



The linked parishes of Crail & St Ayle
in the East Neuk of Fife



Crail Harbour



Anstruther Harbour



Cellardyke Harbour

SUMMARY

These two Parishes, which sit within the beautiful and historic East Neuk of Fife, are newly linked in 2019. Prior to this linkage Crail was linked for many years with Kingsbarns. Kingsbarns has now taken the opportunity to go under guardianship of the Presbytery.

. St Ayle Parish Church was formed from the very harmonious union of Anstruther and Cellardyke Parish Churches on 16th September 2016. Our newly linked parishes are part of the East Neuk East Cluster of churches and the Minister will have a continuing involvement in this.

The population of the area had been fairly static for a number of years, but is now growing again. At present the Parish populations in the 2017 Presbytery Plan (taken from the 2011

census) are Crail 1812 and St Ayle 3165. New housing continues to be developed. The two Parishes are just four miles apart - a short drive of less than ten minutes; there is also a regular bus service. Many people living in the parishes work in St Andrews or further afield (in Edinburgh, Dundee, and Glenrothes for example) rather than in the local agricultural or fishing industries, both of which, however, continue to exert a strong influence on the life of the East Neuk.

A fair proportion of the population is retired, especially in Crail, but extremely active in the life of communities and churches. Both Parishes are vibrant and active, with many groups working for the benefit of both congregations and communities.

There is a service in both parishes on Sunday mornings. These are currently held at 9:45 am in St Ayle and 11:15 am in Crail. There is good support for events held by the individual churches, as well as for those that are shared, such as the Prayer Group.

We desire to call a Minister with whom we can maintain and strengthen a strong witness to Christ, who will be able to guide us as we explore new relationships in our linkage charge, enabling us to reach out to all traditions and help to bring more young people and children into the congregations. Particularly we wish to reach out to all within the parishes to increase our membership.

Crail Parish Church has a Unitary Constitution. In 2018 all financial commitments were met and the finances of the congregation are sound, with capital reserves from the sale of the manse held by the General Trustees. The congregation numbers 310, with an average attendance of about 50 at Sunday worship - with numbers higher at communion, Christmas and Easter.

We have a worship team which helps with services and provides support for Minister and Congregations. Interdenominational relationships are good and there is a warm relationship with the Catholic church in Crail, with shared Guild activity and at least one shared service each year.



Anstruther & the Isle of May

CRAIL PARISH



CRAIL PARISH

The Kirk Session numbers 22 elders. The elders all have districts which they visit regularly, especially if there is illness or bereavement. There is an active flower group who arrange the flowers for Sunday worship and take the flowers to people who are ill, bereaved, lonely or suffering in other ways .

We are fortunate to have a number of very active groups within the Congregation and representing a broad range of interests. These include:

- The Church Guild of 44 members who meet twice a month.
- A small Sunday School is active on a Sunday morning.
- ChatBite; a fellowship and coffee morning every Wednesday with an average of about 40 people attending.



ChatBite at Crail

- A shared prayer group also on a Wednesday morning in the church.
- A carers' support group on the first Tuesday of the month, and supported by Alzheimer's Scotland.
- An experienced and skilful choir which performs introits and anthems every Sunday.
- The Crafty Bairns group for pre-school meets on a Friday once a month.
- A Beaver Scout Colony, who use the hall once a week.

We support the East Neuk Foodbank with weekly donations and also support the Blythwood Trust with our annual 'shoe box' appeal - and Christian Aid with a collection at ChatBite, plus a 'soup and sandwich lunch' after church in Christian Aid week.



Crail Festival

The Parish Magazine KARAIL, which has been running since 1963, is produced three times a year, just before Communion and is distributed to each house throughout the Parish. We hope that it provides a form of outreach and a regular point of contact between Church and community. There is the possibility to rethink its potential across the new linkage.



Crail Church

Crail Aspirations

- To maintain the many centuries of Christian witness in Crail by continuing to be a welcoming Church, accessible to all, friendly and inclusive.
- To continue to develop the Church as a central part of our community.
- To nourish and strengthen a strong witness to Christ.
- To explore and grow new relationships in our linkage charge, deepening fellowship among our members and with our neighbours at St Ayle
- To reach out to all traditions and help to bring more young people and children into our congregation.
- To reach out to all within our parish to increase our membership and to encourage increasing involvement of existing members.

Concerns

- Like many in the Church of Scotland we are an ageing congregation, but we do actively involve younger people in our work.
- Our church building is historically important, but now requires significant repair and upgrade. This will undoubtedly be challenging but it will also provide us with the opportunity to introduce changes that although remaining



sympathetic to the building will equip it for the 21st century. Professionals will be appointed to manage the work on our behalf.

- Despite having a Sunday School, we know that there are families in our parish with whom we have little contact



ANSTRUTHER PARISH



CELLARDYKE PARISH



ST AYLE PARISH

St Ayle Parish Church was formed from the very harmonious union of Anstruther and Cellardyke Parish Churches. During the period when first Anstruther, then Cellardyke buildings underwent refurbishment, the congregations worshipped in their sister church. Worshippers got to know each other and realised that, by working together, so much more could be achieved. We were formally joined in a Presbytery-led service of union on 16th September 2016. Both churches had already adopted a unitary constitution.

Church Groups / Organisations.

Many groups, serving various purposes, meet regularly and are attended by members and others from the wider community. These are the Guild, Friendship Group, Babies and Toddlers, Stepping Stone Coffee Morning, Country Dancing, Games Afternoon, Members' Association, Prayer Group and Craft Group. Our Messy Church group meets in "blocks" as does Bible Study.

Our Kirk Session consists of 34 elders.



Spiritual Development.

St Ayle's willingness and openness to change has been underpinned by the growing spirituality of the Kirk Session and members of the congregation. Attendance at Bible Study and Presbytery conferences over the years has helped people to grow in their own faith and build stronger and closer relationships with one another. A prayer group meets each week, alternating between evenings and mornings and, although small in number, is very much focussed on the needs of the church both locally, nationally and internationally. It also has a prayer session in church each Sunday before worship.

Worship teams have developed over many years and now lead several services throughout the church calendar. Members of the team and others also help to lead worship weekly in the local care home and monthly in the nursing home.



Pastoral Care.

Like many small towns and villages, the East Neuk of Fife has seen much demographic change in recent years. However there remains a core community within Anstruther and Cellardyke. Neighbours are there for one another and there is always a friendly face nearby. Pastoral care happens naturally within the church, but we also have a structured plan with elders and church visitors going out into the parish to visit the sick and housebound, helping with lifts to church and social events and looking out for anyone who might be glad of a visit or a helping hand. The community feeling is very much alive and we pray that we can convey this feeling to people moving into the area.

The flower ministry plays an important part in our pastoral care with flowers delivered to anyone who is ill, bereaved or celebrating a special birthday, anniversary or family event. The flowers are taken personally, along with a printed Order of Service from worship that day. This small gesture is very much appreciated by those who are unable to get out and helps bring them in touch with what is going on in the church. We have an annual communion service for the frail and elderly and also a well-established bereavement service (held in December), which is welcomed and appreciated by those from the community and beyond.

Outreach.

The large housing area which has been developed in recent years is ripe for mission and we are looking for ways to reach out to all, especially the young families and newly retired people living in our midst. There is a Babies and Toddlers group held in our buildings, as well as "Beavers" and many of these children and their siblings attend or have participated in our Messy Church, which meets in four-weekly blocks four times per year. Each block ends with a Messy Sunday service, followed by a family lunch. Relationships are all important and although we no longer have a Sunday School we feel these opportunities are God-given and we are privileged to tell the children about Jesus.

St.Ayle has a puppet ministry which started taking the Christmas story to the local primary schools. The children engage with the puppets and the puppeteers enjoy it every bit as much as the children. This has also developed into visiting local care homes.



The East Neuk Foodbank is open twice weekly and has been running since 2013 in the Anstruther Church building, operated by a co-ordinator and a team of volunteers. It not only provides food for those in need (1132 food bags have been handed out in the period 1st Apr 2018 to mid Jan 2019) but more importantly it offers a drop-in centre for people who are isolated and may have nowhere to turn for advice, a friendly chat and a listening ear.

Community Events & Involvement.

St Ayle is involved in all aspects of community life and is seen by the community as an integral part of the fabric of the town.

We were involved in the recently resurrected Sea Queen Festival. Its aim was to bring the community together and the church played a pivotal role in its success. The Session Clerk and Associate Session Clerk represented the two burghs of Anstruther and Cellardyke on the day. The Sea Queen organising group was very keen to incorporate a new element into the event – and so a “Kirkning of the Sea Queen” was held the following day at St Ayle in Cellardyke. We were also involved in a highly successful Silent Walk as part of the centenary of WW1.

At the annual harbour festival there is a well established and popular church service held on the Sunday at the quayside, attracting both locals and visitors. Local organisations regularly use our church buildings for concerts.



Anstruther Harbour Festival Service



Cellardyke Sea Queen

St Ayle Aspirations

- To continue to learn about and to share the good news of God's love and the teachings of Jesus
- To strengthen our pastoral care initiatives, reaching out to the vulnerable and isolated members of our community
- To encourage involvement in our prayer and bible study groups to deepen our Christian faith and witness
- Looking forward to a deepening of our relationship in our new linkage with our friends in Crail

Challenges

- As a predominantly ageing congregation we are mindful of the need for mission and stewardship in reaching out to the whole community
- To be sensitive to social changes in our communities, seeking to make church relevant, responding to the different needs and challenges we see around us
- To continually review our finances in order to balance the General Fund and to better contribute to ministry and mission across the wider church
- Messy Church is successful in attracting younger children (5-8 years old) but we are aware there are many families in the parish with whom we have no contact

More information about our work is available on our website.



CHURCH BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

THE MANSE

The Manse is situated in Anstruther and is a modern, well maintained and well appointed property and is jointly owned and managed. It is a two-storey detached villa built in 2005. Accommodation includes, on the ground floor, vestibule, hall, lounge, living room, study, dining kitchen, utility room and WC. And on the first floor landing, four bedrooms, bathroom with shower and WC, en-suite shower room with WC. There is a double integral garage.

Crail Parish Church building dates from 1243 and is Grade A Listed. The church has pewed seating, disabled access and toilet and has a new high quality sound system with a hearing loop. Major renovations are needed to safeguard the future of the building. However we are pleased to state that our Presbytery has

advised (July 2019) that following completion of an evaluation of buildings by the Strategy and Resourcing Committee we may proceed to make the appropriate application to the General Trustees for the requisite permission to undertake the required work. Based on projected costs we are confident that the extensive planned/required work can be fully funded from our financial resources although grant support will be sought. The work will of course be professionally managed.

A new Kirk Hall was opened in the spring of 1998 and is well used by church groups, as well as the wider community. Both church

and hall have become popular venues during the annual East Neuk Music Festival and Crail Festival.

St. Ayle Parish Church is made up of two well-maintained buildings, which have been brought up to date in the past few years.

St. Ayle at Cellardyke was dedicated in 1881 and consists of a large pewed seating area downstairs and a balcony. The chancel area was extended a few years ago by removing some pews, creating a multi-purpose space. The south transept has been transformed into a private prayer area, which can also be used for small informal services and communions.



St Ayle - Cellardyke

The Hall, which is incorporated in the church building, was recently renovated and additional storage was created. There is also a committee room, a fitted kitchen and modernised toilets. The church has disabled parking bays at the front of the building and a large adjacent car park.

St Ayle at Anstruther, which was completed in 1634 has recently undergone extensive renovation both internally and externally (supported by a Heritage Lottery Grant). A new double doorway leads into the nave which has been remodelled and the pews removed, making it a multi-purpose space. Both buildings are bright and welcoming with digital projection technology to support worship and with full disable access.

FINANCE

St.Ayle Church is in a sound financial position with a healthy sum of money held on behalf of the church by the General Trustees. In addition, funds held locally are more than sufficient to cover monthly expenditures and repairs. Thanks to a hardworking and very generous congregation, fund-raising activities, especially the annual Givings Day (which raised £13845 in 2018) has resulted in a surplus at the end of each financial year.

Recent years have been financially more difficult for Crail, however this has now improved considerably. In 2018 all financial commitments were met and the finances of the congregation are now sound, with capital reserves, from the sale of the manse, held by the General Trustees.



St Ayle - Anstruther

SOCIAL ASPECTS

The East Neuk of Fife is favoured with a notably dry and moderate climate and with beautiful coastal scenery backed by a fertile and attractive hinterland. It is steeped in history and has some of the most picturesque towns and villages in Scotland, with iconic red pan-tiled roofs and 'craw-stepped' gables witness to a long trading history.



People are friendly and welcoming: well used to making the many people who choose to live, holiday or retire here feel at home. Neighbours are looked out for.

The university town of St Andrews with its wide range of shops and services, theatre, concert hall, restaurants and coffee shops is close by and the cities of Dundee and Perth a little further afield, but readily accessible. Slightly further again is Edinburgh with its international airport. There are also mainline railway Stations at Leuchars and Kirkcaldy

Both Crail and Anstruther have busy primary schools. Secondary schooling is provided by Waid Academy in Anstruther and Madras College in St Andrews. Also in St Andrews, St Leonards offers private education from 4 to 18 years of age. St Andrews University is of world

standing, with students in their red gowns a familiar sight. The University also offers a wide range of lectures and open access courses throughout the year.

The communities are served by health care practices in the Skeith Centre in Anstruther, with a modern community hospital in St Andrews. Specialist services exist at the major hospitals in Dundee, Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline.

There is a truly enormous range of clubs and societies catering for just about every interest including golf, walking, sailing, cycling, badminton, bowls, art, music and museums to name just some.

Much more about the area can be found by visiting websites that serve the East Neuk of Fife, for example: www.eastneukwide.co.uk





FURTHER INFORMATION

The linked charge has voted to remain with the traditional teachings of the church on same sex marriage and applications are sought from any who hear a call to lead us.

Contacts:-

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