



When asked where my home is, I tend to give the generic answer of 'the North East'. It's true that I was born here (ex-railway town in County Durham), and that I live here (ex-mining town in Northumberland), but it's much more than that. I have travelled a lot, both within the UK and outside of it. But the North East has, for me, a beauty that I have yet to find elsewhere.

My childhood was predominately spent on an estate very similar to the one in Sunderland where I now work for Unlock. As a family, we had our fair share of problems, as most do. But the biggest thing I remember is how differently we were treated by professionals. People who would come in, determine that my future was already written (and was most definitely bleak), try and 'save us', and then at the end of the working day, leave.

I read something recently about Ministry, and it said that sometimes there is nothing that you can do except hold someone's hand and try to help them find the tiny gold strand that is Jesus, swimming around in the dirty swamp that is life. The professionals from my childhood didn't do that. They saw what was wrong, but very few of them stopped to look at what was right, to build on that, to enable that to grow. The resilience, the amazing sense of community, the strength, the resourcefulness. I look around Town End Farm, and that is what I see.

I live with my husband and two daughters on the coast, with our rather boisterous (and often badly behaved) spaniel. I graduated in 2019 with a degree in Accounting and Finance that I started when trying to discern what it was I was actually called to do and having very little direction. Having now found that, I suspect I will never use the degree for that which it was intended; but let's be honest, with God, nothing goes to waste.

I have a great love of people in all their many forms and spend a chunk of my time running a Parenting Support organisation in Newcastle. The rest of my down time is often spent with friends, 'doing Church'. I help lead a Fresh Expressions team at the Church where I worship, but actually it's just friends learning and growing together. Board games, food, campfires, music are all things that we do regularly, but Jesus is always right there in the centre.