

April 2022

Issue 266

FOCUS



Parish Magazine of St. Stephen's, Hightown



The Easter Issue

Editor's letter April 2022

Hello and welcome to the Easter issue

At this particularly dark time for our world, it couldn't be better for us than to be heading towards Easter. We need the message of Easter more than ever this year; its message of hope, that good will overcome evil.



In the last few weeks, we have heard of many atrocities and seen horrific images, from Ukraine. People, naturally, can start to wonder why, if there is a God, He allows such evil things to happen. As Christians, we believe that when God created humans, He created, people of free will. This inevitably means that, sometimes, the wrong choices are made and there are consequences. In the worst case scenario, human nature is completely altered by our evil thoughts and actions and we then witness human wickedness and scenes of war, terrorism and genocide

But, we believe, God does not desert us at these times; He is clearly to be seen in our partnership with Him: those times when we allow Him to work through us in our service of others: the people organising the refugee camps, their travel arrangements, and aid of all types. 80%—90% of the Ukrainian population are people of faith. Their courage and determination to remain independent stem from the belief that God is on their side, and that good will triumph over evil. People of faith believe that miracles aren't necessarily confined to the annals of history or the scriptures. We pray for divine intervention in this terrible war to bring life and healing where all human hope and efforts seem futile.

Which brings us back to Easter and the central miracle of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Acts of cruelty by others do not make us cruel; they make us, more than ever, determined to reach out and love one another. The Easter message is powerful. Hold it in your heart.

Colette

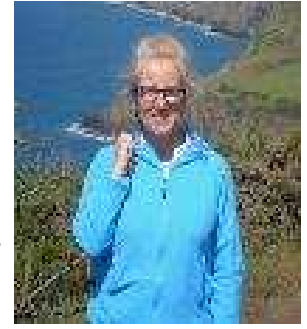
Entries for future issues of Focus to be sent to:

Focus.Magazine@StStephensHightown.org.uk

Please submit before the last day of the month.

Hi All,

In the Maundy Thursday service (Thursday 14th April), I take a washing up bowl of warm water, some soap, a large jug of clean water and kneel on the floor and wash 2 or 3 people's feet. That's the theory. In practice, I struggle to find anyone who will let me wash their feet! There are all sorts of excuses: bunions, ugly feet, smelly feet, wearing tights, embarrassing feet, ticklish feet etc etc. And the one or two I can find have, I suspect, spent hours before the service washing their feet, so they are spotlessly clean.



Perhaps I should allow someone to wash my feet - but then again I may have a verruca!

In this service we remember what Jesus did the night before he died: he washed his disciples feet. In Jesus' time, in hot countries, people didn't wear shoes or socks, just sandals. Roads were unmade and people walking around would have ended up with dusty and probably smelly feet. Before entering your own home or the homes of others, especially if you had servants, the lowliest servant would wash your feet.

Jesus was making a point about himself. To quote from John chapter 13: 'When Jesus had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord', and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example so that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."

I'm wondering why it's difficult to find people willing to have their feet washed. I'm wondering why I would wish to have perfect feet before this happened to me. What is this saying about us? Is it suggesting God can only love us if we are 'perfect'?

Some time ago on Radio 4 there was a short story called, 'Tickles' written by the Irish writer Paul McVeigh (There's a video of him reading this story on YouTube).

'Tickles' is the story of a son visiting his mother, in a care home, where she is now resident because of her dementia. She embraces him and will not let him go. He becomes very self-conscious, but then she starts to tickle him and his mind goes back to his childhood, and how his overworked mother would come in from one of the two jobs she held down, both of which involved long hours standing on her feet, and would tell him to fetch the basin. He remembered how he would wash her feet – and even tickle them. This had been the last time he had been properly intimate with his mother. He remembered the patience and

care required to look after her fearfully ugly feet, and the bond that existed between them in this intimate act. The embrace in the care home is finally broken, and he talks with a nurse who mentions his mother has been complaining about her feet. He asks her for a basin.

This story helped me see John 13 in a different light. Jesus isn't simply teaching his disciples to serve and be served. He is showing them what love looks like: intimate, compassionate, tactile love.

After the feet were washed Jesus says, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you." This is what the son is showing in the Radio 4 story. I hope this year as we hear this story told once again and feet are washed we may know God's love for us which is intimate and compassionate no matter how verruca-ed or ugly our lives are.

Blessings and a Happy Easter,

Jan - Revd Jan Ashton



Hightown Jubilee Festival

Friday - Sunday, 3rd-5th June 2022

These are what we hope will happen!
Firm details nearer the time.

Friday 3rd June -

Family Day at Hightown Club: taster tries for tennis, bowls and cricket

Afternoon - Street party and children's party on the grass, please email Agnes if interested:

hightownstreetparty22@gmail.com

Evening - Live music and disco. 'The Free Spirits' 8pm £10 on entry. Contact Chris 07884491807 Food available to buy. Any tickets left will be sold on the door.

Saturday 4th June –

Morning - Coffee Morning plus, at St Stephen's Church Hall

Afternoon - Hightown Pub TBA

Evening - Sailing club, 7.30pm food and entertainment. Contact Chris Williams: Cwill1951@virginmedia.com

Sunday 5th June -

Afternoon - Children's Party with Entertainer. On the grass outside St Stephen's Church Hall



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Police (Non-Emergency) – 101

NHS (Non-Emergency) – 111

Sefton Council Main Number – 0345 140 0845

Adult Social Care – 01704 704389 (North) / 0151 529 3761 (South)

Children's Social Care – 0151 934 3114

Children's Safeguarding Concerns – 0345 140 0845 (8am-6pm)

Sefton Council Emergency Duty Team (weekends) 0151 934 3555

Sefton Council for Voluntary Service – 0151 920 0726

Healthwatch Sefton – 0800 206 1304

Sefton Security – 0151 934 4746

NHS Southport and Formby CCG: 01704 395 785

Sefton Carers Centre (helpline) – 0151 288 6060

Stop Hate UK - 0800 138 1625

Sefton Women's & Children's Aid - 0151 922 8606

National Domestic Abuse Helpline 0808 2000 247

St. Stephen's Church Services for April

Sunday 3rd April 10.30am All Age Eucharist for Passiontide
6pm - Evensong

Wednesday 6th April 10.30am - Morning Prayer

Holy Week Starts

Sunday 10th April 10.30am Eucharist for Palm Sunday + Passion Narrative
6pm - Evensong

Wednesday 13th April 10.30am - Eucharist + Extended Prayer Time

Thursday 14th April 7.30pm - Eucharist for Maundy Thursday+ Feet Washing + Stripping of the Altar

Friday 15th April 9am - Good Friday Liturgy
10.30am - Walk of Witness with Our Lady's and other churches. Coffee + Hot Cross Buns at St. Stephen's Church
2pm - 3pm Family Celebration of Good Friday and Easter - making hot cross buns / making an Easter Garden / Easter Egg Hunt / Telling the story using 5 symbols / Extinguishing candles at 3pm

Saturday 16th April 7.45pm - Watching the Sunset (7.57pm)+ Vigil + New Fire and Lighting of the Paschal candle and celebration of the resurrection + 'Prosecco' and chocolate

Sunday 17th April 10.30am - Eucharist for Easter Sunday
2pm - Baptism
3pm - Burial of Cremated Remains
6pm - Evensong

Wednesday 20th April 10.30am - Morning Prayer

Sunday 24th April 10.30am - Eucharist
6pm - Evensong

Wednesday 27th April 10.30am - Eucharist + Extended Prayer Time

Sunday 1st May 10.30am - All-Age Eucharist
6pm - Evensong - Jan's Final Evensong with Hymns

Sanctuary Flowers April

3rd Lent
10th Palm Sunday
17th and 24th Easter Flowers

Brass Rota April
Kevin Bradshaw

Sunday Coffee Rota April

3rd Beth Cresswell
10th Christina Grocott
17th Jan Williams
23rd Hilary Munro
30th Diane Aldis



It would be so good to start Beavers, Cubs and Scouts here, again, in Hightown.

Might you be interested in leading a group or helping a group?

If so, please contact Rev Jan in the first instance on 07734 927575

Baptisms

Joshua Shackleton 21st April 2019

Amber Wall- April 2020 **worth 28th**



Birthdays

Evie Davies 14th April

Nathaniel Frost 17th April



Can you help us?

St. Stephens Church Hall is in regular and popular use by the Hightown and neighbouring communities by young and old. The ceiling is in poor condition and needs attention before there is further deterioration.

The Church has plans to replace the ceiling and the lighting, estimated to cost about £20,000.

People have been very generous and we have so far raised just over half of that sum.

Please send donations via our Just Giving:

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ststephenshightown

By cash or cheque (made payable to **St. Stephens PCC**), placed in an envelope and posted through the Vicarage Letter Box

By electronic transfer to our bank:

Sort Code: **01-03-25**

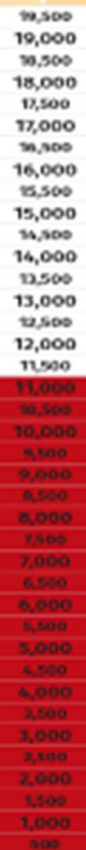
Account Number: **27525155**

Account Name: **St Stephens Church Hall**

Your donations would be gratefully received.

Thank you

£20,000



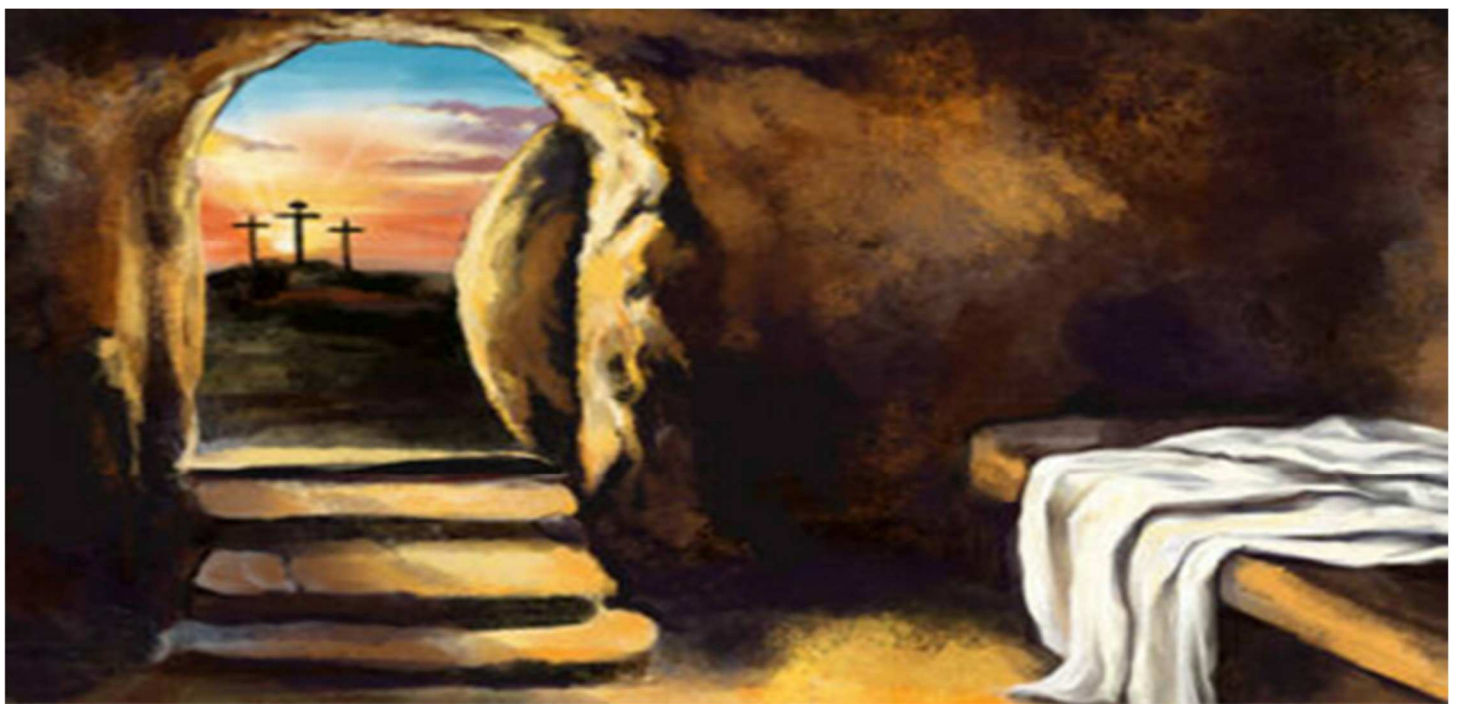
OFF TO A GREAT START!

PRAYER PROMPTS FOR APRIL



- 1st. Pray for all teachers.
For the people of Blundell Avenue and Alton Close
- 2nd. Pray for families living in poverty
For the people of Marston Crescent and Larkhill Grove.
- 3rd. **5th Sunday of Lent.** Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem
- 4th. Pray for our Armed Forces.
For the people of Whitefield Close, Brentwood Close and Oakfield Rd.
- 5th. Pray for the bereaved.
For all the people of Holmfield, Moss Lane and Farms in the area.
- 6th. Pray for the homeless.
For the people of North End Lane.
- 7th. Pray for doctors and nurses in I.C.U.
For the people of Blundell Road.
- 8th. Pray for desperate people in need of hope.
For all the people of Thirlmere Mews and Thirlmere Road.
- 9th. Pray for all Christian Pastors and Martyrs
For the people of Blundell Grove and Wignalls Meadow.
- 10th. **Palm Sunday.** Forgive us Lord as we forgive others
- 11th. Pray for our Police and Fire Services
For the people of Thistledown Drive and Sandilands Grove.
- 12th. Pray for those feeling rejection and separation.
For the people of Withinsfield, Alt Road and Lower Alt Road.
- 13th. Pray for abused women.
For the people of Hester Close and St. Stephens's Road.
- 14th. **Maundy Thursday.** From a grateful heart we remember our blessings.
For the people of St. George's Road and Sandy Lane.
- 15th. **Good Friday.** Giving thanks that Jesus died for us on the cross
For All the people of Mark Road.
- 16th. For He will give His angels charge concerning you. Psalm 91
For the people of North Dunes and Westway.
- 17th. **Easter Sunday.** Hallelujah He is Risen!!
- 18th. "Lighten our darkness we beseech thee O Lord"
For the people of Briary Croft, Langley Close and Richmond Close.
- 19th. Pray for children finding school difficult.
For the people of Elvington Road.

- 20th. Pray for our neighbours living next door.
For the people of the Village Way and the Roundway.
- 21st. Pray for those who are sick in mind, body and spirit.
For the people of the Range and Altcar camp.
- 22nd. Pray for local shops and services.
For the people of Sandhills and Old Acre.
- 23rd. Pray for protection of our children and grandchildren.
For the people of Moorhouses and Bankside.
- 24th. **2nd Sunday of Easter.** Pray for Godly wisdom for our Government.
- 25th. Mark the Evangelist. For missionaries and evangelists.
For the people of School Road, Tudor Gardens and Rathbone Rd.
- 26th. **George Martyr Patron of England.** For our Queen and Our Nation.
For the people of Elmcroft Lane and Emerson Close.
- 27th. Christine Rosetti, Poet 1894 – For writers, artists and musicians.
For the people of Thornbeck Avenue and Mayfair Close.
- 28th. Pray for lifeboat crews and mountain rescue teams.
For the people of Windermere Road.
- 29th. Pray for teachers and students taking exams this summer.
For the people of Gorse Lane and Orrell Hill Lane.
- 30th. For the Scriptures and the Hightown skies. Also our lovely family, friends and neighbours. We give thanks for all your blessings.
For the people of Riverside.



War or Peace

By Michael Cudby, Church Warden



Hightown is 2,000 miles from West Ukraine, and life goes on here much as it did yesterday and the day before, except the news has moved on. Brexit once dominated the news, to be wrested by COVID 19, now we are being lashed by news of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. There is a ground swell of disgust at Putin's actions to overthrow the Ukrainian government and his determination to destroy the country. He has woken up world condemnation. There is a correlation between Putin's plans with the Nazi movement. Both have no place in a peaceful world.

Where is God in all this? The Old Testament has many stories of God's vengeance to overthrow godless people and His support of the underdog. Jesus, on the other hand, lived by peaceful ethics; love for all was his mantra. The Russian and Ukrainian people belong to the Orthodox Church, loyal to the Pope. We all pray that their church will influence the people to rise up and stop this war.

We in Hightown pray for peace in Ukraine and for safe passage for those families fleeing from the war and a welcome at the end of their journey.

Remembering St. Stephen's Church in your Will

Just before Christmas, someone who used to come to St Stephen's Church years ago, before moving 'down south', passed away. They, generously, left the Church £500 in their will.

It was a joy to know they remembered us.

That week, our 10 year old kitchen water heater, in the Church Hall, broke down. It was the heater that everyone used— boiling water for so many people at so many different events. It cost £600 for a new one, so we used the legacy to buy a new heater and we wrote to the family explaining how their money had been spent.

If you would like to remember us in your will, we promise to use your money for the good of Hightown.

Thank you.
St. Stephen's PCC

Who's Who at St. Stephen's

Vicar	Rev. Jan Ashton (Jan) Jan.Ashton@StStephensHightown.org.uk
Reader	Mr. John Gibson
Wardens	Mr. Michael Cudby Mr. Geoff Bailey
PCC Secretary	Mrs Beryl Howard
PCC Treasurer	Mr. Keith Aldis
Gift Aid Secretary	Mr. Brian Taylor
Safeguarding	Mrs. Sonia Bunyard
Wills and Legacies	To be appointed
Electoral Roll Officer	Mrs Beth Cresswell
Sacristan Team	Miss Hazel Roberts
Health and Safety	Mr. Stanley Alty
Flower Rota	Mrs Hilary Munro
CMS Secretary	Mrs Beryl Howard
St. Stephen's Youth Club	Rev. Jan Ashton
Church Hall Bookings	Mrs Sally Fraser
Focus Editor	Colette Grove: Focus.Magazine@StStephensHightown.org.uk
Focus Advertisements	Val Monchar
Focus Distribution	Mr and Mrs K Bradshaw
St. Stephen's Church Website	StStephensHightown.org.uk

Village Organisations and Activities

Tuesday Group, St Stephen's Hall Tuesday morning 10am	Beryl Howard Jan Branigan
Hightown Friendship Group 2nd Wednesday at 8pm, St Stephen's Hall	Margaret Wear
Gardening Club 2nd Monday St Stephen's Hall 8pm	Hilary Munro
Bowling Club, Sandy Lane	Diana Killen
Hightown Club	Chris Scrine
Blundellsands Sailing Club	Rohan Pickard rohan.pickard@gmail.com Chris Williams Cwill1951@virginmedia.com
Probus Club	Clive Rowley
Yoga Classes, Hightown Club	Rose Billinge
Flower Show	Ian Wear
Open Mic Poetry Group 3rd Thursday 7.30pm, Hightown Hotel	Tony Higginson tonythebook@live.co.uk Sally Anne tapiabowes@gmail.com
Craft Group, Thursdays, 1.30—3.30pm	Sue Taylor
Village Singers, Our Lady of Victories Hall, Mondays 1.30—3pm	Chris Payne payne-c@sky.com
Hightown Parish Council	Jenny Farrar clerk@hightownparishcouncil.uk www.hightownparishcouncil.uk
Chair Fitness for health and balance Wednesdays 11.30—12.30, St Stephen's Hall	Gaynor Mc Hugh

PEOPLE IN OUR PARISH - INTRODUCING THE GREAT BORRINI

After moving to Hightown in June 2020, I am finally taking the opportunity to introduce myself to the local community. My name is **Matteo Borrini**: I came to the UK in 2013 to teach forensic anthropology at Liverpool John Moores University. Before then, I had been a contract professor at the Universities of Florence and Rome, in Italy, my homeland. I also taught at the Papal Theological University "San Bonaventura".



By profession, I am a forensic anthropologist: I reconstruct individuals' lives from an analysis of their bones, helping police and pathologists at the scene of crimes. My investigations could also lead to the repatriation of WWII soldiers and for this reason I have been appointed as an honorary member of the Commonwealth War Graves. Sometimes, my interests take me further back into the past, exploring antique mysteries with modern CSI techniques. Using these techniques, I have analysed an alleged "vampire" from the 16th-century, various mummies including prehistoric and Egyptian mummies, and some dating back to the Venetian plague. Last but not least, I have analysed the Turin Shroud. Indeed, I most certainly am an academic during the daytime, but, in my spare time, I wear the magician's tailcoat and go under the stage name of **"The Great Borrini"**.

I cultivated a passion for magic and illusionism over decades, and have had many opportunities to perform on international stages. Among these, the Fédération Internationale des Sociétés Magiques and the Casino Rio in Las Vegas, in front of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences. I offer the public an enchanting journey into the Victorian era of elegant magic and mentalism with an intellectual touch.

Since 2019, I have had the honour of being the president of Liverpool Mahatma Magic Circle, one of Britain's most historical associations for magicians and illusionists. We currently hold our regular meetings in St Stephens Church Hall.

As **The Great Borrini**, I have supported charities such as COPS, which, in turn, help support the families of police officers who have died in the line of duty. Similarly, I wish to bring a sparkle of magic into our village community, offering my wand to enhance the spirit of Hightown, maybe with a fundraising event to raise money to improve our area.

I am looking forward to meeting all of you in Hightown, waiting for that moment when the stage curtains open and the magic begins.

Best Wishes,

Matteo Borrini

[The Great Borrini is on Social Media \(Facebook, Instagram, YouTube\)](#)
[@thegreatborrini](#)



From Beth's Kitchen

OATMEAL SCONES



I was inspired to pick this recipe for **FOCUS** by a notice in the Post Office window. The season for St Stephen's afternoon teas is beginning. Cakes and scones will be baked, sandwiches filled and fine china set on welcoming tables. The first one has already taken place but more will follow, I am sure, and you may well be encouraged to hold your own at home. This recipe gives you light scones because of the added oatmeal and they go well with crusty clotted cream and strawberry jam.

Ingredients

150g self-raising flour, sifted

75g medium oatmeal

½ tsp baking powder

75g butter, cubed

25g golden Caster sugar

1 medium free-range egg

milk – approx. 75ml

Method

Sift the flour, oatmeal and baking powder into a large bowl with a pinch of salt. Rub in the butter, then stir in the sugar.

Lightly whisk the egg in a measuring jug and add enough milk to make up to 150 ml. Slowly add this to the bowl (you might not need all the liquid – just enough to form a softish dough). Very gently combine with floured hands to shape into a round, place on a floured board and pat down to a thickness of 2.5cm/1in.

Using a floured cutter, cut into 6-8 scones.

Place on a lightly buttered baking tray and brush with any leftover egg/milk in the jug. Bake near the top of a preheated oven (220C/Gas 7) for 12-15 minutes, until well-risen and golden on top. Leave to cool on a wire tray.

Eat when still warm from the oven or leave to cool completely and freeze.

Defrost and reheat before trying them later.

Never mind the calories!

Just Enjoy!



Gurkhas Parade

On 3rd March 2022, seventy two Gurkhas from Recruit Intake 2022 took part in their queen's Gurkha Signals Attestation Parade at Altcar Training Camp. Colonel of the Regiment, Major General JJ Cole OBE was the inspecting officer at the parade.



In accordance with regimental tradition, six newly commissioned Gurkha Warrant officers were, in addition, attested and officially commissioned. Also on the parade square, were pipers and drummers providing musical entertainment for those present.

Lt. Colonel Gordon Black commented:

“It was humbling to have been invited to witness the Attestation Parade. The drill and turnout was immaculate. It has been an absolute delight to host the Queen's Gurkha Signals at Altcar Target Camp for their training, and we congratulate all the young soldiers on their success today. We wish them all the best for the future.”



There was a splendid turnout from Hightown, in spite of the inclement weather. In the absence of their families, so far away, we were determined to support these excellent young men.



Entries for future issues of Focus to be sent to:

Focus.Magazine@StStephensHightown.org.uk

Please submit before the last day of the month.



St Stephen's Church Hall

Next Coffee Morning - towards the Pods

Saturday 2nd April 10am to 11.30am

Easy Fundraising

St Stephens has have been using #easyfundraising to raise FREE donations for the Church when we shop online. We have just been paid! These donations will make a BIG difference and you can help during this difficult time too - it only takes 2 minutes to sign up and 4,500+ shops (including Amazon and Ebay) will donate for free, every time you shop online with them!

Why not visit:

[easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ststephenschhightown/
payments/60537b0af62fd200266cbd30/](https://easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ststephenschhightown/payments/60537b0af62fd200266cbd30/)

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Wills and Powers of Attorney are powerful legal documents. The skill in preparing the right document for your circumstances comes from knowing to ask the right questions coupled with the experience and expertise to draft it correctly; and thereafter ensuring that the formalities of finalising the document are properly adhered to. If you cut corners there is a risk that your loved ones will only discover the problems when it is too late - causing them stress, heartache and unnecessary financial loss.

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Julie Hopkins
Branch Director



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Blundellsands Sailing Club

Established 1907 Hightown



New sailing members welcome!

Whether you are a complete novice to sailing and want to give sailing a try or are an experienced ocean dweller you are more than welcome at BSC.

No boat required!

We sail all manner of yachts up to 30ft in length from moorings in the Alt between April and October. During the winter we fit out our boats in the boat yard with lots of socialising and events throughout the year at our club house overlooking the shore.

If you are interested in joining the club or trying some sailing with existing members, please contact:

Rohan Pickard – Sailing Secretary
rohan.pickard@gmail.com

Chris Williams – Rear Commodore
Cwill1951@virginmedia.com



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