

The Benefice Profile of Upper Wansbeck

Introduction

Welcome to the Benefice of the Upper Wansbeck churches of St Giles, Netherwitton; St Andrew's, Hartburn with St John's, Meldon; St Andrew's, Bolam; and St Mary Magdalene, Whalton. Our churches have worked together for many years serving our rural communities. We are now actively exploring how we form a Joint PCC for the Benefice. We already have shared procedures such as Safeguarding. Our current ministers, who have been an integral part of, and whose development has been supported by, the Benefice are:

The Rev. Fiona Sample, Interim Minister (retiring)
Pamela Walker, Associate Lay Minister
Rachel Coundon, Authorised Lay Worship Leader

Mission

Our ambitions are summed up in these five goals to which we enthusiastically subscribe:

- 1) To worship locally and with openness to new patterns of worship, new styles of worship and fresh types of congregations.*
- 2) To develop the church's life and mission with confidence. This will include training for lay and ordained, the development of discipleship, the nurture of lay worship leaders and the growth of clergy able to focus on delivering the vision.*
- 3) To be regarded by other institutions, communities and individuals as a significant partner/player in the development of local communities.*
- 4) To enable the church to be valued, by itself and others, as sacred space that holds and shares the Christian story and its heritage in Northumberland and beyond.*
- 5) To be a church that embraces a holistic and varied understanding and practice of growth: in numbers of people who value, respect and engage with their parish church; in numbers of these who are positively impacted by the church; and in openness to how church growth might happen.*



Our people

The person we seek

We hope that the new priest we seek will offer us:

Spiritual leadership

We are looking for a spiritual, thoughtful, caring and inclusive priest who is comfortable with the diverse community (from young to old, working in the city to working on the farm, not working and unable to work) to our church services leading prayer for our rural community and for the whole world and its problems, developing and building our faith and increasing our congregation. They will be willing to get out and about (knocking on the doors of the widely spread farms), to be visible and engage with people and build a social network.

Leadership in development

We would like a priest who is empathetic, approachable, energetic and visible who can lead us in involving more of our rural community, both churchgoers and non-churchgoers, and engage with schools, who is imaginative, innovative and insightful, to create an environment which is accessible to all of us, adults and children alike, of all faiths and none and be comfortable with IT systems. To find a way of rejoicing positively, to encourage sharing and the development of our community using both traditional and more modern ideas. A good sense of humour always helps!

Leadership in worship

We would like our priest to lead us intellectually and thoughtfully in our search to find ways of broadening the appeal of our worship in the reality of the world we occupy today but thinking about what tomorrow may bring, whilst still catering for the needs of those who value traditional as well as new forms of Eucharistic worship.

Our churches

All our beautiful and peaceful church buildings are listed Grade I except for St Giles which is Grade II*. Some churchyards also have listed headstones. All the churches have history, some dating back over 900 years of Christian worship. Their condition varies from very reasonable to good with various legacies and grants which have helped with maintenance. All churches have churchyards, only Hartburn is essentially full but there is plenty of space at its Chapel of Ease, St John, Meldon. Each parish has prepared a profile and they can be viewed at: www.upperwansbeckchurches.weebly.com



St Andrew's, Bolam



St Andrew's, Hartburn



St John's, Meldon



St Mary Magdalene, Whalton



St Giles Netherwitton

Our communities

The four parishes together have a population of around 1500 with 180 on the electoral rolls. The population is an interesting mix of farmers and agricultural workers (there are a number of large estates as well as independent farms) together with commuters and home workers and the retired, many of whom have come from outside the Benefice. There are pockets of deprivation as well as a significant proportion of those with professional qualifications and degrees. The population is mainly White/British. Our congregations are mainly over 55 years old. The children of current parishioners have mostly grown up and left home leaving their 'empty nesting' parents behind to support the churches.

We are fortunate to have access to very good schools. There is a Church of England primary school in Whalton and a small primary school in Belsay, part of the Pele Trust, which serves the western part of the Benefice. Secondary education is provided by two multi academy trusts, The Three Rivers Learning Trust based in Morpeth and The Pele Trust which is based in Ponteland, on both of which the Church of England is represented. All these schools are rated Good or Outstanding. The primary school in Whalton being located next to the church plays a significant role in village life and the Ministry Team provides regular worship in school and in church for pupils and parents.

Patterns of Worship

Our tradition is one of 'gentle Anglican worship' with an emphasis on the Eucharist and joyous celebrations at Easter and Christmas. The real strength and opportunity for the Benefice is the extent of general goodwill towards the Church throughout the community. This does not always show results in turnout every Sunday but can be seen in attendance figures for the major festivals as well as in the plethora of fundraising events. All our villages have access to halls, although the re-ordered Hartburn Church also serves as the village hall. It is the home for the Hartburn Community Project which works with the church.

During the Covid pandemic the ministry team recorded a service of Morning Prayer every Sunday, as well as midweek morning prayer and a daily reflection, all on Facebook. There were also lay led Sunday Evensong Services on Zoom led by members of Hartburn congregation and lay led family services and morning prayer most months on Zoom from Bolam.

As things have begun to return to normal a weekly Service of Holy Communion has been held in rotation at each of the four parish churches as well as two family services each month in Whalton and Bolam respectively and monthly Evensong at Meldon. Until Covid, there was Holy Communion twice a month at each church with Bolam offering a lay led Family Service once a month. All our churches can be described as welcoming churches offering coffee after services.



Coffee



The Roost Team

There is a charity in Netherwitton called 'The Roost' aimed at supporting post-18 young people which is run by the Pioneer Minister Rev. Beth Rookwood and has a Bishop's Mission Order from the Diocese seeking to reach young adults across the whole of Northumberland. Follow the link:

<https://roostcommunity.org/>

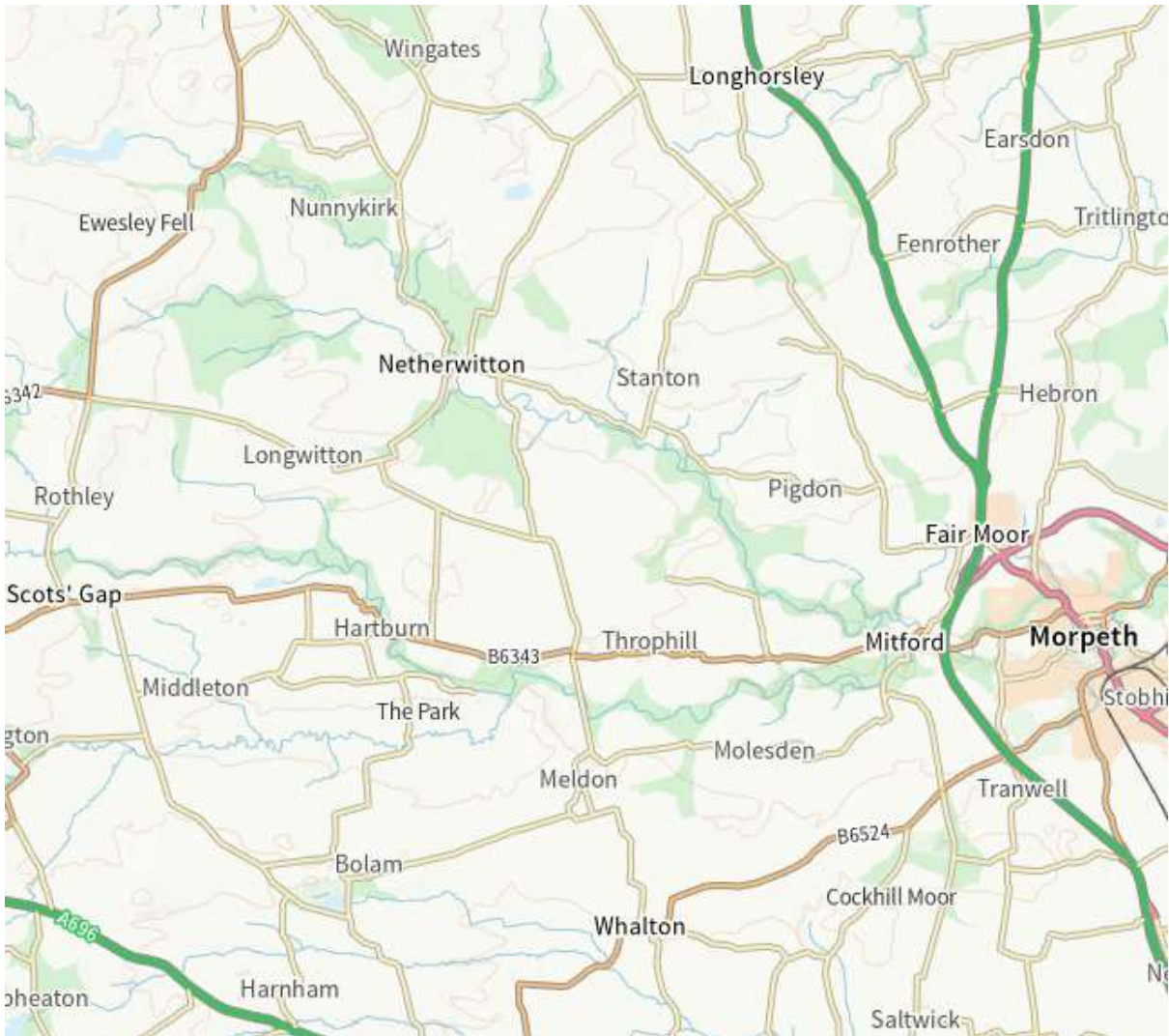
Sustaining rural worship is a challenge that requires the clergy to be creative and open minded in their approach to diverse rural populations. There is a role for pioneering work with non-churchgoers and the development of children's and young people's involvement. This may require some greater flexibility in the way the clergy work and perhaps some experimentation in, for example, the timing of services and the nature and even the location of some services. It certainly needs an encompassing vision which captures the nature of the community as it actually is, whilst supporting routine activity such as visiting the sick and offering communion to the housebound. We are open to wider cooperation with other denominations but there is only one Methodist church and one Catholic church located adjacent to our Benefice. Given the preponderance of Church of England related schools we can look forward to building on the good foundations of our existing relationships.

The link to our Benefice newsletter for March/April is shorturl.at/iopA5

'Reflections' are posted on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/upperwansbeck>

Geography

The Benefice consists of a number of villages and hamlets spread over an area of approximately fifty square miles surrounding the catchment area of the River Wansbeck which rises in the Northumberland hills. The shape of the Benefice is roughly triangular with Netherwitton at the north, Bolam at the south-west and Whalton at the south-eastern points. Distances are Netherwitton to Bolam 8.5 miles and to Whalton 7.5 miles. Bolam to Whalton is 4 miles. Hartburn and its Chapel of Ease, Meldon lies within this triangle.



Central Newcastle is about 30 minutes away, the airport some 25 minutes. There are three pubs in the area and the village halls hold pub nights and offer a wide range of activities and entertainment including film nights.

Our population in the Benefice is growing slowly with the addition of some new houses to existing villages. Its proximity to national and international transport routes and easy commuting to Newcastle is recognised and alongside the growing awareness of the quality of life which Northumberland offers with wide-open landscapes, extraordinary beaches, castles, country houses and gardens of national importance, and the vibrant city centre in Newcastle, sees the villages becoming increasingly popular with young professionals.

Events and outreach

Spread around the Benefice our parishes hold events which serve to involve both churchgoers and non-churchgoers and are often fundraising opportunities. These include Crib, Christingle and Carol Services, National Garden Scheme Open Gardens, church fetes, drama, quiz nights, a cinema organ recital, carols and mulled wine, a Baal Fire, a hand-writing competition for primary children, a lunch club, parish supper, Christmas Fair, musical events and so on.



Finance

Income over the last year has obviously suffered from the pandemic in that our ability to arrange special fundraising events has been restricted. The total combined income from the four parishes was about £90k in 2021 of which £54k was derived from a combination of parish giving, collections, donations and gift aid from HMRC. A further £28k related to the receipt of grants which are generally sought to cover specific major projects.

Looking at expenditure, the major elements are the Diocesan parish share contribution and maintenance to the fabric of our churches which in 2021 were £33k and £35k. We try to pay 100% of our parish share contribution although in recent years one of our parishes has been unable to commit to this.

Overall, there was a very small, combined surplus. In broad terms the parishes are able to break even through the normal income but rely on the receipt of grants, which are applied for from various local sources, to assist with major spend projects.

The combined net assets, consisting of bank balances (£52k), investments (£200k) less a small creditor (£9k) were approximately £245k at the end of 2021. It should however be noted that at least 25% of the bank funds are restricted in that they are allocated to specific forward projects.

We do not as yet have a Joint PCC and so PCC accounts for our four parishes which have been, or will be, submitted to APCMs are as follows:

St Andrew's, Bolam

Financial Statement: Year Ended 31 December 2021

General Account

Receipts

		2020		2021
	£	£	£	£
Incoming Resources from Donors				
Gift Aided Giving	6,881.12		5,300.00	
Income Tax Recovered	8,891.21		3,351.47	
Church Collections	279.65		1,522.50	
		16,051.98		10,173.97
Other Voluntary Incoming Resources				
Donations	17,580.68		2,863.89	
Wall Box	184.90		26.41	
		17,765.58		2,890.30
Receipts from Investments				
Interest & Dividends	1,187.54		1,833.47	
CBF Deposit Fund Interest	12.25		0.00	
		1,199.79		1,833.47
Other Receipts				
Fees		932.00		411.00
Special Collections for Charities		175.10		441.00
Historic England Grant		15,000.00		0.00
Newcastle Church Institute Grant		350.00		0.00
Grants		0.00		11,676.14
Total Receipts		<u>51,474.45</u>		<u>27,425.88</u>
Payments				
Special Charity Collections		345.10		0.00
Bank Charges		350.30		396.86
Church Activities				
Diocesan Parish Share		11,287.00		9,000.00
Expenses of Ministry & Parsonage		1,253.00		0.00
Insurance Premium		2,665.56		2,667.85
Heating Oil		618.91		389.81
Electricity		848.40		(466.68)
Maintenance of Building		8,910.14		30,857.22
Inspection of Accounts		100.00		100.00
Other Sundries		1,292.50		20.98
Total Payments		<u>27,670.91</u>		<u>42,966.04</u>
Surplus/(Deficit) on the Year		<u>23,803.54</u>		<u>(15,540.16)</u>

War Memorial Account

	Receipts	Payments	Balance
Opening Balance			2,956.88
Bank Charges		1.00	
Landscaping		500.00	
			501.00
Closing Balance	<u>0.00</u>	<u>501.00</u>	<u>2,455.88</u>

Statement of Balances as at the 31 December 2021

Monetary Assets

	Handelsbanken Current Bank Account No 48461927	Handelsbanken War Memorial Bank Account No 14450218	2021	2020
Opening Balances	25,437.88	2,956.88	28,394.76	9,506.82
General	(15,540.16)	0.00	(15,540.16)	23,803.54
Churchyard	(1,580.00)	0.00	(1,580.00)	0.00
War Memorial	0.00	(501.00)	(501.00)	(4,915.60)
Transfer Between Funds	2090.00	(2090.00)	0.00	0.00
Closing Balances	<u>10,407.72</u>	<u>365.88</u>	<u>10,773.60</u>	<u>28,394.76</u>

Other Assets

Investments - market value		128,148	118,516
		<u>146,911</u>	<u>146,911</u>

Other Liabilities

Loans		<u>1,500</u>	<u>1,500</u>
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St Andrews Hartburn

Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2021

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
RECEIPTS					
Voluntary Receipts					
		4,042		4,042	6,791
Planned giving	[a]	6,137		6,137	
Parish Giving Scheme	[a]	3,260		3,260	2,315
Cash collections at services	[a]	-		-	157
Church collection box	[a]	635		635	556
Car park	[a]			-	-
Organ Fund donation			1,991	1,991	50
Project donations received	[b]				
		14,073	1,991	16,064	9,868
Grants, taxes and fees					
		1,850		1,850	2,600
Grants for churchyard & repairs	[c]	423		423	739
Fees		1,434		1,434	2,754
Tax recovered					
Activities for generating funds					
			2,141	2,141	535
Project funds raised	[b]		75	75	10,135
Miscellaneous income	[b]				
		1,580		1,580	1,680
Investment Income					
		19,361	4,207	23,568	28,310
Total Receipts					
PAYMENT					
Church Activities					
		8,785		8,785	10,542
Diocesan parish share				-	1,100
Clergy expenses		13,547		13,547	12,389
Church running expenses	[d]	613		613	118
Building repairs & renewals			234	234	164
Costs of generating funds	[b]	6		6	-
Financial costs		954		954	233
Charitable donations		892		892	76
Miscellaneous expenses				-	4,000
Loan Repayment					
		24,797	234	25,031	28,621
Total Payments					
		(5,435)	3,973	(1,462)	(310)
Excess of Receipts over Payments					
Release of investments		(5,435)	3,973	(1,462)	8,464
		(26,309)	42,575	16,266	7,801
Cash at bank and in hand at 1 January					
		(31,745)	46,548	14,804	16,266

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Hartburn PCC

Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2021

Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2020 £
Assets						
Cash Funds						
Bank Current Account	(31,745)	46,548	14,804	(26,309)	42,575	16,266
Investment Assets						
Artemis	[e] 13,393		13,393	12,041		12,041
Blackrock	[e] -		-	-		-
Jupiter	[e] -		-	-		-
M&G	[e] 22,876		22,876	20,177		20,177
Total Assets	4,524	46,548	51,072	5,908	42,575	48,483
Liabilities						
Wm Leech Foundation Loan					-	
Total Liabilities	-	-	-			
NET ASSETS	4,524	46,548	51,072	5,908	42,575	48,483
REPRESENTED BY:						
General Fund	4,843		4,843	10,278		10,278
Organ Fund	1,000		1,000	1,000		1,000
Investment Revaluation Reserve	(1,319)		(1,319)	(5,370)		(5,370)
St Andrew's Community Project Fund		46,548	46,548		42,575	42,575
	4,524	46,548	51,072	5,908	42,575	48,483

St Mary Magdalene, Whalton

Income & Expenditure

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

<u>INCOME</u>	2021	2020
<u>VOLUNTARY INCOME</u>		
Gift Aid	4497	3461
Collections Tax	1034	872
Recovered	922	800
Donations	1089	1198
Grants	4	<u>0</u>
	<u>2500</u>	6331
	1984	
	7	
 <u>OTHER INCOME</u>		
Investment Income Trading	111	84
income Fundraising	0	227
Funerals, Weddings & Baptisms	1777	4078
Sundry	755	0
Sale of Investment	33	33
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	2676	4422
 TOTAL INCOME	 <u>22523</u>	 <u>10753</u>
 <u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
Parish Share	400	5000
Clergy Expenses	0	1400
Church Running Expenses	695	835
Upkeep of Church	1175	3761
Upkeep of Churchyard	474	1845
Sundry	2	120
	206	
	0	
	0	
Church donations	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
 TOTAL EXPENDITURE	 	 <u>12961</u>
 NET	 9851	 (2208)
 Cash Funds at 1 st January	 1050	 1050

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

	2021	2020
<u>BANK ACCOUNTS</u>		
Current Account	1050	1050
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OTHER ASSETS		
Investments		2167
<hr/>		
DEBTORS		
Tax Refund	<u>4213</u>	<u>2046</u>
		<u>4213</u>
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LIABILITIES		
Other Creditors	0	0

ST GILES, NETHERWITTON

Income & expenditure account for the year to 31 December 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
RECEIPTS			
Income resources from donors:			
Planned giving		9,610	9,420
Collections and other giving		1,175	278
Income tax recoverable		2,532	2,560
Other voluntary income resources:			
Donations		575	775
Income from operating activities to further the work of the church:			
Parish Council Grant to churchyard		800	800
Bann/Funeral		564	396
Income from operating activities to generate funds:			
Fundraising events		-	-
Income from investments:			
Dividend income		188	169
Interest		1	2
Miscellaneous		-	240
Total receipts		15,445	14,640
PAYMENTS			
Grants to further the work of the church:			
Donations made		-	100
Church activities:			
Newcastle Diocese Parish Share		10,274	10,274
Organist fees		160	492
Organ tuning		-	-
Insurance		1,576	1,592
Group Parish Expenses		-	1,000
Electricity and Heating		294	393
Maintenance and repairs	3	1,567	719
Churchyards		835	861
Church Management and Administration:			
Postage, Typing and Printing		0	0

Miscellaneous costs	67	130
Total payments	14,773	15,561
Surplus/(Deficit) of Receipts over payments	672	(921)

ST GILES, NETHERWITTON

Statement of assets & liabilities at 31 December 2021

	Notes	2021		2020	
		Book cost £	Valuation £	Book cost £	Valuation £
Barclays Bank		14,149	14,149	12,565	12,565
Cash in hand - unbanked collections		0	0	0	0
CBF Bank		100	100	100	100
Total bank & cash		14,249	14,249	12,665	12,665
Debtor - Income tax	1	3,165	3,165	4,228	4,228
Creditors & accruals	2	-	-	(20)	(20)
Investments					
CBF Church of England Investment Fund		701	3,223	701	2,819
BlackRock		3,300	22,794	3,300	19,944
Alliance Trust		1,896	6,502	1,896	5,676
		5,897	32,519	5,897	28,439
Total net assets		23,311	49,933	22,770	45,312