

ANNUAL REPORT

2021

**Church Officers**: **Current post holders:**

Church Secretary Ray Hammond

Assistant Church Secretaries: Ann Hammond

Carole Mallett

Treasurer Kevin Ames

Assistant Treasurer Jenny Hooper

Gift Aid Secretary Kevin Ames

Pulpit Supply Organiser Iain Ord

Safeguarding Officer Lucy Cooke

Deputy Safeguarding Officer Hazel Hall

Safety Officer Sue Ames

Fire Officer Bill Hopper

Independent Examiner Laverick Walton & Co

Newstand:

Editor Tim Cooke

Business Manager/Distributor Carole Mallett

Reform Distributor Joan Yarrow

Press Officer Heather Carr

Online Communications Administrator Tim Cooke

**Church representatives** **Current post holder(s):**

Whitley Bay & District Churches

Together Valerie Taylor

Ecumenical Social Committee Sue Ames and Ann Hammond

Northern Synod Sue Ames

Depaul Trust vacant

Christian Aid Kevin and Sue Ames

**TEAMS 2021**

**PREMISES MAINTENANCE TEAM ACTIVITIES TEAM**

Chris Hales (Elder) (convener) Ann Hammond (Elder) (convener)

Catriona Fenwick (Flower Team) (Elder) Joan Blanchfield (Elder)

Barbara Watson (Catering Committee) Ray Hammond

Bill Hopper (Fire Officer) Catriona Fenwick

Sue Ames (Safety Officer) Sue Ames

(Hall Letting Team member) Margaret Varley

Kathleen Hopper

Barbara Watson

Heather Carr

Carole Moore

**FINANCE TEAM DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

Bill Hopper (Elder) Bill Hopper (Elder) (convener)

Ray Hammond (Elder) Ray Hammond (Elder)

Kevin Ames (Treasurer )

Jenny Hooper (Assistant Treasurer)

Joan Yarrow

Beryl Thompson (convener)

**DEVELOPMENT FUND MANAGEMENT TEAM**

Church Secretary Ray Hammond

Church Treasurer Kevin Ames

Development Fund Treasurer Kevin Ames

Convenor - Finance Team Beryl Thompson

Convenor - Development Team Bill Hopper

**EXECUTIVE TEAM**

Church Secretary Ray Hammond

Assistant Church Secretary/

Activities Team Ann Hammond

Premises Maintenance Team Chris Hales

Finance Team Beryl Thompson

Development Team Bill Hopper (convener)

Treasurer Kevin Ames

**CHURCH SECRETARY’S REPORT FOR 2021**

The year did not get off to a good start. Whereas we thought by the beginning of 2021 things would return to some sort of normality, lockdown at Christmas 2020 meant cancellation of services into the New Year. January saw the final report of the Transitional Working Group.

The lockdown meant we were once again unable to say a personal farewell to Dr Carla Grosch-Miller and this had to be carried out via Zoom at her last service with us on 14th February 2021. This was disappointing as she had been so much a part of St Andrew’s and done such a great deal for us all during her time with us. The one redeeming feature of her departure was that we could truly set out on the vacancy journey with the appointment of Dr Andrew Graydon as our Interim Moderator and the formation of a Pastorate Call Group. Dr Graydon soon started assisting the Group in the compilation of St Andrew’s Profile.

As the year progressed we were able to re-introduce worship in the church and hold Church Meetings after the services. This proved essential for the discussions which needed to take place concerning agreeing the Church Profile and considering the proposals for ‘Ministry at the Coast’ with the establishment of a joint pastorate with St Columba’s when the Revd Trevor Jamison retires.

In due course we were able to bring back Newstand as opposed to Newstand Lite which had been introduced as a temporary measure. We are extremely grateful to Tim Cooke, as editor, for all his sterling work in producing an excellent monthly magazine.

Throughout this time the numerous changes that needed to be introduced had the one priority, namely to keep the congregation safe which we believe we achieved. Eventually in September we felt able slowly and carefully to allow other users back on to the premises. It is sad to say that a number of previous regular groups had folded for various reasons, including our own Friendship Club.

**Membership -** At the end of the year there was an overall decline in membership from 113 to 106. Whilst we were pleased to receive one new member, sadly there was the loss of eight members through death but we will always remember and appreciate their support for the church over the years.

**Attendance at services**

When services were able to restart the number attending was around 38 to 40 which gradually increased as people became more confident. By the end of the year attendances were up to around 50. Throughout this time there were regular members who continued viewing the service on YouTube or received hard copies.

**Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals**

We were able to hold two baptisms in 2021. During the year funerals were usually held at Tynemouth or Whitley Bay Crematorium with sometimes, when allowed, Services of Thanksgiving being held in church. The services were conducted by Dr Ann Sinclair, the Revd Gordon Connacher and Mrs Valerie Taylor to whom we offer our grateful thanks.

**Eldership**

The current serving Elders are: Mrs S Ames, Mrs Joan Blanchfield, Mrs B Burgess, Mr T Cooke, Mr C Hales, Mrs H Hall, Mr & Mrs R Hammond, Mr P Hartley, Mr W Hopper, Mrs C Fenwick, Mr I Ord, Miss C Mallett, Dr A Sinclair, Mrs V Taylor and Mrs M Varley.

In November, five Elders, Carole Mallett, Ann Sinclair, Joan Blanchfield, Margaret Varley, Bill Hopper and I came to the end of our extended terms of office as serving Elders and at the Church Meeting in November we were all re-elected to serve for five years. Elders’ Meeting agreed that the terms of office of Tim Cooke, Hazel Hall and Iain Ord, who came to the end of their office in 2021 be extended by one year to November 2022.

As previously explained an enhanced régime of pastoral oversight was introduced to maintain contact between St Andrew’s and the congregation which by all accounts has been much appreciated and this continued during the lockdowns in 2021.

Dr Ann Sinclair and Mrs Valerie Taylor had been re-authorised by Northern Synod to preside at communion services held at St Andrew’s. Mrs Lucy Cooke has now, along with Ann and Valerie, been put forward to Northern Synod for authorisation in 2022 which will now be for a period of up to five years.

**Representation at Northern Synod**

Some of our members are involved in the wider church at Northern Synod where Sue Ames is a member of the Children and Youth Work Group as well as being our Synod Representative, Bill Hopper is on the Manses sub-group and Ann Sinclair is Lay Preaching Commissioner as well as being Interim Moderator for four churches.

**Outreach**

As a church we support the Street Pastors Project, the Bay Food Bank, SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocol) and the Depaul Trust, some church members being actively involved with this work. Until his death, Michael Spicer had been involved in the organising of St Andrew’s contributions to the Christmas hampers for young homeless people in Whitley Bay. He had been involved in this work over many years from his time as Church Secretary at the former Trinity Church in Whitley Bay.

Whilst the operation of these organisations themselves or our involvement had of necessity been curtailed this was reversed towards the end of 2021 when activities were restarted. It was good that Langley First School were able to return to St Andrew’s to record their annual Carol Service which was then distributed to parents and families.

**Charitable Support**

We have been able to continue our support for various charities:

* Christian Aid by way of a direct appeal.
* Commitment for Life (Bangladesh) by the regular contributors.
* People’s Kitchen (by a collection at Harvest).
* Great North Air Ambulance Service (carol singing).
* St Andrew’s Charity Scheme whereby 10% of fund-raising is donated to the three charities chosen for 2020/1 which were Woodlawn School, Admiral Nurses and Pearey House.
* The church also acts as a channel for other charitable donations when retiring offerings are sought at funeral services held in the church.

**Coast Partnership**

The usual joint services held with St Columba's North Shields have unfortunately been discontinued for the time being.

**Ecumenical Activities**

Our involvement in Whitley Bay & District Churches Together has been able to continue. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for our co-operation through the Ecumenical Social Committee with the other five churches in the parishes of St Peter’s and St Alban’s where the usual Coffee Morning and Wine and Cheese Evening were not able to take place for a second year.

**Music at Services**

Our grateful thanks, for their limited attendance this year, go to the organists Paul Hartley, and Alex Goulding. Whilst Tim Cooke had little opportunity to use the digital hymnal, he was heavily involved in other ways associated with the technology used for streaming services involving YouTube.

**Church Life**

The Executive Team continued overseeing the day to day running of the Church through the elected Teams: Finance, Premises Maintenance, Development, and Activities, as well as hall lettings. Whilst the closure of the building reduced some of the organisation and maintenance, all the routine servicing of appliances and equipment together with arranging for any repairs to be carried out, was still required and we are grateful to the group of people who continued with this work.

During the year N&P Cleaners continued to undertake general cleaning of the premises although on a much reduced basis. Cleaning of the outside of the main entrance windows, on a reduced frequency, was undertaken by Complete Cleaning Services with Mike Brannigan Gardening Services ensuring the gardens were maintained.

The annual cleaning of the carpets, chairs and other windows, and redecoration was not needed this year due to the limited use of the premises.

A major problem was encountered when we were able to reopen concerning the computer/software system that controls the heating system. Not only did the system fail but it was found that the relevant company had gone into liquidation.

**Floral Decorations**

We are very grateful to members of the Flower Team who were able during the year to continue with the ministry of flowers which is an important part of the life of St Andrew’s when flowers from the church are distributed in cases of illness, special birthdays and anniversaries. It was good that they were again able to decorate the church for Harvest and Christmas.

**Social and Fund-raising Activities**

Initially during the year social activities were all via Zoom including Poetry Evenings, a Spring Raffle and a Play Reading Evening. It wasn’t until later in the year when we were able to resume ‘in person’ events. Two Mini Fairs were held, one outside the premises in August and another in the Main Hall in November. The support of members and friends for all these events was much appreciated.

**Letting of the Premises**

With the closure of the building the income generated by letting out the premises is missed. What is also missed is the value of the premises as a centre for bringing together the local community in so many different ways. Following national guidance on Covid-19 prevention the premises were gradually opened up with a few users being able to come back towards the end of the year.

**The Manse**

During the year the Manse continued to be occupied by a tenant with management being handled by Brannen’s on behalf of St Andrew’s. With the work by the Pastorate Call Group on the production of the vacancy profile progressing well it was anticipated that the tenancy would not be renewed in March 2022.

**Grateful Thanks** to everyone who has continued to work on behalf of St Andrew’s during another exceptionally difficult year.

RAY HAMMOND, Church Secretary

**TREASURER’S REPORT FOR 2021 AND BUDGET FOR 2022**

In February 2021 I prepared the Church budget for the year. At the time the Church was closed, with no income from our hall lettings, weekly offertory, and our usual fund-raising activities. With the future under the pandemic looking very uncertain, I forecast a huge deficit in our finances.

I am pleased to say that I was very wrong. The Church re-opened in May, and our weekly services were resumed. We still restricted the use of the halls for the rest of the year, mainly to protect the congregation from other groups meeting in the Church buildings. However, we were able to hold a mini-market, and some indoor activities, to help boost our funds. The final result for the year was, under the circumstances, very pleasing, with a deficit of just over £17,000.

The largest area of our income is the Church Offertory, and, despite being closed for four months at the beginning of the year, was close to our normal amount. This was mainly due to our members venturing into the world of ‘internet banking’, and making regular bank transfers to cover the offertory.

The hall letting income was drastically reduced, as it had been in 2020, but the Activities Team greatly helped financially with what events they were able to arrange. Our expenditure was much less than for a normal year. It is the ‘every cloud’ theory, because with the Church being closed for a while, and the halls not being available for hiring, our gas and electricity bills were a lot less than usual.

Even with the problems associated with the pandemic, the charitable side of the Church continued almost as normal. Church members are still regularly donating to ‘Commitment For Life’, and in December I was able to send £1,000 to the charity. During Christian Aid week we raised £535, a good sum for us, and one which helped to bring the total raised during the week to over 5 million pounds.

We also made donations to the Christian Aid Famine Appeal, and The People’s Kitchen.

Our Activities Team were able to raise over £5,000, and with other donations into the Charities Fund, this year we will be giving £250 to each of our three chosen charities.

**Church Budget for 2022**

At present, although not completely back to normal, this year looks a lot more predictable. I have estimated a budget for the year, and the details are shown on one of the ‘numbers’ pages. The forecast for the deficit is just under £16,000, a much better looking figure than the one predicted for 2021.

KEVIN AMES, Treasurer

**WORSHIP GROUP**

Since our last report for an Annual General Meeting, which was prepared just before we went into lockdown, there have of course been considerable changes in the worship pattern of virtually all churches, including St Andrew’s. At that time we were reflecting on the very busy year of 2019, in which we had, in addition to Morning Worship each Sunday at 11.00 am, a short service of Communion on the third Sunday of the month at 9.30 am, a Praise Service on the first Sunday of the month at 9.30 am, followed by a meeting of the Prayer Group at 10.30 am, a short Act of Worship in the foyer each Tuesday at 9.30 am, and a monthly Monday afternoon service at 2 pm. We also had regular sessions of Messy Church, a monthly meeting of ‘SAY’ (St Andrew’s Youth) and of course three or four Parade Services each year involving the young people’s uniformed organisations. This all came to an end in March 2020, when we were required to close the premises for worship or any kind of meeting, due to the onset of Covid 19. After several months of closure there was a brief period of reopening, before closure again in November 2020. In May 2021 we were finally able to reopen again, and since then we have proceeded very cautiously step by step to try and get back to some form of normality. During the months of closure, however, worship was conducted via Zoom and YouTube – often from the Worship Leader’s home or elsewhere – and an after-service coffee hour was introduced, with great success. The distribution of paper copies of the Sunday service was also begun, for some of the congregation who did not have access to technology, and this practice is still carried out for some of the people who are no longer able to come to church in person.

When we were allowed to reopen the premises again, the members of the Worship Group resumed their planning meetings by using Zoom, and we are now back to our regular meetings at two-monthly intervals, sometimes in person and sometimes still via Zoom.

Although we are not currently taking an active part in many of the services, we are responsible for ensuring that there are people to lead worship each Sunday, and that there is provision for music, as well as someone to read the Bible passages, and someone to compile and lead Prayers of Intercession. The midweek Act of Worship (formerly on a Tuesday, but now a Wednesday) also comes under our remit.

We have been extremely fortunate in having Dr Ann Sinclair, Mrs Valerie Taylor and Mrs Lucy Cooke, who have put a tremendous amount of time and effort into the planning and leading of so many of our Sunday services. We are immensely grateful too for all the help given by our visiting worship leaders, including our Interim Moderator, Dr Andrew Graydon, and those members of the Worship Group who have volunteered so willingly when required. Special thanks must also go to Paul Hartley and Alex Goulding for playing the organ, and to Tim and Andrew Cooke for their huge contribution week by week to all things technical. We are also very much indebted to Iain Ord for looking after pulpit supply, as well as rotas for the organ, Intercessions and readers. Regular Bible Study sessions have been implemented and led by Dr Ann Sinclair and Mrs Alison Mood, and because they are conducted via Zoom, people from other churches are also able to take part. Many thanks to Ann and Alison for all their work in this respect.

During 2021, no Communion services were held at all, because of the risk of transmitting Covid infection. Sadly, no Parade Services of the uniformed organisations were possible either, nor were we able to hold our usual Children’s Festival Service in December. At Christmas, we tried to have some semblance of normality, although our Christmas Eve service had to forego the coffee, mince pies and candlelight.

There is no doubt that the last two years have made a big difference to the lives of many people, and some of them have not felt able to come back to church. We are therefore proceeding very carefully and taking a few steps at a time. However, we are now in the season of Lent and are pleased that the Lenten Bible Study sessions and Lenten Lunchtime Services are expected to go ahead as planned. After that it will be Easter, with our usual Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday worship. St Andrew’s will once again be taking part in an Ecumenical Good Friday Service outside the Ship/Black Horse Inns in Monkseaton at 12 noon, and leading a Sunrise Service in front of the Dome/Beefeater on Easter Sunday morning at 5.30 am.

I would like to express my personal thanks to the other members of the Worship Group, namely Sue Ames, Barbara Burgess, Anne Cockburn, Andrew Cooke, Ray Hammond, Paul Hartley, Una Ketteridge, Iain Ord, Sandra Pine, Ann Sinclair and Valerie Taylor, for their contributions, support and resilience over the last two years.

CAROLE MALLETT

**DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

Notwithstanding the problems caused by the onset of Covid-19 in 2021, various improvements to the fabric of the church buildings and major repairs were carried out or put in hand as listed below.

(a) New doors were manufactured and fitted to the west emergency exit of the main hall which will also reduce sound transmission to adjacent properties.

(b) Renewal of the boiler house floor.

(c) Replacement of failed obsolete software and controls for the church heating system.

(d) Roof repairs to the main entrance/circulation area.

The annual repainting and redecoration was not carried out this year since this was not considered necessary due to the reduced usage of the building. Quotations were invited for lighting improvements to the meeting room, lounge, rear corridor and vestry.

***Remembering Derek***

It would seem appropriate at this time to mention the passing of one of our number. Derek Stembridge was a member of the Team whose prime responsibility was the management of finances. This included the funding and financial control of the major refurbishment and construction of the church buildings in 2009 which, unusually for such a large project, was completed on time and within budget, due in no small part to the enthusiasm and expertise which Derek brought to the construction.

His contributions to Development and Executive Teams are greatly missed. His style within both groups may be summed up as ‘forthright but fair’ and the results of his efforts are there for all to see and enjoy!

We miss you Derek!!

My thanks go to the Members of the Development and Executive Teams for their continued help and support.

BILL HOPPER, Convener

**CHILDREN AND YOUTH WORK**

Messy Church and the St Andrew’s Youth Group were both suspended during the lockdown. Efforts were made to keep in touch with both groups whilst we were unable to meet. We hope that we will be up and running again soon.

Langley First School recorded their Christmas performance in the church, without an audience. However, Joan Blanchfield and I were treated to a short, enjoyable performance of a couple of their songs and took the chance to speak and pray with the children.

SUE AMES

**SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY**

Due to the pandemic the small group of dancers have not met since March 2020. However when the restrictions eased during 2021 the dancers arranged a get together in September. We discussed the future of the Society and we agreed to meet for a coffee morning on the first Monday of each month to keep in touch until we feel it is dance again.

I am not sure how many dancers there will be when we return. However I will leave you with a comment made by one in January 2021:

“I have decided to hang up my dancing shoes as 8.00 pm on a Wednesday night is pyjama time.”!!

KATHLEEN HOPPER, Chairperson

## FLOWER TEAM

The Flower Team has continued to place flowers in the church for the Sunday services, baptisms and funerals. We have been able to take the flowers to people in need of cheer. Special birthdays and anniversaries have been acknowledged with a flower arrangement delivered by the florist.

We were delighted to be able to hold the Harvest Coffee Morning in the Main Hall. The team arranged flowers to decorate the church, collected gifts and donations for The People’s Kitchen, had a cake stall and served coffee. It was a happy social occasion and good to get together. The flowers were taken to housebound church members after the harvest service, and the gifts taken to the People’s Kitchen.

The Team were able to get together to decorate the church for Christmas while several men from the church erected a beautiful tree.

Soon members will be collecting donations for the church flowers for 2022. We look forward to your continued support for the ministry of flowers.

CATRIONA FENWICK, Flower Team Convener

**ST. ANDREW’S CARPET BOWLING CLUB**

Since starting to bowl again I’m afraid we have not had a very good attendance, averaging 12 members per session.

We put this down to Covid restrictions with people not yet willing to return to group activities and also due to the age of our members.

MARY CHRISTOPHER, Secretary

**ST ANDREW'S FILM CLUB**

The Club has now been running for 10 years, having commenced in February 2012. We have shown films monthly on Friday afternoons to very appreciative audiences from both the community and church membership. On all monthly occasions there is an interval when tea/coffee and biscuits are provided plus choc ices which have gone up in price but are still a bargain at 30p!

We have shown a variety of films, endeavouring to cater for all tastes, and would welcome suggestions although we are limited by our licence to certain production companies.

After the last lockdown we reopened in September 2021 showing *Downton Abbey* which had been cancelled in February 2020 due to the first lockdown. Since re-opening we have shown four films in 2021 with an average attendance of 20 people.

Many thanks to Robert Chisholm, Catriona Fenwick, Ray Hammond and others for their help.

ANN HAMMOND

**FIFTY EIGHT SOCIETY**

The 58 Society was suspended during the Covid Lockdown but, plans were made to reopen in January 2022. Members were contacted by letter in the autumn of 2021 and were invited to a coffee morning in December. This was well attended as was the first meeting in January, when we welcomed the popular speaker Professor John Derry.

New members or occasional visitors will be made very welcome. Details of meetings are in Newstand.

We have 52 members. Meetings are well attended and held fortnightly on Monday evenings in St Andrew’s Church Hall, at 7.30 pm.

SUE AMES, Chairman

**FRIENDSHIP CLUB**

Looking through my notes of Winter 2019, they indicate that all five duty teams needed strengthening, and the overall membership was much lower than usual. Both myself and our excellent secretary, Christine Ridley, were intending to retire, and the Covid period delayed those plans. However, two years on, the Committee sadly felt unable for various reasons to carry on. If any church members would like to discuss the possibility of taking over the Club, I would be happy to discuss the situation with them.

PAUL HARTLEY, Chairman

**ST ANDREW’S ART CLUB**

A ‘different year’ in several ways! ‘Covid’ apart, we sadly saw the well-earned retirement of our very long-serving Leader/Treasurer Chris Bulloch, for whose offices we are extremely grateful.

Alongside this, our Bank suddenly demanded new ‘Safeguarding’ information, which propelled us into new decisions and practice. As a result, we formulated our first Constitution, and set up a committee to organise the running of the Club.

Also (and this sweetened the pill of our labours) we were delighted to be afforded the opportunity to become ‘a Church Group’, and we await with hope and pleasure, the verification of our new status by the Membership of St. Andrew’s at the upcoming AGM. We will do our best to provide some enrichment to the already vibrant community which is St. Andrew’s.

When we were able to re-convene after ‘lockdown’, we unfortunately had to say farewell to a few long-standing members, but we welcomed heartily some new artists.

As we feel we are able to accommodate up to 20 people – and continue to remain working at an appropriate social-distance for as long as this is required - we advertised our existence in the St. Andrew’s Newsletter and the local ‘ABC’ magazine, and we expect to appear in ‘Our North Tyneside’. We shall also have posters in the library branches in Whitley Bay and Monkseaton.

In addition to meeting weekly to paint and socialise, we enjoyed eating together in a local restaurant just before Christmas ... lovely!

We have, of course, missed staging our Annual Art Exhibition, but we look forward to planning for a show, if at all possible, this coming Autumn when we can enjoy the event with our Church friends and other guests.

TRISH WOJCIECHOWSKI, Club Co-ordinator

**7th RAINBOWS**

We are pleased to be back in church for our rainbow meetings. The girls have settled in really well. We have had a very busy year. We have done Christmas crafts and Chinese lanterns. We have also had an ambulance man in to teach the girls first aid which the girls loved. It's nice to get back to a little bit of normality.

TRACY SWINDLE

**6th RAINBOWS**

Although we are running meetings we have smaller numbers of girls to stay in line with Girl Guiding regulations.

We have enjoyed getting back to normal Guiding and have recently completed a Park Holiday weekend at Cheviot View, a Thinking Day walk and activities with units from Shiremoor, and we are almost finished our First Aid badge. We had a fantastic evening celebrating Chinese New Year where we completed lots of activities.

CLAIR BARNFATHER

**6th MONKSEATON BROWNIES**

Not much to report as we did not get back to face to face meetings until September. Great to be back and although numbers are down most have gone to Guides.

We have done the Swiss Challenge which the girls loved, especially the fake snow and the chocolate tasting. We made a poppy bookmark, a snowman light and a Christmas tree. We have started a new themed badge and finished with our Christmas party.

AUDREY ADAMS, Brown Owl

**7th and 8th MONKSEATON BROWNIES**

The 7th and 8th Monkseaton Brownies joined together for the whole of 2021. We initially met via Zoom, and delivered craft packs to the Brownies so they were still able to be creative. When the weather allowed we met at Churchill Playing Fields or Bertram Grange Community Centre in Shiremoor, although we did get soaked several times and played games, held treasure hunts and explored nature. It was lovely to get back to St. Andrew’s and the girls worked on various badges. We ended the year with a socially distanced Christmas party.

PAT ROBSON

**6th MONKSEATON GUIDES**

Another very busy year for 6th Monkseaton Guides.  We have met throughout the last year’s lockdowns and restrictions with meetings online, outside and indoors. This has involved lots of risk assessments and forms!

Our unit is at capacity with 35 girls. Our volunteer team consists of four fantastic young leaders and three awesome regular adult leaders, with one fab occasional helper.

We are really proud to say that eight girls have achieved their silver awards and 10 girls have achieved bronze awards this year. We have three girls on their way to achieve their gold award by the summer. We continue to complete lots of badges.

We did lots of thing through the year which have all been great but to pick out some highlights:

* Harry Potter themed residential weekend. Girls loved being able to go away again, we did lots of fun activities and did tree climbing and cave bus.
* Surfing - girls had a fab night surfing with Tynemouth Surf School.
* Adventure day at Timestep Activity Centre; we did axe throwing, cross bows, crate stacking and climbing.
* Fun pool party at Lakeside Swimming Pool with inflatable.
* Ice skating at Whitley bay Ice Rink, we managed to avoid any injuries.
* Camp skill night in which we learned new campfire songs.
* Circus skills night at Circus Central. Girls learned how to juggle, hula, use aerial silks and trapeze.
* We had lots of visitors, including a reptile man with spiders and lizards (this one was online, much to the leaders’ relief).
* We really enjoyed a visit to the Bound Bookshop for World Book Day. We had a talk from the resident author and from the book seller.
* We were very proud of the girls raising £1,000 for Children in Need by doing a Countryfile ramble.
* Girls collected things for the North East Homeless Christmas Stocking Appeal (we took two cars full of donations).
* Morph adventure where we visited the morph statues in North Tyneside using the metro and buses.
* Lots of crafts and baking.

We are super proud to say Libby Greenhalgh (a Guide) has been selected to go to the 25th World Jamboree in Korea summer of 2023. Also Lucy Taws our young leader has been selected to go to the World Jamboree as part of the international service team. We will be supporting them with fundraising for these amazing adventures!

CHRISTINA BITHELL

**17th WHITLEY BAY (ST ANDREW’S) SCOUT GROUP**

During the last year we have seen Scouting starting to re-emerge from the various restrictions that have been put in place to keep everyone safe. This started with us being allowed to meet outside during June and July last year and this enabled us to meet face to face again for the first time since March the previous year. From September we have been able to meet indoors as well, which has meant we have been able to deliver more Scouting to our young people.

The last year has been a challenge for the Group but we have continued to provide activities and the future looks bright for the Scout Group.

JONATHAN MOBBERLEY, Group Scout Leader