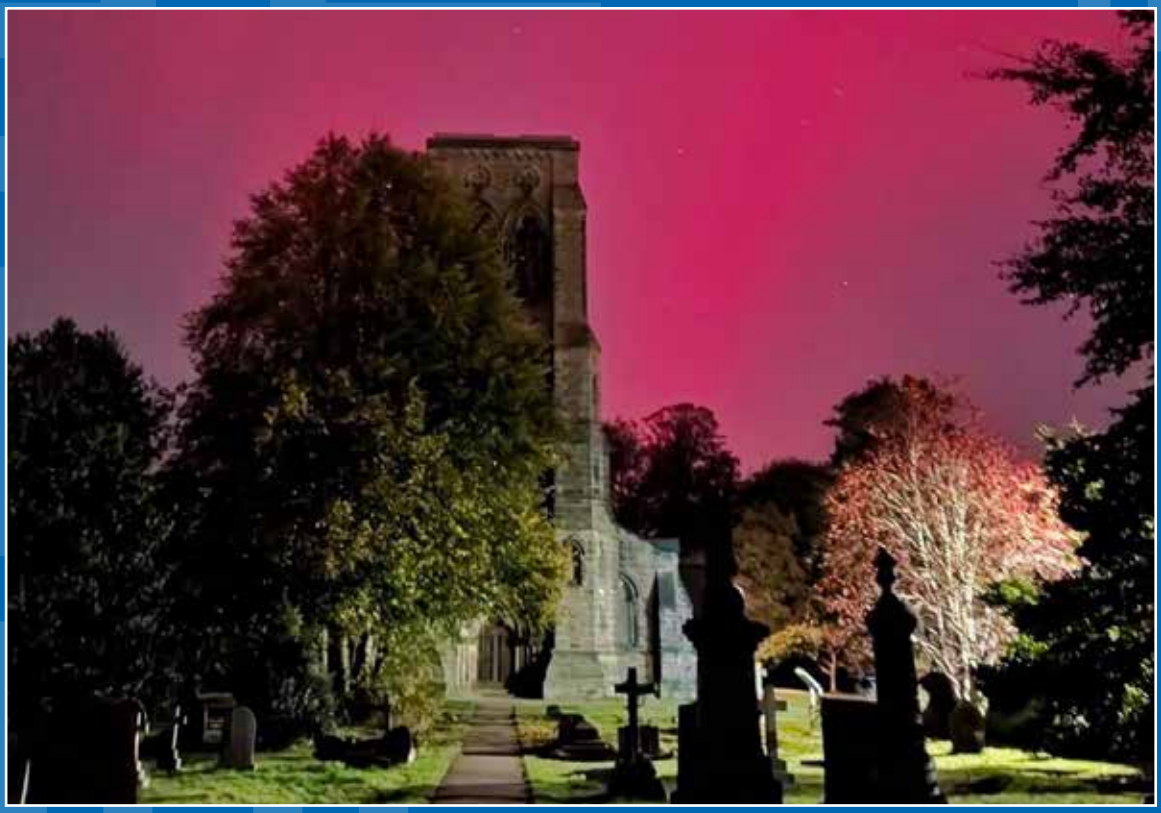
ST JOHN'S CHURCH & ST LUKE'S CHURCH

In the deanery of Harrogate, Archdeaconry of Richmond & Craven in the Ripon Episcopal Area, Diocese of Leeds

Parish of St John and St Luke, Bilton, Harrogate

PARISH BROCHURE



www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Leeds

1 THE WIDER CONTEXT

The Diocese of Leeds is now one of the biggest dioceses in the country, covering an area of around 2,425 square miles and with a population of around 2,642,400 people. It stretches from the major industrial cities of Bradford, Leeds and Wakefield in the south to the vast expanse and deeply rural areas of the Dales in the north, with its countless small towns and villages.

Our parish falls within the Archdeaconry of Richmond & Craven and the episcopal area of Ripon, our **Bishop being The Rt Revd Anna Eltringham**. The parish of St John and St Luke, Bilton is the largest in terms of population in the Archdeaconry and is part of Harrogate Deanery, an active and supportive network of churches.

The vision as a diocese is about confident clergy equipping confident Christians to live and tell the good news of Jesus Christ. For all appointments the diocese is seeking clergy who have a joyful and confident faith which has inspired a track record of church growth, both numerically and spiritually. We are pleased to say the diocese is committed to clergy wellbeing and supportive in terms of personal growth and development.

Our church is open during the day, 5 days a week. Follow these links to our website:
www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

WHAT NEXT?

Vacancy details are on the Leeds Diocesan and Pathways websites. The first contact for further information being:

Area Bishop Anna Eltringham:
bishop.anna@leeds.anglican.org

2 SUMMARY/INTRODUCTION

Are you looking for a **new role in a lively parish,** where you would be **Team Rector** with oversight of two very different but happily 'married' churches? If so, then welcome to the parish of **St John and St Luke, Bilton!**

The parish is situated on the northern edge of the spa town of Harrogate in North Yorkshire. Our two churches, one large and Victorian (St John's) and one small and 1960s built (St Luke's) offer different styles of worship, with St John's following a more formal tradition than St Luke's, but our varied, eclectic, all-age congregations regularly meet up for joint services, events, celebrations and parish weekends away. St John's has over 200 people on the electoral roll and a regular Sunday attendance of 80+ adults at the main service. St Luke's has nearly 60 people on the roll and a regular attendance of 30+. We are looking for someone to take particular responsibility for St John's church, whilst being in overall charge of the parish as a whole.

The successful candidate will need to have great team-working and team-leading skills, a vision and a passion for growth, and a willingness to embrace the opportunities and challenges that working across both our churches brings. Rest assured that you would have a great team to support you and work with, including Laura (our Team Vicar with special responsibility for St Luke's), four active, retired clergy, a full-time paid youth worker, an excellent part-time paid administrator, 4 church wardens (2 at each church) and a large, knowledgeable and dependable PCC.

More information about our parish can be found on our website, **www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk**

If all this has piqued your interest, **then please do read on...**

3 THE PRIEST WE HOPE FOR

Our Vision:

We believe that God, who loves us with a deep and unbreakable love, has called us to 'make disciples who make Jesus known'. Thus our priorities are to help each other in our journeys of discipleship and help others enter that journey.

As mentioned above, you will need to be a confident leader and embrace teamwork, as this is a leadership role across two different, but complementary, churches. We have a particular passion for children's and young people's work, and you would need to see this as an important part of your ministry. In addition to these skills, we are looking for someone to help us:

1. Be inclusive as a church, open to all, a place where everyone can find welcome, love and community.
2. Deepen our spirituality and develop a more active prayer life.
3. Continue to develop our work with young people, both within our churches and the wider community.
4. Build on our desired aim to encourage and develop lay leadership to grow our confidence and capacity.
5. Be bold in our vision for mission and ministry.
6. Explore further avenues of community outreach as well as growing existing initiatives, such as our Fresh Expression at Dene Park.

In return we offer as our strengths:

1. A sizeable congregation with a wealth of skills and gifts, yet to be exploited. We are a broad church and encompass people from different traditions and backgrounds, from 0-90 years old, and strive to be a welcoming, open community.
2. A body of lay church members, already engaged in activities across all age groups, both at church and through community outreach projects, and keen to be supported and assisted to develop.
3. An energetic and imaginative lay team of children and young people's volunteer leaders, who work alongside our paid youth worker to minister to young people of all ages, from toddlers to 18-year-olds, both within our churches and through schools' ministry.
4. A committed PCC, who acknowledge the pressures of the Team Rector role and will support our clergy in their ongoing ministerial training and development, being mindful of their mental health and wellbeing and need for work-life balance.
5. An eagerness to grow in spirituality and discipleship.

Our hope is to learn from you and grow with you as new ideas and priorities emerge and evolve.

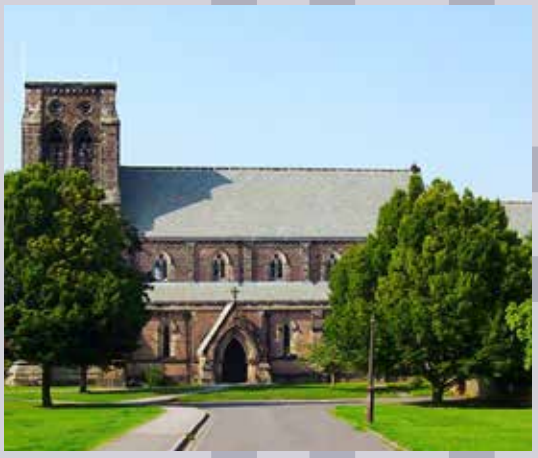
Of course, there are challenges too:

- Maintaining and growing a stronger presence at and around St Luke's.
- Living with difference - We embrace many different traditions and views and strive to be wholly inclusive. We want to continue to develop and improve on this.
- Ongoing financial challenges. In 2023 our total income was £277,006. After paying £120,000 towards the requested parish share of £148,245 and £14,000 towards building improvements we ended the year with a deficit of £11,000, and we have several years of accrued arrears of Parish Share. We also face the challenge of funding the youth worker post from 2025 onwards.

4 ABOUT OUR CHURCHES

St JOHN'S

Our congregations are varied, eclectic and cover all age ranges. St John's is a large, traditional Victorian church, with a separate church hall, in the heart of Bilton, and is home to the parish office. The Team Rector's house is next door. It has the larger congregation, which is 90% local and of mixed age, including a good number of families with school-age children, though we are conscious that people in their 20s are thin on the ground. It has a great music tradition, with a fine organ and robed choir, as well as a modern music group, allowing us to embrace different types of worship.



St LUKE'S

St Luke's is situated slightly closer to Harrogate town centre and is based in a former church hall. The dedicated congregation there is smaller than at St John's, but starting to grow, largely due to the energetic ministry of our Team Vicar, Laura. Whilst traditional services are embraced at St Luke's, the space lends itself well to more informal church services and gatherings. The Team Rector has special responsibility for St John's Church and the Team Vicar for St Luke's.

CHURCH HALL

The **Church Hall**. Built in 1897, is grade II listed and used by the Church on Sunday for our younger members. Monthly Coffee Mornings take place on Saturday mornings. It is also used by the community including a Children's pre-school Monday to Friday, and during evenings it hosts Uniformed Organisations, plus various other users.

5 OUR PEOPLE

We were delighted when Laura Martin (formerly our curate) became our full-time Team Vicar in January 2024.

Assisting Laura are a full-time paid youth worker, Emma James, and a part-time parish administrator, who is also our parish safeguarding officer. We are fortunate also to be supported by a licensed lay minister, four active retired clergy - all of whom bring a breadth and depth of experience and a wide variety of preaching styles - and a strong team of enthusiastic lay members.

Members of the congregation take intercessions, read lessons and are authorised to administer the sacrament at all Eucharists. Home communion is taken currently to five housebound people.

Our parish administrator/safeguarding officer works 4 hours a day on 4 days a week and plays a vital role, including updating the church website.

We have good governance arrangements, including a very effective safeguarding lead, two church wardens at each church, one bringing deep expertise in property maintenance, and well-attended, knowledgeable and committed PCC and Finance Committees. Our aim is to help the clergy team focus on ministry and mission.

We are part of Netmakers (https://netmakers.org.uk) a group of local churches working together. A recent initiative involved Mark Greene of LICC talking about 'Fruitfulness on the Frontline'. We've built on the theme in our house groups and also by using 'This Time Tomorrow' to share insights into our day-to-day lives. Netmakers have also collaborated with Emma on her youth worship night and coaching initiatives. Netmakers have just appointed a youth worker to focus on outreach and we hope to continue to collaborate.

6 LOVING AND SERVING OUR COMMUNITIES

...IN OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY:

We believe we have a number of good things going on in our church community. Among them are the following:

Youth work – We see our work with children and young people as of very high importance. We are fortunate to have an untypically large number of young children attending church with their families, meaning there is creche, pre-school and primary-age provision at the main Sunday morning service, led by a group of enthusiastic and skillful volunteers. Our choir also encourages and develops young choristers. At St John's we also have Sunday morning teaching for secondary-age youngsters, but were aware that, if we wished to retain young people at church beyond Year 6, we needed to focus attention on that age group. In 2020 a substantial anonymous donation kickstarted a financial campaign which enabled us to recruit a youth worker. In Appendix III you can read more details of their fruitful work in this area.

Welcome Team – A new welcome team is being established. We already have a committed team of sidespeople, but we recognize that we need to improve our ways of engaging with those who may be new to church, or who may have been coming for a while but who may be perceived as being on the periphery of church life. We would like to focus particularly on the 10.30 service at St John's, where we want to develop opportunities to build relationships and encourage people to join in the life of the church.

Pastoral Care – 2023 saw the rebuilding and commissioning of a new pastoral care team. Three members of the team undertook diocesan pastoral training, and between them the team have undertaken over 300 pastoral visits and phone calls this year (and that is only the ones that have formally been recorded). The Pastoral Team aim to support the clergy in visiting those who have asked for additional support, those who are housebound or isolated, and those who are ill.

House Groups – We currently have about 40 people engaged in 6 lay-led house groups, meeting mainly in leaders' homes, but we have a much larger regular congregation in our two churches, and we would like to develop and grow our groups.

6 LOVING AND SERVING OUR COMMUNITIES

...cont

Rhythm of Life – This is a diocesan initiative to help people on their journey of faith and discipleship by offering them a 'trellis' to help them grow without trying to impose a one size fits all programme on everyone, irrespective of personality and where they are on this journey. While an individually crafted journey, it is also a shared one, with each person having a fellow traveller to help them on the way, albeit in varying places and at varying speeds. The 4 main areas worked on are Transforming (taking steps to achieve change by spending time in the company of Jesus); Treasuring (seeking to unearth and share God's many blessings); Travelling (having a supporter or 'fellow traveller' whose role is to lovingly encourage us on our journey); and Rhythming (God has wired creation so that it lives by rhythms – day/night, work/rest, growth/fruitfulness etc). We launched this in our churches late in 2023, but with a more limited response than had been hoped for. We are planning to continue running this during the vacancy, whilst being open to review under a new incumbent.

Alpha – Alpha courses have recently been run every year at our churches, but we are reviewing this during the vacancy.

Green Team – We are proud to have an active Green Team across both our sites, and recently St John's was awarded the A Rocha Silver Eco award and St Luke's the Bronze award. Actively monitoring our environmental impact has led to achieving a number of solid steps to reduce the carbon footprint, both at our church buildings and at home, and the diocese is very supportive with new initiatives that assist with attaining their goal of carbon neutral by 2030. We have recently been awarded a grant for the installation of solar panels and storage batteries at the vicarage.

Creationtide is observed annually, with new approaches employed each year. Examples of the types of projects undertaken by the Green Team are: Sustainable energy tariff, toilet 'twinning', a recycling centre for the hard to recycle items, coffee mornings, seed swaps, the installation of a bike rack, development of wild flower areas in the churchyard, bug hotel by the Sunday School, documenting flora and fauna species, changes to our cleaning products, LED lighting, and 'crafternoons' (beeswax wrap and sashiko mending).

6 LOVING AND SERVING OUR COMMUNITIES

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...IN OUR WIDER PARISH COMMUNITY:

We have a number of successful, lay volunteer-led initiatives which are good opportunities for loving and serving our wider parish community, particularly our elderly. Below are a selection of the things that members of our church family are involved with:

Thirst – A weekly coffee morning at the Community Centre on the Dene Park estate off Woodfield Road. It is run by 4-5 volunteers, mainly from St John's and St Luke's, and aims to reach what is, in many ways, a neglected area of Harrogate, through provision of refreshments and providing a space for people to chat, share problems and, we trust, catch a glimpse of the love of God through the contact made. Around 25-30 people attend each week, not including helpers.

Three of the leaders have been part of the local 'Greenhouse' gatherings, a support group to encourage the development of Fresh Expressions in local churches. They, along with a small team from St John's and St Luke's, have recently launched Monday First, offering a monthly informal hour-long worship session over tea and coffee (and, of course, cake), based in the Community Centre, open to all in the Dene Park area and beyond.

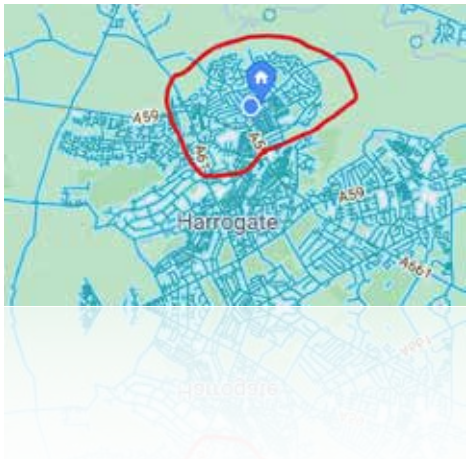
Comfort Cafe – A monthly gathering, held at St John's Church, for those living with the impact of bereavement. At the café guests are offered afternoon tea, which always includes sandwiches and a wide selection of homemade cakes. The café offers a safe space for people experiencing grief to come along, just as they are, with no expectations that they will feel sociable or cheerful. Everyone is treated as an individual and the volunteers running the café sit amongst the guests listening to their stories and walking alongside them on their journey. Numbers attending the café vary, but an average month will now welcome up to 25 people, including volunteers. The café volunteer team includes all four members of our bereavement team, ensuring good links between our funeral follow-up care and the café.

Wellbeing Cafe – This was established to provide a welcoming space, with the offer of soup and a roll or tea and cake, for anyone in our local community who might appreciate a friendly, safe space to meet and make new friends. Although open to all, the cafe especially caters for those who may be suffering with dementia or another condition. On average, 20-30 people attend our regular Friday afternoon sessions, as well as a variety of trips and special events, and new faces arrive regularly. The café is run by a strong team of 15 highly valued volunteers, who enjoyed a Christmas get-together at the end of 2023.

Community Lunches – This is a long-standing church outreach initiative to elderly residents in the wider parish community. A committed team of church volunteers prepare a fresh hot, three course meal, every second Wednesday, in the local Community Centre. 40 or so people attend regularly.

7 ABOUT THE PARISH

LOCATION



Bilton (population approx. 18,000) has grown from a small village described in the Domesday Book, and is now part of the spa town of Harrogate, on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales. The ecclesiastical parish stretches from the beautiful Nidd Gorge to near the town centre, which boasts a park, a theatre, 2 cinemas, gyms, supermarkets and numerous pubs, cafes and independent and chain shops. The cities of Leeds and York are within easy reach by rail, there are direct trains to London every day and the A1 is less than 30 minutes' drive away for easy access to both the north and south of the country. Local bus services are good and there is also a regular bus service to nearby Leeds-Bradford airport.

COMMUNITY

- The population of the parish is significantly white British with a large proportion of owner occupiers, and 64% are of working age (18-65). The parish deprivation rank is 7326 (1=most deprived parish in the Church of England, 12,382=least deprived, C of E database, Oct 2023). However, this general picture obscures significant pockets of difference:
- The Woodfield, Dene Park and New Park areas have significant areas of deprivation e.g. at one school nearly a fifth of children receive free school meals.
- The English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (last published 2019) illustrate that, whilst several areas of the parish are in the tenth decile (least deprived 10% of small areas nationally) and other areas are in the sixth, seventh or eighth decile, one area (Woodfield and Dene Park) is in the first decile, indicating that it is in the most deprived 10% of small areas nationally.
- There are also a significant number of one-bedroom properties and lone parent families in rented accommodation in the parish, where loneliness and isolation are clear issues.

More generally, the parish has one doctor's surgery, a thriving cricket club, a social (formerly working men's) club, three pubs, a community library and a mix of small independent shops and cafes. There are also three community centres. Meanwhile both St Luke's Church and St John's church hall host uniformed organisations and a range of other community groups. A daily children's pre-school uses St John's church hall, which is available for hire for one-off or more regular events.

Other churches in the parish include Catholic, Methodist and United Reformed churches, and a Free Church, but there is no other Anglican presence in north Harrogate, an area which has grown substantially in recent years, and has a number of new-build housing estates.

There are six primary schools in the parish, including Richard Taylor C of E Primary School, with which there are already strong links, and where the Team Rector is ex officio one of the Foundation governors*. The Team Rector would also be welcomed as a trustee of Richard Taylor's Educational Trust (please see Appendix IV for details). A Pupil Referral Unit lies within the parish, whilst all five of the state secondary schools in Harrogate lie outside it, including St Aidan's C of E High School, which many children from our churches attend. It will be part of the Team Rector's role to regularly participate/lead worship at St Aidan's on a rota basis. At Harrogate High School, the closest school to our parish boundaries, we are currently offering mental health support for students using material provided by the national charity, Transforming Lives for Good. We see schools' ministry as integral to our ministry and mission.

A former primary school in the parish is being developed to build a new school for children with autism. Whilst this project is still in its infancy, in the fullness of time we see the new school as a possible way of engaging more with our local disabled community.

** Whilst it might be possible for a new incumbent not to take on the Foundation governor role, this would have to be discussed with the Archdeacon, and, in the spirit of supporting and building youth ministry in our churches, it would be preferable for the incumbent to be willing to embrace a strong relationship with the church schools*

APPENDIX i - OUR BUILDINGS

St JOHN'S

St John's Church was consecrated in 1857 and is a grade II* listed Church with a seating capacity of up to 300. It is light and airy, and has a flexible worship space, thanks to the replacement of pews in the 1960s with moveable chairs. Disabled access is facilitated by internal and external ramps. In the last 10-12 years both the main body of the church and the tower have been re-roofed, new lighting has been installed both inside and along the church driveway, and AV facilities have recently been upgraded. The parish office is situated in St John's.

There is a useful meeting room in the space that was once the chancel, which is great for PCC and other meetings, Alpha and for children's groups on Sunday mornings. The Wednesday morning communion service also takes place there. There is a small kitchen and a single toilet which has disabled access. St John's has a large churchyard which, although not officially closed, is only open for the interment of ashes. It is well maintained by church volunteers. There are extensive grassed areas either side of the drive, maintained by the Local Authority.

St LUKE'S

St Luke's Church was constructed in 1959/60 as a church hall and converted to become St Luke's Church Centre, with the first service taking place in 1974. St Luke's has seating capacity for up to 140 and the structural condition is good, with recent works undertaken including a new AV system, new lighting and the refurbishment of the kitchen. The Church Centre is used for 'Ignite' (our Church Youth Group for secondary-aged children), our Wellbeing Café (for the isolated and those with dementia), 'Little Fishes' (a weekly term-time parent and toddler group), Café Church (a monthly all-age, family-friendly service, part of our pattern of services at 10.30), and is also home to two Rainbows groups. As with the church hall at St John's, St Luke's is available for hire to local groups or for one-off events.

APPENDIX i - OUR BUILDINGS ...cont

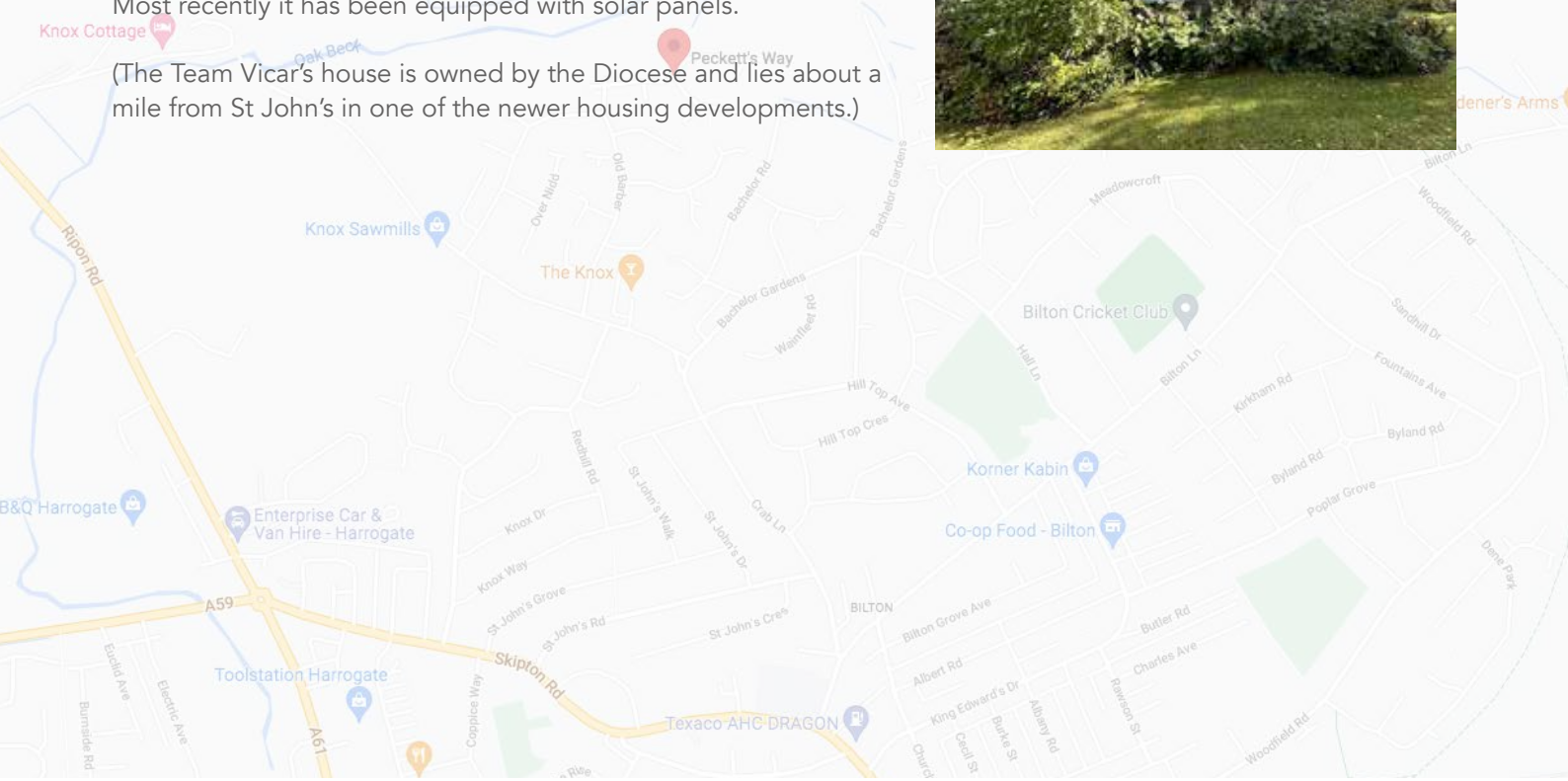
CHURCH HALL

Our **Church Hall**. built in 1897, is grade II listed and used by the church on Sunday for our younger members. Monthly coffee mornings have been taking place over many years on Saturday mornings with all proceeds (often in the region of £500+) going to named charities and projects. The church hall is also used by the community, including a children's pre-school group Monday to Friday, and in the evenings it hosts Uniformed Organisations, dance and badminton clubs, and various other users. It is also available for private hire for one-off events and celebrations.

THE RECTORY/VICARAGE

The Rectory/Vicarage was purpose built in the early 1970s to replace a Victorian vicarage on Bilton Lane. Surrounded by private gardens, the vicarage sits adjacent to St John's Church and looks onto the church drive. It is a good-sized family house with four bedrooms, a well-proportioned study and a garage. Most recently it has been equipped with solar panels.

(The Team Vicar's house is owned by the Diocese and lies about a mile from St John's in one of the newer housing developments.)



APPENDIX ii - OUR SERVICES

St JOHN'S

First Sunday:	9.00am – Holy Communion 10.30am – All Age/Parade Service	Av. attendance 16 Av. attendance 80+ adults, 25+ children
Second Sunday:	9.00am – Holy Communion 10.30am - Holy Communion 12.15 pm Baptisms & Blessings	Av. attendance 15+ Av. attendance 80+ adults, 25+ children
Third Sunday:	9.00am – Holy Communion 10.30am – Morning Worship	Av. attendance 15+ Av. attendance 80+ adults, 25 children
Fourth Sunday:	9.00am – Holy Communion 10.30am - Holy Communion	Av. attendance 15+ Av. attendance 80+ adults, 25 children
Fifth Sunday:	9.00am – Holy Communion 10.30am – Joint Service at St John's or St Luke's	Av. attendance 15+ Av. attendance 80+ adults, 25+ children
Wednesdays:	10.30am mid week Communion	Av. attendance 25+

St LUKE'S

First Sunday:	10.30am – Holy Communion	Av. attendance 30 adults, 3 children
Second Sunday:	10.30am - Café Church	Av. attendance 26 adults, 6 children
Third Sunday:	10.30am – Morning Worship	Av. attendance 26 adults, 4 children
Fourth Sunday:	10.30am – All Age Worship	Av. attendance 26 adults, 4 children
Fifth Sunday:	Joint Service at St John's or St Luke's	Av. attendance 55 adults, 7 children

Wednesday Communion:

This service has a regular attendance of 25+ communicants and, with the coffee, cake and chat that follow, has developed a good community feel over the years.

Morning Prayer:

This takes place Mondays to Thursdays from 9-9.30 am and has a small but regular attendance rate. We are looking to re-evaluate its format during the vacancy.

Occasional services in 2023:

In 2023 there were 5 weddings, 15 baptisms, 20 funerals (some clergy-led at Stonefall cemetery) and 5 interments of ashes.

APPENDIX iii - YOUTH WORK

Here are some of the things that our professional Youth Worker, Emma, has been involved with over the past four years:

- With the help of enthusiastic adult volunteers, she has taken a sizeable group of young people to summer camp at Limitless Festival in both 2023 and 2024, seeing God breaking into several young people's lives (and the leaders' too).

- A monthly Youth Worship Evening, with nearly 50 young people now attending, (though it should be emphasized that not all of these are from our churches – some come from Knaresborough and Ripon!) Youngsters are involved in planning and leading services, and it has been particularly encouraging to see a good number of Year 7 children from SJ&SL regularly attending.

- A lunchtime group at St Aidan's (a popular Church of England secondary school) continues to thrive and has evolved from being purely about building relationships to now including a faith element/question each week.

- 1 to 1 coaching of vulnerable young people in Harrogate High School in partnership with the charity TLG.

- As part of our schools' ministry, we now do collective worship in New Park School, as well as Richard Taylor, Bilton Grange, Coppice (all primary) and St Aidan's (secondary) schools. As with the worship evening above, Emma now meets with children in Y6 at Richard Taylor to help them to plan and lead collective worship for their peers at school.

- A Sunday evening group for older teenagers, Ignite, continues to run weekly and, we hope, provide the young people with a space they feel welcomed and where they can be themselves.

- Emma also undertakes 1 to 1 meetings in cafes or walks with young people (one of her first ventures started during the pandemic), and indeed these are often asked for by both young people and parents.

Emma will sadly be leaving us in the spring of 2025 as she is currently undertaking ordination training, but PCC is very keen to proceed with seeking funding to enable us to recruit a replacement.

APPENDIX iv - RICHARD TAYLOR'S EDUCATIONAL TRUST

For nearly sixty years the Vicar of St John's has been Chair of Trustees, initially of Richard Taylor's Educational Foundation, which was a very old charity set up to finance a school and pay a teacher. It was restructured to a charitable incorporated organisation a few years ago as RTET. The Trust owns the School and The Hub (formerly Bilton Youth Centre) through its endowment charities. With the change in structure the Team Rector requested the opportunity for a successor to refuse a trusteeship and for the chair to be optional. The current Trustees would greatly welcome the new Rector as a trustee and, if possible, as chair of the Trust as the only trustee whose tenure is indefinite under the constitution.

All the trustees are closely connected with St John's, another church or Bilton. Meetings are now held at Richard Taylor School, an office for the Trust has recently been set up there and the admin staff from the school are to clerk meetings and assist with administration at the Trust's expense.

Apart from some support to RTS for "special benefits", the Trust makes grants for educational purposes for young people where there is financial hardship, whether that be for equipment e.g. to assist children with severe eyesight problems, or for specialist clothing for training as a plumber, or just to attend school trips or a Christian Summer Camp. This year the lease of the Youth Centre has started a separate income stream from which support is being given to the St John's Youth Worker Fund and offered for children whose parents would find it difficult to afford the whole family attending the parish weekend. This recognises the Trust's requirement to look after the spiritual wellbeing of children as well as their social, physical and mental capacities catered for in the lease.

RTET has a seat on the Board of Directors of Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust as do St John's PCC and the Richard Taylor School Headteacher. The Rector would not be expected to be available for that position.

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St John's Church | Bilton Lane | Bilton | Harrogate HG1 3DT

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