

Living Up To Expectations

It was a case of '*Great Expectations*' fulfilled as the Hogarth Partnership Players took their performance of Jo Clifford's adaptation of the Charles Dickens' novel to each of the partnership parishes, with eight performances over a period of just 11 days. The play entertained more than three hundred people, with audiences giving the cast a standing ovation at several venues.

During the interval, and after the show, the actors were encouraged to mingle with the audience members, which gave people from different parishes the chance to meet and chat together – one of the aims of the initiative. Tickets bought were valid for a performance at any of the venues, enabling a substantial number of people to watch the play away from their usual parish, and make new links.

The cross-parish initiative was the brainchild of director Brian Coady, who invited people from all parishes to take part in the production. The 18-strong cast was assisted by a dedicated support team who organised an ingenious rotating set which gave a clear sense of scene, yet could be cleared and loaded into the van within 30 minutes of the production ending.

The production was also performed on 22nd and 23rd May, at Crown Street Library, as part of the Darlington Arts Festival.