

# ST ANDREW'S EARLSFIELD - PARISH PROFILE

## A QUICK INTRODUCTION TO ST ANDREW'S

St Andrew's is a Church of England Parish church within the Diocese of Southwark. The church extends far beyond the confines of our beautiful 135-year old building, and we sometimes describe ourselves as a *church without walls*.

The St Andrew's community embraces an ever-evolving spectrum of faith expressions, and innovative responses to what it means to be rooted in, and serve, our wider community. This parish profile sets out our current activities and approaches, and our ambitions for the future.

Our church family aims to be welcoming and inclusive. We seek to support and build the local community, reaching out to all. We work to nurture spirituality, and to promote peace and justice.

St Andrew's has a vision for spiritual, social and environmental wellbeing encouraging a flourishing community. In recent years the parish has broken down the walls from being primarily a traditional Sunday congregation, becoming an ecosystem where this vision can grow.

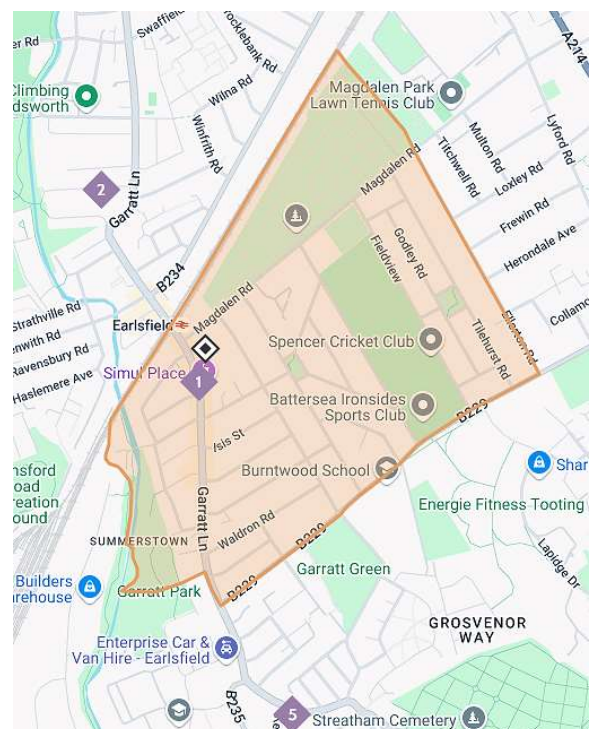
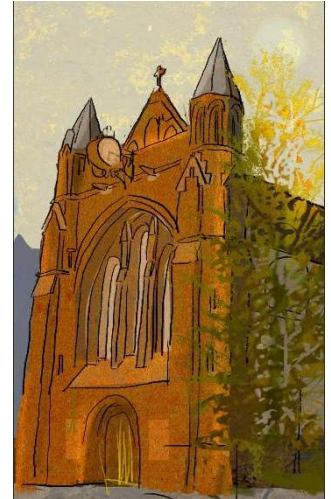
Across our ecosystem of faith expressions, charity partners and community groups, it is estimated that around 1,000 people come through our doors each week.

We are a community of various ages and backgrounds, and value diversity in all its forms. Some of us have lived in Earlsfield all our lives, others have moved here much more recently. We offer a warm welcome to newcomers. As a Christian community we work for the wellbeing of the whole of our neighbourhood. Our mission is to be an inclusive and mutually supportive place that cares for the mind, body and spirit – as we sometimes say, *a place to belong*.

## ABOUT EARLSFIELD AND THE PARISH

Our church building is located on the busy Garratt Lane, which runs the 4km from Wandsworth town centre to Tooting Broadway in South West London. It is well-served by bus and rail links, including Earlsfield station which is less than 15 minutes by train from London Waterloo.

The area has undergone significant population changes over recent decades. Information from the 2021 census<sup>1</sup> shows that, compared with England as a whole, there are more children than average



<sup>1</sup> The information is for the local authority ward of Wandsworth Common which contains, but is larger than, the Parish

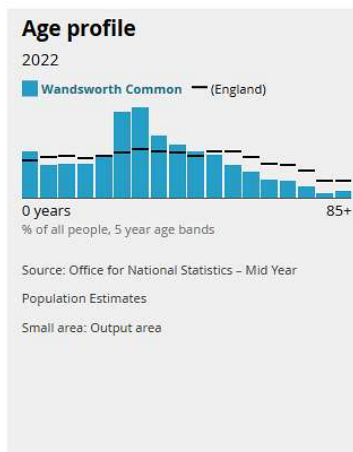
aged 0-5 years, and significantly more adults in the 25-45 age bands. On the other hand, there are far fewer people aged over 60 compared with England as a whole.

This is consistent with a tendency for some families with children to move out of the area (and probably out of London) as their children approach secondary school age. This is likely to be related to the availability and cost of housing, especially larger accommodation.

Earlsfield might be seen as a prosperous area with 69% of people aged 16 or more being economically active compared with 57% nationally, but it is still the case that nearly one-third of people in our area are economically inactive.

75% of the population describe themselves as white, with 25% from other ethnic groups. 46% of people describe themselves as Christian.

This information provides the context in which St Andrew's works, for example in terms of diversity, addressing food poverty, and reaching all sectors of our local community.



## AN OUTLINE OF OUR CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND PARTICIPATION

There remains a tendency in the Church of England to judge the success or vibrancy of a church by numbers - such as how many people attend a service of worship on Sunday morning, or how many people are on the electoral roll. St Andrew's does not fit into this mould. For example, many active and highly committed members of the St Andrew's community rarely attend one of our more traditional church services. The church building is typically in use six days a week, and, on the other hand, some of our expressions of worship do not take place within the church's walls.

Here's a brief description of our current activities (additional information about participation follows the descriptions):

### Parish Communion

A service of holy communion is held every Sunday, usually at 10am, but at 9am once a month when Allsortz (see below) takes place at 10.30am. The format might be described as fairly traditional, but not overly formal. Attendance has not returned to pre-pandemic levels, but has

been growing slowly but steadily over the last year or so. People who have started attending more recently are of a variety of ages and usually include several children.

Related to the local demographic information given above, St Andrew's is popular for local families wishing to have their (usually infant) child(ren) baptised, and baptisms usually take place during the 10am Parish Communion services.

Until the retirement of our previous vicar, a communion service was also held on most Wednesday evenings at 6pm, but this has been suspended during the vacancy. These services were billed as a calm, reflective space in the middle of people's busy weeks, at a time when some people might attend on their way home from work. However, the format was traditional and they did not reach what might have been their potential.

### Allsortz

Allsortz is an interactive family gathering on the first Sunday of most months, with a lovely communal ownership of the space and the rhythms we practice together. The children are often the ones to explain the different moments we travel through together and their keen anticipation of their favourite activities is always a highlight. It aims to welcome the gifts and skills of the children who attend, and as they grow and develop they are encouraged to accompany younger children that have started coming along too.

The space feels co-owned by the regular families that attend. With parents offering to also participate and bring their skills and gifts to the gatherings, Allsortz has grown in its sense of self over the last year and is flourishing in a new way which is a joy to see.

### Community Meal

We believe in the power of hospitality to bring people together over an inclusive and welcoming home cooked meal once a month: nourishment for body and soul. It is a wonderful, welcoming space open to everybody in our local community of any age and background, any faith or none. We share a meal in a relaxed setting, getting to know one another and enjoying the home cooked food and the plethora of desserts that we bring and share! It is hosted by the Home Cafe (see below) and run by volunteers. There is a small charge which most people find affordable, but people are not turned away if they cannot pay.

### Home Community Café

Home Community Café is an independent social enterprise<sup>2</sup> that uses its profit to benefit the neighbourhood of Earlsfield. It is an important part of our community and is often a first point of contact for many to St Andrew's. The Café is open weekdays, closing on Thursdays to support the Earlsfield Foodbank. Alongside the day to day cafe offering, it partners with various voluntary sector organisations to run a program of events, including social prescription projects, drop-in sessions and lunch clubs. It is an inclusive, warm and welcoming space, and its values reflect those of St Andrew's. The cafe now has around 20 projects running – from dedicated weekly clubs, like our knitting group, work experience for adults with additional needs, after school club for children with special educational needs, seated exercise classes, and our fabulous annual Mad Hatter Tea party. There is always something going on at Home Café, which last year celebrated its 7-year anniversary.

The Cafe has Sanctuary Status for its work supporting refugees. Since the cafe's inception, they have collaborated with the voluntary sector to welcome refugees and asylum seekers into our

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<sup>2</sup> constituted as a Community Interest Company

space as volunteers and guests, and they wanted to formalise this by offering a dedicated program. They invited cohort of 10 women, to be part of the project for a year – which sees them volunteer, train and develop new skills to become part of their new community. Within this we also offered holistic support to ensure the women have access to services to address trauma, health and build wider friendships in the local area. We have created a befriending network with local women, who have come alongside our cohort to support and offer one-to-one friendship and companionship.

### Earlsfield Foodbank

Earlsfield Foodbank<sup>3</sup> has been working to alleviate immediate food poverty in the Earlsfield community since 2013. It moved to St Andrew's early in the pandemic, when restrictions made it unfeasible to continue in its original location. A portacabin has been installed in the north garden of the church for storage of Foodbank goods.

The Foodbank seeks to prevent and relieve poverty through the provision of food to individuals in need, and also through providing support and advice. The foodbank operates out of St Andrew's Church and the Home Cafe in Earlsfield every Thursday morning.

In partnership with the Home Café and the pastoral care of the Church, Earlsfield Foodbank is able to provide a safe, comfortable experience for guests of the foodbank. Guests are welcomed by the hospitality team, served coffee and breakfast at no cost, and enjoy a community atmosphere while the food bags are prepared for them. The aims of Earlsfield Foodbank are to, in the first instance, alleviate immediate food poverty, but also to help address the root causes of food poverty and work towards making foodbanks obsolete.

The increased need for support in the Earlsfield community as a result of the rising cost of living has been significant recently and evident in the number of guests coming each week, as well as stories shared with volunteers and staff about the impact of rising costs of food, housing and energy. The foodbank is able to refer guests to further support such as Citizens Advice, Family Action, Ethnicity Mental Health Improvement Project (EMHIP) and St. Mungo's homelessness charity.

### Kitchen Tables

In 2023 we launched a regular gathering for adults to connect around friendship, faith and sharing life together. Kitchen Tables happens on the first Wednesday of the month in someone's home. The evenings are structured around a theme that we explore together, and there's always space for personal reflection, time to be creative and respond to what we have explored and an opportunity to share our reflections with each other.

There is a regular group who attend and we have enjoyed some deeply enriching evenings together. Having a regular 'adult only' space has been a really grounding rhythm and although this was our hope when we set out on the exploration of Kitchen Tables it has been really encouraging to see the hope come to life.

### Forest Church

Forest Church takes place four times a year on a Sunday afternoons at Wimbledon Common: an opportunity to walk in the forest to find God in the beauty of nature and the story of the seasons.

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<sup>3</sup> an independent registered charity

Forest Church is always a refreshing touch point in the flow of the Fresh Expressions year. The seasonal nature of the gathering really serves as a moment to step back and reflect. The Spring Equinox, Summer Solstice, Autumn Equinox and Winter Solstice all bring their different qualities which offer an opportunity to encounter God in a different way and zoom out to think about the journey you are on over the course of the year. There is a regular group of Allsortz families who come along every time if they can and there is often a new family or two who comes to check it out and see what Forest Church is about.

### Community Garden

St Andrew's Community Garden, on the south side of the church, is an important space for the wider local community, as well as for local wildlife, particularly birds and insects. It combines attractive hard landscaping features (such as the pavement labyrinth bordered by semi-circular seating) with lawn, and borders and raised beds planted with flowering shrubs and herbaceous perennials. It is shaded in summer by lime trees and shielded by hedges from the busy life of Garratt Lane. The garden is appreciated and intensively used by members of the public, who visit it to enjoy a quiet break in the sun or a chat with friends; children love exploring the labyrinth. There is also a productive vegetable plot.



### Decorating and Preparing the Church

On occasional Saturdays, a small, informal group has evolved to spend time decorating the church, often for a specific service (e.g. Black History month, Pride, Easter, harvest festival, Christmas). These sessions provide a nice opportunity for people to just pop in and have a quiet space. Sometimes parents like being able to rest a bit whilst the kids do craft, other times people can enjoy the refreshments and just meditate for a bit in the space. The craft themes are very light touch but are a way for people to engage with ideas about social justice and Jesus' message, in a creative way without being expected to agree or have deep thoughts.

### Leadership and Staff

Our ministry team has comprises a Vicar, Revd Johnny Sertin, whose appointment was announced in December 2025 and who will be licenced on 24 May 2026. He will serve on a house for duty and self-supporting basis, occupying the vicarage and committing 3 working days to the role. Alongside him will be an Associate Vicar who will work on a similar basis, her/his house for duty being at Glebe House. The third member of the ministry team is a Reader. Also, there is a couple who currently live in a flat at Glebe House and whose ministry is formally recognised, and who have leadership roles within fresh expressions at St Andrew's.

There will be an addition to the current two part-time employees, who are a Parish Administrator (12 hours a week) and Director of Music (Sunday services and some preparation/rehearsal time). A third, new, role has been created of Head of Parish Operations (around 28 hours per week), and it is envisaged that this post will be filled by around May 2026.

The Parochial Church Council [PCC] comprises the ministry team, two churchwardens and nine other members. The church has a safeguarding policy, with an active safeguarding officer and deputy safeguarding officer, drawn from the PCC membership.



### Occasional Offices

During the last six months<sup>4</sup> 14 children from 12 families have been baptised. The vicar (or assistant vicar as the case may be) meets with the baptism family, in person if possible, in advance of the baptism.

One funeral has taken place, and it is not uncommon for there to be no funerals in a six-month period. There were no weddings during this period. While banns are quite often read, most couples tend to return to their family origins outside London for their wedding ceremony.

### Reference Information

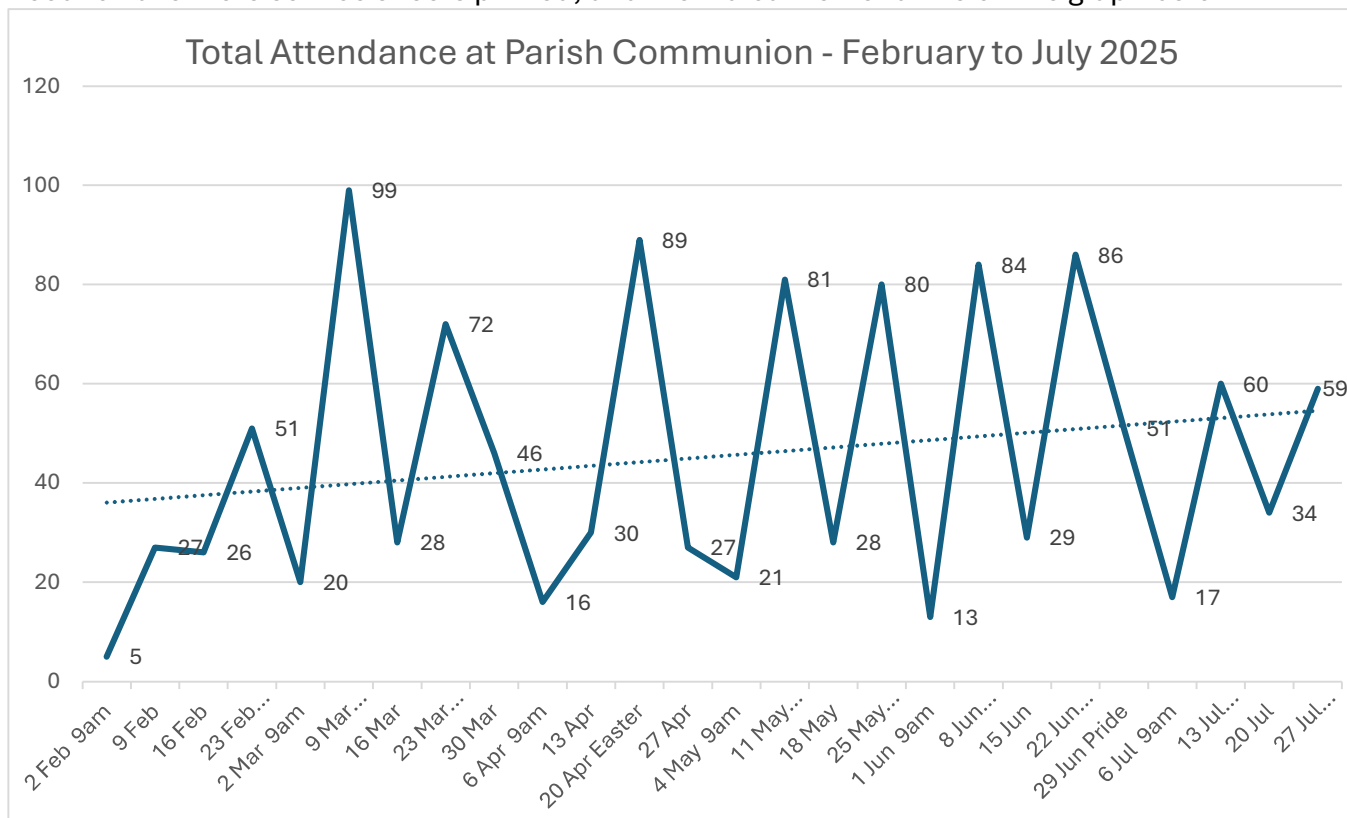
The church operates as a registered charity with the name of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Andrew's, Earlsfield, registered number 1181916. Its website is [www.standrewsearlsfield.org](http://www.standrewsearlsfield.org)

## Participation Data

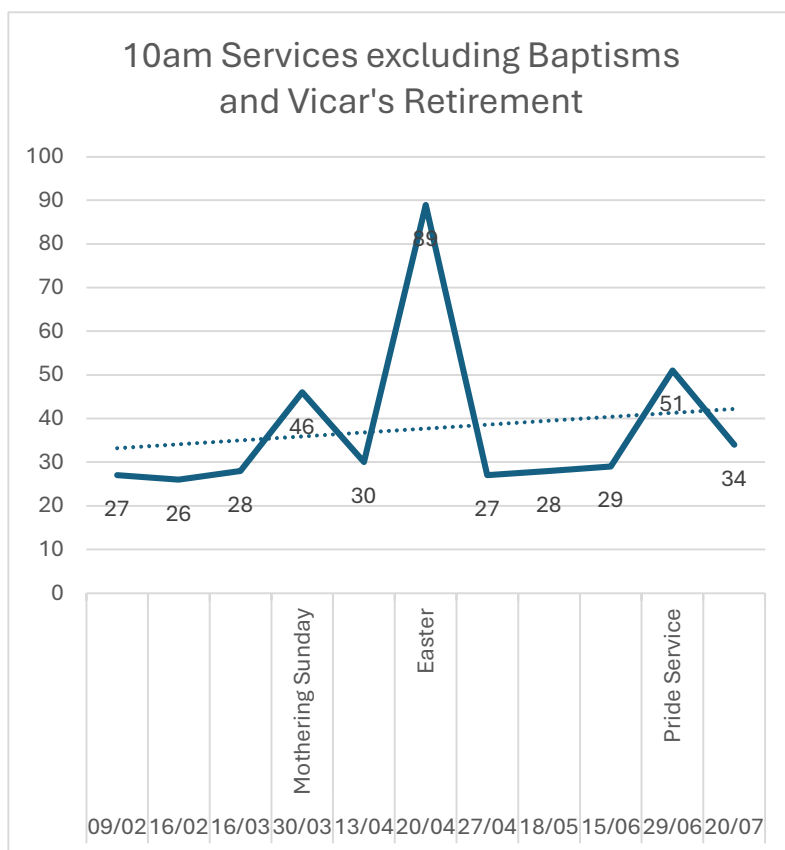
This section gives an indication of how many people participate in various activities and faith expressions – something which is recorded more formally in some cases than in others. The information has been gathered for the 6-month period from February to July 2025.

### Parish Communion

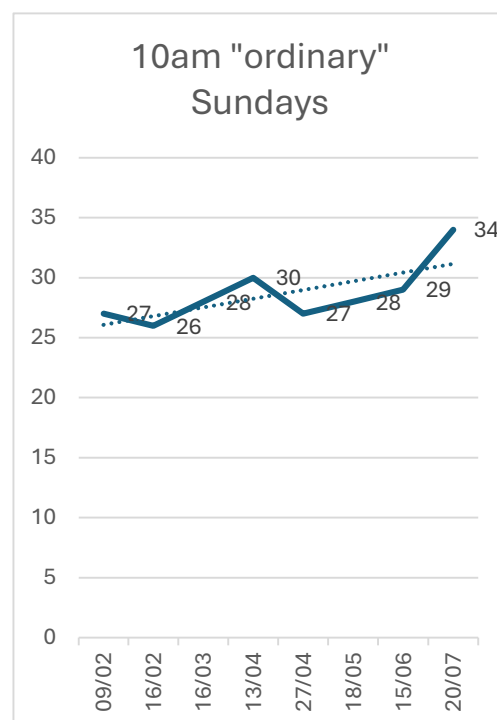
Attendance at the Parish Communion services is recorded formally in a register. The 9am service on the first Sunday of the month has lower attendance but is followed by Allsortz. Attendance tends to be higher for some services: in the current period there were 8 Sundays with at least one baptism, Mothering Sunday, Easter Sunday, the retiring vicar's final Sunday and a special service for Pride month. Attendance is generally on a gentle rise, as evidenced by the need to have more service sheets printed, and the indicative trend line on the graph below.



<sup>4</sup> to 31 July 2025



Attendance can be analysed in various ways; the underlying increase remains evident.



### Allsortz

Attendance at Allsortz (which is usually recorded in the formal register) in this period was:

|          |                |
|----------|----------------|
| February | [not recorded] |
| March    | 51             |
| April    | 40             |
| May      | 27             |
| June     | 48             |
| July     | 46             |

Around half of those attending are children.

### Community Meal

The lowest number we have had is 25 people and the highest number was 70. The average is around 50 people per meal. Alongside young families, elderly people a few people from the congregation, the community meal is very well attended by the most marginalised people in the community.

### Home Community Café

The Home Cafe has approximately 200 people walking through its doors each day.

### Earlsfield Foodbank

Since 2013, the foodbank has grown significantly. Prior to the pandemic, the foodbank would service approximately 25 households per week, a number that has grown to be regularly over 80 households per week and has peaked to over 110 households. On average it serves around 215 individual food parcels per week.

### Kitchen Tables

A core group of 10 people who attend regularly.

### Forest Church

An ongoing average attendance of 3-6 families.

### Electoral Roll

As required by Church of England rules, the Electoral Roll was fully revised in 2025, and as at the Annual Parochial Church meeting in May there were 59 people on the Roll.

### Church Services at Christmas

Although not within the six-month reference period, it may be helpful to note that at Christmas 2024, 85 people attended a carol service (service of nine lessons and carols) held 10 days before Christmas. On Christmas Eve, around 360 people attended one of the two, child-oriented, “crib services” and 37 people attended midnight mass. In most years (but not 2024) a very popular “beer and carols” event has been held – which includes children acting the nativity story in the church garden (and beer, and carols). This is normally attended by approx. 400 - 500 people.

## **WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO PEOPLE AT ST ANDREW’S?**

Throughout the month of July 2025, the PCC undertook a consultation process to find out as much as possible about the views of people who participate in the life of the St Andrew’s community, and to seek opinions in some key areas which the PCC has identified as priorities, along with asking for suggestions as to what we should be looking for in a new vicar.

The process involved:

- 1 Questionnaires which were distributed electronically through WhatsApp groups, by e-mail, and via a link which appeared on the website and in the weekly mailing from the Parish Office. Hard copies were available in the church.
- 2 Group conversations, facilitated and recorded by PCC members, associated with as many activities/groups as possible.
- 3 Letter sent to two key partner organisations – Earlsfield Foodbank and Home Community Café.

Around 30-35 people took part in the group conversations, and 15 questionnaires were returned. There may have been a small overlap, but roughly 45 people participated.

As might be expected, there was a diversity of views, and in a few cases quite differing perspectives. This section of the Parish Profile seeks to distil some common themes around:

- (i) the various services, activities and faith expressions, and
- (ii) some key issues the PCC has identified as priority areas
- (iii) any other emerging areas



## **Services, activities and faith expressions**

### **1 Parish Communion Services**

It is clear that these services are an important part of many people's life of faith. Communal worship is valued, and for some this is the foundation of our Christian family life. The more traditional nature of these services is held dear by some, but this is rarely a rigid view – many people mentioned building a degree of informality around the edges of tradition, especially at the more frequent 10am services. Sharing of the Peace has become a genuine period of greeting each other. Since the appointment of a Director of Music in early 2024, music has become an increasingly important aspect, and a few congregation members sing or play instruments occasionally. The gentle growth in attendance is represented by people of various ages, with new members generally being younger than the longer-standing congregation. Also, some of the newer members bring their young children. There is concern that we do not offer much for these children, and there is a real need for leadership and support in this area – some people mentioned reinstating a Sunday School.

There is some enthusiasm for varying the liturgy, and for involving more congregation members in various ways.

The Nigerian-inspired service held for Black History month has begun developing into a quarterly event, and a special service in Pride month was welcomed.

The less frequent and less attended 9am services, prior to Allsortz later in the morning, are seen by some as especially reflective or spiritual, but change is not ruled out – for example the addition of a short sermon or reflection.

In relation to the 6pm communion services (currently suspended) there is some sense that a weekday service of communion (or perhaps a reflective opportunity akin to compline or evening prayer) might be of value.

### **2 Allsortz**

There is unanimous positivity around Allsortz, and those who lead it, and a desire to see it continue along existing lines, along with a suggestion that it could perhaps be more frequent than once a month. There is really only one proviso – the children who participate are obviously getting older, so what happens when they outgrow the current format? One suggestion was a "Youth Allsortz".

A forthcoming development is the introduction of baptisms within Allsortz.

### **3 Community Meal**

The Community Meal lives up to its name: it truly engenders a sense of community. People from all walks of life welcome the opportunity to meet and have conversations with other local people, over what is described as delicious food. It is seen as a place where you meet people who you can then say hello to when you see them in the local street or shops, and is seen as especially important for people who live on their own. There is a desire for it to become even

better known and attended. It is seen as multi-generational and includes people from across a wide age range.

#### 4 Home Community Café

Home Café is seen as a place of true welcome – and the, mainly vegan, food is often praised too. There was some opposition to setting up a café in the church when it was mooted around 10 years ago, but is now universally seen as a wonderful and integral part of the St Andrew's community, and a main initiator of outreach to the wider community.

#### 5 Foodbank

Most volunteers at the Foodbank are not involved with St Andrew's in other ways, although there is some crossover. Some members of the St Andrew's community support the Foodbank through making donations, and see the Foodbank as a way of giving back to the community.

#### 6 Kitchen Tables

Kitchen Tables participants overlap considerably with family members of Allsortz families, and they value the adult space together. There is a desire to consider how to broaden participation and reach others in the parish.

#### 7 Forest Church

Although only held four times a year, Forest Church is clearly valued as a way of marking the passage of the seasons. One person described Forest Church as “a very special spiritual experience – to feel connected to God in nature”.

#### 8 Community Garden

The garden is maintained by a small group of committed volunteers, supported by a professional gardener. Gardening at St Andrew's is as much about the people as about the garden. The gardening group meets for work as well as for enjoyment and mutual support. The coffee breaks continue to be highlights of the sessions with lots of laughter.

#### 9 Decorating and Preparing the Church

These sessions have become a really nice way of connecting different St Andrew's communities (in this case, the garden volunteers and the church decorators) and getting to know people in the congregation, some familiar but without a name to the face, others totally new to the congregation. Increasingly people who get involved are now showing up a lot more in the more practical aspects of church life (e.g. attending the annual meeting, and tidying things up in the worship section of the building) which is really lovely and much-needed.

## Priority and Other Emerging Areas

### 10 Young People

While Allsortz provides a great option for younger children once a month, the consultation demonstrated that there is considerable concern about the general lack of offers for young people beyond this.

Many people noted the lack of meaningful activities for younger children at the Parish Communion services on non-Allsortz Sundays. Some parents sit with their children in the more informal café area (where there are soft furnishings) and one member of the congregation encourages children to do some colouring or similar. There were suggestions about re-establishing a Sunday School and finding people (including possibly teenagers) to lead more meaningful activities.

The PCC has long recognised the lack of any specific offer for teenagers and for people in their early twenties. One or two teenagers attend the Parish Communion services, and some teenagers attend the Community Meal, usually with their families.

It was suggested that we need to engage with young people themselves, and find out what they think, and what they might like us to offer. This is also linked to the “Youth Allsortz” suggestion mentioned above. It is a multifaceted issue – connected with the church building and facilities (see below), and our finances (also see below) in terms of whether we might be able to afford to employ a youth worker and/or make other investments in young people.

### 11 Individual Giving and Fundraising

In the consultation, several people made the point that there are no updates provided to members of the St Andrew’s community about our financial situation, no feedback on how donated funds are used, and no updates for regular donors. People felt that this does not create a climate for individual giving or fundraising.

St Andrew’s finances took a considerable hit during the pandemic, and the PCC even had to suspend payment of our Parish Support Fund payments to the Diocese of Southwark.

The Parish Support Fund enables the Diocese to pay priests, meet certain costs for ministry housing (including maintenance, repairs, water rates and council tax), pay for national and diocesan training, curates’ stipends and other ministry support, and offer other support to parishes. Our indicative Parish Support Fund costs for 2026, even excluding the cost of paying a vicar as we currently have a vacancy, is £79,500. Inevitably, some parishes are unable to make a full contribution, while some others pay in considerably more. In 2023 we paid £10,000, in 2024 £25,000, in 2025 £45,000, and have pledged £50,000 for 2026.

We receive rental income from letting the parish hall to Chelsea Hall School, and are grateful that both Home Café and Earlsfield Foodbank make a contribution for their use of the building. Apart from these sources of income, we largely rely on individual giving.

St Andrew's bank balance is currently quite healthy, but this is substantially due to one-off factors, which will not be repeated year to year. This includes a legacy, and a large payment of arrears of utility costs by the school.

For many more traditional churches, individual giving is centred around the Sunday service which is attended by most members of the church. Many of these people make regular contributions and/or give money at the service itself. This model does not really apply at St Andrew's. We do have a loyal band of regular givers who make (usually monthly) bank payments, but the number is relatively small compared with the number of people involved in all our activities and faith expressions. There is an offertory collection by cash or card at the parish communion services, but this type of giving is not integrated into other activities and faith expressions.

Some people felt that we should have a clearer "ask", perhaps approach people more personally, and publicise regular giving options more frequently. The PCC has had tentative discussions about a membership model, where everyone involved with St Andrew's becomes a "member" which involves making a financial contribution, but also receiving more information and encourages a stronger sense of belonging.

There are few events held specifically to raise funds for St Andrew's. This may be partly due to factors mentioned above, but also a lack of volunteers with time to organise events. Suggested events included concerts, barbecues, sales and fairs, movie nights, garden party.

The PCC has identified the need to develop a legacy policy and then promote requests for people to remember St Andrew's in their wills.

Many of our ambitions for the future will come at a financial cost, so this is clearly a priority area.

## 12 Racial Diversity

In general, St Andrew's does not appear to reflect the racial diversity of the area – the census data above shows that 25% of the local population identify as belonging to ethnic groups other than white. While some people of Global Majority heritage may be of religions other than Christian, only 10% of the local population said they were followers of other faiths.

Some people noted that the Parish Communion services are probably the most racially diverse of St Andrew's activities and faith expressions. Also, Home Café reaches out to a range of often excluded groups including people of Global Majority heritage, and specifically refugees.

There were positive comments about the Sunday service for Black History Month, which was a Nigerian-inspired service, and is evolving into a quarterly event.

While some people felt that there is a commitment to racial diversity, this was a topic upon which views varied considerably. Some people felt that ethnic minorities in the church are taken for granted, and questioned whether people of Global Majority heritage could count upon the church community to look out for them when they encounter even polite or unintentional racism. Does the wider church anticipate and hear their concerns, know them as individuals and treat them as real people? There were concerns which link to a lack of pastoral care (see below) and which also seemed to relate to past hurts which have not fully healed.

The lack of obvious racial diversity of PCC members and the ministry leadership was raised, and people felt that visibility is important. The PCC has been aware of this issue, and has made some attempts in advance of the annual meetings to encourage people with Global Majority heritage to stand for election to the PCC. Obviously, this requires more thought and effort.

### 13 An Inclusive Church

Many people feel that St Andrew's is an inclusive church and welcoming to all. We have signed up to the Inclusive Church network whose mission includes challenging the church where it continues to discriminate against people on grounds of disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality - and believes in a Church which welcomes and serves all people in the name of Jesus Christ.

As is evident from section 12 above, there are people in the St Andrew's community who do not feel fully recognised and included. On a positive note, there was widespread enthusiasm for flying the Pride flag during Pride month, decorating the church accordingly, and for having a special Sunday service for Pride. Similar efforts are made to recognise Black History Month.

Home Café and the Community Meal make many efforts to include people from diverse backgrounds, and are seen as integral to St Andrew's commitment to being inclusive. However, comments were made that other parts of the St. Andrew's community have not been as successful in this respect.

While flying flags and similar steps hopefully send out a positive signal, some people felt our commitment does not run deep enough and show itself in practical actions across the whole of the St Andrew's ecosystem. For example, what intentional support has the wider St Andrew's community shown for refugees and asylum seekers, or for the Trans community? We don't routinely provide service booklets and documents in large print, and how might we communicate the liturgy to people who do not have high literacy? Again at an intersection with pastoral care, have we thought about how we recognise the needs and wishes of anyone who may be on their dementia journey?

Being a fully inclusive church is obviously a journey we have embarked upon, but still with some distance to travel.

### 14 Our Church Buildings and Facilities

Over the years, the church building has been updated and re-configured to accommodate the café and to make the space more flexible, with pews having been removed in the nave and replaced with moveable/stackable chairs. The PCC has started to think about whether there are further options for using church spaces to their best and maximum capacity.

This falls into two areas. Firstly, there is general support for using the nave and café areas for more events – music, drama, etc. This includes the ability for the space to be used by youth groups, clubs and other organisations – and some of these uses may generate income. This really requires an upgrade of the sound system and lighting to a more flexible and professional standard, and perhaps reconfiguring the dais enabling it also to be used as a stage. The acquisition of moveable partitions would encourage more flexible use of the space. Also, unlikely to be controversial are initial thoughts about reconfiguring the church office (which occupies the “yellow room”) and vestry, including installing a mezzanine floor, so that the space can be used throughout the week.

Secondly, there may be options to reconfigure the chancel and/or side chapel. These areas retain some pews and are generally reflect a long-standing traditional arrangement. Some strong views were expressed that these areas should not be changed, with an intermediate view that any changes should allow return to the current configuration for services. (The chancel has a traditional choir arrangement with two rows of pews on either side facing each other across the central aisle). This is a sensitive area, which requires careful thought.

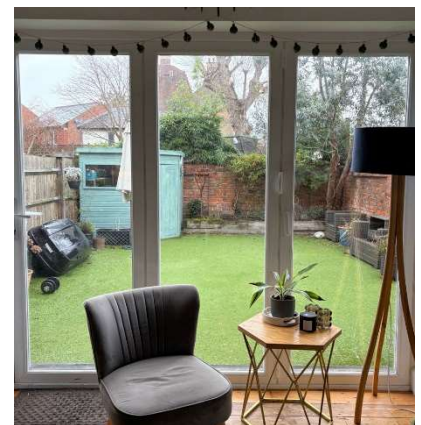
The church has a traditional pipe organ to one side of the chancel, which has not been in working condition for many years. It is understood that repairs might cost in the region of £150k. A flexible keyboard piano/organ is used for services, but it does not function well as an organ. The option of purchasing a digital organ is under consideration.

Later in 2025, we will be refurbishing the part of the community garden where wooden railway sleepers used in the design have rotted, and other upgrading work is needed, This work has been made possible through a specific donation.

As mentioned earlier, the parish hall, in Waynflete Steet which runs alongside the southern edge of the church and community garden, is largely let out to a school. St Andrew's retains the option to use some space in the building outside of school hours, but this is little used other than for yoga classes, and the arrangement is under review. The St Andrew's Vicarage is located in St Andrew's Court, which runs off of Waynflete Street, along the eastern boundary of the church premises.



Also in Waynflete Street is Glebe House, which is divided into three homes. In recent times, two of these have been used in full or in part as housing for service to the church, and one of these will



become the House for Duty for the Associate Vicar.

This is a four-bedroom house (two double bedrooms and two single bedrooms). The property has a garden to the rear, which includes a shed with electricity supply, suitable for storage or workshop use, and a small planted bed at the rear, framed by mature trees, creating a sense of privacy and established greenery.

## 15 Pastoral Care

The topic of pastoral care was raised spontaneously during the consultation. There is no doubt that there is much instinctive and genuine, mutual support and care expressed within parts of the St Andrew's community. However, we do not have an agreed, coordinated approach or policy across the whole St Andrew's ecosystem. The PCC has acknowledged this as an issue, but to date little progress has been made in taking this forward.



We are responsible for more CO<sub>2</sub> emissions than most churches, to a large extent because our building is in use 6-7 days a week. The building is heated by a fairly modern gas boiler. The PCC has been looking at some short-term wins in reducing emissions and fuel bills, but in the medium term wishes to explore options such as installing heat pumps, and/or solar panels on our very large south-facing roof. During the consultation, it was suggested that there might be a role for St Andrew's in advising our community about green initiatives, and also in acknowledging the distress some people feel about the climate emergency.

## 17 One Church, One Faith, One Lord

Members of St Andrew's understand and celebrate the multi-faceted nature of the church community, where everyone has a place. There are cross-overs where, for example, families who are part of Allsortz may also be involved with Kitchen Tables and/or Forest Church, and Families attending Parish Communion may also be part of Allsortz. Everyone is invited to the community meal, but this quite rightly has a wider community focus. There is no place or forum which has the purpose of bringing the whole St Andrew's community together. In the consultation, one person noted that this had happened at our retiring vicar's final service and farewell lunch, and to an extent it sometimes occurs around the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. One or two people mentioned the need to avoid cliques.

Our new vicar needs to be a leader and shepherd of the whole St Andrew's flock. The potential membership model for St Andrew's might become a unifying force, but thought should also to be given to bringing the whole flock together on occasions.

## OTHER FACETS OF OUR PROFILE

### 1 Earlsfield Friary

Earlsfield Friary has been an important catalyst for the development of many of St Andrew's activities and faith expressions, and community development initiatives across Earlsfield. Earlsfield Friary comprises a stable group of a few families who live locally. Members are deeply grounded in their Christian faith commitment with a common desire to serve their community.

The Friary's involvement was welcomed and encouraged by our previous vicar, and started to re-energise the St Andrew's community at a time, well over a decade ago, when the church appeared to be in decline.

In 2024, St Andrew's was involved in jointly commissioning research by US-based researchers Beyond Data, for Street Psalms - who describe themselves as a dispersed, global community in mission who share a common call to free others to love and serve. The research looked at the question: "in a post colonial landscape, how can a place-based community development model cultivate an ecosystem of social, spiritual and environmental transformation in an urban context?" The research looked at the Friary's involvement in place-based community

development in Earlsfield, partly to discern themes which might be transferable to other urban contexts.

Themes which were found to underpin the development of the ecosystem in Earlsfield, including St Andrew's, included:

- Deep listening to the place and its needs
- Building trusting relationships over time
- Balancing complicated tensions
- Imbuing values, tied to Christian faith, into initiatives in a manner that has broad appeal and connects to other faith traditions or philosophies
- Using perception and communication skills rooted in faith-based principles
- Aligning values and operational practices

While Earlsfield Friary has been, and may remain, the engine room for driving new initiatives and developing faith expressions, it not the sole repository of innovative ideas and desire for growth. As the St Andrew's ecosystem further matures, new forums may be needed, interacting with the PCC and other stakeholders, so that innovation is built upon a broader common foundation.

## 2 Work on Vision, Mission and Purpose

During 2021, the PCC worked on developing statements to articulate the vision, mission and purpose of St Andrew's. The outcome of this process does not appear to have been widely disseminated, but is included here as a foundation for continuing discussion and development as we move into the future:

*Our vision is:*

To be a community where inclusivity and diversity express the passionate embrace of a listening God and holds the space for transformation in us and our parish.

*Our mission is:*

- To be a welcoming church.
- Love the Local where we live.
- Do good in the neighbourhood.
- Apply our skills to serve others.
- Invite questions not just offer answers.
- Promote change as normal.
- Be relevant to the whole demographic of the parish.
- Deepen diversity among the community.
- Ensure slow time is enacted.
- Develop people's passion and purpose.
- Listen to the stories of the outsider.
- Embody Jesus as transformational tradition.
- To be a 'home' for the 'homeless' (Body mind and spirit).
- To offer hospitality and love.
- To respect and protect everyone.

*Our purpose is:*

To be God's people, enabling flourishing and fullness of life for everyone.

Not unrelated to the demographic data for Earlsfield provided earlier, a substantial proportion of the St Andrew's community, including most of the PCC, are people who are in full-time work and have children at home. People do generously give as much time and energy as they are able, but a gap tends to emerge between ideas, initiatives and perceived solutions to problems, and the time needed to implement them. This suggests a need to draw in and engage with members of the community who may have more time, but also that there will sometimes be a need to buy-in time, which obviously relates to issues around giving and fundraising outlined above.

## MOVING FORWARD – HOW DO WE SEE THE FUTURE?

When our previous long-standing vicar retired, he reflected upon the changes which had taken place over his 20-year tenure. The PCC used this as a prompt to ask people, through the consultation process, what changes they would like to see in future, and also what they would not want to lose or change.

As might be deduced from the section above about what is important to people, there is enthusiasm for continuing with our current activities and faith expressions. This does not exclude some evolution of existing expressions and the development of new ones. We will continue to listen to our community, and explore spiritual practices suitable for our context.

During the preparation of this Parish Profile, the PCC was reminded of the national priorities of the Church of England, which sit alongside an overall vision, and also identify desired outcomes. As we move forward at St Andrew's we should be mindful to align ourselves to the priorities, vision and mission of the Church of England as our desire is to have shared outcomes.

### One vision

A Church for the whole nation which is Jesus Christ centred, and shaped by, the five marks of mission. A church that is **simpler, humbler, bolder**.

### The five marks of mission:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

### Three priorities:

- **To become a church of missionary disciples** where all God's people are free to live the Christian life, wherever we spend our time Sunday to Saturday.
- **To be a church where mixed ecology is the norm** – where every person in England has access to an enriching and compelling community of faith by adding new churches and new forms of Church to our parishes, cathedrals, schools and chaplaincies.
- **To be a church that is younger and more diverse.**

**Six bold outcomes:**

A church for everyone through:

- **Doubling the number of children and young active disciples** in the Church of England by 2030.
- A Church of England which **fully represents the communities we serve** in age and diversity.

A pathway for everyone into an accessible and contextual expression of church through:

- **A parish system revitalised for mission** so churches can reach and serve everyone in their community.
- Creating **ten thousand new Christian communities** across the four areas of home, work/education, social and digital.

*Empowered by:*

- **All Christians in the Church of England envisioned, resourced and released to live as disciples of Jesus Christ** in the whole of life, bringing transformation to the church and world.
- All local churches, supported by their diocese, **becoming communities and hubs for initial and ongoing formation.**

Sources: [www.churchofengland.org/about/vision-and-strategy](http://www.churchofengland.org/about/vision-and-strategy)  
[www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx](http://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx)

Building upon what is important to people, the priority areas outlined above, feedback from the consultation, and in the context of the national church's priorities, key areas for development are:

- 1 **More options for children and young people.** This includes activities for children at the Sunday Parish Communion services, and especially new offers for teenagers, including the emerging older Allsortz group. This means engaging with young people to find out what they would want us to develop. It is linked to improving facilities in the building such as sound and lighting, and to finding funds to invest in this work, including the possibility of employing a youth worker. Where young people already are, or become, involved in church activities, then we need actively to involve them in valued roles. Reconfiguration of the office and vestry areas would provide space for Sunday School and Youth Club activities.

It would be valuable for St Andrew's to build stronger links with local schools, Guides/Scouts and similar groups, and also St. Cecilia's Church of England secondary school in nearby Southfields, which is attended by children from Earlsfield.

There is recognition that the term "children and young people" includes a variety of age groups, whose needs and wishes may overlap but may differ. For example:

- Those coming to the end of their primary school years and entering secondary school
- Mid to late teenagers with growing autonomy and independence
- Students and people in their early twenties
- Young adults (25-35)
- Young families (including children, and adults aged 30-45)

Our future planning needs to be more sophisticated in terms of different age groups, and needs to include what days and times of the week may be best to maximise participation in any planned activities and faith expressions.

- 2 **Develop financial strength and resilience.** We need to think through more effective approaches both to individual giving and fundraising. This includes a more open approach to communication about the church's finances, more focussed and personalised appeals for funds, exploring a membership/subscription model, and being able to hold a bigger variety of events in the church building. It means actively promoting regular giving, encouraging fundraising ideas and initiatives by members of the St Andrew's community, and also promoting legacy giving.
- 3 **Reaching out and growing the St Andrew's community.** Across the spectrum of our activities and faith expressions, many people want to share their experience and sense of belonging with others, and want to encourage more people to participate in the faith expression(s) which have meaning for them. This includes young people as set out at point 1 above, but applies much more generally too. This encouragement to others might be by word of mouth, joint working with other community groups, inviting people to specific events and projects, posters and local publicity, and use of social media. One particular area which is being worked on is to build a relationship with the families who have their children baptised. This would include being in touch in the period following the baptism, sending birthday messages and/or messages on the anniversary of the baptism, inviting the family to Allsortz, etc.

Home Community Café acts an important entry point for the wider St Andrew's community but more needs to be done to better integrate the Café's work and community outreach into the life of the church. There is scope for shared use of resources and networks to see wider community impact, and a stronger presence of the Café in the church's vision and mission.

- 4 **Being welcoming and truly inclusive.** We know many people have found St Andrew's to be welcoming and inclusive, but this is not universally the case. The ministry team, PCC and all leaders need to engage more deeply with, and support, people who don't feel heard, included or respected, wherever this occurs across the St Andrew's community. The inclusion of people of Global Majority heritage needs to be visible within the PCC and other leadership roles.
- 5 **Pastoral care.** There is valued mutual support and care within parts of the St Andrew's community. However, unlike some churches, we do not have clear policy or approach to pastoral care, nor a pastoral care team whose members look out for, support and visit people who are unwell in their mind, body or spirit - or perhaps "just" lonely. As our community grows, we wish to find new ways to express love and care to anyone in need.
- 6 **A green hub.** Over the next five years, the hope is that the church building can be heated and lit using power generated on site. In this way we wish to lead by example, and put ourselves in a position where we can also share expertise and advice across Earlsfield.
- 7 **Music.** We need to build upon recent progress and integrate music more deeply into appropriate faith expressions, including the Parish Communion services and Allsortz. The purchase of a digital organ, improving the sound system, developing the St Andrew's

singers group and encouraging music-making generally, would enhance the role of music at St Andrew's.

- 8 **One family of faith.** As current faith expressions evolve, and new models emerge beyond our current plans and, perhaps beyond what we can currently imagine – we want to safeguard the unity of the St Andrew's family. This means that everyone will have a sense of belonging and acceptance, there will be mutual respect and support, there will be something for everyone who seeks a dwelling place in the house of God. And on occasions the members of the family will gather together. The new vicar, and any assistant vicar, will have a crucial role in defining and building this family.

There are many dwelling places in my Father's house. Otherwise, I would have told you, because I am going away to make ready a place for you.

*John 14:2*

## PERSON SPECIFICATION FOR OUR NEW ASSOCIATE VICAR

This person specification derives from the descriptions above – what is important to people and how we see our future - along with comments made during our consultation month when we asked what are the important skills, attitudes and abilities we should be looking for in a new associate vicar for St Andrew's?

Within our ministry team looking for:

- 1 An ability to listen deeply and non-judgementally to each individual within the St Andrew's community, and to the wider neighbourhood.
- 2 Able to foster a sense of belonging to a diverse but united Christian community. To demonstrate an understanding of, and respect for, the whole spectrum of faith expressions from the traditional/inherited, to the fresh, new and innovative.
- 3 A commitment to pastoral care, enabling St Andrew's to reach out to all who are in any form of distress or ill health.
- 4 Willing to be present and visible in all St. Andrew's activities and faith expressions, and in the wider community.
- 5 Ability to engage with, and develop trust with, young people, as a basis for understanding their needs and wishes, and enabling St Andrew's to respond.
- 6 A commitment to the financial health of St Andrew's, and willing actively to support individual giving, income generation and fundraising activities.
- 7 A commitment to the principles of being an Inclusive Church and helping the whole St. Andrew's community live up to those principles in practice.
- 8 Committed to the national Church's wider priorities, particularly around engaging new demographics, forming lay leaders, and embedding mission and discipleship as core to parish life.



- 9 To be an all-round effective communicator, whether preaching in church, participating in meetings, or in informal and one-to-one settings.
- 10 Leadership and commitment – an inspiring leader who can navigate cultural change with prophetic imagination, and who is seen to put St Andrew’s first in the vicar’s role.

For the Associate Vicar role, we are seeking in particular someone who:

- Has experience of ministry with young families
- Is confident across a range of worshipping traditions, from traditional Eucharist to fresh and contextual expressions of church
- Is entrepreneurial, adaptable, and at ease with change and innovation
- Has a proven record of leadership in ministry or the workplace, able to work both collaboratively and independently
- Brings creativity, strong communication skills, and ideally musicality, to their ministry.

As we sustain, support and evolve our mixed ecology of worship, our Associate Vicar will participate and help in:

1. Designing and shaping a revised, primetime Sunday service that intentionally attracts, welcomes, and integrates young families. As part of this, we are re-imagining our baptism preparation as a more intentional pathway into the life of the church, aligning it with Sunday worship, patterns of belonging, and ongoing family engagement. This includes responding thoughtfully to families who initially connect through baptism or school-related church references, and designing structures that foster deeper participation, retention, and shared capacity across the parish.
2. Developing develop further expressions of faith, especially in a community and home-based way. In particular, designing a cafe-style service for young people and growing the pattern and shape of our mid-week home-based meetings called kitchen tables as a way of all ages intermingling and growing in faith and life together.