



The Hothouse

An introduction...

We describe ourselves at The Hothouse as a 'small community church', we are similar to a 'fresh expression' of church – introducing people to faith in Jesus, and helping them to go deeper in their faith, in unconventional ways that work contextually. Our building is in the heart of the Redhouse estate, a pocket of council housing in Aldridge.

We meet all kinds of people from different walks of life and experiences of faith on the estate and reach out to them with Jesus' love in both words and action. We love to work in creative and interactive ways, seeking to prayerfully adapt and reimagine our activities and groups in line with how God leads and how we see the community connecting. Below is our current range of activities throughout the year.

Hothouse Sundays – all age worship

At 4-5.30pm on the first and third Sundays of each month (term-time) we have a time of all-age worship together at The Hothouse, often in a style similar to 'Messy Church'. Normally our time together begins with a craft time on that Sunday's theme, followed by a short interactive Bible teaching, and creative prayer response time, then we all have tea together. Some families come together, and we have a small contingent of children from the estate we can accommodate on their own when we have enough team present!

During this time, our small group of teenagers head out to another local space with our youth leader and a DBS'd volunteer to have their own tailored interactive bible study time together, returning for tea.



DIG – women's small group

This small group meets 8-9.30pm fortnightly Mondays during term-time, during which times we catch up on life and explore the Christian faith together. DIG stands for 'developing in God' or 'digging into God' – it's both really!

We enjoy following a course to help our discussions and have done courses such as 'Alpha', 'The Wellbeing Course' and currently 'The Lectio Course'. This group has grown smaller over the years and we are exploring how to better connect with the wider Redhouse community and beyond to offer this space to other women who would appreciate it.

Hot Chocs – community connection time

Thursdays term-time 3-4pm we stand outside the front of The Hothouse and hand out hot chocolates and sweets for free to passers by. This has been a brilliant time of connection with people in the community from toddler age to the older generations, sparking conversations about life and faith and offering us a chance to share about our groups and upcoming events.



Hothouse Tots – toddler group

Weekly 9.30-11am Thursdays during term-time, this group includes free play time, snack time, story time from the Bible and nursery rhymes.

We welcome babies to pre-school age children and their grown-ups who are a mixture of parents and carers, grandparents and child-minders.

This group is a great space for connection with people in the local community, and often leads to further conversations around practical support such as food bank vouchers and small grants, as well as emotional and spiritual, being able to offer prayer and pastoral support.



Hothouse Youth – yr7-11 youth group

This is our group for secondary school young people aged between 11 and 16 (with helpers aged 17-18), taking place on Thursdays weekly during term-time from 6.30-8pm.

We have free form 'hang out' time to begin, with card games, crafts and video games. After this we have tea, have a group game all together, and have a short 'God time' involving a thought about faith shared by one of the team and a chance for the young people to pray in an interactive way if they want to, and a group game all together.

Most of the young people are from our local estate and are from unchurched backgrounds - we welcome those of all faiths and none, encouraging them to engage at the level they are happy to.

Annual rhythms

We have a number of activities which run on an annual basis outside of term-times, partnering with Tynings Lane Church (TLC). These include lunch clubs for Redhouse primary school aged children, a 'Big Camp In' night at TLC for 8-16 year olds, a Christmas Christingle service in 'café style' and our well-loved Walking Nativity travelling from The Hothouse to TLC meeting nativity characters and singing carols along the way. All of these activities involve teaching the Bible in fresh, fun ways, and involve volunteers and community members as much as possible. We also fundraise in various ways where possible, including joining in with the local Aldridge run each year.



Community Support

In addition to these activities, we have a good relationship with our local food bank and are authorised to issue food bank vouchers where needed, and we partner with charity Acts 435 to apply for small grants to support local families in need. Together with Tynings Lane Church we run a uniform bank where people can access good quality second-hand local school uniforms for free.