



# **The Parish of Hoylake**

*Compiled by the congregation,  
PCC and friends of  
St Hildeburgh's Parish Church Hoylake.  
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## **Introduction**

This Document has been compiled with the support and input of the congregation, friends and those who have an affinity with and love for St Hildeburgh's parish Church, Hoylake and the Christian values we cherish:

- Love of Jesus, and spreading the gospel.
- Love of the Bible, its teachings and the desire to encourage others to grow in faith.
- Love for people of all ages and backgrounds in our church and community, and a desire to serve them well.

We aim to promote these values and provide an inclusive, safe, friendly and welcoming environment to all who are involved with our parish. We hope the following words and sentiments provide an insight into who we are, and who we are learning to be in Jesus, for those considering whether God is calling them to Hoylake.

## **The Area**

The beautiful Parish of Hoylake is located on the tip of the Wirral peninsula. It is a distinct geographical area, being bounded to the North by the sea, and to the South by the railway line to Liverpool. To the East is the parish of Meols, and to the West is West Kirby. All three parishes have their own distinct personalities. Whilst the area may appear at first sight to be prosperous, there is a particularly diverse mix of housing, ranging from ex-council properties to homes of footballers, to terraced fisherman's cottages to inter war semi-detached. The parish also contains a compact but thriving industrial estate.



The Wirral Peninsula offers fantastic leisure facilities with a number of beautiful beaches, golf courses and parks along the coastline, linked by the King Charles III National Coastal Pathway.

The maritime city of Liverpool and the historical city of Chester are each readily accessible by both rail and road links from Hoylake, and, with easy access to both motorway (M53) and National Railway infrastructure (Liverpool Lime Street), excellent access is readily gained to the rest of the UK.

Liverpool offers a wide range of attractions, including internationally recognised art galleries, museums and theatres, alongside modern shopping centres which bustle with international visitors. Chester also offers a vibrant mix of visitor attractions and, on its outskirts, boasts the largest shopping outlet village in the UK. Within these two great cities, there are a number of world-class universities, and the region is particularly well endowed with sporting venues which include the Royal Liverpool Golf course, Aintree racecourse, Liverpool Football Club's stadium at Anfield, and Everton's new state-of-the-art stadium on the banks of the River Mersey, Tranmere Rovers stadium at Prenton Park.

## The Church



St Hildeburgh's church is located on [The King's Gap](#), which forms part of the King Charles III National Coastal Pathway, at the West end of the village of Hoylake. This is a beautiful conservation area and sees significant passing traffic by car, bike and foot as people make their way to the beach.

There is a strong community bond to the church, many see it as 'our church', and this can be witnessed at events such as weddings, funerals and Christmas services. The building itself is Grade 2 listed building.



The original parish church, Holy Trinity, was located in the centre of the parish and was demolished in the 1976 because of structural issues. This is where the parish graveyard is. It is closed to new burials, but continues to be used for the interment of ashes and burials in family plots, and is maintained by Wirral Borough Council. The graveyard remains an important focal point for the local community. We have good relationships with the local Funeral Directors and during early December each year the incumbent takes a short Service of Remembrance at the offices of Quinns Funeral Directors in West Kirby. This is well attended by families who have lost loved ones.

The church is an attractive building, both inside and out, constructed in red engineering brick. Being so close to the sea, there have been minor challenges with erosion to the exterior, but in the main the structure is very sound. In recent years, the old rush seating has been completely replaced by modern upholstered seats, a projector and sound system have been installed, and a new boiler and heating system invested in. The Church Centre was enlarged and refurbished approximately twenty years ago, and remains a bright, inviting part of the estate.

The vicarage is situated next to the church grounds and is an impressive Arts and Crafts building from the beginning of the twentieth century. Its' design is a little unusual in that it is wide, but only one room deep, giving the advantage that every generously sized room in the building faces South. The diocese has, over time, ensured that the vicarage is maintained in good order. It is secondary glazed throughout, and has a central heating system approximately ten years old. It sits in a large lawned garden which overlooks the Royal Liverpool golf course.



Our Sunday services, whilst largely traditional, also include contemporary offerings accessible to a wide range of worshippers.

- 8am Holy Communion (said)
- 10am Holy Communion (sung) (first three Sundays of the month)
- 10am Family Praise (last Sunday of the month)
- 6pm Evensong (first two Sundays of the month)
- 6pm BCP Communion (Last Sunday of the month)
- Healing Eucharist every other month at 10am on a Sunday

### **Finances**

To date the parish has sustained and met its financial commitments to the diocese and towards the general upkeep of the buildings and grounds. However, financial sustainability continues to be one of our major challenges.



### **Our commitment to Safeguarding.**

We have adopted the House of Bishops' guidance and good practice documents as our policies and procedures. We currently have one Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) and 2 additional Safeguarding Team members, also responsible for DBS applications. The PSO has completed specific PSO and Leadership training.

We seek to ensure safer recruitment of all new volunteers is carried out, and we are currently retrospectively registering existing volunteers, ensuring they have appropriate training and supervision, and understand what is expected of them. Alongside this, we have made a conscious effort to celebrate the contribution so many volunteers make to our church life, encouraging them to feel valued and flourish in their roles. The number of volunteers who have completed Basic safeguarding training exceeds 15 but we envisage that this will increase as Safer Recruitment and People Management becomes more embedded within the culture of the church.

The PCC and its Standing Committee each receive a safeguarding report at all of their meetings which includes a progress report on the Parish Dashboard. The Safeguarding Team meet at monthly intervals, approximately. We are working towards level 2 on our Parish dashboard which we use as a tool for improvement. Weekly notification of Safeguarding contact details and publicity is published in our Parish Newsletter, *The Beacon*. Contact details for Safeguarding purposes are visible around the Church premises and online on our Website. Safeguarding guidelines in the form of pocket booklets and credit card size, are freely available to take away, in the church building.

We have good relationships with our Diocese Safeguarding Team who provide support and guidance via telephone or email.

Safeguarding is the job of everyone at Church and we seek to ensure that this is worked out in practice, with vigilance, as we seek to reflect the grace, mercy and love of God to all. Our aim is that St Hildeburgh's should be a place where everyone is safe and able to flourish in relationship with God and one another.

### **The Deanery of Wirral North.**

The Parish of Hoylake is in the Deanery of Wirral North. There is no natural centre of gravity for the Deanery – it comprises 14 parishes, covering nearly as many separate population centres, and with 21 churches with a range of size, style and traditions. There are good

relationships in the Deanery particularly between the clergy, for whom it provides a valuable forum for fellowship and mutual support. Synod meets three times a year, usually with a speaker on a topic of relevance, often one of the Diocesan team. Because of the size and makeup of the Deanery we do not currently have Deanery-wide initiatives involving all the churches, but some churches partner with and support one another or are involved in joint events together on a local basis.

## Our Congregation

### Children

St Hildeburgh's has a close, mutually supportive relationship with the local C of E primary school, and the incumbent is part of the governing body. Hoylake Holy Trinity Primary School has a distinctive Christian ethos, reflected in its recent excellent SIAMS report, and regularly welcomes the ministry team and others to weekly Collective Worship. Other services such as Communion in the Community are also celebrated in the school.

**From the Head Teacher:** *Hoylake Holy Trinity CE Primary school very much values our partnership with St Hildeburgh's Church and the connections it brings. We look forward to welcoming a new incumbent into both church and school and continuing to work together to grow our children's faith in God.*



The school holds services at St Hildeburgh's and also visits in support of the Religious Studies curriculum. School supports and promotes our family-oriented activities such as Messy Church and Family Praise, and is always open to exploring new ideas for collaboration.

The Primary School is located just off Hoylake high street and for such a small school has a disproportionate number of notable alumni: Glenda Jackson, Daniel Craig (Actors) and Chris Boardman (Olympic Cyclist), The Coral (contemporary pop musicians).



St Hildeburgh's Parish organises and runs regular Messy Church events throughout the year. This provides an excellent opportunity for interaction between adults and children – quite a few of whom attend from the Church School

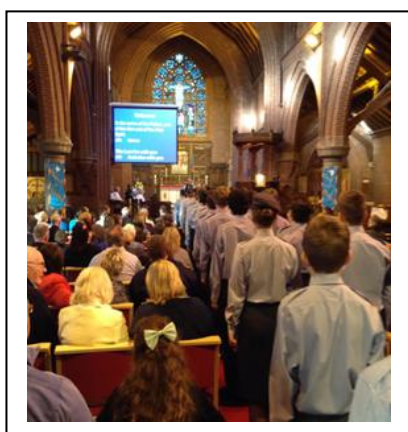
Activities include games and crafting based around a set theme. Our most recent event celebrated *Love Life – Live Lent*. The group also uses the main church building for a period of worship with lively songs with actions. Events are then rounded off with a hot meal for all.

A short distance from the church are located both Army and RAF cadet units, with the vicar being the chaplain of the latter. This has been a role historically held by the incumbent for many years, and gives the new vicar a ready-made opportunity to interact with local young people who might not normally have a connection with the church.

### Adults and Families

**Mid-week services.** In addition to Sunday services we also have a celebration of Holy communion each Wednesday in the Lady Chapel as well as a range of special services throughout the Christian calendar.

**St Hildeburgh's Guild** are very proactive in the support of the church including the organisation of the beautiful arrangements for services and festivals throughout the church calendar.



**The Art group** is a place to explore spirituality through creativity. Each week we reflect on a different theme, expressing ourselves using either pens, pencils or paint. Simple ideas are shared as to how you may like to respond to the theme, making it accessible to all.

**The weekly Reflection group.** was started in response to the desire for Bible study opportunities expressed by members of the congregation. It provides a safe, welcoming environment to discuss a Bible passage or theme, reflect on its application to our lives today and support one another in prayer.

**The weekly Tots Group,** is a very popular event and is very well attended by pre-school children from the local community.

**Community groups:** A long-established Brownie Pack of 25 girls meets weekly.

**“Bacon Butty”** mornings on Tuesday was introduced by the previous incumbent, offering lunch and company to those who may be living alone.

In addition to Church organised activities, a number of other activities are held in the church centre through the week such as; Pilates, and Slimmer's world and modelling clubs.



## Older generation

Whilst Hoylake has a healthy mix of ages amongst its population, it has long been a magnet for retirees, and as such there are a significant number of retirement homes within the parish bounds. Pastoral work and ministry with these facilities has been a mainstay of parish work over the years, this includes regular monthly services of communion, co-ordinated by the ministry team, and other social occasions. Residents are also encouraged to attend activities organised in the church hall throughout the week.



### **Quote from the Director of the Old Garden Care Home:**

Our residents do indeed benefit greatly from your visits, and we are ever so grateful for your continued support.

Our connections with St Hildeburgh's are a vital part of the offerings from The Old Garden to our current and prospective residents and their families.

The monthly Communion services at the home are well attended and our visits to St Hildeburgh's for the Care Home Services are a wonderful addition to our activities schedule.

The residents enjoy reading the weekly updates from St Hildeburgh's too. We very much look forward to welcoming our new vicar.

We hold a Care Home Thanksgiving Service in church every quarter – Easter, Summer, Harvest and Christmas. This is followed by Afternoon Tea in the Church Hall and has become a popular feature of our church calendar.

## **Community Interaction**

Hoylake was originally a fishing village, and it has one of the oldest lifeboat stations in the UK. The incumbent is chaplain to the lifeboat crew. Support for the RNLI runs deep within the town's community.

There are strong links between our local lifeboat crews, volunteers and support staff and Hoylake Parish Church. The Church's annual service for the lifeboats is a major civic occasion, which has traditionally been followed by a barbecue in the grounds of the Vicarage, strengthening connections and showing ongoing support for the crews in their work.



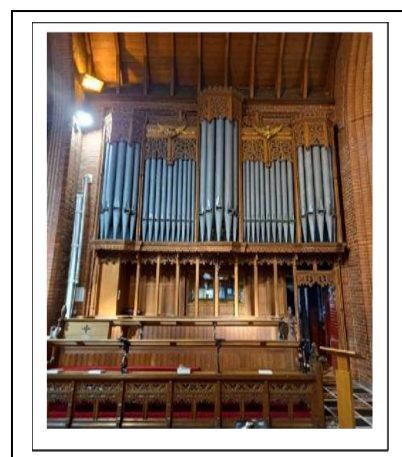
Hoylake itself has a strong community identity and sense of self-sufficiency. Examples of this include *Hoylake and Meols in Bloom* within which volunteers maintain flower beds in the town throughout the year, and the *Christmas Lights* which visitors travel large distances to see each December. The High Street has weathered the challenges of austerity and on-line shopping, retaining a healthy, vibrant mix of shops and cafes.



Due to the church's excellent acoustic qualities, the Wirral Orchestra organise regular performances to raise money for local charities.

Other notable events held in recent years include performances by:

- Hoylake Chamber Concert Society
- Songs from the Shows
- The Hague String Trio
- Piatti String Quartet



In the centre of Hoylake lies Melrose Hall Community Centre. The hall is used by many organisations in the local community and was built for the pensioners of Hoylake with proceeds from the George VI Memorial Fund. The incumbent has historically been appointed as one of the trustees.

There are a number of other churches, both within the parish bounds and in close proximity to the town of Hoylake. Through the 'Churches Together' initiative, strong links are maintained between St Hildeburgh's and other local Christians with different traditions of worship.

The annual Hoylake Christmas Tree Festival is warmly anticipated by many across Wirral, bringing significant footfall and income to the parish. Local charities, groups and businesses sponsor and decorate trees which are displayed in the church in the build up to the festive season. The public are invited to visit and appreciate fantastic displays in the beautiful setting of the main church building and enjoy some festive treats in the church hall. During this event, a variety of local groups provide musical entertainment.





## Local amenities

Hilbre Island is located approximately one mile from the Hoylake coast. The name Hilbre is derived from the dedication to St Hildeburgh, an Anglo-Saxon holy woman said to have lived there. Depending upon the tide times, the island can be reached on foot.

Hoylake's Royal Liverpool Golf Course was one of the earliest links courses outside Scotland to host the Open, and after three successful tournaments in recent years, has returned as one of the regular courses, when the world's sporting media along with thousands of spectators descend on the town for a week. St Hildeburgh's has sought to make the most of these opportunities, welcoming visitors and tournament staff to use our facilities and opening the church as a welcoming space for prayer and reflection.

Having, in its time, harboured a fishing fleet, Hoylake still boasts a sailing club whose clubhouse and boathouse are located on the promenade adjacent to the old lifeboat station. Rugby and football are strong within the parish, and there are a number of active bowling & tennis clubs.





## **Our vision**

### **Goals for the next 5 years:**

- Appoint a leader (incumbent) who will articulate a clear vision, delegate, and encourage wider participation and empowerment of church members.
- Encourage sound biblical teaching, relevant to the needs of the congregation and which lead to a deeper understanding of our identity as a community of Jesus' disciples and what that means for our lives here in Hoylake.
- Sustain a stable financial base in order to carry out our mission.
- Implement and maintain Statutory Duty of Care: ie Safeguarding.
- Engagement with young people and families. There is a significant need to build further on our good relations with our Church School and the Messy Church events to grow and sustain the congregation of St Hildeburgh's Parish Church, and help others grow in faith.
- To build our wider outreach into the community of Hoylake.
- Maintain a range of weekly services that appeal to different congregations.
- Support for our larger church activities such as Christmas Tree Festival.

### **Areas of church life which we consider are in most need of development.**

- Promote and raise the profile of St Hildeburgh as the Parish Church of Hoylake.
- Engagement with young people, using the connections available through our church school and the cadet units.
- Engagement with families. St Hildeburgh's remains the church that many families in Hoylake will look to for baptisms. Developing this point of contact into ongoing relationships and discipleship.
- Encouraging more members of the wider parish community into church life.
- Promotion and support of lay ministry to spread the load, bringing breadth and depth to ministry and encouraging all to use their gifts.
- Maintain and develop our robust pastoral care within the community, particularly amongst the elderly.
- As music has, traditionally, been a strength of St Hildeburgh's and provides important opportunities for building relationships with our community, we look for recognition, consolidation and enhancement of this through both our own, and external musicians.

### **What we are looking for in our new vicar**

The PCC and congregation are looking for someone who can:

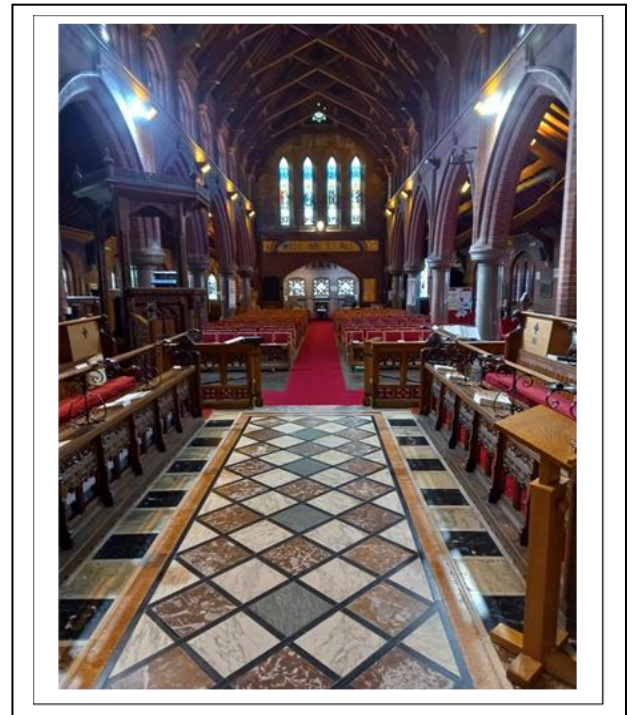
- Provide passion and desire to spread God's love and teachings to help us develop our Christian faith and grow the church in Hoylake.
- Throughout the week, and beyond the set services, encourage the congregation to live out their Christian faith in daily life.
- Foster and maintain a strong safeguarding culture.
- Work with the congregation and friends of St Hildeburgh's to clarify, articulate and facilitate the goals identified and summarised above.
- Work closely with the PCC to develop and implement strategies to facilitate our development as a parish.
- Reflect on and respect the style of worship currently practised by the congregation of St Hildeburgh's Parish Church.
- Work with the Churchwardens, Treasurer and PCC to ensure our financial sustainability going forward.
- Seek to use St.Hildeburgh's church as much as possible as an open, welcoming space for anyone in need of prayer or spiritual support.
- Retain and develop a close relationship between the parish and Holy Trinity school.

### **In summary:**

From a family or individual perspective, Hoylake has much to offer. Whilst appearing to be rural, it has a bustling community many of whom take advantage of the excellent rail links to Liverpool and Chester and beyond. It is a safe place for children, well served by local schools in both primary and secondary sectors.

We hope having read this document, you are inspired by our profile and our traditional Christian values of worship and fellowship, which we as a church family cherish and practice in our lives within our community here in Hoylake.

We also pray this inspires and compels our future vicar, to lead this ethos, to grow and develop our Parish.



We welcome any requests to visit, or to have an informal chat with a member of the PCC, to learn more about our parish.