visual "big picture" so ideas for improvement could become quite focused.

While the second session started off well, with the long afternoon break having given people time to think constructively, it was clear that more time was needed for action planning. Unfortunately the time allowed for the action planning was curtailed due to logistical difficulties at the conference centre (1 hour as opposed to the planned 1hr 45mins). One other difficulty with the action planning was that some of the actions would clearly require input from

people not at the session, which left the groups feeling uncertain as to whether it would be possible to proceed with action.

Having said that, the enthusiasm which was generated by the process was fantastic and feedback received afterwards left us in no doubt that Ketso is an excellent tool for such a process.

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