



# **Diocese of Newcastle**

# **Annual Reports 2015**

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## Contents

2	<b>Bishop's Council and Standing Committee</b>
3	<b>Local Ministry Development</b>
4	<b>Local Evangelism</b>
4	<b>Safeguarding</b>
5	<b>Church in Society</b>
6	<b>Together Newcastle</b>
7	<b>PARTNERS in Community Action</b>
8	<b>Diocesan Education Board</b>
10	<b>Diocesan Mission &amp; Pastoral Committee</b>
10	<b>Diocesan Advisory Committee</b>
11	<b>Houses &amp; Glebe Committee</b>
12	<b>Readers</b>
13	<b>Self Supporting Ministers</b>
14	<b>Parish Giving</b>
14	<b>Interfaith &amp; Ethnic Relations</b>
15	<b>Pastoral Care &amp; Counselling</b>
16	<b>Youth Team</b>
17	<b>Communications</b>
18	<b>Ministry of the Retired Clergy</b>
19	<b>Ecumenical Officer</b>
20	<b>Major Incident Plan (MIP)</b>
20	<b>Task Groups</b>
21	<b>Inspired North East</b>

## Bishop's Council and Standing Committee

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the reports for 2015 which was another significant and exciting year for the life of the Diocese of Newcastle.

2015 started with a consultation to help the work of the Crown Nominations Commission and a well-attended meeting at the Falcons Rugby Ground at Kingston Park enabled Caroline Boddington and Edward Chaplin, representatives of the Archbishops and the Prime Minister, to listen to many views about the gifts and skills people were seeking from the next Bishop of Newcastle. Caroline and Edward went on to work with our six representatives who were elected to serve on the Commission and in the summer and I was delighted to respond to the calling to become the twelfth Bishop of Newcastle.

The Diocesan Synod met five times in 2015 and began with an Open Synod Forum for learning and reflection for Lent at Chapel House led by the Revd Dr Calvin Samuel, the Academic Dean and Director of Wesley Study Centre at St John's College, Durham. In May the Synod met in Rothbury and welcomed two representatives from the Archbishops' Council, Canon John Spence and the Revd Dr Malcolm Brown. Over 200 people packed the main hall at the Dr Thomlinson Church of England School and engaged in debate about the programme of Renewal and Reform. This was the last meeting of the Synod for the triennium and elections followed in the summer.

The new Diocesan Synod was inaugurated at a service at the Cathedral in September and at the Finance Synod in October, Synod helped to shape the Diocesan Budget that was subsequently adopted when it met again in November. A significant element of the Budget for 2017 included a new strategic mission fund which will help us to resource future initiatives. Synod also gave its support to a proposal to strengthen the episcopal leadership and I am now in the process of seeking to appoint the first Suffragan Bishop for Newcastle Diocese, the Bishop of Berwick.

Many people from across the Diocese engaged in consultations about Renewal & Reform and roadshows were held in Hexham, Chatton, Cramlington and Ashington. This was important work and I should like to thank all those who took part in the consultations. Your contributions helped to discern how we will respond to the challenges that are ahead.

I am indebted to Bishop Frank and the Bishop's Staff Team for their unstinting work and support during the vacancy and to all those who contributed to the life and mission of the Diocese through our respective Boards, Committees and Task Groups.



The Rt Revd Christine Hardman, Bishop of Newcastle

generous engaged open

## Local Ministry Development

**M**y work as Local Ministry Development (LMD) Officer is hugely enabled and encouraged by the LMD Task Group. In 2014 we had some changes in the group, saying goodbye to some and adding three new members. We began 2015 with a Task Group Away Day at the Northumbria Community near Felton to consolidate the new team, getting to know each other, sharing our learning and setting priorities for the year ahead.

A key priority we identified was supporting the 25+ active LMD Teams across the diocese by continuing to develop the network of parishes engaged in collaborative mission and ministry. One of several networking opportunities in the year is our annual **Quiet Day** for LMDTs held in January at Shepherds Dene. It was led by Catherine Askew of the Northumbria Community on the theme of 'finding our voice' using the story of Moses and the film, *The King's Speech*. This was a very encouraging and inspiring event as was our **Annual Networking Event** held in July at Café Azure, Cramlington. This year we tried something different with parishes bringing an idea that they had tried recently to share with others. This proved useful and even inspiring for many, offering lots of simple ideas that might be taken away and used by other parishes. These included setting up a community choir or a film night, a Baptingle and knitted teddy bears to try as part of developing baptisms or using heritage events to open the church and faith to those outside the usual congregation. Other networking opportunities were offered in February and then October based around deanery groupings. It would be great to see more people attend these so they will be reviewed and offered in a different format in future.

I continue to offer support to parishes in setting up LMDTs and those LMD parishes with Incumbent vacancies. The **LMD values of collaborative working, contextual mission and learning** are also used by

parishes not in the 'official' LMD scheme. We have also seen changes to the Supporting Ministers group this year and this has enabled and encouraged more joint working with parishes such as:

- Delivering on a parish audit process developed by Together Birmingham with Steve Forster called Know Your Church and Neighbourhood
- Working with the Developing Stewardship Group
- Working with John Sinclair on following up the Healthy Churches process and the Mission Shaped Introduction course
- Continued work with the Religious Resources Centre
- Getting to know the new Children and Young People's Team

A key piece of joint working came out of the ministry conversations held between Vocations, CMD, LMD, Readers Executive and the SSM group culminating in resourcing reflection with **ROOTS** on the theme of the **Ministry of the Whole People of God** for Trinity Sunday. I was also part of a group with others from the Evangelism Task Group who attended Leading Your Church into Growth in November to look at possibilities for sharing the learning from this course more widely in our diocese in the future.

The consultations in the diocese arising from the Renewal and Reform reports also encouraged joint working with the Roadshows held across the diocese in the autumn. One of the key Renewal and Reform Reports was on **Discipleship**. I was involved in organising a day in London in April enabling the sharing of good practice nationally across dioceses around the question of how to deepen discipleship. I was also involved in a small group set up to look at how our diocese might support discipleship development more widely as well as through the LMD process. This culminated in the establishment of a Discipleship Task Group chaired by Robert Peers. He has stepped down from chairing the LMD Task Group and so, in another change to the LMD Task group line-up, Barbara Davidson has now taken on the role.

**The Revd Rachel Wood**

**Local Ministry Development Officer**

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## Local Evangelism

**T**he year began with preparation and delivery of evangelism training in our Link Diocese of Botswana. Bishop Frank, Canon Ian Knox and I spent the end of January and the beginning of February doing work among different groups, youth, Men and Women in Gaborone and Francistown. I continued to serve on General Synod and spent time working ecumenically with the Fresh Expression Area Strategy Team. The Mission Shaped Ministry course continued to be delivered at Church House and we set up a series of vision days and Mission Shaped introduction courses to run in 2015 - 2016.

Work continued throughout the year with leading parishes through the **Healthy Church** process. I led training with year seven curates, from both Newcastle and Durham dioceses, on how to develop a shared vision for mission and outreach. I continued to be part of the Archbishop of York's evangelism reference group which involved help planning events at Bishopthorpe Palace on growth and evangelism in the Northern Province.

**The year continued** with Mission Weekends in the Aln and Costal Parishes, and St Columba Wideopen. We held events for young people and children as well as adults. A hog was roasted at the end of the Wideopen weekend - a delicious highlight.

I was commissioned as a **Street Pastor** and work on the Streets of Newcastle every seven or eight weeks until 4.00am. I continue as a trustee of the Street Pastors and find the work and conversations very rewarding.

I continued to speak to parishes about the '**Pilgrim**' course, promoting its use as a tool for outreach and discipleship.

**The year was filled with** the usual round of meetings with other Supporting Ministers. My role as Residentiary Canon of our Cathedral and a member

of the Cathedral Chapter took up a chunk of time. I was invited to preach and lead services across the whole diocese, taking the opportunity to remind congregations of the important role of faith sharing one on one.

I played a full part in my role as member of the **Diocesan Parish Development Group** working with parishes often in interregnum. I was pleased to meet with colleagues in the wider missioner network and especially with the Northern Province group.

This brief report can only be a snapshot with most things not mentioned. I am always happy to be contacted if you would like to discuss my work, or if you feel I could help in some way.

Bishop Frank has continued to be my line manager and I appreciate deeply his insight and wisdom. Thanks to Steve Dixon and the Evangelism Task Group as well as all in our great diocese who have made my year so rich and personally rewarding.

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## Safeguarding

**T**he safeguarding audit that was undertaken in the summer of 2014 informed our safeguarding priorities for 2015, these were contained in the Diocesan Safeguarding Plan that was endorsed by Synod in May 2015.

**Policies and procedures-** we rewrote our Diocesan safeguarding policies and procedures in the form of a handbook referred to as Towards a Safer Church and these are now on the diocesan website safeguarding page along with a range of forms that parishes can use. Synod formally adopted the House of Bishops safeguarding policies in May 2015 and these too can be found on the website.

**Training-** we rolled out a comprehensive training programme in March 2015 offering 9 three hour sessions for ordained clergy and readers, 9 two and half hour sessions for laity, retired clergy, PCC members, church wardens and anyone working with children, young people and adults who might be at risk. These represent the foundation training for everyone in the Diocese.

We ran **three** sessions for specific churches with significant numbers of people requiring training.

In addition we offered **nine** sessions for parishes wishing to undertake a parish audit and develop an action plan and **six** sessions on recruiting volunteers and paid staff safely.

The training has been well received and evaluations consistently reflect satisfaction with the relevance of the content and its delivery.

Whilst the training resulted in over 800 places being filled this area remains a priority especially for all those who are ordained or have PTO as the intention is that everyone in this group will have completed safeguarding training by the end of 2016.

**DBS-**responsibility for laity DBS checking came under the safeguarding umbrella in March 2015.

**Authorised Listening Service-**we established this service for survivors of abuse within the church in September 2015 and have 8 listeners who can provide 3 sessions to survivors who might or might not have disclosed their abuse before and help them identify what next steps are appropriate for them to take. This could for example include reporting the abuse to the police or having counselling.

**Advice, guidance and case work-** the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) has willingly responded to numerous questions and queries from parishes as they seek to improve their practice and to respond appropriately to any safeguarding concerns they may have.

In addition the DSA has liaised with statutory authorities in responding to and assessing those who have had allegations made against them or who potentially pose a risk to children, young people or adults. This work has been guided by the Church of England's practice guidance 'Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations' and 'Risk Assessment for Individuals who may Pose Risk to Children or Adults' (2015).

As 2015 drew to a close it became clear the amount preparation and work that would be needed in order to respond to the **Goddard Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse**. This work will be useful preparation for the external audit into safeguarding practice in the Diocese planned for 2017.

At the end of the day our safeguarding practice is only as good as the response in parishes and Ruth Rogan, Linda Hunter and Julie Roberts are in post to assist this process by ensuring there is an accessible website with up to date policies and practice guidance plus being available to offer advice and guidance.

2015 saw a step change in the profile and importance being attached to safeguarding both within the Diocese and within the Church of England as whole. This will certainly be the case for the next year or two as we have much to learn from listening to survivors and reflecting on how things were handled in the past so we ensure we all play our part in making the church a safer place for everyone now and into the future.

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## Church in Society

**D**ecember 2015 saw the official launch of Tyne And Wear Citizens. This was the fruit of more than a year of networking and planning, bringing together representatives

from a wide range of different civil society organisations to celebrate the establishment of broad-based community organising in the northeast. The founding partners, who include our own Diocese, together with the Diocese of Durham and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle, have pledged start-up funding for the next two years, which will enable the fledgling organisation to develop and grow.

Community Organising can be a very effective way of bringing about social change. Just over half the member organisations of Citizens UK nationally are faith groups, who see community organising as a practical way of putting faith into action. The coming year promises to be very exciting for our diocese and region, as we work towards a full-scale regional assembly ahead of the mayoral elections next year.

In addition I continue to be involved with the **Newcastle City of Sanctuary** working group, building a culture of hospitality and welcome for refugees and asylum seekers; and I sit on the boards of the Newcastle Council for Voluntary Services (NCVS), the Road to Recovery Trust and the City Centre Chaplaincy, as well as a number of Diocesan Task Groups.

I have also been working closely with **Changing Lives**, training a number of support staff to deliver meditation sessions for clients attending the abstinence based recovery programmes offered at Oaktrees in Blyth and Gateshead, as well as the Recovery Centre on the Quayside. The success of this work has led to the formation of a Community Interest Company, which will enable us to expand the provision of training and further develop opportunities for people to attend meditation workshops in the city centre.

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## Together Newcastle



is a partnership between the Diocese of Newcastle and Church Urban Fund and

exists to assist local churches to tackle the effects of poverty within its neighbourhood. Our work over the past year has involved us working with parishes and organisations across the Diocese.

In all our work we aim is to be a resource to churches, individuals and groups that want to get involved in some form of Community Activity, particularly where there is evidence of unmet need and provides the local church with an opportunity to make use of its gifts and resources.

Our work continues to be exciting and varied and 2015 has seen us focus on a number of work themes:

- **Training:** putting on, or contributing to, training events and workshops.
- **Capacity Building:** helping to develop community activities that nurture relationships between people and organisations.
- **Raising Awareness:** doing talks and sermon slots.
- **Financial Inclusion:** working with Credit Unions, Churches, Schools and Community Finance organisations.

### Some examples of our work included:

- Helping to set up and deliver a **Slow Cooker** cookery session where we worked with a group of parents and carers. We prepared a simple nutritional meal together and provided each person with a slow cooker and pantry pack to take away so that they could continue using them to provide low cost meals for the family.
- Encouraging us all to think about election issues by contributing to a "**Link General Election Special**".
- Working with local Credit Unions to increase capacity to develop a model of fairer finance for all.
- Helping to find funding to enable a local church and school develop after-school drop in sessions for children aged 8 – 13 year old.

- Working with the Local Ministry Development Advisor and two parish groups who are undertaking the “**Know Your Church and Know our Neighbourhood**” activities.
- Running a **Money Magic Course** – a discussion based group to explore how we use and manage our money.
- Advent Sleep-out: a fundraising event for the work of CUF and De Paul Night Stop. Over 50 people slept out in St Nicholas cathedral, raising in excess of £6000.00

### 2015: Our work in numbers

- **49** Activities and projects supported
- **7** Training and workshop events
- **£38,000** funding raised to support activities

### Thank you

We would like to thank clergy, parishioners and community members for the work they do in bringing their ideas and activities to life and helping communities to flourish. Thanks also to Diocesan staff for their support in helping to make things happen, and to CUF for their ongoing financial support. Finally to our Board of Trustees who give their time and encouragement to support all that we do.

The Revd Canon Ian Flintoft retired after serving as Chair of our Trustees for 5 years. Ian was instrumental in bringing about the joint venture and his work, during his tenure, is very much appreciated. Ian steps down as chairperson however, thankfully, has agreed to remain on the Board of Trustees. We had to find a new chairperson and we have been blessed with Bishop John Packer, who brings a wealth of experience, knowledge and skills to the post.

We have another exciting year ahead and are already beginning to develop our work plans and themes for 2016 which include:

- Financial and Digital Inclusion
- Homelessness
- Places of Welcome
- Continue to respond to requests for help to find resources; in particular funding!
- Develop our new website

### Steve Forster, Development Worker

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## PARTNERS in Community Action

**S**o what is Partners In Community Action? It's a question which I still often hear! **PARTNERS** is a Newcastle Diocesan scheme originally set up around the same time as the national Church Urban Fund. It was to help ALL churches, not just those in 'deprived' areas, work with and within their local community. Many churches still need to alter buildings to make them more suitable for community use. Good preparation; auditing the local community, (its other public buildings, user-groups and possible interested parties), working on a feasible plan which may be staged and suggesting other sources of grant-funding are part of what can be offered by 'Partners'. Grants have also provided on-going community activities, from Circus Central, working with young people to Holidays at Home for the more elderly.

In addition, **PARTNERS** is committed to increasing the confidence and competence of congregations to foster a 'can-do' approach, through Food Hygiene preparation days offered at nationally accredited Level 2 standard and linking similar projects up to share knowledge and expertise.

The latest **PARTNERS** flyer with news of some of recent projects can be found at the PARTNERS page on the diocesan website.

### The Revd Frances Wilson, Development Officer

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## Diocesan Education Board

### Activities and Achievements in the Year Regional Vision

The Dioceses of Newcastle and Durham work together in education and are committed to the flourishing of all children and young people and the part that education plays in achieving this.

The '**Working Together in Education**' paper sets out the detailed joint vision for our specific work in education through church schools.

We wish to offer the highest quality of education across the North East to ensure each and every child achieves their full potential across all areas of the curriculum whilst having a lively engagement with the Christian faith within the setting of a Christian community.

We wish to ensure clergy are fully equipped to serve their local schools, that the church appoints skilled governors who are able to ensure the school does the very best it can and that all staff flourish and develop to their fullest potential.

### Operations and Staffing

The **Joint Education Team** (JET) continues to work across the Dioceses of both Newcastle and Durham and this arrangement has been refreshed with the finalisation of a new Partnership Working Agreement between the two Dioceses and new terms of reference for an Operations and Co-Ordinations Group (OCG) which oversees the joint working (replacing the Co-ordination Committee for Joint Education Working).

Paul Rikeard was appointed as Acting Director of Education at the end of May 2015 and became Director of Education from September 2015. In addition a new Assistant Director, Anne Vernon, was appointed for Standards and Effectiveness from September 2015. A further Assistant Director for Standards and Effectiveness, Jo Warner, has now been appointed and is due to start on 11 April 2016. The team is now also supported by a range of consultants – brokered by the Director to meet the specific challenges posed by some of our schools.

### National Educational Landscape and implications

2015 has been a challenging year in terms of continued changes to the educational landscape following the General Election and the impact of this going forwards.

The new Education and Adoption Bill has now been passed and is due to come into force as soon as possible. The Bill sets out new powers to the Secretary of State and Regional School Commissioners (RSCs) to tackle underperformance in schools and also provides further detail on those schools which may be identified as 'Coasting Schools' and eligible for intervention.

One of the major changes is that the Regional Schools Commissioners will now take on the formal responsibility for tackling underperformance within their regions including appointing new sponsors to schools who will become academies and also approving new school (Academy and Free School) bids.

A draft Memorandum of Understanding has been developed by the DfE and the National Society to try and ensure Church Schools are protected as far as possible when a school becomes eligible for intervention and in 2016 this is likely to be finalised and tested in practice under the new Act.

The team has worked hard to develop good working relationships with the RSC for the North and her team. Regular meetings also take place with the ten Local Authorities across both Dioceses, Ofsted and the national group of Diocesan Directors of Education in order to share best practice and develop good relationships to ensure the best support for our schools.

### Particular challenges and achievements

Within the Newcastle Diocese, we have faced various challenges throughout the year which have required extensive support and guidance to our schools. These have included consultation on a structural reorganisation from three tier to a two tier system across one partnership and ongoing support to a federation of schools facing significant challenges and closure of one of its very small schools.

The Director and the Assistant Director for School Effectiveness continue to review and Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rate each school's data and use this to prioritise visits to our schools to offer intensive support and guidance to those schools which need it. The RAG system allows us to have a strategic overview of our schools and enable us to hold leaders to account for underperformance. It also allows us to shape the team, including consultants for the year ahead.

A significant amount of school improvement work is now delivered by the team. This is in response to the demand from schools for high quality curriculum and managerial support that is required in order to achieve under a challenging Ofsted Framework. Where the team is not able to deliver its own solution a network of school to school support is now being introduced to use the strengths we currently have in the Diocese to support those schools who may be in difficulty.

We facilitated a hugely successful conference 'Partners in Progress' for Heads and Chairs which took place in November 2015 and attracted in excess of 200 delegates. Speakers attended from the Regional Schools Commissioner, Department for Education and Ofsted followed by workshops in the afternoon and feedback from this event was overwhelmingly positive.

We also continue to manage the planning, training, delivery and staffing of the SIAMS inspection process in our schools – with five new inspectors joining the team this academic year.

### **Working with communities**

Many of our schools have approached us for discussions about academisation and we are involved with various situations where community schools and our church schools wish to come together to form a 'mixed' Multi-Academy Trust.

We are also continuing to discuss the wider strategy of the Board particularly in relation to small rural schools and how they can be supported, particularly in light of the academies agenda. As a Diocese we are working hard to broker and deliver community solutions which work to support communities. However, outcomes for children are the key driver

when determining the viability and sustainability of a school.

We have also continued to work with school governors and have provided updates and support, guidance on training on various issues including the provisions of the Admissions Code of practice (for our VA schools and academies), recruitment of Head Teachers, reconstitution of instruments of government as required by legislation and hosted governor training sessions with the National Governors Association (NGA). We have developed working relationships with the NGA locally and are also working with the National Society on a Pilot scheme on improving strategic planning for our governing bodies.

A key strategic priority for the Board going forwards into 2016 is how to develop our support for, and recruit appropriately skilled, foundation governors in our church schools in light of the continued challenges and expectations placed on governors.

We have also continued to support our schools in the financial oversight and administration of capital projects and provided assistance to schools in managing these works.

### **The future**

The NDEB has recently reconstituted so we will have a new Board in the coming year. It will be the role of the Board to help shape the strategic future of Education in the Diocese and support the JET to deliver on this mandate.

We aim to continue to develop and focus on the following:-

- school effectiveness support
- developing skilled school governors, clergy and school leaders
- areas of particular challenge such as small rural schools, secondary schools and academisation
- distinctiveness and development of the Christian ethos.

As a Joint Education Team we are committed to delivering the best possible professional support and challenge to our schools. As such helping them to provide education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice -

understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promoting Christian values through the experience offered to all children.

**The Ven Peter Robinson, Chairman**

**Mr Paul Rickeard, Director of Education**

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www.jointeducationteam.org

## Diocesan Mission & Pastoral Committee (DMPC)

**2015 proved to be a busy year for the Diocesan Mission & Pastoral Committee.**

Meetings were held in February (Annual 'Away Day'), May, July, September and November. During the year we were pleased to welcome Ms. Carol Hepple as Secretary to the DMPC. Despite a major learning curve for Carol in this new line of work she has managed to amass a huge amount of knowledge and is proving to be a great asset in the work with which we are charged.

### Schemes which received attention included:

**Lynemouth:** this scheme was published and St. Aidan's church closed for public worship.

Much work was carried out looking at the development of schemes for the future pastoral care of **Bedlington, Blyth, Newcastle St. Barnabas & St. Jude**, and the parishes of **the Glendale Group**.

In September the Committee approved the renewal of the **MINE Bishop's Mission Order** in the east end of Newcastle for a further five years.

### Suspension of Presentation

Suspension of Presentation was invoked for the benefice of Humshaugh w Simonburn & Wark and renewed for:

- Cornhill w Carham
- Branxton
- Byker St. Anthony
- Byker St. Martin
- Byker St. Silas
- Kirkwhelpington w Kirkharle, Kirkheahon & Cambo

- Newcastle Christ Church w St. Ann.
- Shotley
- Stamfordham w Matfen
- Stannington
- Wylam

At a meeting on 9th October all benefices where suspension of presentation had been invoked were examined and those suspensions no longer considered appropriate were brought to an end.

### Other matters covered included:

A review (at our 'Away Day') of the **Mission & Finance Analysis** provided by the Research and Strategy Unit at Church House, Westminster. This raised awareness of how data was being used by the National Church Institutions.

**Renewal & Reform:** the Committee reviewed the **Resourcing the Future** element of the programme and how this would impact on its work. A review of the **Simplification** element also took place and a response was submitted to Church House, Westminster. The Committee also reviewed the Report of the **Church Buildings Review Group** and submitted a response to the Church Commissioners.

**The Revd Canon Paul Scott, Chairman**

**Ms Carol Hepple, Secretary to the DMPC**

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## Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches (DAC)

**T**he Committee met 8 times in 2015 and also enjoyed a tour in August when we visited St James & St Basil's, Fenham, Hexham Abbey and the churches at Hunstanworth St James, Blanchland St Mary and Slaley St Mary the Virgin. It was sometime since the last three church in the Corbridge Deanery had been visited and it gave the Committee an excellent opportunity to look at the complex issues regarding work to the decorative glass at Blanchland. This illustrates the benefits that can come from actually seeing the fabric of a church where work is envisaged.

We continue to consider many projects of varying size and significance where parishes need to apply to the Registrar for a Faculty. This year the total was 105 items asking for formal advice including 13 projects seeking a grant under the **Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund**. A number of the applications were successful and work is now progressing on implementing the proposals for roof repairs.

Our regular annual meeting of **Quinquennial Inspectors** was delayed and was held on 9th February 2016 with 23 attendees. DAC member attended 17 site visits usually to give informal advice to parishes who are considering a building project. Our annual Dinner was also delayed until early 2016 so that we could welcome Bishop Christine. The QI event and Dinner were both delayed to relieve pressure on the very full diaries of senior members of the diocese, due to the events surrounding the appointment of the new Bishop of Newcastle.

Towards the end of this year details were circulated about the new legislation covering Faculty applications which will come into force on 1st January 2016. In preparation for these changes the Archdeacons, the DAC Secretary and I attended training courses. Next year will be challenging, particularly for our Archdeacons, as new procedures are implemented and our DAC Secretary becomes familiar with the amended system. Looking further ahead we anticipate that online applications may be implemented within the next year.

Following Nigel Foxon's retirement in November 2014, the Revd Dr Helen Savage acted as our Interim Secretary and I would like to thank her for ensuring that the legal and administrative responsibilities of the DAC continued to function satisfactorily.

We were very pleased when Lucy Burfield was appointed as the new DAC Secretary in June 2015. She is picking up the technicalities of her job with great alacrity. The Archdeacons continue to ease the work of the DAC through their careful and helpful

liaison with parishes who apply for a Faculty and I would like to thank them for helping to smooth the work of the DAC.

Finally, I would also like to thank all members of the Committee for their expert advice when considering schemes that come before us. The Diocese is lucky to have the benefit of so many high quality opinions willingly offered at our meetings.

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[www.newcastle.anglican.org/dac](http://www.newcastle.anglican.org/dac)

## Houses & Glebe Committee

The work of the committee covered a number of varied subjects, which always led to some stimulating discussions over the year. It was particularly pleasing that a number of projects were progressed with too. One such example was the improvement and extension to Holy Island Vicarage, which was successfully completed in August. The floor layout and study accommodation has been greatly enhanced, providing a much more suitable and practical parsonage. The glebe holdings often cover some interesting topics as well. This was illustrated this year in regard to one of the older glebe buildings in Alston. It had been occupied for a couple of decades by an upholsterer but following his retirement there was nobody else wishing to rent the property; an attractive building located in a conservation area. It was decided to make an application to convert the property to residential use, this was approved and the property was sold in December.

In total there were 23 clergy moving in or out during the year which forms a key part of the committee's responsibilities. It is with thanks to the appointed sequestrators during the vacancy for keeping an eye on parsonages during this time; not least in organising the garden maintenance. When possible, tenants will be sought for these vacant houses during the

interregna. This year there was over 20% more income than anticipated from these rented properties.

Storms Desmond & Eva impacted a number of houses and glebe properties towards the end of the year with the unprecedented rainfall, flooding and gales. The extent of destruction varied from simply a few roof slates being blow off to trees falling down and flood water damage. Despite the extra demands matters were dealt with quickly with support from the diocesan insurers when needed.

It is important to extend thanks to all those on the committee for their continued hard work and enthusiasm throughout the year.

**Canon Roger Windass, Chairman**

**Mr Ian Beswick, Secretary**

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## Readers

**Newcastle Readers** are licensed by the Bishop to preach and teach the gospel, to lead worship, to develop a supportive ministry for those exploring their faith, and to energise others to be drawn to God through all that they are and do both inside and outside the church.

In 2015 some 160 Readers worked as members of ministry teams in their parishes in a wide variety of ways, leading and supporting study groups, young people's work in schools and other settings, undertaking pastoral work including funerals ministry, working as chaplains and in various fresh expressions and leading and supporting the worshipping life of their parishes – as well as letting their lights shine in their workplaces and communities.

We try to support each other to maintain and develop our ministries, and others are welcome at most of our events. In 2015 we completed our series of **Readers**

**on Writers**, meals at which we explored the thought of Christian thinkers and writers in an atmosphere of fellowship. We signalled a change of direction with the newly re-named Middlemiss Dinner, at which Revd Dr Steve Bellamy took us through some of the more mind-bending aspects of the relationship between science and our faith. In 2016 we'll be maintaining our fellowship and moving on to consider aspects of popular culture and their relation to religion in a new series, **Reading the Signs of the Times**.

Our series of Annual Seminars also came to an end with a seminar including a workshop on ministry with older people which attracted so much interest that we decided to run a full information day on this in 2016. We'll be replacing the Seminar in 2016 with our own special event to celebrate 150 years of Reader ministry in the Church of England. We worked hard on our support group **Network 153**, which encourages Readers to maintain contact with each other in small groups, and look forward to relaunching it in 2016. We also established an 'away team' of Readers who are available to visit parishes in whatever way is appropriate to promote Reader ministry and lay ministry more widely, especially in places where there are no Readers.

Reader ministry holds an annual **vocation day** where those who are put forward from their parishes have an opportunity to test their vocation to Reader Ministry, and in 2016 it is on June 18th, more details from the Reader Secretary.

**The Rt Revd Frank White, Warden of Readers**

**Dr Hilary Elder, Secretary to the Readers' Board**

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## Self-Supporting Ministers

There are over 40 Self Supporting Ministers exercising a wide variety of ministries across the diocese. They include Non Stipendiary (NSM), Ministers in Secular Employment (MSE), Ordained Local Ministers (OLM), and House for Duty (HfD). These ministries may be full or part time and be exercised in parishes, chaplaincies and diocesan roles in both rural and urban settings.

The **Steering Group**, established by Bishop Frank in 2013, continued to work throughout the year to support this growing group of ministers across the diocese, especially the newly ordained or those new to our area.

There has been work on supporting and celebrating **key transitions** in ministry – for example at the end of training (especially if not relocating to a new setting), in interregna and formation of new teams, and moving to PTO. Links have been made with the Worship and Liturgy Task Group and the Bishop's Officer for Retired Clergy on this.

The Group has been considering the way in which SSMs can contribute to the challenging agenda of **Renewal and Reform**, drawing on their experience of working on the boundaries between Church and the wider community.

SSMs gathered on the 9th May for our **Annual Diocesan Conference**. These events provide an important opportunity to meet together, especially with those colleagues who may have secular work which prevents them from attending Deanery Chapter meetings. The first part of the day was led by Rachel Wood helping us to look at the **Ministry of the Whole People of God**. We covered various aspects including "from 'Ministry to Mission-Shaped" - which can only be achieved if laity are willing to move up, clergy are willing to move over and the whole of God's people are willing to move out. This led us to consider Ministry, Discipleship and Citizenship.

Links nationally to Ministry Division have been encouraged. Pauline Pearson along with over 70 delegates from other dioceses attended a **National Consultation day** on the 16th May with the aim of affirming the ministry of SSMs and to look at resourcing them for the future. Delegates were challenged to consider their ministry in the context of their wider identity. A Bishop who himself was a former SSM reflected on the past, current and future 'value-added' of SSMs emphasising the role of bridging both church and society, laity and clergy along with the gift of challenge that comes with this unique position. These ideas have been fed back into our thinking about how best to shape the future here in the North East.

Significant work has been undertaken to **review documentation** for self-supporting ministers. This has included Statements of Particulars, Guidelines and Work Agreements which were designed with stipendiary clergy in mind, which are not always readily transferable to self-supporting ministries. The steering group worked on re drafting them to better reflect the varied roles of self-supporting ministers.

A new section has been developed for the **revised Clergy Handbook**, offering guidance for parishes and ministers. During the year we have also contributed to work on Ministerial Development Review, and reviewed the SSM contribution to Task Groups.

We look forward to another busy and productive year in 2016.

On behalf of the Steering Group.

**The Revd Elizabeth Brown, Chair**  
**The Revd Christine Brown, Secretary**

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## Parish Giving

**O**nce again thank you to every parish and individual who has over the last 12 months taken the time to plan, work and respond to stewardship and giving campaigns.

This last year has seen many changes in the support I receive, giving the impetus to ensure that all the programmes that are run are designed for each individual church. The formation of the **Developing Stewardship Group** (DSG) which is looking at what we really mean by “Stewardship” and how we as Christians react to the demands it places on us, has meant that even before we begin to plan events and campaigns the parish is able to explore its own meaning of Stewardship in the parish setting, thus giving a new lease of life to the campaign we run.

The **DSG** is chaired by Liz Kerry who brings useful experience from her from her working life, parish and diocesan committees and is joined by both Archdeacons, the Diocesan Secretary and a group of knowledgeable clergy and lay members. Even though it’s less than a year since the group was formed, we are beginning to see both a clear understanding of what Stewardship could mean for the Diocese in future years, as well the way in which the “message of its need” is told in our churches.

Over the last few years the annual meetings with Deanery Officers has also been a great source of support. Being able to talk, often informally, about where I can be of best value to the deanery has meant I have been able to concentrate on parishes and congregations that really do want to explore their giving as part of their discipleship journey. Equally, working in a constructive manner with all of the Deanery Finance Officers, trying to understand which parishes are in need of such an intervention, has proved to be invaluable to us from both perspectives.

Finally I would recommend to everyone connected to our churches and parishes that they read the new

“**Adding Value**” leaflet. This year’s version is very different in style, but still contains the financial information needed to help to explain our Diocesan finances. I would ask every PCC and DCC member to read this document together and to discuss where as a parish, you are in playing a part in ensuring we have a Christian presence throughout the Diocese. The design is such that it can easily be used as a series of posters suitable for display in Church or Hall. The more people who see it the more everyone understands.

**Richard Gascoyne, Parish Giving Officer**  
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## Interfaith & Ethnic Relations (CIFER)

**T**his annual report is given in the form of a summary of the main areas of my work and the work of **Committee for Inter-Faith and Ethnic Relations** (CIFER).

**Voices of Faith** is a group which arranges inter-faith dialogue sessions that are held bi-monthly in different places of worship. It is an initiative that was set up 2 years ago and focuses on developing deeper dialogue with people of other faiths. Topics have included: Human Rights, Faith in the Media, Blasphemy and Why Inter-faith Dialogue.

I organised the sixth study visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau in June in partnership with the RC Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle and Newcastle’s Interreligious Department. Participants included Anglican and RC Clergy and teachers from both C of E and RC schools.

I organised an intensive 2 week series of events looking at ‘**Keeping the Memory Alive**’ at Northumberland Church of England Academy to mark the 70th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz. I raised funding to bring over the Auschwitz Museum

Curator and Director of the Centre for Interfaith Dialogue and Prayer to work with students and teachers during the many sessions on offer.

A significant initiative has developed following our CIFER Away Day which was led by Dr. Elizabeth Henry, the National Adviser for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns. A sub-group has been appointed to explore the concerns and need of Minority Ethnic Anglicans.

I organised an Inter-Faith Cricket Match and Family Fun Day in August held at Percy Main Cricket Club and supported by staff from Church House. The day was a great success with two mixed cricket teams and stalls and activities which were free for families. Over £100 was raised for **The Bay Foodbank**.

As part of my work for Newcastle Council of Faiths I helped arrange the Annual Peace Walk in Newcastle. I helped clergy and others arrange events to mark National Inter-Faith Week and I arranged speakers on different topics and from different faiths to speak to members of Newcastle Council of Faiths Open Meetings.

I have established another important initiative which began in September last year. '**Pathways from Abraham**' has brought together Christians from other churches and members of both Jewish Communities together to look at some of the issues surrounding Jewish Christian relations. A visit to the Holy Land will take place in 2016.

I continue to be involved in other groups including:

- National Inter-Faith Advisers
- Council of Christians and Jews
- Newcastle Peace Initiative
- Strategic Independent Advisory Group (Northumbria Police)
- Angelou Centre
- Interreligious Department

### **Lesley Hillary**

#### **Interfaith & Ethnic Relations Adviser**

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## **Pastoral Care & Counselling**

### **H** health and wellbeing for the sake of the Kingdom

It is sometimes referred to in my sphere of work as the health and wellbeing agenda. It is both about providing care and support for the clergy, those in licensed lay ministry and where possible members of congregations in the diocese but also encouraging self-care. In my work with both clergy and lay people in ministry I hold in my mind the ideal of commitment and dedication to Christ as one side of the coin and on the side of the coin the duty of self-care. It is essential for those in ministry to hold both of these aspects together. There is, inevitably and rightly so, a dimension of ministry that is an expression of sacrifice and dedication but there also needs to be another dimension which is about self-care and self-development.

These two aspects are, in a sense, reflected in the two key aspects of my work. On the one hand, as the Bishop's adviser in pastoral care and counselling I manage the Diocesan Counselling Service and referrals to the service come to me or to my colleague Dr. Frances Dower. Some of those who are referred or who are self-referrals I see for counselling or psychotherapy while others are referred on to members of our pastoral counselling network. We are very fortunate to have a small group of highly skilled and effective counselling practitioners who provide therapy to those in need. It is a huge joy and blessing to see the lives of those, both clergy and laity who have been suffering psychologically, be transformed through their engagement with the therapeutic process where they are able, individually, to work through difficult issues and experiences that have been a source, for example, of anxiety, depression or distress.

On the other hand I also focus on ministry development which is about working with both clergy and licensed lay ministry, in both personal and



professional development. Some aspects of this developmental work actually happens in one to one meetings for therapy, work consultancy or spiritual direction. Other aspects of developmental work happens through training events such as the Developing Resilience workshops which we ran in 2014-2015 and which I hope will be repeated and extended. In 2014-2015 I organised a series of Bridge Builder workshops for the clergy and accredited lay ministers and these too were provided not only as learning opportunities but also with the added sense that learning contributes to health and wellbeing. It is to this end that I am delighted to cooperate and collaborate with Catherine Pickford who has taken responsibility for Continuing Ministerial Education. I am also deeply grateful to my colleague Dr. Frances Dower who is not only a member of the pastoral counselling network but also carries responsibility for the development and management of the women clergy companions which ensures mutual support and encouragement in ministry for the ordained women of the diocese.

Among other things that come under my remit has been the development of a group of listeners, in collaboration with Ruth Rogan, as part of our safeguarding support system. We also provide pastoral support and debriefing for potential ordinands who are going through the selection process including attendance at Bishops' Advisory Panels and have a particular concern for the support of those who are not recommended but equally want to provide support for those who are recommended and also for their partners. Then again, there is support for clergy and clergy spouses where there is the sad fact of marital breakdown through the offices of the Bishop's Visitor who is also one of our counsellors. I also contribute to the preparation of training incumbents for the responsibilities of having a curate and more recently have organised Myers-Briggs workshops for incumbents and curates in the hope of strengthening and enhancing a working relationship that isn't always easy to get right.

Looking to the future, a key theme that I have been working on with clergy for some years is emotional intelligence. More recently, the idea of emotionally intelligent congregations has emerged. It makes very good sense to me in an individualistic world where we need attractive faith communities that are able to draw others into their fellowship because of the experience of life and love within them. Communities of faith that seek to live in and express the life and love of Jesus Christ need to be and become emotionally intelligent communities. Anyone out there whose interest is engaged by this theme should get in touch with me as I am happy to have a conversation and see where it takes us.

**The Revd Canon Peter Kenney**  
**Adviser in Pastoral Care and Counselling & Ministry**  
**Development Officer**  
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## Youth Team

**D**eveloping the Strategy. We have held 5 formal consultations across the diocese, 3 for voluntary leaders and clergy; 2 for children and young people. In addition we have consulted with individual leaders, individual young people, youth groups, national colleagues and IME participants. These consultations with around 500 people are informing the diocesan strategy which, as it has been developing, has been shared with a 'consultant and a 'sounding board' of diocesan 'stakeholders'. It is almost completed.

- The first planning meeting will be held in March for a celebration of the part played by children and young people in the life of the Church which is to be held on June 18 2016.
- We initiate contact with and respond to requests from parishes/deaneries to whom the 3 team members have responsibility. We support engagement with children and young people through worship, clubs, drop-ins, holiday clubs,

festival workshops, Admission to Communion, Confirmation, etc

- We have organised a variety of training events in collaboration with SPCK, Scripture Union and other agencies. These have included Collective Worship training (62 participants), Open the Book (40 participants), Christmas Comes early (50 participants). We are also supporting the God Calling, Godly Play, Messy Church, Prayer Spaces in Schools and Barnabas in Schools networks, partly by inviting them to do workshops but also by promoting their activities.
- The **'Staying Alive'** residential took place at Seahouses in August. It attracted around 40 young people from Year 7 upwards. We also supported those going to **Taize and Walsingham**.
- We held a review meeting with those involved 'Hot Chocolate' style youth 'drop-ins' and keep in touch with them, supporting training and development.
- We have a regular **Youth Forum** which exists to support youth workers in parishes, some of whom are paid.
- Establishment of Facebook pages and Twitter accounts; developing presence on website and in Link.

### Networking

- Attending national and regional Youth/Children's Work Adviser conferences
- Other agencies eg Children NE, Scripture Union, Prayer Spaces, YFCNE.
- University of Northumbria and Ashington Academy Chaplains.
- Together Newcastle (*see page 5*)
- Seahouses Hostel ([www.seahouseshostel.org.uk](http://www.seahouseshostel.org.uk))
- Building up a Messy Church network

### Building the Team (and its identity)

- Regular monthly team meetings and a residential
- Attendance at Supporting Ministers' meetings
- Membership of Safeguarding Panel

- Membership of Discipleship Task Group
- Membership of Seahouses Board
- Membership of YFC NE Council of Reference and Board of Trustees

### Judith Sadler

#### Children's & Young People's Work Support Team

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## Communications

The aim of the communications department is to engage internal and external audiences with stories and information intended to inform, to inspire and to resource the mission of parish churches as a sustaining local Christian presence; and to promote and protect the reputation of the church in this diocese as generous, engaged and open.

The great communications challenge in 2015 was the announcement and introduction to her ministry in Newcastle Diocese of our twelfth Diocesan Bishop. This has been a hugely enjoyable roller-coaster ride with much encouragement from Bishop Christine herself as well as from the national Church of England Communications team in the early stages, and of course the process continues as she explores her diocese and comes to know – and be known by – its people.

Part of the challenge was of course that the more routine work of making the mission and ministry of the church known to the world around us (and to each other) goes on regardless. This includes producing ten annual issues of the Link newspaper, populating the news and events sections of the diocesan website, running Twitter and Facebook accounts, creating the monthly e-Bulletin (for clergy, readers, PCC secretaries, churchwardens and others), and of course liaison with the external media.

In meeting these and other commitments, the department was helped from the autumn by the arrival of Communications Officer Robin Frame, for

one day a week. Robin continued as Communications Officer (and hence a close colleague anyway) at St Nicholas' Cathedral for the rest of the week. The increased resource brought real benefits in the production of editorial material for Link and elsewhere, and in the routine management of our online presence.

It is hoped that in 2016 it may be possible to engage Diocesan Synod in some consultative work to guide the ongoing priorities of the department.

For 2016 the strategy remains:

- Through maintaining awareness of and capability in current communications methods and technology, to identify and exploit appropriate platforms to disseminate resources, information and narratives as widely and accessibly as feasible
- Through constructive engagement with churches and individuals across the diocese, to encourage engagement with and exposure through external media by local church communities and by diocesan leaders, in order to maximise the range of audiences, voices and subjects through which we can express the nature of our mission
- Through building and maintaining fruitful relationships both internally and with external media, to seek opportunities for the church's voice to be heard on issues beyond its own walls

### **Martin Sheppard**

#### **Development Officer for Communications**

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## **Ministry of the Retired Clergy**

**W**e are grateful to our Deanery Officers for maintaining contact and offering pastoral care when required through the year.

Joan Dotchin and Ray Best (*Bedlington & Alnwick East*) have now handed over to David Ormesher and Gail Uttley, but we thank them all. We

are also grateful to Gwenda Gofton who continues to organise an Easter lunch for retired clergy and spouses at Shepherds Dene each year.

The invitation to gatherings twice a year is developing a faithful following. Last May, Nicholas Buxton stimulated us to re-consider mediation and contemplation and in December, Bishop Stephen Patten, Chair of Hymns Ancient & Modern and associated publishers, discussed with us about the realities of contemporary religious publishing. The topic for May 2016 is liturgical (with Richard Giles) and dates for regional gatherings with Bishop Christine and Archdeacons have been set for December.

About one third of clergy with PTO have now attended Safeguarding training, in line with the current three year programme!

Hitherto, costs for the care of the retired clergy have been met from the Bishop's Discretionary Fund, but the Diocesan Board of Finance has now accepted that this is Diocesan responsibility, and a modest amount has appeared for the first time in the 2016 Budget.

The Church of England Pensions Board faces its own difficulties, but continues to remind serving clergy to consider seriously what their retirement housing needs might be, years in advance of that magical date! Their aim is to make contact with stipendiary clergy five years before retirement might loom on the horizon and have appointed a Welfare Benefits Advisor, whose advice has indeed been of considerable benefit to some our brothers and sisters. The Retired Clergy Association is increasingly active on our behalf and we encourage clergy to join - especially as the Bishop is willing to meet the 'once and for all' membership fee!

Those who offer self-supporting ministries face a particular range of issues when they decide to move from License to Permission to Officiate (PTO). Further consultations are being held in order to be able to

offer models for good practice for times of transition for this group.

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**Bishop's Officer for Retired Clergy**  
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## Ecumenical Officer

**I**N 2015 I attended regular meetings nationally of **MAPUM** and **CCU**. This role ended in the autumn when I was not re-elected to General Synod. I also attended national conferences including those for CTE and the Anglican Ecumenical Officers. Regionally, I attended regular meetings of the **NECAT LEG** (Local Ecumenism Group), the local Ecumenical Officers and the Regional Ecumenical Officers. In the diocese I attended regular meetings of DMPC, CIFER, The More Task Group, the Ecumenical Task Group, and the Supporting Ministers.

I also conducted a paper review of Kingston Park LEP, and as a result organised the setting up of a LAG (Local Advisory Group), in order to provide advice and support, and which they had been without for 10 years. This has now met. I am also the link (through the LEG) with the Ashington, Haltwhistle and Ponteland Covenant LEPs. Amongst other technical support, I arranged, resourced and facilitated a meeting concerning the vexed question of how to calculate Parish Share for LEPs, a matter which is now being progressed by the Church Leaders and the NECAT Coordinator.

For the Task Group I updated the contents of the ecumenical page of the diocesan website. We also held a useful day of reflection in October on the themes of hospitality and dialogue.

My priorities for 2016 include how to raise the profile and increase the understanding of what is sometimes called the '**new ecumenism**'. This is a recognition that working in partnership and collaboratively with other

churches, will often be more fruitful for the mission of the Universal Church than seeking full visible unity, a process which too often becomes bogged down in legal and structural issues. This new approach is also more fruitful for engaging with some of the 'new' or 'independent' churches which are rapidly becoming significant in the life of this region.

To this end I have already begun to make links with some of the independent and ethnic churches and plan to build on this in the hope of forming fruitful local relationships between churches. Our mission together can flourish when we use the priorities we share to reach out to the local community, as initiatives such as Street Pastors, or the Heaton Christmas Presence, demonstrate so vividly.

I also intend to visit more deaneries and Churches Together Groups in the hope of enthusing them in such collaborative work. Additional work on internet information, such as a Facebook page, may also help recreate 'ecumenism' in a more positive and constructive light. Perhaps the very word 'ecumenism' needs replacing, helping us to celebrate what we have in common in the Gospel, rather than focusing on intractable divisive issues. In addition we can concentrate on rejoicing in the distinctive gifts and experiences each church can offer to others for our mutual benefit.

**The Revd Janet Appleby**  
**Ecumenical Officer**  
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## Major Incident Plan (MIP)

**I**n the event of a Major Incident occurring in the Northumbria Police area, the Church of England, through the Diocese of Newcastle, has been charged with co-ordinating any spiritual or religious support that may be requested by the victims or survivors of such an event. To that end the Bishop created the role of Major Incident Plan Clergy Co-ordinator. The task of the Clergy Co-ordinator is to

liaise with the clergy of all denominations and with the religious leaders of the other faiths to create and maintain a list of trained and accredited personnel who are available at short notice to respond to requests for help. Further the co-ordinator is to liaise with the statutory providers – in the first instance the Emergency Planning Officer for the Local Authorities – to understand the processes and procedures that would be implemented in the event of a Major Incident. Finally the co-ordinator is to be available in the event of a Major Incident to implement the clergy and other faiths response.

I have held this role for nearly eight years. However, due to a major illness last year which took me away from work, Revd. Christine Brown, assisted and supported by Revd. Phil Hughes, very generously undertook to be the co-ordinator. During her time at the helm she was able to maintain links with the Emergency Planning Officers, to undertake a review of the Clergy and Other Faiths Major Incident Plan and of the list of volunteer clergy and other faith personnel, and to initiate two excellent training sessions for those who had volunteered their services.

On my return to work it was agreed that I would once again assume the lead role but that we would endeavour to maintain the good working relationship that Christine and Phil had developed and that we would work as a team.

I am pleased to be able to report that there are 40 accredited and trained volunteers on the list. There is now also a Major Incident Plan page on the Diocesan website which details the name and contact details of the co-ordinator as well as having available for download the Clergy and Other Faiths Major Incident plan as well as an MIP Call-out action sheet which is the sheet a volunteer would use to collate the information they would be given prior to attending an incident.

The Co-ordinator will be attending meetings with the local authority Emergency Planning Officers in the

coming months and will be taking part in a desk-top exercise in June.

During my tenure as MIP co-ordinator there has not been a declared major incident to which the clergy have been called.

**The Revd Jeremy Thompson**

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**Task Groups**

**T**ask Groups are the way in which the Diocese articulates some of its work. They are both short and long term groups who set 'tasks' and achievement dates and targets.

During the year we have continued to support both the work of established Task Groups and the development of two new ones. This year, there have been two areas of growth, these are '**Shared Conversations**' and '**Discipleship**'. The Task Group meetings continue to operate successfully and people are able to interact and consider where common ground might be found. Budgeting was well controlled and we worked with allocated funding, however, there is also work to do to establish a closer match between budget and expenditure. There also continues to be plenty of work to do in relation to **communications and visibility across the diocese**.

**Deanery Development**

Canon Carol Wolstenholme

**Young People's Work**

Judith Sadler

**Evangelism**

The Revd Steve Dixon

**Tourism**

Andrew Duff

**Local Ministry Dev.**

Barbara Davidson

**Estates & Urban Dev.**

The Revd Stephen Herbert

**Children's work Group**

Judith Sadler

**Higher Education**

The Revd Dr Pauline Pearson

**Disability**

The Revd Bill Rigby

**Ecumenism**

The Revd Helen Gill

**CIFER**

The Revd Gavin Wort

**Continuing Ministerial Dev.**

The Revd Lesley Chapman

**Botswana Link Group**

The Revd Canon Allan Marks

**Møre Link Group**

The Revd Canon Brian Hurst

**Winchester Link**

The Revd Canon R Gage

**Vocations**

The Revd Canon Ian Flintoft

**Worship and Liturgy**

The Rt Revd Frank White

**Poverty Action**

The Revd Canon P Kenney

**Learning Church**

The Ven Peter Robinson

**Task Development**

Sue Hart/Gloria Cadman

**Discipleship**

Robert Peers

**Shared Conversations**

Ann Purves

Details of activities, planned and completed, as well as contact details are available on the Diocesan Task Groups' website at:

[www.dioceseofnewcastletaskgroups.co.uk](http://www.dioceseofnewcastletaskgroups.co.uk)

If you would like more information or to join in any of the work do make contact with any of the Task Group conveners.

## Inspired North East

A busy year began with advising 14 churches applying for Roof Repair funds, of which 6 were successful, worth £194,000 in grants. We advised 25 other churches during the year on a variety of repair and development projects, and supported several

successful funding bids to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), National Churches Trust and others.

Our new 'Inspired Futures' initiative, funded by HLF for Stage 1, has worked with 18 churches across the region, half in Newcastle Diocese, exploring the potential for regenerating church buildings through heritage and wider community use. With help from the Churches Conservation Trust and local heritage consultant Jo Scott, this entailed many site visits, 12 workshop events, and 'Way Forward' reports and Heritage Assessment reports produced for all 18 churches. The enthusiasm of participants exceeded our expectations. We are now awaiting a decision on our Stage 2 bid to HLF.

The 'Spirit in Stone' project, also funded by HLF, was completed in 2015. Celebrating the heritage of historic churches across the region, this involved 48 churches in 7 local 'clusters' to engage volunteers and visitors in their local Christian heritage. This multi-activity project concluded with the launch of 6 new church heritage trails, a children's Church Explorer Trail, and publication of the practical resource 'Church Buildings for Everyone - A Visitor Welcome Toolkit'. Ring-binder copies are being distributed to parishes and can also be downloaded via.

**Andrew Duff**

Inspired North East

[www.inspirednortheast.org.uk](http://www.inspirednortheast.org.uk)

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