



Central Hartlepool Group

One Family, Three Parishes,
Growing the Kingdom.

Overview and profiles of the Group Parishes

St Luke Hartlepool

All Saints Stranton

St Aidan and St Columba, Hartlepool





Central Hartlepool Group

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Introduction

The parishes in the Central Hartlepool Group are on a journey with God and with one another, 'Growing the Kingdom'. United by their commitment to their local communities, with a strong calling to loving service, together they represent and celebrate the rich diversity of the Anglican Church in their prayer, worship and teaching. There is a shared commitment to the Hartlepool Communities of Hope Project, which is resourced through SDF funding and works across the area to build contact and share Good News with the

whole community. A particular emphasis on work with families, children and young people complements a wide range of established activities, which include food provision, outreach to asylum seekers and refugees and support for local schools. All of this is described in more detail in the parish profiles.

The three parishes are committed to forming one family and are working hard to strengthen relationships that are based on trust, respect and integrity. There are no structural links (this is not a formal Group or Team Ministry) and there is no formal Group Leader. Two stipends are allocated to the Group parishes, and the PCCs are clear that the two priests are of equal status, and they are each licenced to all three parishes. The informal Group Council, with representatives from each PCC (and chaired in rotation by a lay person) is a collaborative space where individual views are respected and decisions reached by consensus. There is no desire or urgency to introduce more formal structures, but every incentive to develop the Council as the basis of reaching a deepened and shared understanding of the parts that form the whole and a place where priorities, demands and resources can be negotiated and shared with respect and grace.

After a long period of conversation and consultation, the Group came together in 2020 and the clergy in post at that time worked together to establish new relationships, celebrate the diversity of the group and help to set the vision for the future. Hartlepool Communities of Hope was also formed in 2020, with the parishes as equal partners. From the summer of 2022 all of the parishes will be in vacancy. The incumbent of St Aidan's and St Columba's left in the summer of 2021 and the incumbent of All Saints' Stranton and of St Luke's will retire at the end of June 2022.

The first appointment will be of a priest who will be 'incumbent' of all three parishes, as the second post is likely to remain vacant for a significant period. The housing and long term future appointment will be agreed with the appointee, and a colleague priest recruited to complement their gifts and traditions.

The PCCs are strong, with appropriate officers, clarity about their governance role, 'good enough' finances (there are challenges) and a clear appreciation of the needs, uses and challenges of their buildings. Each parish has an effective part time paid administrator and budgets support a priority for mission. Many tasks are already delegated or shared and the PCCs are committed to further development of shared ministries. The PCCs have an increasingly realistic view of their leadership responsibilities, and recognise that the new priest will have an impossible task without their help, which will include realistic negotiation of priorities, require new ways of working, generosity of spirit, and grounding in prayer. The PCCs

are committed to the wellbeing of their clergy, including encouragement to take time for themselves and family needs, with proper holidays and days off.

A new priest (incumbent) will need skills of discernment to negotiate and determine priorities, and to encourage and resource the ministries of others. They will need to be sensitive and adaptable to leading and worshipping within different traditions, affirming, supporting, strengthening, and deepening mutual esteem across the group. The next five years (at least) will be a time of change for the parishes and their priests; exciting opportunities that require attention to the foundations of worship and mission, and the development of the leaders in every area. The parishes are excited by the possibilities and ready for the challenges.

We are looking for a wise priest who

- is grounded in prayer, open to and comfortable with the breadth of Churchmanship across the group and within the parishes;
- is a motivational leader, with a broad and strategic vision, supportive of multiple strands of mission and outreach, and able to lead the churches and the group in discerning God's purposes for them in the context of opportunities, challenges and change;
- is an enabling and collaborative leader who will discern and develop the vocation of others, affirming and supporting all in their discipleship;
- has a heart for engaging with families, children and young people, encouraging them to grow in faith;
- is willing and able to support training of ordinands and curates within the Group parishes;
- Is open to change, flexible and imaginative, realistic and challenging.

The parish profiles give more information about the vision, hopes and needs of each church in the family that is The Central Hartlepool Group of Parishes, committed together to 'Growing the Kingdom'.

Hartlepool

The coastal town of Hartlepool is situated in the North East of England, a fantastic area of outstanding beauty, friendly people and vibrant towns and cities. The North East is blessed with the historic city of Durham and is also home to the exciting city of Newcastle. For those who like adventure, nature and exercise we have the 100 acre Summerhill Country Park, RSPB Saltholme and the Cleveland Hills and many other countryside, coastal walks and cycle ways await. With excellent road, rail and air transport links Hartlepool is very easily accessible.

Hartlepool is a proud town steeped in history and maritime heritage with a rich mix of the very old and ultra-modern areas and facilities. The Headland area sometimes known as 'Old Hartlepool' was the original settlement, the new town of West Hartlepool was built during the Victorian era and surrounded the existing small parishes. The two boroughs merged in 1967 and today Hartlepool provides an enriching experience of the founding town with many historic buildings and traditions.



Hartlepool offers something for all, from the 500 berth marina with shops restaurants and Farmers Markets, a multi-screen cinema to 4 municipal parks, 3 golf courses, an award winning beach, good health facilities and hospital, leisure and shopping centre, supermarkets, art gallery, a league two football club, rugby grounds, and the Town Hall Theatre. The town has five secondary schools, two of which are church schools and 31 primary schools, 10 of which are church schools (Anglican and RC). There is also the Cleveland College of Art (recently extended), the College of Further Education (in a new building) which is affiliated to the University of Teesside. The Sixth Form College has links to the University of Sunderland.

Hartlepool is a unitary authority in the ceremonial County of Durham. Many of the working population travel by car along the A19 to Tyneside and Teesside for work. In the town the main employers are the Borough Council, the brewery and the nuclear power station. There are areas of manufacturing to the east of the main A689 through route. There are good rail links to the north and south and a new transport exchange has recently been opened adjacent to the railway station.

Tourism is a significant and a growing part of the local economy. Hartlepool hosted the Tall Ships Race in 2010, and will do so again in 2023, the award winning National Museum of the Royal Navy visitor attraction with the mighty British fighting ship the HMS Trincomalee.

The population of Hartlepool is around 90,900. The town has a small ethnic minority population of around 2%. The largest non-Christian group in the town is Muslim who have 2 centres of worship. Hartlepool has always had a strong community spirit and is more akin to a large village way of life rather than a town and the Central Hartlepool Group of Parishes embody this individually and together.

The Central Hartlepool Group of Parishes (CHGP) came together at the beginning of 2019. The three parishes, St Luke's, All Saints Stranton, and St Aidan's and St Columba, are committed to working with each other, and have collaborated in a number of projects.

The Parish of St Luke's is fairly central to the town and has a wide range of housing and communities from town houses, flats, sheltered accommodation through to large executive homes. Also situated in the parish there are four Primary schools, a Secondary school, various local shopping facilities, a dentist, doctor, a recreation ground with football pitches and a cricket ground, all within a reasonable walking distance. The population of the parish is 10,544 and with an IMD score of 3295 ranks among the 30% most deprived areas nationally. There are 64 people on the Electoral Roll.

The Parish of All Saints', Stranton is socially diverse and includes part of the town centre area. It contains a range of retail and hospitality businesses, some light industry, a wide assortment of housing, plus a large linear park with a Family Wood. There are four primary schools in the parish area, including Ward Jackson Church of England Primary, also the Sixth Form College, Further Education College and College of Art. The area is home to many of the town's asylum seekers and refugees. The parish has a population of 8537 and ranks 306 on the IMD, placing it among the 5% most deprived parishes in the country. There are 97 on the Electoral Roll.

The parish of St. Aidan and St Columba is near the centre of town. It includes two main areas of housing, Belle Vue and Rift House Estate, and Longhill Industrial Estate. There are three primary schools in the parish, including St Aidan's Church of England Primary School. There is a mixture of densely populated terraced, semi-detached and detached housing and specialist housing for the elderly in both public and private ownership, with a number of new housing developments. Within the parish area there is a doctors' surgery with associated pharmacy, a number of local shopping areas, and a range of facilities for sport and leisure. Also in the parish is Stranton Cemetery which is the town's main cemetery and houses the only crematorium. The population of the parish is 11439 and an IMD ranking of 581 places it among the 5% most deprived in the country. There are 66 people on the Electoral Roll.





PARISH PROFILE St Luke's, Hartlepool

St. Luke's is a community whose purpose is to share Christ's love with all people through worship, learning, caring relationships and service to others.



In a largely residential parish St Luke's draws together people of many different ages, backgrounds and Christian traditions. Over the years, the church has built a reputation as a friendly, open to all ages and welcoming community that is forward and outward thinking.



Governance

St Luke's Church has an active PCC which is reflective of the congregation, having a mix of members who are able to share ideas, roles and decision making in order to support the work of the Church Wardens and smooth running of the different components of the Church.

The SMDT (Shared Ministry Development Team) is a smaller group of Elected Parishioners working alongside the Incumbent in order to explore issues around Ministry and Church Mission. The group can also explore specific issues as delegated by the PCC, for example in the past the SMDT reviewed the format of services, and have looked at and later supported outreach work within the Parish by developing a

“Cake and Cuppa” group for the lonely and isolated.

Members of St Luke's are open and friendly, and with the support of their experienced Parish Safeguarding Officer try to provide a safe and friendly place for everyone. The PCC has adopted the current Diocesan Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment policies and guidance with the result that Parish is able to meet the criteria of the annual safeguarding assessment.

The PCC also has two representatives who link with Deanery meetings and represented it at the recent Waymark conference supporting the Diocese in planning future strategy.

Buildings



St Luke's Church is situated on the corner of Hart Lane and Tunstall Avenue. The Church was consecrated in 1916. The adjoining Parish Centre was added in the 1950's and 90's.

The buildings are in a good state of repair and in 2010 substantial work was undertaken to improve access, making every entrance wheelchair-friendly. The area bordering onto Hart Lane is mainly grassed with a number of fully grown trees which are protected under Tree Preservation Orders.

The Church buildings are built in sandstone and brick with traditional slate roofing with leaded areas which have been renewed and repaired in the last two years, whilst the adjoining Parish Centre is brick built. Internally, the Church has traditional pews that can seat up to around 180, also there are moveable seats which could increase capacity

further. Incorporated into the Parish Centre is an administration office manned three days a week to receive instructions on wedding, baptism, funerals etc.

There is a Children's Corner to one side of the church for the use of Children during the main services. A Makin Church organ is installed. The sound system has television LED Screens to assist in the presentation of services, and a hearing loop is installed. A new church boiler was installed in 2012, is serviced annually and operates satisfactorily, the heating for the Parish Centre is provided by a separate boiler. Current lighting is energy efficient.

The adjoining Parish Centre opened in 1995 has two good sized meeting rooms with a large amount of storage, adjacent fully fitted kitchen area, and smaller room for informal meetings, the Administrator's Office and toilets are incorporated into this area as also is the Vicar's Vestry. The Parish Centre is used regularly throughout the week by community groups as well as for church activities.





The Vicarage is next to the main church building across a small off road church car park. The building is an architectural award winning two storey detached 4 bedroom brick and tile constructed house, built in 1986, and maintained to high standards. With full central heating, the ground floor comprises of an entrance hall with cloakroom, WC and office and a separate living area consisting of dining room, living room, kitchen and utility. On the first floor there are four double bedrooms with the main bathroom and one en suite, two of the bedrooms have built in wardrobes and two large store rooms. There is an attached garage with entrance from the main building car park. To the rear there is a good sized garden area laid mainly to lawn, with well established small borders.



Our Church

The PCC of St Luke's has not passed any of resolutions A and B under the Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure 1993 Code of Practice. There is a good history of ordained women's ministry within the parish. The Shared Ministry Development Team (SMDT) was inaugurated on St Luke's Day, 2009. The SMDT was instrumental in consulting the congregation on the matter of moving the time of one of our Sunday services.



We have many members who are confident in participating in assisting at Sunday services in a variety of ways including:

Servers; Home Communion providers; Chalice Bearers; Sacristans; Lay led intercessors; Lesson readers; Sidespeople; Greeters; Organists; Choir members (robed); Baptism team; ☐ Bereavement services; Coffee Rotas

Other areas of ministry include:

WhatsApp Prayer Chain & Church Groups; Bible Reading Notes; SMDT; PCC; Vergers; School ministry (Open the Book); Mission to Seafarers; Gardening Ministry (Pauline); Caretaker; Parish Administrator; Flowers; Cleaning rotas; Magazine group; Audio visual team;

Areas for development:

Evangelism within the Parish; Links with the Comprehensive school; Throston Estate

Teaching and Fellowship

Teaching

Our Church Mission Statement includes 'Learning' as one of the ways in which we aim to 'share Christ's love with all people'. We see 'learning' as more about our faith being central to our lives as disciples of Christ. Teaching and learning takes place in many contexts.

Seasonal Courses

Advent and Lent courses are regularly held. These have sometimes been held as a CHGP initiative. Recently the Bible Study Group has used the 'Love Life Live Advent' resource.

Preparation for Holy Communion, Confirmation and Baptism Preparation

In line with Diocesan policy, young children may take Holy Communion. We prepare for Confirmation those children wishing to draw closer to God any time after their 7th birthday through a short series of sessions during Sunday worship. We try to make this a very special time. Adults have usually been prepared for confirmation through teaching sessions with a member of the clergy. At Sunday services Communion is offered to everybody.

Families wishing to have their babies baptised have been invited to come to the Parish Centre for a lay led booking and preparation session, thereafter they are encouraged to attend a Sunday service where they are 'Welcomed' by the congregation.

Children and Young People

We have no young families in our regular congregation. In the past we had groups for 3-11 year olds and teenagers meeting in the Parish Centre; this is an area we are eager to develop.

Mission and Fellowship

Our mission statement states that we aim to share Christ's love with all people through 'caring relationships'. We do this in many ways including:

Little Angels (Carers and Toddlers); Mothers Union; 'Open Door' Soup Lunches and 'Cake n Cuppa' (not currently taking place- but could be resumed); Sewing Party; Coffee Mornings; Toys / gifts supporting local Refuge; Harvest time; Garden Party (annual); Hampers for local school families; strongly support a number of charities; church notices delivered during Covid; Refreshments in the Parish centre after most church services.



Style, tradition and theology.

Mindful of the fact that most Anglican churches would describe themselves as 'middle of the road' and that this is not very meaningful we hope this narrative might help:

We are ***inclusive*** in that we are always striving to make our worship and our community accessible to all people at whatever stage of the journey of faith (or no faith) they happen to be at.

We are ***traditional*** in that we draw upon the rich traditions of the Anglican faith in order to help us achieve these aims- this includes BCP worship, anointing with oils (on some occasions), festivals and feasts (St Luke's, Harvest, Epiphany, Candlemas for example are times when we love to celebrate with symbols and song - introducing new generations to the Christian message through practical means).

We are ***evangelical*** in as much as we are passionate in wanting to share the good news of Christ's love with all people and we try to do this through worship, learning, caring relationships and service.

We like to ***'do things well'***- whether this means celebrating the special times in our community with cake and balloons, offering a baptism service that families and their friends will remember for being 'a good experience of church' or making sure that the primary school groups who visit enjoy a really good time.

We are ***Biblical*** in that we seek to learn from God's Word in a variety of ways-through sermons, bible study group, daily prayer, occasional courses and conferences for example. We seek to find truth from the Bible, the teachings of the church and our own reasoning and conscience.

We are ***open*** in that we try to respect a wide range of views and ideas and to accept that we are all on a journey of faith and we do not have all of the answers. We like to try new things whilst still maintaining and valuing the old - BCP, small robed choir, festivals and traditional liturgy. We have gone through a lot of change over the past few years, while still remaining optimistic about the future.

We know that all of these ***'labels'*** are imperfect and that we too are imperfect in our striving to attain these goals. We are a 'pilgrim people' and we are looking to the future with prayer and faith.

Worship

At present our pattern of worship is a single Eucharist Sunday service using Common Worship, and a Wednesday morning service using BCP. We are open to returning to a more varied worship offering, e.g. family services, when conditions allow.



We also have a number of 'special services':

Christingle (post Covid); Toy Service (gift to local refuge); Home communions (when allowed); Children's Nativity; Candlemas; Ash Wednesday; Maundy Thursday meal (and stripping of the alters); Good Friday (family multi-sensory service in morning and CHGP meditative service in the afternoon); Palm Sunday procession; Easter dawn service (Churches Together by the sea at the Heugh battery); Easter breakfast; Ascension Eucharist; Pentecost (the congregation wear red and enjoy a party type atmosphere); Harvest (gifts to refuge and auction of produce); St Luke's Tide (pastoral service); All Souls bereavement service; Remembrance Sunday

Administration

The Parish office is part of the Parish Centre. The Parish Administrator works on site three days a week, 8 hours paid and 4 hours voluntarily; Monday afternoon, Wednesday and Friday morning. The main task is producing the weekly Notices & News sheet. She deals with all enquiries for funerals, baptisms and weddings and liaises with clergy, vergers, funeral directors and organists. Rotas are prepared for sidespersons, lesson readers, servers, chalice, coffee, greeters, cleaning and towels and packs are produced for baptism families and wedding couples. The Parish Registers are kept up to date by the Administrator, Verger and Churchwardens.

There is a magazine editor who prepares the master copy that is then printed in-house by the Administrator. 'The Magazine' is collated and distributed by volunteers. The website administered is currently in vacancy.

The caretaker works for 12 hours per week, the majority of his time being to prepare the Parish Centre for the various groups that use it. His skills as a joiner have been invaluable in repairing and making items for the church.

There is a great deal of support given by volunteers to prepare the church for worship throughout the church seasons.

Finance

1. A summary of the 2020 accounts can be seen at the end of the profile. The Covid-19 pandemic is the cause of the shortfall in the year, impacting hall rent and fundraising income. The PCC maintained the Parish Share at the pledged level and this was funded using the reserves of the church.
2. In 2020 we had **30** tax efficient Planned Givers, though this number has dropped in 2021.
3. The impact of the pandemic on the church's finances is significant; income has fallen significantly from £64k to an expected £45k in 2021. The fall in Planned Givers means forecasted income for 2022 is expected to be lower again, and as a result the PCC have decided to reduce the Parish Pledge for 2022 to try and bring the finances to a more sustainable level. However it is likely that further cost saving measures will be required to ensure the viability of the church in the longer term.
4. The reserves policy is to hold at least 3 months' worth of expenditure. Despite the challenging financial climate, the church continues to have sufficient reserves to meet the required level, and forecasts that this will still be the case by the end of 2022.

5. The vicar's expenses are shared and reimbursed across the group.
6. St Luke's has a restricted fund for use towards Children's ministry of £3.2k, and restricted funds of around £2.1k towards the upkeep of the windows and £1.8k towards to upkeep of the roof.
7. The Parish Centre is hired out to various organisations but the potential to increase this element of income is limited by the planning restrictions placed on the Centre which only allow St Luke's to hire the hall to certain named organisations or organisations with a connection to the church. Steps were taken to reach out to the local authority and neighbours to remove the restrictions but these were met with some resistance and have had to be put on hold during the pandemic.
8. The church windows require significant repair work in the short to medium term. Quotes have been obtained and the cost will be in excess of £150k. St Luke's has access to a Trust fund towards the repair of the buildings to the value of circa £80k but the remaining funds will need to be sourced in order to fund the work required.
9. St Luke's congregation respond generously to any appeals for charitable organisations but also for disaster appeals of various kinds throughout the year, including giving of gifts and food as well as monetary collections.
10. St Luke's hosts around 4 coffee mornings across the year (connected organisations also host coffee mornings from the church hall). The congregation respond generously to these and the events are also an outreach opportunity as the public in general respond very well to these events giving St Luke's a contact they would otherwise not have.
11. St Luke's is a member of the Parish Giving Scheme and has a card reader in church to facilitate efficient and easy giving for all members.

The Last 5 Years

We introduced a Mission Statement and from that new initiatives have grown:

Buildings: extensive repairs on the roof; new TV screens; exploratory work done on windows and stone surrounds.

Prayer Life: WhatsApp prayer chain; virtual services during Covid lockdown (continuing in a more limited way); Facebook;

Outreach: Fairtrade parish and stall; School links; Foodbank and other charitable giving; support for the Communities of Hope initiative.

Families: Toddler groups; Uniformed groups

Learning: Group study; Diocesan links

Pastoral: experienced Safeguarding Officer; Pastoral care- formal and informal; weekly Sewing Group

Ministry: SMDT; within CHGP we support Ordinand and Curacy training

Next 5 Years

Building on our connections through the schools, coffee mornings, Cake n Cuppa and the community at large, both in terms of pastoral care and reaching out with the Gospel.

Undertake extensive repairs to windows and surrounding stonework.

Statement of Need

“Doing God’s work inside and outside of church”

STRENGTHS – In all undertakings we look to our mission statement for guidance, especially the need to share Christ’s love with all people. There is an active and enthusiastic God focussed Shared Ministry Development Team as well as an able and supportive PCC and committed active church membership. The Parish Centre attached to the church is a great boon, it means that all visitors to the church can have access and vice versa. We are a popular church for baptisms having families contact us following recommendations from people attending our services. The vicarage is a modern building on the site. The Parish Administrator is on site three days a week.

WEAKNESSES – Recovering from the lockdown has meant fewer people are attending services. We are struggling to maintain enough income to pay the Parish Share.

THREATS – The regular congregation is slowly shrinking due to the death of long standing members.

OPPORTUNITIES – Our vision is to be a growing church. We need to encourage young families who have links with the church. The St Luke’s site is in the SE corner of the Parish. There is a need to expand into the community, which has community centres and other venues that could be utilised as meeting places. There is a strong ecumenical group in Hartlepool and an opportunity to establish firmer links with local churches.

The Person

This post-holder will need excellent people skills and the ability to work with and attract diverse groups of people. They will be visionary and will want to encourage learning amongst the congregation and beyond.

We look for this person to:

❖ Share Christ’s Love with all People

- maintain and grow services that are attractive and build up the people of God
- develop our sense of mission by outreach into the wider Parish

❖ Through Worship and Learning

- ensure that our church is open to all

- support and encourage the existing Bible Study Group and develop other learning opportunities
- encourage and support the Open the Book team

❖ **Through Caring and Service to others**

- identify and support the needs of residents in the wider Parish
- work with the Communities of Hope team

We are looking for a leader who puts the highest importance on their own personal prayer, faith and growth. We are keen to support this.

As a church we believe that God wants every member ministry in His service. Each of us has a place and value. We are looking for a leader who can help develop this, working collaboratively with an active PCC, SMDT and involved community.

We need a leader who can work in times of change, through differences and for God in helping us to move forward as a Church and fulfil our mission statement, and with the vision and ability to help us work with the rest of the CHGP to develop mission opportunities.

We are seeking a good teacher who can open God's word to people and so enable them to gain a deeper understanding of the Christian faith.

We need someone who is naturally able to engage with people of all age groups and be comfortable in delivering varied patterns of worship.

Working with our team, we need someone comfortable with, and enthusiastic about, the use of audio visual aids in worship.

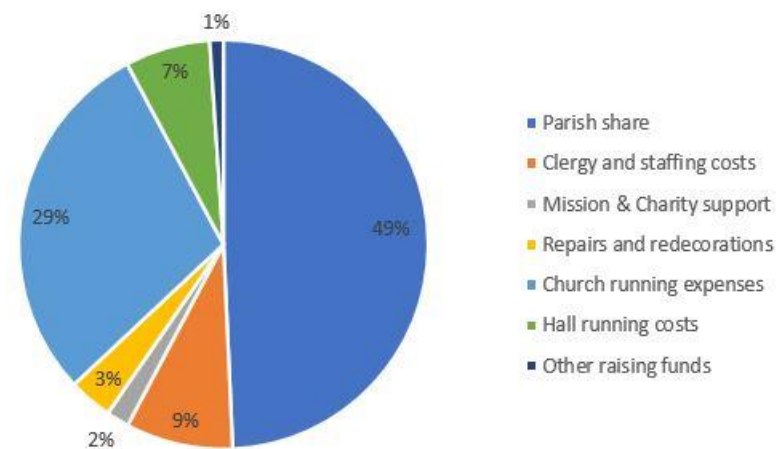
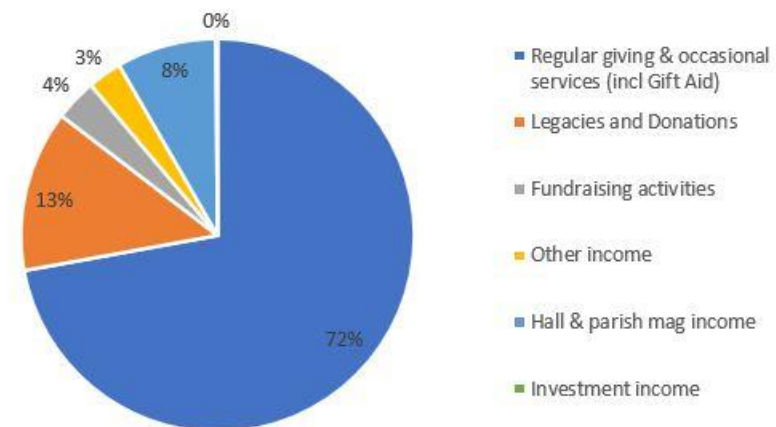
Contact details

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St Lukes PCC Accounts summary 2020	£	
Income	2020	Notes
Regular giving & occasional services (incl Gift Aid)	35,811	
Legacies and Donations	6,588	
Fundraising activities	1,714	
Other income	1,390	
Hall & parish mag income	4,077	
Investment income	64	
Total income	49,644	
Expenditure		
Parish share	28,000	
Clergy and staffing costs	4,818	includes admintrator wages
Mission & Charity support	1,026	
Repairs and redecorations	1,960	
Church running expenses	16,579	includes caretaker wages
Hall running costs	3,820	
Other raising funds	612	
Total expenditure	56,815	
Deficit	-7,171	



PARISH PROFILE: All Saints Stranton



*Rooted in God's love,
growing together with Jesus,
branching out in the power of the Holy Spirit.*

All Saints Stranton is a busy town Church with a wide mission to people from a variety of backgrounds. It follows a low Anglican evangelical tradition. Services of worship are prayerfully underpinned. People are encouraged to pray and speak in services, allowing for movement of the Holy Spirit, and to receive prayer for healing.

The Church has an active evangelical outreach in multiple settings within the local community..

We maintain a four-congregation approach to worship, (with contact between congregations):

- Traditional said Holy Communion, 9am.
- Evangelical Family communion/morning worship/Lighthouse (unrobed) with Music Group and use of audio-visual presentations 11am, and monthly Messy Church (4:00pm).
- Mid-week traditional said Holy Communion. (Held at St Matthew's Community Centre).
- Messy Church is a family craft, worship and food service which is held monthly in St Matthew's Community Centre

Our Sunday Worship service attendance has fluctuated in number in recent years, as the demographics have changed, with a high proportion of people coming from more diverse backgrounds.

The Church has a small Pastoral Care Team with lay involvement in visiting and administering home communion. There is an opportunity for this to be developed further.

Pre Covid we had four bible study homegroups, at present three are currently are running. There were 25-30 baptisms, 10-12 weddings and 30-40 funerals annually.

Mission

Mission is a priority of our church. We have adapted and changed our worship over the last few years to be manageable with reduced ordained staff, as the Central Hartlepool Group was formed, to be accessible and attractive to a variety of people and encourage newcomers with a warm welcome. Outreach to the community is via various groups, largely through the St Matthew's Community Centre and Burbank community engagement, particularly in one of the three the local primary schools. We have been able to contact more people and offer more mission focused outreach, rather than just social events, with the help of the Community of Hope team. St Matthew's is a busy community hub run by a subgroup of the PCC and with the Burn Valley Residents Association. The building is used for Messy Church monthly (20-40 children with their families), a midweek service using the Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion (10-15 people), asylum people's bible study/alpha type course with translator (6-8 people), there is a monthly Drop-in café (20-30 people). The community centre rooms are also used by uniformed organisations engaged with the church and run by church members, Mothers' Union, badminton, beading, sewing groups - to name some. It is used for parish and community social events, two mother and toddler groups meet here.



Opening of refurbished St Matthew's Community Centre

We employ a Family and Community Parish Worker (for the last 18 years). He is supported by the congregation financially and physically. He is chaplain to our local church primary school. We have supported him to become an ordained NSM priest over the last 4 years and he is greatly valued in being part of the leadership team. He was chairman of the town Food Bank, but this role has now been taken on by our retired NSM priest.



The church has a newly updated audio-visual and sound system that is used particularly to enable streaming to YouTube and Face Book of the 11am service, youth services and some occasional services. Please check these out at <http://www.stranton-church.org.uk> .

Sunday Club 4–11year olds (3-5 children) meets in church during the 11am service and the Youth Fellowship 11–16 year olds (4-5 young people) meets alternate Sunday evenings.

We have facility for simultaneous translation used in the services for our Iranian members. The church, pre Covid, hosted English classes for asylum seekers and we have a Farsi bible study which is now online. The Arabic bible study is running with 5-8 members weekly.

We have started a community allotment/garden with our curate which is successfully building local contacts and has great mission potential.

We actively support Christian Aid, Tear Fund and sponsor the Kilimatinde Trust as well as two CMS partners. We are green energy users and use Fair Trade products in church.

Ceilidh (left); open air service Burbank; Coffee, Cake and Chat





Passover Meal in Fulthorpe Chapel

Buildings

Stranton is a grade 2* listed building; parts date from Saxon times, mostly from the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries, with 19th century additions of organ chamber, vicar and choir vestries. The side chapel has been enclosed to make a meeting place. This is used for youth work, for English classes, bible studies and church social events, faith meals etc and has a full working kitchen and a toilet.

The new accessible toilet and servery under the balcony in the west end bell tower has made socialising more inclusive.

The bell tower has 8 bells which are in the process of full refurbishment (fully funded by donations and grants) and supports a large active ringing group of 30 members.



The churchyard is closed and maintained by the local authority. There is shared parking to the rear of the church and wheelchair access from it to the church. We are about to have a QI from which we expect to be advised re repairing stonework in the tower windows. The church is generally in good condition and there are no outstanding recommendations from previous inspections. We have a restricted trust fund which aids costs of church fabric repair.

St Matthew's Community Centre, built in 1900s, formerly our church hall, is owned and overseen by the church and managed by a separate subcommittee of the PCC in partnership with the Burn Valley North Residents Association. It is a large facility: with a smaller meeting hall with small kitchen and accessible toilet; a large hall with a modern kitchen (which is accessible from the small hall) and toilets. There is also the church office and Community of Hope office, plus two smaller meeting rooms and small kitchen. This area has a separate entrance but is accessible to the rest of the Centre. There is a leased carpark to the side.



Stranton Vicarage has 4 bedrooms, was built in 2013 to the Green Guide specification, half a mile from the church, and is well placed within the Central Group of parishes. Situated in a quiet residential street close to the town centre, modern insulation and heating mean that the house is warm and energy bills are low (circa £800 in 2021).

The church owns a modern 4 bedroom detached house just outside the parish boundary which is occupied by our Community Worker.

Our curate lives in a house in the parish owned by the diocese.

Governance and leadership

The church is led by our incumbent with assistance from the clergy team, worship team and Shared Ministry Development Team (SMDT); the SMDT could be further developed.

Within the parish we have a NSM (retired) priest who assists, not infrequently, with occasional offices and services, a lay reader, a pastoral assistant and our Community Worker.

We are a training parish and have been assisted greatly in our diverse activities by curates, MEV placements, and ordinands in training. We need this to continue our current outreach. We support the diocese by being a training parish and sending members of our congregation into the ordained ministry.

The PCC functions well with respectful discussions to reach resolutions. It has subgroups for finance and buildings and worship/music team, SMDT and St Matthew's Community Centre.



Full immersion baptism

While the PCC is a varied group with members from the different worship services, the younger members are not well represented. It is currently led by our incumbent, the Vice-Chair is the Lay Chair of the Diocesan Synod. Safeguarding is taken very seriously and, along with Health and Safety and finance, is scheduled for every PCC meeting.

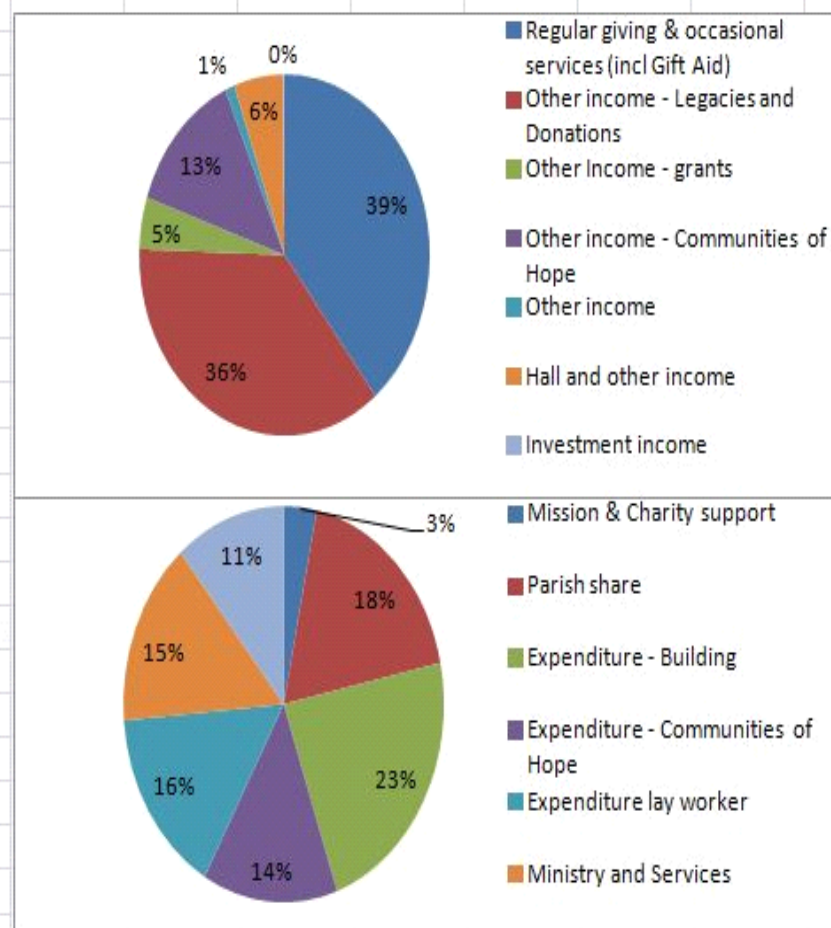
Finance

The church is financially stable, in fine balance. We continue to pay our guided pledge in full monthly; and employ a part time administrator; and currently a full-time Community and Family Worker. Our income has dropped during Covid restrictions as occasional service collections have not been possible. Members mostly give via the Parish Giving Scheme or Envelope Scheme and have been very faithful during this time.

We have just completed alterations in the main church building to include handrails to chancel, side chapel and kitchen and built an accessible toilet, and servery. All this was made possible by gift days and a substantial legacy from a long-standing member. A new audio-visual sound system has just been installed, paid for by donations. We have low reserves and use gift days to raise funds for specific projects.

St Matthew's Community Centre is self-supporting but accountable to the PCC.

Stranton PCC Accounts summary 2020	£	
Income	2020	Notes
Regular giving & occasional services (incl Gift Aid)	68,461	
Other income - Legacies and Donations	63,105	incl £36K legacy
Other Income - grants	8,110	
Other income - Communities of Hope	22,950	part year
Other income	1,821	
Hall and other income	9,494	affected by lockdown
Investment income	256	
	174,197	
Expenditure		
Mission & Charity support	5,585	
Parish share	30,900	
Expenditure - Building	38,658	incl £36K access works
Expenditure - Communities of Hope	22,950	part year
Expenditure lay worker	26,092	
Ministry and Services	25,612	
Management and Administration	18,711	
Total expenditure	168,508	
SURPLUS	5,689	
	174,197	



Person Specification

We are praying for a priest who is:

- comfortable with the breadth of Churchmanship across the group and within the parish;
- willing and able to support training of ordinands and curates within the parish;
- adaptable to and supportive of multiple strands of mission and outreach, able to lead the Church with strategic vision to respond to changes and opportunities as they arise;
- a delegator, able to develop lay ministry in pastoral care, worship, and outreach;
- someone with a heart for working with families and young people, and provide oversight of the church school within the parish;
- supportive of inclusion of asylum seekers, refugees and other mobile populations within the parish.

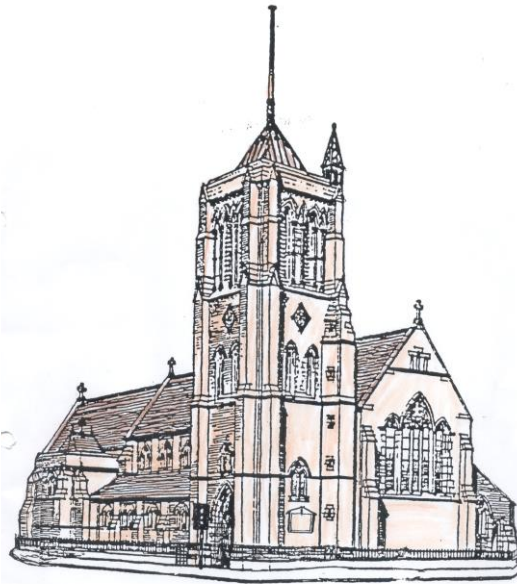


Ward Jackson CE School Christmas Service in Church

Easter Sunday



PARISH PROFILE: St Aidan and St Columba, Hartlepool



Promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church

Our Buildings

The parish is responsible for three buildings. St Aidan's is a Victorian grade II listed building. St Columba's is a twelve year old modern multifunctional church and community building. The parish is also responsible for a rented unit used as a food store for the St Aidan's Kitchen.

St. Aidan's

St. Aidan's Church is a listed Grade II building with a purpose built community kitchen which stands in a prominent position in Hartlepool on one of the town's busiest junctions. It is a red brick Victorian building, designed in the early English style and was dedicated in 1890. The tower with eight bells was dedicated in 1911, and the bells are rung regularly. There is a clock in the tower that is seen by the council as important to the town of Hartlepool to the extent they financially support its maintenance.

The organ is in original condition and over 100 years old. It is a three manual Opus 311 instrument made by the firm Peter Conacher of Huddersfield built in 1890. In 2010 the organ was awarded a historic organ certificate at Grade II (star) by The National Pipe Organ Register. There is a particularly beautiful, striking reredos which is the basis of the Grade 2 listing. The stained-glass windows date between 1897 and 2016 and are mainly dedicated to former clergy and parishioners, and are of various styles reflecting the dates they were installed. The church houses four Regimental Colours for local armed service units that are no longer in existence. The Church grounds are not extensive, streets closely border the north, east and west sides, with the former Vicarage and associated garden to the south side.



St Columba's

St Columba's is a multi use space which can be used in various layouts, for example all church furniture is movable and storable leaving an empty space. The building is situated on the Rift House Estate at the west end of our parish and was consecrated on the 14th June 2009. It is a dual-purpose building, tastefully furnished and set amongst a mixture of houses and bungalows both of private ownership and social housing. It is used as a place of worship, attended by a loyal congregation.

The building is also available to the general public to hire for functions, children's parties, meetings etc. and is used as a venue for Lent courses, Deanery meetings and a local Polling Station when required.



Food Store

The food store was leased in February 2021 to accommodate the food required to supply St Aidan's Kitchen. The kitchen is supported by the community and the food store and St Aidan's are used as a drop off points for donations. The premises enabled us to meet the hygiene required for food standards. The parish received a grant which enabled us to employ a food store manager.

Looking ahead: all our buildings are well maintained. At St Aidan's we aim to improve facilities and prepare for multi-functional use, to increase community engagement and expand mission. Particularly children, youth and families. We have plans to remove pews to create a suitable space so we are best equipped to serve the community. The parish administrator has the office located in St Aidan's. At St Columba's we aim to maximize community engagement.

Churchmanship

Mass is in the Anglo Catholic Tradition within the Church of England. Seasonal vestments are worn at all services and incense is used. All major feasts are celebrated including All Souls, All Saints, Corpus Christi, and Annunciation. There is a small group of servers who attend the Sunday Mass at St Aidan's and the Thursday Mass at St Columba's, they also help during major festivals and Holy Days. In addition there is a rota for sidespeople to assist at major services and members of the congregation read the lessons and intercessions.

Our Reader and a member of the congregation take home communions to the members of the congregation unable to attend church due to ill health.

At the moment the times of our services are:

Sunday 10.45 am Sung Mass in St Aidan's

Thursday 9.15 am Mass in St Columba's

Services suspended due to Covid and interregnum

Sunday 6.30 pm Evensong in St Aidan's (monthly)

Wednesday 6.00 pm Mass in St Aidan's

Attendance is around 10 for midweek services to over forty for Sunday and major services. We also have an online following. All our services are live streamed. The organ is played regularly as the parish has an organist who also plays at other parishes within the group.

We hold baptisms once a month our average number for the year can be up to 25 children and 13 adults. We have about 5 weddings each year and about 45 funerals.

Diocesan Priorities

Mission

In the Anglo Catholic tradition we seek to serve the poor and marginalised of society through continued prayer and worship, and mission is undertaken with diocesan priorities in mind. Our mission, outreach work and on-line presence has seen a growth in the congregation. Also new opportunities for fellowship, discipleship and worship have developed. We offer a range of regular opportunities for people wishing to explore their faith. As an Inclusive church we are always open and welcoming to all newcomers.



St Aidan's and St Columba's is committed to the alleviation of poverty. The main outreach in the community is the Thursday Kitchen which provides food and practical support for approximately 120 guests who use this service each week. In addition to providing food, we also provide emotional support and spiritual guidance. A number of asylum seekers regularly use the kitchen, and they are further supported by All Saints, Stranton, a partner church in the central group. Additional individual support is also provided by Communities of Hope Evangelist. Likewise, many families access the kitchen, especially through school holidays and Communities of Hope children and family's worker provides assistance throughout the year. St Aidan's offers a home to the Communities of Hope café and drop in on a Friday morning.

Every year our congregation supports families in need at Christmas time by provision of gifts, and we extend this to include seafarers away from their families. We also challenge poverty internationally by our support for Fairtrade, Christian Aid and provision of clean water and sanitation through tap and toilet twinning.

We have an excellent working relationship with St Aidan's school which leads to weekly opportunities to work directly with children through Open the Book, Collective Worship, Prayer Spaces, Foundation governor involvement and Reading Development volunteers. Each year group attends a mid-week service each half term. Through this, some of the pupils, if they wish to do so, are admitted to Holy Communion after training at school.

The church has supported St Aidan's school in becoming an International Cross of Nails school (ICON), and we are currently supporting Eskdale Academy in the same process. The church also supports the pupils' parents which has resulted in many coming to church to receive Holy Baptism. In conjunction with Communities of Hope St Aidan's works with children, young people and families via monthly Forest church gathering at St Aidan's Primary school. St Columba's has been used for summer school as part of the local authority initiative to ensure children are fed during the holidays.

As a parish we care for God's creation and we plan to improve the energy efficiency of St Aidan's by the installation of a new heating system, the installation of which is within the faculty process. We continue to look at other ways of reducing our carbon footprint. We have an approach of reclaim, reuse and recycle.

Finance

The parish manages its finances responsibly, and although the climate is challenging, an experienced treasurer closely monitors the situation and advises the PCC effectively. Our priority is maintaining the life, body and work of the church through running costs for the parish and diocesan share, and we have been able to pay the amount we have undertaken each year, through wise stewardship. As a parish we are generous givers to specific projects such as raising £30,000 in a short space of time to fit a kitchen in St Aidan's. Most recently, over a period of four weeks we raised over £600 for tap and toilet twinning. The PCC have sourced grants to support the food store and all monies donated to the kitchen are restricted. We have effective systems in place and most of the congregation are planned givers and gift aid their donation. The PCC is looking for ways to increase income by maximizing the use of St Columba's and a possible stewardship campaign.



ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
HARTLEPOOL ST AIDAN AND ST COLUMBA

CHARITY NUMBER 1185257

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2020
	Note	£	£	£
<u>INCOMING RESOURCES</u>				
Voluntary Income	2a	36567	810	37377
Activities for generating funds	2b	984	0	984
Income from investments	2c	266	466	732
Church Activities	2d	4414	0	4414
Other incoming resources	2e	732	27137	27869
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		42963	28413	71376
<u>RESOURCES EXPENDED</u>				
Cost of generation voluntary income	3b	20	0	20
Fund raising trading costs	3c	0	0	0
Church activities	3a	47234	1925	49159
Governance Costs	4	5120	0	5120
Other Expenses	5	439	17467	17906
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		52813	19392	72205
NET INCOMING RESOURCES BEFORE OTHER RECOGNIZED GAINS AND LOSSES		-9850	9021	-829

Governance

We have a proactive and committed PCC, with several newly elected members working alongside those more experienced, and a congregation who are happy to take on leadership roles to support the priest and the life of the church. The parish also has an active reader. Approximately 50% of the congregation have some form of role. There is a strong commitment to the life of the church and the use of rotas allows distribution of the work load.

We have a full PCC, committed churchwardens and an experienced parish administrator. We are a warm, open, friendly, welcoming inclusive church. Safeguarding is well established and embedded in the life of the church. It is addressed at every PCC meeting and everyone with relevant roles goes through safer recruitment and safeguarding training. Our safeguarding policy and information are publicly displayed. Details of named safeguarding contacts are publicly available online also.

We have good collaboration with others. We are part of the Hartlepool Central group, a collaboration of three parishes and work well together. The central group host a SDF funded Community of Hope project. We have a strong presence across the deanery via schools and outreach work.

Links with other denominations include Church of the Nazarene, New Life Pentecostal and Roman Catholics via St Aidan's Kitchen and collaborative on line morning prayer. We also have links with other faith groups who support our community work, for example Nasir Mosque.

St. Aidan's Parish has existed for over 100 years. Occasional visitors tell us they feel that St. Aidan's Church is full of prayer and surprisingly beautiful on the inside. St Columba's church and Parish Centre even though modern has a friendly feel. As a parish we feel our weaknesses are an aging congregation and a very small number of young people who attend church on a regular basis. However over recent years our church family have welcomed around ten new regular attendees.

Our strengths are that even though a small congregation we are one family and can work and pull together very well. Numbers attending our services are constant and even though we are two churches within one parish we work as one. Our buildings are clean and friendly with a great spiritual atmosphere. The congregation is keen to be led in faith and work with a new incumbent to ensure a vibrant future for the parish.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The parish is seeking a priest in charge for a mainstream Anglican Church of liberal catholic traditions. We are praying that the successful candidate:

- is an energetic and motivational leader with a collaborative style who will drive forward the faith and mission of the church within the Group, the Parish, the school and the wider community.
- is a person of prayer to proclaim Christ's Gospel to the people in the Group with a deep regard for the sacraments and with a sense of occasion.
- will be an effective preacher
- will further the close relationship developed with the school with the object of attracting the children and their parents to become regular worshippers in church.

- will encourage, inspire and stretch people to grow spiritually in an all inclusive ministry to encourage and empower others to lead or take more active parts.
- is concerned for the care of the congregation and will support and develop pastoral care within the Parish
- has excellent communication skills, being easily approachable, patient and a good listener.
- has the ability to empathise with people of all ages and backgrounds, from the older parishioners to the younger children of the school
- is well organised and will work closely with the Parish Administrator and PCC in all aspects of the Parish

The successful candidate has a great opportunity to develop the Parish and encourage the young and families to attend worship in the church with the knowledge that they will have the support of the PCC and the congregation.

Hartlepool Communities of Hope

Hartlepool Communities of Hope, hosted by All Saints Stranton and based at St Matthew's Community Centre, is enthusiastically supported across the Central Hartlepool Group, and is an important resource that all the Parishes would like to see continuing to flourish. This is not a financial commitment as it is fully funded by the Strategic Development Fund with three paid staff, now in year two of a four-year project.



The Central Hartlepool Group of Parishes is host to the “Hartlepool Communities of Hope” project, one of several parish based initiatives supported by the Diocese of Durham under the umbrella of “Growing Hope”, and funded nationally by the Church Commissioners through an allocation of Strategic Development Funding (SDF).

The Hartlepool Project is underpinned by prayer, sponsored and supported by all three Central Group parishes through a joint Steering Committee. It has its own “ring fenced” budget (2022 - £95,000) for staff and running costs, to support various project initiatives, aimed at creating new and sustainable worshipping communities and addressing issues of poverty and deprivation in central Hartlepool. It is working with schools, families and children, the homeless, and local community groups. Its office base is in the St Matthew's Community Centre.

The original team was appointed in late 2020 and despite the difficulties of Covid lockdowns, it has made considerable headway in schools and community engagement. It has established regular “Forest Church” worship at St Aidan's School (pictured), worked with primary schools using “Open the Book” and other materials, has developed outreach to the homeless and asylum seekers, and

made contact with many deprived families within the parishes. It has provided seasonal worship and celebration events across all three parishes, held an Alpha course, established community craft and cafe groups. It has also attracted supplementary grants and donations mainly to assist in “holiday hunger” and homeless outreach programmes.

The team is being renewed and re-formed with a new project lead and workers, and a key task of the new Central Group Incumbent will be to provide continued support for the visioning, and planning further development work in 2022. The project is currently half-staffed with a new project leader, it is receiving support from steering group members and one of the mixed mode student placements, along with a significant number of lay volunteers.

For more information about “Growing hope” see <http://www.stranton-church.org.uk/documents/growinghopedocument.pdf>

Also, Communities of Hope Hartlepool <https://www.facebook.com/hartlepoolcoh/>

