

Message from the Chair

Welcome to our second newsletter funded by Dogger Bank.

Churches Together in South Tyneside (CTST) listened to the views of members attending the three listening events in 2022 and our newsletters are part of our response to the need to improve communication.

Thanks to funding from Dogger Bank, we will be able to produce 3 printed newsletters for distribution to the churches. Without further funding we will rely on our electronic and social media communications to maintain contact with those attending churches or on our contact list.

Contact

Audrey@churchestogethersouthtyneside.org
with comments on our communications

News and Dates for the Diary

Paul Southgate, Executive Lead retired on 31st December 2024.

We wish him well and will continue to work with Paul as a volunteer.

The Job Advert for Executive Lead is in circulation and the deadline for applications is 21st February 2025.

Plans are under way for the Sunrise Service on Easter Day at South Shields seafront: 20th April at 6am. Meet at the Amphitheatre

Review of Events

Interfaith Event 11th November 2024

The South Tyneside Faiths Forum is a powerful networking tool which should be nurtured. About 40 people from different faith backgrounds gathered in the Town Hall Reception Room to share aspects of their faith during Interfaith Week.

Moving forward: Paul Southgate is the Chair of the Faiths Forum and he will continue in this role as a volunteer.



CTST Reflecting Together Conference 14th November 2024

AN EXCELLENT EVENT

The year-long research project into the experiences of loneliness and social isolation of older people in South Tyneside was funded by the William Leech Research Fund and supported by Regents Park College Oxford and Research Fellow Stefanie Conradt.

Moving forward: we would love to share the findings of the report with our members in 2025 and to continue our relationship with the funders and Stefanie.

Positive comments: 'Incredibly powerful'; 'Inspirational'. Moving forward: we would love to share the findings of the report with our members and local churches – to learn more contact

bernadette@southtynesidechurchestogether.org

BEATING THE WINTER BLUES

Happy New Year ! Last year was full of great times and making memories, now onwards we go into 2025 with the same aplomb! Throughout January and February we will be giving out leaflets and advice to our beneficiaries on staying warm and well this winter. We also have a 'beat the January blues' initiative to help people who may be feeling down this time of year.

We have a factsheet full of helpful advice, and of course, we want to encourage them to stick to their routines of getting out and attending our social events to stay connected to lift their mood!



Happy at Home gents group started the year with a bracing seafront walk followed by fish and chips in good company!

KEY TO LIFE FOODBANK THANKS YOU



The generosity of the people of South Tyneside is amazing. For the Harvest Appeal donations came from around 20 schools and the team visited 5 schools. Fifteen churches gave very generously, often more than once! At Christmas 170 families received seasonal parcels, including presents for 392 children. The Love Christmas Appeal organised by St. Gregory's, St. Oswald's, Sacred Heart and St. Margaret's added to the multitude of donations, alongside many individuals, clubs and businesses. Great coordination is needed. The volunteers always come up trumps, aided by companies that release staff for a day to help out!

NURTURING DEMENTIA

The WAVE Dementia Club continues to meet monthly, with visits from Social Prescribers and Admiral Nurses, who plan to refer clients to the group. We celebrated Christmas with a meal at the Olive Tree, funded by a McCarthy & Stone Christmas Connections grant. Four Dementia Friendly Christmas Services were held across South Tyneside, supported by five local schools, with participation from people with dementia, carers, care homes, and the community. In October, we launched Care Connect, a project fostering positive relationships and intergenerational engagement by involving local communities and care homes, including churches, youth groups, and social organisations.



STREET ANGELS

Patrols continue to go out in South Shields town centre and their presence is appreciated. This project continues to seek new volunteers.