

Parish Profile Autumn 2023



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Bishop's Introduction

Jesus said: *'I have come that you might have life in all its fullness'*. I hope these words of Jesus might resonate with you as you read this profile. There is much love and life at the heart of The Bridges Group of Parishes.

Emerging from the pandemic the church family are in good heart with a deeper sense of unity and greater working together. Their shared vision is that the rural church at the heart of their village communities can build on individual local identities, and yet come together in a creative and collaborative 'collective' for serving communities and sharing the Good News of Christ.

There are warm relationships with schools, young parent groups and uniformed groups. Support for a range of mission projects is strong and there are reliable signs of an hospitable and willing church family who desire to use their gifts for mission and set the compass firmly in the right direction to see the gospel reach more lives across these communities.

The group is formed of two benefices that were previously under a single House for Duty Priest-in-Charge. We are now looking for a Priest-in-Charge for each of the benefices who will work closely with the other to further enable the group to flourish as a whole.

These parishes are situated in a wonderful part of the heart of England in which to live and minister.

A new colleague can be confident of finding a deanery with supportive clergy who have a track record of doing mission together, and a diocese that is working towards restored health, new growth from within the life of our churches, and renewed relationships. I commend this post for your prayerful consideration.

With my prayers

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a small cross symbol followed by a stylized, cursive name.

Bishop Ruth Worsley
Acting Bishop of Coventry



Deanery Summary

The Southam Deanery is the smallest Deanery in the Coventry diocese, currently made up of 15 parishes within a six-mile radius of the market town of Southam.

As a Deanery we have a strong focus on mission together, with a number of joint initiatives taking place, from a 'Mega Messy church', to 'Forest Church', and joint worship.

The Deanery chapter is supportive, friendly, and collegiate, and we would welcome new colleagues to join us.

Currently we have 8 of our 15 parishes in interregnum, which has been a challenge for our small clergy team, but we have a wealth of committed and talented lay people who are doing all they can to support their parishes during their interregnums. As I have helped to cover the parishes of the Bridges group I have been warmly welcomed and have greatly appreciated their friendly nature and support in my role as a relatively new Area Dean.

I am in discussions with the new Mission Hub based in Leamington Spa to see what support can be offered as this new initiative develops.

We have recently developed a Deanery plan, but this is currently under review as we wait to see what response we receive to the current vacancies, but the current situation has also been a means of increasing unity.

HS2 has a significant effect on the Deanery as a whole, as we lie directly in the path of the planned route and continuing work has had a major impact on the local environment and regular, sometimes unexpected road closures! We are also experiencing huge changes with new housing developments in a number of villages and Southam town itself, so working together and supporting each other, as well as developing new leaders and exciting new ideas for growth will become even more important.

Our Deanery has some of the most attractive and historic churches in the diocese, which is, of course a mixed blessing, as often small and elderly congregations struggle with the cost of maintenance and development.

As someone who was not expecting to be called into rural ministry I can confidently state that I have found in our parishes and our Deanery places of unexpected opportunity and wonderful blessing, but of course despite the relative affluence of our communities there are still areas of real need, and these are often hidden. We work closely with the local foodbank to support those in need, and often our parishes have close contacts with the farming community.

On behalf of myself, the newly appointed Area Dean, and John Eld, the new Deanery lay-chair, we look forward to new colleagues who will be able to bring their gifts to our small, outward-looking Deanery.

Rev Andy Batchelor (Area Dean)



Introduction and Welcome

The Bridges Group is six rural parishes (two benefices) just outside the small market town of Southam in Warwickshire. We form part of the diocese of Coventry (renowned for its international work for peace and reconciliation) in its south-east corner between Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire. This is the heart of England, served by good rail and road networks. The cultural centres of Stratford-upon-Avon, Birmingham and Coventry are nearby, along with the historic towns of Warwick, Royal Leamington Spa, Rugby and Banbury. The region is a major hub of the motor industry providing excellent employment opportunities. And it's on the edge of the Cotswolds with beautiful countryside around us. Southam and the neighbouring villages are served by an excellent secondary school and good local primary schools.

We are linked by a series of red-brick humpback bridges on the West Midlands canal network, at the junction of the Grand Union and Oxford canals – hence our group name and vision to see people connecting with God.

We are offering two fantastic opportunities for you to mould and develop these new roles to suit your own gifts and skills and we look forward to welcoming and working with you.



The Reconciliation Statue
Coventry Cathedral



Royal Shakespeare Theatre
Stratford upon Avon Stratford



One of the many bridges
across the canals

The Context of the Bridges Group

The parishes in the benefice of Napton, Stockton and Lower Shuckburgh and in the benefice of Priors Marston, Priors Hardwick and Wormleighton came together as a Group in 2009 following the retirement of the Priest In Charge of the Priors Benefice. We have been working with a shared vision and common purpose ever more closely since that time. Experience of running the Group has prompted us to develop a pioneering model, whereby the workload typically borne by a Priest In Charge of a large number of parishes is shared between two House for Duty P.I.C.'s working with the team of lay leaders we have in the parishes.'

We are currently exploring the possibility of becoming two "united parishes" and one benefice is further along this process.

We encourage our church families to see themselves as part of something bigger than their individual parishes, to join together for worship and social events. Increasingly people are willing to travel to the variety of services held and to come together on the 5th Sunday for The Gathering.

We also have joint activities such as prayer meetings, Lent and Alpha courses. We see good support from across the Group for other activities and fundraising events such as Lent lunches, teas on the green, Christmas fairs and concerts.

During COVID19 lockdown we went "online" and made videos which we published weekly for people to get involved in and watch. We found this helped us to stay connected and maintained our focus on worshipping together. One of our parishes has the technology to live stream services but this is something we would want support with if we were to make it a reality.

As a Group of six parishes, we aim to make our administrative structures as effective and robust as possible. We have the Bridges Steering Group for strategic oversight and co-ordination. The P.I .C's would chair the Steering Group meetings in turn. We have regular joint meetings for treasurers, building managers, parish safeguarding officers, children's leaders and the pastoral team (the latter still to be established).

We have a part-time paid administrator. We have a central fund that pays costs such as travel, office supplies, training and conferences, service resources and outreach initiatives. We have also recently conducted a stewardship campaign and introduced new initiatives for raising funds – some with more success than others!

We stay connected with a weekly "Bridges Group News" via email, also available in each of the churches, monthly village magazines, our website and social media.

We have six ancient and very beautiful church buildings, each with their own special characteristics. Some have major repairs or projects underway to make them suitable for the demands of our changing society. We recognise that they are an important part of our heritage and are special sacred spaces at the heart of our communities. In some cases they are the only public building in the village. We see our buildings as an asset, with the potential for being an important part of our mission and ministry in our villages. We are working towards having eco-churchyards and net-zero carbon buildings.

The graveyard in Stockton is partially closed, apart from the Garden of Remembrance. There is a parish council cemetery nearby which is well maintained. The graveyard in Napton is close to full and the parish council is aware of the need to find an alternative site. The graveyards in the other four churches are still open. Each PCC has a policy in relation to who can be buried in the graveyards and closely follow the Diocesan guidelines. Funerals are also held at the local crematoriums – Oakley Wood (Warwick), Banbury and Rainsbrook (Rugby).



Outdoor Gathering at Napton

Summer Fete at Lower Shuckburgh

Plant Sale at Stockton

Our vision and commitment

Our vision is to see more people connecting with God in a deeper way.

We long to continue to grow the core group of deeply committed Christian disciples in each village who will be equipped and released to share their faith effectively, to lead worship, to feed and nurture others and to live out the love of Christ in their daily lives within their own communities and beyond.

Our commitment to worship

We enjoy a wealth of different lay-led and clergy styles and traditions of worship that are inspiring and allow people to connect with God:

- Common Worship Holy Communion
- Evensong and BCP Holy Communion

- Lay-led Worship (contemporary, reflective, family)
- Methodist-led services (in LEP at Stockton)
- Messy Church
- The Gathering on 5th Sundays
- Forest Church

The major festivals and other seasonal services are popular and attract families and large proportions of our communities, including the Advent and Epiphany family services, Christingle services, the Crib service, Carol services (involving the Young Farmers and Women’s Institute), the Easter Carol service, Mothering Sunday, Harvest, Remembrance Day and Bereavement services.

Rural spirituality has a unique character, closely connected to the seasons and the land. We try to use different occasions to encourage people to experience different styles of spirituality. We are currently running Forest Church, drawing in part on “Celtic Christianity” resources.

Part of being a welcoming and inclusive church is the importance of the occasional offices. These are invaluable for building relationships across the generations. They are generally well attended and are an important opportunity to connect people with God.



Messy Church in Stockton



Pet Service in Priors Hardwick



Wedding in Stockton

Our commitment to growing as disciples

We are working with the deanery to help people have the confidence to share their stories about their Christian journey. The activities that we undertake help us grow closer to God, build stronger relationships with each other and help us to be accountable to God and one another:

- a network of home groups
- a pattern of personal and corporate prayer
- special Lent and Advent courses and quiet days
- formal and informal links with other local churches – Stockton is an Anglican / Methodist LEP, and within the wider deanery
- National, Deanery and Diocesan Discipleship courses
- Attending national Christian gatherings online and in person, such as New Wine, Spring Harvest, Greenbelt and Rural Ministries

Home groups are recognised as valuable, safe spaces for sharing, being held accountable, building relationships. They offer an opportunity to pray for each other and to study the bible in more depth together. We should like to encourage more members of our regular congregations to get involved with a local home group or other forms of small group.

Active work with children and young people includes Messy Church, schools through assemblies, Open the Book, Godly Play, Pet Services and festivals/end of year services in church with families.

Although some people in the villages still have a traditional expectation that the “vicar” should be doing everything, we have seen people grow in their confidence as leaders of home groups, children’s groups and Sunday worship. We need to continue efforts to identify gifts and skills, to train and empower lay people into roles currently undertaken by clergy; we have 8 lay leaders who have been formally commissioned in 2023 to lead during our time of interregnum.



Priors School Harvest Festival in Church



Stockton World Day of Prayer



Home Group visit to New Wine

Our commitment to transforming our communities

We encourage building relationships, offering hospitality and being generous. There is considerable goodwill in our villages towards our local churches on which we intend to build. We are increasingly engaging with our local communities outside the church walls, helping to create a loving, caring society where all are valued and included.

Social activities include monthly lunches, afternoon teas, morning coffees, concerts, literary events, Christmas Tree festivals, flower festivals, Christmas and summer fairs, craft sales, plant sales, Knit & Natter groups, children’s holiday clubs and pancake parties.

Our Create & Play and Babes & Tots groups provide invaluable support and encouragement for parents, carers and grandparents.

Our parishes regularly provide gifts, at baptisms and Mothering Sunday along with Messy Church bags at Christmas and Easter. We support several charities – both financially and as volunteers, including the Carriers of Hope (who work with refugees in Coventry), the local Foodbanks and Embrace the Middle East.

Individuals are also involved with many other charities, especially those which support farming communities such as the Addington Fund and the Farming Community Network.

Many members of the church family support and are involved in village organisations, schools, local businesses and personal networks. We have people in each community who help to care for the buildings and churchyards, without necessarily considering themselves to be part of the church family.

We offer marriage and baptism preparation classes to encourage healthy marriages and family life.

We take part in the evangelistic events planned and organised by the Deanery Mission Team, such as concerts with nationally-acclaimed Christian performers, Massive Messy Church and afternoon tea parties hosted by the clergy as a thank-you to all the laity involved in local church life.



Taking donations to the Carriers of Hope in Coventry



Supporting Fosse Foodbank



Syrian refugee visit to Napton

Our commitment to our Priests

- Pastoral support for you and family from the Churchwardens
- Expenses paid for travel and training
- Support with finding alternative occupations
- Support from Deanery via regular supervisions and contact with Area Dean
- Support from Bridges Steering Group to determine the future of our churches together

Our Vicarages

There are two vicarages in the Group. One is halfway up Napton Hill with extensive views over the countryside and Napton waterways, towards Coventry. The other is in Priors Marston next to the school and church. Both are modern houses, with four bedrooms, a garden and separate study.



Priors Marston Vicarage



Napton Vicarage

Our commitment to Safeguarding

We recognise that the care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in church activities are the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of the church. We are committed to:

- best practice that contributes to the prevention of abuse
- promoting a safe environment and culture
- safely recruiting and supporting those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults
- responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- caring pastorally for victims of abuse or other affected people
- caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse or other affected people
- responding to those who may pose a present risk

Further details of our commitment to safeguarding can be found on our website.

Our priorities

To meet the challenges of these commitments, we have been:

- spending intentional time together in prayer and listening to God
- building an effective team of lay leaders and clergy, supported by sound admin structures
- identifying everyone's gifts to equip and release them to serve God
- working on having buildings that are fit for purpose and an asset for ministry and mission

In the future we are looking to:

- unite the Group's activities and organisation to further its core vision and commitment
- establish a consistent network of pastoral support for all our villages and support for those carrying out pastoral visits

We are looking for two people who share our priorities and has the qualities that we are looking for in the Person Specification and Role Description below. We are not looking for one person to have all the qualities listed however we do pray that the two Priests will complement each other skills and abilities and between

you will cover the majority.

Person Specification

Skills & Attributes

- has an aptitude for pastoral relationships
- has an aptitude for leadership
- is good at listening and relating to people from all backgrounds
- is enthusiastic and motivated even when facing challenging situations
- is compassionate and kind towards others and themselves
- works well as part of a team
- has an enjoyment of a wide variety of service styles

Experience of, or willingness to work on,

- bringing people into relationship with GOD
- empowering others to discover their own potential
- creating a discipling community
- working with others for the good of the community
- working in an ecumenical way with the Methodists as Stockton is an LEP
- uniting parishes

Role Description

This is what we hope you will do:

- proactively go out into the community and listen to people
- continue to build on, and make new, relationships within the villages
- lead a wide variety of services to appeal to different people
- visit people for pastoral support
- lead on outreach initiatives to further mission within the community
- mentor, support and encourage the existing team
- foster potential within the villages
- take turns in Chairing the Bridges Steering Group
- work with the other P.I.C. to maintain unity across The Bridges Group

About the Parishes

Napton-on-the Hill and the Church of St. Lawrence

Napton is a hilltop village, mentioned in the Domesday Book (1086). It currently has a population of around 1400 (2021 Census). It is a village full of character and charm with a diverse array of properties, some dating back 400 years. The hill is encircled by the Grand Union and Oxford canals. The canals and the numerous footpaths give people a chance to explore the wonderful countryside.



There are two pubs, a social club, sporting facilities, village hall, and shop (with post office and café) which supplies local and eco-friendly produce. There are two schools: the C of E primary school of St. Lawrence and the Arc – a private school that provides for needs that cannot be met in mainstream settings. The church enjoys being actively involved with life, families and many community activities, held in and around the parish, including the much-acclaimed annual music festival and bike ride.

St. Lawrence's Church dates to the medieval period with evidence of older fabric of Norman influence. It is situated on the top of the hill, alongside the windmill, with breath-taking views. It attracts many birdwatchers as the church is on a migratory route for many birds. It is a delightful, peaceful church, with a strong spiritual presence. It has a variety of interesting features and improvements, including toilets and an area to serve refreshments.

Worship is celebrated in several ways, from Common Worship Holy Communion to lay-led informal worship. We have been running Forest Church in the Churchyard here for over a year, this has been a great success and you can here more about this here: <https://www.coventry.anglican.org/news/celtic-forest-church-at-napton-.php>

There are two active home groups. The church family supports those in need, of all ages, in both the local and wider communities. It has recently taken over the running of the weekly "Babes & Tots" group which meets in the village hall. Various events take place throughout the year to celebrate the love of God, to build relationships and raise essential funds, both in the church and out in the village.

The church welcomes St Lawrence C of E Primary School to special festivals and joint services. Church members also support the school as governors and volunteers in the classroom. We are also starting to make connections with the Arc School and hope to be more actively involved with them as they develop their RE curriculum.



Babes & Tots Summer Club



Messy Church bags



Lent Lunch in Village Hall



Christingle



Harvest Supper

Lower Shuckburgh and the Church of St. John the Baptist

Shuckburgh village is owned by the Shuckburgh Estate. Sir James Shuckburgh, who is custodian, lives with his family at Shuckburgh Hall, Upper Shuckburgh. The church of St. John the Baptist in the Wilderness, next to the hall, is a “peculiar” with services held there by invitation only.



Further along the main road, Lower Shuckburgh has approximately 25 houses plus outlying farms and the church of St John the Baptist. There are no other public places to meet in the village for social events so it is very quiet unless Sir James organizes an event at the hall. As the land and buildings are owned by the Shuckburgh Estate there have been no new builds and most of the houses are tenanted. The children travel to other local villages to attend school.

St John the Baptist Church is situated towards one end of the village. The church was built on the grounds of the previous one, in 1864 by John Croft, for Sir Frederick Shuckburgh. It is a Victorian building featured as one of Pevsner’s “England’s Thousand Best Churches”. Its unique exterior and interior Moorish architectural style attracts many visitors.

There is no car park, but the neighbouring farmyard can be used with permission for bigger events. There is electricity with overhead heaters, but no water or toilet facilities which can be difficult at times, approaches are being made to install water as a first step.

There are three fetes a year at Easter, Summer and Christmas, which are all successful at raising funds for the church. Regular coffee mornings and afternoon teas are also held in support of a cancer charity along with heritage open days for visitors. All are well supported from within the village, local churches and further afield.

Up until end of May 2023 a BCP service with Holy Communion was held every 4th Wednesday at 9am. This attracted a small congregation with attendees from Lower Shuckburgh village. From June 2023 this service moved to every 4th Sunday at 9am. A popular Christmas Carol Service is held on Christmas Eve, attracting people from further afield, and a family service on Easter Day.

The church and village are considered to be a special place, but are struggling to build community through

the church and worship.

Afternoon Teas



Summer Fete



Summer Fete



Stockton and the Church of St. Michael and All Angels (Stockton and Methodists in union)

Stockton is the largest of the six villages with a population of around 1500 (2021 Census) and growing. It is characterised by the 19th century terraced cottages built for the employees of the neighbouring quarry and cement works (the latter now closed) and small estates of new houses. There is a primary school (which is part of the Stowe Valley Multi Academy Trust), shop, pub and village hall. There is a social club, sports club, Scout group, WI, toddler group and other village activities and groups. It has a regular bus service between Rugby and Leamington.



St. Michael's & All Angels Church is situated at the heart of the village. It is in an LEP with the Methodist Church. The origins of the building are probably Norman but the greater part of the building is Victorian, with a wonderful east window. The church was reordered 14 years ago and is now fully accessible, with underfloor heating, lighting, projection and PA systems, broadband, meeting rooms, toilets and kitchen. Car parking is available on the street (although alternative arrangements are made for larger events).

A range of activities take place in the church, including a Knit & Natter group, "Create & Play" baby and toddler group, a weekly prayer meeting and monthly soup lunches. Other events include concerts, Christmas Tree and flower festivals, plant sales, pancake party etc. The building is also hired out from time to time for use by other village organisations.

Our aim is to make this a central part of the community, accessible and used by all throughout the week, not just on Sundays, a true community asset. We have hosted Warm Hubs over the Winter period and continue to provide refreshments free of charge throughout the week, we provide free WiFi as well. We've found people are starting to come in and use the building to meet with friends when the weather is either really cold or really hot.

The style of worship is an eclectic mix of Common Worship Holy Communion, lay-led informal worship, a Methodist-led Holy Communion and Messy Church. We've partnered with Napton Church to deliver Forest Church in the Churchyard there and this has been a great success. The school also comes into church to celebrate the special festivals during the year.



The Knit & Natter ladies with their poppies



Cubs' good turn in the churchyard



Pancake Party

Priors Marston and the Church of St. Leonard

Priors Marston is a growing village of well over 700 people, within easy reach of large towns such as Banbury and Leamington. Its present growth is partly due to its successful school, which also serves Priors Hardwick. It is one of the first Free Schools in the country, set up by the villages when their historic one with 20 pupils was closed by the local authority. Quite a few families have moved into the village to enable their children to attend the school which now has over 80 pupils on roll. The village is materially prosperous, with many professional residents and property is expensive.



Other features of the village are a pub, sports club, and the Priors villages' hall which contains the Post Office and hairdresser. Local activities include the WI, a monthly "Coffee & Chat" run by church members, film nights and a play group. There are no shops or public transport.

Surrounded by its churchyard and high trees, the church is in the centre of the village and its network of pathways, right next to the school, pub and vicarage. Dating from the 13th century, the church was substantially extended and re-ordered in the Victorian era. From the high west tower window, the light now pours in through the glass-screened arch, opened up as part of the interior re-ordering completed in 2012. Though a historical building, it now enjoys modern facilities such as kitchen, toilet and a meeting area designed for a variety of purposes, including monthly round the table "Clean and Chat" meetings, 4th Sunday reflective services and Messy Church.

The church has a Common Worship service of Holy Communion and three varied lay-led services each month. Attendance numbers were affected by Covid but are now rising and special occasions such as Christmas will fill the church, with 20% of the village population in attendance.



Birdbox project



Priors School staff come to lunch



The Oxford Welsh Male Voice Choir

Priors Hardwick and the Church of St. Mary

Priors Hardwick is a picturesque village lying between Wormleighton and Priors Marston, both in size and geography. The houses form a circle around a large meadow, the site of the medieval village, a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The most dominant buildings are the Grade II* stone church, dating from around 1300, followed by the nearby and renowned Portuguese restaurant, The Butchers Arms, which attracts many visitors. Most of the 190 (2021 Census) village residents live in freehold houses, many of them built, like the church, of ironstone and nine of which are also Grade II listed, as is the old red telephone box and seven of the graves and tombstones in the churchyard. In recent years many properties have been bought by young professional families.



The village shares with Priors Marston ownership of The Priors School, The Priors Hall, Priors Sports and Social Club, and Priors Marston & Hardwick WI. The Priors Hall, which was a Millennium project provides, on the first floor, 5 offices which are let to local businesses and provide an important income stream. The Priors School was saved in 1996 when WCC closed it, leaving just the building and playing field which had been provided in 1847 by Earl Spencer “for the advancement of education of the children of Priors Marston and Priors Hardwick”. The villages immediately established a charity-based independent school which ran until 2011 when it achieved recognition - and funding – from the government as a Free School. A Church of England representative from either village serves on the School Board of Governors.

There are several informal groups, clubs and activities in the village. In this small community PCC officers also hold posts of responsibility in the village. The Village Meeting holds its quarterly meetings in the church and the handbell ringing group holds its weekly practices there.

The church holds three services per month and its congregation is supplemented by people from other parishes who come for the traditional BCP services of Holy Communion and Sung Evensong. The latter is lay-led and much enhanced by the two-manual pipe organ which is widely acknowledged as one of the best in the area. The service on the first Sunday of the month is also lay-led, it is usually a shorter form of Morning Worship and includes opportunities for the congregation to take more active roles in leading. Special services to draw in members of the wider community also take place on the first Sunday about four times a year, including an annual Pet Service and Easter Carol Service. The Festival services at Christmas and Harvest are very well attended. Although the church does not yet have a water supply, refreshments are usually served after each service to encourage increased fellowship.

Following the recent Quinquennial Inspection a major overhaul of the building is being planned. This is being seen as an opportunity to re-order the interior to enable it to accommodate more community activities, the local community is very much involved in this project.

The PCC members include mostly active retired people, some with business experience. There are currently no churchwardens but their duties are covered by members of the PCC. In addition the PCC is well supported by teams who look after cleaning, flowers, building and churchyard maintenance.



The village clear-up working party



Pet Service



Summer Fete

Wormleighton and the Church of St. Peter

Wormleighton is a small parish having a population of approximately 100 people occupying some 40 houses of varying sizes which are nearly all from the Victorian era. It is located in an elevated location in the south-east corner of the Diocese, bordering the Peterborough and Oxford dioceses. This attractive and picturesque hamlet has only one modern dwelling and is best described as being a manorial settlement with most of its population living near to the 16th century manor house. The manor was once much larger, being the original home of the Spencer family prior to their move to Althorp.



Most of the land around the hamlet is part of the Spencer property portfolio and is basically divided into two large tenanted farms, plus some smaller independently owned agricultural holdings. The parish demographics change quite regularly as some of the Spencer-owned houses are occupied on short-term rentals. The hamlet is essentially rural and its Grade 1 Listed church is its only public amenity, since the recent closure of the village hall. The nearest shop, doctors' surgery and pub are all about one mile away. The Oxford Canal, which follows the contours of the land, meanders through the parish and draws occasional visitors to the church.

The church is a Grade 1 listed building of significant historic interest, built around 1150. Its many original features have remained unaltered for more than 400 years. Its basic simplicity creates an immediate impression of timelessness.

The church has always relied for its existence on the enthusiasm of a few positive-thinking people who recognise its unique value as a part of a manorial settlement with royal connections and an interesting history. It has close ties with Priors Hardwick and has always had good support from people outside of the parish.

This church's organisation is essentially fragile due to its small parish population and the administration being in the hands of a few - now mostly elderly - people. The essential task is to find successors to those who have devoted much time and effort in keeping this church alive as a centre for Christian and community-related activities.

The monthly service is normally led by the Group's Reader and Parishioners are encouraged to go nearby to Priors Hardwick for Holy Communion.

A considerable amount of money has been raised in recent years for repairs and the modernisation of the building including a new roof, toilet, servery and the installation of an all electric heating system.



Flower Festival



Book Signing



Where sheep may safely graze

How to apply

For informal conversations, please contact:

Acting Archdeacon Pastor, Tim Cockell, on tel: 07983 300675 Tim.Cockell@Coventry.Anglican.org

or

Area Dean, Rev Andy Batchelor on tel: 01926 714295 or rev.andyb@gmail.com

For further details and an application form please contact:

Debbie Niblett, Assistant to the Associate Archdeacon by email to: Debbie.Niblett@Coventry.Anglican.org

An application form can be downloaded from the Diocesan Website:

<https://coventry.anglican.org/clergy-hr.php>

An Enhanced DBS disclosure is required for this post

Appendices

Parish Finances

Income

Income	Lower Shuckburgh		Napton		Stockton		Priors Marston		Priors Hardwick		Wormleighton	
	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
Planned giving	£1,080	£1,080	£8,100	£7,775	£6,900	£10,120	£5,934	£4,146	£4,050	£4,833	£1,120	£600
Other giving	-	-	-	-	-	-	£5	-	-	-	£20	-
Collections at services	£140	£717	£3,060	£7,194	£1,755	£2,859	£1,058	£2,356	£3,683	£3,676	£1,084	£2,348
All other giving	£506	£5,395	£8,764	£3,437	£2,277	£1,550	£25	£3,686	£240	-	-	-
Gift Aid	-	-	£4,246	£3,849	£3,734	£3,115	-	-	£2,624	£1,941	-	-
Legacies	-	-	-	£1,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grants	-	-	-	-	-	£500	-	-	-	-	£3,633	£5,000
Fundraising	£2,062	£2,133	£2,447	£2,875	£413	£741	-	£681	-	-	-	-
Interest etc	-	£11	£2,569	£2,236	-	£48	£4	£2,753	£637	£906	£3	£67
Fees	-	£119	£3,227	£3,540	£2,192	£905	£1,973	£1,238	£746	£1,227	£1,265	£1,506
Trading	-	-	-	-	-	-	£1,133	£1,757	-	-	-	-
Any other receipts	-	-	-	-	-	-	£581	-	-	£548	£1,180	£138
Unrestricted total	£3,788	£9,455	£25,961	£31,270	£17,271	£19,838	£10,713	£13,965	£11,880	£12,986	£8,305	£9,659
Restricted total	-	-	£6,452	£636	-	-	£4,431	£2,652	£100	£145	-	-
Total	£3,788	£9,455	£32,413	£31,906	£17,271	£19,838	£15,144	£16,617	£11,980	£13,131	£8,305	£9,659

Source: Church of England Online Parish Returns System

Expenditure

Expenditure	Lower Shuckburgh		Napton		Stockton		Priors Marston		Priors Hardwick		Wormleighton	
	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
Fundraising costs	-	£102	£320	£221	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mission & charity	-	-	£1,544	£1,980	£123	£453	£149	£309	£205	£1,263	-	£529
Parish share	£630	£1,261	£8,006	£6,820	£3,369	£7,938	£2,500	£6,377	£3,388	£3,000	£1,808	£1,810
Salaries etc	-	-	£470	£845	-	£2,730	£485	£440	£420	£435	-	-
Clergy expenses	-	£375	£2,306	£2,406	-	£564	£2,574	£1,718	£1,067	£750	£542	£542
Church expenses	£1,937	£2,895	£7,006	£3,080	£5,549	£2,880	£1,904	£3,370	£10,109	£2,639	£1,773	-
Utilities	£142	£319	£1,218	£5,923	£1,726	£2,688	£3,021	£1,275	£690	£1,068	£1,256	£1,825
Cost of trading	-	-	-	-	-	-	£1,632	£1,840	-	-	-	-
Major repairs etc	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£4,463	£169	£3,000	£14,690
Other payments	£18	-	£305	£164	£2,451	-	£200	-	-	-	-	-
Unrestricted total	£2,727	£4,952	£18,596	£21,439	£13,218	£17,253	£12,465	£15,329	£20,342	£9,324	£8,379	£19,396
Restricted total			£2,589	£1,300	-	-	£6,719	£722	-	-	-	-
Total	£2,727	£4,952	£21,185	£22,739	£13,218	£17,253	£19,184	£16,051	£20,342	£9,324	£8,379	£19,396
Cash balance *	£2,098	£6,589	£47,269	£56,433	£5,331	£8,209	£36,927	£37,309	£44,785	£48,592	£15,550	£5,747
Investments	£823	£833	£13,231	£11,674	-	£9	£13,976	£14,160	-	-	-	-

Source: Church of England Online Parish Returns System

Statistics for Mission

	Approx population	Worshipping community		Electoral roll		Baptisms		Weddings		Funerals (+ crem)	
		2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
L. Shuckburgh	100	10	10	13	14		1	-			1
Napton	1400	28	18	21	21	1	2	1	2	6 (2)	5 (1)
Stockton	1500	17	15	14	15	5	2	4	1	3 (1)	2
P. Marston	700	18	20	21	21	-	6	2	1	2 (1)	3
P. Hardwick	190	32	35	20	24	1	1	1		2 (3)	2
Wormleighton	100	20	6	10	9	2			1	3	1

Source: Church of England Online Parish Returns System and 2021 Census

Current pattern of church services

	1 st Sunday	2 nd Sunday	3 rd Sunday	4 th Sunday
Priors Hardwick	9.00am Morning Worship Lay-led	5.00pm BCP Evensong Lay-led	9.00am BCP Communion	-
Wormleighton	-	-	-	10.30am Morning Worship Lay-led
Lower Shuckburgh	-	-	-	4 th Sunday at 9am BCP Communion
Napton	10.30am CW Communion	10.30am Morning Worship Lay- led	10.30am CW Communion	5.00pm Alternate Evening Worship / BCP Evensong
Stockton	10.30am Morning Worship Lay-led	10.30am Methodist Service Methodist Minister	4.00pm Roving Messy Church Team	10.30am CW Communion
Priors Marston	10.30am Morning Worship Lay-led	10.30am CW Communion	10.30am Morning Worship Lay- led	10.30am Morning Worship Lay-led

A Map of the Group

