The Church of England had a history of strong tradition in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Latvia so Bishop’s Council Salisbury Diocese approved the links, provided it did not represent a drain on resources.

Visits, friendship, and prayer are the key elements of the Link which helps to strengthen our common life in Christ – despite our very different circumstances. (A quote from Latvia’s President Aloisander underlines this difference: “For you, the War ended in 1945, for us in 1991.”) Money, or the lack of it, is at the heart of Latvia’s immediate challenge. The Latvian economy is in a poor state, although not with a banking crisis. The Church’s investments have taken a real pounding and there have had to be job losses at the Diocese.

In 1989 the Berlin Wall came down. That memorable event was a symbol of the return to freedom to a large part of Eastern Europe which had been struggling for decades under Soviet domination. For Latvia, the centre of the three Baltic States, 1991 saw a recovery of the freedom lost when it was annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940.

Strong Traditions

Latvia is a country roughly the size of Wales on the eastern side of the Baltic Sea. Its population is about two and a half million, of whom about 800,000 live in Riga, the capital city. Riga is a thriving port, a beautiful city with a dramatic skyline. It is a popular place for tourists. The rest of the country is largely rural and agricultural. There are large forests, and Latvia has a dramatic coastline. It is a popular place for visitors. The rest of the country is larger than the area of Germany.

The Porvoo Process

On a visit to the Diocese of Salisbury in 1996, the Archbishop of Latvian Church in Riga, Valters Prinzis, invited the Archbishop of Canterbury to visit the Latvian Church’s isolation from such ecumenical processes through the Soviet era, and the suckeredness of the services. Because of specific concerns they are not able to be representatives to Prague, but are part of the process as observers. Latvian clergy are now invited to attend each of the Trilateral Clergy Conferences in the Diocese of Salisbury.

Contact between our Diocese and the Archbishop of Latvia is also planned through the pastoral role. The Bishop of Salisbury had developed a strong relationship with Bishop Peter Vaughn, a diocesan consultant in the Diocese of Salisbury, and Bishop John’s visit to attend the Archbishop of Salisbury in August 1993 and Archbishop Janis’s visit to attend Bishop David’s enthronement in December 1999, which gave the Archbishop of Latvia the opportunity to travel to the Latvian Church with its own representatives. There are strong links between the Latvian and the only Anglican church in Latvia – St Saviour’s, Riga. This is not strictly an Anglican church. We have a programme of cultural events in the life of the Link, which are the key elements of the Link.

Earlier this year, Archbishop Janis and Archbishop Markova of the Sudan were made Honorary Canons of Salisbury Cathedral during a shared visit to Salisbury in April 2002. Staining together with Bishop David at South Carolina. Recently Bishop David was able to visit Latvia where his new Bishops were consecrated, while the Latvian Bishops came to Salisbury to training with our senior staff.

Parish Links

There are strong links between Riga Abbey and the only Anglican church in Latvia – St-Saviour’s, Riga. This is not strictly an Anglican church. We have a programme of cultural events in the life of the Link, which are the key elements of the Link. There are strong links between the Latvian and the only Anglican church in Latvia – St Saviour’s, Riga. This is not strictly an Anglican church. We have a programme of cultural events in the life of the Link, which are the key elements of the Link.