

**Part H – Step A – The Parish Return Form**  
**Sections 1-5 to be completed and returned**  
**by 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026**

**Section 1: Introduction**

In dialogue with your community, especially young people (in line with synod guidance) reflect on your local data sheets alongside the diocesan context. Please summarise your reflections from Part E, F and G by completing this template and returning it by 23 April 2026 to [discernment.returns@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:discernment.returns@diocesehn.org.uk)

<b>PARISH NAME:</b>	<b>OUR LADY AND ST. CUTHBERT</b>
<b>PARISH TOWN:</b>	<b>PRUDHOE</b>
<b>DEANERY:</b>	<b>Northumberland – Heavenfield Partnership</b>
<p><b>What was the process followed to reach these conclusions? <i>E.g. clergy &amp; laity involved, young people’s voices considered, prayer &amp; listening shaped decisions:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prayer</li> <li>• Meeting of clergy/Partnership and PPC</li> <li>• Explanation of discernment process on Saturday and Sunday Masses.</li> <li>• Toolkit shared with parishioners with an invitation to respond.</li> <li>• Parish invited to meeting for the diocesan Webinar.</li> <li>• Four young parishioners involved in Youth Council who have been involved in the discernment process. In addition, Becca, School Chaplain, St. Thomas More has contacted students inviting contributions.</li> <li>• Our Confirmation candidates will be invited to discuss the pastoral strategy at their next session on the 29<sup>th</sup> April, this will feed into the second stage of the PS Discernment Toolkit.</li> </ul>	

**Beacons of Mission: *Practices that either show signs of hope others could learn from, or faithful responses uniquely shaped by your local context:***

- Welcoming and uplifting atmosphere.
- Large number of volunteers at church and many volunteering in community ie World Day of Prayer, Warm Spaces and non-denominational projects.
- A vibrant Confirmation program and youth community, this year out of 20 candidates from across the local parishes, half are from our parish.
- Excellent relationship with St Matthew's Primary School who support the First Holy Communion and Confirmation programs as well as other parish events. This link helps us to build trust, strengthen faith and create positive experiences for our families.
- A good involvement of youth in our music liturgy at every Sunday mass. Our choir are sometimes invited to lead music at other parishes, most recently at the Mass by Candlelight at St Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle.
- OLSC has its own Youth Group which organises a variety of fun events throughout the year – from Prayer & Pancake Sunday and Easter Egg Hunts to Bonkers Bingo! These events not only bring our parish and young people together but also raise funds to support our young people on their faith journeys. So far, we've been able to help fund FHC and Confirmation retreats, pilgrimages to Holy Island, Alnwick and Lourdes as well as a trip to Wembley Arena for Flame in 2023.

## **Section 2: Mission Discernment**

Please use the suggested prompts at **Part E of The Mission Discernment Toolkit** to guide your conversations and complete the following section.

**Mission: WORSHIP - Celebrating the Sacraments as Places of Encounter**

**Reflection and conclusions:**

- A cheerful, lively Sunday Mass supported by our youth music group.
- Opportunities to socialise afterwards.
- A quieter Saturday Mass with good interaction among parishioners. Adult choir participate in this Mass.
- We need to explore opportunities for each of these congregations to interact.

- Our primary school aged children are invited to Children’s Liturgy every Sunday during term time, this is attended by 15-20 children each week.
- Our young parishioners are encouraged to share their gifts with the parish and become involved in parish life eg welcoming, singing or playing in the choir, serving on the altar, supporting during Children’s Liturgy, this keeps them connected. Their commitment is particularly evident on Youth Sunday, a Mass led by our young people.
- Our First Holy Communion and Confirmation preparation provides our candidates and families with a community and a journey of accompaniment and encounter. Going forward we need to consider how we can offer a similar experience of accompaniment and encounter for other Sacraments eg Marriage and Baptism.

**1. What are we proposing to do? Concrete actions: (*Distinguish what you will do now, next, over a longer journey and who is responsible for leading it.*)**

- Create interaction between Children’s Liturgy and congregation.
- Create more opportunities for private prayer eg Prayer walks etc.
- Build on the welcome and social cohesion.
- PPC and various volunteer groups to lead and consider the need of succession planning.

**2. Why are we proposing this? (*Link to Mission.*)**

- To strengthen relationships between youth and adult parishioners. It has been recognised how important it is that the congregation know each other and feel that they ‘belong’.
- Walking with Jesus and each other enabling encounter in a variety of ways.

**3. Dependencies: (*What will be needed to make this happen? (E.g. people, formation, finances, property decisions, Bishop approval, other parishes co-operating.)*)**

- People willing to train and deliver lay-led courses for sacraments (marriage/baptism etc)
- PPC to consider the re-establishment of a group developing the social life of the parish as well as other groups.
- For this to continue our parish will need candidates, teachers, Catechists, priest, and bishop to work together, as well as a church and a venue to run sessions. Presently meetings/events are held in the presbytery or if numbers dictate in the school hall.

**4. What will be the outcome if this action cannot happen?**

- We will be unable to grow our congregation.

- We will be unable to grow in faith.

**5. How will worship be organised in the area if there are less priests and less worshippers?**

- At present two Masses are required due to the size of our congregation. However, with less priests and less worshippers, there would have to be flexibility with Mass times.
- We have three lay leaders for the Word and Holy Communion.
- We have Eucharistic leaders who take Holy Communion to the housebound. Numbers of both would have to be increased.
- Youth programs led by teachers and Catechists would still run.

**Mission: TEACH - Handing on the Faith**

**Reflection and conclusions:**

- We have excellent Holy Communion and Confirmation programs delivered by both teachers and Catechists from across the Partnership.
- We have an excellent group of 10 volunteers who lead/support Children's Liturgy every Sunday for our primary school aged children.
- Our relationship with St Thomas More is improving since the addition of the new school chaplain, Becca, but still needs strengthening.
- Our young people are given a safe space to deepen their faith by attending events such as The Source, held at St Mary's Cathedral or Flame hosted at Wembley Arena in London. Such events give our young people the opportunity to enjoy live music, prayer, powerful testimonies and community. Four of our young parishioners are also members of the Diocesan Youth Council.
- We have an adult formation program through 'Sycamore' which is priest led. We need to improve opportunities for adult parishioners to deepen their faith.

**1. What are we proposing to do? Concrete actions: (*Distinguish what you will do now, next, over a longer journey and who is responsible for leading it.*)**

- Explore diocesan courses to assist with parish adult faith formation - Sycamore courses etc. altar servers and Sacristan courses. Recruitment of more Catechists is necessary.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young parishioners should continue to be encouraged to serve their parish community and participate in a variety of Ministries.</li> <li>• The current members of the Diocesan Youth Council to form a Parish Youth Council.</li> <li>• Re-establish Faith Formation Group who could possibly organise retreats, prayer walks etc.</li> <li>• Continue to work with Becca, the school chaplain, strengthening relationship with St Thomas More.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Why are we proposing this? (Link to Mission.)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be better able to deliver training to ensure the handing on and deepening of our faith.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Dependencies: (What will be needed to make this happen? (E.g. people, formation, finances, property decisions, Bishop approval, other parishes co-operating.)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of volunteers to become involved in the delivery of programs and suitable venues as well as suitable diocesan courses.</li> <li>• Working with other parishes for effective delivery of training.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. What will be the outcome if this action cannot happen?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stagnation. With falling numbers.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Mission: SERVE - Sharing Christ's Love in Action</b></p>
<p><b>Reflection and conclusions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is financial and practical help for 'Warm Spaces' and 'Miner's Lamp'. We have many parishioners involved in external charities with youth involvement via Confirmation program.</li> <li>• We have many parishioners and a high number of volunteers who are active within our parish community.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1. What are we proposing to do? Concrete actions: (Distinguish what you will do now, next, over a longer journey and who is responsible for leading it.)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify parishioners involved in external charities to encourage and support.</li> <li>• Explore need in our community and reach out to existing community projects.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Why are we proposing this? (Link to Mission.)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaching out is one of our weaknesses.</li> <li>• We need to inform parishioners of specific needs in our community.</li> </ul>

**3. Dependencies: (What will be needed to make this happen? (E.g. people, formation, finances, property decisions, Bishop approval, other parishes co-operating.)**

- We need a focus group to undertake information gathering on the needs of the community. Forming alliances with non-Catholic groups.

**4. What will be the outcome if this action cannot happen?**

- We could be unaware of genuine needs in some parts of our community.

**Mission: COMMUNITY – Building a Family of Faith**

**Reflection and conclusions:**

- We have a welcoming team at both weekend Masses, every parishioner is welcomed into Mass with a greeting and a smile, normally by name. This makes everyone especially new parishioners feel welcome and facilitates integration into our parish family.
- After Sunday Mass, a team of volunteers provide refreshments in the presbytery, this gives the parishioners the opportunity to come together, to get to know and listen to one another.
- Many parishioners of all ages feel a strong sense of belonging through serving their parish community, forming relationships and friendships within their parish family.
- OLSC Youth Group have an active Facebook page with 170 followers, providing our parish with a means of communicating not just with our parish family, but also with the wider community.
- Family focused Masses see an increase in attendance.

**1. What are we proposing to do? Concrete actions: (Distinguish what you will do now, next, over a longer journey and who is responsible for leading it.)**

- Need to identify those housebound parishioners in need of support in the community via SVP visits and Eucharistic Ministers and priests for the distribution of Holy Communion in the home.
- Mechanism for parishioners to be able to form relationships and friendships within their parish family.
- Decisions and responsibilities in the parish are usually shared with the PPC and where appropriate with the wider parish community. Going forward our leadership model will include several working groups each leading into the PPC. Every working group will have a representative on the PPC ensuring all parts of the parish have a voice. Recruitment for working groups has already begun. Each working group will be responsible for preparing for the future.

**2. Why are we proposing this? (Link to Mission.)**

- That anyone/everyone may appreciate the truth and depth of the Catholic faith community.

**3. Dependencies: *What will be needed to make this happen? (E.g. people, formation, finances, property decisions, Bishop approval, other parishes co-operating.)***

- Active PPC supporting the priest to move forward with observations as per answers in this return form.

**4. What will be the outcome if this action cannot happen?**

- Decline in the Faithful.

## Section 3 - Stewardship and Our Common Home (Property)

### Accessibility (to be completed by Parish)

Site Name	Building Name	Estimated Occupancy Capacity	Estimated hours of use per week	Estimated number of car parking spaces	Level access into and within the building (Yes/No)	Accessible WC within the building (Yes/No)	% of people travelling by car	Describe local public transport links
Prudhoe Our Lady and St. Cuthbert	Church	170	8	15 on site with unrestricted road parking at weekends.	Y	Y	71%	Bus stop within a 5 to 10 minutes walk with ½ hourly weekday service and an hourly Sunday service. There is a steep incline to church.
St. Matthew's Hall	Hall	Leased with rental paid direct to diocese	Not used by parish	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	“
Prudhoe - Our Lady and St. Cuthbert	Presby- tery	Chapel 20+	17 hrs	15 on site with unrestricted road parking at weekends.	N	Y	As Church	“

Notes: **Estimated occupancy capacity** – This is simply intended to be a reasonable estimate of the capacity of our churches, halls and meeting spaces. In the future it may be necessary to check these capacity figures against the site Fire Risk Assessment the survey programme for which is currently underway across our Diocese.

### Existing and potential future uses (to be completed by Parish)

Site Name:	Building Name	Existing uses	Potential future uses
Prudhoe Our lady and St. Cuthbert.	Presbytery	Home for Parish Priest Office Children's Liturgy Faith development courses Hospitality Meetings	As existing

## Section 4: Stewardship Review Discernment

Please use the suggested prompts at **Part F of The Mission Discernment Toolkit** to guide your conversations and complete the following section.

### Stewardship: FINANCES

*Please summarise your conclusions based on F1. discussions*

The Finance Committee meet regularly. We publish yearly accounts and quarterly updates and hold open meetings at year end for any questions or concerns from parishioners. We consider our finances transparent to all concerned.

A significant cost to the parish is the cost of servicing the debt for the refurbishment and remedial works to the church, which is reduced by Gift Aid and rent from parish hall. Although parish has been in a net loss position since covid, this year has seen an increase in offertory of approximately of 12%.

Without any major outgoings and sustaining present income and expenditure we consider that we are sustainable in the short term as we have no major costs expected. We feel that our Mission is supported by careful management of our finances.

### Stewardship: BUILDINGS

*Please summarise your conclusions based on F2. discussions*

Our Church is a Grad II listed building. Currently the use of the church and the presbytery strengthen our Mission. Both are in good condition and fit for purpose with no major expenditure being foreseen. The income supports the running costs at present. Currently we collaborate with school for the use of their premises when hosting large events.

### Stewardship: PEOPLE

*Please summarise your conclusions based on F3. discussions and the following questions:*

**How does your parish benefit from its Parish Finance Council and Parish Pastoral Council?**

Parish Finance enables communication of detailed income and expenditure with our parishioners. Both Councils provide vital support to the Parish Priest, parishioners and volunteers.

**Does your parish have active representation on the Partnership Development Group?**

Yes, but with our recent change in our Partnership a strong relationship has not yet been fully formed but is being worked upon.

**Are there potential lay leaders in the parish and would they be willing to be trained?**

We are confident that there is potential for more leaders to be trained.

### **Stewardship: SUSTAINABILITY**

*Please summarise your conclusions based on F4. discussions*

**What is your assessment on sustaining current mission provision over the next 10 years?**

We have numerous volunteers of all ages. Our buildings are in good condition, and our present finances are able to sustain our Mission.

## **Section 5: Snapshot Summary and Parish Conclusions**

Please refer to **Part G of The Mission Discernment Toolkit** to guide your conversations and complete the following section. Provide clear, honest, and prayerful conclusions.

**What is thriving and must be strengthened?**

- We have a thriving youth community, reflected not only in the number of young parishioners attending Mass each weekend, but also in the many young people actively serving within the parish. Young parishioners will continue to be welcomed, encouraged and supported by the First Holy Communion and Confirmation programmes, the parish and the youth group leaders.
- We have strong attendance at Mass each weekend, supported by many volunteers across various ministries and groups, helping sustain a vibrant parish community.

**What should be adjusted?**

- We need to create more opportunities for adults to grow and deepen their faith, not only within our parish community, but also in collaboration with our wider diocesan family.
- Outreach to wider community needs strengthening.

**What drains Mission, is unsustainable, and needs to be released?**

- Nothing identified that drains Mission at present.

**Where is the Holy Spirit prompting bold steps?**

- We believe the Holy Spirit is calling us to acknowledge our shortcomings and take responsibility through meaningful action.

**What are our next steps as a parish?**

- We aim to welcome everyone, building a parish community people want to be a part of and are happy to serve.
- At the same time, it is the role of the PPC to have a clear plan for where people are needed, recognising parishioner's gifts and guiding them. Going forward, our leadership model will include representation from each working parish group, giving every group a voice and responsibility for recruitment and succession planning.
- This approach strengthens leadership, encourages parishioners to take responsibility, providing volunteers and increased finances to support adult faith formation through courses, retreats and prayer activities, and enables the parish to contribute meaningfully to the wider community.

**A REMINDER OF NEXT STEPS**

Once completed, the parish should **submit this Part H** which is a summary of findings from The Local Mission Discernment (Part E), The Stewardship Review (Part F), and The Parish Snapshot Summary and Conclusions (Part G) to **[discernment.returns@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:discernment.returns@diocesehn.org.uk)** by **23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026**.