THE PARISH OF BLACKWELL, ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION



THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL, CHURCH GROUPS, & RELATED ORGANISATIONS FOR THE CHURCH YEAR 2019-20

The Parish of All Saints and Salutation Blackwell

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1. INTRODUCTION

This is the twenty second annual report of the Parish of Blackwell, a parish that became a legal entity on All Saints' Day, 1998. The current COVID situation has necessitated a deferment of the Annual General Meeting and production of this report from its usual date in April to September. The Annual Report is a collection of individual reports from the different people, committees and groups involved with this Parish Church, and they show, as in previous years, the full expression of the ministry we are all involved in within the congregations and wider parish, and in service to the community. It is hoped that the report will be read parishioners and friends as well and that you will pray for those who are involved in all the different activities, groups and organisations.

The full report will again be published on the parish website to reduce the number of copies that need to be printed. We are grateful to those people who have taken time and care to write reports and to those who have had a hand in producing this Annual Report.

Vicar's Report

At the first glance

It is my pleasure to commend to you my first Vicar's Report for All Saints' & Salutation church. As one vacancy ends, a new year begins. I am incredibly grateful and privileged to have received such a warm and welcoming Licensing service on the 2nd March, exactly 6 months ago. Thank you to the Churchwardens and the PCC and to so many of you for ensuring such a successful service. It is by God's grace that the service was held on that date, if it had been two weeks later, it may not have happened. It is so important for a church to hold historical records, because absolutely nothing could have prepared us for the Coronavirus pandemic and future generations will need to learn from this time.

Churchwardens

I have only had 6 Sundays in church, so I am still very new to All Saints'! We are blessed to have 4 excellent Churchwardens in Dee, Nick, Phil and Sandra, you are each a great blessing to this church and to the wider parish. I am so thrilled to be working with the four of you and look forward to our future colleagueship and friendship. On your behalf, may I thank Dee our outgoing senior warden for her hard work during the interregnum and thank you Dee, for sharing your care, your support and wisdom and enabling my smooth transition into this parish. It is important for me to have some continuity going into the next 6 months until the APCM in April 2021 and I am delighted that Nick will be our senior Warden and that Dee has agreed to be a pro-Warden for the additional 6 months. The 4 areas where the Churchwardens have oversight are:

- Links with the community, e.g. Schools, Town Mission, Care Homes.
- Fabric and buildings.

- Safeguarding and young people.
- Communication and care within the congregations.

Adapting our Worship

In the last 6 months, we have had much to learn as we have progressed week by week. Initially, there was a flurry of busy-ness with helping with people's shopping and prescriptions until the point where they found their own new routines and established support systems. I have done pioneer ministry in my 19 years of ordination, but nothing prepares you for learning how to run services online. It was a real joy to welcome Bishop Paul to one of our online services. We took a great leap from Facebook to Zoom, so on your behalf (and mine) I would like to thank Andy Hopkins for his advice, technical skills and wisdom and also Andy Young for working so hard to produce hymn and songs videos every week. Thank you to the members of the ministry team that have similarly grappled with the technology and helped to preach and take part in the services. We genuinely have all worked hard behind the scenes for these services and we have learnt a lot each week. In most weeks about 60-70 people joined our online service and the numbers decreased when the 8:30am service resumed in church. We will re-commence the 10:30am service in church, whilst it is transmitted live and we hope to lead the way with 'hybrid church'.

Care and Support

Above all, please thank and celebrate each other's gifts and time. There has been a network of people who have rung those who are elderly, ill, or isolated and so many have made sure that they have received a phone call and offers of help. Thank all of you for supporting me and others with your Christian discipleship, friendship and Christian values. I am thrilled that Andy Young and Katie Malcolm are now Pastoral Assistants in our parish and their licensing service with be in Durham Cathedral on the 19th December. It is also with great pride that from this autumn, Andy Young will also begin training as a Reader in the Church of England.

Discipleship

In May this year, I took a leap of faith and introduced the Alpha course to All Saints'...online. Approximately 30-35 people joined the 15-week course from beginning to end. We had a mixture of professional course videos and live speakers – including Bishop Paul and Mark East. The feedback from the course has been extremely encouraging and there is a genuine hunger for small groups to continue as either Bible study or post-Alpha courses. It is important for the church to have a rolling programme of discipleship courses and a culture of invitation, so we will build upon what we have achieved so far. In September this year, we will be running a Bereavement journey course and Revd Deborah Robinson will be working with us to lead this. In September this year, we will also be welcoming an Ordinand on placement with us for 2 days a week for 2 years.

The Ministry Team

I am deeply grateful for our existing Ministry Team – Debby, Keith, Kevin, Susan, Brian Holmes, Deborah Robinson, Raymond Cuthbertson and Sarah Jay – you are all such a delight and joy to work with and I think you for your loyalty and support. In the next few weeks, the new focus for the Ministry Team will emerge and we will have oversight of:

Worship (Sundays, mid-week and occasional offices).

- Evangelism (establishing door to door ministry).
- Discipleship (to focus on helping each member of All Saints to become a wholehearted disciple of Jesus, by developing a rolling programme of courses and small groups).
- Ministry (including prayer ministry and pastoral care).
- Fellowship (enable ways of people coming together).

Enabling Access

Scott Marshall our caretaker has worked in maintaining our church and the Millennium Centre as a clean and safe space. Thank you, Scott, for your hard work and your willingness to help at all times. About 3 weeks ago, Nicky Waller returned to the parish office and she is an absolute God send and enables the smooth running of the administration of a big and vibrant church and community. So, thank you Scott and Nicky. David Smith and Nick Auty have been instrumental in enabling our church to be a safe space during this Coronavirus period. They have worked hard at producing risk assessments and taken on the national guidelines from both the Government and the Church of England. Thank you both very much. It is our new culture to take steps to keep you all extra safe, to enable accessible worship and this has been achieved in many ways – so thank you to the Churchwardens, Andy Hopkins and Colin Price.

'Developing' All Saints' Church

I am delighted that this church has embraced the Diocesan Partnership for Missional Church (PMC) and thank Lee Puchula for taking on the role of chair for this and we look forward to developing our gifts and ministry at this church.

One of my other objectives for this coming year, is to develop the links with the uniformed organisations, so that by building up those relationships, I would hope to develop their presence at the Parade Services. There is a degree of trust and faith to be built up, so that they feel they can make a contribution to the life of the worship and ministry of All Saints.

Alongside the objectives of the PMC, I will also plan into each autumn that we have a Vision Sunday to look at our church vision afresh and celebrate recent progress. This can be followed by Commitment Sunday, when we review with God how he is calling us to contribute in prayer, giving and service.

This report, I hope, reflects the 6 Sundays that I have experienced in church and at this point, I look towards our Churchwardens to fill in the gaps. Whatever the next year brings us, it will be unique and the church family of All Saints' will be set to grow and flourish in the strength of Jesus Christ, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I commend this report to you.

Revd. Jennifer S. Croft, VICAR of All Saints' & Salutation.

The Church Wardens Report

When I was first asked to be a Warden, I did think about it long and hard, as I did not feel that I had enough, if any, knowledge of the running of the Church. It was a challenge to me...perhaps time to try and push some doors open and see where they took me.

Being honest, the Wardens were not much used when David was here, so it almost seemed like a cushy little number, but little did we know. It has certainly been an eventful year and I certainly was not expecting to be the Senior Warden throughout an interregnum. I continue to thank the Lord for hair dye!

What I never realised, and I suspect a lot of people will be the same, is just how many people do so many things within the Church, without anyone seeming to know. We are blessed with so many hardworking people who freely give up their time with care and passion.

It has been a privilege to serve as Warden and I am pleased that I have had the chance to do so. With the help and support of my fellow Wardens, Nick Auty, Phil Elliott-Lyall and Sandra Whiston – we did it. We got through the interregnum with a great outcome - our new Vicar, Jen.

The arrival of Jen, followed swiftly by lockdown, took us all to different places. The Church has stood together well and worked hard at keeping the contact and services going.

Many thanks need to go to Andy Hopkins for the work he has put in to getting us on board with Zoom, through which to hold our services. Also, to Colin Price for working with Andy to get the hybrid 10.30am service up and running in Church for the 6th September for those that wish to attend but keeping the service on Zoom for those who wish to continue to self-isolate.

There are so many people I would like to say thank you to, but I am afraid that I might miss someone out so THANK YOU ALL so much for your kindness and support throughout my time as Senior Warden.

As 2020 has been the year of Coved 19, and the APCM was postponed, I have agreed to remain as a Warden until April 2021, but as a Pro-Warden. I will then, go quietly, back to the 'back benches'.

Dee Wastnedge, Senior Churchwarden

PCC Secretary's Report

I was appointed to the position of PCC secretary in May 2018, and would like to express my sincere thanks to Dee Wastnedge, Nick Auty and all the members of the PCC for their support and encouragement during what could only be described as a learning curve.

Since the last APCM the PCC has net 8 times initially under the Chairmanship of Dee Wastnedge, Senior Churchwarden and since May, the Rev Jennifer Croft

Sheila Walton. PCC Secretary

Electoral Roll Report

In accordance with Church Representation Rules, a full revision of the Roll was carried out in 2019. (Everyone on the 2018 Electoral Roll received a copy of the application form and the returns collated together with new applications).

Since the publication of the 2019 revision, a number of additions have been made to the Roll but at the time of writing it has not been possible to access data on those who may have died or moved out of the parish during the last year and so these figures are likely to be overstated.

Over 50% of the people on the Roll reside within the Parish boundary and about 90% live inside the DL3 postal district.

Year		Number on Roll
2007	Full Revision	310
2013	Full Revision	310
2019	Full Revision	189
2020	Partial revision	198

David V Smith, Electoral Roll Officer

Parish Office

The Parish Office is staffed every weekday morning from 9.30am until 12noon and is the focus of parish administration. As I have said before, it seems to get busier by the year. The Parish Office continues to be an oasis of calm and tranquillity at the centre of our common life – if only! It is great to have Jen working in the office, and keeping us on the straight and narrow!

Keeping the Parish's administration and channels of communication on track results in a busy centre of activity becoming ever more critical. This is especially so when there are times leading up to major festivals. The office not only serves this parish of course, but also the Parish of Coniscliffe.

I am pleased to report that the staff, both paid and voluntary, remain cheerful in the face of a challenging workload! My thanks go to Mary Henry for her tireless work photocopying the weekly pewsheets etc. and to Norah Kell and Janice Shepherd. Also, Emma de la Motte who mans the office in my absence!

Nicky Waller, Parish Secretary

2. Worship and Faith Development Report

Confirmation Candidates

The 2019 Darlington Deanery Confirmation Service took pace at St John's, Darlington on 25th June and was conducted by the Bishop of Jarrow. I was pleased to be able to represent our Church by presenting five candidates for confirmation. They were Lucy de la Motte, Joshua Bennett-McNulty, Harriet Hodgson, Charles Rea and Cristina Calabro. May they continue to grow in faith.

Dee Wastnedge, Senior Churchwarden

Worship & Education Committee

The Committee met seven times during the vacancy, with Rev. Brian Holmes taking the chair, and Debby Gill as Secretary. The following were some of the items discussed:

- **Baptism policy.** Rev. Holmes felt there was a need to examine the policy afresh. At the time, there was no immediate prospect of the appointment of a new incumbent, so he proposed inviting parents and godparents to come to Church for a talk about baptism, rather than visiting at home, which was often not a very satisfactory experience. This was discussed on several occasions, but once the new Vicar was in post, it was felt better to have her draw up her preferred policy. Rev. Jen later expressed her wish to get prospective baptism families to come to a 10.30am service first, to see how the Church works, and to familiarise themselves with the building.
- Non-attendance/Poor attendance of some of the uniformed organisations at Parade services. This was a problem with some of the Scouting groups, but not the Beavers, Cubs or the girls' groups. It was a long-standing problem, which needs to be addressed. It was stated that as the organisations paid a reduced rate for room hire for their sessions, they should be prepared to engage more with Church events, but there was recognition of the fact that the groups' promises were not now linked to faith or Church as they had been in the past. It was hoped to continue to build bridges between the Uniformed Organisations and the Church in the future, with the arrival of the new Vicar.
- **Lent Groups.** After discussion it was agreed to study the gospel readings for the Sundays in Lent, but unfortunately the Groups had to stop meeting early in Lent, when the Church nationally had to comply with the new regulations laid down by the Government following the Covid-19 outbreak.
- Clavinova. There had been problems with a broken pedal on the Clavinova which was exacerbated when it was moved. Andy Young was working on repairs, and asked for the instrument to be moved as infrequently as possible.
- Organ Scholars. All Saints' is fortunate to have two home-grown, budding organ students, Caroline Howarth and James Bennett-McNulty. There is a need to protect them from being over-used as they are only in the early stages of training, and rules for their deployment were being drawn up. There was some disquiet about the way in which Caroline in particular was being encouraged by people at St Edwin's not to stick to the rules laid down, but to bypass them. This was felt to be lacking in courtesy towards the PCC and the Director of Music. Our Wardens had tried to set up a meeting with those at St Edwin's, but this had not proved successful.
- Inter-Club Carol Service (Rotary). It was agreed that this would not take place at All Saints' in December 2019.
- Advent Addresses. The Ministry Group agreed with a proposal from the Worship and Education
 Committee for a series of addresses on the Advent themes in the four weeks running up to
 Christmas at 10.30am services.

- **First Class Learning Maths Group.** This group was meeting in Church on Saturday mornings, necessitating the moving of pews to accommodate the children's work tables. A feeling of unhappiness had been expressed about using the Church building for a secular, business purpose, and because of the strain of moving from, and then returning the heavy furniture to its place every week. Further discussion became irrelevant later in the year, when the Group ceased using the Church.
- **Junior Church.** There was discussion because numbers are very low. Families' priorities have changed, and there is a lot of competition for Sunday mornings, usually because of sport. There needs to be a drive to recruit children to come along, because it is crucial to sow the seeds of faith. In the past, children had moved up from the Crèche to Junior Church, but there was no Crèche currently running.
- Pastoral work New Opportunities. Rev. Holmes felt that a complete re-think on this was necessary, to relieve the pressure on Susan Leatherbarrow, the Pastoral Assistant. In addition, Katie Malcolm and Andy Young had expressed an interest in pastoral work, and a training course had been found, which was starting soon. It was agreed that they and Susan Leatherbarrow would attend the course, with the agreement with Lindisfarne training later formalised by the PCC.
- **Terms of Reference of the Committee.** Rev. Holmes wanted the Committee to take some time to look at the ToR and check whether they needed to be changed, and if they could be improved upon. This would take some time and consideration.
- Partnership for Missional Church. It was agreed that the Chair of this group, currently Clare Curran, would receive a copy of the Minutes of the meetings of the W&Ed Committee, so that the group would know what the Committee was aiming to do. The Discernment Day had taken place at Elm Ridge, and was well-attended, with Rev. Jen there as an observer, as her installation had not taken place by then.
- **Shared Ministry.** It was agreed that All Saints' Shared Ministry Group had not functioned for some time, so it was not really possible to call us a Shared Ministry Parish.
- **Deanery Plan.** There has been a re-ordering of the Churches within the Deanery, and our grouping now includes St Matthew's and Heighington. More news on this front will follow.
- **Communication.** Communication between the W&Ed Committee, the Ministry Group and the PCC needs to be improved upon, in both directions. After her installation, Rev. Jen asked that there should be a regular item on the PCC agenda sharing information between the Committees and the Group. She also mentioned the importance of having a Communications Officer or team of two or three people who could take responsibility for this.
- Joint events with Elm Ridge Methodist Church. It was agreed that there would be a pulpit swap in January 2020 with a minister from Elm Ridge preaching at Choral Evensong at All Saints', and one of our Ministry Group preaching at Elm Ridge during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Elm

Ridge would also provide singers for Choral Evensong, as they had at Christmas, to swell the numbers in the Choir. There is still co-operation over joint Christmas and Easter cards with services of both churches to be shown on them and distributed around the area.

- **Future Worship.** Services were planned into April, but in mid-March all church buildings had to be closed because of the restrictions on gatherings on account of the Covid-19 outbreak. It was hoped that live streaming or at least recording of services would take place, to enable as many people as possible to worship at home. Weddings and baptisms could not now take place.
- The organ. There have been a lot of problems with the volume being uncomfortably high in some areas of the Church, and a solution to this was being sought. It was also noted that the speaker in the sanctuary was not working at all.
- **Darlington Band Christmas Concert.** There was disquiet about the way in which some band members had treated both the vergers and the Church furniture two years running, so it was to be brought to the PCC for some kind of stipulation that both should be treated with more respect, or further action would be taken.
- Alf Hind Big Band. The Band had approached one of the Wardens about the possibility of hiring the Church building as a practice area. There was a discussion both at the W&Ed Committee and at the PCC, but as yet, the Band had not been in touch again.
- St Mary Piercebridge. This is now a "Festival Church", which means that services are only held there on very few occasions. Rev. Holmes felt on his last visit that there was a real sense of sadness demoralisation and abandonment. The people who attend St Mary's are very few in number, and when there is such little support from the villagers, who are loathe to see the building close, but who do not wish to go to services, it is hard to see how to move forward, but there was a heartfelt wish on the part of the W&Ed Committee to find ways of offering support. There was a lengthy discussion about how to link St Mary's with local businesses, such as the Farm Shop and Café across the road, and events such as those led by historical re-enactment societies. There could be a flower festival, and Andy Young suggested bringing one of his choirs over, to sing. There was also apparently a level of ill-feeling with the way in which the Diocese had dealt with the sale of the church/village hall. The money raised had been meant to improve the church building, but nothing seems to have been done. Discussion was to continue at the Ministry Group and PCC meetings.
- Lighting the Church on dark evenings. A request was made to ask the PCC if the altar spotlights could be left on in the winter, and in the Crib, when it is there, to make the Church building look more inviting. If the Church is totally unlit, no one waiting in the Foyer (to collect children, for example) can see in, so they might actually consider it to be "out of bounds" through the glass doors, when in fact if people wanted just to look in, or sit in the Church and pray, this is what we should be encouraging. The lights could be put out when the building is locked up for the night. We want people to be curious about the Church, and we need to be welcoming.

- The Gardens Nursing Home. A request has been made to increase the number of helpers who go to the service of Holy Communion on the second Tuesday of the month. Anyone who feels they would like to help with this should speak to the Vicar. Once lockdown began, however, it was no longer possible to go into The Gardens.
- Worship during the on-going building repairs. Contingency plans were made for worship on Wednesdays and Sundays to take place in the Garden Rooms and the Millennium Hall whilst the damage to the Church building was being completed. In the event, Sunday worship was able to continue in the Church because of the good organisation and tidiness of the people doing the repair work. It was to be hoped that all work would be completed in time for the installation of the new Vicar, which did prove to be the case.
- First meeting of the Committee with the Vicar in the Chair. Rev. Jen will be saying Morning Prayer Monday Thursday at 9.00am and Evening Prayer at 4.30pm. Her day off will be Fridays. After the lockdown of the church premises, this was no longer able to happen. The Vicar recorded prayer blogs which were put on the Facebook page.
- **Open the Book.** This group needs additional members, so anyone who feels they could help with this should look out for instructions in the *Weekly Herald* to see who to contact. This valuable work of taking the Bible stories into schools is very important.
- Alpha Course. It is hoped that running an Alpha Course at All Saints' will begin in the autumn, if at all possible. This actually happened sooner and was done via Zoom with a good number of participants.
- **Wedding Fayre.** The Vicar would like to hold a Wedding Fayre at All Saints' to encourage more couples to consider having a Church wedding. The Church would be decorated with flowers to show what could be done, and Andy Young agreed to be at such an event to play.
- **Home Communions.** This was discussed but will now have to be put on hold because of the Covid-19 outbreak, and social distancing.
- The next meeting of the W&Ed Committee. The Committee was due to meet on 2nd April, but this has had to be postponed.

Debby Gill, Secretary to the Worship and Education Committee

Parish Readers

It has been another busy year for us all, especially following the departure of David and Sarah to David's new parishes in Scotland. Here is a general picture of some of the different ways in which we all continue to be involved, both within the work of All Saints' and Coniscliffe and beyond.

- Working as part of the Ministry Team
- Regular preaching duties both at All Saints' and St Edwin's

- Pastoral oversight and responsibilities
- Working as Secretary to the Worship and Education Committee and reporting to the PCC
- Participating on other PCC Committees at All Saints'
- Drafting and arranging the staffing of rotas for all services held in the two parishes, often with the help of visiting clergy during the vacancy
- Involvement with the Music Group and developing evening services
- Being part of the PMC (Partnership for Missional Church) team which is developing the church's outreach into the communities in which we are placed
- Co-ordinating the Men's Group

It is a great privilege to be licensed as a Reader, and this September will see Debby Gill's 20th year of service, and 2021 the same for Susan Leatherbarrow. No Parish Readers have the same duties, except for following our calling to serve God; this we do, in the parish, in our places of work, at home, and everywhere we find ourselves. We are blessed to work as members of a great team of people, and would recommend to anyone that, if they feel they may be sensing a vocational call, whether to lay or ordained ministry, please don't let that call go unheeded – explore it! Step out in faith, be encouraged, and speak to Jen, our new Vicar. Following one's call may not necessarily be an easy option, but it is, without doubt, enriching, stimulating, fulfilling – and definitely not dull! And please, do not think that, because you see the four of us Readers doing the different things that we do at All Saints', that there is no room for *more* people to play *their* part in this ministry or in any other. We all have different gifts, so be prepared to explore your calling, with someone who can help you. And above all, keep praying.

The coming year is going to be rather different from past years because of the Covid-19 outbreak. We are going to have to do "Church" a bit differently for a while, and we do not know for how long. But we will be doing our best, as members of the Ministry Team at All Saints' Blackwell, and Coniscliffe, as we continue to play our part in building God's Kingdom here on Earth. This we will do by working alongside our Vicar, (we are delighted to have you, Jen!) and by reaching out into the communities where we are placed, so that more people may come to know life in Jesus Christ, in all its fullness.

Additional note: We are delighted that Andy Young has been accepted for training!

Debby Gill, Susan Leatherbarrow, Kevin Winkworth, Keith Whiston

Verger's Report

Well, it's that time of year again, doesn't time fly when you're busy, like the Vergers at All Saints' Church who work throughout the year, preparing the church for the very varied services. No matter what, the verger team rise to the occasion in fulfilling and meeting the various requirements which the many services demand.

Over the past year the verger team included Alan Waller, Philip Eliott-Lyall, Anne and Brian Tyreman, Gillian Bower Andrew Watson and myself. I am greatly indebted to all. Gillian does a fantastic job looking after the linen. She also assists with the frontals along with Phil and Alan. I must also thank the vergers who assist with the 6.30pm Sunday service; Alan, Philip and Gillian.

Following her untimely death, Anne Tyreman will be sadly missed at church and amongst the Verger team. After many years of service, Gillian Bower and Brian Tyreman have retired as vergers. I would like to thank them both for their commitment and support over the years.

God bless you all,

Mike Fryer, Head Verger

Safeguarding Report

Once again, I am pleased to report, I have nothing to report from a safeguarding point of view. I am very fortunate to work at All Saints' Church, with people who take safeguarding seriously and above all are responsible people.

There are more and more rules and regulations from the Diocese. I am confident that I have all these covered. Training is available through the Diocese which I personally recommend. There has been a change in recent months whereby on-line training and application for DBS checks have been made available. Sandra Whiston is assisting me with this computerised version of safeguarding.

Mike Fryer, Safeguarding Officer

Readers and Sidespeople

I continue to manage the rota for Readers and Sidespeople. There are almost 50 parishioners regularly involved, some just readers or sidespeople, some are on both rotas.

We are always pleased when someone new wants to become involved in this important part of our worship. Please, let me know if you would like to be included in the next six-monthly rota. **Nicky Waller**

Music Director Report

Choir

Until March, the choir performed its usual duties well, with slightly increased numbers. I was really pleased with their work at the large services – harvest, Christmas and Jen's installation. However, the commitment made by those who sing week after week allowing the choir to keep serving the church is especially commendable. I would like to thank all the musicians we are lucky enough to be able to call on, for making my work possible and enjoyable, and for enhancing our worship in such a special way.

There is still a desperate need for new singers, of any standard, to allow us to lead the singing effectively, once the time comes to do so. If there is a point where we feel able to run the choir, but that congregations are not allowed to sing, there will be an even greater need for a regular number of singers so that we can do this effectively. If you wished to be a member of the choir "for hostilities only", the help would be greatly appreciated!

I would welcome suggestions for thing we could do once we restart, that might be more creative, and help to bring a wider range of people in to experience what is a very fulfilling role in church life.

As Caroline put it "it is all about helping the Church, whilst doing something you enjoy".

Organ Scholars

We have been especially lucky to have two young people start playing for us as organ scholars. Budding organists are a rare thing, and to be cherished and nurtured, but they also benefit the church as a whole. The instrument is not the easiest of things to get to grips with, but they have made and excellent start, already enhancing our worship and keeping the tradition alive in several churches. I am looking forward to more great things from James and Caroline and couldn't be prouder or more pleased with them.

Church Band

Way back in September, we established a wind mand – the Blackwell Millennium Band. We have been very lucky to have instruments lent to us by Cockerton Band, as well as some gifts of money to purchase instruments- tenor horns, flute, trumpets and a baritone. It has been a joy watching them develop as a group, especially those who really thought they couldn't do it. The age range is from 7 up to "I daren't ask"! they have developed into a wonderful, inclusive group who accept each other's different ability levels (ex-pro down to raw beginner) as well as their different emotional and social needs. I am hoping that, once we are able to play again, they will be able to play at fetes and some services, but their main benefit to the church is as a fellowship group, and as a "soft point of entry" to the church, allowing people to come and get to know us without feeling they have to attend services. The friendly supportive atmosphere is, I hope, a good advert for us as a congregation and a way for us to enhance the life of the community we serve.

Andrew Young, Director of Music

Music Group 2019 - 2020

After 10 years of playing together and enjoying many wonderful spirit-filled times, the Music Group has had a sad year. Our last service together was in December - a service of Contemporary Carols. Unfortunately, circumstances did not allow us to play in January and February and by March, Covid 19 had arrived. Prior to this, we played more or less every month on a Sunday evening. Sam, our drummer, changed jobs and is now based in York – although he hopes to still join us occasionally. Sadly, Mike Frankton died earlier this year. We loved his bass clarinet playing. He was such a loyal and supportive member of the group who will be greatly missed. We hope to reconvene post Covid, but as yet, the future remains unclear.

Dorothy Puchala

Flower Arrangers

Well what a strange year this has been I don't really know where to begin with my annual report as there is not much to report.

The year was ticking along nicely until October and Harvest Festival when we had the tumbling pumpkins! The one at the altar just decided to tumble over and the pumpkin at the pulpit was knocked down by a car! Thank you to John Jarvis, who is on disaster watch for me and who phones me to let me know of any mishaps! Christmas passed by uneventfully. Then with Lent, the builders working in church and COVID, the last time we arranged fresh flowers in Church was for Jen's installation. Jen hasn't yet seen any of the wonderful flower arrangements that my flower team put in Church. There will be fresh flowers in church

on Back to Church Sunday. Keith and Sandra Whiston have asked for flowers to commemorate their Silver Wedding, COVID permitting as with Harvest flowers.

I would like to thank all Parishioners who gave donations towards flowers last year and before lockdown. Also, to the P.C.C for paying for festival flowers it is very much appreciated. Without your help we would struggle to keep buying fresh flowers for Church as donations are very much down on previous years. We did manage to have our February coffee morning that raised £195.

Finally, towards the end of 2019 we said goodbye to Joyce Moore from our flower arranger's rota. After many years of arranging flowers in church she has decided to hang up her flower arranging apron. Thank you to Joyce who was a great support to me in my early years of flower arranging and when I took over the role of team leader for the flower arrangers. I will miss your support and chats while arranging flowers. Thank you, Joyce.

Lona Martin

3. Stewardship: Finances & Grounds Reports

PCC Treasurers Report

I am pleased to report that we had a reasonable result in 2019 albeit not as good as that in 2018.

Details of the results are shown in the extracts from the Annual Report and Financial Statements included under 'Abridged Accounts' later in this document.

The Statement of Financial Activities indicates that there was an overall surplus for the year, with income exceeding expenditure by £2,998. This compares to the surplus of £12,399 in 2018, a reduction of over £9,000.

Total unrestricted income reduced significantly from £210,259 in 2018 to £197,931 in 2019.

Unrestricted planned giving of £64,915, together with the associated tax recoverable of £17,526, represents a continuing trend by decreasing over 3% on the amounts received in the previous year (£67,040 and £18,156 respectively). In fact over the past three years the amount of planned giving received has reduced by a disappointing 17%.

Unrestricted costs also decreased in the year from £198,177 in 2018 to £195,332 in 2019 primarily as a result of the reduction in our parish share payment pledge to the Diocese, which was reduced by £9,000 to £85,000. I am very pleased to announce that, once again, we paid this amount in full as we always have done, a very commendable achievement for our parish. The parish share largely provides the stipends and housing for the clergy within the Diocese.

Full details of our income and expenditure during the year are provided in the extracts.

Fundraising during the year was, once again, excellent with a total raised of £12,792 (2018: £14,164). This includes £3,192 from the Garden Party and £4,150 from the Christmas Fair.

We are also very fortunate to have many groups within our church which, as well as providing social activities, also raise funds for the church. These include Tea and Coffee (£1,095); Social Committee (£1,690); 100 Club (£744) and Bell Ringers who raised £1,120 during the year enabling them to make a donation of this amount to Cystic Fibrosis Care.

Our Pre-School has had another very successful year producing a surplus of £4,704 (2018: £14,945). This is another good result for the Pre-School and all those involved should be congratulated.

The surplus for the year has resulted in our total net assets at the end of the year increasing to £103,698 (2018: £100,700) of which £99,254 are unrestricted funds and £4,444 are restricted.

As I indicated above our planned giving has substantially reduced over the past three years.

A number of large givers have either died or moved away during this period and our stewardship campaigns have, so far, not been able to recover these amounts from new or existing givers. As a result, our initial budget calculations for 2020 were showing a substantial deficit for the year. Consequently, although the Diocese requested parishes to consider increasing their parish share pledges for 2020, we decided that we had to reduce our payment this year from £85,000 to £76,000. Even with this reduction our budget for 2020 was still only showing a breakeven position such is the reduction in our parish giving. Therefore, as always, it is vital that we remain diligent in our control of costs and make every effort to continue to increase income.

The Covid-19 pandemic has made matters even worse. Since the closure of the church and the social distancing requirements made in March our income generating abilities have been greatly reduced. Not only have we lost giving in the form of loose plate, yellow envelopes, etc we have not been able to hold funeral services in church which are an income stream for us via collections and donations. Financially, more importantly, we have not been able to hold our many social events, including the garden party, which generate substantial income for the church. Consequently, I estimated that if the situation did not change for the remainder of this year, we would be looking at a potential deficit for 2020 of over £24,000. Based on this the PCC took the decision to inform the Diocese that our parish share payments would have to be reduced from our original pledge of £76,000 to £48,000 with the proviso that if our situation improved then we would look to increase it again.

Peter Davison, Treasurer

Abridged Accounts – please see the Appendices on pages: 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38

Planned Giving

To write this report mid-March, as you might imagine, would have been much more straightforward. However, the impact of the lockdown – and the consequent impact of no services in Church, regular or otherwise, was unforeseen and has inevitably caused a reduction in our income from planned giving and loose plate donation, gift-aided or otherwise.

I have been very much heartened by the fact that all our regular planned-givers on either the standing order or the Parish Giving Scheme have maintained — and in some cases —increased their giving, and a significant number of those on the Green Envelope Scheme have either transferred across to one of the other schemes, or made great efforts to send me their giving. On behalf of the PCC, please all accept my grateful and sincere thanks.

Inevitably, though, as our income has reduced this places a strain on our budget. I would urge all to consider whether they could increase, or start to make, a commitment to regular giving to the Church.

Although this year's accounts show a reduction in Planned Giving, I am pleased to report that this is due to the loss of parishioners who have moved or passed away, rather than any reduction in giving by members of the scheme.

I would urge all regular givers – as well as people who would like to start to make a regular contribution to maintain the life and work of the Church here to consider and sign up to the new direct debit based giving scheme - the Parish Giving Scheme - which we launched at in 2019, which will make administration much simpler and in time supersede the present standing order based scheme.

We are very conscious that giving should not just be about a financial commitment, but it is an intimate part of what you feel you can commit to our Church, your spiritual development and growth within it, and the Church at large. Please give what you feel you are able to – both financially, and with your time and talents - to further our efforts to Grow the Kingdom in this Parish and beyond.

Ellis Leatherbarrow, Planned Giving Treasurer

Buildings and Grounds Committee

We are fortunate to have a relatively new and modern church but barely a week passes when there is not something that requires repair or attention in the church, Millennium Centre or grounds - blocked sinks or drains, leaking taps and gutters, damaged doors and cupboards, broken fences and flower beds that need planting and maintaining. These tasks and many others are undertaken by this small group and to all I offer my gratitude but especially David Curran and Alan Moore for all their support during my Chairmanship of this group. Most of our work probably goes unnoticed but without our combined efforts it would not be possible for the buildings and grounds to be maintained to the standard we have all come to expect.

During the year a number of works have been completed including rebuilding the North wall of the church following an unfortunate accident when a car collided with the building; re-polishing of the Millennium Hall floor, repairs to the Emergency exit doors from the corridor alongside the Millennium Hall and the replacement of light bulbs in the Millennium Hall. Most recently, the Church notice board has been repaired and repainted.

Each week the church is cleaned in preparation for Sunday worship by the dedicated volunteers on the church cleaning rota and to them all hearty thanks are extended.

Finally, I would like to thank all members of the Buildings and Grounds Committee for their support and invaluable advice and would like to add that we have room for more willing volunteers if you feel a desire to join us.

Phil Elliott-Lyall, Churchwarden, Chair Buildings and Grounds Committee

Salutation Hall

Salutation Hall has continued to be used in the year by its regular groups and for parties.

Rental income in the year was £4,500 (2018: £4,198), which against costs of £2,516 (2018: £2,224) produced a surplus of £1,984, a slight increase. The majority of the costs are those associated with heat and light, insurance and repairs and maintenance. This shows that Salutation Hall remains a useful well-used asset of the parish.

Many thanks to Dee Wastnedge who continues with her very efficient running of the bookings system and the rest of the committee of David, Colin Price, David Curran and Sally Johnson who help in its running.

Pam Davison, Salutation Hall Committee

4. Church Communities Groups & Activities Reports

Social Committee

Over the last year I have chaired the Social Committee and as always, I would like to thank, most importantly, the rest of the Committee for the tireless work together with the occasional helpers – of which there are many.

For sure, this year will see a devastating impact on the Social Calendar due to COVID-19. Who knows what we will be able to do? We will try virtual events where we can, but nothing will make up for the loss of the social interaction, as well as the income from the two Fayres and the other events. We will endeavour to do our best. When we do get things going again, please support with extra enthusiasm please!

Before lockdown, overall another successful social year, with our usual Garden party and Christmas Fayre, both of which were well supported by both helpers and attendees. The Garden Party narrowly missed the previous year takings by £160. The Christmas Fayre was down a little more by £540, however during the interregnum, and with the lack of any school choirs, I think a very respectful result. Many thanks to all involved. The two fayres remain our main fundraising events as opposed to social events

The traditional Harvest Ceilidh was once again held in October with "Blind Panic" and I was very pleased to see them continue their excellent skills and a good night was had by all.

We continue with our Parish Coffee Mornings and a couple of extra ones for fundraising in memory of Pippa Bertram and the Flower arrangers and they always seem enjoyed by those that attend.

We tried a new food format for one of Maurice Henrys' Quiz where "Quadrophenia" brought their Fish and Chip mobile service to All Saints. A slight technical hitch meant only 1 fryer but all in all I received exceptionally good feedback and we should do this again in the future.

The Murder Mystery was cancelled in Summer and rescheduled for February. Eventually it went ahead with food reinstated and was enjoyed by all.

We had the Castle Players return for "The Old Curiosity Shop" in the Church and another enjoyable evening.

We are always open to new members, especially strong able-bodied ones! Being a member does not mean you have to attend all events, so it is not too onerous. We are also lucky to have a good supporting cast that we are able to call upon for their continued support.

During the lockdown, we have had three virtual Zoom quizzes which allowed us to share the profits with those members of the congregation making PPE for the hospital. All three were enjoyed by those who attended, and it might be something we try again later in the year, if we cannot have normal events in the near future.

As always, we are open to any suggestions for other events and these can be put directly to me or any member of the social committee. No guarantees but I can assure you they will be vigorously discussed!

Andy Hopkins – Chairman elect

Green Action Group

The Green Action committee has met six times since the last APCM, but not since the March COVID-19 lockdown, continuing with the objectives of looking at climate change and moving towards more sustainable lifestyles that will protect all God's creation and justice for all God's people.

Highlights for the year were:

- Achievement of the "Eco-church" bronze standard. A suitable date for presentation of the award needs to be agreed.
- Orchard fruit picked and placed in the foyer for everyone to help themselves. The trees were pruned in the autumn of 2019 and coir matting placed around the bases of the trees to suppress weeds.
- Wildflower meadow 6 different flowers spotted in June 2019 with a further sowing in spring 2020. A variety of plants germinated, including birdsfoot trefoil.
- 4 The "Giving Tree in Advent" was organised by Eleanor Winkworth.
- 5 Personal environmental survey (in March, repeated in June 2019 for people to see if their score improved).
- A number of articles were written for the Parish Magazine on a variety of topics relating to environmental issues.
- 7 Ways of minimising energy usage in the Millennium Hall and Church continue to be assessed.

David Smith. Chair of Green Action Group

All Saints' and Salutation Ladies Fellowship

We had another very successful and enjoyable year despite numbers being slightly down.

2019 saw us start the year with a talk from Gary Bankhead on 'Diving in the River Wear', which was an enlightening look at the treasures which have lain beneath our feet for years on our visits to Durham. He explained the techniques he used to unearth the items from the waters beneath the bridges in the city and went on to explain that many of his finds could be viewed on display in the museum on Palace Green.

February brought the AGM, which was hosted by the Rev David Railton, who, after the official business was completed, gave a very interesting slide show and talk on his visits to the Holy Land.

The year then progressed with Tim Viggars' warnings of 'How to avoid banking scams.' His talk was very comprehensive and covered all aspects of how to recognise scams in many aspects of our lives. Hopefully, we all left the meeting a little wiser and more cautious.

Our April meeting was presented by Cutting it Fine; a pair of enthusiastic ladies who talked us through, and demonstrated, the way in which ladies were expected to dress in various levels of society during the Victorian era. I think we were all amazed by the wonders a corset could do for our physique!

In May we were invited to 'Meet the Brontes' by Isobel Stirk, who gave the most interesting talk, apparently unaided by any notes. Isobel was a font of knowledge on many aspects of the Brontes' life and it was a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

In June we enjoyed another of our wonderful strawberry events and were entertained by the 'No Added Sugar' choir. The choir themselves enjoyed our evening to such an extent that we are endeavouring to invite them back, albeit as guests for the evening and not as 'the entertainment'.

Our annual outing was to Saltaire in July. Many of us had not visited this World Heritage site before, so it was a wonderful surprise to find Hockneys in the art gallery, artefacts from the mills which were formerly housed in the impressive buildings and to have an exclusive visit to the Church, where we were given a talk on the history of the town. A guided tour of the town followed the talk and each participant was given a bookmark as a memento of their visit. A truly special and enjoyable day.

September was time for Ann Fell to tell us about 'Wheeling a coffin from Scarborough to Cundall'; a talk which had developed from her interest in a newspaper article which did not specify the name of the occupant of the coffin. She had researched the event and filled out the missing details, to such an extent that she was able to tell us all about the father and son who wheeled their wife (mum) to Cundall.

October was an absolute pleasure, with Peter Barron introducing the illustrator Jonathan Raiseborough, with whom he had published a book entitled 'Snowdrop the Spikeshuffler'; a wonderful tale about a hedgehog which outlined the prejudices which people who are 'different' encounter. Jonathan gave a perfect explanation of what life is like when one has Asperger's Syndrome and he eloquently described the condition so each of us could understand the challenges encountered by him.

November saw Anne Wall and Eileen Brereton explain to us all about the VA Auxiliary Hospitals. They had a display of some of the equipment used at that time and regaled us with the procedures used to treat people.

Our year was rounded off with another lovely Carol Service, which was enhanced by the wonderful choir which Andy Young had assembled for our delight.

Christmas presents were again collected for Family Help (formerly known as the Women's Refuge). We were also able to give cash donations to Polam School for its Accelerated Reading Programme, USPG and the 700 Club charities.

Thanks are due to all the Committee members, especially Debby Hardy for all her hard work in arranging for speakers to actually talk to us, as well as the members who together made the year such a success.

Ann Bell, Secretary, All Saints and Salutation Ladies Fellowship

Men's Group

The Men's Fellowship within the parish gives an opportunity for the male members of the congregation (and their guests) to meet on a monthly basis. It used to, anyway. We have been hibernating; now we are bursting to emerge, with renewed creative energy and vigour. Future events are at an advanced stage of planning.

Prior to lockdown we had visited a brewery in Darlington (the appropriately named "Saints Row Brewery"), had our annual trip to the Quoits Club and been for a meal at a tapas bar. At our 21st Annual dinner in October we had an excellent after dinner speech from Michael Davison about his work in an A and E department (it was just as well we had already eaten).

Kevin Winkworth, Secretary

Parish Lunch

The parish lunch continues to be popular with 40-45 people attending every month, our last lunch being on 13th.February. Sadly, one of our helpers Anne Tyreman passed away during lockdown after a short illness. She will be very much missed both for her cooking and washing up skills.

We very much look forward to the lunches restarting when circumstances allow as the fellowship it provides is enjoyed by so many.

Anne Willson

Circle Dancing

<u>Venue: Salutation Hall Monday Evenings during school term time - 7.30pm -9.30pm Cost: £2.00 per evening</u>

2019 didn't see many changes apart from welcoming one new member.

Our dances are performed in a circle to music from various countries and the steps are very simple. At the centre of our circle are candles and a flower arrangement which as a central point are there to encourage meditation.

At 8.30pm we take a break for refreshments, which also gives everyone an opportunity to chat and catch up on each other's news.

We always celebrate the end of Summer term with a wine and strawberry evening, and our last evening before the Christmas break is a party evening with a faith supper.

We are not a profit-making group and at the end of the year we usually make a charitable donation. This year we were pleased to donate £140 to Guide Dogs for the Blind.

As a friendly group of ladies, we are always happy to welcome new dancers. Please feel free to come along one evening and see if you would like to join our dancing.

Mary Henry

The Hand Bell Ringing Group

"The time draws near the birth of Christ; The moon is hid; the night is still; The Christmas bells from hill to hill Answer each other in the mist". Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

Once again, the All Saints' hand-bell ringers ventured forth to ring out carols in the pre-Christmas weeks. This year's chosen charity was Cystic Fibrosis Care, a charity helping to support those living with cystic fibrosis in the local area. Owing to the previous year's difficulty in fulfilling all our supermarket commitments because of the shortage of bell ringers, this year we decided only to ring at Sainsbury's, combining this with bag packing. As always, we were very grateful for the support of members of the congregation and friends. In total, with the help of a donation from the church carol singers, £1120 was raised for our charity. A cheque was presented to Pat Kilpatrick, Director of Cystic Fibrosis Care, at the morning service on Sunday 26 January. A big thank you goes to all the bell ringers, and to others who contributed by holding collection buckets, counting money, packing bags at Sainsbury's, and carol singing.

However, the future of the hand bell ringing group is uncertain. In order to continue with our charitable ringing, we <u>urgently</u> need more members to swell our ranks. Whether you have no experience at all, or if you have rung hand bells in the past, we would love to hear from you. Please contact me if you have a little time to spare, and feel that you would like to join our friendly group. **Jane Elliott**

Badminton Group

The Badminton Group meets almost every Friday from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. in the Millennium Hall, during term time. We have between four and seven adult players who attend regularly and we would welcome more adults and younger people to join us, as this helps to encourage developing players and adds variety to the game of 'old hands'. There is one court on which we play doubles games, although more energetic participants are welcome to play singles games, whilst the rest of us catch our breath and catch up on the weekly news!

We each pay £2.00 per session, so if you are interested in joining us, please ring Sue Elliott-Lyall on 01325 241225, or just turn up on the night and you will be most welcome.

Sue Elliott-Lyall

Knitting and Crafts Group

This group was formed in September 2012 to bring together those people who have an interest in any form of craft – knitting, sewing, embroidery, crochet, tapestry, dressmaking – the list is as diverse as the talents!

The group meets most Thursdays from 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. in the Barbara Bishop room off the Church foyer. To date we have involved ourselves in several charitable projects, such as knitting warm winter woollies (hats, scarves and gloves) for King's Church food bank (to be distributed with food parcels during the winter months), very small items of clothing for premature babies, most notably 'traffic light' incubator blankets, in which premature babies are swaddled to denote seriously ill cases (red), improving health (amber) and significantly improved (green), canula cuffs for babies (to prevent the canula from being knocked out) and knitting squares to create blankets for the homeless.

There is a wealth of knowledge to be shared by members of the group, so please, feel free to join us if you would like to spend a very sociable, and loquacious afternoon, with the customary cuppa and a biscuit!

Ring Sue Elliott-Lyall on 01325 241225 for further details.

Sue Elliott-Lyall

Church Refreshments

Thanks to a dedicated bunch of 25 volunteers, the Sunday morning refreshments after the 10.30 service continue to provide a pleasant half hour or so to meet up and chat. After Wendy Day decided to give up the co-ordination of this rota, it is now produced by the church office. Many thanks to Wendy for co-ordinating the rota and to Pat Williams who has handed the responsibility for ensuring supplies of tea and coffee to Jenny MacMurray. If anyone can spare about an hour, three or four times a year, they would be very welcome to join the rota. **Nicky Waller**

Scrabble Club

The Scrabble Club was formed in January 2011 and has continued to enjoy regular attendance ever since, with numbers of between 3 and 8 players now attending most weeks.

The club meets every Wednesday afternoon in the Garden Rooms at church from 1.45 p.m. to 4.00 p.m., when people are paired up to play a game, before having a break for refreshments, then continuing with a different 'opponent'. The group is very friendly and welcoming and some of the most fascinating discussions seem to be held across a Scrabble board (mostly relating to the spelling of certain words and their meaning!).

The cost is £2.00 per person each week, so if you would like to join, you are most welcome. Please, come along or ring Sue Elliott-Lyall on 01325 241225 for further details.

Sue Elliott-Lyall

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CHARITIES REPORTS

Community Connections Group

Another very busy 12 months – The Group has met 6 times since the last Annual meeting.

Successful projects and initiatives that have continued throughout the year are:

Compassion – 16 of our parishioners continue to sponsor a Christian child in Burkina Faso.

Darlington Town Mission – Stronger links have been established, and we have continued to support a number of their events, which are designed to alleviate loneliness amongst the elderly in Darlington.

Safe Families for Children – In November 2019 we received a national update from this charity which stated, "At All Saints and Salutation Blackwell, we want to celebrate that you have 7 volunteers with Safe Families and have supported 10 families and 27 children".

Darlington Foodbank – This has worked well throughout the year due to the generous weekly donations from our parishioners. However, during coronavirus lockdown with the church locked, the venue for donations has now switched to Dee Wastnedge's house at 12 Blackwell Grove.

Links with Local Schools – We now have strong links with 3 local schools as follows:

Abbey School - 86 Year 4 pupils visited church on 6th June 2019.

Polam School - 52 Year 2 pupils visited us on 8th October 2019.

Hummersknott Academy - 14 students visited church on 24th January 2020.

All 3 schools are keen to repeat their visits during the next academic year.

Broom Tree Mental Health Hub for Churches – We continue to explore ways in which we can provide support for Christians with mental health problems, and this is an ongoing long-term project.

Distribution of Harvest Gifts – Our Group, again, successfully distributed harvest gifts, mainly to the Women's Refuge, but also to a small number of our own individual parishioners.

Sermon slot from the pulpit 19/01/20 – We spoke about all the work we are doing as the Community Connections Group, in an effort to increase our profile. Hopefully it worked in some small ways!

As a Group, we have been involved in other worthwhile projects, but too many to summarise in a short Annual Report.

Going Forward (April 2020) – Obviously, we cannot currently meet face to face as a Group. However, I have asked all our members to think about how we can continue to make a positive contribution to community life in our parish and beyond.

Thank you to all members of the Community Connections Group for their hard work and commitment over the last 12 months. We look forward to strengthening the significant community links we have established, as well as looking for other worthwhile ventures to support in the future (once the current lockdown is relaxed!). Nick Auty, Church Warden and Chair on the Community Connections Group.

Partnership for Missional Church

In 2019, our Diocese invited a number of its Churches to join the PMC Journey. All Saints' was one of those Churches and our PCC agreed this was a Project we should engage in. A Steering Group was established, and I was asked to Chair this for the first year of the 3-year project.

During the year our team produced a data set of information about our church, its boundaries, finances and attendances etc, we interviewed several parishioners, groups linked to the church and a number of businesses that operate within our Parish Boundaries to glean more about their thoughts, views and ideas in-respect of All Saints' and Salutation Church. Many of you attended the three very successful events we hosted, where we presented aspects of the project to you and asked for your thoughts on certain topics. We thank all of you for your support, time, energy and ideas.

In September 2019 we received the Diocesan analysis of our interviews with members of our church, a copy of which has been shared with Parishioners and can also be found on the Parish web site. PMC asks us to use these findings and the outcomes from our Community Interviews to help identify projects that can be undertaken in Year 2. We met on the 29 February at Elm Ridge Church and were joined by two members of the enabling team, we as a Church developed our challenge for Year 2, which was endorsed by the PCC. The Challenge we agreed is:

"How do we engage with people who come through the building. Actively seek out the neglected and the broken hearted. How do we demonstrate Gods love to these people?"

Year 2 of the Project sees the continuation of the Steering Group and the establishment of a second Group the Missional Innovation Team (MIT). These two groups will identify projects to take forward, and will be shared with Parishioners who will also be invited to engage with this work. However, the pandemic has brought many challenges and changes to the way we work, operate and support each other as a Church and Community. The PMC Journey continues, but in a slower and more considered approach. The Chairs of the Steering Group, year 2 Lee Puchala and the MIT Nick Auty, will be in contact in due course and when the time is right for our Church to consider the next stages.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Steering Group who have supported me and our Church during this first year, and continue to support this important project, they are:

Pam Davison Eileen Auty Keith Whiston Dorothy Puchala Lee Puchala With every blessing

Clare Curran. Chair of PMC Steering Group (Year 1)

The Parish Magazine

The Parish magazine still enjoys a loyal readership since I have taken over the reins from Richard and we have managed to keep a core of regular contributors for new articles. There have been some challenges around COVID-19 and having to move to digital copies for a few months, however we seem to be heading back to print this month as things enter the new normal.

We have also welcomed Jen into the fold since the last report and her articles have been informative and very welcome under the current circumstances. I am always seeking feedback and fresh ideas from the readership and the wider congregation, so if there are any suggestions or thoughts, critical or otherwise, please do not hesitate to send them over to me.

Barry McNulty, Editor

The Children's Society

At the time of writing, Wendy Day and I have just finished the annual box collection and wish to thank our box holders for another fantastic amount collected, of £532.96! This charity does remarkable work for children who are in vulnerable and desperate circumstances.

Their service in the North of England focuses on supporting 10 to 18-year olds who are especially vulnerable, and often in situations where they are experiencing severe and multiple disadvantages. Their strategic focus locally has been:

In Yorkshire:

Hand in Hand: for young people affected by criminal or sexual exploitation

Connecting Opportunities: for young refugees and migrants with the right to work

Young Migrants Matter: for 16-25 year old refugees and asylum seekers living in Leeds

HEARTS: for 15-21 year old asylum seekers, refugees and EU migrants

North East:

SCARPA: safeguarding young people at risk of sexual exploitation

My Voice Programme: supporting young people's emotional resilience in schools.

If you would be interested in joining as a box holder of this parish, please have a word with Wendy or I.

Thank you, Wendy Day, Katie Malcolm, Honorary Local Secretaries

All Saints' Blackwell Pre-School

Preschool offers places for children from the age of two years to school age. Opening times are 8:30am – 2:45pm, term time only (38 weeks a year). Funding is available for many families accessing preschool:

- Working families can access 30 hrs of free childcare for 3/4 year olds,
- Universal funding for 15 hrs free childcare for all 3/4 year olds,
- 2-year-old Grant for 15 hrs free childcare for eligible parents (this is means tested).

Amanda Summers became the Preschool Manger in September 2019 with Carole Ferguson retiring in the summer. Amanda Summers holds a Foundation Degree in Early Years and all members of preschool staff hold at least a Level 3 Child Care qualification. All staff are DBS checked and hold a Paediatric First Aid Certificate.

This year has been eventful with the forced closure in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 outbreak. The preschool followed the Government guidance and were forced to only provide childcare for key workers and vulnerable children. This resulted in preschool remaining open for the duration of lockdown with reduced hours to only meet the needs of children deemed able to continue to access childcare.

Preschool re-opened as soon as was possible in June 2020 but still following Government guidelines that required staff and children to be kept in consistent bubbles. Preschool (like other settings) was not able to safely accommodate all children and therefore, places where offered firstly to keyworkers, vulnerable children, those starting school in September followed by the oldest children. Preschool remained in touch with all children during the Covid-19 outbreak operations, sending cards and books to those unable to return and through regular posts and activities through the groups Facebook page.

Preschool is planning to open to all children in September 2020 with the Government guidelines changing the need for preschool children to be kept in consistent bubbles, with other control systems in place.

I would like to thank preschool staff for their support and hard work during a very difficult period for the group, for overcoming their own doubts and fears, to come to work when the majority of the country where staying safe at home. Also, for their willingness to adapt their working hours and carrying out duties not normally associated with their role to provide families with much needed childcare during the outbreak. Their hard work and dedication resulted in a lot of very happy and healthy children attending for the remaining summer term and with children starting school in September "school ready". I am very pleased to report that no staff member or child developed Coronavirus symptoms during this period, which demonstrates the effectiveness of the controls put into place to ensure Preschool remained a safe place for everyone.

I would also like to thank our Parents for their support and understanding who all played their part whether that be staying safe at home, giving their place at preschool to a family more in need of childcare or for trusting us to look after their children during the outbreak.

Thanks also to the Preschool committee and the congregation for their continued support this year, and for assisting the preschool allowing the flexibility needed for the Preschool to adapt during the outbreak. **Amanda Summers, Preschool Manager**

29th Darlington (All Saints' and Salutation) Rainbows

It has been a funny year in Rainbows 2019/2020. We have not covered as much of the programme as we expected to do in the beginning of our year in September.

We started the term in the normal way welcoming any new Rainbows with getting to know you games and activities. All guiding sections have new programmes and badges to follow and we try in incorporate some into every meeting as best we can. The Rainbows have a badge book to follow and earn badges at home, we only need to see the evidence. Within the group we have worked on 'Express myself'. Also, as a group we worked on the first aid section and a badge will be awarded to the Rainbows.

At Christmas we all went to the Pizza Express restaurant for our end of term celebration, we all had a lovely evening. After Christmas we returned and continue with our skill builder activities.

Our meetings came to a close in March, this for me has been a strange time having Thursday evening free as I have run the unit for over 20 years. We will return when we are advised by Girl Guiding. We will

make sure all the Rainbows will receive all the badges they are due as soon as we can as a few will have moved onto Brownies.

I thank Charlotte, Grace and Alex for all their help.

Jill Wildsmith, Guider Leader.

11th All Saints' & Salutation Brownies

What a strange year we have experienced.

Having fully embraced the changes in the Girlguiding programme officially implemented during 2019, we spent the first term completing Skills Builders and Unit Meeting Activities which count towards themed Awards. This involved learning about traffic flow, road safety, packing for camp, fire safety and how to light fires correctly.

Advantage was taken of the good weather, enjoying time outside to play field games and spending a night with 12th Brownies and 29th Guides having a campfire and barbeque.

We planted potatoes in buckets and took part in a challenge to see whose harvest was the heaviest, with the winners from several units attending Darlington Town Hall to meet the Mayor and receive recognition.

Girls received instruction in the art of Taekwondo at The Hub, Barnard Castle where they were keen to learn some self-defence moves.

A visit to Beamish Museum culminated in a sleepover in the Masonic Hall. We were fortunate to be able to take part in maypole dancing and enjoyed a fish and chip supper in the Pit Village.

Unfortunately, Covid 19 curtailed our fun in March, when we were forced to close the unit for everyone's safety, however we have continued to 'meet' on-line on a weekly basis and hope to be able to meet face to face soon.

During lockdown Sooty Owl and her husband welcomed into the world a beautiful baby girl named Mia Adeline. Congratulations Grace!

I would like to personally thank the team, Grace, Katie, Libby and Jess for their continued support and dedication.

Julie Ross, Brown Owl

12th All Saints Brownies

The new Guiding programme was launched last year, and our unit started on the journey in September. The Brownies enjoyed taking their time to look through the six areas and all the new activities within each section. The Brownies enjoyed selecting which of the new interest badged they were keen to work towards, these are a selection already completed, Local History, Performing, Aviation and Jobs.

The Brownies had a fun evening with the guides where they had the opportunity to learn how the build a fire, safely and then they cooked on it. This was a good time for the older Brownies who were deciding

when and if to take the next step and move up to Guides. Following the evening we had some Brownies keen move to the Guide Unit. This allowed us to assist another Brownie unit regarding their long waiting list and some girls had requested to stay together. This resulted in our Pack having an intake of Brownies in January, they were all just settling in when we went into lockdown.

In October we spent a day at The Hub in Barnard Castle with other Brownies from the Division, we took 10 Brownies who all took part in Canoeing, High Ropes, Archery and various other outdoor activities. Some of these activities were new and challenging to the girls and they all did extremely well, a great day was had by all.

Unfortunately, our Brownie holiday weekend booked for the end of March with St Columba's Brownies had to be postponed, this was a big disappointment to the unit as they very much enjoy our Brownie weekends away as do the leaders. We hope that it will be safe to re book the event in the not too distant future.

Anita Wilson, Brown Owl and Alison Skilbeck, Assistant

29th Darlington Guides

Since September 2019 29th Darlington Guides worked on skills builders, unit activities and games from our Girlguiding Programme as well as the following:

- Attended both Harvest and Remembrance Church Parades
- Made Christmas craft
- Outings to the cinema to see Frozen2 and St Augustine's Church Panto
- Made bird boxes and celebrated World Thinking Day in February

During lockdown we didn't hold any online meetings with the guides but sent them out a challenge sheet by email to work with their families if they wanted to.

Louise Gibson, Unit Leader, 29th Darlington Guides

29th Salutation Brownies

In the autumn term we completed our First Aid skills builder badge. The girls particularly enjoyed learning CPR with the help of a senior nurse from the Memorial Hospital. We joined lots of other members of guiding in December to watch Frozen 2 at the cinema.

In the spring term we completed our skills builder badge 'Live Smart' (although the lockdown meant we competed the final part at home instead of at Brownies!). We also took part in an escape room in Salutation Hall as well as celebrating Chinese New Year by making our own spring rolls!

During lockdown we have held our weekly meetings virtually which the girls have loved! We have played games, done quizzes, learnt ballet, baked cakes and even toasted marshmallows all from our own homes.

As always, we are very grateful to our leaders; Lauren, Sophie, Rachel and Abi and our brilliant Young Leaders Ellie and Layna for all their hard work this year.

Jenny Groves, Brown Owl

Millennium Hall

The year started off as busy as usual until Coved 19 hit us, and lockdown began. All groups and parties ceased meeting, apart from Pre-School, open for key workers initially and then KidsFunKlub, throughout this summer. We are working on the risk assessments and directly with the groups to hopefully get those that wish to, meeting again from September. I would like to thank Colin Price, who acted as Chair of the Trustees throughout the interregnum, for all his hard work (which continues) and support, and Pam Davison for her continued support. I would also like to thank Scott Marshall, our caretaker, for all the help he gives and for keeping an eye on things.

Dee Wastnedge, Booking Secretary

All Saints' Millennium Centre Trust (Darlington) Limited

The Millennium Centre is run by an independent charitable company which is limited by guarantee. The land on which the Centre is built is leased for 99 years (from 1997) to the company by the church; and to be a member of the company one has to be a member of the parish electoral roll. There are 12 Trustees: the Vicar, seven nominated by the PCC, one nominated by the Bishop of Durham, one nominated by the Mayor of Darlington, one nominated by the senior ward councillor for Park West and one nominated by Evolution (previously known as the Darlington Council of Voluntary Service), although following the demise of Evolution, we are looking for a new group to be involved. We had intended to deal with this at the AGM this year but as it will involve a change to the Articles of Association and the AGM is being held by Zoom, we thought it preferable to leave that for the AGM 2021 when we hope to be able to hold a physical AGM. Again, all trustees have to be members of the company and thereby also members of the parish electoral roll.

We are grateful to all of those who served as Trustees over the past twelve months and we are particularly grateful for the contributions of Dee Wastnedge, the Bookings Secretary; Pam Davison, the Finance Director; and Alison Barker, the Company Secretary. We certainly couldn't manage without them.

The Millennium Centre remains busy, though with costs escalating, especially the cost of fuel, we cannot be complacent about the finances. We continue to be helped in reducing the running costs by the solar pv panels – but the cost of energy is always a concern. Some of the many groups using the Centre are parish organisations; some are groups that are associated with the church; and others are community-based or private initiatives. In an average week, several hundred people of different ages can be using our facilities. To maintain the popularity of the Millennium Centre, it is vital that we sustain very high standards of provision. The constant use of the centre means that regular maintenance is needed, and

we also need to look to developing and replacing existing fabric as wear and tear take their toll. This year, we have purchased 80 new upholstered, folding chairs to replace the existing ones many of which were on the point of collapse. We have also installed four CCTV cameras to help to maintain a safe and secure environment for all our staff, users of our premises and visitors.

The Trustees have an enviable partnership with the PCC and Church, and one of the most wonderful parts of this from the Trustees' perspective is the work done by the PCC's Buildings and Grounds Committee. We are grateful for the latter taking care of all of the day-to-day upkeep of the building with great effect.

The Church community of All Saints established the Trust to build and run the Centre as a way of furthering its own vision to make this community more like God's kingdom than it otherwise would be. The All Saints' Millennium Centre remains an excellent example of how the Church contributes to the well-being of our society in ways that are often overlooked but which make a positive difference to countless people. Though a separate company, the Millennium Centre and its Millennium Trust represent a gift from God.

Rev. Jen Croft, Chairman of All Saints' Millennium Trust (Darlington) Ltd.

6. WIDER CHURCH AND SYNOD REPORTS

Deanery Synod

The first meeting of the year was held at St James' Church Hall. The Area Dean reported the Deanery Prayer Hub held at St Aidan's Academy had been a good event despite a disappointing number of attendees. Updates were provided on St Cuthbert's application to become a "Resource Church" and the Deanery Plan following the receipt of responses from parishes to questions previously raised. Parish representatives were asked to report back to their PCCs with a view to revising the "Action Plan" and to also highlight priorities. Dates for this year's proposed "Christmas Journey" were announced together with a request for additional funding to cover the expected increase in costs with more schools taking part. The evening ended with a presentation and thanks to David Railton following his decision to take up a new post in Scotland.

Synod members ventured into the country for the second meeting of the year, which was hosted by St Edwin's, High Coniscliffe, where Mark East was welcomed as the new Area Dean. The Deanery Plan was once again the major topic of discussion and a revised plan and proposals were presented to Synod. Tony Roache, the new incumbent for the parishes of St John's and St Columba's was due to be licensed on 22 July with the parish of St Herbert's remaining in interregna. The proposed Deanery Pilgrimage to Ripon Cathedral had to be cancelled.

The last Synod meeting of the year was held at Sadberge Village Hall, where the final draft of the Deanery Plan was presented to members and, following much debate, was eventually unanimously voted through. This would now be submitted to the Diocese before being presented to Bishop's Counsel on 5 November. Other items covered included updates on the Parish Share payments, a proposed Pilgrimage to Durham Cathedral next year, a "Deanery Enquirer's Day" on 21 March and dates for Safeguarding Training.

Michael Shepherd (Deanery Treasurer)

APPENDICES

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

	Unrestricted Funds 2019	Restricted Funds 2019	Total Funds 2019	Unrestricted Funds 2018	Restricted Funds 2018	Total Funds 2018
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:	£	£	£	£	£	£
Donations and legacies	93,514	500	94,014	98,239	-	98,239
Charitable activities	75,172	-	75,172	79,839	482	80,321
Investments	21	-	21	19	-	19
Other trading activities	29,224	-	29,224	32,162	-	32,162
TOTAL INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS	197,931 =====	500	198,431	210,259	482	210,741
EXPENDITURE ON:						
Raising funds	11,402	-	11,402	13,199	-	13,199
Charitable activities	183,930	101	184,031	184,978	165	185,143
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	195,332	101 =====	195,433	198,177 =====	165 =====	198,342
NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)	2,599	399	2,998	12,082	317	12,399
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS: TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD	96,655	4,045	100,700	84,573	3,728	88,301
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	£ 99,254	4,444 =====	103,698	£ 96,655	4,045 =====	100,700

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF

ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

	2019	2018
	£	£
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible assets	836	996
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank accounts	99,182	105,496
Cash in hand	2,659	3,246
Debtors	19,449	9,211
Stocks	164	130
	121,454	118,083
LIABILITIES	121,101	110,000
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year	(18,592)	(18,379)
NET CURRENT ASSETS	102,862	99,704
NET GONNENT AGGETG		
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	103,698	100,700
NET ASSETS	£ 103,698	£ 100,700
PARISH FUNDS	=====	=====
TAKISITI SKIDS		
Unrestricted	99,254	96,655
Restricted	4,444	4,045
TOTAL 5111100		
TOTAL FUNDS	£ 103,698 =====	£ 100,700

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF

ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON

INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:

Income from denotions and legentee						
Income from donations and legacies	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
	2019	2019	2019	2018	2018	2018
Voluntary income	£	£	£	£	£	£
Planned giving:-						
Envelopes, covenants and Gift Aid	64,915	-	64,915	67,040	-	67,040
Tax reclaim	17,526	-	17,526	18,156	-	18,156
Collections (loose plate)	10,512	-	10,512	11,977	-	11,977
Special Charity collections	531	-	531	536	-	536
Donations and Legacies	30	500	530	530	-	530
	£ 93,514	500	94,014	£ 98,239	_	98,239
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
Income from charitable activities						
Church activities						
Choir Fundraising	-	-	-	-	482	482
Occasional offices	9,924	-	9,924	9,012	-	9,012
All Saints Blackwell Pre-School	65,248	-	65,248	70,827	-	70,827
						
	£ 75,172	-	75,172 =====	£ 79,839	482 =====	80,321 =====
Income from investments						
moonic nom investments						
Interest receivable	£ 21	-	21 =====	£ 19	-	19 =====
Other trading activities						
Activities for generating funds						
Fundraising	24,194	-	24,194	27,363	-	27,363
Salutation Hall lettings	4,500	-	4,500	4,198	-	4,198
Sundry income	530	-	530	601	-	601
						
	£ 29,224	-	29,224	£ 32,162	-	32,162 =====
	======	=	==		===	===
Total Income and Endowments	£ 197,931	500	198,431	£ 210,259	482	210,741
	=====	======	======	======	======	=====

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON

EXPENDITURE

Raising funds	Unrestricted Funds 2019	Restricted Funds 2019	Total 2019	Unrestricted Funds 2018	Restricted Funds 2018	Total 2018
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fundraising	11,402 =====	-	11,402 =====	13,199	-	13,199
Charitable activities						
Church activites and expenses						
Charitable and Mission giving	6,103	-	6,103	6,326	-	6,326
Parish share	85,000	-	85,000	94,000	-	94,000
Clergy expenses	407	-	407	1,047	-	1,047
Church running expenses	4,781	-	4,781	4,530	-	4,530
Cost of services	2,799	-	2,799	2,142	102	2,244
Church maintenance	970	-	970	470	-	470
Insurance	689	-	689	644	-	644
Salutation Hall	2,516	-	2,516	2,224	-	2,224
Salaries, wages and honoraria	14,084	-	14,084	12,922	-	12,922
Sundry costs	1,381	101	1,482	379	63	442
Administration costs	3,281	-	3,281	2,706	-	2,706
All Saints Blackwell Pre-School	60,559	-	60,559	55,896	-	55,896
Depreciation	160	-	160	492	-	492
Independent Examination	1,200	-	1,200	1,200	-	1,200
	£ 183,930	101	184,031	£ 184,978	165	185,143
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
Total Expenditure	£ 195,332	101	195,433	£ 198,177	165	198,342
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF

ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON

				•	2019	2018
FUNDRAISING	Income	Expenses	Total	Donations Paid Out	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Surplus/ (Deficit)
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Garden Party	3,472	(280)	3,192	-	3,192	3,352
Christmas Fair	4,300	(150)	4,150	-	4,150	4,683
Parish Lunch Club	1,692	(1,222)	470	138	332	(686)
Magazine	1,109	(1,190)	(81)	-	(81)	(28)
Ladies Fellowship (excluding bank interest)	2,361	(1,964)	397	400	(3)	(212)
Tea and Coffee	1,133	(38)	1,095	-	1,095	1,021
Flower Fund	540	(491)	49	-	49	86
Parent and Toddler Group	949	(990)	(41)	-	(41)	(52)
Social Committee	3,212	(1,522)	1,690	-	1,690	1,717
Badminton	244	(248)	(4)	-	(4)	2
Men's Group	846	(856)	(10)	-	(10)	-
100 Club	1,921	(1,177)	744	-	744	1,133
Bell Ringers	1,120	(48)	1,072	1,120	(48)	(35)
Circle Dancing	902	(759)	143	140	3	(19)
Ladies Night	393	(467)	(74)	-	(74)	-
Hog Roast	-	-	-	-	-	350
	£ 24,194	(11,402)	12,792	1,798	10,994	11,312
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
Summary						
Income		24,194				27,363
Costs		(11,402)				(13,199)
		£ 12,792				£ 14,164

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF

ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON

	2019		, 20	18
CHARITABLE GIVING	£	£	£	£
PCC : St. Teresa's Hospice		492		171
Children's Society - Christingle		531		536
Alzheimers's Society		615		45
MacMillan Nurses		176		42
Cancer Research UK		1,176		440
Parkinsons UK		135		512
Guide Dogs for the Blind		206		-
Willington Open Door		701		_
Darlington Mind		138		_
St Leonard's Hospice		135		_
The Freeman Charity		-		492
Yorkshire Air Ambulance		-		445
NSPCC		-		201
Prostate Cancer UK		-		192
The Macular Society		-		183
Churches Together in Darlington		-		50
Multiple Sclerosis Society		-		45
Darlington Flower Festival		-		70
The Gardens Care Home		-		50
	-	4,305		3,474
Groups:		•		•
Parish Lunch Club : Christian Aid	138		122	
Parish Lunch Club : All Saints Millennium Trust	-		800	
Ladies Fellowship: USPG	100		100	
Ladies Fellowship: The 700 Club	100		-	
Ladies Fellowship: Polam Hall School	200		-	
Ladies Fellowship: Darlington Town Mission	-		100	
Bell Ringers: Cystic Fibrosis Care	1,120		-	
Bell Ringers: The 700 Club	-		1,550	
Circle Dancing: Guide Dogs for the Blind	140		-	
Circle Dancing: Salvation Army	-		180	
		1,798		2,852
	-			
	£ =	6,103		£ 6,326