A year-long project allowing people to access live streamed Church of England services on mobile phones has attracted more than 40,000 viewers.
ChurchLive will make its final broadcast on Sunday at The Point Church in Sussex, one year on after the scheme was launched by the Church of England in partnership with Twitter UK.

The project has broadcast a range of church services via Twitter’s Periscope app - from traditional carols to a blessing of the surf at Hove Beach in Sussex and a service in a tent at Glastonbury Festival.

A total of 53 churches have taken part, broadcasting around 60 hours of worship. On average, each service has been viewed on around 750 screens, including mobile phones, laptops and tablets, or at least 40,000 screens over the year.

The churches taking part have come from across England, as well as St Andrew’s, Moscow, in the Diocese in Europe. Viewers have tuned in from all over the world, including the USA, Jerusalem, India, Puerto Rico, Nigeria, Japan, Canada, Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, New Zealand, Russia and Australia, as well as across the UK.

The project has shown the range of worship styles across the Church of England. St Martin in the Fields church, Trafalgar Square, in London, treated its viewers to a traditional carol service featuring spine-tingling performances from their choir.

At St George’s, Leeds, a group were baptised in the middle of a more contemporary style of service featuring drums and an electric guitar. ChurchLive has also broadcast from a tent in Glastonbury, a blessing of the surf on Hove Beach, as well as two baptisms, and four Christmas services.

The ChurchLive Christmas Day service came from St John's, Hoxton, in east London, while Easter Day was broadcast from St Mary's, Reigate, Surrey. Services have also come from Hull, Plymouth, Grantham, Norwich, Canvey Island, Ripon Cathedral and Beverley Minster.

ChurchLive was launched in October 2015 as a way of showcasing a range of live church services to global audiences simply and accessibly through the use of smartphones. The project has provided a first taste of worship, prayer and preaching for people unfamiliar with Church of England services.

Alice Beverton Palmer from Twitter UK said, "It's been fantastic to see people from across the world watching the ChurchLive broadcasts on Periscope. The success shows how platforms like Twitter and Periscope can really bring communities together both locally and globally".

The Rev Arun Arora, Director of Communications for the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England said:

"It has been a joy to offer the best of the breadth of services offered by the Church to tens of thousands of people over the past year. We have been delighted by the way churches have embraced the opportunities offered by social media to proclaim the Gospel afresh and to reach new audiences."

The first ChurchLive service was filmed at The Point Church, Sussex, which meets in a school sports hall. The service on Sunday will return to The Point starting at 10:30am which can be watched via https://www.periscope.tv/ChurchLive/

An accompanying blog shares highlights and reflections from some of the churches that have taken part throughout the year.