

# **Deanery & Parish Mission Action Planning**

## **St John the Baptist Tidebrook**

### **MAP 2024**



## Section 1 – Community Audit

Parish/ Benefice Name:	St John the Baptist, Tidebrook
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<b>Summary of key connections with community</b>	
The church is the only public building in the community.	
	<b>Mission opportunities: some suggested areas to consider</b> Make plans for Tidebrook community events which have been missed during the pandemic.
<b>How many people live in the parish?</b>	
Around 620	
<b>What is the age and social profile of the church congregation(s) and does this reflect that of the local community?</b>	
3 – 80+ years. The congregation reflects the social profile of the community, but is weak on the younger (5-17 years) age group	
<b>Is the congregation from the local area or gathered from further around?</b>	
Mainly from the local area	
<b>How are your church buildings used? Are there 'non' church groups using your buildings and what are your links with such groups?</b>	
Only occasional use by non-church groups, usually from the local community	
<b>Is there any new housing planned in your parish/benefice?</b>	
No significant new housing planned	
<b>Are there any areas where the church does not have an impact within a parish (housing estate etc) and would an apostolic partnership be appropriate?</b>	
No	
<b>Are there particular parts of the parish which are largely untouched by your church, e.g. areas of deprivation?</b>	
No	
<b>What support is offered locally for marginal groups?</b>	
n/a	

<b>What support is offered locally for people with specific needs -- e.g. mental health, ex-prisoners</b>
Tidebrook Elderly Action (funded from the legacy of a former parishioner) offers support to help older people facing difficulties in continuing to live in their own homes.
<b>What support is offered locally for those who are lonely and/or isolated?</b>
As above. Informal pastoral care is always available through personal contacts.
<b>What local provision is there for the better integration of people with disabilities?</b>
Wheelchair access to the church is available from the parking area. The loop system operates in tandem with the PA system.
<b>What gaps are there in contact with and provision for children (aged 0-11)?</b>
There is provision for mothers & toddlers group but at present there is no demand
<b>What gaps are there in contact with and provision for youth (aged 12-18)?</b>
Young people come together in a youth group led by the Benefice pastoral worker.
<b>What gaps are there in contact with and provision for young adults (aged 19-35)</b>
There is no specific provision for young adults.
<b>What gaps are there in contact with and provision for older adults (aged 65+)?</b>
There is no specific provision for older adults, though there are clubs in Wadhurst.
<b>What gaps are there in contact with and provision for men/women?</b>
There is no gender-specific provision.
<b>What contact does the parish/benefice have with key institutions?</b>
There are no key institutions in the parish.
<b>What contact does the parish/benefice have with local workplaces?</b>
There are no local workplaces other than farms.
<b>What contact does your parish/benefice have with your local church and community schools?</b>
There is no school within Tidebrook's parish boundary but members of the congregation are involved with School Pastors at Uplands Community College, the secondary school in Wadhurst.
<b>What opportunities might there be for chaplaincy?</b>
n/a

<b>Have you used the "Eco Church" tool to develop 'Care for Creation' (or similar)? Eco Church   The Church of England, Energy Footprint Tool   The Church of England</b>
The church is registered with Eco Church and progressing towards the Bronze award.
<b>What other things already happening in the community could the church join in with?</b>
Individuals from the church join in with community activities.
<b>Do you consider that your church has a good reputation as a faith community in the local area?</b>
Yes. The annual Tidebrook Fete in aid of church funds is well supported by the community.

## Section 2 – Mission and Ministry Audit

The mission and ministry audit was conducted by each PCC member filling in the audit individually and the results being compiled and discussed. In the following table, where 'yes' or 'no' is highlighted in bold there was near complete consensus of opinion. Where 'yes' or 'no' stand alone but in regular type face there was a clear majority of opinion one way or the other. Where both 'yes' and 'no' are left in the table opinion was equally divided.

### 1. A growing Church is likely to have a clear mission and purpose and clergy and congregations who are intentional about growth

Do we have a clear sense of our vision as a church?	Yes	
Do we have a clear sense of our distinctive offering as a church?	<b>Yes</b>	
Do we have a clear vision for growth that is understood and owned by members of the church?	<b>Yes</b>	
Does our church have a Mission Action Plan or another form of mission / growth plan?	Yes	No
Is our church intentional about setting clear goals that move our vision forwards?	Yes	No
Are our activities in line with our vision and priorities?	Yes	

### 2. A growing Church is likely to understand its context, and actively engage with it and with those who might not currently go to church

Do we have any specific plans to connect with and reach out to people as yet untouched by our church?	Yes	
Does our community know that we are here; do we have a good reputation as a faith community?	<b>Yes</b>	
Are we creatively involved with our local school(s), whether church schools or community schools, with regular lay and ordained involvement?		No
Are there particular parts of the parish which are largely untouched by our church?	Yes	
Do we have plans to start a new service, community project, a Fresh Expression, or a new apostolic partnership within the next 2 years?		<b>No</b>

### 3. A growing Church is likely to be willing to self-reflect, change and adapt according to its context

Do we have regular opportunities to reflect as a church community on our mission and ministry?	Yes	No
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In general, is our regular worship effective at drawing people into the presence of God?	<b>Yes</b>	
Do we have a sufficiently varied diet of worship that takes place at the most appropriate times?	<b>Yes</b>	
Are we prepared to welcome and embrace change if change is required to make our vision a reality?	<b>Yes</b>	
Are we making full and creative use of our buildings for mission and outreach?	Yes	No
Are we prepared to experiment and 'have a go' with new initiatives investing in what works and pruning what does not?	<b>Yes</b>	
Do we recognise our strengths as a church community and acknowledge our weaknesses?	<b>Yes</b>	

#### **4. A growing Church is likely to have lay people as well as ordained clergy active in leadership and other roles**

Are we committed in principle and practice to growing collaborative shared ministry and leadership?	<b>Yes</b>	
In general, do people feel they have a place within church life and are given opportunities to try things out?	<b>Yes</b>	
Do we regularly rotate volunteer service among a larger number of people?	Yes	
Do we help our volunteers and lay leaders to get the appropriate level of training and support when they require it?	<b>Yes</b>	
Do we encourage new people and young people to play an active part?	<b>Yes</b>	
Do we have more people in leadership positions than 12 months ago?	Yes	
Do we recognise and affirm lay and ordained ministry as having equal worth and value?	<b>Yes</b>	
Do church members share in decision making and share in responsibility for decisions once made?	<b>Yes</b>	

#### **5. A growing Church is likely to actively engage children and young people**

If we have children in our church are we doing the following things to keep them into their teens and young adulthood?		
a) Youth programmes		<b>No</b>
b) Worship services designed for youth or children	Yes	No
c) Camps, Christian youth festivals and retreats	Yes	No
d) Do we have dedicated paid or voluntary youth/children's workers/volunteers	Yes	No

If we don't have (many) children in our church are we trying to attract young families to church by...		
a) Having all age/family services, perhaps once a month	<b>Yes</b>	
b) Holding special child focused services to attract families who wouldn't normally come to church e.g. Messy Church	Yes	No
c) Making children / families feel welcome in the main service (e.g. children's corner)	<b>Yes</b>	
d) Making the most of our baptism connections?	Yes	No

#### 6. A growing Church is likely to be welcoming and build on-going relationships with people

Does our welcome and hospitality help people quickly feel comfortable and settled in our church?	<b>Yes</b>	
Do we have an attractive welcome pack / welcome literature?	Yes	
Does everyone in our church play their part in welcoming people and help them belong?	<b>Yes</b>	
Do we notice if people stop coming and follow this up?	<b>Yes</b>	
Do our church members use every opportunity to invite family and friends along?	Yes	
Are we good at spotting and engaging with newcomers?	<b>Yes</b>	

#### 7. A growing Church is likely to nurture disciples. encouraging people to explore and deepen their faith and live it out in their daily lives

Do we regularly see people coming to / beginning a journey of faith in our church?	Yes	
Do we guide and equip people to pray and to mature in their spiritual lives?	<b>Yes</b>	
Do we help people to read and reflect upon the Bible?	<b>Yes</b>	
Do we run regular Christian basics courses?	<b>Yes</b>	
Do we help people talk about and live out their faith day by day beyond the walls of the church?	Yes	
Do we have effective ways, including small groups, of helping people mature in their faith and their walk with God?	Yes	
Do we keep our members informed of diocesan opportunities for discipleship development and training and encourage participation?	Yes	No

#### 8. A growing Church is likely to have clergy and lay leaders who innovate, envision and motivate people

Do we encourage, support and pray for our leadership team (lay and ordained)?	<b>Yes</b>	
Do we encourage all our people to discern their gifts, spiritual and practical?	Yes	
Does our leadership team encourage everyone to use their skills and gifts?	Yes	
Does our leadership team include those who are good at innovating, envisioning and motivating people?	<b>Yes</b>	
Does our leadership team seek out leadership potential in others, including newcomers?	<b>Yes</b>	
Is our church intentional in setting clear goals for development and change?	Yes	No



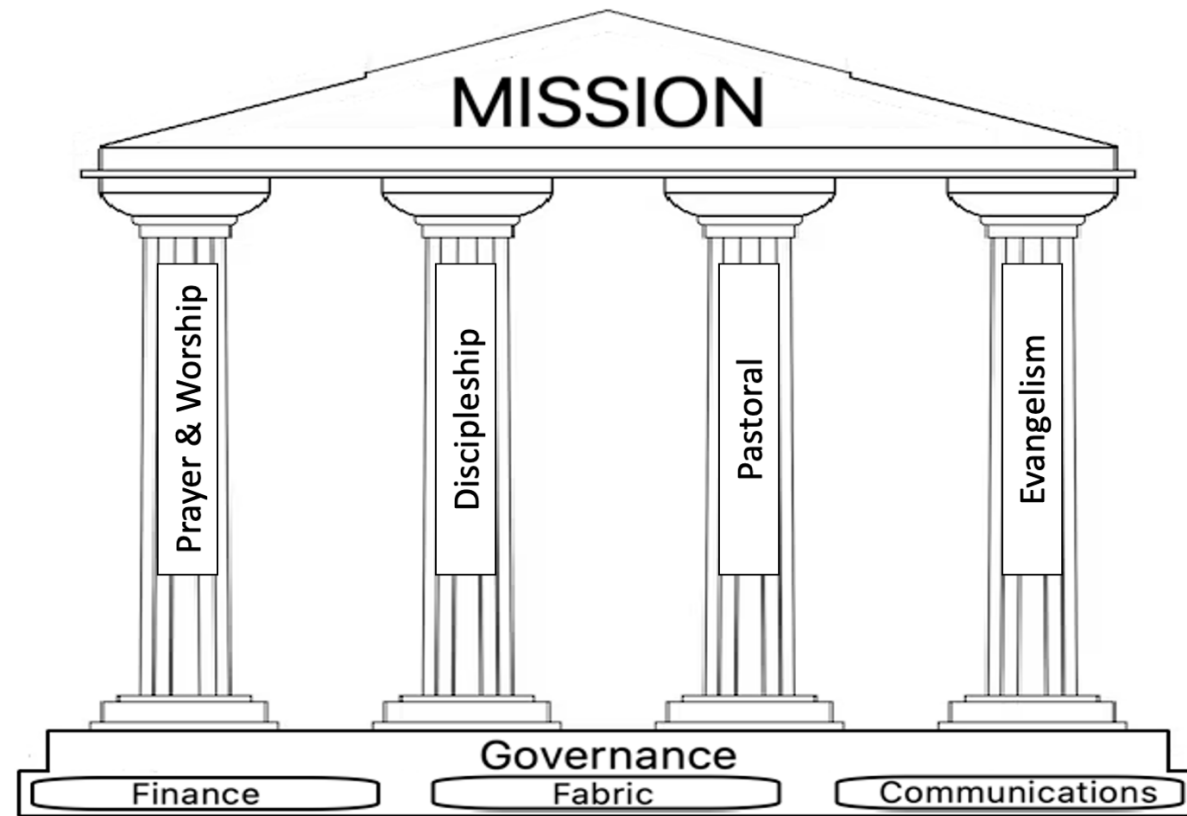
### **Section 3 – Mission Action Plan**

#### **Vision Statement:**

Taking Christ to the community through service and pastoral care.

#### **Mission Statement:**

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There is one MISSION, the *missio dei*, the Mission of God, to redeem the world through Jesus Christ.

The church has four key roles in its participation in the *missio dei*:

- Prayer and worship, through which people are helped to build their relationship with God
- Discipleship, through which people are helped to grow in their understanding of the gospel and to live the Christian life
- Pastoral care, through which the church lives out the commandment to love ones neighbour as oneself, within the church family and beyond
- Evangelism, through which the gospel of Jesus Christ is spread and the Kingdom manifested

The four dimensions of mission rely on good governance, including finance, buildings and communications.

In the following tables, three aspects of these core roles are scored (1-5, 1 being low) based on the results of the mission and ministry audit and discussion by the PCC in 2021. Actions are identified based on priorities identified by this process, but also taking into consideration opportunity and feasibility.

	Aspect	Features	Score	Action
Prayer and worship	Services	Sunday services are inspiring for regulars and newcomers alike People leave knowing they have encountered God A worship experience is provided for all ages A number of people contribute to leading and preaching as well as reading and intercessions	4	
	Prayer	Every aspect of church life is rooted in prayer, with regular prayer meetings Most people are comfortable praying alone or in groups Everyone is growing in their prayer life The church has a culture of prayer ministry, with people ready to ask for prayer and people happy to provide it	4	
	Holy Spirit	Spiritual gifts are understood, welcomed, recognised, and experienced The church is Spirit-led	3	

	Aspect	Features	Score	Action
Discipleship	Commitment	A commitment to Jesus is the norm There is a culture of contribution rather than consumerism There is a commitment to whole life learning Discipleship is facilitated for all age groups	4	
	Homegroups	Homegroup leaders are well trained, confident and capable Homegroups are forums for the exploration of scripture, prayer, fellowship and worship Homegroups encourage discernment and exercising of gifts Most people are in a homegroup, youth group or children's group	4	
	Leadership	Discipleship is reflected in people being keen to contribute to the life of the church The spiritual gift of leadership is readily discerned and opportunities identified for it to be exercised	4	Increase the number of people contributing to preaching and talks at services

		There is a strong leadership team of people who know their roles and authority to act		
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Pastoral	Aspect	Features	Score	Action
	Relationships	Members of the church see it as a family There are good pastoral relationships and care There are regular social events	5	
	Community	The church is focused on reaching out to and serving the community. The church is seen by wider community as open, generous, caring and 'a good thing', not a private club.	4	Reintroduce regular events to engage with the wider community, such as coffee mornings, and involve the wider community in the 'Green Team' addressing environmental issues. (Vicki Souter to lead) 2024 update – take-up of coffee mornings has been disappointing, try alternative formats  Introduce welcome leaflet for new residents (Anne Stordy to lead)  Start sending wedding and baptism anniversary cards to people who have their services at Tidebrook (Beverley to lead)  See if we can run a 'Three-church Walk' as a social and fundraising event
	Ecumenical	The church cooperates actively with the other churches in the benefice. The church sees the other churches in the benefice as co-workers in the service of the gospel. Ecumenical services are participated in and hosted regularly The church is well connected with the deanery, the diocese, the worldwide church and local churches of other denominations	4	

	Aspect	Feature	Score	Action
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Evangelism	Growth	Witness and evangelism are core to our culture There is a rolling programme of enquirers' courses There are regular outreach events The church is growing over all age groups	3	Run Alpha in 2025 as a benefice event
	Transformation	The church tithes its income to support charities that release the transformative power of the gospel locally, nationally and internationally The congregation are well informed about the charities supported and the impact they have	4	
	Care for creation	Our church buildings and churchyards are managed in as environmentally friendly way as possible We are working towards the 'carbon-zero by 2030' target	4	Achieve the Eco-church silver award. Investigate ways to reduce our carbon footprint, including a new heating system.

The four dimensions of mission rely on good underpinning factors:

	Aspect	Feature	Score	Action
Foundations	Communications	We communicate clearly and effectively with the congregation concerning church vision, strategy, ministry, mission and events We use a variety of media to communicate effectively with all ages The wider community can readily access any information they may be interested in concerning the church	3	Improve the frequency of website updates and make good use of the A Church Near You website. (Mark Pearson to lead).  Put Tidebrook Newsletter and church policies on website (Paul to lead)
	Buildings	Our buildings are well cared for, fit for purpose, and facilitate rather than limit the mission and ministry of the church	4	Consider re-ordering the church to help provide enhanced opportunity for mission, in parallel with addressing low-carbon heating.
	Finance	Our financial position is secure, with a high level of stewardship There is an annual surplus that can be used to grow the mission and ministry of the church	4	

Please also answer the following questions (answers were appropriate in 2021):

1. What sort of ministry do you need to fulfil these plans? If you are considering Authorised Lay Minister or Self Supporting Local Deployable Minister (SSM) or Reader Ministry in what way might either of these fit into these plans?

Tidebrook is an exceptionally strong church for a community of its size with many people involved actively in ministry. This is because Tidebrook has always been blessed by the presence of a focal minister, for many years an SSM and more recently by a Reader. As our Reader cannot be many years from retirement there is a need to address succession management as a focal minister is so helpful for holding the church community together and representing the church to the community.

2. Are there any specific ministry profiles/tasks emerging from this vision and how might this affect the sort of ordained (deacon or priest) ministry or ALM electives that might be needed? Do you consider that these ministry profiles require an ordained minister and if so why?

We feel the 1½ ordained posts within the benefice that we should have in place from May this year is adequate to serve the local priestly ministry. We hope that at least some of the people currently training as ALM Worship Leaders will go on to the Preaching elective course in order to cover more of the role that our Readers have fulfilled.

Having a curate serve in the benefice (as has generally been the case in the past) would of course be very helpful in augmenting mission and ministry, but our desire to have a curate here is fully justified by the excellent training context that would be provided.

**APPENDIX A**  
**COMPLETED MISSION ACTIONS**  
**2022**

**Pastoral**

**Relationships**

- Reclaim our common life post COVID.
- Restore our social calendar with events to bring people together again – Tidebrook Has Talent, 2022 Summer Fete etc

**Evangelism**

**Care for Creation**

- Achieve the Eco-church bronze award.
- Collaborate with Wadhurst and Stonegate on working towards carbon-zero.

**Foundations**

**Communications**

- Develop an internet presence – support the development of the new benefice website by contributing £1,000 to the development costs and providing information on Tidebrook for inclusion.

**2023**

**Discipleship**

**Leadership**

- Increase the number of people contributing to leading services occasionally and/or as authorised ministers.
- Beverley Boylan and Steve Stordy have completed the ALM Worship and Liturgy course and been authorised, and are contributing to leading services.

**Foundation**

**Finance**

- Define the costs and benefits of installing a contactless giving station and decide whether or not to progress.
- The decision has been made and a system installed.

**2024**

**Worship and Spirituality**

**Prayer**

- Raise profile and uptake of prayer ministry
- Prayer ministry is offered after services twice-monthly and people encourage to take it up, with some response

**Discipleship**

### Homegroups

Through the benefice, offer different options for homegroup membership, for example for new Christians as well as those mature in faith.

- The Tidebrook homegroup continues to welcome new people and following Alpha in autumn 2023 new men's and women's groups have been set up

### Leadership

Increase the number of people contributing to preaching and informal talks at services

- Our ALM was not able to undertake the Diocesan preaching training as this requires a formal theological training qualification, but several people are contributing to informal talks and testimonies

### Evangelism

#### Transformation

Raise the profile of our mission partners with the wider congregation through guest speakers, regular updates and inclusion in intercessions.

- Our mission partners and the charities we support are regularly included in intercessions and guest speakers have come to talk about their work and achievements