

Deanery & Parish

Mission Action Planning

St Peter & St Paul Wadhurst

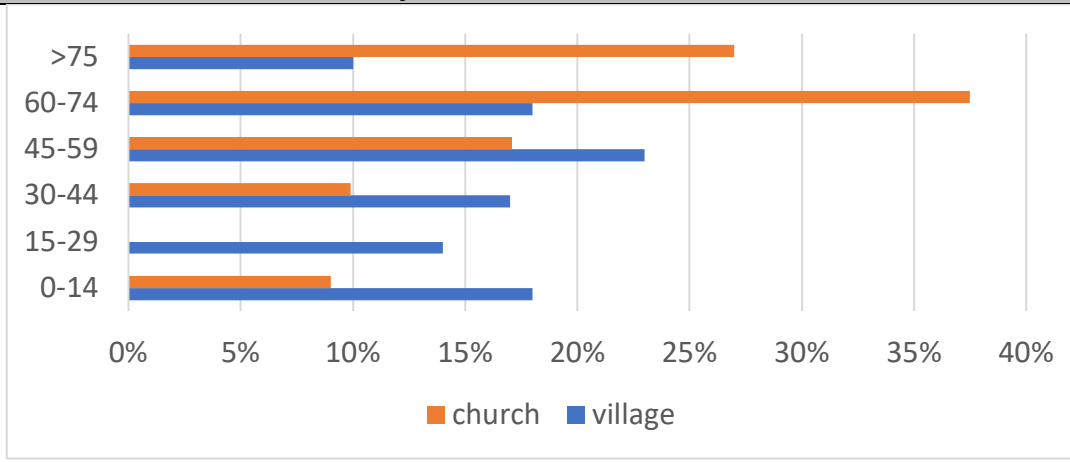
MAP 2023

Section 1 – Community Audit (2021)

Parish/ Benefice Name:	St Peter and St Paul Wadhurst
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Summary of key connections with community	
<p>Key connections with the community include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational institutions - the Church of England Primary School and the Community College • School Pastors' team in the Community College, which serves both the local and wider area; • Carillon Cottage (owned by Wadhurst PCC and used as a village signposting centre and venue for services such as Citizens Advice, Age Concern and Hearing Aid Maintenance) • Connections with younger families through 'Jelly Beans' babies and toddler group and 'Who Let the Dads Out' (WLTD0) • Afternoon Fellowship, Senior lunches and Cameo Day club for elderly • The Parish Council • Church members' involvement in various local clubs and societies • Church members' involvement in local businesses and shops on the High Street • Brownies and Guides groups • Wadhurst Manor Care Home 	
	<p>Mission opportunities: some suggested areas to consider</p> <p>Through community engagement with Carillon Cottage Through and with the schools Use of the church for concerts and community events Life events – the church is popular for baptisms, weddings and funerals Remembrance Sunday and Remembering Loved Ones services Life courses: Marriage Prep, Marriage, Parenting Faith exploration: e.g. Alpha Church Youth Group Clubs for the elderly</p>
How many people live in the parish?	
4,883	

What is the age and social profile of the church congregation(s) and does this reflect that of the local community?



The graph above is based on 2011 census data and 2020 pre-COVID attendance. Those over 60 years old are over-represented in the congregation. Teenagers and young adults are almost totally absent. Generally, the congregation is made up of the relatively affluent - with a few exceptions.

Is the congregation from the local area or gathered from further around?

The congregation is predominantly from the local area.

How are your church buildings used? Are there 'non' church groups using your buildings and what are your links with such groups?

The church building is used for church services, Jelly Beans, WLTD0, the after-school club and concerts. Carillon Cottage is used by many local non-church groups (Parish Council committees, para-health support, Citizens' Advice clinic...)
St George's Hall is used for Afternoon Fellowship and CAMEO, by Brownies and Guides, and some other users such as a pilates group.

Is there any new housing planned in your parish/benefice?

Yes. There is a new housing development and planning permission for several others.

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?

Yes – historically the congregation is drawn mainly from the wealthier households, so the less well-off parts of the parishes (council and social housing) are not represented in a proportion that reflects the wider community. An apostolic partnership would be inappropriate in such a small community; broadening the reach of the present church would be more appropriate.

Are there particular parts of the parish which are largely untouched by your church, e.g. areas of deprivation?

Queen's Cottages, Frazan Court and surrounding estates.
Larger houses along Mayfield Lane and the larger country estates.

What support is offered locally for marginal groups?

Very little, if any – other than the services offered by Carillon Cottage (form-filling, lifts etc)

<p>What support is offered locally for people with specific needs -- e.g. mental health, ex-prisoners</p> <p>Support offered to carers through <i>Care for the Carers</i> and a local group offering regular teas & outings for the disabled. See also above.</p>
<p>What support is offered locally for those who are lonely and/or isolated?</p> <p>The church's new Pastoral and Fellowship Groups have a remit to provide social contact and events for the lonely and isolated. In the village there are a lot of clubs and societies providing forums for social gatherings.</p>
<p>What local provision is there for the better integration of people with disabilities?</p> <p>The church had disabled access and a hearing loop. The village environment has various adaptations (sloping curbs, supermarket adapted access etc)</p>
<p>What gaps are there in contact with and provision for children (aged 0-11)?</p> <p>The church has good provision for children of this age and their families with weekly provision during Sunday morning services, a church-based baby and toddler group, activities in school holidays and a weekly, after school, church-based club.</p>
<p>What gaps are there in contact with and provision for youth (aged 12-18)?</p> <p>For the last 15 years there has been a gap in church provision, reflected in the lack of teenagers and young adults in the church family. This is being addressed with the employment of a church youth worker through a mission grant from the diocese and through the recent formation of the School Pastors team.</p>
<p>What gaps are there in contact with and provision for young adults (aged 19-35)</p> <p>There is virtually no church contact with this age group, although it should also be noted that not many of this age group actually stay in the village. High house prices preclude home ownership, few properties are available for affordable rent and many move away to study in further education and find permanent work elsewhere.</p>
<p>What gaps are there in contact with and provision for older adults (aged 65+)?</p> <p>This age group is very well provided for through activities and support e.g. Cameo, Afternoon Fellowship, provision of lifts and the services of Carillon Cottage (hearing aid maintenance etc)</p>
<p>What gaps are there in contact with and provision for men/women?</p> <p>The church offers little by way of gender-specific activity, other than Who Let The Dads Out? Although most activities are not gender-specific, women make up the majority of the Sunday congregations and the vast majority of the members of homegroups and attenders at CAMEO, Afternoon Fellowship, Jellybeans etc. A new church group for men is just about to start. There are a great many organisations and activities within the village offering leisure pursuits and company for both genders – from Bowls Club to U3A, Trefoil Guild and Rotary. There is also Wadhurst Warriors for younger men.</p>
<p>What contact does the parish/benefice have with key institutions?</p> <p>The church has an excellent long-standing relationship with the primary school and is forging a new relationship with the Community College especially through School Pastors. The church is in good contact with the local parish council.</p>

What contact does the parish/benefice have with local workplaces?

A few church members are involved in local businesses / workplaces.

What contact does your parish/benefice have with your local church and community schools ?

Strong involvement though parents, school governors, visiting clergy and church personnel (conducting assemblies, School Pastors etc). Heads make regular reports for inclusion in Parish magazine. The church hosts seasonal services and leavers' services for the schools and runs an after-school club for the primary school.

What opportunities might there be for chaplaincy?

There is little by way of opportunity for chaplaincy, though the vicar offers pastoral support in the schools.

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](#)

Yes. A new group is working on environmental management of the churchyard, and achieving Carbon Zero status by 2030 is in our Mission Action Plan.

What other things already happening in the community could the church join in with?

The church has provided a presence at the annual village fair through a parent & children's quiet area and activities for children.

Do you consider that your church has a good reputation as a faith community in the local area?

The profile of the church in the community has been raised hugely during the pandemic through the provision of online services and the work of Carillon Cottage, which served as a community helpline, attracting over a hundred volunteers from the community and performing over a thousand 'mercy missions'. The church is working hard to break down historic barriers with the community and to make the worshipping life of the church better understood and more accessible.

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 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?	Yes	
Do we have a clear vision for growth that is understood and owned by members of the church?		No
Does our church have a Mission Action Plan or another form of mission / growth plan?		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?	Yes	
Are we creatively involved with our local school(s), whether church schools or community schools, with regular lay and ordained involvement?	Yes	
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?	Yes	

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?	Yes	
Do we have a sufficiently varied diet of worship that takes place at the most appropriate times?	Yes	
Are we prepared to welcome and embrace change if change is required to make our vision a reality?	Yes	
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?	Yes	
Do we recognise our strengths as a church community and acknowledge our weaknesses?	Yes	

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?	Yes	
In general, do people feel they have a place within church life and are given opportunities to try things out?	Yes	
Do we regularly rotate volunteer service among a larger number of people?		No
Do we help our volunteers and lay leaders to get the appropriate level of training and support when they require it?	Yes	
Do we encourage new people and young people to play an active part?	Yes	
Do we have more people in leadership positions than 12 months ago?		No
Do we recognise and affirm lay and ordained ministry as having equal worth and value?	Yes	
Do church members share in decision making and share in responsibility for decisions once made?	Yes	

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	Yes	
b) Worship services designed for youth or children	Yes	
c) Camps, Christian youth festivals and retreats	Yes	No
d) Do we have dedicated paid or voluntary youth/children's workers/volunteers	Yes	

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	Yes	
b) Holding special child focused services to attract families who wouldn't normally come to church e.g. Messy Church		No
c) Making children / families feel welcome in the main service (e.g. children's corner)	Yes	
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?	Yes	
Do we have an attractive welcome pack / welcome literature?		No
Does everyone in our church play their part in welcoming people and help them belong?	Yes	No
Do we notice if people stop coming and follow this up?	Yes	No
Do our church members use every opportunity to invite family and friends along?		No
Are we good at spotting and engaging with newcomers?	Yes	

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	No
Do we guide and equip people to pray and to mature in their spiritual lives?	Yes	
Do we help people to read and reflect upon the Bible?	Yes	
Do we run regular Christian basics courses?		No
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	

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)?	Yes	
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?	Yes	
Does our leadership team seek out leadership potential in others, including newcomers?	Yes	
Is our church intentional in setting clear goals for development and change?	Yes	No

Section 3 – Mission Action Plan

Vision Statement:

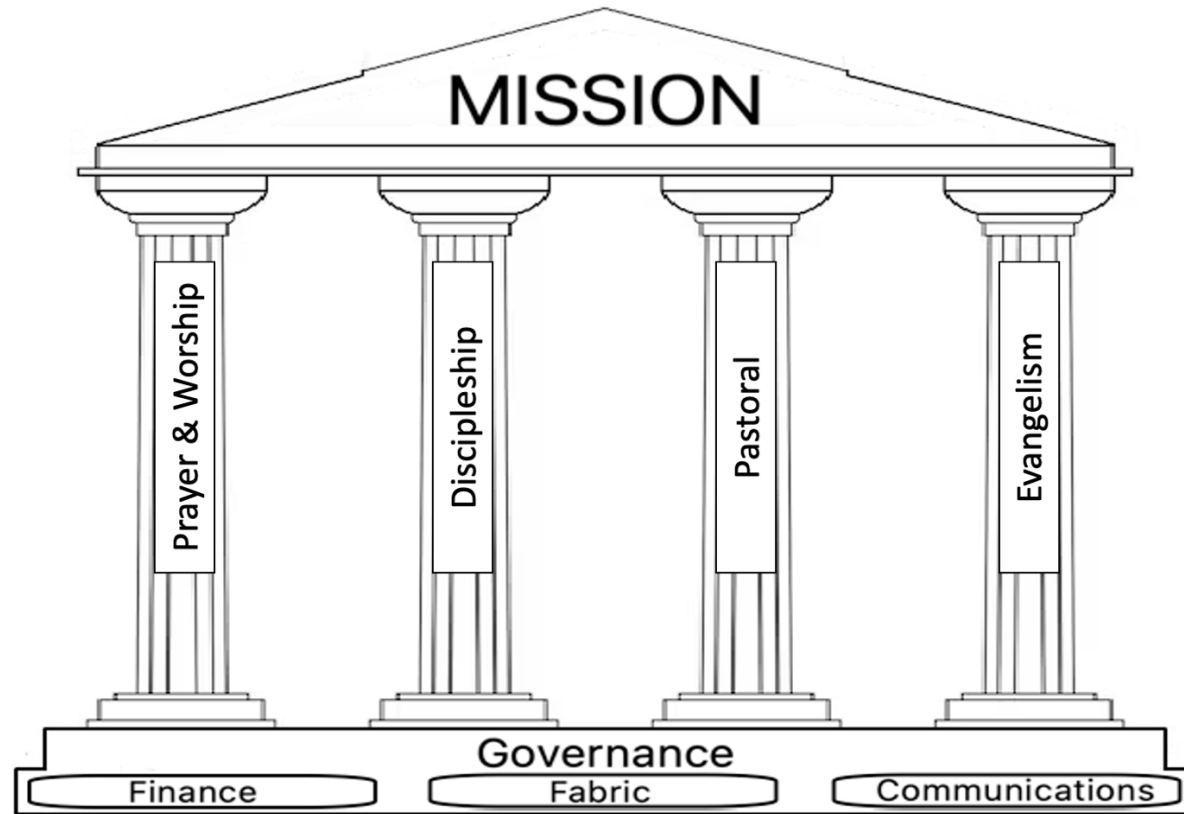
Worshipping God in every aspect of life

Mission Statement:

Using the gifts God gives us, we:

- bring others to Christ
- deepen our faith in Him
- develop the life of the church family
- serve each other and the wider community

and so express our worship to God in every part of life



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 and grown

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

In the following tables, three aspects of these features 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	Expand the service planning group and consider strategic decisions as well as rota planning (Lead: Paul, target date end 2024)
	Prayer	Every aspect of church life is rooted in prayer and there are regular well-attended 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	3	Appoint a prayer coordinator to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide input to pew sheet - Recruit and train intercessors - Set up prayer stations in church - Promote prayer ministry - Other initiatives (Lead: Paul, target date Easter 2024)
	Holy Spirit	Spiritual gifts are understood, welcomed, recognised, and experienced. The church is Spirit-led.	2	

	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	3	Raise profile and understanding of teams and recruit more volunteers. Confirmation offered to our YPs. Plan a stay-at-home parish weekend. (Lead: Paul, target date end 2024)
	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	Raise profile of homegroups and raise proportion of congregation involved. Ensure provision for all stages of faith journey and member availability. (Lead: Paul, target date end 2024)

	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 There is a strong leadership team of people who know their roles and authority to act	3	Bring more people into leading services, preaching, serving on the PCC and other leadership roles in the church (Lead: Paul, target date end 2024)
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	Aspect	Features	Score	Action
Pastoral	Relationships	Members of the church see it as a family There are good pastoral relationships and care There are regular social events	4	Introduce an interest club/s e.g. walking, golf, games, hobbies. (Lead: Anne, target date summer 2024)
	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.	3	Invite Wadhurst schools to be involved in the churchyard projects. (Lead: Vanessa, target date summer 2024)
	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	3	

	Aspect	Feature	Score	Action
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	1	Recruit a baptism team. (Lead: Paul, target date end 2024) Introduce wedding prep. (Lead: Paul, target date 2025) Run Alpha with greater outreach. (Lead: Mark P+, target date end 2024)
	Transformation	The church tithes its income to support charities that release the transformative power of the gospel locally, nationally and internationally	4	

		The congregation are well informed about the charities supported and the impact they have		
	Care for creation	Our church buildings and churchyards are managed in as environmentally friendly a way as possible We are working towards the 'carbon-zero by 2030' target	2	Achieve Eco-Church Silver Award. (Lead: Anthony, target date Easter 2024) Enhance the churchyard as an environmental and community space. (Lead: Vanessa, target date end 2025)

	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	2	Reintroduce a pew sheet but distribute primarily electronically, posters in the village. Make good use of AChurchNearYou site. (Lead: Mary B, target date autumn 2024)
	Buildings	Our buildings are well cared for, fit for purpose, and facilitate rather than limit the mission and ministry of the church	3	Implement the strategy for St George's Hall (Lead: Ruth, target date spring 2024)
	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	3	

Please also answer the following questions (answers 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?

Following the loss of ministers (ordained and lay) to death, moving away, retirement, reduced participation due to COVID and leaving in order to be ordained, and the impending retirement of both the Readers in the benefice, there is an urgent need to recruit more people

into ministry. The appointment of an Associate Vicar (May 2023) will help enormously with priestly ministry. We have three people currently undertaking the ALM Worship and Liturgy module, who we hope will largely plug the gap as our Readers retire. Our Pastoral Team (we commissioned 9 lay people as Pastoral Assistants in 2022) have made a huge contribution to our pastoral ministry, especially with mums and tots and the elderly. We do need to recruit more people to serve as volunteers in most areas as our current teams are stretched. We are also actively seeking to increase the skill set represented on the PCC in order to address succession management in leadership roles such as churchwardens, treasurer and synod representatives.

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

Prayer and Worship

Services

Set up a service planning group to monitor service quality, suggest improvements and bring more people onto the rotas for sidespeople, reading, intercession etc.

Prayer

Hold a weekend of teaching on prayer.

Pastoral

Relationships

Set up and train a Pastoral Group to enhance the ministry to church members.

Set up a Fellowship Group to restart the church's social calendar post-COVID.

Evangelism

Care for Creation

Set up a working group to define a CO strategy.

Foundations

Communications

Use the communications fund to develop a strong benefice corporate identity and revamp the parish website to serve the whole benefice.

Buildings

Reorder the vestries to create more usable, re-purposed space.

Develop a strategy for St George's Hall.

2023

Pastoral

Relationships

Succession management of the Pastoral Team.

Grow the Fellowship Group so more people contribute to planning and delivery.

Evangelism

Growth

Run an enquirers' course (Alpha)

Evangelism

Care for Creation

Define a strategy to achieve C0 by 2030.
Achieve Eco-Church Bronze Award.

Governance

Communications

Use Facebook to communicate more widely and effectively across the community.