

# St John's Church Birkdale

Church Strategy 2022





# The Process

We have developed this document to articulate what we want to achieve and how we could get there.

**Slide 3** summarises our Vision – it's a statement of why we exist and what it will feel like when we achieve it

**Slide 4** starts to structure our activity and categorises what we do into 4 themes: worship; growth; stewardship and community. Everything we do as a church should move us towards progressing these themes. If it doesn't, we shouldn't be doing it

**Slides 5-8** takes each of the themes from Slide 4 and attempts to provide a realistic appraisal of where we are today, where we want to get to and a few ideas of how we might get there

We can use this to help us in our discussions with the other Birkdale churches, to feed into the Parish Profile and to guide the activity of the church and the PCC



# Our Vision

To be a God centred, relationship driven and life transforming church in Birkdale

## **What will it feel like?**

We will be a Church where people feel at home, know they matter, grow in their faith and where they feel confident to invite others



# Our Strategy

## Worship

The style and frequency of our services, combining the traditional and the contemporary. Our music, our bible studies and our prayerfulness

## Growth

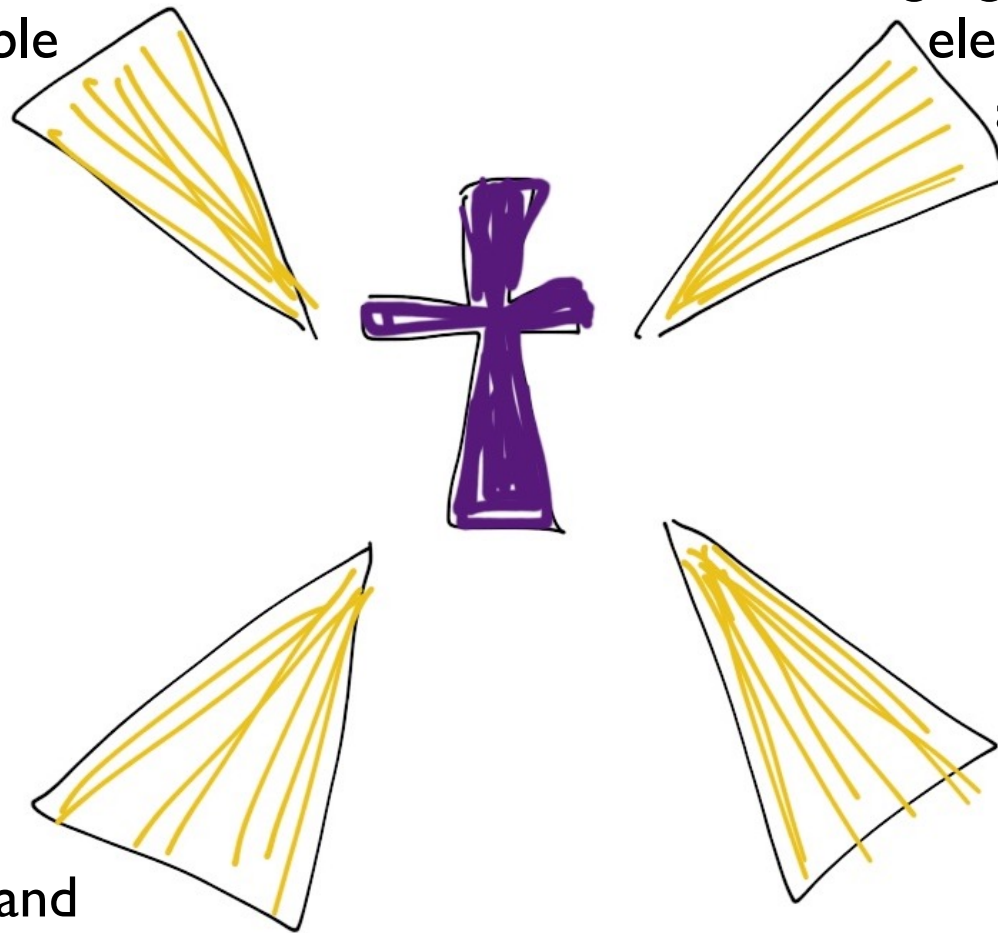
Not only the size and diversity of our congregation or the number on the electoral roll but personal and spiritual growth.

## Stewardship

Looking after the things we've got and leaving behind a legacy for future generations. The use and maintenance of our building, the church finances, our succession planning

## Community

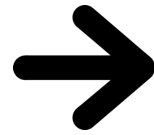
Playing our part in the Anglican community, in our local, Birkdale community and with our mission partner





# Worship

Now



Future

Examples of activity

Mix of communion & service of the Word	Services are varied and meet the needs of various age groups and worship style preferences. Everyone should be able to invite a friend to a service with confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain regularity of communion and service of the Word</li> <li>• Provide a traditional BCP communion during the week</li> <li>• Work with St James' to provide a monthly contemporary evening service</li> </ul>
No choir or music group but ad hoc choirs for special services	Clear strategy for music including traditional and contemporary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider appetite for the introduction of a music group or worship leadership</li> <li>• Continue use of backing tracks in absence of 'live' music</li> <li>• Include modern and contemporary songs alongside traditional hymns</li> </ul>
Bible studies have lapsed	Bible study is a central part of life at St John's with groups established for all ages groups. Clear and structured study to ensure consistency of teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a young peoples bible study group/Home group</li> <li>• Reintroduce bible study groups/home groups beginning with one</li> <li>• Consider how best to widen the appeal and attendance of bible studies</li> <li>• Give everyone in the congregation an opportunity and personal invitation to a bible study</li> </ul>
Fortnightly zoom prayer meeting	A church committed to corporate prayer with regular and ad hoc prayer meetings to continue on zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue a regular prayer meeting (fortnightly)</li> <li>• Encourage ad hoc prayer meetings for specific needs (illness, world events, church issues etc)</li> <li>• Encourage congregation to ask for prayer through Whatsapp group etc</li> </ul>
Mixture of lay and retired clergy leadership leading bible based teaching	Continue to encourage lay leadership alongside clergy provision across Birkdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sermon themes and series to address learning needs of the congregation</li> <li>• Celebrate different leadership styles using lay and clergy</li> <li>• Review methods of access to worship – zoom, live stream, telephone line etc</li> </ul>



# Growth

Now



Future

Examples of activity

Congregation reducing year on year or at best, stable	A church that achieves it's vision and therefore is attracting people to join and congregation feel confident to invite others. Strong relationships are built and maintained. Numerical growth is achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to any 'leavers' to understand reasons and address any recurring themes</li> <li>• Track attendance and intervene with those who are missing so they know they matter and are missed</li> <li>• Pastoral support increased so that relationships are central to our church</li> <li>• Specific invitations for Christmas / Easter services to our local community</li> <li>• Maintain and develop social activity program to build relationships</li> <li>• Continue to seek ways to support the community through Wellbeing Centre and Soup Kitchen</li> <li>• Ensure wedding, baptism and funeral families are appropriately followed up</li> </ul>
Low number of families and no children's work currently, provision for young adults just being developed	By developing work with young adults and building them up in their faith, leaders will be trained up for children's work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure services are attractive to young adults through style of worship</li> <li>• Young adults built up in their faith through teaching and bible study group</li> <li>• Young adult social activities build up relationships</li> <li>• Recruit leaders for children's work from young adults who have grown in their faith</li> <li>• Bible based youth work is the focus on a Sunday and a midweek night</li> </ul>
Relationships being developed and pastoral provision beginning in a more organised way	Pastoral provision developed further so that relationships are central to the church and needs met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social events organised monthly</li> <li>• Pastoral visits/phone calls</li> <li>• Coffee mornings to develop relationships and meet needs (ensuring all ages are catered for)</li> <li>• Bible Study/Home groups are available for all and personal invitations key</li> </ul>



# Stewardship

Now



Future

Examples of activity

Year on year reductions in planned giving have been common and reducing capital / reserves	Financially stable, consistent current year 'profit' and strengthening reserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rigorous expense management and reduction program</li> <li>• Yearly Stewardship campaign to increase planned, tax efficient giving</li> <li>• Increase use of specific appeals (heating, flowers etc)</li> <li>• Maintain successful fund raising events (fairs etc)</li> <li>• Consider a tithing campaign</li> </ul>
All 'jobs' or ministries in the church are filled but issues of succession becoming evident	The right people with the right ministries and a clear and achievable succession plan in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All job descriptions updated and signed off by PCC</li> <li>• Key jobs identified and categorised (Critical/Important/Nice to have) and succession plans developed for all Critical and Important roles</li> <li>• Appropriate training and guidance provide for job-holders</li> </ul>
Church buildings well maintained and documentation up to date	Church buildings well maintained and all relevant processes and legal obligations fully complied with. Together with other Birkdale churches, a clear plan for the future buildings strategy (including closures, repair schedules etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue with annual roof inspections and maintenance</li> <li>• Complete all H&amp;S obligations including guidance from H&amp;S consultants</li> <li>• Complete all recommendations from latest Diocese inspection</li> <li>• Develop methodology for future buildings strategy implementation (eg what would be the basis for closure?)</li> </ul>
Hall lettings recovering after the lockdown but still inefficient use of church assets at times. Vacant rooms / hall / church for much of the week	Increased use of church facilities throughout the week contributing to community needs and to church finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase awareness in local community of Church facilities</li> <li>• Advertise what we have to offer in the community</li> </ul>





# Community

Now



Future

Examples of activity

Strong supporter of mission, particularly overseas and with local soup kitchen and Wellbeing Centre	Continue to develop support of local families through Wellbeing centre, Soup kitchen and continue with overseas mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued support for mission partners – do we have the right one at present? Develop a meaningful link with the mission partner so that church are engaged</li> <li>Increased support for soup kitchen and Wellbeing Centre</li> </ul>
Loose connections with local Anglican and non-Anglican churches	Strong links established and nurtured. Joint events well supported and sharing of services and vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clergy and lay relationships established and nurtured</li> <li>Shared vision for Birkdale and moving towards working more closely together towards Single Large Parish in the future if appropriate</li> <li>Shared service and shared resources of people, buildings, resources</li> <li>Working group developed as a sub group of each PCC to move forward working together and to develop relationships between the 3 Birkdale Anglican churches</li> <li>Shared social gatherings to develop relationships</li> </ul>
Little day to day activity supporting local community	Local needs have been identified and St John's is actively contributing to making Birkdale a better place for everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Groups set up to draw in the community where people feel at home and know that they matter to St John's and where relationships can be nurtured</li> </ul>
Limited visiting program	Well planned and executed visiting, covering congregation, ill, bereaved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visiting list established and diary of visits planned</li> <li>Recruit team of visitors</li> <li>Encourage cross-generational visiting</li> <li>Relationships developed and nurtured</li> </ul>