

BEFORE THE RT REVD THE LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER

ON BEHALF OF THE MOST REVD THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

BETWEEN

**THE REVD RICHARD COEKIN**

Appellant

and

**THE RT REVD THE LORD BISHOP OF SOUTHWARK**

Respondent

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**OUTLINE SUBMISSIONS ON  
BEHALF OF THE APPELLANT**

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## Introduction

1. This is Mr Coekin's appeal against the summary revocation of his licence pursuant to paragraph 5 of Canon C12 by the Lord Bishop of Southwark by letter dated Monday 7 November 2005<sup>1</sup>.
2. The licence granted to Mr Coekin, which the Bishop revoked, is dated 7 January 1996, having been made by Bishop Martin Wharton, the then Bishop of Kingston-upon-Thames<sup>2</sup>. As the licence expressly records, the essential foundations on which it rests are the "*Fidelity, Morals, Learning, Sound Doctrine and Discipline*" of Mr Coekin, in which the Bishop "*do fully confide*". One would expect that in determining whether to revoke a licence consideration would first be given to whether these foundations (or any of them) had failed.
3. The licence is to perform the Office of Assistant Minister of the Chapel of Emmanuel Wimbledon in the Parish of Wimbledon, although, as is clear from the witness evidence and the documents, it was understood from the outset that Mr Coekin would have special responsibility for a church-plant at Dundonald School, in the parish of St Andrew's, South Wimbledon<sup>3</sup>.
4. It is evident that God has granted the Dundonald church plant tremendous growth in membership within the dioceses of Southwark and London under Mr Coekin's leadership. The network of congregations it has spawned has,

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<sup>1</sup> Documents bundle tab 1 page 94.

<sup>2</sup> A copy of the licence is in the Pleadings Bundle at tab 2 page 47.

<sup>3</sup> The church plant at Dundonald School was one of the very earliest instances of what are now formally recognised, in line with the Mission Shaped Church report, as "fresh expressions".

since 2003, been called "The Co-Mission Initiative"<sup>4</sup>. Mr Coekin is clearly highly respected and loved across these congregations (and further afield, both inside and outside the Anglican communion)<sup>5</sup>. He has a fine record of training leaders, teaching congregations and fostering mission<sup>6</sup>. He is a highly gifted Bible teacher, Christian leader and evangelist<sup>7</sup>. He is a committed Anglican, holding to and teaching the doctrine of the 39 Articles, the Book of Common Prayer and the Ordinal<sup>8</sup>. There is absolutely no suggestion that he presents a danger to the public, that he has been guilty of some immorality or infidelity, that he is a heretic or is teaching heresy or that he has done anything to suggest that he is unworthy to continue in office<sup>9</sup>. His positive ministry needs to be affirmed and encouraged.

5. Paragraph 5 of Canon C12 provides:

*"The bishop of a diocese may by notice in writing revoke summarily, and without further process, any licence granted to any minister within his diocese for any cause which appears to him to be good and reasonable after having given the minister sufficient opportunity of showing reason to the contrary; and the notice shall notify the minister that he may, within twenty-eight days from the date on which*

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<sup>4</sup> See Coekin WS paras 6-18 [WS bundle tab 1 pages 3-9].

<sup>5</sup> See Reid WS para 9 [WS bundle tab 8 page 3]; Fletcher WS para 15 [WS bundle tab 2 page 7]; Taylor WS para 6 [WS bundle tab 10 page 2]; Jensen WS paras 3-4 [WS Bundle tab 13].

<sup>6</sup> See Fletcher WS paras 6 and 15 [WS bundle tab 2 pages 3 and 7]; Taylor WS para 4 [WS bundle tab 10 page 2]; Roberts WS para 6 [WS bundle tab 11 page 3].

<sup>7</sup> See Jensen WS paras 3-4 [WS bundle tab 13]; Palmer WS paras 4-5 [WS bundle tab 12 page 2]; Roberts WS paras 2 and 5 [WS bundle tab 11]; Paul Perkin WS paras 9-10 [WS bundle tab 9 pages 4-5].

<sup>8</sup> See Coekin WS para 3 [WS bundle tab 1 page 2]; Taylor WS paras 3-5 [WS bundle tab 10].

<sup>9</sup> Since the revocation of his licence, and pending the outcome of this appeal, Mr Coekin has continued to minister to the congregations under his charge (and further afield) without incident or complaint. This has been the position openly, having been made clear in paragraph 53 of Mr Coekin's Statement of Case on this appeal.

