



DIOCESE OF NEWCASTLE

PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE 1986

Parish of Earsdon and Backworth

Statement prepared by the P.C.C. describing the Church's ministry and mission within the parish

1. The Local Community

Please describe the size and physical features of the parish, the industry, the principal institutions, all schools, and the general category (e.g. UPA inner city, UPA housing estate, urban, suburban, market town, commuter village, village/rural).

Also details of any predominant age and/or social groups, the ethnic mix, and any special social problems, e.g. unemployment, etc.

The Parish of Earsdon and Backworth is located in the north east corner of the Tynemouth Deanery, on the outskirts of the attractive seafront town of Whitley Bay. There are two church buildings in the parish: St. Alban's, Earsdon, and St John's, Backworth, which are only two miles apart.

As well as these two villages, the parish incorporates Wellfield, parts of West Monkseaton and the Red House Farm estate. The overall population of the parish has increased considerably to around 8,000, with the recent building of two large new estates in the parish: West Park, Shiremoor, with over 200 4&5 bedroomed detached houses and Backworth Park with about 290 3&4 bedroomed houses. Both estates are situated within walking distance of one or both churches.

The wider area has recently been much developed and hence the parish is close to hundreds of other new houses in adjoining parishes: our churches frequently welcome newcomers from these estates who find it easier to come to St Alban's.

There are currently three Community Schools in the parish and we have links with all three; the previous Vicar was a Governor at two of them, which resulted in a much increased attendance at our Sunday School. A new Primary School is planned for September 2018 in Backworth Park.

The Church has a well-established relationship with Earsdon Grange Care Home; Holy Communion services are held in the home on a regular basis, and the choir performs carols for the residents at Christmas.

At the end of 2008 the parish became a recognised Local Ministry Parish.

In summary, the parish is attractively situated: a well-populated and varied community, with both rural and suburban characteristics, near to both seafront and countryside but also close to the conurbation of Newcastle with all its facilities.

Earsdon Village itself is a conservation area.

Earsdon Village Conservation Area Character Appraisal May 2011:-

http://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Earsdon%20Village_0.pdf

2. The Church Community

Please give details of the congregations

e.g. any predominant age/social groups, what proportion live outside the parish.

The average Sunday congregation is 70 (St. Alban's) and 10 (St. John's) from October statistics.

There are currently 114 on the electoral roll:

25-49	12
50-65	20
66-75	24
Over 75	29
Not Known	32

There are also a number of families not on the roll but who worship on a regular basis.

Locally we are known as a friendly church, with a very caring community ethos. Like most churches today, we have a large number of older members; however, we also have quite a few young couples who attend regularly, many of whom were married here, and some families with young children who come to the family services. We would very much like to extend this, and hope that a new Vicar would continue the work of the previous incumbent, who did much outreach work to bring more young people and families into the church and keep their interest, through his connections with local schools and by promoting the church for weddings and baptisms.



As a direct result of his work, St. Alban's has become very popular for weddings in recent years and, despite not now having an incumbent Vicar, we still have 9 weddings this year at the moment and 6 booked for 2019. The annual number of baptisms has also increased and we have already held 22 baptisms in the first 4 months of this year.



We have a regular organist, who is supported by occasional relief organists, and an active 4-part choir with about 12 members. This is affiliated to the Royal School of Church Music.

3. Statistics

Population	8,000
Electoral Roll	114
Average Sunday Communicants	60+
Average Sunday attendance	70
Average baptisms per annum	31 (2016), 29 (2017), 22 planned this year so far.
Average Confirmations per annum	This is variable, as we do not present candidates every year. In 2011 we had 11 candidates, both children and adults. An 'average' year might comprise 3-4 candidates.
Average weddings per annum	12 (2015), 8 (2016), 12 (2017), 9 planned this year
Average funerals per annum	15
Average home communions for the sick or housebound	1-2 per week at the moment

4. Church Buildings

Please give details of the churches and licensed places of worship.

St Alban's, the Parish Church at Earsdon, was built in 1836-7, on the site of a much earlier 13th century church. It is a Grade II listed building. The church was designed by John and Benjamin Green, and was consecrated on 12th of October 1837.

Notably, in the churchyard are buried 159 of the 204 miners who died in the disaster at Hartley Colliery in 1862. There is a recently-restored memorial to the miners just behind the church.

The church has a pipe organ which is used every Sunday, and for funeral and wedding services.

There is a newly installed sound and loop system, which can be controlled from a tablet or smart phone.

The church has 3 bells, and these are rung before Sunday services and at weddings if required and the clock chimes every 15 minutes.



The church has some beautiful and interesting stained glass of varied age and in a range of styles, including two windows made with glass that came from Hampton Court chapel during the reign of Henry VIII. Contrastingly, we have two stunning modern windows, commissioned by the church in 2012 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Hartley Pit disaster.

St Alban's church building and the adjacent Edward Eccles Hall are both heated by bio-mass heating which is virtually self-funding now the installation costs have been met. The Government Renewable Heat Incentive will continue to pay per kWh for the

heat we use for a further 16 years. It is the first such facility in the diocese.

St John's at Backworth is a small but graceful stone church built in 1886 by the Taylor family of Chipchase Castle. It is in the parish of Earsdon but until 1955 it always had a priest-in-charge who lived in the clergy house near the church.

Please give details of church halls and any other ancillary buildings (and an indication of the level of their use).

The **Edward Eccles Hall** is a single-story Grade II listed building next to St Alban's.

It has a large wooden dance floor and a stage. There is a small meeting room, toilets and a modern kitchen. There is a small grassed area at the front and to the side of the building.

The hall is very popular for children's parties, wedding receptions and similar celebrations, and is hired most weekends. During the week it is used by: Slimmers' World; three different ladies' fitness groups; Little Kickers (infant football); a children's playgroup; Meditation groups and Art groups.



We also have Scouts, Cubs, Rainbows and Brownies who are affiliated to the church, and who use the Hall for their meetings.

The hall is now self-funding and covers all its costs from hires while providing free of charge or subsidised use for local community and charity events.

Other buildings of significance in the Parish

Backworth Village Hall next to St Johns, is used for the annual Christmas fair. The hall is also regularly used by a Choir, Dance Academy, Carpet Bowls and other groups.

The Backworth Social club is near the church, hosting varied events, and is the rehearsal venue for the well-known Backworth Colliery Band. It has an interesting history; further information is available on the website.

<http://www.backworthcollieryband.org.uk/>

Backworth Hall is also near the church, is a beautiful venue for social occasions. In the attractive grounds is a 9 hole golf course. There is also Cricket, Croquet, Archery and Bowls.

<http://www.backworthminers.co.uk/>

Is there a churchyard to maintain and who is responsible for its maintenance?

The church has a large wooded graveyard, with many lovely stones and monuments, that is now closed for burials; it is supposed to be maintained by the council. A group of local people calling themselves 'Churchyard Wardens' work with the British & Commonwealth War Graves commission and the National Union of Mineworkers together with other groups such as Nature and Wildlife organisations to look after the churchyard. It is much used by local residents as an atmospheric place to walk and is generally kept in an attractively 'natural' state, with weeds and undergrowth more or less under control. It has lovely displays of snowdrops, daffodils and bluebells.

The graveyard is of historic interest with a prominent monument to the 204 men and boys who died in the notorious Hartley Pit Disaster in 1862. 194 of them are buried in the churchyard and the other 10 in family graves in St Nicholas' Churchyard, Cramlington.

Additionally, over 60 men and boys, who lost their lives when Burradon Pit fired in the summer of 1861, are buried in a paupers' grave in the churchyard.

There are also 15 War Graves; we will be getting a plaque from The Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

A large new council-run cemetery adjoins the old church graveyard; this is regularly used, and has a new area for woodland burials. This is accessible by car.

5. Patterns of Worship

Sunday services with times and form of service used.

8:30am St John's - Eucharist

10:00am St Alban's - Sung Eucharist

On the first Sunday every month, we hold a special Family Service with parish breakfast afterwards in the Eccles Hall.

Weekday services

Wednesday 9:30am St Albans - Eucharist

Thursday 9:30am St Johns – Eucharist

6. Church Tradition

Please describe the tradition of your church

The traditions of St Alban's are as follows:

- We follow the Common Worship Lectionary, with printed Orders of Service for all services.
- We do not use incense.
- A regular organist is employed and the Choir leads the congregation in a Sung Eucharist on Sundays. The Choir is robed.
- Hymns are sung throughout the service; additionally the Choir sings an anthem most weeks between the Readings.
- Occasionally visiting clergy sing the preface to the Eucharistic prayer.
- Members of the congregation give Readings and Intercessions, perform as Crucifers and Servers, and assist in the distribution of the chalice.
- The Sunday School children are encouraged to give an account of their activities to the congregation at the end of the service.
- We involve the village in witness at the Remembrance service at the cenotaph.

The traditions at St John's are as follows:

- We follow the Common Worship Lectionary.
- No hymns are sung.
- Members of the congregation deliver the readings.

7. Church Activities

Children & Youth Work/Sunday School/Uniformed organisations

Sunday school

We have an active and enthusiastic Sunday School, which meets in the Eccles Hall, during term time.

They begin the service with us in church, leave during the first hymn and return usually just after the Eucharist. The age range is from about 3 to early teens – some of the older members also participate as servers when they are not at the school. Sessions are run by experienced volunteer members of the congregation. The children obviously enjoy and value the sessions.



Some of our Sunday School Children

Clubs/Societies

The Brownies are affiliated to the church and are invited to partake in special services and events.

Our Mothers' Union branch has presently a membership of 32 with ongoing growth. They hold monthly meetings usually with a speaker reflecting on a theme which this year was "In Mary Summer's Footsteps". They support various M.U. charities in the Deanery, Diocese and Worldwide including AFIA (Away from it All Holidays) for the underprivileged families. The MU rotate with other branches in the Deanery holding events. This year St Albans is hosting the Advent Carol Service.

Social work/Caring for others

We make regular collections of food which is then taken to the 'Food Bank' and the 'Walking With' group.

We participate in the 'Shoe-box Appeal' at Christmas.

Although not on an organised rota, many parishioners visit sick and housebound church members.

Church members also assist the chaplain at North Tyneside General Hospital by wheeling patients to service there.

Safeguarding.

We have a safeguarding policy in place and our safeguarding officer along with the church wardens are responsible for safeguarding in the parish. All our PCC members have been on the diocese course.

Sunday school leaders and most of the choir have also been on the course.

Faith Sharing events or programmes

We regularly run courses for parishioners and during Lent we have had evening courses following a theme and guided by a book and usually based on a DVD movie. We also have themed sermons.

In Advent we have a children's activity day which includes making Christingles for use in the Sunday service.



Easter activity warm up



Making Easter cakes



Rev Appleby telling Easter story.

There is a vibrant programme of children's activities and crafts at the two main festivals: at Easter, on Good Friday, as shown above, and at Christmas. The Sunday School and Brownies make Christingles in December for distribution at the Christingle Service.

We organise a Posada every December, which is much taken up, both by parishioners and our local First and Middle Schools, and we hold a special Tree Lighting service a week before Christmas.

This year, we also held a Nativity festival in December, filling the Church with donated Nativity sets and other Christmas artefacts.

Parochial charities

- Water Aid
- Empty plate collection for Disasters Emergency Committee.
- PCC Donations
- Money from the production of a Church Christmas Card was donated to The Children's Cancer Charity.

Any other

Parishioners are keen supporters of church maintenance, cleaning and decoration: we have a weekly cleaning group, and a panel of talented flower arrangers.

We have a well-established Events Committee organising monthly events.



Jubilee Celebrations

Regular and ad hoc social events in the last year have included:



- Coffee mornings at parishioners' houses
 - A Series of Summer Open Gardens
 - The Nativity Exhibition
 - Heritage Weekend
 - Scarecrow Weekend
 - First Sunday Parish Breakfast
 - Shrove Tuesday Pancake and Quiz Night
 - Various Concerts, Beetle and Whist Drives
 - Spring Fayre
 - Themed Evenings with home-made dishes and entertainment
- by both semi-professional visitors and church members
- PCC sub committees as required

8. Ministry

Parish and Local Ministry and additional authorised ministers

The Parish Ministry is currently led by our licensed Reader - Edward Newton. He guides our active team of members who are involved both in church and in the wider community.

Please indicate current lay involvement in:

a) worship (e.g. Lesson reader, intercessions, administration of communion, serving, other)

We have a wide programme of lay involvement: members of the congregation act as Servers and Crucifers; read the lessons; prepare and deliver Intercessions, often using their own forms of words, in line with the theme of the service.

Several members of the congregation are licensed by the Bishop to assist in administering the chalice during communion and act as Eucharistic Ministers to administer Home Communion.

The choir, several of whom also participate as listed above, sing an anthem each week, and use the Taizé chants to enhance prayers during communion.

b) administration (e.g. pew sheet or magazine production, secretarial assistance, registers, other)

A Pew Sheet is produced weekly by a member of the congregation.

The Church Magazine is produced monthly, including articles from, and is distributed to, other local churches. A member of the congregation produces the magazine.

From May 2018, the church will be open some mornings during the week to perform administrative functions and allow visitors to the church.

c) pastoral work (e.g. baptism preparation/visiting, home communion, visiting housebound or in hospital, other)

Pastoral Visiting is carried out by both clergy and laity; a number of our congregation assist at the local district general hospital as wheelers.

We are introducing a Baptism Project, which includes Baptism preparation evenings. We are using local clergy to guide us at present.

9. Finance

Have you had a parish funding campaign recently?

Despite a number of quite expensive projects we have managed to meet our parish share each year. Due to the ever-increasing costs and significant increases in parish share we held a Stewardship review in 2016.

Many of our congregation contribute each month via a standing order; others use the envelope scheme, many of whom have signed up to make use of Gift Aid.

The new heating system installed 6 years ago cost over £160,000. Much of this was covered by grants and another large part raised by local activities and events. The shortfall of £60,000 was covered by an interest free loan, which was finally paid off last year, so we now have no debts.

Because the heating system is biomass, we have been able to secure a Heating Incentive Grant for the next 16 years, which just about covers the cost of the wood pellets we use. The church is always comfortably warm: 20°C for services and never below 10° C when not in use. This helps to protect the fabric of the church.

Give details of expenses paid to the incumbent, and state whether this covers them in full. Please attach a copy of the latest statement of accounts.

The PCC pays all reasonable expenses incurred by the incumbent; it also pays the Council Tax and Water Rates and makes a contribution to telephone costs.

10. Community involvement

Describe the involvement of the church in:

Schools (e.g. Governors, leading assemblies etc.)

There are three Community Schools in the parish and we have links with all three; the previous Vicar was a Governor at two of them.

A new primary school will open in the parish later this year.

Visits are made by several schools to St Alban's during the school year, to explore the history of the church and the local area.

St Alban's is used by South Wellfield Middle School for their Carol Service.

Other institutions (Industry, Old People's Homes, Hostels, Civic life etc)

The Church has a well-established relationship with Earsdon Grange Care Home; Holy Communion services are held in the home on a regular basis. The Choir sing carols there every December.

There is potential for further work with other nursing homes.

There is a monthly ecumenical service at Eccles Grange Sheltered Housing in Backworth, presided over by a Vicar or Lay Reader, twice a year. These services are supported by St John's.

The recently bereaved are invited to an evening service of Remembrance on the Sunday closest to All Souls Day, where the names of those who have died over the last year are read out. We also hold a quiet service for the lighting of the Christmas tree when we invite the bereaved and those living on their own as well as our parishioners.

12. Ecumenical Relationships

We have good relations with the village Methodist church and have held joint services with them in January for the week of prayer and also a combined ceremony of Remembrance at the village War Memorial on the Sunday closest to Remembrance Day.

Both the Roman Catholics and Methodists contribute articles to our monthly magazine, which is distributed to them as well as our own parishioners.

13. The Parish and the future

What plans does the P.C.C. have for deepening the spiritual life of the members of the congregation, and for engagement in outreach to those who do not attend church?

In 2006, the parish developed its Eucharistic Ministry Scheme and there are currently 15 lay Eucharistic Ministers who worked collaboratively with the previous Vicar.

St. Alban's has a small but active Sunday School, and also works closely with the local Brownie pack. The Brownie Pack became affiliated to the church recently and are included in some of our social events such as the Pancake Night and the Spring Fayre.

The previous Vicar had a particular interest in developing relations with local families, and worked hard to build up our programme of weddings and baptisms, including Baptism Preparation. This has resulted in a noticeable increase in younger families attending church.

What is lacking which needs to be pursued in the next 5 years?

The PCC is working in line with the 2016 Mission Action Plan; the following areas are being reviewed for further development:

Welcome & Hospitality

We would like to have a 'Welcome Pack' to give to new members when they come to our church, and produce a guide to Sunday Services which could be included in the pack.

The Entrance Porch to St Alban's is in great need of refurbishment, to provide a clean, bright, welcoming first impression to new visitors.

We have long wished to provide toilet facilities with the church building itself, as the nearest is in the Eccles Hall. This must be a deterrent, especially to families with young children, and it is a priority for us to fill this gap in our provision.

Pastoral Care

The PCC would like to re-establish Pastoral Groups within the congregation to provide care and build a strong relationship for support of individuals within the group and the whole congregation. The pastoral groups would be aware of members who are unwell in hospital or had difficulties or any other need and could ensure the relevant care and support is provided for them.

Buildings

The PCC would like to explore the development for community facilities in St Alban's linked to Hartley Heritage Project, possibly by redeveloping the balcony area in church, which is currently not used at all except for storage. We would also like to consider opening the back of the church to allow more facilities for younger children and areas for the congregation to meet in a more informal way.

We have initial plans for reordering St John's to provide a Chapel for worship that can be screened off from the main body of the church. We also envision the development of a community space that opens onto the chapel to provide a larger area for services that attract greater congregations, such as the Carol Service.

The plans also contain the inclusion of toilet facilities and refreshment facilities.

We would also like to increase the use of the Eccles Hall for community outreach.

Nurture/Learning/Discipleship

The PCC would like to develop opportunities for learning in groups and individually.

We would also like to look at the possibility for the admission of children to receive Holy Communion.

We would like to develop the Baptism project and introduce a teaching course to enable baptism liaison volunteers. We would also wish to be able to offer preparation sessions to all baptism families.

14. The new Vicar

In the light of the factors set out above, what are the qualities and attributes the P.C.C. would wish to see in the new Team Vicar?

We are looking for someone who would enjoy living in a delightful village in a conservation area close to the coast, who would add value to both the parish and the wider deanery.

The parish is asking for someone who can hold together traditional worship whilst also developing new styles of communicating the Gospel.

There is also a desire for a priest who could support and extend the parish's existing work with young people and their families.

There is a need to be involved with the communities in both Earsdon and Backworth.

In summary, we are seeking someone who is skilled at working with others, who has an energetic vision for discipleship, who can spot potential and develop the gifts and skills of all God's people, and above all who can give focused leadership on mission.

If you would like to find out more information about St Albans, then please visit our website:

www.stalbansearsdon.org.uk

15. Parsonage

Age, number of bedrooms, heating, garden etc.

Any additional information

It is a detached house built 1985. Consisting of 4 Beds (one en-suite with walk in shower), 1 Bathroom, 2 Reception Rooms, large kitchen/diner, utility room and downstairs shower room, plus a study accessible without entry to the main house.

The parsonage has gas-fired central heating.

There is an external large garage.

The parsonage has an established enclosed garden at the rear of the property.

The parsonage is a 3 minute walk away from St Albans and a 7 minute drive from St Johns.

The village has buses to Newcastle (about 40 mins) and Whitley Bay (about 15 mins.), with a Metro station less than one mile away.

There is a large Sainsbury supermarket just 3mins drive away.

First and Middle schools (three-tier system) are in Wellfield, about one mile away.

There are two Secondary schools within two miles of the church, both of which received "Outstanding" reports from Ofsted.