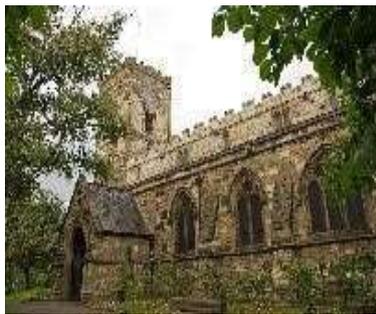




**BILLINGHAM**  
TEAM PARISH  
*Linking with Jesus*

# Billingham Team Parish 2022



## Our Diocesan Vision (an introduction from Bishop Paul)

At the end of 2019 we gathered representatives from each of our parishes for **The Waymark Conference**, to pray, talk, share stories and reflect on how we might best respond to God's call to us as his Church. We reflected on our learning from our previous vision and priorities and agreed to maintain our vision -

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

Through prayer, conversation and sharing our stories we discerned God's call to maintain and sharpen our three priorities. Through the voice of our children and young people we discerned that we should add a fourth, Caring for God's Creation. This was in response to the question, *'How shall we focus our energies, prayers and resources over the next five years?'*

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

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

In Billingham this feels particularly relevant. Billingham is a significant community for which we sense the importance of **Energising Growth** in discipleship, in growing our reach and in the number of local people following Jesus. We also sense the importance of **Challenging Poverty, Engaging with Children and Young People** and **Caring for God's Creation** in an area with lots of families, with some significant pockets of poverty, and with deeply rooted communities that still look to, and are open to, the local church.

In praying for a Change Rector for the Parish of Billingham we are looking for someone committed to, and able to work collaboratively to equip our churches to be part of this vision. The **Waymark Prayer** sums up this hope -

*Loving God, guiding the people of Durham Diocese faithfully through the years:*

*We thank you for saints who have marked our path,  
young and old, known and unknown, from all places and in all walks of life.*

*Help us to find your way in our generation:  
transformed by your truth, sharing your life, blessing our communities.*

*Through Jesus Christ our Lord,*

**Amen**

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

In Christ,

+Paul

**Bishop of Durham**

# BILLINGHAM TEAM PARISH

## Parish Profile

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**OUR DIOCESAN VISION – AN INTRODUCTION FROM BISHOP PAUL**

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**2, OUR CHURCHES AND CONGREGATIONS**

**3, OUR ACTIVITIES**

**4, STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE**

**5, PARISH PLAN**

**6, WHERE IS GOD LEADING US NOW?**

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- i. Key Contacts
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- iv. Places of interest and Heritage in the local vicinity.
- v. BTP Annual Report and Accounts 2021 (Excerpt)





*A parish prayer walk in 2020*

## **WELCOME TO BILLINGHAM AND THE TEAM PARISH**

Our town, of about 38,000 people on Teesside, hosts a world scale chemical industry which it was built to serve.<sup>1</sup> Much of the first housing after WWI was built by the chemical industry (originally ICI). Post WWII it developed as a new town with centre, park and leisure facilities. The town is very largely white European, and is part of Stockton Borough Council. A strong community spirit remains.

The Team Parish was created in 2013 and brings together five church buildings and congregations, varied in their age, heritage, traditions and worship, to serve the whole town. The work of uniting into a single church family has met with difficulties including the departure of two of the initial ministry team of 3 in 2017, the failure to recruit a Team Rector since then and, of course, the coronavirus pandemic, which presented major communications challenges the parish was unable fully to address.

We wish to welcome and support a Change Rector for three years who will guide and advise us and minister to us to enable us to make God's love and ministry once again widely known in our town. We need leadership to help us turn from looking inwards to become a beacon of light and love shining out into the town.

This is a challenging aim and we seek a leader who can quickly recognise our strengths and weaknesses and who, with love and honesty, can advise and guide us on changes in direction and, by example, show us how we can better develop and progress our mission and ourselves.

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.ilivehere.co.uk/statistics-billingham-stockton-on-tees-3535.html>

The Team Parish logo and strapline gives us the mission statement:

**Linking with Jesus**  
*God's Family working together  
to share the love of Jesus  
with everyone*

The parish is working with this aspiration, alongside the Church of England's commitment to:

**A CHRISTIAN PRESENCE IN EVERY COMMUNITY**



*Parish members sharing insights in a Church Partners in Mission conversation, 2022*

In 2022 and into the future we face significant challenges. But we know God is here with us and we long to work with God in our communities, sharing the love and hope of Jesus where we live, in our worship, in our presence in our communities and in our lives.

## **WHERE WE ARE IN 2022**

### **KEY STRENGTHS**

- A physical presence with the five church buildings spread across the parish.
- A committed ministry team of Team Vicar, Priest with PTO and three readers, with a variety of skills and gifts.
- Committed lay people across the parish with a variety of skills and gifts, a passion for the church and a heart for mission.
- Substantial financial reserves of cash and assets.
- Progress towards a new Parish Plan (see below) focused on enabling the church for mission, and driven by lay people, drawing on the support of the diocese through the *Parish Prioritisation Process*.
- Our *Church Partners in Mission* programme, a parish-wide year-long conversation about mission which has brought increased mutual understanding and collaboration. This is the heart of the work of our two Lay Development Workers, who will leave us in June after two years working with us to encourage, enable and equip our laypeople in their callings and mission.

## KEY CHALLENGES

- Ageing and diminishing congregations in most of the churches.
- Reducing income from regular giving.
- We need to improve our governance and communications so that the parish is soundly run and its members well informed and able to participate fully (see Parish Plan below).
- We need to develop a sustainable financial plan for the future (see Parish Plan below).
- We have a significant recent history of feeling 'left behind', leading to some loss of confidence and hope within the congregations. This has stemmed in part from being without a Team Rector since 2017 and has contributed to the congregations not becoming *one family working together* as fully as was hoped. The work of the Lay Development Workers has gone some way to addressing this, and when they leave in June the challenge will be to continue on that path.

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- To work in partnership in mission with ecumenical partners and community organisations.
- To engage more missionally with a 'traditional' community through occasional offices.
- To engage with the key Diocesan priorities:<sup>2</sup>
- *Engaging with Children, Youth and 18-25s* – using our sound and growing relationships with local schools, especially primary schools including our own Church School (see below).
- *Energising Growth* – through the developing Parish Plan (see below).
- *Challenging Poverty* – Billingham is a mixed community with some significant areas of deprivation. We have a Volunteer Community Worker in one of these areas, the Clarences, as well as congregational involvement in the Food Bank and the Mission to Seafarers, and we are looking in the Parish Plan to build on this.
- *Caring for God's Creation* – we have begun this work by appointing an Environment Champion and registering as an Eco Parish.

## KEY THREATS

- Failing to face up to where we are as a parish – *God cannot meet us where we are not*.<sup>3</sup>
- Failing to produce a financial plan that will be sustainable.
- Focusing on *our own* buildings and congregations in a way that disables us from becoming the family God is calling us to be.
- Using our sense of abandonment as an excuse to avoid taking responsibility for ourselves.

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<sup>2</sup><https://d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/61d750a40a35a/content/pages/documents/diocesan-priorities-2021.pdf>

<sup>3</sup>Words of Patrick Keifert, Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theology at Luther Seminary and co-founder of *Partnership for Missional Church*.

## **OUR CHURCHES AND CONGREGATIONS** (presented in alphabetical order)

### **ST AIDAN'S**

Founded in the 1950s as a church plant from St Cuthbert's, this church has a history of a large congregation that has dwindled in recent years to its current Sunday average of around 15. The church is close to the town centre and next to the town park. It has good facilities including a hall and is the location of the parish office. The style of worship is traditional/liberal.

### **ST CUTHBERT'S**

The church of the original village of Billingham, this is the oldest building in the town, with Saxon foundations and a long heritage that makes it popular for occasional offices. Its Sunday congregation has dwindled to an average of 15. The style of worship is traditional/catholic, and is supported by a small choir. There is a hall which is well used for hirings by the local community. St Cuthbert's also has a large graveyard, now closed for burials and maintained by the local authority.

### **ST LUKE'S**

Founded in the 1960s this church, surrounded by housing and near two schools and is more informal and charismatic in its worship style. The average Sunday attendance has struggled the most of all our congregations to recover from its pre-covid level of 40+ and is currently around 25. The building is a flexible space and includes a kitchen/meeting room.

### **ST MARY MAGDALENE'S**

Also founded in the 1960s as a church plant from St Peter's, surrounded by housing and near our C of E school, this is a flexible space with kitchen and meeting room, and a dwindling congregation. It is difficult to be precise about numbers because since 2019 the building has been closed with fabric problems, and the congregation has been worshipping mainly at St Aidan's and St Peter's. Repairs are being made with a view to re-opening later this year. Worship style is traditional/liberal.

### **ST PETER'S**

The church of the village of Wolviston, to the North of Billingham, which is largely a prosperous commuter and retired area, the building is a 19<sup>th</sup> Century church with a large open churchyard, a kitchen and meeting room. The village has a strong community spirit and sees the church as the village church. Average Sunday morning attendance is around 25, with catholic/liberal style, and there is also a monthly Messy Church style family worship on a Sunday afternoon, which is growing since reopening after covid restrictions.

## WORSHIP PATTERN(as at March 2022)

### Sundays

- 9 a.m. – eucharist St Cuthbert's and St Peter's
- 11 a.m. – eucharist St Aidan's and St Luke's

### Monthly variations

- 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday – whole parish worship at one church.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday – Together @ 11 family worship at St Luke's.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday – all age worship at 4 p.m. at St Peter's.

### Weekday worship

- Wednesday 10 a.m. – eucharist at St Peter's.
- Thursday 10 a.m. – eucharist at St Luke's.
- Friday 9.30 a.m. – Play & Praise at St Peter's.

## OUR ACTIVITIES

### CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES

This has been the special focus of the Team Vicar, and it is envisaged he will take up this focus more fully once the Change Rector is in post. The parish has a strong heart for this work, shown in a band of enthusiastic volunteers for several initiatives.

**Prior's Mill Primary, 'our' church school.**



*Parish Friends leading a prayer walk at Prior's Mill, May 2021*

- The school values its relationship with the parish and there are opportunities for working together on worship and other initiatives.
- A team of *Parish Friends* has been visiting the KS1 playground weekly since September 2021 to re-establish relationships within the school.
- Regular collective worship, to which the Parish Friends are invited.
- Governor representation.  
(see appendix ii)

### **Open the Book**

- A small and committed team delivering Open the Book across several schools. This is a very popular ministry and the team finds it needs to manage its workload carefully.

### **Play & Praise**



*Play & Praise worship and picnic July 2021*

- Worship for 0-3s and their grown-ups at St Peter's, each Friday morning in term time. A committed team plans and delivers this and it has led to members joining the team and becoming confirmed. It was recognising that people needed something to move on to that led to the creation of the monthly family worship on Sunday afternoon at St Peter's.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday**

- Monthly Sunday afternoon worship at St Peter's for all ages led by a team including previous members of the Play & Praise congregation.

## **Together @ 11**

- Monthly all-age worship at St Luke's, delivered by an enthusiastic team that has been reduced by covid and people moving away. The team is currently considering change to the timing and format of the worship.

## **Baptism ministry**

- Baptisms are popular in Billingham, and the Lay Development Workers have begun to work with the lay people who help to deliver these to explore how we could make better use of this as a missional opportunity.

## **Children, Schools and Families Working Group**

Almost all of our work in this area stopped because of covid, and the parish has taken the opportunity to take stock and consider prayerfully our future work, with a Working Group. The Group began by looking at how to re-engage with our local schools and is moving on to consider worship pathways for families who know nothing about 'traditional' church and whom we meet at Play & Praise, through baptism and in schools.

## **GROUPS, ORGANISATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

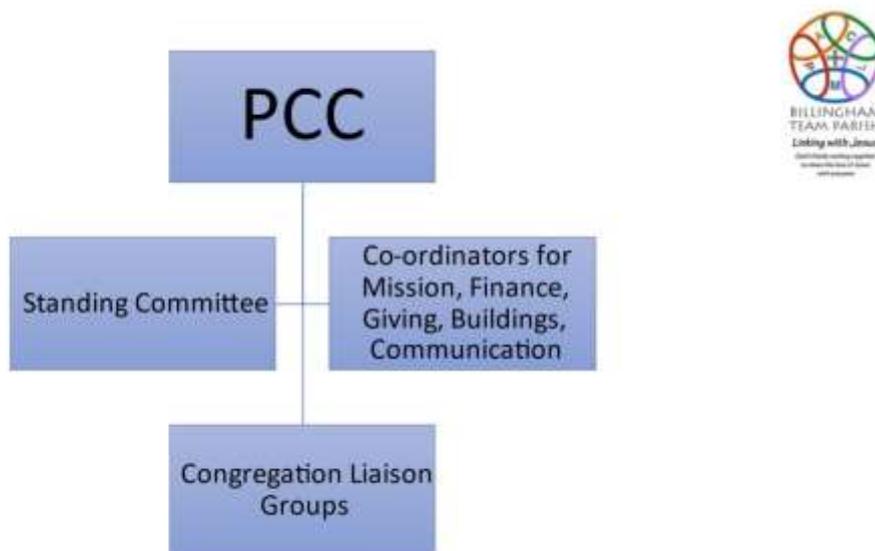
- ***Get Along Group*** – for older people, including non-church members, and combats loneliness and isolation through regular meetings and outings. After a covid-enforced break this group is proving very popular as it starts up again. It is based at St Aidan's and St Mary Magdalene's will share in this when it re-opens, and is run by a team of church volunteers from across the parish.
- ***Mothers' Union*** – at St Peter's and with members from across the parish.
- ***Mission to Seafarers*** – supported by several parish members.
- ***In Stitches*** – a craft group with strong connections to St Peter's, who often help with church craft projects.
- ***Churches Together in Billingham*** – supported within the parish, especially by a reader, seasonal joint events and praying together.
- ***Prayer Group*** – began as a series of Prayer Walks led during 2020 and is a cross-parish group meeting both in person and virtually, sharing informal study, praying together and organising parish prayer events including Prayer Days for Thy Kingdom Come and Advent 2021. The group is one of the parish's roots in prayer.
- ***Study Group*** – led by the Priest with PTO and run online, the cross-parish group undertakes Bible study, usually working through a book at a time.

## STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE



*A representation of our 5 congregations created at the CPiM worship, November 2021.*

### Committee Structure



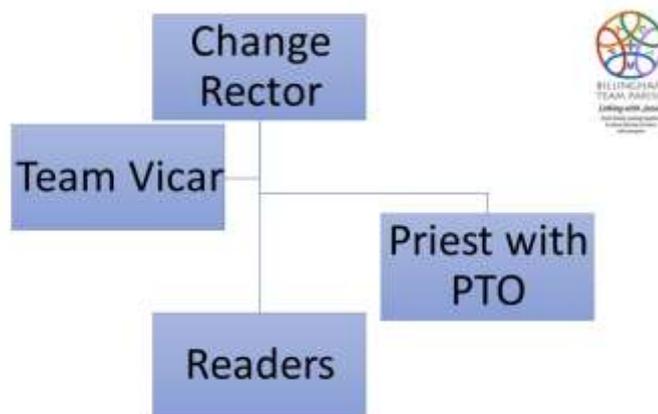
The **PCC** consists of members from each of the churches, including a Parish Warden for each church, in addition to the usual office holders.

The **Standing Committee** is very active, especially currently in working on the Parish Plan (see below).

**Congregation Liaison Groups** for each church exist to provide communication to and from the PCC.

The *Parish Plan* (see below) has appointed co-ordinators for its key priorities of **Mission, Finance, Giving, Communications, Buildings** who are building teams to support them and who report into the PCC

## Ministry Team:



The team currently meets monthly, with the priests meeting more often.

## PARISH PLAN – a work in progress

The Parish Plan is emerging from the work done with the diocese's *Parish Prioritisation Process*. The Standing Committee of the PCC is leading on this work.

The *PPP* required the parish to consider its health in the areas of Mission, Finance, Buildings and Governance and Relationships, and we realised we face significant challenges in all of these areas. The Plan, and the decision to appoint a Change Rector, have come from this.

## MISSION

We realised that our worries about our buildings and finances were preventing us from uniting and working together, and also drawing energy away from our core task of mission. We need to refocus all of our activities so that mission can be prioritised and enabled.

The *Church Partners in Mission* process we have engaged in over the last year has enabled us to think and pray together about mission, working towards a shared understanding, and we are now considering whether to pursue this by joining the *Partnership for Missional Church* process.<sup>1</sup> We want to become a parish that encourages, enables and equips our laypeople in their vocations and mission.

## FINANCE

We want to re-order our financial priorities

	from	to
1	Maintenance	Mission
2	Parish Share	Parish Share
3	Mission	Maintenance

The parish's income in 2021 (£104k) was down 30% on 2019, and in 2020 we reduced dramatically the amount of parish share we paid. We have reinstated this fully, and this means that in 2022 unless our

income recovers, we will end the year with a loss of £30k+. We are looking to increase giving, and revenue from hall hire as part of our plan to overcome this.

We have over £300k in reserves and assets, and we propose to invest this over the next 3 years in a special *Mission and Growth* budget. This means we have 3 years to move towards a sustainable income and expenditure budget.

## **BUILDINGS**

We recognise that our five buildings are placing a strain on our resources of time, energy and finance. With reducing congregation sizes, some are getting close to becoming unsustainable. However they are also an important strength, giving us a physical presence and a cultural connection to our communities, which is why we are committed to trying to maintain and renew all five.

We are working to maximise the efficiency of the buildings and their earning potential, but we recognise too that giving is vital, and that for this to be sustainable we need to grow vibrant, and younger, congregations. We are thinking about each building's connection to its community and its potential for mission, conscious that no one church can do everything all at once.

## **GOVERNANCE AND RELATIONSHIPS**

There have been challenges in the governance and relationships in the parish in recent years, some of which we have already touched on. Staff vacancies have led to systems being overstretched, and there are residual feelings of being left behind, lack of confidence and issues with communications.

Work is being done through the Parish Plan to strengthen all of this. The PCC meets more often, has a Lay Chair and is undertaking basic training via the LDWs. The Congregation Liaison Groups are also meeting more regularly, and the Parish Plan is strengthening financial accountability and other areas of governance.

## **WHERE IS GOD LEADING US NOW?**

In 2022 and into the future we face significant challenges. But we know God is here with us and we long to work with God in our communities, sharing the love and hope of Jesus where we live, in our worship, in our presence in our communities and in our lives.

## APPENDICES

### i. KEY CONTACT LIST

Enquiries about this post can be directed to the Archdeacon of Auckland, the Ven. Rick Simpson by emailing [archdeacon.of.auckland@durham.anglican.org](mailto:archdeacon.of.auckland@durham.anglican.org)

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

Information about Billingham Team Parish is available from <https://www.billinghamcofe.org.uk>

### ii. THE RECTORY

The Rectory is located on Clifton Avenue at the side of St. Mary Magdalene's church. It was built in 1968 and consists of: -

Entrance Hall leading to the Study and Cloak Room and Stairs to the first floor. Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen with Pantry, Utility and Garage.

The first floor consists of: - Landing, Toilet, Bathroom and 4 Bedrooms (1 with an ensuite shower).

The exterior offers a private garden at the rear, off road parking and a plot of garden to the north elevation.

### iii. LOCAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Priors Mill CofE Primary. <http://priorsmill.org.uk>

Bewley Primary. [http://bewley\\_primary.org.uk](http://bewley_primary.org.uk)

Pentland Primary. <http://pentlandprimary.org.uk>

Oakdene Primary. <http://oakdenepimary.org.uk>

Wolviston Primary. <http://www.wolvistonprimary.org.uk>

High Clarences Primary. <http://highclarence-stockton.secure-dbprimary.com/stockton/primary/highclarence>

Billingham South Community Primary. <http://billinghamsouth.school/>

Roseberry Primary. <http://www.roseberryprimary.org.uk/>

The community is served by several secondary schools and colleges in the town including Bede College, St Michael's Catholic secondary School and Northfield School and Sports College.

**iv. PLACES OF INTEREST AND HERITAGE IN THE LOCAL VICINITY.**

County Durham. [www.thisisdurham.com](http://www.thisisdurham.com)

Hartlepool Historic Quay. [www.nmrn.org.uk](http://www.nmrn.org.uk)

Beamish Museum. [www.beamish.org.uk](http://www.beamish.org.uk)

MIMA. <http://mima.art>

Kynren. [www.11arches.com](http://www.11arches.com)

Billingham Forum theatre and Sports complex. [www.teesactive.co.uk](http://www.teesactive.co.uk)

Tees Barrage. <http://tbiwwc.com>

RSPB Saltholme. <http://www.rspb.org.uk>

**v. BTP ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2021 (EXCERPT)**

The Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet from the Accounts are overleaf. The full Annual Report & Accounts (ie including Annual Report, Notes and Independent Examiners Report) can be found on the Billingham Team Parish website.

**The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Billingham**

**Statement of Financial Activities**

**For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021**

		<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>Endowment Fund</b>	<b>Total 2021</b>	<b>Total 2020</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	<b>Note</b>					
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>						
<i>Donations and legacies</i>	2a	61,503	5,550	140,000	207,053	69,092
<i>Church activities</i>	2b	40,472	-	-	40,472	37,405
<i>Other trading activities</i>	2c	2,521	-	-	2,521	180
<i>Investments</i>	2d	763	-	-	763	779
<i>Other</i>	2e	-	-	-	0	-
<b>Total</b>		<u>105,258</u>	<u>5,550</u>	<u>140,000</u>	<u>250,808</u>	<u>107,456</u>

**Expenditure on:**

<i>Raising funds</i>	3a	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Mission giving &amp; donations</i>	3b	750	-	-	750	955
<i>Church activities</i>	3c	83,628	5,550	-	89,178	81,094
<b>Total</b>		<u>84,378</u>	<u>5,550</u>	-	<u>89,928</u>	<u>82,049</u>
<b>Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains</b>		20,880	-	140,000	160,880	25,407
<b>Net losses/gains on investments</b>	5	13,924	600	-	14,524	1,325
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		34,804	600	140,000	175,404	26,732
<b>Transfer between funds</b>		39,130	(39,130)	-	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<u>73,934</u>	<u>(38,530)</u>	<u>140,000</u>	<u>175,404</u>	<u>26,732</u>
Total funds brought forward	9,10&11	105,956	51,763	-	157,719	130,987
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	9,10&11	<u>179,890</u>	<u>13,233</u>	<u>140,000</u>	<u>333,123</u>	<u>157,719</u>

The notes on pages 7 to 11 form part of these accounts.

**The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Billingham**

**Balance Sheet**

**For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Fixed Assets:</b>			
Investments	5	<u>156,426</u>	<u>70,967</u>
		<u>156,426</u>	<u>70,967</u>
<b>Current Assets:</b>			
Debtors	6	<b>7,000</b>	<b>7,000</b>
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>174,605</u>	<u>154,537</u>
		<b>181,605</b>	<b>161,537</b>
<b>Liabilities:</b>			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	7	<b>4,908</b>	<b>74,785</b>

<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<u><b>333,123</b></u>	<u><b>157,719</b></u>
<b>Creditors: amounts failing due after more than one year</b>	8	-	-
<b>Total net assets</b>		<u><b>333,123</b></u>	<u><b>157,719</b></u>
 <b>Parish funds:</b>			
Unrestricted funds	9	<b>179,890</b>	<b>105,956</b>
Restricted funds	10	<b>13,233</b>	<b>51,763</b>
Endowment fund	11	<b>140,000</b>	-
	12	<u><b>333,123</b></u>	<u><b>157,719</b></u>

The notes on pages 7 to 11 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on

Approved by: Rev. R. Radley

Mrs. M. Myerscough

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