



St. Aidan, Gravesend
'Sharing God's love in the community'

**Vision and Needs,
Person Specification &
Parish Profile**

January 2011

www.staidangravesend.org.uk

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This document is illustrated at various points with photographs. Additional illustrative photographs are available on the St Aidan's website at www.staidangravesend.org.uk

PART A – Vision and Needs, and Person Specification

1 Vision and Needs

- 1.1 The PCC has a strong desire to continue to build on the work undertaken over the last 10 years or so to strengthen links with the wider community, work that has seen particular focus in the delivery of the Powerhouse facilities (see Part B, 7.2). The PCC has always acknowledged that delivering the physical facilities would be the relatively easy bit, and that developing relationships with the wider community would be the more difficult bit that would probably not be fully realised until many years after completion of physical works. So the 'starting point' for the PCC's vision is to see the continuation of the relationship building through to completion - albeit that 'completion' is difficult to define.
- 1.2 In this context, we have reflected under God on where we are and the kind of ministry and mission that will be required over the next few years. Our vision acknowledges the need to build upon past achievements and to complete the 'unfinished business' referred to above, whilst also addressing new challenges. Our vision is therefore focussed in the following areas:
- 1.3 **A foundation of intercessory prayer.** We need to continue to build a solid praying and worshipping community by providing opportunities for meaningful public prayer and worship in a wide range of styles. We also need to help Church members to deepen their own prayer life by introducing them to different models of individual and group prayer, and also to grow the number of committed Diocesan pray-ers in the Church.
- 1.4 **Increasing the number of young families.** Our congregation is ageing and has relatively few committed young families. Despite some success in attracting young families in recent years it has proved difficult to retain them. We have recently begun new work to try to engage with such families, of whom there are many in the parish. We also recognise that 'new blood' is needed to begin to start taking over long-held duties and responsibilities of those who have faithfully served but now are beginning to find it difficult to cope. We want to explore possibilities for reaching out to new church members, and particularly to young families.
- 1.5 **'Fresh Expressions' to reach 'untouched' parts of the parish.** Our parish is divided into two areas: Westcourt (where the Church is situated) and Riverview (where the majority of the congregation live). This means that St Aidan's has no worshipping presence on Riverview, and that people who live on Riverview have very little evidence of St Aidan's existence. A form of outreach/fresh expressions on Riverview, perhaps in conjunction with the Baptist Church which meets in the Scout Hall, is something we have already been challenged to consider. The PCC has a long-term commitment to new building for housing on the land adjacent to the Christopher Centre with retention of one property for Church use – we should, within any outreach/fresh expression, maximise these potential opportunities.
- 1.6 **Transforming the existing church hall into an effective community facility.** The original 'masterplan' for community facilities envisaged the Powerhouse within the church building as stage 1, stage 2 being new purpose built facilities on the site of the existing church hall. In the current economic climate we recognise that full 'new build' is unrealistic. However, we do want to pursue a current opportunity to bid for Big Lottery funding that if successful would fund substantial redevelopment the existing hall. All of our buildings (church, hall and Powerhouse) are already a place of contact with a wide variety of people

in the local community but we want to, as part of any further development, expand our network of contacts and provide a clear communication of the Christian message with invitations to join various expressions of Christian community. Any re-development of the hall, for example, would take this into account.

- 1.7 **Actively supporting our neighbouring parishes in shared mission.** Our PCC recognises that, relatively speaking, St Aidan's is well-resourced whilst there is a need for mission in parts of our neighbouring parishes that currently cannot be met. As part of our vision we see resource sharing in some form or other as a way to assist our neighbouring parishes in this mission imperative. One example is the large Kings Farm estate which lies immediately adjacent to St Aidan's parish, part of Holy Family parish. St Aidan's and Holy Family are both members with Christchurch of the East Gravesend Group of parishes through which we already collaborate, but more needs to be done. We want to work more with Holy Family both now and following appointment of a new vicar in the future. We also work in collaboration through our Deanery which has a lively chapter. Our Deanery Synod has recently completed a Mission and Ministry plan, a collective look at mission together across the area, and we expect to play a significant part as plans are implemented.

2 Person Specification

2.1 To assist in meeting this vision we believe there is need for an incumbent who:

- is willing to lead a ministry team that is experienced and competent, is used to working in a very open and collaborative style, and where members' gifts are acknowledged and valued and are fully utilised
- is friendly and welcoming, particularly towards families and children but also to the older members of the fellowship
- does not tend to extremes of churchmanship
- will embrace a wide variety of worship styles, and is open to experimentation with new forms of 'fresh expression' of both worship and Christian outreach
- will maintain existing links with local schools and, where possible, develop new links
- is open to working collaboratively with neighbouring parishes and the Deanery, and is also open to working ecumenically
- is open to, and encouraging of, increased lay involvement
- will keep the Church aware of its place in the worldwide Church and encourage its support of the needy at home and abroad

3 What we offer

3.1 As a church we are aware that the incumbent needs both our active support but also time for themselves and their family. We can offer:

- a church fellowship that has a reputation for being welcoming and hospitable
- the support of the church community but without any intrusion
- a genuine concern for the welfare and wellbeing of the incumbent and their family
- a family home adjacent to, but separate from, the church and hall buildings
- a recognition that the incumbent and their family have a need for rest, leisure and a life outside the church
- ... and a PCC and congregation with a sense of humour!

PART B – Parish Profile

4 Introduction

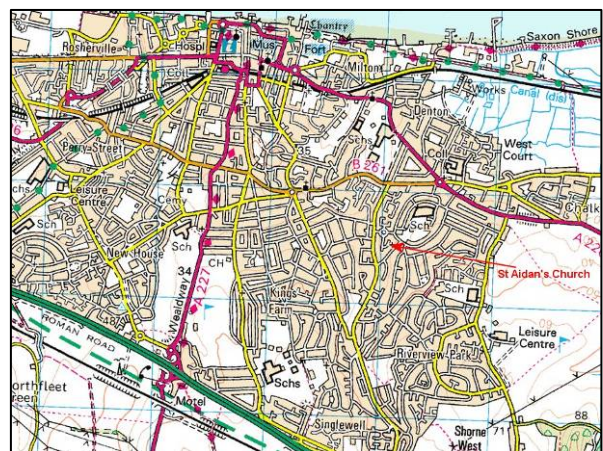
- 4.1 The parish of St Aidan's was formed in the 1950's in response to new urban developments on the eastern side of Gravesend, Kent. Many of the current congregation are members of the 'pioneering families' that took up residence as the new Riverview Park estate was developed, and who have therefore 'grown up' here along with the Parish.
- 4.2 St Aidan's has provided faithful witness and service to the local community over many years. However, in the mid-to-late 1990's, declining church attendance and a perceived 'disconnect' with the surrounding local community were recognised as issues needing to be tackled. A refocusing around a new mission statement 'Sharing God's love in the community' followed and has shaped and influenced both the ministry and wider church activity since, with a reordering of church buildings to provide local community facilities being the most tangible manifestation of this refocusing.
- 4.3 Today, St Aidan's has a good sized, core worshipping congregation with a deserved reputation for being faithful, welcoming and hospitable, and more outward-looking than perhaps in the past. A willingness to 'try new things' alongside traditional ways has resulted in growth with some new, younger families being attracted. However, there is no complacency with recognition that there is much still to do if St Aidan's is to truly serve the local community and be effective in telling the Good News of Jesus Christ.

5 Location

- 5.1 Gravesend is a medium size riverside heritage town situated on the south bank of the River Thames, some 24 miles east from the centre of London, within the borough of Gravesham. St Aidan's parish is located on the edge of the built up area to the south east of the town.
- 5.2 The northern part of Gravesham borough lies within the Thames Gateway, and includes Ebbsfleet Valley, one of the largest regeneration projects in Europe. The area is already home to Bluewater, one of Europe's largest retail and leisure destinations, and many contemporary housing developments are planned or are in the process of delivery. Development has also brought investment in new transport infrastructure, and the area now has excellent road and rail connections, notably the A2 and M25 roads plus international and domestic high speed rail connections to London and the continent. The rail journey from Gravesend to London St Pancras on the high speed service is just 23 minutes. From nearby Ebbsfleet International Station London is just 17 minutes and Stratford (the gateway to the 2012 Olympics) 11 minutes. Continental Europe is also easily accessible from Ebbsfleet International with, for example, the journey to Paris taking just two and a quarter hours.



Gravesend in relation to Central London

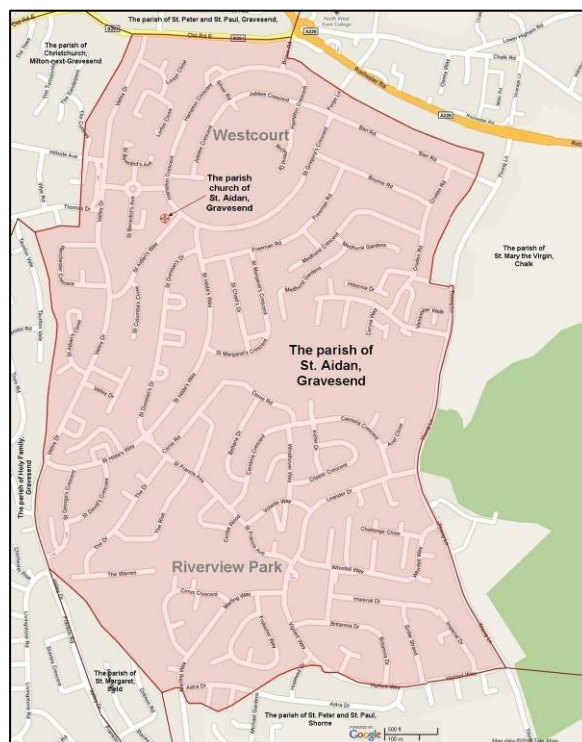


Gravesend

5.3 Employment in the area has traditionally been focussed on heavy riverside industries such as cement and paper-making, which have largely disappeared. Although physically located away from the parish, they have in the past generated work opportunities and have also had an environmental impact within the parish. It is the decline in these industries that now provides the regeneration opportunities in the area and the prospect of significant new jobs in the future, particularly in the science and technology sectors. However, as well as the huge opportunities within the area there currently exist some localised 'pockets' of significant deprivation.

6 The Parish

6.1 The parish is roughly rectangular (1.2 x 0.6 miles) extending approximately to just beyond Valley Drive in the west, Old Road East and Barr Road in the north, Thong Lane in the east, and includes most of Riverview Park in the south. The area was once part of Chalk parish. The population is about 20,000, and St Aidan's is reputedly the second most densely populated parish in the Diocese of Rochester. There are two major blocks of housing: Westcourt (1930's - 50's council housing with a considerable amount now owner-occupied) in the north of the parish; and Riverview Park (a late 1950's/early 1960's privately built estate) in the south. There are also some 1930's private houses to the north of Westcourt and some 1970's properties which started out as shared ownership properties to the east. There are some modern Churches Housing Association properties close to the church & hall and some slightly older senior citizens' flats nearby. The Riverview Park and Westcourt areas of the parish have very different characteristics: for example, according to indices of deprivation Westcourt ward is amongst the 20% most deprived wards in England, whereas Riverview Park is considered a relatively affluent area.



The Parish of St Aidan, Gravesend (map sourced from www.achurchnearyou.com)

6.2 The parish contains shopping parades at Riverview Park (two), Freeman Road, Lion Garage and Valley Drive, and one public house and one branch library, both at Riverview park (the public house in Westcourt having recently closed). Three medical centres and two dental practices are located within the parish. There is no industry or major employer in the parish, nor any senior citizens' residential homes. Frequent bus and commuter coach routes run through the length and along the western boundaries of the parish. Many people within the parish commute to the London area by car, train or coach.

6.3 The local area offers a wide variety of excellent schools and opportunities for further education. Selective education remains in Kent, and Gravesend has both Boys' and Girls' Grammar schools located on the edges of the town. St Georges School, a Church of England secondary school, lies about a mile to the west of the parish boundary, and the incumbent is regularly asked to provide a "church" reference for intending pupils.

6.4 The following schools are located within the parish:

- Riverview Infants and Junior Schools
- Raynehurst Primary School

- Westcourt Primary School
- Thamesview Secondary School (Rebuilt in 2010)

6.5 The Vicar and Curate have well established contacts with primary schools, regularly taking morning assemblies. The schools are encouraged to bring the children to visit and explore the church and have the “occasional services” explained to them, and to visit the church for special services (e.g. Harvest Thanksgiving, Christmas) or projects run by UNITE, an ecumenical youth project in Gravesend. The church also has contacts with some of these schools via the Westcourt Forum (see 18.2)

7 Church Buildings



'Birds eye view' of St Aidan's Church, Church Hall and grounds, and Vicarage

7.1 **The Church** - The Church was consecrated in 1963 and was designed by Northover & Northover. It seats around 120 comfortably (including the choir stalls). The nave and



Church interior looking east



Church interior looking west on the occasion of the dedication of the Powerhouse, 3/9/06

chancel are exceptionally light, with large windows. The main altar is of stone. The Vicar's vestry is small and has direct access from the car park. A larger office doubles also as a choir vestry. The church is generally in good order. A rebuilt pipe organ was installed about 35 years ago. New nave and chancel overhead electric heaters were installed in 1996. The church was redecorated and modern lighting and sound systems were installed in 2006.

- 7.2 **The Powerhouse Community Centre** - From February to August 2006 the Church underwent substantial reordering at the west end and was redecorated throughout, a £150,000 project to develop new community facilities out of the back third of the church building. A mezzanine floor, new and refurbished entrances and toilets (including a toilet for disabled persons), a new church office/choir vestry, and a new kitchen were all built. Known as The Powerhouse, the facilities provide flexible meeting space and a computer training room, all fully accessible to wheelchair users with a lift as well as stairs to the mezzanine floor. There is a separate entrance to the Powerhouse and a folding glass partition divides the Powerhouse and the main church building – the Powerhouse facilities can therefore be used independently but can still act as part of the church on occasions when additional seating capacity is required. The Powerhouse West Room features a large wall-mounted TV screen used for the showing of DVDs and other audio and visual media.



Spilling from the Powerhouse into the church at the 2010 holiday club 'fish & chip' lunch



The Powerhouse Computer Centre

- 7.3 **The Church Hall** - The church hall lies on the opposite side of the car park from the church. It was built in 1954 and for the first 10 years of its life was in use as a dual purpose church/community building. It had a major repaint about 5 years ago (as a Community Service project) but now requires further redecoration. The Church Hall has male & female toilets, a new toilet for disabled persons, a small kitchen, and a stage with curtain and storage space underneath. The Hall is used five mornings a week by the Church Nursery



External view of the Church Hall



Internal view of the Church Hall looking towards the stage (the Hall prepared for the 2010 summer holiday club)

School and, together with church and outside bookings breaks even most years. However, due to its age it is in need of a major rebuild/ refurbishment, and outline plans have been drawn up for a new extension to house a meeting/small café area with kitchen and new toilet facilities in addition to internal refurbishment and some reordering of the current building. The plans are, however, at an early stage and are currently unfunded.

- 7.4 **The Church Grounds** - The grounds surround the Church and Hall and include a car park which can hold 20 cars. (See Figure 4). There are grassed areas and a small garden of remembrance where ashes are infrequently interred, the planting of which is tended, and the lawn cut, by a parishioner. Gravesham borough council cut the grass in the grounds under contract. A new outdoor playground for use by the nursery school was constructed to the rear of the Hall in October 2010.
- 7.5 **The Vicarage** - The Vicarage was built in 1958 and is situated just north of the Hall less than 100 yards from the church. It has gas central heating and consists of 2 reception rooms, a study, kitchen and a utility room, downstairs toilet, porch and upstairs 4 bedrooms plus a bathroom. There is an integral garage, burglar alarm and exterior security lighting. The rear garden is reasonably large. The premises are in good structural condition.



Vicarage, external front view



Vicarage, external rear view

(Note: further pictures of the Vicarage, including internal views and views of the garden, are available at www.staidangravesend.co.uk)

- 7.6 **The Christopher Centre** - The Christopher Centre at Riverview Park, which has no vehicular access, was once the second parish hall but as a result of the constant drain on parish resources was handed back to the Diocese for lease to the Riverview Park Residents Association. The centre is used five mornings a week by the Church Nursery School see 12a .Under the terms of the long lease, the church has free use of it on Sundays. On the third Sunday of each month there is joint service with the Riverview Baptist Fellowship and St Aidan's (see 8.4.3 and 17.2). There are plans for improvement of the existing building. There are also plans to sell off surplus land adjacent to the existing hall for the construction of flats, with the proceeds used as repayment of a £60,000 loan from the Diocese towards the costs of constructing the Powerhouse. However, the collapse in the housing market over recent years has meant these plans are stalled.

8 Worship, Services and the Ministry Team

8.1 Worship

- 8.1.1 Worship is focussed on the Sunday morning 9:30am choral parish Eucharist, together with a Wednesday morning Eucharist and a range of non-Eucharistic, more informal services at other times. The churchmanship does not tend to the extremes of being low or high. The priest has traditionally worn alb and stole. Common Worship is used for most services. Over recent years different formats for the non-Eucharistic informal services have been tried with varying degrees of success. Audio and visual material is often used during these

services, using a digital projector and screen placed in front of the pews. Audio and visual material is also used occasionally during the main Sunday morning 9:30am service.

8.2 Statistics

8.2.1 The Electoral Roll stands at 122. The congregation is predominantly middle-aged and elderly but there are also several families with young children. Easter Communicants in 2010 were 83. Statistics for Occasional Offices (during 2009, unless noted otherwise) were

- Baptisms 16
- Confirmations 3 (in 2010)
- Weddings 2
- Funerals 78

8.3 Music

8.3.1 Music is an important part of worship at St Aidan's with a tradition of choral music. The choir is 11 in number, mainly mixed age females but with some male members, and is robed for the main services. The Advent and Christmas Carol services are a feature of the choral year. The choir takes part in the Diocesan and Deanery Choir Festivals each year. Most of the choir is available for Saturday weddings if requested. A very committed honorary Choir Director/ Organist has been in post for more than 10 years. The Parish Communion musical setting comprises Rutter's Gloria, Aston's Agnus Dei with the remainder by How. A variety of hymn books are used: AMR, Hymns for Today, Songs of God's People and Songs of Fellowship. A small music group formed in recent years, comprising guitar, keyboards and drums, was well received by the congregation but has now ceased due to key members having moved away.

8.4 Sunday Services, and Other Services/Groups

8.4.1 The 9 30am Sunday Parish Communion is the main service of the week, with an average of 65 communicants. On the 1st Sunday of each month the 9:30 service An all age service with a shortened family Eucharist is held with worship and music following a more informal pattern. The choir sings appropriate "gathering songs/hymns" on the 2nd and 4th Sundays. On the second Sunday an informal non-Eucharistic service is held at 11.15am at which Riverview Brownies parade, and on the fourth Sunday a 'Messy Church' is held at 4pm (started in September 2010).

8.4.2 The 6 30pm (4pm in the winter) Sunday evening service, attracting about 8-12 worshippers, consists of:

- 1st Sunday – Healing Eucharist
- 2nd Sunday – (No evening service)
- 4th Sunday – Messy Church (4pm, in church hall)
- 5th Sunday - Evening Prayer

8.4.3 On the 3rd Sunday in the month, an Informal service with Riverview Baptist is held in the Christopher Centre, attracting 30-40 people.

8.4.4 A mid week said Service of Holy Communion is held at 9 30am on Wednesdays. The average attendance is 20.

8.4.5 There are currently up to 5 members of the congregation receiving Holy Communion at home every month which is ministered to them by clergy and lay members of the ministry team.

8.5 Baptisms are usually at 11:15 on a Sunday morning. Holy Oils are kept in the aumbry for use at Baptisms, Confirmation and anointing.

8.6 There are 5 Pray-ers who are on duty in rotation after each 9.30am Sunday service for members of the congregation seeking prayer for themselves or for others. The Pray-ers

also meet each Monday morning for intercession.

- 8.7 Morning Prayer is said in church each Tuesday morning. Two lay-led Bible Study House groups (one day time, and one evening) meet for a number of sessions during the year, and there is a Prayer and Praise evening once a month.

9 Ministry Team

- 9.1 The Ministry team consists of Vicar, Curate, two Readers (one PTO), and two Pastoral Assistants who meet as a team once a month. These visit the housebound with Home Communion most weeks. One Reader is authorised to conduct funeral services and regularly exercises this ministry. Pastoral Assistants undertake follow-up bereavement and pre-baptism visits. Three servers act in rotation; there are 20 Sidespeople and a rota of about 15 individuals/families who read the first lesson, lead the intercessions and present the elements at the 9.30am Sunday service. Five chalice assistants are licensed by the Bishop for 4 year terms
- 9.2 Administrative/Secretarial help is made available as required.

10 The Parochial Church Council (PCC) and Subcommittees

10.1 PCC

10.1.1 The PCC meets in alternate months and is composed of 15 lay members, including Deanery Synod Members and the two Churchwardens plus the Incumbent, Curate and Readers. One third of the electable members is elected each year. The Parish is blessed with committed and capable Churchwardens and PCC Secretary and Treasurer.

10.1.2 There are a number of subcommittees whose work is to specific (although largely unwritten) briefs in their area of responsibility. Proposals on matters of principle, or where money needs to be expended, are always referred to the full Council for approval. The subcommittees are listed below:

- **Standing Committee** - The Standing Committee is composed of the Incumbent, Churchwardens & Secretary and two other PCC members. It undertakes the initial discussion of important issues so as to allow the PCC to discuss already-formed proposals thus saving time.
- **Maintenance Group** - The Maintenance Group is responsible for considering maintenance work required to the Church and Hall and with the wisdom to know what to tackle "in house" and when professional help must be sought.
- **Joint Service Planning Group** - This group is responsible for organising the joint Sunday evening informal services held with the Riverview Baptist fellowship, and for considering ecumenical initiatives and formulating outreach proposals.
- **Worship Group** - The Worship Group is principally concerned with arranging the 9.30am All-Age 9.30am service each month.
- **Fund Raising & Publicity Group (FRAPS)** - Organises fund raising and social activities such as: Quiz Evenings, the Harvest Supper, Pudding Parties, and Progressive Suppers etc.
- **Powerhouse Community Centre Steering Group** - manages the operation of the Powerhouse.
- **Computer Centre Steering Group** – manages the operation of the Powerhouse

Computer centre and seeks the funding to keep it going.

- **Games & Planes Steering Group** - manages the operation of an oral history project based in the Computer Centre and funded until 2012 through Heritage Lottery funding.
- **Nursery School management Committee** – manages the operation of the Nursery School (see 13)
- **Other responsibilities** - Named individuals have assumed responsibility for overseeing flower arranging, CRB checks and child protection, fire and safety, and data protection. Cleaning of premises is undertaken by paid staff, supplemented by occasional work mornings.

11 Finances

- 11.1 Historic generous giving and careful stewardship means that St Aidan's finances are in relatively good shape, at least when compared to many other parishes, and currently has reserves to draw upon. A summary of the accounts is shown at Annex 1. A number of restricted funds exist for specific purposes in addition to the general fund, one being a Stipend Investment Fund. This fund has existed for a number of years being capital set aside to support the Vicar's stipend if necessary. The PCC has during recent years used interest on this fund to support the cost of the wider Ministry. St Aidan's has historically met the Vicar's Stipend (usually paid at around the mid point of the range recommended by the Diocese), contribution to the Curate's stipend, paid Parish Share in full and met all other running costs from annual income, but there has been need to draw on reserves to an increasing extent over recent years. No fees are retained by the Ministry Team and full expenses are paid.
- 11.2 The Freewill Offering Scheme with its 70 sets of envelopes has been in use for many years with 20 contributing via Gift Aid. A Rochester/Canterbury Dioceses Stewardship scheme was launched in 2005 and produced results in increased giving and offers of help. Six Sundays in the year are designated for Charitable "Away Giving" when all collection money not in FWO envelopes is given to specific charities as agreed earlier in the year by the PCC. Church members are active during Christian Aid week, collecting door to door and organising fund-raising functions. St Aidan's also has a Children's Society representative and a Christingle service is held in aid of the Society each December.

12 Young Peoples Ministry

- 12.1 Historically youth ministry at St Aidan's has been arranged into several JAM ('Jesus and Me') groups each ministering to a different age band. However, this has recently changed and the children and youth ministry is now focussed on:
- a weekly After-School club for ages 4 to 11 between 3.30 – 4.45 on a Wednesday
 - a small group of teenagers from church-attending families who meet on a Sunday evening.
- 12.2 During the first part of the 9:30 Sunday service children are offered teaching and activities in the Powerhouse and then rejoin the service for communion. Teaching and activities are also offered during part of the 3rd Sunday 11:15 service.
- 12.3 A themed children's activity week is held during the summer holidays, a very energetic week of Christian teaching for the local (mostly non church children). The week includes a day out on the Saturday and a special 'holiday club' service on the Sunday. The holiday club has proved extremely successful and is seen as a most worthwhile outreach activity.
- 12.4 There are local Scout groups not affiliated to St Aidan's, two Brownie packs at Riverview

and a Guide company. Brownies attend Church parade most months.

13 The Nursery School

13.1 St Aidan's Church operates 2 Ofsted-inspected Nursery Schools with fully trained and paid staff. Started in the 1960s, it operates from two sites:

- the Christopher Centre, operating on five mornings each week with full numbers.
- St Aidan's Church Hall on five mornings a week again with full numbers.

13.2 The Nursery School has good relationships with the local authority, very often taking referrals from them. It also works with the local primary schools especially when children transfer from nursery to school to make the transfer as stress free as possible.

14 Publicity

14.1 A weekly news sheet is produced (4 x A5 pages) giving service times, Sunday service readings, general notices and prayer guidelines for the week. The news sheet is prepared and photocopied 'in-house' ready for distribution at the 9:30 Sunday morning service.

14.2 The Parish magazine, '*The Pilot*', normally of 12 A5 size pages, is published monthly and sold at a cover price of 40p. The main regular features include the Vicars letter, forthcoming events, a children's page, extracts from the registers, a prayer diary, forthcoming Sunday readings, and other occasional articles. About 280 are sold each month. A team of helpers deliver the magazine to those subscribers who have asked for this but seldom attend church. The printing is undertaken 'in-house'.

14.3 Following an earlier pilot project, a fully functioning website was launched on 8th May 2010. The website is powered by ChurchEdit and is maintained 'in-house'. The web address is www.staidangravesend.org.uk.

15 Other Groups

15.1 A number of other groups exist within St Aidan's providing both ministry and social activities:

- **Aidan Ladies** - This is a group of up to 15 ladies meeting on the second Wednesday of each month during the day.
- **Luncheon Club** - This club, run by church members, provides a two-course hot lunch, and social opportunity, at reasonable cost for up to 10 senior citizens, some with little or no Church connection. The meals are supplied by a local day centre for the elderly.
- **Jubilee Club** - This club meets after the Luncheon Club as a "drop in" facility and provides a focus for about six people some of whom have no other church connection.
- **Craft Club** - The club meets on the first Wednesday of each month making cards etc for sale for church funds
- **Men's Lunch Group** - Meets on the second Monday of the month for a lunch with a talk by members of the group, or invited guests, attended by around 15 men. Occasionally competitions are arranged with a similar group from St Francis, Strood.

16 East Gravesend Group Activities

16.1 St Aidan's is part of the East Gravesend Group of Churches (C of E) comprising also:

- Christ Church, Echo Square (Vicar: Rev Sue Brewer)
- Holy Family, Kings Farm
- St Margaret, Ifield

16.2 Holy Family and Ifield is a combined benefice currently in long term interregnum. The Deanery is actively supporting the Benefice (with St Aidan's ministry team playing an important role) and seeking God's will for the long-term future.

17 Ecumenical

17.1 Very Good relations exist with other Churches in the Town through "Churches Together in Gravesham": RC, URC, Baptist, Methodist, and the Salvation Army. The East Gravesend clergy group meet with clergy of the other denominations, about every 4 - 6 weeks. The Churches of these denominations come together for Lent and Advent.

17.2 A Baptist Church fellowship meets every Sunday morning in the Scout Hall at Riverview Park. This congregation joins with St Aidan's at the Informal Sunday evening Services at the Christopher Centre. Traditionally the Baptists have attended our Maundy Thursday evening Communion Service, and also attend and take part in our Palm Sunday evening service of meditations, readings and hymns.

17.3 The Lighthouse Church (Guiana) meets in the Hall each Sunday morning and Wednesday evening.

17.4 With the Baptist Fellowship the only other place of worship in the parish is The Victory Centre, an independent Pentecostal church located in Valley Drive on the western boundary of the parish. However, at the time of writing, there are also plans emerging to develop a Muslim worship centre located within the former Westcourt Inn public house which is approximately 150m from St Aidan's church building.

18 Links with the Wider Community

18.1 St Aidan's has been closely involved with the formation of a number of groups within the local community and continues to support these, including:

18.2 **Westcourt Community Forum** - The Forum started in 2000 with leaders of the local community (Head Teachers, Borough Councillors, Church Members, the Church, together with KCC Councillors and Community Warden, Kent Police beat police Officer plus Police Community Support Officers. Other interested parties are invited for special projects. The Forum, Community Warden and CPSO with KCC Youth & Community Workers run a youth club which meets twice a week in the Powerhouse to cater for different age groups. The Forum also runs community days and supports the efforts made by the Borough Council in its Safety Days. It also acts as a Kent Police PACT (Police and Community Together) team allowing local residents to voice their concerns on local issues at meetings. Although having during past years proved beneficial in meeting its objectives, the Forum is currently in need of reinvigoration.

18.3 **Westcourt Residents Association** – holds its meetings in the Powerhouse. The Association also runs a 'Cheeky Chimps' after schools club in Westcourt School which St Aidan's church members assist with.

18.4 **Westcourt Social Group** – Has until recently run a breakfast cafe, OAP's club, youth clubs, Arrival fun days with many activities run from the Powerhouse. Over recent years the group has run a Christmas community day alongside St Aidan's annual Christmas Fayre. This group has been very active but is currently short of volunteers and as a result some activities have been curtailed.

18.5 **Community Payback Team** – based at the Powerhouse on a Wednesday, this group carries out various tasks within the community and sometimes in and around the church.

19 Overseas Links

19.1 St Aidan's has developed a link with Bishop Samuel Gnanaprahasam and his Church in Cumbum, Tamil Nadu, South India, and sponsor directly and through individuals over 20 children for their education and healthcare. The previous incumbent made a visit to India in March/April 2006 and Bishop Samuel and members of his family made their most recent visit here in 2009.

ANNEX 1 – SUMMARY OF THE PCC ACCOUNTS

ST AIDANS PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

EXTRACT FROM STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2009

		General Fund	Dedicated Fund	Restrictive Funds				2009	2008	
		Fund	Fund	Building	Stipend	Mothers & Toddlers	Nursery School	Redevelopment-	Total	
<u>Incoming Resources</u>		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
	note									
Giving	1	33,435							33,435	36,191
Ordinary Income	2	8,381					109,124		117,505	116,788
Fund Raising	3	2,727							2,727	2,821
Charity Appeals		1,703							1,703	3,182
Legacies & Other Income	4	21,292		2,529		184			24,005	19,411
Interest		384		133	3,259		19		3,795	5,883
Total		67,922	0	2,662	3,259	184	109,143	0	183,170	184,276
<u>Outgoing Resources</u>										
The Ministry	5	43,968							43,968	44,539
The Church	6	10,107							10,107	6,366
Ordinary Expenditure	7	10,796					110,789		121,585	117,276
Charitable Donations		2,397							2,397	3,581
Other Expenditure	8	15,162		3,270				1,336	19,768	12,612
Total		82,430	0	3,270	0	0	110,789	1,336	197,825	184,374
Net Incoming Resources		-14,508	0	-608	3,259	184	-1,646	-1,336	-14,655	-98
Fund Transfers		15,085	-4,750		-7,398		-2,937		0	0
Net movement of Funds in Year		577	-4,750	-608	-4,139	184	-4,583	-1,336	-14,655	-98
Balance Brought Fwd		1,318	29,298	18,002	67,144	197	13,210	2,394	131,563	131,661
Balance Carried Fwd		1,895	24,548	17,394	63,005	381	8,627	1,058	116,908	131,563