



Media Release

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Southern Midlands Community Directs Its Church Representatives To Vote Against Church Sales

A public meeting convened by the Southern Midlands Council last night has unanimously voted to condemn the Anglican Church for its plan to sell churches in its municipality and has directed its parish representatives to vote against the plan at the Synod Meeting this weekend.

The meeting of around 130 community members at Kempton also resolved to request its Council to work with the neighbouring Central Highlands Council to lobby the Anglican Diocese to review its plans in light of the opposition.

Mayor Tony Bisdee said the community has spoken 'loud and clear' that it wants to retain as many heritage churches and cemeteries as possible.

"The meeting condemned the sell-off of 8 of our 9 Anglican Churches and cemeteries in the Southern Midlands Area and there is a commitment to pressure all the way to have this reversed," Mayor Bisdee said.

"Such a strong turnout and strong opposition expressed at all stages of the meeting is indicative of the community interest in this issue. They will not accept it as the plan stands today," he said.

The meeting had a presentation and overview of the properties identified for sale from the Council's Manager of Heritage Projects, Brad Williams, and also a presentation from the Treasurer, Peter Gutwein, MP, in relation to the current *Burials and Cremations Act 2002*.

Mayor Bisdee said Mr Gutwein detailed the State Government's intention to review this legislation which will include a public consultation process. He said it is envisaged that the review will certainly strengthen the provisions contained within the Act with respect to cemetery management and place significant obligations on cemetery managers, including a more robust assessment in terms of who can be approved as a cemetery manager.

Further information or interview:

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