

THE CHELLINGTON TEAM MINISTRY JOINT PROFILE

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THE CHELLINGTON TEAM MINISTRY

Co-incidental vacancies over the last 2 years have provided a rare opportunity to encourage growth and release rural churches for mission in the Sharnbrook Deanery. The Diocese of St.Albans are allocating 2 full-time stipendiary priests to develop and lead this new venture which brings together 8 churches:

St.Peter's Harrold & St.Mary's Carlton with Harrold United Reform Chapel
(an established LEP known as 'Churches Together in Harrold & Carlton')
All Saints' Odell
All Saints' Turvey²
St.Mary the Virgin Stevington¹
St.Lawrence Wymington with St.Mary the Virgin Podington (united benefice)

Generally active lay leadership has been encouraged and supported over the past 3-5 years, particularly in leading worship and pastoral care. During the interregnums with the support of local retired clergy, the 8 churches have ably maintained regular services and exercised a wider ministry in their communities.

Following a January workshop, led by Sue Blanch of 3D Coaching, the 14 churchwardens and 2 elders, together with the Rural Dean and Assistant Rural Dean, have been meeting monthly to pray and plan in preparation for welcoming the new Team Rector and Team Vicar. Carefully listening to each other, and respecting their differing traditions, they have made a promising start on this new journey of faith, and are now thinking and acting as a group in an honest and positive way.

One example of this is how faced with the challenge of different hikes in their parish share once the 2 full-time clergy are appointed, the churchwardens/elders are not trying to 'defend their patch' but are looking creatively at how the overall increase can be more equitably shared and how those with a relatively smaller increase can help those who will be expected to meet a larger one. The Diocese has offered support and encouragement by offering staged grants to the team of 75%, 50% and 25% over 3 years, from the date the posts are filled.

As part of preparing the Church Profiles the Rural Dean challenged the 8 churches to think about where they want to be in 5 years time. This was shared with PCCs and congregations, and the paragraph below summarises the main points:

Where we want to be in 5 years time

"We want to find ways to grow by working co-operatively where practicable to maximise resources. We want to encourage and support one another while respecting each other's traditions. We want to be a welcoming, active Christian presence in our villages, and to see a renewed ministry to children, young people and families. We recognise the need to be imaginative and creative and we are prepared to embrace the changes that will be necessary to enable us to fulfil our vision."

¹ Turvey and Stevington churches work together on an informal basis, eg. joint service on 5th Sundays

About Sharnbrook Deanery

The Sharnbrook Deanery, within the Diocese of St.Albans, brings together 30 rural parishes in the Borough of Bedford. In the last 2 years, following 5 retirements and the former Rural Dean moving on, several of our parishes have undergone a period of extensive change. Towards the end of 2015 two full-time clergy were appointed to united benefices of 6 and 3 parishes respectively, and in the first quarter of 2016, 2 more full-time clergy were appointed to benefices of 3 parishes each, one with Pioneer Mission experience has been licensed as a Mission Minister.

A new Rural Dean and Assistant Rural Dean were appointed in May 2015, and during the past 2 years the Deanery funded and ran a number of courses and workshops to support local ministry, eg:

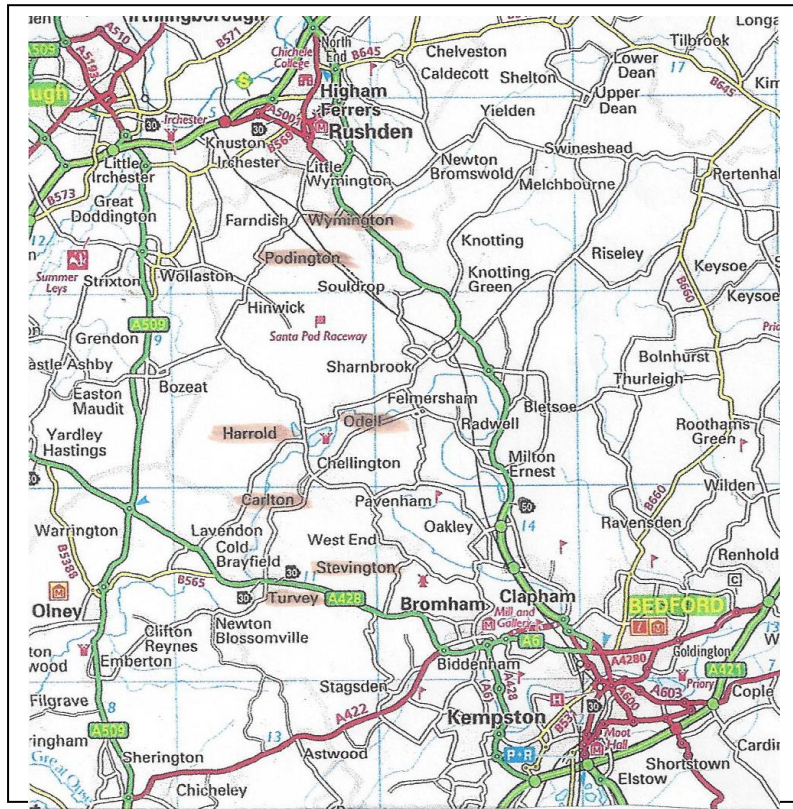
- Basic Principles in Pastoral Care
- First Aid courses led by St.John's Ambulance
- Workshop for churchwardens in Interregnum
- Workshop based on Diocesan toolkit "Where have all our Children Gone?"

In addition, individuals from Deanery churches, including those in the Chellington Team have completed the Diocesan "Lay Leaders of Worship" course, and one person from St.Peter's Church Harrold is in the process of applying for Reader Training.

We enjoy a collegial Chapter and seek ways to work together where practical to share resources, skills and experience. The deanery is currently growing into an enhanced role to develop at deanery and parish level the Diocesan vision 'Living God's Love 2020² - with a particular focus on doing so with generosity and joy, imagination and courage.

² See summary of LGL 2020 on <http://www.odellbeds.net/ChellingtonTeamMinistryVacancies.htm>

VILLAGE LOCATIONS, TRANSPORT, LEISURE etc.



Road Links:

The 7 villages are connected by a network of country roads, with the A45 & A428 to the north and south, and A6 & A509 to the east and west. The M1, A1, A14 are about 20mins drive away, with the towns of Rushden, Bedford, Wellingborough, Olney, Milton Keynes & Northampton within easy reach. Luton Airport is about an hour away, Heathrow about 90 mins.

Trains:

There are regular services to London St.Pancras (35mins), Brighton and Derby from Bedford – including services to Luton & Gatwick airports. For Heathrow take the Bed-Pan line & underground. From Milton Keynes, regular services run to London & Birmingham.

Bus Services:

The villages are served by several local buses which connect them to the nearby towns and to each other. In addition The Villager Bus, operated by qualified volunteer drivers, operates services between the villages and Milton Keynes (monthly), Northampton (twice monthly), Peterborough (monthly) and Olney market (weekly).

Markets & Farm Shops:

Bedford, Olney, Higham Ferrers all have good markets, including a Farmers' Market. Meat, vegetables and fruit direct from the farm are available from several Farm Shops.

Sports and Leisure:

In addition to village sports clubs and activities, there is a swimming pool in Rushden and three in Bedford. Sharnbrook Sports Centre offers gym and other facilities. The Ouse Valley is very popular with walkers and cyclists, and our village pubs offer good food at reasonable prices. There is a strong musical tradition in Bedford and the villages, with numerous choirs providing concerts. The Mill Theatre, Sharnbrook (Sharnbrook Amateur Theatre Trust) produces high-class amateur shows and theatres in Bedford, Milton Keynes and Northampton are within easy reach, or hop on the train for a West End treat. If you want to tread the boards yourself, the Harrold amateur dramatic company 'Ad Hoc' will be pleased to welcome you. There is a choice of several local cinemas, and at Bedford and Milton Keynes cinemas you can view 'live' performances screened directly from London theatres and the Royal Opera House.



THE CHURCHES in the TEAM

‘CHURCHES TOGETHER IN HARROLD & CARLTON’

A Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) was formed in January 2005 following several years of increasing cooperation between the member churches previously informally linked within Churches Together. It comprises the united benefices of St Mary’s Church, Carlton and St Peter’s Church, Harrold within the Deanery of Sharnbrook, in the Diocese of St.Albans, and the Harrold United Reformed Church within the Northamptonshire District of the East Midlands Synod of the United Reformed Church (URC). On formation the partnership was served by two ministers from each denomination but for the past 7 years it has been served by a single Anglican ‘shared minister’.

Our Vision:

Each congregation of the member churches values the opportunity to share resources working alongside and enriching one another in the process. Within Churches Together we celebrate our oneness in Christ whilst recognising our diversity. We believe we can achieve more working together than we could acting separately in our mission to make Jesus better known and understood by our community.

Our Mission Statement:

“We are committed to building relationships with God and each other, the village communities and the wider world through worship and prayer, witness and mission, service and discipleship, pastoral care and spiritual guidance.”

This reflects the Covenant (available on request) agreed to by the LEP’s members on formation, and formalized in its Constitution defining the practical and legal details of the agreement. The LEP is supported by Bedfordshire Ecumenical Committee through which it is accountable to the Church of England and the United Reformed Church.

The person appointed as Team Rector will become the ‘shared minister’ of the LEP, but both Team Rector and Team Vicar may be ‘designated ministers’ of the LEP.

Current Group Structure:

Worship, Pastoral Care, Children & Young People and Mission are the 4 task groups that meet 3 or 4 times a year, and include representatives from each member church, one of whom acts as leader, The shared minister may also attend and/or choose to lead. Each group reports regularly to a ***Leadership Group*** and annually to the Churches Together AGM (held after the Anglican APCMs & URC AGM).

The Leadership Group is jointly chaired by the shared minister and the Lay Chair of Churches Together, and includes a representative from each member church, plus the Churches Together Administrator and Treasurer. It supports the Shared Minister and monitors the overall direction and purpose, vision and leadership of the LEP as it seeks to fulfil its Mission Statement. It also gives and receives feedback from the four task groups and from the member churches.

The Staffing Consultative Group (SCG) meets twice yearly with two representatives from the partner churches, one from the Bedford Ecumenical Committee (BEC), one from the Sharnbrook Deanery, plus a local URC minister and the shared minister. The Group advises on appropriate levels of remuneration and expenses to be paid to the shared minister and the process of specifying and selecting clergy.

Church Administrator (part-time 9 hrs/week) is employed by ‘Churches Together’ to reduce the administrative load and support the shared minister and the LEP groups.

Financial Structure:

The three churches are financially independent each, including Harrold URC, paying its appropriate Parish Share to the Diocese to support the shared minister. The URC also making an additional payment to the Maintenance and Ministry fund of the East Midland Synod of the United Reformed Church. Additionally, each church makes proportionate annual contributions

- to the Churches Together General Fund³ to cover the cost of the shared Administrator, general office expenses and the activities of the task groups.
- to the Ministerial Account to cover the shared minister’s expenses and the cost of visiting clergy.

A Churches Together Treasurer sets a budget and monitors expenditure. Through joint fund raising small surpluses have been achieved on these two accounts to cover future outgoings such as new IT equipment and training. Accounts are independently examined each year and presented to the Churches Together AGM – and are available on request.

Informal link with All Saints’ Church Odell:

‘Churches Together’ enjoys informal links with All Saints’ which is represented in each of the four LEP task groups. Joint activities include Lent Groups, Messy Church, Holiday Clubs, a Walking Group, Patronal services and other events throughout the year.

‘Churches Together’ activities, events & communications⁴

- United (3 Churches) & Joint (2 Churches) Services -some with All Saints’
- Monthly all-age Services + Crib, Christingle, Mothering, Harvest, Remembrance
- ‘Open the Book’ -weekly in both Harrold & Carlton Lower Schools
- Children’s Holiday Club -involving lay volunteers & teenage helpers
- Seniors’ Holiday Club -trips, walks, lunches, concert & skittles evening
- Monthly ‘Walk & Talk’ -walk plus optional pub meal
- 5/6 Lent Study groups -York Courses- led by lay volunteers
- Village Open Gardens -fund-raising for local Charity+Churches Together
- Christmas Tree Festival
- Messy Church -monthly in term-time (suspended in the vacancy)

Publicity/News:

The bi-monthly magazine ‘The Bridge’ is delivered free to every house in Harrold & Carlton and Odell. As well as church news both Parish Councils and the Bedford Borough Councillor contribute articles – copies of the magazine are available at [\[e-link\]](#)

Church Services and events are listed in the Village Diary and in the Churches section of the Harrold Village website www.harrold.info

Safeguarding:

Churches Together are fortunate to have the expert services of its own Safeguarding Co-ordinator who ensures those involved are compliant with and registered by both the URC and the Church of England agencies responsible. The Co-ordinator has provided detailed guidelines for all those dealing with children and adults.

‘Churches Together in Harrold & Carlton’ – Normal Pattern of Services		
St.Peter’s Church, Harrold	9.30am Parish Communion	1st, 2 nd & 5 th Sundays

³ An additional voluntary contribution is received annually from All Saints’ Church, Odell

⁴ These LEP joint activities/events are in addition to those of individual churches - see further profiles

	11.00am All Age Worship (45 minute service, lay led or can incorporate a baptism)	3 rd Sundays
	8.15am Holy Communion	4 th Sundays
Harrold United Reform Chapel	10.45am Worship Service following the non-conformist URC tradition	weekly (except when there is a HC service)
	10.45am Communion	monthly
St.Mary's Church, Carlton	8.15am Holy Communion	1 st Sundays
	11.00am All Age Service in the Village Hall	2 nd Sundays
	9.30am Sung Eucharist	3 rd , 4 th & 5 th Sundays
<p>Midweek Holy Communion Services on Wednesday mornings held at St.Peter's (monthly) and St.Mary's (monthly)</p> <p>Morning Prayer 10.00am on Mondays held at Church House, Carlton</p> <p>Joint services held throughout the year alternate between the LEP churches</p>		



Electoral Roll/Membership/usual Sunday attendance figures			
	ER	Usual.Attend	Easter/Carol Service
St.Peter's Church, Harrold	43	20	29/59
Harrold United Reform Chapel	17	14	19/30
St.Mary's Church, Carlton	67	30	37/108

The Future:

Churches Together in Harrold and Carlton is, to our knowledge, the only LEP within the St Albans Diocese and the URC East Midlands Synod that anticipates being served by two Anglican clergy. This will make us unique, presenting challenges as well as opportunities. We see an exciting time ahead when the Team Ministry will need to show willingness and flexibility, respecting our different traditions, to try new ways of working collaboratively to stimulate growth and enhance our ministry to children and young people. These are reflected in the following pages describing the three churches in the partnership.

ST.PETER'S CHURCH, HARROLD MK43 7DG
ER 43 Population 1,700

Worship and Tradition:

Everyone is warmly welcome at our services. The church has a new set of altar frontals in the full range of liturgical colours, designed by one member of the congregation and made by another. Communion Services (Common Worship) vary with the seasons and we normally use The New English Hymnal. Bibles (NRSV) are available in each pew. Joint Pew Leaflets are e-mailed every Friday plus hard copies in church, to allow the congregation to follow the Collect, readings, other hymns etc. Many lay members serve as sacristans/crucifers, servers, chalice administrators, bible readers, intercessors and sidespersons. Two people have completed their training on the Diocesan course to be Lay Leaders of Worship. The Peace is actively and enthusiastically exchanged at most services. There is an obvious atmosphere of love within the congregation which expresses itself both in support of one another and in welcome to newcomers and visitors. Refreshments are served after every Sunday service.

A number of families with young children attend the monthly All-age service, as well as Mothering Sunday, Christingle, and Christmas Crib and Carol services. There were 3 baptisms and a wedding in 2015 and a joint Confirmation Service for young people from St Peter's and neighbouring parishes.

The organ, a typical single-manual village church instrument of 1869 is supplemented by a new electric piano donated a few years ago. Playing of the organ is shared by two members, with 2 or 3 others in reserve. Some members of the congregation sing in the united choir that is assembled for special occasions.

Children and young people:

Activity bags for children to use during a service are always available, but at present we do not have any other activities or clubs for children, due to current lack of numbers. It is hoped we can revive the Sunday Club which used to operate a few years ago.

Pastoral Care:

In addition to the 'Churches Together' Pastoral Care Group, Parish Contacts take responsibility for keeping in touch with everyone on the Electoral Roll. Many members of the congregation regularly visit the housebound, the elderly and people in trouble and two people take home communion to the housebound. Members also help with the monthly Lunch Club at the URC.

Social programme:

Recent social activities have included coffee mornings, the harvest lunch, teas and guided tours of the church, a mystery hunt round the village and special events such as a Wedding festival and a Flower festival.

Our Church Building:

St.Peter's is a Grade 1 listed building, with some parts dating from the late 12th century. Unusually, the church has no south door, the main entrance being through the west door. There is enough seating for about 200 people and space for temporary seating for

a further 50. The land to the south side of the church, which used to be part of the Hall garden, was registered by the PCC a few years ago as belonging to the church and is used for a variety of church activities during the year.



Over the past 30 years about £250,000 has been spent on improvements and repairs, including stonework repairs and refurbishment of windows. A new heating system has been installed, re-wiring completed, new lighting and a modern sound system added. A new toilet and kitchenette with disabled access have greatly enhanced the capacity for events such as Harvest lunches, concerts and exhibitions. St Peter's is now dry, bright, clean, warm and well-lit with the new facilities encouraging fellowship between members of the congregation and visitors after services.

Bell ringing and the Churchyard:

The church is served by a joint Carlton/Harrod band of bellringers who ring on Sundays with one of the Carlton ringers as Tower Captain.

The Churchyard is full and was closed to new burials about 50 years ago. It is well maintained by Harrod Parish Council as is the adjacent village Cemetery.

Finances:

Over the last 3 years St Peter's has received staged Diocesan grants to help meet their Parish Share but is planning a stewardship campaign and aiming to meet its 2016 Parish Share in full. This means there is little to spare for direct giving to charity, but the profit from the Harvest Lunch goes to the Bishop of St Albans' Harvest Appeal and a St. Martin's Basket put out every Sunday is regularly filled with food and gifts for a Women's Refuge in Bedford. Members of the congregation also take an active role in fund-raising for Christian Aid and the Children's Society.

Churchwardens and PCC:

The Churchwardens normally serve for 3 years. The PCC has 7 members in addition to the shared minister and the two Churchwardens, and meets 4 times a year.

Friends of St Peter's:

This charity was set up in the mid-1980s to raise the large sum of money urgently needed to finance the rebuilding of collapsed stonework. At present it accumulates about £1500 p.a through subscriptions, occasional donations and sale of merchandise.

Hopes for the Future:

We want to grow our church by increasing our involvement with children, young people and their families. We want to be more effective in our stewardship, not only to improve our financial position, but also to encourage greater involvement by our congregation.

HARROLD UNITED REFORM CHURCH MK43 7BJ

Membership 17

Worship and Tradition:

Preaching the Gospel by Dissenters in Harrold is recorded from 1774. Sometimes meetings took place on the village green, or in a barn lent by an Anglican surgeon. Today our worship follows the URC's non-conformist tradition; members commonly reading lessons and offering intercessory prayers. We use the URC's "Rejoice and Sing" and "Mission Praise" for hymns, accompanied by a Clavinova which replaced the traditional organ in 1997. Monthly Communion Services are led by an ordained Minister, two Elders serving the sacraments to the seated congregation and all eat and drink together. If an ordained Minister is not available a nominated and authorised lay person officiates.

Decisions on important issues are made by the church members at Church Meetings. The Elders, who have overall responsibility for running the church and meet quarterly, are elected by members and serve for a 3 year term but may be re-elected for further terms. Elders welcome visiting clergy, offer vestry prayers before the service and arrange collection of the offertory, including a weekly contribution to the "MITE" scheme providing sachets to Third World children to prevent de-hydration. Over the last 10 years Harrold URC has donated over £2,500 to this cause representing over 8,000 sachets.

Children and Young People:



The Church has long been committed to working with children and young people and has been recognised by the URC as a Child Friendly Church. We have excellent facilities and an extensive stock of resources. For the last five years we have hosted and assisted in the development of a monthly after-school Messy Church run as an LEP activity in association with Odell. We have also shared in the planning of the LEP's Children's Summer Holiday Club and hosted it for the past three years.

Pastoral and Social Care:

In addition to the LEP Pastoral Group, each Elder cares for designated members in need.

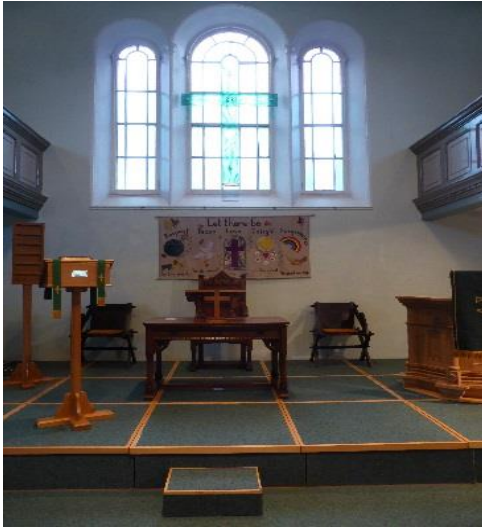
With support from the other churches, we offer activities on 4 Tuesdays each month as part of our Care in the community:

Coffee mornings – home-made cakes etc.
Lunch Club for Senior citizens living alone
Open Lunches – popular & affordable
Tea Meeting – guest speaker & afternoon tea



Our Church building:

Built on donated land, and with 'the pence of the poor people' a chapel opened here in 1808. Following a complete refurbishment in 1998 we have a well heated, carpeted building, facilities for the disabled, a modern kitchen and an adjoining schoolroom. The premises are let out most days to non-church organisations.



URC Anniversary Service

Finances:

Through regular gift aided giving, normal collections, fund raising events and rental income we make full contributions to the Maintenance of Ministry fund of the East Midland Synod of the URC and also to the funds of the Diocese of St Albans. The latter has covered our contribution towards the stipend of the shared Anglican priest and to the running costs of Church House in which the URC has a ~10% financial interest. In 2014 we contributed £1884 to the URC funds and £10536 to Diocesan funds. In addition we gave £2145 to Churches Together to cover ministerial expenses and the cost of the LEP's Church Administrator. Altogether our contribution to these funds amounted to 60% of our income in 2014. Accounts are available on request.

In addition we support a number of charities. At Christmas we give toys and a donation to the local "Spurgeon's Child Care" and after Harvest Festival and at Christmas we give food and a donation to "BECHAR" (Bedford Charity for the Homeless and Rootless) Our annual Easter and Christmas Fayres and occasional concerts raise money to supplement our regular income but despite this it has become impossible to meet our costs over the last few years. We have no outstanding loans or debts but need to complete some significant building repairs in the near future and so are increasingly dependent on our declining reserves. We hope to increase our income from renting out the School room and Chapel to eliminate the current deficit.

Hopes for the future:

Our aim is to engage with and serve the wider community particularly those new to the village. We hope to increase our outreach particularly to children and young people and their families and to increase our membership. We wish to continue to strengthen our spiritual growth within the wider Church fellowship offered by Churches Together and the Team Ministry proposed for our area.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, CARLTON MK43 7LD
ER 67 Population 900

Worship and Tradition:

Services at St Mary's centre on the Eucharist using Common Worship. The incumbent wears cassock-alb and stole. A less formal approach to vestments is taken for the all-age services in the Village Hall (about 6 times a year). Lay people administer the chalice, read lessons and lead intercessions. There are teams of sacristans, servers, sidespeople, cleaners, churchyard mowers and flower arrangers.

Music plays an important part in our worship and adds considerably to the quality of our services; we use a sung setting for the Eucharist comprising Gloria (or Kyrie), Sanctus, Benedictus and Agnus Dei. There is a choir which sings about once a month and for major services and festivals; choir members also help by leading the singing at services where there is no formal choir. A service of lessons and carols is held on the evening of the Sunday before Christmas.

The congregation comprises a wide range of ages from families with young children to several people in their 90's, with the majority over the age of 50. Our numbers have remained steady over the last 5 years, with losses due to death or relocation being replaced by new members.

Pastoral Care:

Pastoral Contacts, mainly PCC members, keep in touch with everyone on the Electoral Roll, and two people take communion to the housebound. Two of our members are part of the 'Churches Together' Pastoral Care Group which meets regularly to coordinate care activities in the two villages.



Social activities:

In addition to participating in the shared activities of 'Churches Together' we hold coffee mornings in people's homes, a Christmas Bazaar and a bi-annual art exhibition.

Our Church Building:

Carlton church was first mentioned in 1206, when Gerinus de Leigh held the right to appoint the priest. By that time the church had already been standing for 250 years. With Saxon origins from around 950AD, the building as we see it now was completed by the end of the 15thC.

Today our church is well-maintained and in good condition, made possible by constant care and attention over many years. The exterior stonework has been extensively restored, also the north and south aisle roofs. Following two incidents of lead theft, the roof coverings of the porch and the nave were replaced with stainless steel.

In the last 15 years, a Millennium Window has been installed, a toilet with disabled access has been built adjacent to the south door and refreshment facilities have been introduced in the vestry to allow refreshments to be served on suitable occasions.

St.Mary's church is located a short distance to the west of Carlton, but Church House (formerly the Rectory) is a modern house in the centre of the village.



Bell-ringing

The six bells are rung regularly and to a high standard for services and for weddings.

The bell ringers also ring for services at St Peter's Harrod and at St Peter's Pavenham (about once a month).

Finances:

Currently 41 members contribute via a gift-aided stewardship scheme. Our Parish Share is currently £22140; historically we have always met this in full. We make regular donations to charities from our PCC funds and from collections at special services during the year (£1350 in 2014). A copy of the accounts are available on request.

Emmaus:

Emmaus is an organisation that helps homeless people to help themselves. Emmaus Village Community, Carlton opened in December 2001 on the outskirts of Carlton. The companions earn a living mainly by recycling donated goods and they run a furniture shop, a bric-a-brac store, a boutique and a Bistro offering home-made meals, cakes and snacks. The community maintains strong links with St Mary's church and its members. Details can be found via www.emmaus.org.uk/village_carlton

Hopes for the Future:

To maintain St Mary's as a central part of village life serving both our congregation as well as the wider community. We wish to continue to grow our links with the village school; we see this as a potential route to involving more young families in the life of St Mary's.

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, ODELL MK43 7AA
ER 37 Population 300

Worship and Tradition:

All Saints' is a welcoming church offering services which range from the informal to BCP. We want to enable people to worship God, hear his word for today and grow in faith. We seek to take God's love out to others through being actively involved in village life, strengthening good relationships and providing pastoral care. Lay leadership is encouraged and enabled - church members read the lessons, lead intercessions, choose hymns, assist with chalice and home communion, and 3 people (including both churchwardens) have been trained in leading non-eucharistic services.

We also enjoy the regular services of Rev'd Dr. John Weaver, a lecturer in Practical Theology, former President of the Baptist Union and chair of the John Ray Initiative connecting Environment, Science & Christianity who came to live in Odell in 2014.

		Usual attend.	Easter/Carol Services
'Worship Together' informal/flexible/ interactive	1 st Sundays	21	27/72
BCP Holy Communion	2 nd Sundays	20	
Morning Prayer (CW) sometimes lay-led	3 rd Sundays	19	
Holy Communion (CW)	4 th Sundays	19	
Holy Communion (CW)	5 th Sundays	19	



Children and Young People:

Until October 2015, church members helped to lead Messy Church, a joint activity with 'Churches Together in Harrold and Carlton'. Only a handful of children live in the village, so there is no regular Sunday School, but we have a well equipped children's corner in church and when children do come to church at festival times, or at marriage and baptism services, they are made very welcome. One young person was confirmed in 2015 and some church members help with 'Open the Book' in Harrold and Carlton Schools.

Pastoral Care:

Several church members have completed the Diocesan course 'Principles of Pastoral Care' and share the church's pastoral and prayer ministry, keeping each other regularly updated. Home Communion to the housebound is available on request.

Activities and Events:

- Meeting Point – a thriving ladies bible-study/prayer/fellowship group on alternate Wednesdays
- Café-in-the-Tower/tower trips – a popular visitor attraction & fund-raiser runs twice a year
- Harvest Supper/Lunch – usually supporting Bishop's Harvest Appeal.
- Art Exhibition – bi-annual fundraiser, very well supported
- Churchyard work-parties – approximately 3 a year, with other volunteer help.
- Fairtrade Café – Traidcraft craft and food stalls, light refreshments occasionally in the Village Hall
- Occasional Concerts
- Odell Fete & Dog Show – annual community event, involving many people from village and raising money for the church fabric



Our Building:

All Saints' Church is a 15thC Grade 1 listed building, largely unrestored and described as 'charmingly atmospheric' by Simon Jenkins in *England's Thousand Best Churches*. Regular maintenance ensures that quinquennial inspections have not identified any necessary major work, but parts of the stonework will require attention before long.

In 2010 work to install running water, drainage, a new tea-point and disabled toilet within the existing building was completed and paid for, enabling us to run Café-in-the-Tower, concerts, exhibitions and other events throughout the year. A generous donation in 2013 enabled us to install a new clock-winding mechanism removing the need for manual winding. A team of church members and others regularly clean and care for the church and arrange flowers. People from the village who do not attend church regularly but have long-established links with the church and churchyard also assist with these duties.

The six bells, restored 52 years ago, are rung for some of the major festivals and for weddings. We would like to recruit more ringers so the bells can be rung more frequently.

Odell shares a bi-monthly magazine with Harrold and Carlton 'The Bridge' keeping us up to date with local church and village news and events – this is delivered to every house in the village by church and village volunteers.

Churchyard:

The Churchyard is open for burials, and is regularly mown by a local contractor. Mowing is managed through the year to protect and nurture the wide diversity of flora and fauna. The churchyard is a registered County Wildlife site and won a CPRE Silver Award for managing a good balance between tidy and natural areas. There are two memorial gardens and we have an 'adopt a grave' scheme for the older graves which would otherwise be neglected.

Finance:

The financial position of the church is good and to date we have always been able to pay our Parish Share in full and meet the normal outgoing expenses. Income from the annual Village Fete contributes to the Fabric fund which will be needed for future maintenance. We have healthy funds on deposit. Each year we donate 5% of our income to a number of charities, as well as other one-off donations made during the year. A copy of the accounts is available on request.

Churchwardens, PCC and Electoral Roll:

The present Churchwardens have served for many years, but are elected annually. There are 12 PCC members including the 2 churchwardens and 2 Deanery Synod reps. There are 37 on the ER, 19 of whom are resident.

Future:

We want to be an active, country church with a congregation that covers all ages and is at the centre of village life. We are willing to think outside the traditional confines of the CofE and to have a more flexible attitude towards liturgy and procedure.

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, TURVEY MK43 8EP
ER 91 Population 1,200

Worship and Tradition:

Common Worship is used for the weekly Sunday morning Eucharist, BCP for Evensong, and a monthly service of Holy Communion, Lay people read lessons, lead intercessions, serve and assist with chalice and refreshments are always available after morning service. Attendance on special occasions such as Remembrance Sunday, Easter and Christmas averages around 150.

		Average Usual attendance	Easter/ Carol Services
Parish Eucharist at 11.00am Evensong 6pm	1 st Sundays	46 7	62/150
Parish Eucharist at 11.00am Holy Communion (BCP at 6.00pm)	2 nd Sundays	46	
Family Eucharist at 11.00am Evensong at 6.00pm	3 rd Sundays	51 7	
Parish Eucharist at 11.00am	4 th Sundays	46	
Joint Service 'Together at 10' with Stevington at 10.00am	5 th Sundays		

All Saints has a strong tradition of music, which forms an important part of Sunday worship, Easter and Christmas services, as well as weddings, funerals and baptisms. There is an organist and a four-part robed choir of around 20 members. The choir has recorded two CDs; a recording of Stainer's "Crucifixion" and Allegri's "Miserere", and, for Christmas 2015, a CD of Christmas Carols. In 2012 All Saints hosted a West Gallery choral workshop with the help of the Bedford Gallery Quire, and more recently held a service featuring West Gallery hymns and music. A recent substantial bequest, for the purpose of renovating the Hill organ, will enable us to attract visiting organists to give recitals and draw more people to the church.



The Little Lights' Rainbow

Children and Young People:

Family services use a contemporary and innovative approach tailored to the needs of young families. Little Lights, a group for pre-school children meets monthly and Festival workshops for Key Stage 1-2 children are held quarterly. Uniform groups attend church parade twice a year.

An enthusiastic team of over 20 bell ringers includes 10 aged under 18, who won the 2015 Bedford District Young Ringers Competition.

Turvey Lower School (which is not a Church school) has been regularly visited by our previous vicars and the school Harvest Festival and Nativity Play are held in the church.

Pastoral and Ecumenical:

Pastoral care, such as hospital and home visiting, is currently done on an ad hoc basis when members are known to be ill or bereaved, and at Christmas with the gift of a plant. A well-attended monthly lunch club, brings together older people from church and the local community and is much enjoyed.

All Saints enjoys a close relationship with a Roman Catholic Order of Benedictine monks and nuns who have been based at Turvey Abbey since 1981. Several of their number attend All Saints' festal services and some members of All Saints attend Lent and Advent groups at the Abbey. Some couples, where one partner is Roman Catholic and the other is Anglican, attend services at All Saints and the Abbey.

Our Building:

The church of All Saints, situated in the heart of Turvey, is a fine, Grade 1 Listed Building featured in Simon Jenkins' book "*England's 1000 Best Churches*". The original building dates from Saxon times and is mentioned in the Domesday Book. Over the centuries it has been added to, with considerable extensions and renovations completed in the 1850s, with the eight bells were added over a period of time.



The Nave



West Gallery Workshop

In 2007 a small kitchen and W.C. were installed at the base of the bell tower. In 2013 the church was entirely re-lit and the medieval wall painting in the south aisle also underwent conservation work at the same time. Repair of the South Aisle roof and the recent improvements to the tower access and repairs to the church clock are all part of the continuing maintenance programme to ensure that the church is available for a wider congregation for church services as well as for concerts and other events.

The assets of the PCC include the Manor Room in the centre of the village, which is used for small functions and meetings. It is, however, in need of extensive work to bring it up to a standard which would make it suitable for wider use.

Finance:

The PCC and Church members work hard to meet the Parish Share by means of fund raising social activities such as monthly coffee mornings, a Christmas bazaar, cream teas during the summer months and other events. Regular income is provided by church

collections, an envelope scheme and Gift Aid. The Church donates annually to numerous selected charities and “adopts” a charity each year, for which funds are raised throughout the year. A copy of the accounts is available on request.

PCC and FRIENDS:

The PCC consists of two Churchwardens, two Deanery Synod representatives plus ten elected members including the Secretary and Treasurer. Meetings are generally held monthly and sub-groups are appointed as and when needed.

A Charitable Trust, Friends of All Saints Turvey (FAST) raises funds independently of the PCC for major works of repair and has contributed to repairs to the nave roof and the provision of the kitchen and W.C with disabled access.

A monthly **Church Newsletter** is also produced and distributed to subscribers, with additional church information also provided via the village magazine, Turvey News, distributed quarterly to every house in the village.

Turvey Mysteries:

In 2014 the first of Tony Harrison’s cycle of mystery plays, ‘The Nativity’ was performed in church, followed by ‘The Passon’ in 2015.

We are now preparing to present the third in the cycle, ‘Doomsday’ in October 2016. The cast and crew were all local volunteers, many of whom had never acted before.



Looking Forward:

Turvey is a very active village and the church is at its centre in both spiritual and physical terms. While Church life is alive and well and continues to attract members from within and without the village, we are not complacent and are committed to reach out to younger parishioners and children in the community. We recognise our need to grow spiritually and to review our Mission Action Plan to provide more opportunities for regular prayer, bible study and discipleship groups.

Plans to re-order some of the pews in the church are in hand with the aid of Heritage Lottery Funding, in order to provide a versatile area to accommodate children, young people and adults for a wide range of activities, and this will provide a dynamic approach to the provision that we are able to offer our young people.

More information about All Saints can be found on the new church website www.allsaintsturvey.org.uk, which has more about services, church groups, a guide book and an events calendar.

ST.MARY the VIRGIN, STEVINGTON MK43 7QB
ER 43 Population 600

Worship and Tradition:

With the help of retired clergy, Holy Communion (Common Worship) is celebrated every Sunday morning except for the fourth Sunday in the month which is devoted to Evensong (BCP) led by members of the congregation. Where there are five Sundays in the month, a joint service is held with Turvey.

Festival services and Mothering Sunday are better attended. Christmas services include Dressing the Crib, Nine Lessons and Carols, Christingle, Midnight Mass and Christmas morning Eucharist. Remembrance Sunday Services are held around the War Memorial in the Churchyard. By tradition, the Baptist Minister conducts this service on alternate years. A bagpiper accompanies a brass band in the service. We have three servers, three organists and five sidesmen who operate a monthly rota and lessons are read by church members. Sunday morning services are rounded off with coffee and chat, organised by a rota of helpers. Our 5 bells are usually rung on Sunday mornings by a small but enthusiastic team of bell-ringers, and as required on other occasions. For major festivals and other special occasions, the choir meets and is able to draw on a number of the congregation and others from the community to assist.

Most of the congregation are over 50, with one or two children attending occasionally, but the number of children attending on special occasions is a little more encouraging. The young people enjoy the traditional Easter Sunday Egg Hunt in the Churchyard and Christingle, but we all agree that there is a need to encourage and promote families to participate in services and activities.

		Average usual attendance	Easter & Carol Services
Holy Communion (CW)	1 st Sundays	16	42/66
Holy Communion (CW)	2 nd Sundays	16	
Holy Communion (CW)	3 rd Sundays	16	
Evensong (BCP)	4 th Sundays	10	
Joint Service 'Together at 10' with Turvey at 10.00am	5 th Sundays	32	

Community and fund-raising events are always popular and well-attended eg. Open Garden Teas, Harvest Supper and children's activity events such as baking, making and wildlife days.

Well Dressings:

Both children and adults enjoy working together to create these, in preparation for our Patronal Festival in May.





Our Buildings:

The Church of St Mary the Virgin is medieval, Grade 1 listed and rich in history. The lowest section of the tower probably dates from the early 10th century. The church roof and a second stage to the tower were raised in the 15th century. Restoration work was carried out in the early part of the 19th century. A toilet and kitchen were added recently, allowing increased opportunity for events to be held in church.

The peaceful Churchyard is well maintained and is rich in wildlife. An extensive ecological survey has been carried out and wildlife areas are encouraged. Set within the Churchyard wall is a mediaeval Holy Well, originally attracting pilgrims for its healing properties. 2015 saw the completion of a Memorial Garden which is now in use.

The recently refurbished Victorian Church Room has toilets and a new kitchen funded by Friends of St Mary's. Situated about 350 yards from the Church, the Church Room is regularly used for Church events such as the Harvest Supper, Children's Activity days and Frugal Lunches throughout Lent. As well as housing the Community Shop, an active WI meet there monthly, and the premises are also available for private hire such as parties, rehearsals, and receptions. Situated adjacent to the Manor House gardens, refreshments are served in the Church Room when the gardens are open to the public, several times a year with proceeds donated to charities.

Finance:

Giving is encouraged through envelopes, with tax reclaimed under the Gift Aid scheme as appropriate. Donations to mission and charity are made on an ad hoc basis. A copy of the accounts are available on request.

We meet our Parish Share in full, but do struggle to meet the day to day running costs and to pay for the ongoing maintenance of the church. The Parish has received generous bequests in the past, but we know it will be a big challenge to meet the increased Parish Share once the two new clergy are appointed.

Pastoral and Ecumenical:

Although attendance can be low considering an Electoral Roll of 43, the congregation support one another and there is a strong sense of belonging. Members of the Church also provide support and care for people in the community such as hospital and home visiting although it is on a neighbourly rather than a church basis. We recognise this is something the church could engage in more effectively.

Our relationships with the Baptist Church are very good. There are no regular local 'Churches Together' or sharing agreements but we do unite in worship with the Baptist Church on an ad hoc basis.

A regular Newsletter is produced with further information given via the Village Magazine.

PCC and Friends:

The PCC comprises 10 members, plus the ex officio Churchwardens, ranging in age from about 45 to 90. The Council meets regularly, and while there are no sub-committees, various members undertake specific tasks.

The Friends of St Mary's Church, formed in 2010, has successfully raised money for the upkeep of the Church and the Church Room. Membership of this organisation is open to both church and non-church members and has drawn the community together with a number of lively social and entertaining events, such as the Church Christmas Concert. Additionally, some of the Children's Activity days are organised by the 'Friends' group.



Future:

Stevington and Turvey are two separate parishes with their own identities that have worked closely together under the leadership of the previous incumbent. We look forward to working even more closely with a new priest to lead us forward together.

While we are dedicated to maintaining a Christian presence in Stevington, diminishing numbers make that difficult. We would like to be able to involve and encourage families and children more, and to improve our pastoral care. Both PCC and Church members are prepared to address issues in order to enable us to do this.

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, PODINGTON NN29 7HS
with HINICK and FARNDISH
 ER 48 Population 500

Worship and Tradition:

Although we have been without a priest for 11 years, St.Mary's is a very happy and welcoming church with a steady congregation of 20-25 most weeks, and considerably more on major feast days. The tiny village of Farndish (St.Michael and All Angels medieval church, now vested in the Churches Conservation Trust) and the hamlet of Hinwick is also served by St.Mary's Church Podington.

Our tradition is 'middle-of-the-road', vestments are worn and the Sacrament is reserved. Sunday and Festival services are taken by retired priests, or occasionally by the Bishop, or Diocesan clergy without a parish. If no priest is available, an alternative service is conducted by the churchwardens, with members of the congregation leading intercessions. We use the New English Hymnal for regular worship, lay members read the Old and New Testament, and an approved chalice bearer serves at the eucharist.



Pattern of Services			
		Average usual attendance	Easter/Carol Services
Holy Communion (CW)	1 st 2 nd , 3 rd or 4 th Sundays	20	45/150
Family Service	Last Sunday in month	22	

Children and YP:

A small but active Sunday School provides for younger and older children on alternate Sundays, and in 2015 three of the older group went forward for confirmation.

In 2014, with encouragement and help from the Diocesan Children's Adviser, we joined with Wymington Church to run a one-off Messy Church event. Since then, one of our PCC members who is Chair of Governors at the Christopher Reeves Voluntary Aided Church School in the village, together with a PCC member from Wymington Church, has continued to run Messy Church 4 or 5 times a year, with the help of volunteers from both churches.

The Christopher Reeves Voluntary Aided Church of England School, maintains a close relationship with St. Mary the Virgin Parish Church in Podington. Pupils celebrate the festivals of Easter, Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas with services in the Church to which parents and local residents are invited, and there is a leavers' service at the end of the school year. One of our PCC members is Chair of Governors. For more information about the school see www.christopher-reeves-school.co.uk

Pastoral and Social:

Pastoral care is provided by volunteers who visit the sick and elderly. The church is involved in the life of the village through events such as an annual Lent lunch, the Summer Fete, Strawberry teas, a Harvest Supper, concerts in church, and the popular Carol Service.

The American Connection:

An American Memorial to the 92nd Bombardment Group who were stationed at Podington Airfield during the 2nd World War still draws regular visitors to the church. The Group paid for the restoration of the organ in 1980.

Our Building:

St. Mary's is a simple but spacious and peaceful church. Dating back to Norman time, 13th and 14th century additions include a crocketed spire containing a clock and four bells. For safety reasons it is only possible to ring a single bell now. The Churchyard remains open and is regularly maintained by volunteers.

Finance:

Parish share is paid in full and we are able to make some charitable donations. Our main source of income is from church collections, donations and community events. A copy of the accounts is available on request.

PCC:

In addition to the two churchwardens, we have a treasurer and secretary making 12 PCC members in all, and we meet every 6-8 weeks. One of our churchwardens acts as Deanery Synod representative.

Future

We want to be a vibrant, thriving church with a more diverse congregation, and which is an integral part of our local community. We want to attract a younger congregation and develop closer relationships with the local community, particularly with the school. We want to break down barriers between the church and those who think of themselves as non-churchgoers.

ST.LAWRENCE CHURCH, WYMINGTON NN10 9PT
ER 21 Population 1,000

Worship and Tradition:

Our small congregation, typically 15 on a Sunday morning, enjoys a weekly Eucharist (CW) at 9.30am. Vestments are worn, and there is a sacristan and an altar server. The introduction to confession is led by a chalice bearer, who also announces hymns and helps with administration of the chalice at the Communion. Lay members read the lessons, and also intercessions unless these are being led by the priest. If no priest is available to take our service, Morning Prayer is led by a Churchwarden. Festival services attract high attendance, as does the popular annual Pet Service.

Pattern of Services			
		Average usual attendance	Easter/Harvest Remembrance & Carol Services
Parish Eucharist (CW) at 9.30am	1 st 2 nd 3 rd & 5 th Sundays	15	24/45
Family Eucharist (CW) at 9.30am	4 th Sundays	20+	
Evensong (BCP) at 6.00pm	2 nd & 4 th Sundays	7	

Musical Tradition:

Before the service begins, the Veni Creator Spiritus is sung as a form of preparation. The Eucharist is sung to Appleford, except during Advent and Lent when Rutter is used, and we use both traditional and modern hymns.

Children and Young People:

In 2014, with encouragement and help from the Diocesan Children’s Adviser, we joined with Podington Church to run a one-off Messy Church event. Since then, two PCC members, one from each church, have continued to run Messy Church 4 or 5 times a year, helped by volunteers from both churches. Another PCC member helps with the preparation of a high tea to round off each session. It is good to see Messy Church attracting a number of families who have no other church connections.



We are liaising with the Rainbow & Brownie leader about their involvement in Church Parade for Remembrance Sunday and other significant dates.

St.Lawrence Voluntary Aided Church School:

There is a close relationship between the church and the school. Two members of the PCC serve on the Board of Governors and others lead a School Assembly once a month. Church members also assist when the school holds services in the church at Easter, Harvest, Remembrance, and Christmas, and a July school leaver's service

Pastoral, Ecumenical and Social:

The reserved sacrament is taken to the sick and housebound by the Churchwardens.

We enjoy a good relationship with the Wesleyan Reform Chapel in Wymington, who regularly join us for our monthly Family Eucharist, with refreshments served after the service, providing opportunity to chat. We also combine for a Lent Study Group and the Remembrance service at the Memorial. The Bridge magazine (a joint publication from St. Mary's & St.Lawrence's churches) is edited by a volunteer, while others distribute it free to every house in the United Benefice. This regular and successful link between church and village, provides a good source of information about forthcoming events and news from local organisations as well as the two churches. Printing costs are currently covered by a generous donation. Church members are actively involved in the wider community – one as Parish Councillor, another who is Deanery Secretary, as well as Diocesan Synod rep and serving on the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee.

Our Building:

The church of St Lawrence is a medieval church built in 1380 and is mentioned in Simon Jenkins' 'England's Thousand Best Churches'. The tower, which rises to a height of almost 100 ft, contains five bells. There are fine examples of monumental brasses, including a famous one of Sir Thomas Bromflete, who was "cup bearer" to King Richard II. There are three "Doom" paintings over the chancel and adjacent arches as well as traces of other medieval wall paintings. The medieval pews are of black oak and some have unusual pull-out extension settles. The well-kept churchyard is closed for burials

Finance:

Christian stewardship is practised through the envelopes scheme or Direct Debit. St.Lawrence Church regularly supports missionaries/charities – eg. Christian Aid, The Mission to Seafarers, The Children's Society (collection boxes distributed just before Christingle service) and Harvest gifts to the Rushden food-bank. Although historically the Parish share was paid in full, regrettably we have fallen short over the last 3 years.

PCC:

Our PCC of 8 is made up of two churchwardens, a treasurer, a secretary and a Deanery Synod representative. PCC meetings are held bi-monthly.

Future:

We are looking for an evangelist who is a strong leader to help us work more effectively with children, families and schools and to be a presence in the community. We want to achieve our full potential in the service of God, and encourage those on the margins of the church to develop their faith.