

# The Parish of Herne Hill

## Mission Action Plan 2014-2016

*Our aim is, in God's strength, to bring Jesus to the centre of our lives and to the heart of our community.*

By...

1. Growing up

2. Growing together

3. Growing out

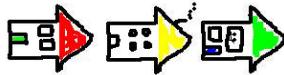
Friendly,  
Welcoming,  
Warm,  
Love and care,  
Relationships,  
Support...



What are we doing?

Choir  
MusicGroup  
PlayGroup  
StSaviour'sSchool  
Preaching  
Praying  
MinistryOfFood  
Worship  
PrisonMinistry  
HomeGroup  
Creche  
MissionPartners  
Family  
Zone2YoungPeople  
Children'sChurch  
DiscoveryMission  
BuildingForMission

Our mission is to take everything we celebrate about church out into the neighbourhood...  
(Celebration Sunday June 2013)



...all in, for and with Jesus.

### Where are we going?

*Somewhere exciting!* 2013 and 2014 have been busy years of building and preparing as a parish, bringing together lots we have been working on over several years. We've been listening and discovering how we can bring Jesus to the centre of our community through the Discovery Process. We've appointed a youth and children's worker. And we've completed a major building project, blessing us with a building more special than we could have imagined.

Over the next 3 years we are aiming to go further then, to grow up, grow together and grow out.

We believe that everything we do in our parish should be:

Profound: expecting encounter with God  
Personal: life changing  
Professional: aiming for God's best

We believe that to grow up, grow together and grow out we should focus on:

**1. Public worship:** we believe that public worship is one of the key ways of encountering God: through worship, through prayer, through hearing and receiving His teaching through the Bible. We believe that Sundays are an opportunity to refresh after the week past and to start the new week with God.

We will continue to strive for more people encountering God regularly.

**2. Church family:** we believe that we are one family in the Parish of Herne Hill. We believe that families grow together by spending time together and by encouraging each other in their faith. Each of us, whatever age or stage, has a unique part to play, and a unique place in this family.

- In a South London parish where the church family is often dispersed, we recognise the importance of small groups to nurture belonging.
- We recognise the need and joy of caring for one another in times of need, through practical and loving support, but particularly through praying with and for each other.

**3. Community:** our aim is to bring Jesus to the heart of our community, both by sharing His Good News and by being His loving Hands and Feet in Herne Hill.

- We recognise and value the special relationships we have with children and families in the community through St Saviour's School and the playgroups.
- We want to do something new to love and serve the wider community in Herne Hill. Through the Discovery Process we want to discern how God wants to lead us.
- We want to continue to work with other local churches to bring God's love into Brixton Prison.
- We believe that each of us, in the places we are in, at home or away, can be lights shining God's love.

### Priority actions 2014-2016:

	Mission Action	Expected Outcomes	Completion date
1, 2, 3	Youth provision	Develop a sense of community with our young people, through regular attendance	End 2016
1, 2	Small groups audit and development	Spiritual nurture and community, particularly recognising the dispersed nature of the parish community during much of the week	March 2015
2, 3	St Saviour's Playgroup and St Paul's Playgroup	Building relationships and a safe space to grow and play	St Paul's Playgroup start April 2014
3	Conclusion of Discovery process including formation of Community Action Group	Meet missional need in the parish, particularly but not exclusively focussed on the Milkwood area	Begin action from summer 2014
3	Y5 and 6 transition support	Y5 and 6 pupils and their families supported in changing schools; building relationships	Summer 2014
3	Exploration of faith based work in St Saviour's school	A safe space for children to learn and grow in faith	End 2014

## **Annex**

We are on the cusp of a number of new adventures and as such we feel that an action plan for 3 years is appropriate as we sense change will happen as a result of the new initiatives referred to in this plan.

The plan forms the output of a series of streams of work happening across the parish over the past decade, including 3 major areas.

### **1. The Building Project**

In 2001 a review entitled “Doing God’s work – Bricks and Mortar” explored the physical conditions of St Paul’s church and the adjacent church hall, with a view “to ensure that decisions about the future use and development of St Paul’s church and St Paul’s church hall are based on a fully understood and agreed plan”. The review considered the current use of the buildings and highlighted a number of developments required to better facilitate the missional work in the church. Following extensive fund raising and further discussion, the Statement of Need which accompanied the DAC submission in 2010 which outlines the requirements for the new accommodation stated:

“Our Parish aim is “in God’s strength to bring Jesus to the centre of our lives and the heart of our community”. We believe that to do this effectively we need the church to work better for us as a building. We believe that the physical limitations of the building are restricting our growth, both spiritually and in numbers. We have a small area set aside for babies and infants at the back of the Church but this is not physically separate. This leads to noise and interruption during services causing distraction to worshipers and some embarrassment to parents. There are no rooms within the Church that could be used for Children’s Church. The lack of toilet and kitchen facilities do not make the building a welcoming place. There are no facilities for the disabled. Moreover there are no separate rooms available to use for outreach activities during the week.... The back aisle and a half of the church will be reconfigured to create 5 new rooms. Using as much glass and/or mirrors as possible we will maximise the light and retain views from these rooms of the East Window, High Altar, nave, pews and clerestory windows. A new welcome area will be created between the main West Door and new glass doors into the church framed by the Memorial Screen. A new meeting room, kitchen and toilets (including a disabled WC) will be installed and spaces made for storage and notices. There will be a spacious and sound proofed crèche. The Loop system will be upgraded to ensure that the service is audible to the hard of hearing... In summary, the redevelopment of the back of the Church will enable us to grow as a congregation, both physically and spiritually. The Church will be an inviting environment open to people of all ages and abilities, enabling all to hear the word of God.”

In October 2013 the redevelopment work commenced and St Paul’s church building was re-opened on Palm Sunday, the 13<sup>th</sup> April 2014. During Holy week a series of prayer evenings were run in the new building to thank God for what He is doing in the community and church and to ask for His help and guidance in the parish living out its aim to bring Jesus to the centre of our lives and heart of our community, with particular focus on the use of the new facilities.

## **2. Review of Children and youth provision**

In 2009-2010 an in depth review of children and youth work in the parish was completed. In undertaking that review we consulted the children and young people who take part in our groups, the group leaders, and the wider congregations of both churches. We also reviewed the work done by other churches in our local area and looked at some national resources. The results of the consultation showed that there is much to celebrate, and to give thanks for, in the work currently being done. Notably –

- overwhelmingly, the majority of children report very positive feelings about their experience of church
- the group leaders demonstrate high levels of commitment and dedication to their role

The children of the Parish make up a very significant proportion of the regular congregations of the two churches. In 2009, at St Saviour's, the average attendance was 75 children each week out of a total congregation of 178. At St Paul's the average attendance was 22 children each week out of a total congregation of 96. This attendance has grown in both churches. The child-friendly atmosphere that encourages this attendance is set by the clergy and leadership at all levels.

The review concluded that "whilst the current arrangements deliver a great deal, with thanks to a lot of people who make them happen, the Parish's work with children and young people warrants, and would benefit from, a clearer focus and leadership in the future. Our collective responsibility for the young people with whom we have a connection – and their importance in the future of our church – means that a more strategic and considered approach to our engagement with them would be beneficial... PCC should adopt a clear statement of objectives for the Parish's work with children and young people at all ages and stages of Christian development from 0 to 18 years together with a strategy for delivering that objective."

The specific recommendations of the review included a need to recruit a full time youth and children's worker to work with the clergy and volunteers in the parish to develop and implement this strategy. We have recently recruited this post and are beginning to flesh out with him what this might look like.

The objectives and aims are as follows:

### **Mission Statement**

Herne Hill Parish Youth (HHPY), a ministry of the Parish of Herne Hill, is committed to the Parish Aim, and seeks to enact this through the following Mission Statement:

1. To enable all children and young people in our community to encounter and engage with God's love and God's truth.
  2. To introduce children and young people to the teaching of the Bible and nurture their understanding of the Christian life; encourage their personal faith; and equip them to continue in that faith into adulthood.
  3. To promote the full participation of children and young people in the life of the church in every way.
  4. To keep safe and promote the well-being of children and young people in the church and in our community.
-

## Aims

HPPY is committed to working with two key groups of children and young people:

1. Those who either are Christians or are looking to explore Christianity, from our Parish or local communities. We aim to work with them by;
    - a. Seeking to support, encourage and guide them on their Christian journey.
    - b. Providing opportunities to meet together for programmes of suitable activities and learning opportunities. These will be relevant to their lives both within and outside of these groups.
    - c. Listening to their needs and responding by offering guidance and support where we are able and trained to do so. We will provide access and referrals to other agencies where this cannot be provided “in-house”.
    - d. Enabling growth and development so that they are more able to take responsibility for themselves, and to recognise the needs of others.
    - e. Being positive, responsible, honest and authentic role models to them.
  2. Those from the local geographic community who are of any or no faith. We aim to work with them in the same ways as listed above, apart from point a; which enables showing God's love unconditionally, whilst respecting faith choices.
- 

### **3. Discovery process to discern mission opportunities**

Following the sale of St John's hall we are reviewing ways in which we can best serve the local community, particularly the part of the community in the Milkwood area of this parish.

The following summary is the understanding of objectives as agreed after in-depth discussions: *A PCC Working Group chaired by Adrian Parkhouse is exploring Tearfund's Discovery programme ([www.tearfund.org](http://www.tearfund.org)> resources for churches > engage with your community) with the intention of preparing the churches for greater community engagement, in order to:*

- *develop the parish's mission, particularly in the area around St John's*
- *find an appropriate use for proceeds of the sale of St John's*
- *bring hope by showing love, because we are people of faith (the Bishop's call to mission)*
- *in God's strength, bring Jesus to the centre of our lives and to the heart of our community (the parish mission statement).*

The working group has been following the Tearfund Discovery Process, which has 5 stages:

- a. Celebrate
  - b. Understand the needs in the community
  - c. Gather information
  - d. Dream dreams
  - e. Plan for action
- Reviewing and celebrating the gifts and resources in the parish (a): this section was launched in St Saviour's and St Paul's through celebration services in June 2013. Individuals in the congregations were asked to reflect on the things they most appreciate and value in the churches and to celebrate the gifts and blessings found in both churches.

The most common things said were about warmth of welcome, relationships and mutual support within the congregations.

- Exploring the needs of the local community (b and c): an in depth review of the needs of the Milkwood area was conducted by using local statistics, talking to local community organisations, and conducting an information gathering exercise in November and December 2013 with local residents using a postcard with the question “Life would be better around here if...”. The congregations in both churches were also invited to answer this question. The information was brought together and discussed to reveal some key areas of need. The majority of responses were about getting to know neighbours and building social connections, with a second major theme of the physical environment. Specific groups mentioned in responses were young people, elderly, and disabled people.
- Considering potential ways of meeting those needs (d and e): the working group considered the role the Parish of Herne Hill can play in meeting some of those community needs, including how they can work with other local organisations. The group reported to PCC with their findings in the summer 2014, including the following recommendations, which were unanimously accepted:  
“we propose that the parish respond with a three-year partnership project as follows:

### Aim

To be a blessing to our neighbourhood by enabling and supporting activity to build community and to meet needs in partnership with others; and to create a sustainable mindset and momentum in the parish which will continue to attract volunteers and resources to show and share God’s love.

### Objectives

- To select a small number of partnership activities focussed on the Milkwood area which can be launched quickly including a summer programme for young people and an Autumn Feast for older people
- To create a Community Action Group (CAG), with a life of three years and a parish-wide remit along the following lines:
  - Action - to be involved personally in action for good in the parish but outside the churches
  - Discovery – to continue the work of getting to know the parish and its needs (not just the Milkwood area) which began with the postcard survey
  - Communication - to be the link between the churches and other actors including those already listed
  - Resources - to look out for ways the churches can deploy their resources to build community and to meet needs and bring proposals to the PCC and Action Groups as they arise
  - Mindset - to generate and sustain enthusiasm for community action among the congregations