

HOPE HOUSING

An initiative of Bridlington Deanery

It started with three conversations in three churches happening about the same time – wouldn't it be great if we could use one of Bridlington's empty properties to house homeless people?

Encouragement at a Diocesan anti-poverty meeting led to us making contact with a national charity, Green Pastures, which enables churches to do just that.

Before long, all the churches of Bridlington Deanery were on board, both from the town and the surrounding villages, leading to the setting up of the charity Hope Housing Bridlington, whose members are the Synod and Trustees are the Deanery Leadership Team.

Soon, money was being donated, we found a suitable house which Green Pastures bought for us to rent from them, and we appointed Ian Burbidge, a member of the Priory Church, as part-time Housing Support Officer.

We made good links with the Council and the homelessness agencies in the area. We also installed fire doors and smoke alarms and furnished the house, almost entirely from donated furniture. By October last year we housed our first resident, with two more arriving soon afterwards.

There have been bumps in the road.



Richard Hare, top right, with other Hope Housing Trustees

Homelessness is often accompanied by past trauma and present struggles with drugs, drink, debt or trouble with the law. One resident left of his own accord; another had to be evicted. But things are fairly settled at the moment, with three formerly homeless residents working at their personal support plans with Ian and making progress in their lives.

Our next step is to build a team of volunteers to befriend the residents. We continue to share our faith where we can, in a way that respects the dignity of the residents. And we are beginning to think about asking Green Pastures to purchase a second house for us, to house another three people.

Richard Hare, Deanery Mission Enabler Project Lead, Hope Housing Bridlington

JULY 2020

ENCOURAGE, RESOURCE AND ENABLE

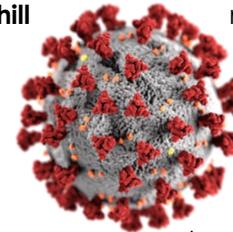
As lockdown began immediately after a very successful and joyous 'Come & See' Northern Bishops' Mission weekend, here in Harhill the feast could so easily have turned to famine. Those

goals of 'encourage, resource and enable', that are the focus of our deanery mission plan, have been the stimulus of our efforts to sustain links across the 26 parishes over the weeks of lockdown. Those who could, began to stream services early on and were very happy to share them with other parishes; Zoom services and study groups developed, as did ministry team meetings and a virtual away day! Wydale it wasn't but fellowship was real and so very much appreciated.

Being able to share concerns and support one another through these

days has brought the parishes closer in many ways; phone contact and even letter writing have been vital in reaching those in our communities with limited or non-existent broadband links. Area and Lay Deans have endeavoured to keep in touch with parishes regularly.

Finances are a challenge of course with so many annual fundraisers unable to take place this year and we are grateful to the finance team for encouragement to find new electronic ways of giving. The weekly meetings for Area and Lay Deans hosted by Bishop Alison and Archdeacon Andy have kept us up to speed on national guidance and local implementation of the ever-developing policies and plans so that we are hopefully ready for the days ahead as public



worship re-commences. Being able to join in with the webinars from the National Deanery Network has enabled us to benefit from national fellowship as well as local. Whilst none of us would have chosen this as a way of developing as a deanery, as individual parishes we have been required to innovate and try new ways of being church and reaching out in our communities. New links have been made and co-operation with other churches in the area has grown and developed. All in all the cooperative strength of the deanery praying and working together has given us hope for even closer ways of working to share the good news as our doors open and our internet presence continues to develop.

Revd Jacki Tonkin Area Dean
Martin Adams Lay Dean

THEY CAME AND SAW - WHAT NOW?

MARY ROLLS AND DAVE JOHNSON LOOK BACK AT MARCH'S MISSION IN MOWBRAY DEANERY



As Multiply Ministers, we fitte 10% of our time to our Deanery. Through Come and See we have well and truly given that over the past 9 months!

Dave Johnson (Multiply Northallerton) and I (Multiply Thirsk) contributed to the local steering group and have helped to facilitate, encourage, train towards and hold the weekend's programme.

It's been a fascinating insight into where the local church is in our understanding of mission.

At the time of planning we couldn't have foreseen that a global pandemic would force us to think differently, about not just how we follow up those who have shown interest in faith, but also how we exist as church!

We could report back on 24 events, 5 school visits and 7 seeker-friendly Sunday services in Mowbray Deanery and a good time was had by all (which it hopefully was!).

- But is it more fruitful to think about what we do now? These questions might help your analysis:
- What connected people meaningfully to Jesus, and helped them move closer to him?
- Did you do anything out of your ordinary run of activities? If so, would you do it again? How might you improve it? Would you consider trying something else new as a result of your experience, or seeing the range of events across the diocese?
- Will we organise more events in the next 6 months to capitalise on momentum from the weekend, and continue to grow relationships with those we've reached out to? (given normal business resuming!)
- How are we following up those who have started a journey of faith?



Some of our reflections from Come and See:

Dave - we trialled a number of events and we will look to continue the Youth Café and Shed Talks, both of which were well received by both the attendees and the venues (Café Nero and the Potting Shed pub).

In Northallerton, the greatest impact was where the speaker used prophetic gifts to speak into the lives of those they were talking to and praying with. A number of people were amazed that God would speak directly to them.

However, I've come to the same conclusion as previous missions:

we are not confident in inviting people to events. Attendance was no doubt affected by the Coronavirus. But despite every effort being made to encourage our congregants to invite people, most events lacked people who weren't already part of the church. People from church didn't bring others with them. How do we encourage to invite?

Mary - Sport is a huge recreation in Thirsk, and so connecting with our local sports teams was a good reach to people who aren't regularly around church. We did this through sporty congregants, and will definitely look to do another Question of Sport quiz! We had eight sports represented, each bringing five quiz questions. It was 80% non-church people, and a fun way gently to talk about faith in a sociable environment (plus we love that we got to introduce the Bishop as the 'Joker' to double each team's points on the round on which he joined them).

However our healing service brought mainly church-associated people and wasn't quite the draw to those outside we wondered if it might be. We will continue to plan these into our worship programme, and God used it to draw together a new fledgling prayer ministry team so nothing wasted!

We've been praying that Come and See will change the missional DNA of our churches and envision and inspire us. What we do now is as important as the spade work put into the weekend.

What is your analysis and follow up?