

St Columbanus

Ballyholme



Restoration Update
Mission News
Annual Cricket Match
Tune Tots



..On the way
together..

The Parishioner

September/October 2026

Michelle Savage was in the pulpit showing us Stubbs's famous horse portrait from Mount Stewart. Christies sold a smaller one for £30 million. Then came her 2 year old daughter Amy's crayon picture of her granny and granddad with curiously placed eyes and multiple belly buttons. Untested at auction, the Stubbs was literally priceless. Yet that didn't come close to the value Amy's grandparents saw in her picture – which still hangs proudly in their living room. Michelle was quoting Jesus in Matthew 13: *'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field... and a merchant looking for fine pearls'* (vv 44 & 45). What value do we attach to God, faith and Church was her question. But there's more... The Antiques Roadshow was in Bangor that day. When I asked did anyone have tickets, only two hands went up. Then quietly, after the service, someone showed me the e-ticket she'd got but passed on to a friend. Why? It was for the morning session, she said: that's when I go to Church. As the message about the priceless value of the Kingdom and her value as a child of God unfolded, she had no regrets about her decision.



SED

Church Grounds Work Party

Where would we be without the willing souls who give 2 or 3 hours of their time twice a year to keep St Columbanus and its environs looking loved, cared for and welcoming? The added sunshine and warmth of this summer quickly undid the meticulous weeding of our crack team back in June but, have no fear, we will be announcing our second work party of 2026 in the run up to Confirmation and Harvest.

We usually send out a reminder message to our regular volunteers, but please feel free just to turn up on the day. We pre-arrange with a couple of parishioners to hitch up their trailers but for the rest of us the most useful kit to bring is gloves, bucket, bush, trowel and hedge-clippers.

On the day, simply arrive and start tidying wherever you like. Some begin on Grove Park and work down; some begin on Groomsport Road and work up. Either way, we meet in the middle for coffee and biscuits!

Confirmation Candidates: final call-up!

The summer magazine flew the kite for both our young people waiting to be Confirmed and any adults who might also come forward.

This is your chance, so please contact Andrew Watson our Youth Worker or the clergy to be part of preparations for the service we're hosting on Sunday 11 October at 6.30pm.

Youth sessions will start on Wednesday 9th September in the Parish Centre, 7.00 to 8.30pm.

Adult sessions will be by arrangement with those who are interested.

It's Smartie time again

This year a Smartie tube will be delivered to you at home towards the end of August.

Please return the tube filled with 20ps at the Harvest service on Sunday 18th October 2026.

Happy sharing of the Smarties!

Ian Hardstaff for the Mission Committee



Back to Church Sunday Invitations

Please find enclosed with this issue an invitation for you, your family and your friends to join us for Back to Church Sunday on Sunday 13 September. As ever, this coincides with the start of our new children's and youth programme.

After you've read your invitation, by all means pass it on with a prayer to someone you think might just be waiting for some gentle encouragement, either to come back to worship after a long time away or to join us for the first time.

You will be pleased to learn that the Phase Two Vestry sub-committee had its first meeting on Friday 26 June. From left in the photo: Roy Lawther, Ivan Humphreys, Brian Kelly, Peter Craig, Steven Nickell and Stephen Baker and at the front Rev Jonny Watson and Jenny McKay-Kyte.



As was shared at the Easter Vestry, the Building Fund is nudging steadily upwards. When we reach the preliminary £500,000 total, we want to be ready to start. That key figure emerged when the original £1.2 million project was split into two. Because Phase One, the Church restoration, cost £705,000, that left £500,000 as our natural target. Sky-rocketing inflation and rising building costs since 2016 mean it's going to cost considerably more than half a million, but undoubtedly £500K puts us well on our way. We thank God both for the success and popularity of Phase One, and for bringing Phase Two within our grasp.

On contacting the Rev Alistair Morrison who chaired the Phase One Building Committee. Alistair replied: "Reviewing these plans for the first time in over a decade, I am convinced this project will greatly enhance the experience for both parishioners and visitors. Moving away from the current need to walk up the slope to the hall for fellowship will make the environment much more inviting." Alistair also suggested a way for us to get started:

1. Review Space Needs: since the parish's needs have likely changed since 2015 we will start with a thorough analysis and re-evaluation of current room, storage and space allocations.
2. Planning Permission: full planning permission was granted for the original plans and if our alterations are significant, a planning amendment will be required.
3. Consult the Architects: following our review of current needs we will speak with Knox & Markwell and review the previous fee structures for the professional team (Architect, Quantity Surveyor, Structural Engineers, and M&E Consultants) to negotiate fees for Phase Two.
4. Assess Existing Foundations: we need to confirm with the architect which foundations have already been installed, as this will dictate the placement of any new walls.



5. Update Cost Estimates: If the architect is reappointed, and our changes are discussed, we will request an updated cost estimate.

In an initial brainstorm, among the specific issues identified were: the original shared-space principle behind the Parish Centre; the size of the kitchen; challenges over storage; the heating system which has already been replaced once and remains unreliable and costly; designing a characterful, low-maintenance link building; designated youth and children's facilities.

Over the ten years since we re-opened the Church, not one parishioner has approached me with reservations about proceeding with Phase Two. Rather, many parishioners have raised the delay with me impatiently, especially as their own mobility issues have increased. Suffice to say it was an exciting meeting. Okay this is about 'lift and loos' as I've said from the outset. But it's about so much more than that. Everyone felt the buzz of our first meeting and there was unanimity around the table that as God gave us our original vision and supplied our needs for Phase One, so He will do so again for Phase Two – so long as we stretch ourselves this time to do everything that we need to do and do it right!

SED



Parish Visiting Team

We have a team of volunteers comprising men and women who each visit one or two of our housebound parishioners every so often. I have been part of the team for several years now and find it a fulfilling and rewarding experience.

A lot of the more senior members of our church family can feel lonely or isolated and greatly appreciate having a friendly face calling in with them from time to time and keeping them in touch with what's happening in Church. It lets them know they are still very much part of our church family and that we have not forgotten about them.

Do you enjoy spending time with people, chatting to them and listening to what they

have to say? Have you got a bit of spare time on your hands? If so, you might like to consider joining our Parish Visiting Team.

If you would like to find out more without any obligation to commit to anything, please come along to our next meeting on Friday 25 September at 10:30am in the Parish Centre. We meet every so often to offer one another support. We also have a help sheet which explains what is involved, things to bear in mind and some practical suggestions. Copies of this will be available at the meeting.

As the number of people to be visited increases extra volunteers are always required and will be made very welcome.

Also, if you know of someone you feel would benefit from having someone to visit them please ring Heather McKee in the Parish Office Tel:02891-274912.

Christine Johnstone



This year's match fell foul of a diary clash which left both sides badly depleted. No, it wasn't the football World Cup qualifier between England and Ghana. It turned out to be the last pre-holiday cricket practice for the Bangor Under 9s at Upritchard Park. Thus cruelly robbed of several stellar dad and lad cricketers, did we let this dampen our enthusiasm?



Guided by our hugely experienced umpires Roy Lawther and Trevor Smith, an ingenious bit of on-the-hoof rearranging saw everyone present fielding throughout the match. On losing the toss, the Youth Worker's seven were put into bat, and then the Rector's seven attempted to chase down their total. The pictures capture the mood.



Huge thanks to Peter McIlwaine for securing us the use of the new artificial wicket in Ward Park. Still in its first season, the bounce was consistent, safe and made for a good match between bat and ball. Much as in previous years, bitter rivalries were renewed, festering grievances were re-aired and family feuds were refuelled so, obviously, it's still a very worthwhile exercise all round.

After 11 overs, the younger people scored 40 for 3. After 9 overs, the less young people scored 41 for 5. So it was a win for the less young people. The Billy Fyffe Memorial Trophy stays at the Rectory for another year.

I personally am amazed that I am again encouraging you all to fill up your Smartie Tubes with as much as you can generously give. Time certainly does speed up the older you get!!

The Parish has always supported this fund raiser and it is one of our main sources of income. So thank you so much in anticipation of your continued support. The new June iteration of the Quiz was a great success and we plan to make it a regular event. The quiz raised £585 which leaves us with a sound balance going into the Autumn.

Over the summer the Committee has received many letters of thanks from those we give to. A common theme is what a huge value the gift is for folk on the ground. I think it is the sense that we are in their work with them which should encourage all of us that our Mission giving is a powerful witness of Christ's presence in so many challenging circumstances both in NI and overseas.

Our Harvest Service speaker this year is Hannah Elliot of International Justice Mission. She is speaking in place of Ben McMeekin, who has been with us before, as he is answering God's call and leaving IJM for the ordained ministry in the Presbyterian Church. We all, I am sure, wish Ben well in his new service to the Lord. We will be praying for him.

So up and running again for another season of the Lord's work.

After the Harvest Sunday services we will be holding lunch in the Church Centre. There will be a sign up sheet available for anyone who wants to attend nearer the time. Why not sign up and come along to enjoy the lunch with family and friends.

Blessings

IH.

Samaritan's Purse Christmas shoeboxes



This autumn, join us in supporting Operation Christmas Child, a global project that delivers gift-filled shoeboxes to children in need. Each shoebox is a powerful tool for sharing God's love, offering joy, hope, and the message of Jesus Christ.

For many children, it's their first-ever gift. Let's make an eternal impact together. We encourage you to make a difference and pack a shoebox. Shoeboxes will be available from Sunday 20th September and can be returned to Church no later than Sunday 15th November 2026.

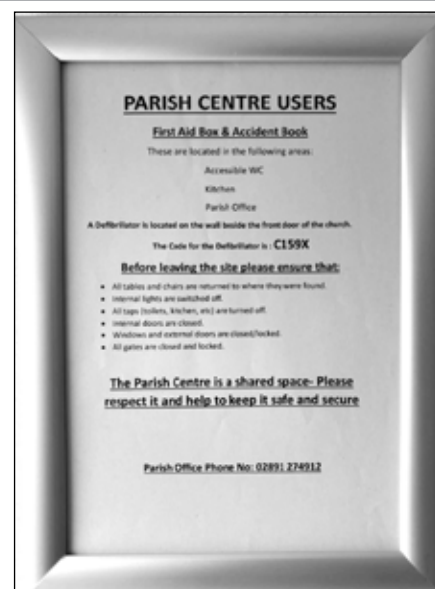
Geoff Hewitt

Please take 5 minutes – every time you leave

New posters are in position inside all five external doors in the Parish Centre to encourage hall users to leave the premises safe and secure after their session.

Striding out the door for home at the end of your meeting or activity, it's all too easy to assume there is still someone inside who will do the needful. Not necessarily! 5 minutes is all it takes to ensure the Parish Centre and its gates are locked, with every light and every tap inside turned off.

You would be amazed how often hall users turn up to find doors or windows open or hot-water running in the toilet handbasins – and the diary always tells us which group has been careless. Please be responsible and show our halls the respect and care they deserve.



Communion Lunch – Dates for your diary

Thursday 17th September 12.30pm

Thursday 10th December 12.30pm

The next Parish Communion lunch is arranged for Thursday 17th September 2026, 12.30pm in the Parish Centre. Following the Holy Communion service we will have a light lunch.

Our last Parish Communion lunch in June was a great success, held on a lovely warm day. It was so good to see so many senior members of our congregation attending and enjoying our worship together. Following lunch, we had 3 great musicians who came along and entertained us with some favourite tunes. Everyone felt in good spirits on their way home.

If you have not attended for some time or would like to join us for the first time, please know you are very welcome and we would love to see you in September. Transport can be organised if required.

If you would like any further information, please contact myself or Heather at the Parish Office.

Also if anyone would like to join our small team of volunteers to help, you would be most welcome, please contact the Parish Office, to find out more.

I look forward to seeing everyone on Thursday 17th September

Kind Regards

Margaret



The Wednesday Club



We are meeting up for a new season on Wednesday 2nd September at 2.00pm, and look forward to welcoming all our ladies, and we would also welcome anyone new who would like to come along and give it a try. See you then.

The Wednesday Club Team

The only way to approach Thursday mornings at 10am at the Parish Centre, is by skipping along the corridor with your pigtails swinging, or hopping along in your new velcro-fastening trainers...

A sunny highlight in the week for Paula, Elizabeth and Lisette - no matter the weather - is hosting the babies and toddlers at Tune Tots. A welcome hot cup of tea or coffee and overdue sit down for their sleep-deprived parents adds to the mix of happy clients.



The boy-with-no-name bursts through the door, giggling that his name is top secret and not to be spoken aloud. Lentils spill in all directions from the playtray via a toy cement mixer. The craftiest girlies head straight for the pritt stick, sequins and stickers table, legs swinging off their tiny chairs, poised to create their next masterpiece to exhibit on the fridge.

Wibbly wobbly toddlers hoist themselves up, leaning on the wooden toy kitchen, or whizz cars around the racetrack on

their knees. Bubbles gently float through the room.

Babies stare and blink. They don't have much hope of napping amongst the fun, colour and noise.

Then it's songtime: instruments rattle, bang, shake, hands are flung in the air with hoots of laughter, as we row our boats, wonder who will appear next on Old Macdonald's farm, or why Miss Polly's dolly never seems to get any better?



Elizabeth is the toast fairy and the warm, buttery goodness is gobbled up in record time.

Then it's playdoh fun - trying not to mix up the colours, or add in lentils for extra texture, eek. Actually, both end up being a losing battle, never mind.

The little tornadoes blow on, and after a speedy tidy and Hoover of far too many lentils, which reach every corner of

the room, we are ready for a rest, til it's time to do it all over again next week.

Tune Tots meet on Thursdays during school term 10am - 11:30am. All babies to preschoolers are very welcome to join in the fun and bring their parent or carer along. We start back again mid-September. Date will be advised in church Facebook page.

Lisette Watson



Monday Morning Coffee

Monday morning coffee and scones will resume in the Church Centre on 21st September 2026 at 10.00am. Why not come along and find out what is your favourite flavour of scone. At present mine is the pear and walnut scones! Listen for the announcement in Church.

Harvest Flowers

On the Monday following Harvest Sunday a small team of people make up the flowers into bunches and deliver them to some of the housebound members of our church family so that they can enjoy some of the Harvest decorations at home.

If you would like to help make up bunches of flowers and/or to make some deliveries, please come along to Church on Monday 19th October at 10.00am. It would be great to see you there.

Many thanks

Irene Long



Photos from Summer Combined Service



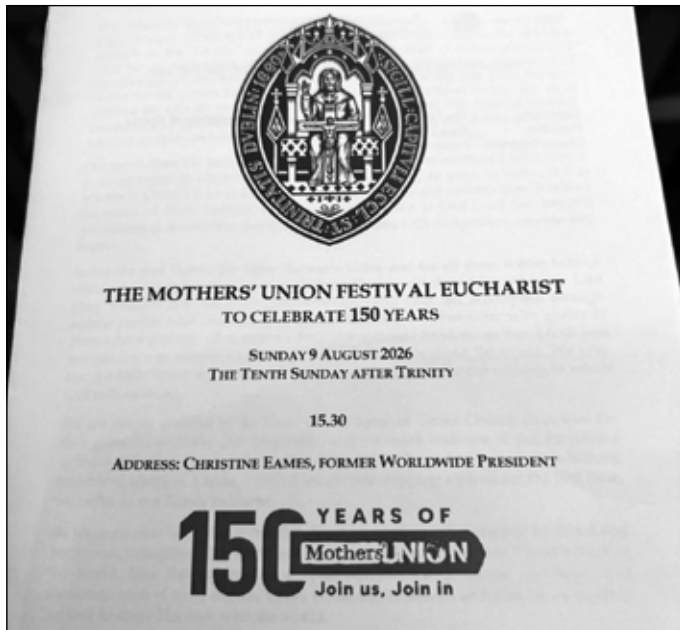
More Photos from Summer Schemes





Some of our members travelled to Dublin on Sunday 9th August to attend the Mothers' Union Festival Eucharist to Celebrate 150 Years at Christ Church, Dublin.

Over 550 members gathered at the Cathedral for this major service celebrated by Archbishop Michael Jackson. Taking place on Mary Sumner Day which commemorates the founder of Mothers' Union, the thoughtful and encouraging address was given by former Worldwide President, Lady Christine Eames.



The Mothers' Union Opening Service will be on Sunday 20th September at the 10.00am Service followed by Hot Dogs in the Church Centre for anyone who wants to attend.

Our first meeting is on Monday 5th October at 7.45pm.

Proposed Christmas outing is on Friday 4th December at Harrison's Restaurant where we will have a 2 course meal and listen to music from the Sydenham Salvation Army Band.

We intend to travel by private car and have offers of about 6 people who are willing to be drivers.

The cost for the evening is £30. To sign up to attend please leave the payment in a named envelope in the Church Office so we can confirm our numbers or bring it along to our meeting on Monday 5th October.

**Many Blessings for now from
Yvonne & MU Team**



Recently, Canon Simon asked me if I would write about a meeting I had had with someone who has made history in the Anglican Church. This was Archbishop Dame Sarah Mullaly, and the first female Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury.

Having had this great opportunity, I very much hope it may be of interest to our Parishioners. The context of my meeting was on the 4th July 2026 at a final celebration of the Eucharist at St Anne's Cathedral Church Belfast.

The context is an interesting one as the Anglican Consultative ACC-19 Council which meets triennially, had decided that St Columb's Cathedral in Londonderry in 2026 would be the choice for these deliberations. Also Belfast would then provide a speedy access to and from international flights and with a welcome and then a final goodbye Service at St Anne's Cathedral, before going home to all the world wide Anglican Dioceses involved.

This gathering of the Anglican Consultative Council ACC-19, with 152 Archbishops, Bishops, Clergy and laity had completed a very collaborative working week having made Television News when going on a Pilgrimage across the Londonderry/Derry Peace Bridge.

Sitting in St Anne's Cathedral on 4th July 2026, I was privileged to see an amazing congregation including the beauty of Copes, Mitres and Vestments was not lost on my appreciation of our Anglican traditions. The thought "To this we belong" seemed very real.

The newly commissioned choral composition, "Missa Brevis", by Joanna Forbes L'estrang, gave the congregation the privilege of a first class performance by Jack Wilson, our highly acclaimed Cathedral Organist plus Choir. This piece had an ethereal quality, enhanced by the well known excellent acoustics of St Anne's Cathedral.

This very moving performance allowed all present to become united in this sacred Service of worshipful remembrance.



The west end of the Cathedral nave was used additionally to provide the distribution of the Sacrament where, the Rev Cameron Mack, a former Deacon of St Columbanus Parish who with the Archbishop of Armagh were able to serve the large congregation.

I had been sitting beside the daughter of the Chaplain to the Archbishop of Armagh where I enjoyed the well chosen hymns alongside a very gifted voice.

The end of the service accompanied the goodbyes of many who had formed fraternal friendships in a working week with a new Archbishop whom I was soon to meet resplendent in a Gold Mitre and Cope.

Dean Stephen networking amongst the congregation came over to introduce me as a Cathedral Steward and a part time Acolyte from St Columbanus Parish Church in Bangor advising that the Parish Diocese was of the 6th century Bangor Abbey of Saints and Scholars.

Archbishop Sarah's smile was warm, the handshake firm, twinkling blue eyes and blonde hair were as attractive as one would wish for, in her gold cope and mitre. She seemed not so very much taller than my height of 5 foot 4 inches. She had been seen earlier keeping company with the Archbishop of Canada whom I had also met, and who would raise the bar to well over 6 feet in height wearing her mitre. As my mother would have said at 4 feet 11 inches, "Height has nothing to do with success!" Perhaps with a majority of male counterparts this could be argued!

I had prepared a small bag with four gifts, a card wishing her well from my family and Parishioners of St Columbanus Parish, a card with some of the missionary Saint's sayings, a pink rose from my 92 year old Bangor garden wrapped securely for transit to Lambeth, as well as three green hearts of my usual paper folding type with 3 After Eight mints therein representing a Shamrock. On each I had written in my best calligraphy, "Be thou my vision O Lord of my Heart".

Her broad smile and a "thank you", concluded our meeting.

Her Sermon had been based on "Called to one hope" and was easy to follow relating to our present world needs and challenges.

Archbishop Sarah also said in her Enthronement sermon, that her gift as an ex nursing Officer was to bring compassion to her role and the world wide Anglican Church.

It would be good to remember this courageous woman who impressed me with her presence and energy, in our prayers as she daily prays for us all in our ongoing pilgrimage in the Christian Way.

E Adeline Cully

14.08.2026

FUNERALS

June

29th: Denis Charles Neill formerly of Dam Road

July

1st: Eileen Harmon formerly of Donaghadee Road

23rd: William David Moore formerly of Glendale Avenue

August

14th: Kate Dornan formerly of Ashley Gardens

BAPTISM

July

5th: Lily Susan Boyd, daughter of Garth and Diana Boyd

**BBC
RADIO**



The Rector is on Radio 4 Prayer for the Day from Sunday 29th August to Friday 4th September 2026 and Radio 4 Morning Service from Nendrum Monastic Site with Fr Martin Magill on Sunday 30th August 2026.

Listen again on BBC Sounds.



**July - Portrush to Portstewart**

Six walkers travelled to the north coast and took the five mile coastal path from Portrush to Portstewart. There was a biting headwind coupled with the rough path that made for a demanding walk. On reaching Portstewart, they took refuge with voraciously eaten hearty fries in Morelli's, finishing off with ice cream!

**August - Ards Greenway**

Ten walkers headed up the new Greenway from Ards to the new footbridge at the Ark farm. Continued on through the ferns at Whitespots country park spotting a young fawn along the way before descending to House church cafe.



YOUTH-news

youth [youth] (youths)

news [nooz]

As I'm writing this, summer 2026 is in full flow! We've had Summer Madness, two days of Jumpin', and X-Cess is ahead of us. As ever, it's been a really brilliant time. The weather has been great (apart from at Summer Madness), the children and young people have been loving it, friendships are being formed and people are learning about Jesus.

Summer Madness this year was one of the best ever – even in spite of the terrible weather. We camped with Ballyholme Presbyterian and Kings Church, and for the first time ever we fully sorted our own food – providing breakfast (with bacon!), lunch and dinner for the young people every day. A huge thank you must be said to Eileen Pollock from the Presbyterian, who almost single-handedly sorted the cooking! It was an enormous effort, and if anyone reading this feels up to the task of helping next year, we would be delighted to have the help.

Jumpin' has been going great this year – a sellout as usual and with our biggest ever group of 'Pumas', the Year 8 – 10s who are partly children and partly junior leaders at it, helping us to run various games and activities.

Your prayers and support of the youth ministry here are always hugely appreciated – thank you as ever!

Andrew



SEPTEMBER 2026**Wednesday 2nd September**

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 6th September Trinity 14

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Cafe Church - Parish Centre

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 9th September

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 13th September Trinity 15

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Good News at Ten & Children's Church

11.30 Parish Communion

6.30 United Service - Ballyholme Presbyterian

Wednesday 16th September

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 20th September Trinity 16

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Prayer & Praise Children's Church

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 23rd September

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 27th September Trinity 17

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Parish Communion & Children's Church

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 30th September

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

OCTOBER 2026**Sunday 4th October Trinity 18**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Cafe Church - Parish Centre

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 7th October

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 11th October Trinity 19

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Prayer & Praise Children's Church

11.30 Parish Communion

6.30 Confirmation

Wednesday 14th October

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 18th October Harvest Trinity 20

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Good News at Ten & Children's Church

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 21st October

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 25th October 5th Sunday before Advent

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Parish Communion & Children's Church

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 28th October

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

September 2025**6th** Ruth Lynas**13th** Heather Whitfield**20th** Leanne Young**27th** Patricia Stubbings**October 2025****4th** Muriel Ryan**11th** Patricia Todd**18th** Harvest**25th** Christine Johnstone

Decorating the Church for Harvest

Donations of flowers are always very welcome and we also appreciate willing hands.

If you are free on Saturday 17th October and are able to help it would be great to see you any time from 10.00am.

Irene