



THE DIOCESE OF  
DURHAM

*The Parish of Heworth, St Mary  
Parish Profile 2023*



# *The Parish of Heworth, St Mary (Gateshead Deanery).*

## **Parish Profile**

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# Welcome to the Parish!

We are looking forward to welcoming and supporting a new priest who will work with us in aiming to fulfil the Diocesan priorities of **Energising and Growth, Caring for God's Creation, Engaging with Children, Youth and Young Adults** and **Challenging Poverty** and to realise the aims and objectives of the Gateshead Deanery plan.

We are looking for a priest who is prayerful and spiritual and will encourage and nurture us with understanding, compassion and sensitivity.

Our new priest will need to be a good communicator and listener, and have a sense of humour.

We would like to strengthen our existing relationships with our local schools and baptism families, as well as continuing to develop our *Partnership for Missional Church* outreach work within the community.

We want to build on our Ecumenical links and maintain our fellowship with our Locality Partners of St Andrew's Leam Lane and St Thomas' Eighton Banks, as well as continue to develop our close relationship with Age UK and our Community Partners.

We are seeking a priest who will appreciate the heritage of a 200 year old church building but understand the financial challenges of this. We hope for someone who will bring enthusiasm and new ideas for fundraising.

Our PCC and PMC team have risen to the challenge of taking care of our Parish during the vacancy. We hope our priest will continue to grow, support and strengthen these teams, developing their skills further. During the vacancy, we were delighted to achieve the Bronze Eco Church award and have started working towards our Silver award. We would like our new priest to work with us to realise this goal.

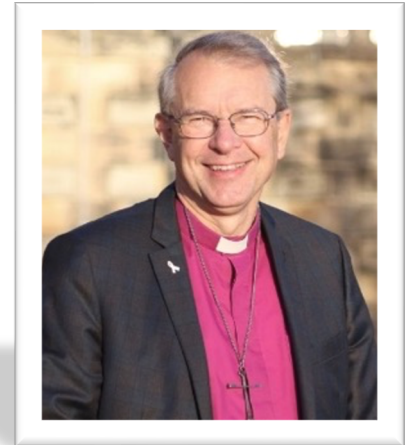
We look forward to meeting you!



## I, Our Diocesan Vision - An introduction from Bishop Paul

At the end of 2019 we gathered representatives from every parish, including St Mary's and from the wider Gateshead Deanery, for **The Waymark Conference** - to pray, talk, share stories and reflect on how we might best respond to God's call to us to be his Church here in the Diocese of Durham. We reflected on our learning from our previous vision and priorities. We agreed to maintain our Vision

***'From the Tyne to the Tees and the Dales to the Sea,  
blessing our communities in Jesus' name for the  
transformation of us all'***



Through prayer, conversation and sharing our stories we resolved to maintain and sharpen our three priorities and (in response to the voice of our children and young people) we discerned that we should add a fourth, *Caring for God's Creation*.

The result is our missional strategy which we describe as **Renewing Pilgrimage** – an opportunity and invitation for each of our parishes to step out in faith together, responding practically to the call to **Challenge Poverty, Energise Growth, Care for God's Creation** and **Engage with Children, Youth and Young Adults**.

In making this a reality it will look different in every community. In some places it will come about in collaboration with others. Nobody is expected to do everything immediately or alone, but we are all invited and expected to find ways to respond relevantly.

In the Parish of Heworth St Mary's this feels particularly relevant. We sense the importance of **Energising Growth** – increasing in discipleship and in the number of people served by and engaging in the life of our churches. We also sense the importance of **Challenging Poverty, Engaging with Children and Young People** and **Caring for God's Creation** in an area with lots of families, with some significant pockets of poverty, and with deeply rooted communities that still look to, and are open to, the local church.

In praying for a new Vicar for St Mary's we are looking for someone excited by and wanting to be part of this vision who can help nurture and grow the congregation in number, discipleship and reach.

The **Waymark Prayer** sums up this hope -

*Loving God, guiding the people of Durham Diocese faithfully through the years:  
We thank you for saints who have marked our path,  
young and old, known and unknown, from all places and in all walks of life.  
Help us to find your way in our generation:  
transformed by your truth, sharing your life, blessing our communities.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord,*

**Amen**

We look forward to meeting together and sharing in this with you.

In Christ,  
+Paul

**Bishop of Durham**



## 2, Church & Churchmanship

St Mary's Church, Heworth is a Grade II listed building and is the Parish Church, with the current church built in 1822, standing on the site of a church dating back to 650 AD.

The overall churchmanship tends to be in the middle, keeping a traditional service. The service is shown via an overhead projector to save paper and to make it easier for both regular, new or visiting parishioners, so they can follow the service easily.

Our attendance has declined in the wake of the Covid pandemic to around 35 communicants at our 11am service (approximately the number prior to the pandemic) We would love to work with our new Priest to rebuild and grow this congregation.

## 3, Worship & Occasional Offices

**Sunday Worship** - During vacancy we have maintained both of our Sunday services, changing the time of our Eucharist service time from 10am to 11am to enable visiting clergy cover. Bread Church has paused since the pandemic but we are keen to find ways to relaunch this.

0800	Service of the Word
1000	Private Prayer, open to everyone
1100	Eucharist Service
1230	Baptisms (fortnightly)
1600	Bread Church (paused since the pandemic)

### Worship midweek

- Third Monday of the month – Mothers' Union 2pm
- First Tuesday of the month – Priory Court, local care home
- 10am Tuesday Morning Eucharist (paused since Covid)

### Seasonal Services include –

- Holy Week evening services
- All Souls – community service for all who have lost loved ones
- Christingle service
- Carol service
- Services for schools
- Miners' Association (Thomas Hepburn Memorial service).

## Baptisms, Weddings & Funerals

We hold regular Baptisms throughout the year, usually after the service on the first and third Sundays of the month. We have approximately four weddings a year. We have funerals held in church, the two local cemeteries and at local crematoriums, happening on a regular basis. Our Reader is licensed for funeral ministry.

For many at these services it can be their first experience of visiting a church, so it is vital that they are made to feel welcome.

## 4, Volunteering and engagement

**Our congregation are engaged in the life of the church in a range of ways including as –**

Deanery Synod Reps

PCC members

Churchwardens

Treasurer

Intercessor & Reader Team

Partnership for Missional

Church (PMC) Team

Pianist

Paid Organist

Sidespeople

Server

Social Media Lead

Communications Team

Baptism Team

Stewardship Officer

Eco Church Group

Flower arrangers

Vergers

Gardening Team

Foodbank distributors

Choir (Pre covid)

## 5, Children & Schools

We have 4 primary schools (one of which is a Catholic school) and 1 secondary school within the parish. The previous incumbent regularly visited two of the primary schools, and along with a member of the congregation, set up a prayer space in our secondary school. As a result of these connections, some of these schools hold Christmas services in church and visit as part of their school curriculum. We hope this link can be reinforced by the new vicar, to bring new life into our church, enable children to grow in faith, and enable us to link closer with our community.

We also receive visits from schools outside the parish who are interested in the history held within our church yard.

The Diocese is committed to engaging with Children, Youth and Young Adults as one of its Missional Priorities and provides support to churches and clergy wanting to develop children's, youth, schools or chaplaincy work through the Mission, Discipleship and Ministry team based at Cuthbert House.

## 6, Mission & Community Engagement

### Social Events

St Mary's hosts a variety of events to build relationships and create a sense of community including fairs, quizzes and bingo (on zoom) and a gardening group alongside providing tea and coffee every Sunday following our 11am service.

### Foodbank

Both our church and the wider Gateshead deanery have a strong commitment to supporting the local Gateshead Foodbank where several of our congregation are regular volunteers. There is a collection point for church members at the back of church and our Harvest collections have been donated to Gateshead Foodbank for the last two years. This year, we have asked the congregation to donate Christmas food for the Foodbank hampers.

### Engaging with the elderly

In addition to leading a monthly service in one of the local care homes we work with **Age UK** who manage our hall lettings to community groups, and use the building for dementia day centres, community choir and a new digital hub.



## Ecumenical

In 2020, we joined in with other local churches for a Christmas *Angel trail*, creating a community trail leading from Windy Nook through the parish to Bill Quay (on the banks of the Tyne). We also participate in a yearly Tearfund event organised by Bill Quay Community Church and work with Bill Quay Community Church to help make up craft packs for prisoners.

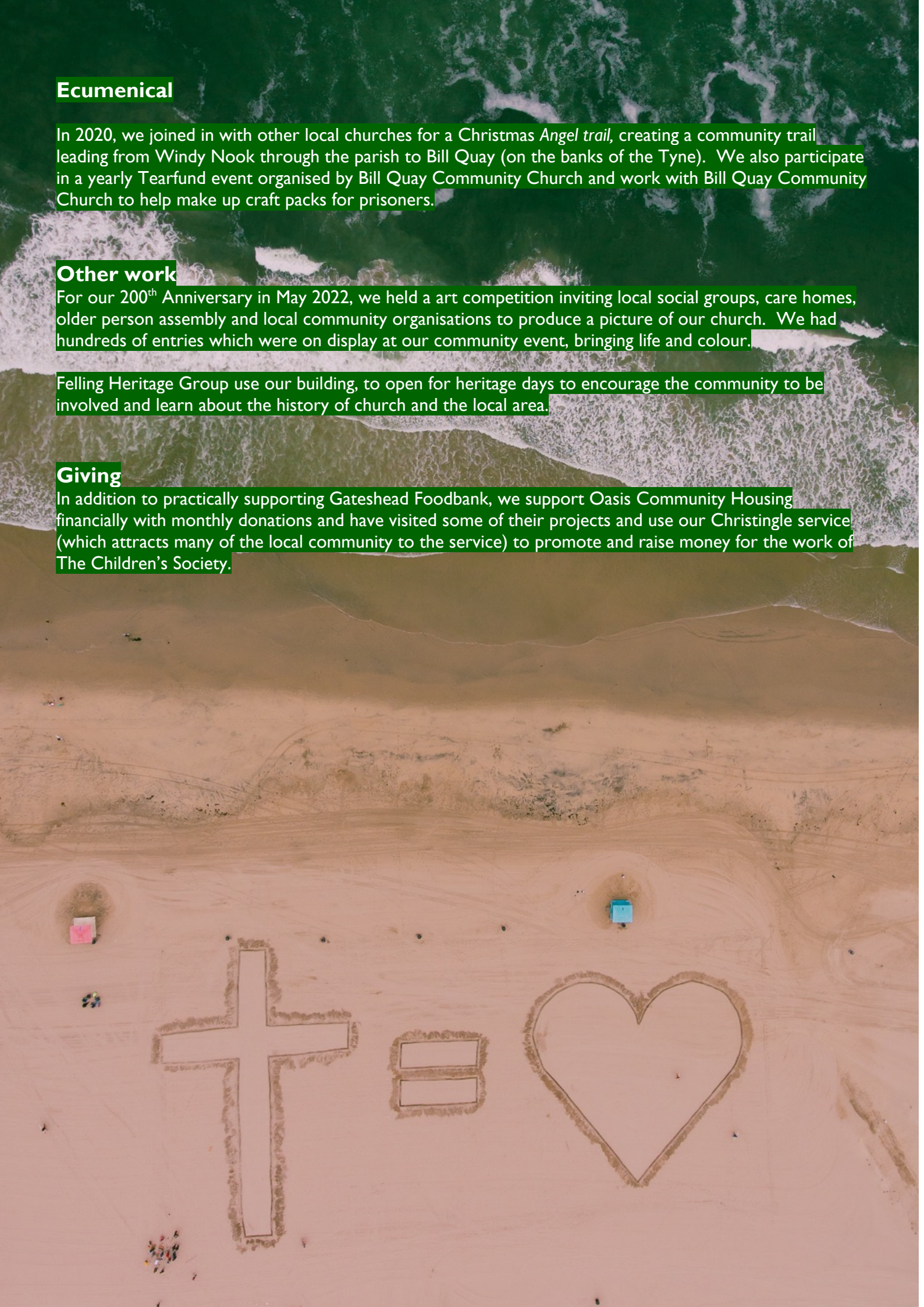
## Other work

For our 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in May 2022, we held a art competition inviting local social groups, care homes, older person assembly and local community organisations to produce a picture of our church. We had hundreds of entries which were on display at our community event, bringing life and colour.

Felling Heritage Group use our building, to open for heritage days to encourage the community to be involved and learn about the history of church and the local area.

## Giving

In addition to practically supporting Gateshead Foodbank, we support Oasis Community Housing financially with monthly donations and have visited some of their projects and use our Christingle service (which attracts many of the local community to the service) to promote and raise money for the work of The Children's Society.



## 7. Discerning our readiness for mission - the Parish Prioritisation Process

As part of preparing Parishes in Vacancy for a new clergy appointment, every Parish in the Diocese of Durham goes through a missional review, known as the Parish Prioritisation Process. By undertaking this, PCCs (supported by their Archdeacon) have the opportunity to review their journey, identify any areas of challenge and consider how God might want them to focus in Mission and outreach as the church moves forwards.

<p><b>What about Future Mission?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through the <b>Partnership for Missional Church</b> (PMC) process, we recognised a need to focus on loneliness. This affects all ages, genders and cultures.</li> <li>• We would like to encourage more community use of our church building for worship to grow our church family, and outside of worship hours, particularly to reach out to those who are lonely or isolated. We are blessed with various gifts from volunteers who help keep our church running, and hope our new vicar can join us to spread the news and be a link out in the community.</li> <li>• This year we are aiming to advertise the roles carried out within church, make a welcome wall with parishioners photographs, and create lanyards to wear when in church so people can greet each other by name and clergy know who is who.</li> <li>• We also aim to find out more about our partners (Age UK, Oasis and Felling Heritage Group) in order to advertise their services and ensure our congregation benefit from local activities and advice.</li> <li>• We hope to make an emergency contact poster for anyone requiring help who calls into the church, and a leaflet for anyone to take away, which also signposts to our partners.</li> <li>• Our church does not have a toilet or kitchen or the money to provide them, so increasing funds by fund raising or grants to enable this, would allow more flexible usage of the church for other activities and meeting groups.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What are we good at?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcoming visitors to church, especially the many baptism, wedding and funeral families.</li> <li>• Communicating through our Facebook page, website, WhatsApp group, newsletters and phone calls to keep our congregation informed of events and news, and to keep links with those unable to attend to show that we care.</li> <li>• Team work and organisation, to keep the church running during our vacancy and keep up within constant changing restriction rules. We are well organised into roles, and look forward to supporting the new vicar. We require someone who can bring new gifts and work with us.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What could we do better?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage families to attend services and events through continued work with schools and Baptism families to strengthen links and encourage children's faith. We often lose contact once the special event has taken place, therefore we are looking for someone who can help us in this outreach.</li> <li>• Focus more on mission - being seen in and around the local community and listening to their needs.</li> <li>• Link with our partners Age UK, Oasis, Felling Heritage Group to advertise their services and support them in the work they do in the community. To encourage our congregation to access to these services, where this would be beneficial.</li> <li>• Organising social activities. While prior to COVID we had many monthly social events, these have greatly reduced since.</li> </ul>



## **8. Buildings for Mission**

### **The Church**

St Mary's Church occupies a prominent position, opposite the local metro and bus interchange and adjacent to the main road between Gateshead and Sunderland. The building is a dramatic and attractive building. We have a beautiful oak organ of 1882 by Harrison & Harrison, restored in 1959, which is tuned twice a year. The seating within the main area of the church is wooden pews, with some cushions. The Lady Chapel is a mixture of pews and chairs, to allow for a range of uses.

The church is well maintained with yearly servicing of systems, and has had a Quinquennial inspection in 2022. The gutters and roof were repaired in 2021 using a lot of our reserves. We installed a new boiler into church in 2020, although the pipes connected to the system are cast iron.

Due to the age of our church we do not have a toilet or kitchen facilities in the church itself. Facilities are however available in our church hall, next door. Fundraising to improve this would allow use to increase use of the church building, hold longer meetings, group hire and encourage older members of the community to come to church. This will require forward planning about how we can use the space flexibly

Our lighting system requires an update, which we are in the process of getting quotes to apply for grants. We are applying for a faculty to replace our sound system, to lower the speakers so members of the congregation can hear better, and locating the controls to the back of church. This will use up some restricted reserves.

We had a fire outside the vestry in 2021, which resulted in a new vestry door, and the cleaning of all carpets. We have been awarded a grant for security lighting and CCTV, which will be part of the faculty application along with the sound system.

### **The Church Hall**

The church hall is next to the church, but not adjoined. It is a 1960s built prefabricated, flat roofed building. It has a large hall with a stage and under stage storage. There are two smaller halls, one of which has two large cupboards. In addition, there is a large kitchen and separate toilets. The boiler house is attached to the main building. The hall has a car park to the side and is surrounded by a large garden, which is currently maintained by our gardening group.

We are in the process of leasing the building to Age UK on a 15-year lease. This enables the hall to be used full time for day centres for the benefit of the community, small local businesses can hire the hall on evenings and weekends for local keep fit and choir classes which is managed by Age UK. It allows us to use the hall outside of business hours with prior agreement for social events. A small part of the roof was replaced after a storm in November 2021, and a new electric heating system has been installed in 2022.

## 9. Finance & Generous Giving

St Mary's is blessed to have a positive and generous attitude to giving, even in challenging years by loyal parishioners, some of whom haven't returned to church in person. We encouraged moving to the parish giving scheme, setting up standing orders and the use of QR codes and links during the Covid Pandemic.

We have a stewardship officer, who arranges our planned giving scheme using envelopes, and organises our gift aid submissions.

These regular donations, however, do not cover the cost of our beautiful church, so we are reliant on hall income and social events to subsidise weekly contributions. We need future fundraising to enable us to cover costs and increase our parish share.

The Treasurer reports to the PCC at every meeting, and the accounts are independently examined. We create a draft budget based on the previous year's figures and provide a 6 month and 9 month budget to assess our position. Payments are made using online banking.

In terms of financial planning, prior to the pandemic we paid our full parish share. We had to reduce our pledge in 2021, due to a loss in income. In 2022, we had to make the painstaking decision to dramatically reduce our pledge, but paid the total amount we had pledged. We have worked tirelessly to reduce our costs in 2022. Our pledge for 2023, is larger than last year, although not the amount the guided pledge asked for. We aim to work towards restoring our parish share to the full amount as soon as possible.

We have occasionally received legacies, which have been ring-fenced to help with capital or large expenditure improvements. We put a regular amount into a maintenance fund from any baptisms, weddings and funeral collections, so they are maintaining the building for future generations. We have been granted a security grant for CCTV and security lighting.

We want to work with our new parish priest on a journey towards generous giving, so we can be generous in mission and generous to the Diocese.





## 10, The Vicarage

St Mary's Vicarage is a spacious, detached family home in good repair, located across the road from the church. The ground floor comprises an entrance hall and main hall which give access to a study, dining room, living room, kitchen, utility room and downstairs toilet.

The staircase to the first-floor landing gives access to four bedrooms and a bathroom.

The front of the property has a long driveway leading to a double garage and a stepped footpath to the front door. There is a garden to the front which contains a grassed area and large shrubs. The garden to the rear provides a safe space which is enclosed by fences and walls. It is grassed with some fruit trees and two small brick-built outhouses.





## 11, Wider Relationships – Churches Together and the Deanery

As part of Gateshead Deanery's Five-Year Plan each of the individual parishes has committed to work together in partnership and as a single locality area in order to focus together on our Diocesan priorities of:

- Energising Growth
- Engaging with Children, Youth and Young Adults
- Challenging Poverty and
- Care for God's Creation

As a Deanery we have collaborated to support Gateshead Foodbank, deliver a significant community theatre event and produced online worship resources during the lockdown.

St Mary's, St Andrew's Leam Lane and St Thomas' Eighton Banks are Locality Partners. St Mary's and St Andrew's have supported each other in working together on social media and defibrillator training recently. Our Treasurer meets with others in a similar role locally to ensure that we help and support each other, and are aligned in our responses.

At present our church has one elected representative on Deanery Synod, who reports back to PCC to keep us informed. Our Synod meetings are now open to all laity not just parish representatives.

Gateshead Deanery takes an inclusive approach to ministry and the contribution of every church is seen as essential in developing and growing ministry in Gateshead.



## 12, The Role

### **We are praying for an incumbent willing and able to -**

- Work with us to engage with the wider community and revitalise our missional confidence and capacity
- Attract the wider community to church activities, initiatives and worship
- Support our church to grow in number, reach, depth and service
- Develop and deepen our work with children, young families and engagement with local schools
- Find ways to collaborate with Deanery partners and ecumenically to develop social action, evangelism and discipleship
- Lead and help us to provide a safe and inclusive environment
- Develop our building as a resource for mission

### **Who is –**

- A good team leader, able to encourage, enable and consolidate the attributes of the PCC
- Full of energy, enthusiasm and is a good communicator, with both those in church and those in the wider community
- Is passionate about working with the local schools, community projects and care homes.
- With good IT, computer and electronic communication skills
- Has a “get up and go” energetic attitude and is yet humble, has patience, a good sense of humour and is looking forward to a fresh challenge
- Collaborative, committed to continuing to work collegially with friends at St Andrews Leam Lane and St Thomas Eighton Banks
- Able to engage us fully with the Diocesan Vision of Energising Growth, Engaging with Children, Youth and Young Adults, Challenging Poverty and Caring for God’s Creation.

One of the key tasks for the next priest will be to work with our congregation and other partners to find creative ways to extend our capacity and reach, in line with our local aspirations and the Gateshead Deanery plan which includes a commitment to collaboration, mutual and sharing resources in order to extend mission.

## Appendix I. Our Building in more detail

St Mary's current church building is 200 years old, built in 1822. It is a Grade II listed, sandstone built, cruciform church, set in a large closed churchyard. The current church stands on the site of a church dating back to 650 AD.

In addition to the main part of the church, it comprises an entrance hall, lady chapel, vestry, choir vestry and upper vestry. Our bell ringing/clock tower with 6 bells cast by Warners in 1880, and are frequently used by visiting bell ringing groups. In the sanctuary, we have beautiful Gothic-arcaded reredos with 1922 painted panels, large stained glass windows, and in the south transept, a late Gothic-style octagonal font. We have a list of incumbents dating back to 1310.

The churchyard holds a huge amount of history, including a Lychgate which was paid for by public subscription in memory of King George V, and completed in 1937 by Tate, Brown & Co, using Heworth Burn Quarry sandstone. Within the churchyard is the memorial for the Felling Colliery Disaster in 1812 at our local mine, where 92 men and boys died and a blue plaque installed on the church boundary wall in 2012. The Revd John Hodgson of this church took up the cause of mine safety and as a direct result of his efforts the miners' safety lamp was developed. It also holds the grave of Thomas Hepburn, who was a coal miner and trade union leader, who is remembered during an annual memorial service in church. In addition, we have a number of Commonwealth War Graves too. The churchyard is maintained by Gateshead Council.

We are the meeting place for The Felling Heritage Group who have led Remembrance Day events, Churchyard tours, and Heritage weekend events in the church and churchyard. They linked with us at our 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event, showing the community photographs and information of changes over the years.

Our church hall is next to the church, but not connected to it. It was built in 1962. We are in the process of leasing the building to Age UK for 15 years.





## Appendix 2. The Area in more detail

Heworth is very well located for access to retail, leisure, education and cultural facilities.

Both the Metro Centre (one of Europe's largest shopping and leisure centres) and Newcastle city centre (offering a huge range of shopping, historical, arts and education facilities) are only a very short bus ride away.

The Parish itself is served by a number of good primary schools, a bus station and metro stop and is within easy driving distance of the beach, several supermarkets, the Sage Gateshead (an amazing concert venue), Gateshead Stadium and Newcastle City Centre. Details of our nearby primary secondary schools are provided in **Useful Contacts** (Appendix 3).

The area is well served with lots of high quality sports and leisure facilities. Heworth leisure centre is a short walk from the church (with swimming pool, gym and indoor surfing machine!). Gateshead Stadium is home to fantastic athletics facilities hosting several major national events every year.

Gateshead has an excellent public transport system with the nearest bus and metro hub just across the road from the Church, connecting residents to the centre of Gateshead, to Newcastle City Centre, the Central Train Station in Newcastle and Newcastle International Airport all within a short ride.

### The wider region

The North East is an exciting place to live, learn and be part of God's mission. There is a huge amount to see and discover from heritage centres, to outstanding countryside and the action of our cities. Find out more by visiting <https://www.visitnortheastengland.com>



## Appendix 3. Useful contacts

### The Parish, the Post and the Diocese

Enquiries about this post can be directed to the Archdeacon of Sunderland, The Ven. Bob Cooper at [Archdeacon.of.Sunderland@durham.anglican.org](mailto:Archdeacon.of.Sunderland@durham.anglican.org)

Information about our Diocese is available at <https://durhamdiocese.org/>

Details about St Mary's are available online at [www.stmarysheworth.com](http://www.stmarysheworth.com) or our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/stmarysheworth>

You can find out more out our Deanery at [www.gatesheaddeanery.com/churches](http://www.gatesheaddeanery.com/churches) or through the Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/GatesheadDeanery/](https://www.facebook.com/GatesheadDeanery/)

### Our Local Primary Schools

The Drive <https://www.thedriveprimary.co.uk>  
Wardley Primary School <https://wardleyprimary.org>  
Bill Quay Primary School <https://www.billquayprimary.org>  
St Alban's Catholic Primary School <https://stalbangateshead.org>

### Our local Secondary Schools

Our nearest secondary school is Heworth Grange <https://www.heworthgrange.org> with other children travelling to Emmanuel College [www.Emmanuelcollege.org.uk](http://www.Emmanuelcollege.org.uk) or alternatively Cardinal Hume <https://www.cardinalhume.com>

Our local partners include -

The Felling Heritage Group  
[www.facebook.com/groups/1648381998804309](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1648381998804309)  
Age UK Gateshead <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/gateshead/> or <https://www.facebook.com/AgeUkGateshead/>  
Gateshead Foodbank <https://gateshead.foodbank.org.uk>  
Oasis Community Housing <https://www.oasiscommunityhousing.org>  
Edbert's House <https://edbertshouse.org>