

Meet our NEW Operations Manager

We are delighted to have welcomed Paul Jones MBE to our team here at Churches Together in South Tyneside.

Paul brings a wealth of experience in the community sector where he has run similar organisation.

He has recently moved from Yorkshire into the NE with his family, who we all welcome and pray they settle into schools, church and their local community.

We do hope you find time to meet him, introduce yourself and welcome him into your community.

Read more in our **BLOG**.

Contact Paul

Paul.Jones
@churchestogether
southtyneside.org



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Message from our Chair

In September 2022 Churches Together in South Tyneside held three Listening Events. These took place in Jarrow, South Shields and Hebburn. Through these Listening Events we identified, from what you said, three key themes – Isolation and Loneliness (includes Dementia); Poverty and Communication. In response to feedback from 21 churches the following is a sample of 'What we did'.

Held a year-long research project November 2023-November 2024, 'The Reflecting Together Project: Experiences of Loneliness and Social Isolation of Older People Living in South Tyneside.'

Developed the Dementia Empowerment and Engagement Project (DEEP) and engaged a group of people living with dementia. They call themselves the W.A.V.E DEMENTIA CLUB and share views, hopes and intentions of people living with dementia.

Raised awareness of the Credit Union. Hosted the Household Support Fund 2023-2025. Supported Free Help with Debt and Key to Life management committees. Became a member of South Tyneside Poverty Action Group.

Developed Marketing and Communications leading to a Marketing Strategy 2025 and ongoing developments of our website. Produced 3 funded Newsletters in 2024-2025.

Where do we need to go now in June 2026? For us to have the unity of Pentecost and move forward in Spirit and Action we need to recognise the importance of connection and friendship.

CTST has provided the space to engage in reflection; dialogue and relationship building; supporting collaborative actions and issues of shared concern. Our mission is 'together in faith and action.' Let us deepen our understanding of each other and share the love of God in the community.

Audrey Tennet
Chair of Trustees



STREET ANGELS

to relaunch in SOUTH SHIELDS

The CTST project of Street Angels operates primarily in South Shields during the late evening/night. Angels work as a team to offer non-judgemental support to anyone vulnerable, in need, or in difficulty, on their night out.

Following a period of reflection, where the Street Angels project paused due to a significantly lower need, especially in the winter months, the team have returned to discuss their work and the difference that they make.

The result is that there is a feeling among volunteers and colleagues in similar connected services, that the need remains for a Street Angel patrol, although the nightlife scene has definitely changed.

RECRUITING ANGELS

Click below to volunteer:

www.churchestogethersouthtyinside.org/street-angels



How do you prefer YOUR information?



We look at different readers and think how they want their daily information...

by PIXEL or by PRINT

Every organization wants to keep people connected, informed and encouraged.

For many years, the printed newsletter was the trusted way to do that. It arrived through the letterbox, sat on the kitchen table and gave readers time to absorb information at a gentle pace.

Today, blogs, email updates and digital newsletters offer a very different advantage: speed. News can be shared almost instantly, whether it is a reminder about a coffee morning, a change to a service time or an urgent prayer request.

The question for many churches is not simply which format is better, but which format serves people best.

Paper newsletters still have real strengths. Many readers enjoy holding something physical in their hands. Print can feel calmer, more personal and more deliberate than a flood of emails or social media posts.

It is especially valued by older church members, people who are less confident online, and anyone with limited internet access.

A printed newsletter does not require a password, a device or an email account.

It can be read in an armchair, kept beside a Bible or pinned to a noticeboard as a reminder of upcoming events. For these readers; **print is not old-fashioned; it is dependable.**

Digital newsletters and blogs, however, answer a growing need for up-to-date and accessible information. Younger adults, busy families and people who are often travelling may prefer to read news on a phone, tablet or laptop. They appreciate being able to check details quickly, click through to extra information and stay updated.

A digital format also allows churches to respond faster. If a meeting is cancelled, a volunteer opportunity opens up, or a community appeal needs urgent support, online news can be changed and shared in moments rather than days.

Different reader types respond in different ways. Reflective readers often enjoy print because it invites slower, deeper reading. Practical readers may like digital updates because they can search for dates, save messages and return to them easily.

Some people with visual needs may prefer digital text because it can be enlarged on screen or transcribed, while others find paper easier on the eyes and less distracting.

Accessibility, therefore, is not just about technology. It is about making sure news reaches people in the form they are most likely to use and trust.

Perhaps the wisest answer is not choosing one over the other, but using both well. A printed newsletter can offer thoughtful stories, pastoral reflections and key dates in a format many still treasure. A blog or digital newsletter can keep the followers informed with timely updates and wider access throughout the week.

Together, they recognise an important truth: church communication is about **people before platforms.**

When we understand our readers — from long-time members who value the familiar to younger readers who expect instant information — they can share news in ways that are welcoming, relevant and inclusive for all.

Paul Jones and Ai



It's been a busy year for the DEEP group (Dementia Engagement and Empowerment Project). Our DEEP group have renamed their group WAVE (we are valued equally) Dementia Club.

We are registered with the UK DEEP Network. Members support each other offering advice and sharing experiences. They are also an action group for people living with dementia who want to make a difference in their local community.

The group have been working on a project to improve public toilets in South Shields.

They have met with representatives of South Tyneside Council and have offered their expertise and advice on improving access to public toilets for those with hidden disabilities. As a result of this work South Tyneside Council have initiated an audit of public toilets in South Tyneside and have adopted the national 'I Cant Wait' card initiative.

The Council via the Business Pledge are currently promoting the scheme with local businesses. The group have also enjoyed 2 visits to Beamish Museums Clover Cottage for activities facilitated by Beamish

and Wellbeing team. We enjoyed crafts singing and toasted crumpets. One of our visits had a Christmas theme and the group made Christmas crafts to take home.

We were joined by some of the residents from a local care home we have been working with. One of the gentlemen said he had the best day ever and wanted to book a holiday there. One lady said it was a fantastic experience and that everyone with dementia should go. Members of the Health and Wellbeing team commented that they really enjoyed how the group engaged and enjoyed the activities.

Maria Scurfield-Walton

Happy at Home Tackling Loneliness

BEFRIENDING

A befriending service for those who cannot get out of their own home. One to One services as a visiting friend (non-carer), or with a weekly phone call.

HAPPY HUBS

A Happy Hub is a lunchtime gathering of likeminded people in South Tyneside, to chat, sing, play games and of course, have a meal.

Located in Whitburn, Jarrow, South Shields and Boldon

MENS HUBS

The monthly Men's Hubs include Hub in a Pub, Trip Hub and the regular banter amongst friends.

You will always find a quiz or a game to play, but importantly; **men together** is better than men isolated.

Visit our webpage:

www.happyathomesouthtyneside.co.uk

Check out our website:

www.churchestogethersouthtyneside.org



EVENTS: we have our own events and our members events listed on this special page

BLOG: have a read about our past events and information on our blog page. You can also find our **Prayer Points** and **5-Minute Sermons** here.

PROJECTS: find more information about our social action, including how to refer people!

TEAM: Find out more information to help our volunteers and staff in their roles.



Our Dementia Friendly Christmas and Easter services and celebrations continue to grow in attendance.

We facilitated 2 Christmas services at Grange Road Baptist Church and St Margarets URC these intergenerational services are uplifting and joyous occasions for everyone that attends. We were joined by Dunn Street School children at Grange Road Church and St Gregorys School Choir and Harton Academy students at St Margarets Church. The children sang for us during the short service and were entertained by singing and dancing during refreshments from students at Harton Academy. Residents from 3 local care homes attended and engaged during the services and joined in with the singing and dancing. Everyone attending received a knitted Angel or Cross that had been blessed during the service and were knitted by the local community.

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY SERVICES and celebrations



CARE CONNECT

During 2025 Nurturing Dementia facilitated a 12-month project funded by Caritas to establish new ways of working between 3 care homes and the local community in Jarrow and Boldon with aims to promote relationships and friendships to enrich residents' lives and relieve social isolation and loneliness and meet the spiritual needs of residents. This involved care home residents accessing the wider community including churches and intergenerational groups and offered a reciprocal approach so that the community will

engage with residents in their care home. The project was successful in achieving its aims with 2 care homes Roseway House and Palmersdene. 5 local Churches were involved in the project with residents attending weekly activities at Grange Road Baptist Church and the Church hosting Dementia Friendly Church services. Churches are offering visits to the care homes to address residents' spiritual needs. The project also developed positive relationships with local intergenerational and community groups.

Local schools, youth groups and CIC companies have worked with us on various activities including visits to the care homes, Easter celebrations, reminiscence activities and dementia awareness sessions. Luna Blu (Enhancing Mental Health through Art) has engaged residents in both care homes in creative therapy and Kalma Life are facilitating intergenerational yoga at the care home with residents' families and babies.

Over 60 residents were involved in these activities which positively impacted their well being, engagement and connection. The end of project success was celebrated at a family fun day hosted by Roseway House Care Home. Local community and church groups were invited, and the Mayor and Mayoress of South Tyneside attended the day and expressed their interest and support for the project. Although the project has ended the connections with the Churches, schools and community interest groups continues to grow.



YOU can Make a Difference

We absolutely value our wonderful **volunteers** who without, we would not be able to offer the range of services.

If you would like to join our amazing team, visit www.churchestogthersouthtyneside/team-ctst

Upcoming CTST Events:

Boldon Happy Hub – Fourth Wednesday of month

Jarrow Happy Hub – First Wednesday of month

DEEP Dementia Group – monthly in various locations

Whitburn Happy Hub – Second Friday of month

Shields Happy Hub – Third Friday of month

Gathering and AGM – 18th June 2026

Street Angels – July 2026



On 5th April 2026, 100 brave souls united at the Ampitheatre of South Shields, led by Rev Jane Rowell in a Sunrise Easter Service. He is Risen. South Promenade was cold but the service was in shelter, away from Storm Dave.

He has RISEN

Those participating were welcomed back to the church of St Margarets for a hot drink and breakfast. For the full story, click [here](#)

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