

## Pause for Thought



It's amazing how two words can define our attitudes and how we relate to each other. Are you a 'both/and' sort of person or an 'either/or' individual? Is your life governed by a willingness to be inclusive and accepting or controlled by a desire to be exclusive?

In nearly ten years of having the privilege of living and serving within the community of Lydiard Millicent [and associated communities further afield] I have known, experienced and benefited from the immense 'sense of community and well-being' inherent here.

In reading through the Lydiard Millicent Parish Plan and commending the logo on the front cover, 'Bringing our community together,' it is critically important that we foster and retain a 'both/and' mentality. In a fast-moving and rapidly-changing environment, the spiritual and relational qualities of life can so easily be side-lined and rejected. We can become exclusive, isolated and only concerned for our own welfare and prosperity. I strongly believe that we should both protect and foster the beautiful rural context in which we live and also be aware of the needs of others and be creative in welcoming others in the form of affordable starter homes and/or sheltered accommodation. A fortress mentality where others are excluded or rejected will ultimately result in the breakdown of community and fellowship. I understand residents' feelings regarding the quality of life and the need to protect our green spaces. A 'N.I.M.B.Y.' mind-set however, which is the antithesis of all that it is to be truly human, is an attitude we must try to avoid.

Here in the vicarage, Ro and I are so blessed to be able to look out across fields and open spaces. We recognise both this joy and blessing and are also conscious of the needs of others to be included and embraced. We trust and pray that All Saints Church, along with so much else in our Parish, is a place of welcome and acceptance – a constant

signal to each one of us in welcoming and accepting the call to be an inclusive community, never ever an exclusive ghetto.

Revd. Peter Knight