

East Grinstead Courier

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SCIENTOLOGISTS EXPEL 12 BUT ...

THE ANNOUNCEMENT that the Scientologists have kicked out 12 key members of their UK headquarters staff at Saint Hill Manor, East Grinstead, as part of a policy change, has received a mixed reception in the town.

East Grinstead's mayor Cr Ray Boulger said that if the Scientologists were genuinely trying to said that if the Scientologists were genuinely trying to purge themselves, then it was in everyone's interests to try to promote better relations.

But the Rev Roger Brown, vicar of St Swithun's parish church, East Grinstead, said the history of the sect showed that it just shifted ground when the public seemed not favourably disposed towards it.

"I don't think the image-changing will work," he said.

'I DON'T THINK IT WILL WORK' SAYS VICAR

The "excommunications", for misconduct, followed an internal investigation prompted by the conviction and imprisonment of senior Scientologists in the United States.

Several other staff in the Guardian's office at East Grinstead have been moved to other positions. The expulsion of the 12 was recommended by Mrs Edith Buchele, the movement's new external affairs director in Britain, after she uncovered what she describes as "a complete mess".

Charges against the 12 included misuse of funds to launch a series of libel actions, particularly against British newspapers but also against Scotland Yard and the Department of Health and Social Security.

It was also alleged that one senior member of the Guardian's office staff had falsely claimed to be a barrister.

The Scientologists say the founder, Mr Ron Hubbard, at least 20 years ago, was to use legal means only as a last resort and to maintain friendly relations with the environment and public.

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The Guardian's Office, which at one point had a staff of about 40, was closed this year when the last expulsion happened. The international side of the Church of Scientology at East Grinstead had now been transferred to Los Angeles. The original "open policy" which had been taken out by the 12 has been restored, a sect spokesman claimed this week.

Mr Mike Garside, public affairs officer for the movement, said the announcement had come at the end of a process which had been going on for about 2½ years. They had wanted to make sure the church and its external

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Doubts over 'new image'



THE team that stays - Mrs Edith Buchele, the new external affairs director (centre) of the UK headquarters of the Scientology movement at Saint Hill Manor, East Grinstead, pictured with other staff at Saint Hill. On the left is Mr Mike Garside, the movement's public affairs officer, and Cathy Sproule, director of affairs. On the right is Mr Robert Springall, director of public affairs, and Barbara Bradley, public affairs assistant. In the background can be seen the "castle" complex used for counselling, administration and as a study centre