



*The Parish of St Cuthbert
With St Aidan, Durham*



DURHAM NORTH TEAM MINISTRY

Parish of St Cuthbert's with St Aidan's, Durham

ANNUAL REPORT

2025

For presentation to the

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL

CHURCH MEETING

Wednesday 13th May at 7pm 2026

in

St Aidan's Church

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION: The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the Parish of St Cuthbert with St Aidan, in the diocese of Durham, has responsibility for co-operating with the incumbent in administering the requirements placed upon it by law to uphold the work of the Anglican Church in that parish. It is also responsible for maintaining the two church buildings:

St Cuthbert's Church, North Road, Durham, DH1 4NQ

St Aidan's Church, Front Street, Framwellgate Moor, Durham, DH1 5BL. The PCC is also responsible for the Parish Hall on the St Aidan's site.

St Cuthbert's with St Aidan's became a charity in its own right in 2025, its charity number is 1214867.

Banker: CAF Bank Ltd., King's Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA

Independent Examiner: Mr. Nigel Ball, 20 Aykley Green, Durham DH11 4LN

PCC Architect (appointed for the Quinquennial Inspection) : Mr. Michael Atkinson, Architecture and Heritage, 47 Kitchener Terrace, North Shields, Tyne and Wear NE30 2HH

PROFILE: The parish, with a population of about 7,500, is approximately two and half miles long by one mile wide. It falls within two wards of Durham City : Western Hill and North End are in Framwellgate Ward; Pity Me is in Framwellgate Moor Ward, as well as in the area covered by Framwellgate Moor Parish Council.

In 2002, the parish joined the parishes of St Michael and All Angels, Witton Gilbert (dissolving the plurality formed in 1997), All Saints Newton Hall (a local ecumenical partnership with the Methodist Church) and St Philip and St James Kimblesworth to form the benefice of the Durham North Team Ministry.

The Revd Canon Caroline Dick was licensed as Team Rector on Sunday 3rd July 2016, with pastoral responsibility for St Cuthbert with St Aidan, Witton Gilbert, Sacriston, Kimblesworth and Newton Hall.

A new benefice, named The Benefice of Durham North has been created, This includes the parishes of Esh, Langley Park, St Cuthbert with St Aidan Durham, Kimblesworth, Newton Hall, Witton Gilbert and Sacriston. Each parish remains legally distinct. The team ministry for the benefice is to be known as The Durham North Team Ministry.

Pastoral responsibility is shared by the Rector in the Team Ministry and one other minister. Canon Caroline Dick is the first Team Rector. The Revd Michael Peers is the first holder of the office of Team Vicar, living at The Vicarage; Church Street, Langley Park, Durham, DH7 9T.

St Cuthbert's Church: Built in 1858- 1863, a Grade 2 listed building at the southern end of the parish. A community room was added in 1991 and extensive repairs to the tower were completed in December 2003.

St Aidan's Church: Built in 1871, at the northern end of the parish, originally as a chapel of ease. A new porch was added to the church in 2009.

Parish Hall: Built in 1962, extensively modified in 1993, remodelled in 2001 to accommodate the Team Office and a meeting room

Vicarage: The Vicarage, la Church Parade, Sacriston, DH1 6AD

REGULAR SERVICES

St Cuthbert's: Sunday - 8 am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer),
11 am Holy Communion (1st Sunday - Morning Worship)

St Aidan's: Sunday - 9.15am Holy Communion (1st Sunday - Morning Worship)
10am Thursday Holy Communion

Morning Prayer 8.30 Tuesday and Wednesday.

Baptisms: Sunday - 1 pm at St Cuthbert' s and St Aidan's

Home Communion and Services of Holy Communion at St Aidan's Lodge and Melbury Court Care Home :

AIMS AND ORGANISATION OF THE PCC: The PCC has the responsibility for co-operating with the Team Rector in "promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical" (PCC (Powers) Measure 1965). We believe all are valued and have a part to play. We aspire to every member ministry and recognise the need to be active in serving the community, in contributing to worship and in connecting people to Jesus. We are seeking to grow as a Healthy Church by encouraging prayer, sharing faith stories and nurturing discipleship. We aim to be welcoming and inclusive by being flexible in worship and developing a sense of belonging. We are committed to doing our best to live out the Durham Diocesan Vision of "Blessing our Communities in Jesus' name".

The PCC's function is enabled by a Standing Committee, required by law, which has the power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings, subject to directions given by the Council.

MEMBERS OF THE PCC :

Chair: The Revd Canon Caroline Dick (Team Rector)

Vice-Chair: Philip Blackburn

Churchwardens: Duncan Cadd (St Aidan's),

Philip Blackburn and Barbara Gow (St Cuthbert's)

Deanery Synod Members: Karen Abbott (Reader), Alison Blackburn (Reader), Judith Gaughy

Treasurer: Revd Meg Gilley

Secretary: Revd Bill Jackson

Other elected members: Elaine Kilgannon, Alison Blackburn, Karen Abbott, Keith Wynn, Beryl Welch

STANDING COMMITTEE :

The Team Rector, Churchwardens, PCC Treasurer, PCC Secretary, Elaine Kilgannon (PCC Representative), Beryl Welch (PCC Representative).

TEAM RECTOR'S REPORT

On 8th June 2025 I announced (at the Annual Team Service) that I would be retiring as Team Rector on Easter Day 2026.

It has been a joy and a privilege to lead the Team for the last ten years.

There have been many changes in that time. The most significant being the expansion of the Team from six churches to seven ie when Langley Park and Esh joined us and Bearpark left us and joined with St John's Neville's Cross.

In my time we appointed Paul Richards as Team Administrator and he continues to play an invaluable role, as does Stephen Ellis as Team Finance Officer, and Elaine Kilgannon as editor of the weekly Team Newsletter 'Staying Connected'. Between them they run a 'well oiled machine'.

I have been ably assisted and supported by numerous retired clergy eg Gordon Harper, John McManners, Peter Baldwin, Bill Jackson and Meg Gilley, and our wonderful licensed lay ministers Pauline James, Karen Abbott and Alison Blackburn. We have been blessed with the arrival of Wendy Hughes, who is training to be a licensed lay minister and Emma Clements who is currently studying with Lindisfarne.

At the time of writing the churches in the Team are in the process of undertaking the Vacancy Audit Process which will decide how the Team moves forward in the coming years.

I wish to thank Michael for being such a great colleague and for all he has done as Team Vicar, (especially in holding the fort when I took my sabbatical) I have every confidence in Revd Michael Peers as he leads the Team during the Vacancy. The good news is that the Sunday rota for April-June has already been filled, and without too much difficulty!

The theme of this years Lent Talks was 'Broadening our Lenten Horizons' and I invited former colleagues from across the Anglican Communion to talk about the experience of Cross and Resurrection in the countries they came from ie Steve Muneza spoke about Burundi, Mahalha Wachepa spoke about Malawi, Remi Omole spoke about Nigeria and John Jebaseelan (Methodist) about India.

I have greatly valued the experience and wisdom of my former colleagues, and of being part of the Local Ecumenical Project at Newton Hall, and for the Team to continue to flourish, it will need to continually broaden its horizons beyond narrow church matters, and follow her risen Lord and Saviour into the communities and world which we are called to serve.

I shall leave my final words to Paul writing in Ephesians 3:20-21

'Now to God whose power working in us is able to do so much more than we can ever ask of or even think of, to God be the glory, in the church and in Christ Jesus, for all time for ever and ever, Amen!'

Revd Canon Caroline Dick 10/03/2026

VICAR'S REPORT

This is my last report as Vicar of St Cuthbert with St Aidan. A post that I have held for 10yrs, and needless to say a lot has happened in that time.

I feel a bit sad that the first thing that comes to mind is building work, because our primary focus should always be worship and mission, but the reality is that maintaining three buildings is always going to be time consuming. However the good news is that through amazing fundraising efforts we have a new boiler in St Aidan's, a new heating system in St Cuthbert's and are well on the way to a new heating system for the hall, and that's to say nothing of roof repairs, east end gable repairs, sound systems, double glazing etc etc. There will always be a 'to do' list but we thank God that we have three buildings that are fit for purpose and a brilliant caretaker (Paul Richards) who ensures that the hall is in tip top condition, which means it is fully booked and providing an indispensable source of income for the churches, as well as providing a brilliant community venue for groups of all ages and sizes.

At St Cuthbert's, the Baby Memorial Project and the deepening relationship with Hild/Bede Chapel Choir were sufficiently noteworthy that they were 'showcased' when the new Bishop of Durham - Rick Simpson (currently Archdeacon of Auckland) stopped off on his tour of the diocese to learn more about them.

At St Aidan's, Aidan's Kitchen continues to flourish with around 40 people from the church and wider community enjoying friendships developed over a cuppa and a bacon butty. The midweek service now regularly attracts about a dozen people, the grounds are being maintained by men on the Community Payback Scheme and The Church Lads and Church Girls Brigade is benefitting from congregation members going in to tell Bible Stories.

Both of our churches are blessed with excellent organists ie Ann Marshall at St Aidan's and a range of organists at St Cuthbert's - including some from Hild/Bede, and the prayer filled lives of our congregations are expressed in the carefully crafted prayers that are written for our Intercessions.

Although we don't have a formal pastoral care team, members of the church and the Mothers' Union work tirelessly to support those in need, whether through home visits, hospital visits, telephone calls, comforting the bereaved or offering home communion.

Sadly this year we lost three much loved church members ie David Blake, Graham Sudbury and Sheila Eastwood. Their funerals were uplifting affairs as we gave thanks for a lifetime of service in church and community as they followed Jesus, their Lord and Saviour from this life into the next.

Finally I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our Churchwardens Barbara Gow, Phil Blackburn, Duncan Cadd (ably assisted by Connie Parkinson), our Treasurer Revd Meg Gilley, PCC Secretary Revd Bill Jackson, our Safeguarding Officers Elaine Kilgannon and Phil Blackburn, our retired clergy Meg and Bill, our Licensed Lay Ministers Karen Abbott and Alison Blackburn, and all who serve in any official capacity. Your dedication and faithfulness are a blessing to our parish.

In concluding I want to give all the glory to God for his faithfulness, provision and unending grace that has guided us through another year, and to thank you all for the privilege of allowing me to minister amongst you.

I leave the parish confident that there are firm foundations to build on (both materially and more importantly spiritually) and I wish Revd Michael Peers every blessing as he covers the Vacancy.

With my love, gratitude and continued prayers,

Revd Canon Caroline Dick (Vicar) 11/03/2026

Churchwardens Report 2025 – St. Cuthbert's

2025 became the year of the heating and the pigeons!

We were fortunate, thanks to the many donations received and grants provided, to be able to have the church and Community Room heating systems replaced by a single system in July. This meant an end to twelve months of worship in the cold or the Community Room. We are very grateful to all those who helped fund raise and donated themselves to raise the £36,000 needed. Our thanks also to Elaine Kilgannon who masterminded some of the grant applications for us! The heating now works well and church and Community Room are warm and useable throughout the year. Thank you again to all involved! The double glazing project for the Community Room is on-going and will feature in next year's report.

During the early part of the year, we had repair work done on the louvre windows on the second floor of the church tower. Unfortunately, the contractor left one of the louvres slightly open and the pigeons made the tower their home for the year! The mess was incredible and the pigeons didn't want to leave so we could clear up! Thanks to the help of Durham Wildlife Trust, who are going to fit Swift boxes to the tower, they have managed to 'encourage' the pigeons to leave! More about that in next year's report as the final works are still on-going – but interestingly, apparently Swifts frighten away the pigeons anyway – so hopefully the pigeons will get the message – although you may see one or two clinging on to the tower in hope!

The Hild/Bede College choir started their second year 'in house' with us in September and continue to join us for two Sundays a month as well as their weekly Choral Evensong services in term time. It is wonderful now to be able to offer them a 'warm' home for services and rehearsals!! Evensongs are Wednesdays at 5.45pm in term time. The organists continue to make use of the organ during the week and we'd like to say a huge thank you to the choir, its leaders, organists and chaplain Marie Edwards for their contribution to our church life.

The Churchyard project, including the Baby Memorial, is now finished. Handrails have been installed on the front path and back vestry steps using a disability grant from the central Church, enhancing congregation safety during the winter.

The hospital chaplains continue their support of those families who have lost a baby before, during or shortly after birth by holding their annual memorial service in church. This gives families the opportunity to remember their lost loved ones and take time in church or at the wonderful Baby Memorial in the church grounds. Thank you to all those involved in the services and the Baby Memorial project, which, now completed, provides a huge support to those families involved.

There are many people who contribute to the daily and weekly life of the church and to whom we are grateful for their time, efforts and energy. In no particular order thank you to those who:

prepare our rotas; support weddings, baptisms and funerals by being verger; provide refreshments; provide our flowers; clean our church; welcome everyone to church; read

lessons; provide Intercessions; ensure that our pew sheets make it to church from the office; assist clergy at services by administering the chalice and the many other tasks that happen unseen each day. Also, many thanks to our Team Administrator for his help with room bookings, admin and provision of the pew sheets.

Thank you to our organists, Adriel and Sam, and also 'happy retirement' to Adrian Skelton who has been our organist for a considerable time and contributed greatly to our worship.

Sadly during 2025 we lost Sheila Eastwood, Graham Sudbury and John Lewis, all of whom were long term members of our congregation – may they rest in peace.

Thanks also to our clergy and Lay Ministers; Caroline, Michael, Meg, Bill, Alison, Karen and Pauline for their roles in leading services and many other contributions during the year.

Finally, we'd like to wish Caroline (and Raymond) a long and happy retirement.

Barbara Gow & Phil Blackburn – Churchwardens.

St. Aidan's Churchwarden Report

If it ain't bust, don't fix it! The majority of what I have said in previous years still stands.

First I should like to thank Connie, who despite "retiring" from being a Churchwarden years ago has continued to support me in so many ways. Connie, you are a real treasure and a real pleasure to learn from and work with. I am also grateful for your continued service as verger. I cannot let the opportunity pass to remind you all that every church ideally has 2 Churchwarden's, so please consider standing'

Thank you also to my very supportive colleagues on the Standing Committee and PCC for their patience and encouragement.

Likewise I owe grateful thanks to those members of the Congregation who do so many apparently small jobs but whose collective effort makes St. Aidan's run on autopilot. I would particularly wish to call attention to the people who help clear the altar after Holy Communion and care for the linen, who help administer Holy Communion, including Home Communion, our cleaners and those who have kept our Church looking so fresh with magnificent floral displays around the year. Thank you for those who read the scriptures, those who lead our prayers, those who offer a warm welcome and those who serve refreshments after the services.

We are very blessed to have Ann and Valerie who enrich our services with their art. Let all things that have breath praise the Lord!

Thanks to Bill and Keith for keeping a finger on the pulse of the fabric of our Church and Parish Hall, I could not possibly cope if I had to do this myself. Bill and Keith have been absolutely vital in helping us address these issues effectively.

Thank you also to Paul in the Parish Office who is very rarely seen but who would be sorely

missed if I had to look after the admin tasks. The fact that the income from the letting out of the Parish Hall effectively subsidises both our churches is testimony to his dedication and hard work.

There has been significant work done on the Church, with the external work to the East Gable end just completed in March this year. We now have to wait eighteen months to two years for the stonework to dry out before we can tackle the inside. Thank you for the generous donations you have all given and for the grants we have received.

The garden at St. Aidan's is being improved in partnership with the Probation Service's Community Pay Back Team and they have made significant contributions to the beds between the church and parish hall which are now planted out with a variety of shrubs.

The Amblers Group called it a day in August 2025 after many years of fellowship and visits to a wide variety of locations in all weathers!

The Brigade, the Mothers Union and Aidan's Kitchen continue to attract support and the Vision Day we had in late 2025 has provided some ideas for the period we are now entering of a vacancy, until the planning for Durham North Team and our extended family outside Durham North Team has been completed. The updates we are getting will be shared with the congregations as we progress towards the appointment of a new Team Rector.

St Aidan's congregation completed the Point North challenge by walking around the church 585 times. Over the course of July collections were taken and sent to Point North – first £140 (reported in issue 191) and then £120. This was matched with £150 by Point North benefactors so in total £410 was raised, by our efforts, to tackle child poverty in County Durham.

Thank you Elaine, for all the things you do for us especially "Staying Connected" which at the last count had 214 recipients. This truly is shared ministry with contributions coming in from all over the Team but without an able editor it wouldn't be the polished communication machine we know and love, and which is a very visible component of witness in the community.

There has been significant work done on the church, with the external work to the East Gable end just completed in March this year. We now have to wait eighteen months to two years for the stonework to dry out before we can tackle the inside. Thank you for the generous donations you have given.

We are closing in on the money required to replace the Parish Hall heating. The Parish Hall is essential for around 500 people who use it each week and is a valuable Community

resource. Despite being almost next door to the Community Centre, the Parish Hall is nearly fully booked so there is evidently a real need for this space and we coexist very happily with our near neighbours. The income we get from letting out the Parish Hall is an irreplaceable support for our two Churches, so it really matters that we can keep it well maintained and well used. We are now only £10k short of the amount we need, thanks to some generous grants and donors!

Without you – the congregation – Christian witness in Framwellgate Moor would be much the poorer and you all contribute simply by being you and attending and donating as and when you are able.

Last, but by no means least, a big big Thank You to our Ministers and Readers who lead our worship and who expound the scriptures so that the people may understand their meaning. It is right to take this opportunity to say another big big Thank You to Caroline for her leadership of Durham North Team, and for the services, sermons, meetings and pastoral care she has provided for us. May Caroline and Raymond enjoy a long and happy retirement in their new home!

Duncan Cadd, Churchwarden, St. Aidan's.

PCC Secretary's Report

The PCC met on 7th May 2025 to elect the following:

Vice Chair: Phil Blackburn

Treasurer: Meg Gilley

Secretary: Revd Bill Jackson

The PCC met in the Community Room at St Cuthbert's on 1st July 25, 16th Sept, 11th November, 20th January 2026, and 10th March 26, There were also a number of Standing Committee meetings held in St Aidan's. Also, an extra-ordinary PCC meeting to agree double glazing in St Cuthbert's Community Room.

WORSHIP: Following a leak in the heating system at St Cuthberts extensive work was carried out in the church and Community Room through the winter period to install a brand-new system. Hild Bede College Choir have continued their partnership with St Cuthbert's and have successfully helped to enhance the worship.

MISSION: There has been a number of initiatives involving mission; a Quite Day at Alnmouth Priory; a Vision Day was held with a plan for future initiatives; discussions are ongoing about bringing new people into the church.

FINANCE: There is a need to be concerned about future finance. Revd Meg Gilley has kept us informed of the need to be careful about our expenditure. Discussions are ongoing about increasing our giving and encouraging more church members. The PCC invited the

Diocesan Generous Giving Officer, Paul Child, to do a presentation on how we might increase our giving.

BUILDING:

St Aidan's Work was carried out on St Aidan's church east wall because of falling plaster on the east side of the church. The boiler in St Aidan's church was replaced. A fundraising campaign is under way for a new heating system in the church hall.

St Cuthbert's, In partnership with the Diocese it was agreed that a new heating system has to be installed. After much research the PCC agreed to a new gas system of fan radiators.

ECO GROUP: The Eco Group has met on several occasions and has a plan of action.

Charity Commission: In 2025, St Cuthbert's and St Aidan's became a registered charity.

DEANERY SYNOD: Alison Blackburn and Karen Abbott continue to serve on Synod. We receive regular reports at PCC. Judith Gaughy agreed to become a Deanery Synod Member.

SAFEGUARDING: Elaine and Phil continue to act as our Safeguarding Officers and have been very busy sorting out the ongoing changes suggested by the Diocese. Both churches observed Safeguarding Sunday. Safeguarding guidelines are constantly updated and on every PCC Agenda.

FUTURE OF THE CHURCH: Revd Canon Caroline Dick decided to resign at Easter time 2026. The PCC are going through the VAP process with the Diocese to decide the Vacancy and future of St Cuthbert's and St Aidan's and the North Durham Group...

PCC resignation: Pam Scott resigned as PCC member due to her ongoing health problems. John Dobson remains Electoral Role Officer and Data Protection Officer.

Treasurer's Report

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025

First of all, I want to thank all of you, every member of the parish, for your many different contributions to the finances of the parish through direct giving, fundraising, applying for grants, and volunteering, and through signing up for Gift Aid, and leaving legacies in wills. The parish could not function without all that you do and all that you give. Thank you.

Funding the Work of the Church

The column labelled "Unrestricted" relates to income and expenditure for the general running of St Cuthbert's, St Aidan's and the Parish Hall.

Our main sources of income are Planned Giving (Standing Orders), Collections, Gift Aid relating to these, and lettings of the Hall, though other funding streams play an important part. The total for 2025 was £73,173, which was £5,484 more than in 2024.

Expenditure encompasses the cost of running the churches and the hall. At the top of the list is the £31,500 paid to the Diocese of Durham as our contribution towards the cost of ministry. This barely covers a third of the cost to the Diocese of each priest. Insurance is another major cost, £7,394, and utilities (gas, electricity, broadband for the hall), £6,921. We employ a caretaker for the hall, essential to the smooth running of the hall, £6,240. Add in the cost of running services, including organists at St Cuthbert's and upkeep of organs, administration, maintenance and cleaning, plus some other items, and we spent a total of £75,943. This is £9,928 more than we spent in 2024 in this respect.

General expenditure exceeded general income by £2,770. Fortunately, we have enough in the account to prevent an immediate crisis, but clearly this is something we will need to address. This is not sustainable in the long term.

Though we had significant increases in both income and expenditure, the increase in spending exceeded the increase in income by a long way. Costs are going up quicker than income.

Fundraising for Projects

Restricted Funds relates to money raised for particular projects.

The Baby Memorial Project at St Cuthbert's was mostly completed in 2024, but the installation of the handrail up the slope from the lychgate improved disability access to the

church, thanks to a donation from the Archbishop's Council.

In 2025, we raised £52,144 to replace the heating system at St Cuthbert's, which has made a huge difference to our comfort in church. The funds came from grants, donations, fundraising, claiming VAT and Gift Aid. The total cost of the project was £45,989 plus the cost of architect's fees. There is still work to be done: the windows in the Community Room need to be replaced and double glazed.

Once again, thank you to all who contributed to raising the money for the heating system. And we acknowledge the help of donations and grants from: the College of Hild & Bede, the Diocese of Durham, MGL Group, the Sir John Priestman Charity Trust. It's a joy to have the College of Hild and Bede at St Cuthbert's and they make a financial contribution towards the parish. So far, the funds have been used to make the building fit for their use.

In 2026 we move on to replacing the heating system in the Parish Hall. The east wall of St Aidan's church also needs considerable work. The work of maintaining our three buildings never ceases.

Treasurer and Auditor

I took on the role of Treasurer in May 2025, and agreed to do this for 3 years. I will give up the role at the Annual Meeting of 2028 (unless I move away from Durham in the meantime). I will keep reminding you of this.

Thank you to Barbara Gow, who was Treasurer before me, for all her help and support.

And thanks also to Nigel Ball who kindly examined and signed off the accounts. He has agreed to help us next year as well.

Meg Gilley

February 2026

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	PCC of St Cuthbert with St Aidan									
2	Year ended 31 December 2025									
3	Income and Expenditure account			2025				2024		
4		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total			
5		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
6	Income									
7	Planned giving	28,894			28,594					
8	Collections	5,080			4,875					
9	Donations	525			607					
10	Parish Hall Refurbishment Fund		1,593		0					
11	Churches Building Fund: St Cuthbert's		29,641				7,791			
12	Churches Building Fund: St Aidan's		401							
13	Baby Memorial Project		0				592			
14	Gift Aid claimed on donations and collections	9,239			3,978					
15	Gift Aid claimed on St Cuthbert's Flowers		0				62			
16	Gift Aid claimed on Restricted Churches Building Fund		1,699				750			
17	Gift Aid claimed on St Aidan's flowers		100							
18	Refund of VAT on St. Cuthbert's repairs		7,575		0					
19	Refund of VAT on Baby Memorial Project		0				1,166			
20	Fundraising: Heating System		3,828		290		2,695			
21	Fundraising: Hall Heating etc		1,839				8,067			
22	Insurance claim St Cuthbert		1,670							
23	Insurance claim Hall		300							
24	Bank interest received	3,274			3,174					
25	Fees	2,480			3,222					
26	Hall lettings	21,828			21,137					
27	Durham North Team Office utilities	1,000			1,000					
28	Aidan's Kitchen	608			343					
29	Refreshment Fund St Cuthbert's	166			328					
30	Charity Fund Raising	77			10					
31	Donations for flowers St. Cuthbert's		0				255			
32	Donations for flowers St. Aidan's		400							
33	Refunds for undelivered goods	0			127					
34	Legacy	0					2,500			
35	Grants Churches Building Fund				9,000		4,250			
36	Grants Hall Dishwasher				1,200					
37	Grants Baby Memorial Project				4,128		29,088			
38	Other		2				4			
39	Total Income	73,173	63,374	136,547	67,689	57,216	124,905			
40										

Safeguarding Report

Reporting Period: 2025

Introduction

Safeguarding remains a core responsibility of the parish and the Parochial Church Council (PCC). The Church of England's safeguarding policy statement, *Promoting a Safer Church*, requires all church bodies to maintain an up-to-date safeguarding action plan that demonstrates how safeguarding policies are implemented and reviewed in line with national and diocesan requirements.

Our parish is working to **Level 3** of the Safeguarding Dashboard, covering *Safer Foundations, Safer Activities, and Safer Practices*. This represents the highest level and includes all mandatory safeguarding requirements for the Church of England.

Policies, Procedures and Governance

The PCC has approved all required safeguarding policies and reviews them regularly. The Parish Safeguarding Policy, compliant with *Promoting a Safer Church*, was reviewed in July 2024 and continues to be actively promoted. All Church Officers have access to this policy.

Safeguarding is a standing agenda item for all PCC meetings with a more detailed consideration at three meetings each year. At the time of writing the most recent full review took place on 11 November 2025, the next being 10 March 2026. A policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders was reviewed in March 2025.

Approved procedures are in place for responding to safeguarding concerns or allegations, lone working, appropriate boundaries, data protection, and record retention. Procedures for responding to concerns were reviewed in July 2025. Arrangements are in place for the secure storage of safeguarding records during clergy vacancies. Support for victims and survivors of abuse has been considered and discussed by the PCC.

Further work is required to ensure full compliance with national guidance on the use of social media and to strengthen the promotion of a healthy and safe church culture.

Safeguarding Roles and Training

A Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) was appointed in January 2022, with a second PSO appointed at the APCM in May 2025. The PSO provides safeguarding reports at each PCC meeting and presents the safeguarding action plan in detail three times per year.

Churchwardens are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and review safeguarding policies annually. A DBS Administrator is in post, with the team administrator enrolled since July 2023.

The PCC confirms that required safeguarding training has been completed by Parish Safeguarding Officers, Churchwardens, DBS Administrators, and PCC members. Training records are monitored and reviewed regularly.

Safeguarding Information and Visibility

Safeguarding information is clearly displayed and accessible. All church buildings display safeguarding policy notices, contact details for safeguarding roles, and *Promoting a Safer Church* posters. Safeguarding arrangements are visible on the parish website, and information is available for victims and survivors of abuse.

Church Activities

The PCC has authorised all church activities involving children, young people, or vulnerable adults and ensures that appropriate insurance, safer recruitment, DBS checks, risk assessments, and induction processes are in place.

Aidan's Kitchen, a drop-in community group, continues to operate with PCC authorisation and insurance cover. Risk assessments and recruitment processes are in place; however, some safeguarding training, volunteer support, and work to strengthen safer environments remain outstanding and are being prioritised.

Care Home Services are authorised by the PCC and operate in line with both parish and Care Home safeguarding policies. Recruitment, training, DBS checks, and risk assessments are in place, and the activity continues to strive to provide a safer environment for all participants.

Home Communion is authorised and insured. Plans are in place to strengthen volunteer support and oversight, and improve safer environment arrangements.

Non-Church Activities

Non-church activities using church premises, including the Community Room at St Cuthbert's and the Parish Hall activities on the St Aidan's site, have PCC authorisation. Appropriate hire agreements, including safeguarding, are in place.

Oversight, Review and Next Steps

Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at every PCC meeting. At the time of writing The PCC last received a full safeguarding report on 11 November 2025, the next being 10 March 2026. Safeguarding was reported to the APCM in May 2025.

The PCC recognises that while strong foundations are in place, further action is required in the coming year. Key priorities include:

- safeguarding training – rolling programme
- improving volunteer support and oversight

- strengthening safer environments
- confirming non-church activity records
- continuing to promote a healthy and open safeguarding culture.

The PCC remains committed to safeguarding as a shared responsibility and to ensuring that the parish is a safe and welcoming place for all.

Elaine Kilgannon & Phil Blackburn

Deanery Synod Report for 2025

In February 2025 we met at All Saints Newton Hall. Revd Canon Caroline Dick welcomed everyone and described the Local Ecumenical Partnership under which the church operates. The church has connections with local schools and provides All -Age and family worship, including Messy Church. The hall serves as a community space and is well used. The Ven Libby Wilkinson, Archdeacon, gave an update on the Vacancy in See process, by which a new bishop is appointed. Durham Diocese was having to start again with its appointment process, after the nominated person withdrew prior to an announcement. Questions were invited and points raised. Prayers were offered for Bishop Sarah, as Acting Bishop of Durham. Amy Burns (Head of Programme Delivery for Diocesan Transformation) gave a presentation on the Transformation Strategy. In ten years, the National Church of England had lost 18% of worshippers, but Durham Diocese had lost 40%. Substantial funding is now available for new initiatives to support growth across the Church. Individual dioceses will decide where funding should be targeted, working alongside deaneries and parishes. We were asked, 'What will happen if nothing changes?' Revd Alexander Jones (Growing Mission Strategic Lead) explained the four new threads of work which had been identified: Growing Mission; Growing Leadership; Growing Churches; Growing Younger. We were asked, 'What would a healthy and fruitful deanery look like in 2030? Where would be the best places for these activities?'

Our June meeting was held at St Lawrence's Church, Pitlington. Church Warden Dave Arnott welcomed everyone and gave a short history of the church, which was Saxon originally, with frescoes based on the life of St Cuthbert. St Lawrence is part of the Small Pilgrim Spaces network. Revd Peter MacLellan, former CEO of Durham Christian Partnership, began with the Parable of the sheep and the goats, reminding Synod of the importance of Christian service in action. The first foodbank was set up in 2011 in conjunction with the Trusell Trust and North Road Methodist Church, but demand soon increased across the whole county. Debt management support was also set up. There is also a Fuel Bank to support those struggling with energy bills. All Food Banks have a mission to close themselves; to be unneeded. When Benefits are increased, the use of Food Banks decreases. But work does not guarantee an exit from poverty. Debt has become 'acceptable' through access to free and easy credit. What might churches do in addition to providing food? Engage politically; be aware of what is happening. Food parcels

were set up as emergency provision, not a lifestyle choice. Alternatives still do not address the basic issue of lack of money. Christian charities need to retain their identity when working with others.

In September, Synod met at St Helen's, Kelloe. We were welcomed by Robin, who gave an interesting account of the history of this church and some of the current activities. Claire Estall spoke about the work of Churches Together Durham including: a Refugee and Asylum Seeker project; work with children and young people to challenge the stigma of poverty; a new Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship project for Yrs 5-8; addressing food insecurity. Synod members were asked to discuss where they thought the least/most 'deprived' areas were in the diocese. Statistics were examined in detail for our own Deanery. Deprivation is identified on a scale of criteria which are very specific. There would be a County Durham Food Summit, offering a series of sessions and a challenge to parishes to set up a food related initiative with £200.

Alison Blackburn

_St Cuthbert with St Aidan Electoral Roll

During the spring of 2025 a completely new Electoral Roll was compiled in accordance with the requirement under the Church Representation Rules 2025 to undertake this task every six years. This new Electoral Roll, known as the 2025 Electoral Roll, replaces its predecessor the 2019 Electoral Roll. Before reporting further on numbers it should be noted that under the Rules, names continue to be recorded on the Roll until the end of the six year period unless they are removed by death or by formal resignation. There were 90 names on the initial publication of the 2025 Electoral Roll (the 2019 Electoral Roll closed containing 132 names).

There are currently 90 names on the Electoral Roll following one deletion and one addition since first publication twelve months ago. Sadly the one deletion was caused by the death of Sheila Eastwood and the one addition came from the enrolment of Wendy Hughes. I also record here the death of David Blake who did much work as a former Electoral Roll Officer, but I understand he was too infirm to enrol to the new Electoral Roll in 2025. The 90 names are made up of 32 from St Aidan's and 58 from St Cuthbert's.

John Dobson

Electoral Roll Officer

College of St Hild & St Bede Chaplaincy Report for 2025/26

I started as the Chaplain for College of St Hild & St Bede on 22nd April 2025. At this time the college had been working with St Cuthbert's Church since the beginning of the academic year, while awaiting the restoration of their original site. We currently host two services on a regular basis; we have College Choral Evensong at 5.45pm on a Wednesday

night and on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month I lead the Holy Communion Service at 11.00am. I am joined by the choir at the Communion Service. Both services are term time only. We have a couple of students who regularly attend the Holy Communion Services each week, not just when I lead the service.

The choir use the church to practise regularly, the organists have a rota for coming in to practise and we have a WhatsApp Group to enable frequent and much needed communication between the choir, myself and the Churchwardens, so that we know who is in the church and when.

Just before Christmas in 2025 I hosted an Angel Festival. I asked members from around the community such as Waddington Street Centre, as well as members of the Durham North Team to make angels for the festival. Members of Aidan's Kitchen made some paper angels, and several members of the team knitted or crocheted many angels for the festival. We had angels from Waddington Street Centre, the students of the college and St Hild's Primary School and they were displayed in the church one Sunday afternoon for people to come and visit to see what had been made. We had a small service at the end of the festival for people who wished to join in, where we sang carols and heard about angels from our visiting preacher Rev Vanessa Kirby who is a Pioneer Minister in Middlesbrough.

We held Nine Lessons and Carols towards the end of the college term which was a great success. We had readers from the Hild Bede Trust, who support the choir and members of Durham North Team. Mentors, staff and students were in attendance. We also come up to the church for the Sounding of Retreat, which commemorates those members of St Bede's College lost in war.

In September of 2025 we introduced new students as Director and Assistant Director of Music and a Choir Manager, so we took the opportunity to discuss how the first year had gone. The congregation brought up some issues that had arisen, such as not being able to use the altar rail for communion, and we were able to talk with the students who were new to the role about how we could resolve these issues and make it work for everyone. We were able to do so quite easily, and I feel we have a great working relationship with the congregation, Churchwardens and Rev Caroline. We continue to be very grateful that we can use this beautiful building for our worship and other activities.

Marie Edwards.

Summary of DNTM accounts for 2025, produced on an accrual basis for the year ending 31st December 2025, plus Analysis.

INCOME:

Grants towards Team expenses received from Church Councils:

Cuthbert's and Aidan's	£4,766.89
All Saints, Newton Hall	£3,612.51
St Michael's, WG&Sac	£3,483.33
St Philip & James, Kim.	£1,417.04
All Saints, Langley Park	£1,609.31
St Michael's, Esh&Hamsteels	£635.90
1) Grants total:	£15,525

Monies received towards salaries of TA (PR) and CYFW (EA):

C & A	£6,240 (for Part B of TA's salary)
All Saints, N H	£13,957 (for CYFW's salary)
2) Salaries total:	£20,197

Monies received from Photocopying:

3) Photocopy total: £1,427

Total Team Income (excluding **4**) Funeral & wedding fees, baptism donations)

1)+2)+3): £37,149

Other fees 4): £16,918

TOTAL received: £54,067

EXPENDITURE:

Clergy expenses, including water charges £6,825

(Service fees paid to retired clergy = £2,799 All other clergy expenses = £4.026)

Rent paid to C&A towards Team Office use £1,620

Office expenses (<i>inc. baptism candles, lectionary sub., baptism service sheets, power lead, shredder, computer upgrade, virus protection and office float</i>)	£363
Payroll & pension services (Mullen Stoker)	£547
Team Administrator salary	£13,728
CYFW salary	£13,501
Employer's NEST pension payments	£442
Photocopier costs	£947
Other Team expenditure	£0
DBF (Diocese) fees	£7,009
Fees paid to CCs, retired/n.s. priests, vergers and organists, for funerals & weddings, plus baptismal donations, banns & baptism certs. via the Team	£9,651
TOTAL expenditure:	£54,633
Estimated loss on year =	£566
Estimated true end of year bank reserves =	£2,853

Analysis:

1. Clergy expenses were up from £6,578 in 2024 to £6,825 in 2025, a modest increase of £247. Retired clergy carried out 157 services, but claimed service fees for only 88 (56%).
2. Photocopying income remained virtually unchanged at £1,427 (£1,423 in 2024).
3. Photocopying costs were £633 in 2024, rising to £947 in 2025, an increase of £314 (49.6%).
4. Fees paid to DBF (Diocesan Board of Finance) were £10,786 in 2024, but only £7,009 in 2025, a decrease of £3,777 (35%).
5. Team Office rent paid to the PCC of St Cuthbert's with St Aidan's in 2025 remained virtually unchanged at £1,620 (£1,617 in 2024).
6. Grants received from the Church Councils in 2025 remained unchanged at £15,525, for the second year running.
7. Payroll and pension service costs (Mullen Stoker Ltd, Chartered Accountants) remained steady at £547.

8. Employer's National Insurance Contributions (NIC) have been paid by the Employment Allowance awarded to the PCC of Witton Gilbert and Sacriston, which acts on behalf of the Team as the named, registered employer of the TA and CYFW, by virtue of its being a small business. Employees' NICs and any income tax, plus employees' workplace pension contributions, are included in the salary figures quoted. Employer's workplace pension contributions rose slightly in 2025 (from £434 in 2024) to £442, due to an increase in CYFW's pay in 2025.
9. Fees paid to Church Councils, retired/n.s. priests, vergers and organists, for funerals and weddings, plus baptismal donations, wedding banns & baptism certificates via the Team, were £14,002 in 2024, but only £9,651 in 2025, a decrease of £4,351 (31%). This decrease marks a significant reduction in the number of funeral and wedding services over the year. Other fees (item 4 on first page re Income) were £24,789 in 2024, but only £16,918 for 2025, a decrease of £7,871 (31.75%) over the year. (The decrease is actually slightly larger because statutory fees payable for weddings and funerals rose in 2025 from the 2024 rates.)
10. The Church Councils generously increased their grants to the Team by 15% from 1st January 2024, to ensure that the Team bank finances would be sufficient for both 2024 and 2025, and contributions should not need to be increased again until 1st January 2026. However, it is hoped that Team Finances will be sufficient for some, if not all, of 2026 expenditure. It is the intention to maintain contributions from Church Councils at their present levels for as long as possible.

We only have one member of staff on our payroll now (Paul, our Team Administrator) after Emily (the Children and Young Families Worker based at All Saints', Newton Hall) left at the end of December 2025. Paul reduced his weekly hours to 20 from 22 in February 2025, but maintained all his work duties, and his salary remained unchanged. We are very grateful to Paul for the high level of service provided.

Stephen Ellis, Team Finance Officer, 05/03/2026

TEAM ECO GROUP REPORT

The Team Eco Group has met on four occasions:

April at Kimblesworth

June at Witton Gilbert

September at St Cuthbert's

January at Langley Park

As well as reporting on and supporting each church's environmental initiatives, we also had a visit from Durham City Swift Project which has resulted in Swift boxes being placed into the tower of St Cuthbert's church.

The churchyard project at Langley Park goes from strength to strength; Breathing Space with Woodland Wonders and Men's Shed at Witton Gilbert keep the environmental agenda at the forefront of people's minds. St Aidan's now have a Community Payback group working on maintaining and improving the church grounds and Newton Hall continue to promote Hedgehog Highways and beautifying their church grounds.

We do our best to provide eco material for Staying Connected and encourage people to support Climate Action Durham eg the DNT eco banner was on display at the annual Climate Action Durham March through the city centre. Members of the group attended a brilliant talk by Prof Chris Stokes on COP 30, which he had attended as a rep for Durham University, where his specialism is glaciation. Caroline was asked to be a member on a panel addressing the biblical quote - 'Where there is no vision the people perish' and she focused on keeping hope alive in an age of environmental crisis.

The group will continue to meet after Caroline has retired at Easter and Revd Michael Peers has kindly agreed to take over as chair.

Revd Caroline Dick 10/03/2026