

Diocese of Manchester

Deanery of Oldham & Ashton



Parish of St. George, Stalybridge



St. George's Church, Stalybridge

# Parish Profile and PCC Statement (Benefices Measure)

## 1. Manchester, Ashton-Under-Lyne and Stalybridge

The Diocese of Manchester is the Church of England in Greater Manchester.

Manchester is situated in the south-central part of North West England, fringed by the Cheshire Plain to the south and the Pennines to the north and east. The recorded history of Manchester began with the Romans in AD 79. Throughout the Middle Ages Manchester remained a town but began expanding "at an astonishing rate" around the turn of the 19th century as part of a boom in textile production in the Industrial Revolution in the Victorian period resulting in it becoming the world's first industrial city. As the result of an early-19th century factory building boom, Manchester was transformed from a township into a major mill town, borough and was later granted honorific city status in 1853.

Manchester was the site of the world's first railway station, hosted the first meeting of the Trades Union Congress and is where scientists first split the atom and developed the first programmable computer. It is known for its music scene and its sporting connections. Manchester was the host of the 2002 Commonwealth Games, and its sports clubs include two Premier League football teams, Manchester City and Manchester United. Manchester is the third-most visited city in the United Kingdom by foreign visitors and the most visited in England outside London.



*Manchester Town Hall*

Ashton under Lyne is in the Greater Manchester area of the North West of England. It is part of the County of Lancashire and is now the administrative centre of the Metropolitan Borough of Tameside.

There was a settlement of some kind at Ashton long before the Norman Conquest of 1066. A small hillock on the north bank of the River Tame, overlooking a good crossing-point on the river, became a fortified position guarding the boundary between the ancient kingdoms of Northumbria and Mercia. A village developed just to the north of this. The fortification eventually became the Old Hall. A church was built and a market developed which served the surrounding areas. Over the centuries Ashton developed into a small market town. Wool spinning was a traditional cottage industry in the surrounding hilly areas, which were particularly suitable for rearing sheep. A small amount of coal mining took place nearby. A major turning-point in the history of the town was the coming of the canals (and later the railways). Ashton became the junction of three canals, the Manchester and Ashton canal, the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the Peak Forest Canal. The mines of the area began to supply the new factories in Manchester.



*Ashton Town Hall and Market place*

The canal enabled the coal mines to increase their output. Tram roads ran from local mines to take coal to the canal to be loaded onto narrow boats. The canal meant that the coal and other raw products and finished goods could be transported easily and cheaply. The damp climate in the area to the west of the Pennines made the area suitable for the spinning of cotton and the whole area to the north and east of Manchester became the world centre for the manufacture of cotton goods. The town expanded rapidly during the Victorian period.

Stalybridge is a small town in the North West of England. Lying in the foothills of the Pennines, which are also known as the backbone of Britain, 8 miles east of Manchester - it's a beautiful part of the world to live in. Stalybridge originally came about due to the local Manor of Stayley, and the bridge which crossed the River Tame. Stayley Hall, erected in 1343, was for many years left a ruin but is now sympathetically converted to a residential development. Saddleback Bridge, built in 1707, which replaced earlier versions, still stands over the River Tame in a modern form. The bridge across the river enabled travellers to pass from the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne to the parish of Mottram-in-Longdendale. The town of Stalybridge was the creation of the Industrial Revolution. In 1776 came the event that was to lead to the development of Stalybridge as a town - COTTON!



*View of the Parish from Gorse Hall*

Much has changed in Stalybridge- with help from money received from the National Lottery and other sources. The improvements to the town include shopping centres, stores and new accommodation and the restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. Stalybridge - once called 'Little Venice' because the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and River Tame run directly through the town - is surrounded by the towns of Ashton-u-Lyne, Audenshaw, Denton, Dukinfield, Droylsden, Hyde, Longdendale, and Mossley. These towns collectively form the borough known as Tameside. With more visitors to the town in recent years due to the re-building of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and new clubs and bars opening up in the town - a local radio station referred to the town as 'StalyVegas' - a nickname that has now become popular for the town far and wide.

Stalybridge has been awarded Town of Culture in Greater Manchester for 2022.

## **2. Manchester Diocese and the Oldham and Ashton Deanery**

St. George's Church is part of the recently formed Oldham and Ashton Deanery within the Manchester Diocese. The Diocese has four Archdeaconries with Stalybridge falling within the Archdeaconry of Rochdale.

## **3. The Parish of St. George Stalybridge**

The Parish of St. George, Stalybridge consists of approximately 6 square miles with a population given as 7989 according to the Church of England Parish Map (supplied by ArcGIS dated 4 September 2018) with 3517 occupied households and a deprivation rank of 713 (1 most deprived, 12,500 least deprived)

<https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=67bce0ed36dd4ee0af7a16bc079aa09a&extent=-5.3948,50.0787,-4.5516,50.3686>

Diocesan Parish Data available on request.

It has a single church building which was built in 1838 - 1840 but is in fact a united parish bringing together two churches which bore the same name.

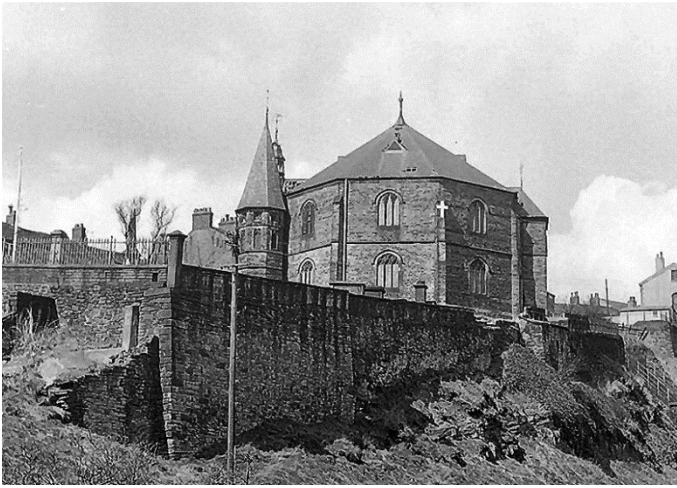
The current building, for many years known as New St George's, was built as a replacement for the Chapel of Ease which had been built near the River Tame in 1776. The Old Chapel had been rebuilt twice but it had continual issues with the building needing repairs due to land slippage.

The new church became the focus for the community, but the titles of Old St. George's and New St. George's remained over the next few years.

Eventually in 1967, Old St. George's Church finally closed its doors, and the two parishes were merged in 1969.

More can be read about the two parishes in the book by Revd Canon Paul Denby - "Two into one will go." This can be viewed on the parish website which can be found at [www.stg.org.uk](http://www.stg.org.uk)





*Old St. George's Church*

The current church is built in stone with a slate roof with a tower. Originally it had galleries around three sides but these have been removed. The West end of the church was redeveloped and was finally finished in 1976. These alterations allowed the building of a coffee lounge, choir vestry, committee room, toilets and kitchen downstairs and the whole width of the building upstairs was a large meeting hall now enhanced by addition of a kitchenette.



In 2009 a Garden of Remembrance was laid for the interment of cremated remains. A dedication service was led by the Bishop of Middleton and attended by the Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester



The church has a loop sound system; the lighting has again been improved with the installation of LEDs to conserve energy and improve the lighting in church. The loft space has been insulated to reduce our heating costs as access to the old lights was no longer required. Significant fund raising was necessary, but we were fortunate in receiving two large donations and this meant we could complete the works far earlier than we at first thought.

The building is Grade II listed. It can seat 300 people using chairs to supplement the pews.



### Some Facts & Figures

Number on the Electoral Roll	120
Baptisms in 2017	11
Confirmation Candidates in 2018	10
Weddings and Blessings in 2017	4
Funerals (plus burial of Ashes)	6
Copies of Parish magazine per month	118

## **4. The Tradition of Services at St. Georges**

### Weekly Services

#### Sunday

- 10.30 Parish Communion and Junior Church  
(4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Worship for All)
- 18.00 Occasional Special Services as announced

#### Tuesday

- 10.30 Holy Communion



Baptisms are currently offered on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays at 12.30 after the 10.30 service by arrangement and within the 10.30 service if requested.

Normally attendance at the main service is between 50 and 70 people which can vary widely at Baptisms and Festival days. Festival days can see numbers up to 100. Harvest, Nine Lessons and Carols by Candlelight, Christingle and Toy Service and Easter are popular, well attended services.

### Other Services

Communion to Sick and Housebound by request

Special Services include Advent Carol Service, Christingle and Toy Service, Nine Lessons and Carols by Candlelight, Blessing of the crib; Midnight Communion, Christmas Day, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Holy Week, Good Friday, Easter Day, Harvest, All Souls, Remembrance Sunday.

## Orders of Service used

The church uses the *Book of Common Worship* and sometimes the *Book of Common Prayer*. Some services use formats designed for particular services such as – Worship for All; Baptism within a Eucharist Service.

## Music Tradition



The church has a pipe organ which is in need of some repairs (which we are currently fundraising for). There is a robed 4-part choir which is affiliated to the RSCM, usually 12 members strong. The main hymn book used for during our services is the *Complete Anglican Hymns Old and New*. We are currently using relief organists following the resignation of our previous organist and choirmaster.

Choir practices continue, led by a senior choir member. We have cd's of hymn music available to use if needed but would wish to appoint an organist and choirmaster following the appointment of a new incumbent.

## Church Resources and Staff

### Parish Priest

The PCC is looking for a new priest who can bring a renewed enthusiasm and direction to the parish following the last incumbent's re-location at the end of January 2022.

### Church Wardens

St. George's has 2 Church Wardens: Mrs Valerie Fallows and Mrs Gillian Cotton

And 3 deputy Wardens: Mrs Christine Crabtree. Mrs Janet Vidler and Mrs Rose Hayward

### Other Assistants

PCC Secretary - Mrs. Lynn Moon

PCC Treasurer - Mr. Michael Davies

14 Lay Assistants for the administration of the chalice at Holy Communion

Lay involvement in the service with prayers led by members of the congregation & clergy and lesson reading by people on a rota.



In the past, several members from the congregation have become Readers, NSMs (2), OLMs (3).

Pastoral Care in the wider parish community is continuing whilst the parish is in vacancy thanks to 2 members of our Pastoral Care Team. During Covid restrictions, the previous incumbent called on a group of willing volunteers to contact everyone on the Electoral Roll (each volunteer having a list of 8-10 people), who contacted those on their list on a regular basis, to offer help and support. Some volunteers did shopping or collected prescriptions for those who were unable to get out. This helped to develop friendships which have continued.

We are also involved in the local Ecumenical community in Stalybridge with the other churches in the area - 2 C of E (in the Diocese of Chester); 1 RC; 1 Methodist; 1 Baptist; 1 Unitarian; 1 Congregational; 1 Evangelical (Revive Church). We have also, in the last 2 years, begun to develop links with the Parishes of Mossley due to the 2 incumbents being married to each other.

### Church Hall

The church hall is integral in the west end of the church.



There is a community hall in the village of Heyrod which is also available for hire in the parish.

## **5. Church Organisations**

- Junior Church meets throughout the 10.30 service. Some of our Junior Church members are now of Secondary School age, which we know is a time when we can lose them. Early in 2022 we introduced 'Junior Church Seniors', aimed at our older Junior Church. The aim is to hold regular events where they can meet up in a safe environment. We have held two events up to now - DVD night with pizza, and ten-pin bowling. Unfortunately, since Covid restrictions have been lifted, we have seen a drop in numbers. The Junior Church leaders have highlighted potential reasons for this and are trying to come up with innovative ideas to bring our younger members back.
- Rainbows - Tuesday evenings
- Brownies - Wednesday evenings
- Guides - Wednesday evenings
- Choir practice - Friday evenings



- Fair Trade Afternoon Teas as advertised on Saturdays.

The following organisations also use the building facilities: -

- Tameside Community Voices Choir rehearsal - Thursday evenings
- George's Kitchen: a community project which cooks and delivers (frozen) meals to elderly or vulnerable people in the parish weekly on Wednesdays,
- Come Together, an informal social time for anyone who wants a cup of tea and a chat, held each Thursday afternoon.
- Dementia Café is held on 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays of the month (to dovetail with the Dementia Cafe held at Willow Wood Hospice on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays). Highlights include Christmas parties, concerts, meals, games, crafts, themed quizzes and armchair aerobics. On occasion, some gentle hand massage and relaxation treatments can be provided. This group has grown rapidly since Covid restrictions have been lifted and regularly gets 20 attendees. The organiser has created a WhatsApp group so that members can offer support outside of the meetings, which has proved extremely valuable.
- Tiny Tots group meets in church lounge on Monday & Thursday mornings and is much valued by the local community.

## **6. Use of the Church Building**

We offer the building to the wider community for hire, for such things as local elections, parties, and concerts.

## **7. Local Organisations**

### Schools

There are 2 primary schools and a boy's secondary school within walking distance from the church. None of these are church schools, but some contact has been made with the 2 primary schools and the incumbent has previously led morning assemblies.

### Hospitals/Hospice

There is a local hospital and a hospice at the edge of our parish both of which we visit upon request.

There are a number of homes for elderly persons within our boundaries. Better links with all of them are being forged with a view to meeting the spiritual care of the residents. We also organise private home visits/Holy Communion/Prayer to those who require them.

There are housing association owned bungalows at Kendal House and St. George's House - these are independent flats within a main complex; Blandford Court - sheltered accommodation with flats and independent housing; Holme Lea and Stamford Court - nursing home and residential care accommodation.

## **8. What are our strengths?**

We are a committed congregation who want to work together to serve God and our local community.

We seem to be respected within the local community and want to work to develop this.

## **9. What are our weaknesses?**

Sadly our previous choir master and organist resigned following a disagreement. Unfortunately this has left behind some discontent within the Church community.

We can be set in our ways; it is hoped that a new incumbent will guide us tactfully to accept new ideas.

We have many baptisms, but we do not seem able to encourage the return of our baptism families, this is something that we really need to work at.

## **10. How do we engage with the wider community?**

We have a regular e-newsletter which currently has 97 subscribers. We have a Facebook page and Twitter page which are manned regularly, and we frequently post events on the local Facebook group. We hold Christmas and Spring fairs, where local businesses can hire a stall - during Covid restrictions, these were held online and proved so popular, that this year we have continued online as well as face-to-face fairs. At Christmas we held 'Breakfast with Santa' which booked up within a couple of days. We have taken part in a sponsored walk organised by our local hospice, and a sponsored dog walk in aid of MIND and Church funds.

We also collect for the local food bank.

We are lucky that we are well supported by the local paper which often reports on what is going on.

## **11. Finances**

A copy of the last 3 years audited accounts are available on request. The church works hard to balance the budget and for the last few years there has been a small profit.

Some Highlights: -

- 2021 income £55,943; Expenditure £75,368 (if the amount spent on the George's Kitchen refurbishment is discounted - grants covering this expense had been received in 2020 - the excess expenditure on the general running of the church is £2,247)
- Incumbent's and other expenses paid in full.
- No major debts

- Over the last few years, the Parish Share has been paid in full. Projects like the Roof Fund and the Organ Repair fund have meant that the congregation have donated to these specific items and not to the general fund.
- The major expense of the Parish is always the maintenance and upkeep of the internal fabric of the building. This has been kept to a minimum expenditure by the well organised and well-connected Fabric Committee.
- The lighting update was completed

Current Projects: -

- The Quinquennial inspection was done in 2020.
- Phase 3 of the building repairs is the next priority - roof over sanctuary and vestries and the tower.

## **12. Specification of Skills and Experience for the new Incumbent**

### **Mission Statement**

Faith in God, Hope in Jesus, Love and Service to all.

The church is called to be the agent of God's rule, drawing people into harmony with God, with each other and with the natural world.

As part of the One Holy and Apostolic Church, as part of the Church of England, and the Diocese of Manchester, we respond with joy to God's love.

We seek to share in all that we do, clergy and lay people together, supporting and encouraging one another.

### **Worship**

We want our worship of God to be as good as possible and involve as many as possible to try to make it awesome, worshipful and helpful as possible to all people.

### **Nurture**

Our Pastoral Care group is a sign of our concern for others.

We aim to be aware of each other's needs and of the needs of our neighbours.

### **Witness**

We want better communications both within the church and outside it.

## **Service**

As a Parish Church we are for all within the parish boundary.

We aim to look for new ways to ensure we grow outward in service

## **Experience and Skills**

In the context of the information in the rest of this document, the new incumbent will need: -

- To be an experienced Priest who has either been a Parish Priest or an assistant curate.
- To be committed to prayer, the five marks of mission and growth
- To be an innovative, dynamic and creative person who can take the parish onwards developing lay ministry as part of the holistic ministry of the church.
- To be a good teacher and role model to all
- Successful experience of working in a team
- To be an outgoing person - very good at dealing with and communicating with people, church members, parish residents and local leaders.
- A good sense of humour
- To encourage and help the congregation and people in the parish to continue to be involved in many aspects of the church and for them to take on roles as lay workers.
- To share leadership - a team builder who will lead a team of people.
- To be prepared to share responsibility and work with neighbouring parishes within the Deanery and the town to support and progress the work of Mission Communities.
- A flair for working with children, young people and young families - to encourage children to be involved, and to offer something from the church for the youth of the parish.
- With the experience to ensure that the church continues to offer appropriate whole life worship for all members of the congregation.

## **Potential Developments and Other Pastoral Opportunities**

- We wish to develop further the church's work among young people and young families, through their involvement in services and by working with the young people in our parish outside of the church building.
- Good progress has been made establishing and building relationships with people and organisations in the parish, including the 3 schools, the police and the local councillors. We are a Fair-Trade church and regularly have an Afternoon Tea and stall after the 10.30 service. We



have social events and a Spring Fair and a Christmas Fair. We are very keen to build on the work done and develop further links within the community.

### Other Items and Conditions

- The incumbent, with the PCC, will be responsible for the care of a Grade II listed church building which we are trying to maintain in good order – via a good, working fabric committee – and will need to have real enthusiasm for the building including repairs and conservation work but also a willingness to consider ways of increasing its use for religious and secular events.
- The PCC has NOT passed any resolution (resolution A or B) that restricts the acceptance of a woman as a minister or incumbent or priest in charge or from presiding at Holy Communion and welcomes applications from both men and women who will be treated equally.

### Mission Action Plan

#### Summary

Looking five years ahead:

'For the future, we want to be described as a Church who know, love and follow Jesus, who support one another, and those in our Parish and beyond, who seek to encourage others of all ages to join us, and a church that has a reputation for loving service'.

### Our Core Values

Values that define us and that are non-negotiable:

- We do not compromise our faith to fit in with the world around us
- We are committed to living a Christian life every day of the week
- We are child orientated
- We are open and welcoming to all
- We are a Fair-Trade Church

Our Mission Action Plan will ensure that the life and work of our church is:

- Seeking to determine God's will for the future and led by the Holy Spirit
- Purposeful in all that it does
- Develops and grows in spiritual and numerical aspects
- Focused in our worship and enabling people to live out their everyday Christian life.

### Our Five Marks of Mission

(defined by the Anglican Communion)

- To Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom (Tell)
- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers (Teach)
- To respond to human need by loving service (Tend)

- To seek to transform unjust structures of society (Transform)
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the earth (Treasure)

Mission Action Plan appended at end

# Our Parish in Pictures



Heritage treasure trail  
2018



Whit Walks in Stalybridge

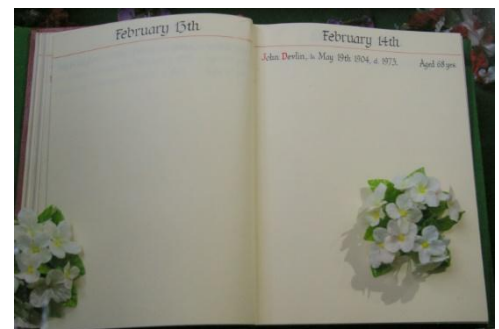


Winter  
Wonderland!



Easter Morning @ Sunrise!

Lady Chapel and Votive Stand



Book of Remembrance

Noel from the 'Veterans Food Co' gives a demonstration on how to cook easy and healthy food.



Spring Fair 2022



Lancashire Afternoon 2018 (over 60's Christmas party - usually an annual event but postponed due to Covid restrictions)

Ladies Afternoon Tea, complete with waiters!







Our Lovely Centenarian celebrates with a glass of bubbly



Jason from MIND gives a talk on the work they do, before accepting a donation, raised by our sponsored dog walk.



Some of our young members being Confirmed, alongside our friends from Saint George's Mossley



All set for our Midnight Wander in aid of Willow Wood Hospice



Afternoon tea in the garden



Junior Church Nativity -2021



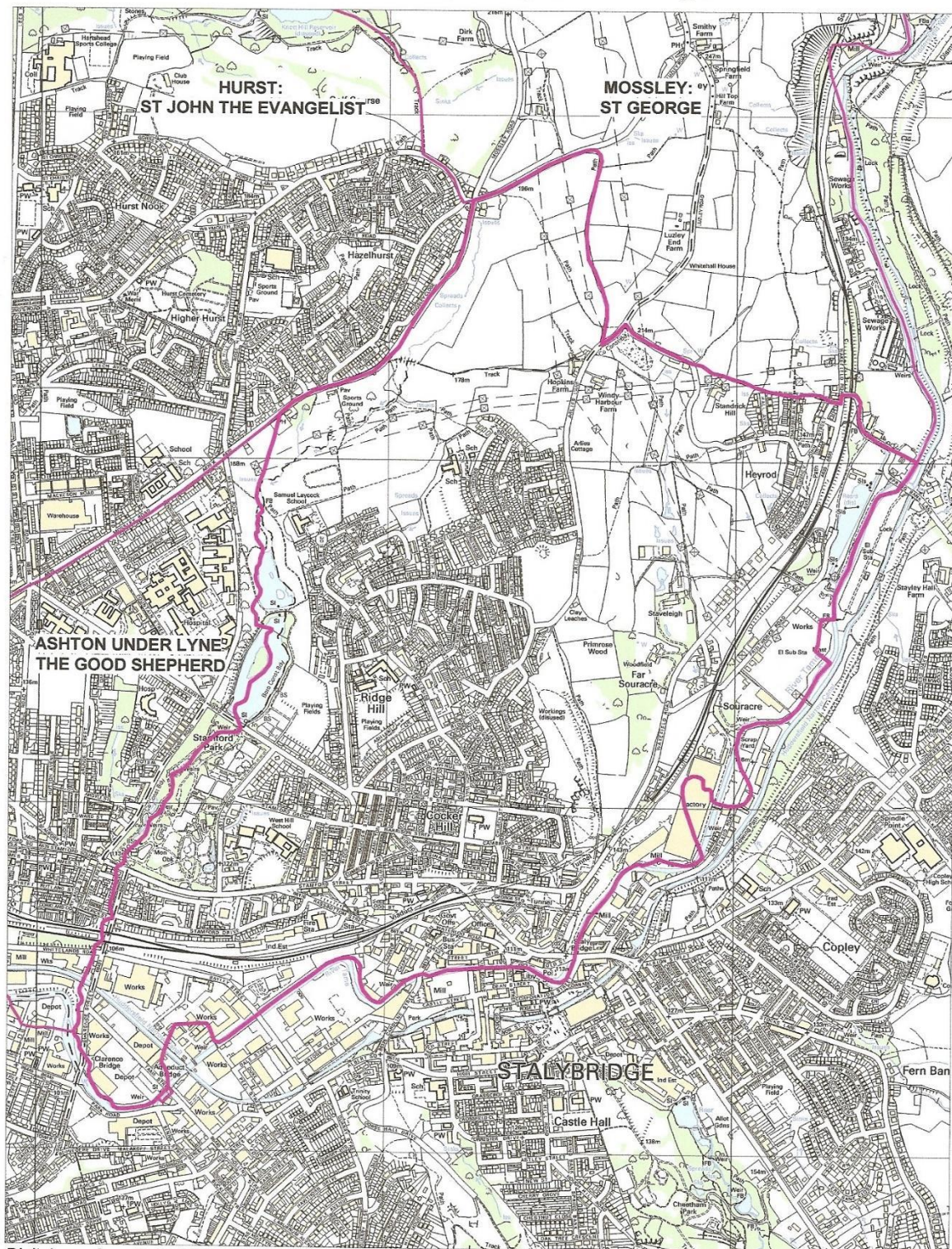
Junior Church Seniors on their trip to Ten-pin bowling



Permission has been given to use photos



## Parish of Stalybridge, St George



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# Our Mission Action Plan

Parish: Stalybridge, St George

Deanery: Ashton-under-Lyne

Period covered by this plan: April 2018 – March 2023

## Our Vision/Values

St George's aims to play its part in the diocesan vision of being a worshipping, growing and transforming Christian presence at the heart of every community. Our mission and vision is of St George's being at the centre of the parish and reflecting God's love and glory in every aspect of life, that shows love to everyone, regardless of colour, race or creed; that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we become empowered ourselves; and enable people to become what God intends them to be. Our Mission and Vision Statements are:

### Our Mission Statement

**Faith in God. Hope in Jesus. Love and service to all.**

'We aim to give God the worship he deserves and to be willing and obedient disciples who are on a journey to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom calling people to faith, encouraging gifts and transforming communities'

### Our Vision Statement

**God wills that all people live in peace and love**

The church is called to be the agent of God's rule, drawing people into harmony with God, with each other and with the natural world.

As part of the One Holy and Apostolic Church, here in the Church of England and the Diocese of Manchester, we respond with joy to God's love.

We seek to share in all that we do, clergy and lay people together, supporting and encouraging one another.

### **WORSHIP**

We want our worship of God to be as good as possible, and involve as many people as possible, to try to make it awesome, worshipful and helpful as possible to all people.

### **NURTURE**

Our Pastoral Care Group is a sign of our concern for others.

We aim to be aware of each other's needs and of the needs of our neighbours.

### **WITNESS**

We want better communications both within the church and outside it.

We will seek to do this so that God's work may be more clearly known.

### **SERVICE**

As a Parish Church, we are for all within the parish boundary.

We aim to look for new ways to ensure we grow outward in service.



Looking five years ahead:

'For the future, we want to be described as a Church who know, love and follow Jesus, who support one another, and those in our Parish and beyond, who seek to encourage others of all ages to join us, and a church that has a reputation for loving service'.

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(defined by the Anglican Communion)

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## Stage 1 - Review

**Where we are starting from** - a realistic summary of our context and our present situation.

The coronavirus pandemic which unfolded from early 2020, and its resulting restrictions has adversely impacted our 5 year plan.

St. George's is a warm and loving community and there is strong commitment to the church. We are a liberal catholic Anglican church – the only one in the town of Stalybridge in the Diocese of Manchester.

The parish has a population of approximately 8000 people and is ranked as one of the most deprived areas in the country (deprivation rank = 712). There is a high incidence of unemployment, single parents, elderly people and of people on benefits or low income.

64% of the people identified themselves as Christian. Many of the baptisms that are booked are for families who have moved away but who still identify with St Georges church.

Whit Sunday has a strong cultural significance in the parish and has been celebrated alongside annual brass band contests held on Whit Friday. Neither of these two events have been held since 2019 due to Covid.. The Stalybridge churches of Chester Diocese and those of other denominations are looking to develop the churches' witness so as to be more relevant for the community. We would wish to be part of the team developing this theme.

There are two primary schools, one senior boys' school and a variety of local initiatives set up to encourage residents and to try to maintain the area.

The church retains its pews and is strong in tradition. Vestments are worn and we have a robed choir. Our music is traditional with some more modern compositions.

We have a wonderful and colourful history that should be celebrated with the potential for a wonderful future that fills us with joy. This MAP seeks to build on what God has been doing through St George's in the past in order to anticipate the future.

In 2021 there were roughly 60 adults and 8 children at the 10.30 hr Sunday service and in addition to Sunday services, we held extra services for the community during Advent and Christmas.

Our services are rooted in prayer and worship and we celebrate a Sunday Parish Eucharist weekly and a Worship for All on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of every month (a said Holy Communion is held earlier on this day). We also hold Holy Communion on Tuesday mornings and on Holy Days. All of these services use the Common Worship liturgy. On festivals, we usually hold a BCP Holy Communion at 6.00pm. Baptisms take place on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays following the Sunday service, with some held during the main service itself.

Our church exists for the local community and the building is used by various community groups including Rainbows, Brownies and Guides, Tiny Tots, Tameside Community Voices, George's Kitchen, Come Together Group and Dementia Café.

However, the building requires modification to enable users who cannot use stairs. We aim to do this by installing a lift.

Our events are held throughout the year, e.g. Fair Trade Afternoon Tea, Quizzes etc.; and are open to the parish and surrounding neighbours. We also act as agents for our Local East Tameside Food Bank. Donations received of other materials e.g. at Harvest and at the Christingle and Toy Service, are also made to local charities. We have acted as a collection centre for Afghan and Ukrainian refugees.

**Our strengths are:**

- A strong faith
- Regular, lay people
- A popular Junior Church
- A commitment to Fair Trade
- A willingness to move forward and outward in a changing world in line with Church for A Changing World
- A Church that people identify with, even if they have moved away from the parish
- Sustainable finances
- 

**Our weaknesses are:**

- Our Church has an ageing population and no robust succession plan
- Our Pastoral care has diminished
- Our church buildings could be better used
- Our church needs on-going repairs and alterations
- Over the last 2 years key members of our Fabric & Maintenance team have been lost to illness, re-location and shielding.

**Our challenges/threats are:**

- Missing opportunities
- Lack of priorities
- Overstretching leadership and volunteers
- Developing a robust and sustainable succession plan
- On-going fund raising to meet the cost of change, growth and sustainability
- Our parish is located in an area ranked as seriously deprived.
- Encouraging back into our church community those members of the congregation who have not returned following lockdown and shielding,
- Adapting to 'sharing' our Minister with the Parishes of Mossley and the changes that will necessitate

**Where we are going** - a description of where we would like to be in five years' time**Areas for development include:**

- Increase in numbers – especially children, families and young adults. (TOP Priority)
- Being proactive in the community and Pastoral care (TOP Priority)
- Aspects of spiritual growth, nurture and giving (Top Priority)
- Communication – especially in terms of social media and people being aware of our presence. (Priority) On-going over the coming years.
- Collaborative working/Partnership with others (Priority) – On-going over the coming years

**1. Growing Churches    Worship and Prayer**

(Mission Mark 1 - Proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom) **Tell!**

As a church, we are called to tell the Good News of the Kingdom of God, both in word and deed and to show what God is already doing amongst us. We must point the way, prophetically, to what the Kingdom of God could look like in the future, and tell the Good News, primarily, through our worship together.

We will seek to strengthen this aspect of our mission by reviewing how we 'do worship'. Primarily, we will seek to engage more deeply with the Anglican tradition so that our worship can be both forward looking whilst firmly rooted in our own preferred tradition.

We acknowledge that the Good News is also told to the wider community through how St. George's is seen by others. For that reason, we will undertake a thorough review of how we do marketing in all its forms; notice boards, logo's, use of social media, website, magazine, pew sheet, and other publicity material.

We will work towards the buildings themselves 'speaking out the Gospel' by a process of de-cluttering, proactive maintenance, community usage and as a resource for educational development. We will work towards St. George's Church becoming a building whereby people may meet God exactly where they are.

#### **What we value:**

- The Anglican balance of Scripture, Tradition and Reason;
- Our robed choir led by an organist & choirmaster
- Worship that is well structured and well prepared;
- Worship that is inclusive, relaxed and welcoming, and has a strong focus on the Eucharist;
- A church that is welcoming in the pastoral offices of baptisms, weddings and funerals;
- Inclusion of children in the Parish Eucharist and a Family service that is well prepared;

#### **What we wish to develop:**

- Our Junior church with a focus on children being 'at the front' through participation in reading, prayers, music and dramatised Bible stories and a children's serving team;
- A 'Children's Working Group' to plan, support and deliver faith education through Junior Church, Baptism and Confirmation training, and to develop new ways of including children, their parents, guardians and godparents in all aspects of church life;
- We are currently applying for the Child Friendly Church Award;
- Joint services with the local churches of our area;
- 'Setting God's People Free' recommendations – encouraging the Lay community;
- Space for exploring faith through Bible Study, home groups, Christian meditation, teaching and retreats;
- Music that enhances worship, carefully chosen with imagination and delivered with the help of the organist/choirmaster, the choir, congregation and children;
- The opportunity for occasional, innovative approaches to worship through the use of our Church land as an inspiration;
- By delivering meaningful and innovative intercessional worship and increasing those involved including children;
- Re-instating Choral Evensong on a quarterly basis.

## **2. Teaching, Learning and Training**

(Mission Mark 2 – To teach, baptise and nurture new believers) **Teach!**

Teaching and nurturing people in the Christian faith will be at the heart of all we seek to achieve over the coming years. St. George's is committed to an understanding of discipleship as a 'life journey' practiced seven days per week. We will be proactive in nurturing opportunities: birth, baptism, confirmation, marriage, and death.

We will develop and promote small groups and opportunities for exploring Christian spirituality and meditation. We will become more creative in our use of social media as a tool for daily discipleship.

A comprehensive review of children, youth and families work will be undertaken. Appropriate resources will be made available for each of these areas of ministry. We will seek more imaginative ways of engaging with local school children, parents and carers, by way of nurturing and discipling into the Christian faith and the practical outreach of that.

As part of our MAP, St. George's will undertake the provision of appropriate resources and training opportunities, access to Diocesan resources and other networking possibilities, and prayerful support for all



those who are undertaking training for mission and ministry. We will encourage the exploration of vocation. We will seek to be fully supportive as individuals come to find their place at St. George's.

**What we value:**

- Training and Development as being the norm;
- The teaching of the Christian faith to all ages;
- Increasing knowledge and understanding through Prayer, Sermon, Courses, Study groups, Lent courses, individual study and opportunities to attend external training and retreat;
- The encouragement of vocations, both ordained and lay, within our church family;

**We wish to develop:**

- Greater understanding for all age groups through additional resources and courses;
- Setting up of Home Groups/Bible Study classes
- Training in all aspects of liturgical life including intercessions, setting up for service and serving;
- Spiritual development via retreats/external opportunities/shared teaching and learning with other local churches;

**Pastoral Care**

(Mission Mark 3 to respond to human need by loving service) - **Tend!**

St. George's must be a community where people find safety and welcome at all times and in all ways, and we must proactively reflect the unconditional hospitality and welcome of God. We will work on a working definition of pastoral care agreed by the Pastoral Care Team and, as a matter of priority, assess and review our strategies for welcome and hospitality at Sunday worship; the welcome we offer to newcomers, resources provided for children and young people, provision of care towards the infirm and less-able bodied, hospitality for the elderly, the welcome of children into the Eucharistic family, user-friendliness of liturgy booklets, use of technology in worship, opportunities for prayer ministry after the services and much more. We will undertake a review of our baptism policy, and our procedures for weddings, in order to seize these as key moments to offer pastoral care and support. Safeguarding of young people and vulnerable people will become a visible and embedded culture at St. George's.

We will consider ways in which we can deliver pastoral care in the wider community: home communions, care home ministry, youth work, parenting classes, home visits, chaplaincy to families and schools, supporting transitional moments for school pupils. We will underpin all that we do with a deeper commitment to prayer.

**What we Value:**

- Compassionate fellowship with one another, inspired by the Scriptures and which reaches out to welcome newcomers;
- The work of our Clergy;
- The work of our Lay Ministry;
- The work of the PCC;
- The caring work that we do in various teams;
- The Church notices, pew sheet, magazine, minutes;
- Our Safeguarding policy.

**What we wish to develop:**

- A trained and commissioned Pastoral Care team to take pastoral work forward;
- A clear working definition of Pastoral Care;
- Home Communion to those who need it;
- Expanded number of volunteers in various caring teams

- Better communications – revamped notice board, website, Facebook page, Twitter, general information, availability/placing of information, welcome pack, ‘meeting and greeting’;
- Identification of responsibility for communication and all aspects of church life;
- Clear communications with bodies outside of Church;
- A Dementia Friendly church;
- A place of welcome;
- Better links with local nursing homes.

## **Transforming**

(Mission Mark 4 – To seek to transform unjust structures of society) **Transform!**

St. George's serves a diverse community in which there is deep social need. We are situated in a broader world context of increasing social injustice, poverty, persecution and threat to minorities. It is clear that our mission must proactively engage with these issues and that there must be a serious attempt to challenge the unjust structures that increase social injustice in all its forms. Partnership work will be at the heart of this aspect of our MAP, and we will seek to develop meaningful relationships with secular agencies and other faith groups, as well as other local Christian bodies, in order to pursue our social justice agenda.

We will encourage a deeper involvement in local projects and activities that seek to work towards the renewal of society and that address such issues as poverty, crime, race and hate crime, equal rights and opportunities, work with migrants, employment issues, provision of vocational training opportunities. We will seek ways to develop a sustainable overseas agenda or knowledge of same.

### **What we Value:**

- A welcoming, well maintained church building and grounds;
- The contribution to the care of the church and grounds by the various teams and individuals;
- A complete plan of our Churchyard;
- Our Grants Team for the work in securing grants to enable us to maintain our church;
- Our Remembrance Garden section of the churchyard for interment of ashes;
- Sustainable finances;
- Events and initiatives that build up our sense of community;
- Peace, reconciliation and Justice;
- Inclusivity.

### **What we wish to develop:**

- To install a lift to the upstairs floor where a new kitchenette has been installed, in order to bring the church up to modern day standards and enable more people to use the upstairs facilities; re-order the toilets
- The Renovation of the church organ;
- On-going repairs to the roof;
- Lone worker policy/security of those working alone in church;
- Review of H&S policies;
- On-going Grant applications for sustainable buildings;
- Events that build up our growing sense of community and social events that reflect special services/festivals;
- Collating all the information given on the Time/Talents sheets in order to begin implementing the suggestions made;
- Initiatives that will seek to challenge injustice and violence;
- We will work towards the buildings themselves ‘speaking out the Gospel’ by a process of de-cluttering, proactive beautification and as a resource for educational development.

## **Environment**

(Mission Mark 5 – To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth)  
**Treasure!**

As part of our MAP, we will undertake a comprehensive Environmental Audit. We will develop an Environmental Policy as an aspirational document towards which we will work over the coming years. Accordingly, PCC decisions will be dictated, in part, by their positive or negative impact on the eco-targets we set ourselves. In developing this aspect of the MAP, we will seek expertise from the Diocese and any other agencies that may be able to support us in this regard.

### **What we Value:**

- Our commitment to Fair Trade;
- Our natural churchyard grounds;
- Commitment to recycling;
- Our well-tended churchyard

### **What we wish to develop:**

- Biodiversity in the churchyard;
- Bird and insect life;
- Becoming a 'Greener' Church – reacting to issues like climate change, use of plastics etc.;
- Links with relevant external agencies;
- We will provide educational and practical opportunities for members of the congregation to grow into this aspect of the MAP; engagement in Fair Trade Week, promotion of Fair Trade Goods, publicising environmental campaigns (locally and nationally), and encouraging engagement in global ecological causes.

## **Outcomes**

We have to take all of this steadily – God is at the centre of all that we do and we must listen to Him.

Pray – have conversation – pray – take action – pray – conversation – pray – review and so on. The process must be revisited time and again. The action plan must become 'a way of being' – constantly moving and changing and will never have a completion.

## **Stage 2 - Prioritise**

**How we will get there** - a description of the priority actions if we are to 'get there'.

### **Priority 1**

#### **Growing Church (Proclaiming the Good News) - TELL!**

1. Growing Junior Church /Young Adult Church by inviting children from the schools in the parish to various events.
2. Encouraging Godparents by inviting them to a yearly service along with the children and their parents

Priority 2

**Pastoral Care (responding to human need) – TEND!**

1. Redefining 'Pastoral Care';
2. Identifying training needs;
3. Identifying the needs of the parish;
4. Setting up our identified initiatives.

Priority 3

**Transforming communities (transforming unjust structures of society) – TRANSFORM!**

1. Developing Fair Trade;
2. Restoring the organ;
3. Installing a lift;

Priority 4

**Serving Community (teaching, baptising and nurturing others) – TEACH!**

1. Identifying and Encouraging vocations and gifts;
2. Baptism guidance and encouragement;
3. Bible study group.

Priority 5

**Safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth – TREASURE!**

1. Involving children with fair trade, recycling and outdoor activities;
2. Link with relevant organisations.

## Stage 3 – Current activity plan.

**What do we need to do and by when?** Precise, time-based and measurable actions that help us achieve our priorities. It is assumed that this page will be updated regularly as the outworking of the plan develops and progresses.

Task / objective	Person Assigned	Resources available/required	Budget required	Timeline (expected start and completion dates)	Review method and timing
1.A Grow Junior Church	Joyce Hansell Sylvia Barratt	Word of mouth Creche Rota reqd	None at this stage	Begin after Easter – awaiting visit from Diocesan Children’s Worker on 22/4/18 Radiator in crèche to be checked	Monthly update to PCC
1.B Invite children from uniformed organisations and schools to various events	Joyce Hansell Sylvia Barratt	Flyers required	None at this stage	Plan for Anniversary Sunday 24/6/18 and starting on 16/9/18 for Harvest Service 30/9/18	Monthly update to PCC
1.C Invite godparents, parents and children to yearly service	Joyce Hansell Sylvia Barratt	Names & addresses from Baptism Register from past 3 years (138 baptisms)	None at this stage	Plan for Anniversary Sunday 24/6/18	Monthly update to PCC
2.A Pastoral Care - Identify the needs of the parish		Members lists	None at this stage	September 2018 after ALM Licensing	Monthly update to PCC
2.B Identify training needs and redefine pastoral care		Programme of teaching over one month	Budget may be required later	September 2018 after ALM Licensing	Monthly update to PCC
3.A Tuesday Café with free tea/coffee/juice/biscuits/toast and activities	Joyce Hansell and MAP Team	Time & Talent lists Info into Pew Sheet Contact possible helpers	None at this stage – possible grant from Big Hub	Begin to implement Tuesday Café 1.00-3.00pm on 1/5/18	Monthly update to PCC
4.A Restoring the organ	Director of Music and MAP team	Fund raising required	~ £25000 £9000 in organ fund	Seek funding after Easter from various charities	Monthly update to PCC
4.B Installing a lift	Project Team	Fund raising required	~ £60000	Plan for end of 2018 after HLF grant for work secured	Monthly update to PCC



**Our partners – what other people do we need to involve/consult – e.g. Mission unit/deanery; local authority; other churches; other organisations?**

**Local Schools**

- Silver Springs Primary Academy
- Arlies Primary School
- West Hill School

**Local Community Groups**

- Big Local Hub
- Ridge Hill Enterprise
- Slimming World
- TMBC

**Local Churches**

- Holy Trinity
- St Paul's
- St James, Millbrook
- Methodist Church
- Baptist Church
- Congregational Church
- Revive Church

**Uniformed Organisations**

- Girl Guides
- Brownies
- Rainbows

**Parish and Deanery - How our plan connects with and enhances the mission of the deanery as expressed in the current Deanery Plan?**

With the tasks set out above, we aim to become and remain a transforming growing Christian presence at the heart of the parish of St George in Stalybridge

Our mission action plan shows how we will play our part as a local church in the Diocesan vision of

**A worshipping, growing, and transforming Christian presence  
at the heart of every community.**

This mission action plan was approved by the PCC on 17th April 2018

Signed: *P. Bríerley*

Post/office Vicar

**Date: 17 April 2018**

*Please send your plan, along with any supporting documentation to the MAP team – [map@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:map@manchester.anglican.org). The MAP team will then review it and send it to your Archdeacon*

