Hedsor, Buckinghamshire

St Nicholas' Church

Parish Profile

The Parish

The parish of St Nicholas' Church, Hedsor is a small rural parish in south Buckinghamshire. The parish is part of the benefice of Bourne End and Hedsor and adjoins the parishes of Wooburn to the north and Taplow to the south.

During the vacancy we began discussions with the Deanery and Archdeacon of Buckingham about the future of the benefice. We discerned that the future of the two parishes of Hedsor and Bourne End probably lay in different directions in the future. With the Deanery and Archdeacon, we continue to explore the possibilities for the future while maintaining the work of mission and ministry within each church and its community. To enable this, the Archdeacon has been appointed Priest-in-Charge of the benefice until the necessary pastoral reorganization is complete.

The Congregation

With such a small rural population the congregation is drawn largely from local villages such as Bourne End, Wooburn and further afield, thus it serves a large outreach area. For a small parish we have a large congregation.

Our services and events are well attended, and many of our wedding couples attend services on Sundays. We place great emphasis on a friendly and inclusive atmosphere to all and try to involve any who wish to play a part in the life of the church, always looking to extend our 'family' by making sure every visitor receives a warm welcome.

We have a gathering immediately after our services which gives everyone the opportunity to chat to regulars and newcomers. There is always a warm buzz and it is well attended; during the summer months it spreads outside. All newcomers are helped to join in and we aim to make the most of this time. At our 9.00am service we average about 28 people.

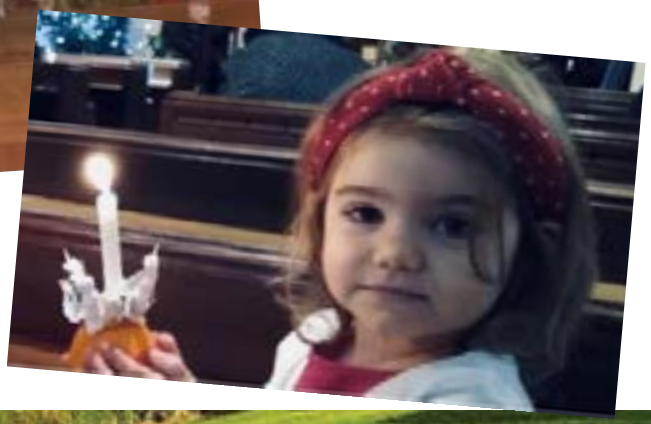
There are members who are very helpful with ongoing church maintenance; people who offer to run fund raising events; and many who help generally. We are fortunate in having the services of two organists.

There are around 30 weddings each year. We regard these as outreach and take great care with them; this also applies to our baptisms There are about 5 yearly and about 3 funerals. In the past we have taken part in Lent courses etc. but this has not been possible during the vacancy. We hold meditation each Wednesday. This brings into the church those who are not regular churchgoers. They come to sit in silence in order to commune with God.

Whilst we appreciate the sacred space of our church and the beauty of its location, we are mindful that we, the congregation, are the church and so our aim is to be concerned with the life of the community whether locally or further afield. We look to constantly reach out to bring the message of Jesus to more people. We attempt to do this by example and by events of a social nature. Whenever possible we open the church on Sunday afternoons in the summer. We found that during Covid many people walked to the church to sit quietly on the benches outside and we pray that the peace they found there brought them nearer to God. Once the church opened after the pandemic, we found that our congregation were more than happy to return and we have endeavored to resume all our pre- covid activities.

Extra services

- An Epiphany Service with musicians
- A programme of Holy Week Services culminating in a Service of Light when we light the Paschal Candle
- Animal Service (prior to covid) perhaps could be resumed.
- Harvest Festival and Harvest Supper
- Remembrance
- Christingle
- Nativity Play



Social events

to reach out beyond our community

Several social events are organized throughout the year by various church members accessing various venues provided by the community. Whilst these were curtailed during covid curtailed we are now beginning to resume them.

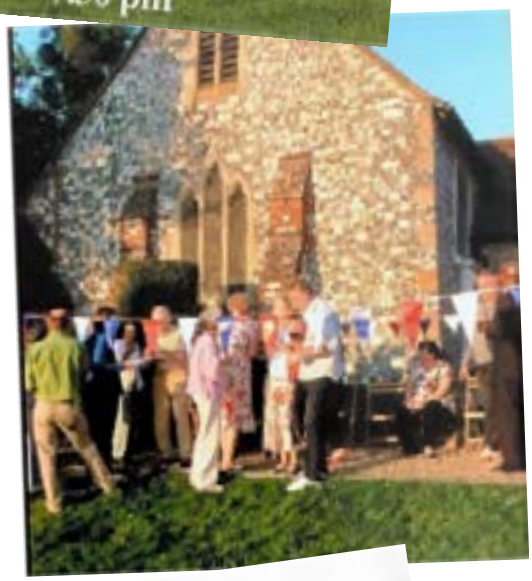
Hedsor Fair is the main social event and outreach opportunity in our year. It is the largest of St. Nicholas' fund raising events. It is held on the last Saturday of June, and is often described as a quintessential English garden fete. It has also been described as the local social occasion of the year.

The riverside setting allows us to offer the key attraction of boat rides, and we also have some unusual games focused on children as well as adults which are very popular. Thanks to the generous donation of strawberries from a local producer with links to the church, we offer strawberry cream teas as well as popular homemade cakes. Together with a major raffle the fair allows us to make around £7,000 on the day.

Last year around 600 people plus children attended making it a golden opportunity for outreach. It marks us out as part of the local area as we aim to promote God's presence at St. Nicholas' Church and in the lives of the local population.

Social events

Across the year church members also organize:



Talks - From time to time we have talks in the Church which are of interest to our local community , such one about local artist , Stanley Spenser

Beating the Bounds which attracts lots of people who then keep in touch.

Open Gardens attracts many who remain on our mailing list and whom we regularly communicate with. It shows where the church is and encourages people to come along to join us. It tells them that we are there for them.

Bucks Ride and Stride. This is in aid of Historic Churches.

Our **Harvest Supper** is is held in a local farm and is well attended.

Theatre Club involves trips to London, Oxford etc. This attracts many in the local community of Hedsor, Bourne End and beyond.

Christmas carol singing takes us around the benefice when we sing and are able to chat to residents on their doorstep.

The location of the church could be said to be isolated but our links with the villages and community are vast as we reach out in so many ways.

We have been in a vacancy for over a year but all the extra services and a lot of the events have carried on. We feel that the congregation has grown this year, and perhaps we may have come closer to God and each other.

Weddings

Weddings have become an important part of the ministry of the church.

Hedsor House, which is in within walking distance, is a very successful wedding venue and they collaborate with us when a couple wishes to have a marriage service. Website:- www.hedsor.com Prior to the vacancy we had group meetings, known as 'Love and Cherish' between those getting married and the priest.

We take great care to welcome these couples when they attend on Sunday morning.

We chat together over coffee and get to bring them closer to our church community in order that they have both a friendly and spiritual experience.

We aim to bring them close to God both before and on their special day. We receive many acknowledgements of gratitude for all we do.

Many couples come back to us to have their children baptized and on their wedding anniversary.

We have wedding administration to help all in this process.

We pray that each service brings not only the couple but also the congregation nearer to God.

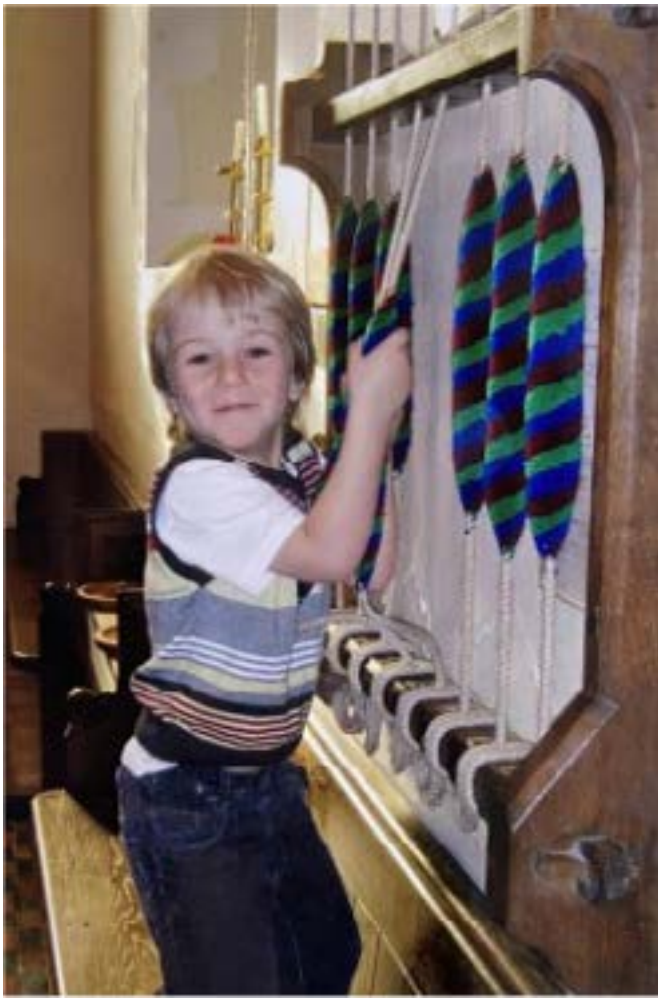
Future

Our prayer and our goal is to have a thriving church of all ages.

We live in a world of busyness and bustle, a world of bleeps and pings of modern technology. At St. Nicholas', we have a church that is away from the noise of modern life. In these times, especially after covid when many are searching for meaning, the peace and calm that this small church exudes is conducive to all who are seeking God.

This brings us back to the vision of our mission statement.

From our small church, following the teaching of Jesus Christ, we reach out to the wide world with love and compassion.



Our New Priest

We pray for a priest

- Who will engage with our parish community leading us in further growth and discipleship
- who will value traditional ways whilst embracing a new way forward.
- who will identify, enable and work with lay volunteers

We offer a warm welcome and a willingness to work alongside.

The ability to travel around this semi-rural parish is essential.

The Church Building

St. Nicholas' Church, whose foundation is documented back to 1218, was originally a chapel belonging to Hedsor Priory, a dependent priory of the Benedictine Nunnery of St. Mary, Little Marlow.

At the Dissolution of the Monasteries the Priory disappeared and the chapel became the parish church. It stands on the top of Beech Hill with unrivalled views over the Thames Valley and the beauty of the countryside around give it a sense of peace and serenity which extends into the beautiful interior.

The church is in very good order following the restoration work done as part of the Millenium Appeal. This included a two manual organ by Rushworth and Draper and a newly fitted vestry. A new toilet has been added. The open churchyard is well maintained with a new pathway and external lighting. There is a 'Cabin in the Woods' for the children to use, either for play or hear bible stories.

The interior of the church gives it an immediate sense of peace and calm.

Finance, Governance and Safeguarding

PCC

There are six elected members of PCC in addition to a Churchwarden, Treasurer and PCC Secretary. There is currently one Deanery Synod representative who also serves as the PCC Secretary. The Churchwarden, Maura Carr has been undertaking some administrative work during the vacancy period.

The Vicar normally chairs the PCC meeting and the PCC meets five times a year.

Safeguarding

Hedsor PCC is regularly updated on good practice and has complied with the duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops guidance in relation to Safeguarding. On-line training has been undertaken by all PCC members relevant to their role within the church. Face-to-face safeguarding training is being organized for later in the year to ensure that all members are fully conversant with their compliance and legal responsibilities. We ensure that all training is completed when members take on new roles.

We are aware of our responsibility to respond to and to document all queries correctly and to document this, to adhere to confidentiality and to report to the diocese if and when necessary. This has been supported during our present vacancy.

We provide details on our website.

Enhanced DBS checks have been carried out on all PCC members and those dealing with children and have been verified. A folder dealing with our safeguarding documents and processes is available in the church and required documentation is place in the church porch.

Finance

St Nicholas Legal Accounts for years ended 31 December 2020 and 2021		
INCOME	**2020**	**2021**
	£	£
Collection	2979	3196
Covenants	8994	9014
Tax gift aid refund	4665	3606
Net PCC Fees	941	9940
Net events	851	3375
Donations	6784	2641
Wedding/baptism collections	369	3137
Legacy	1250	500
Booking fees/deposits donated	0	1000
Interest earned	48	0
TOTAL INCOME	**26881**	**36409**
EXPENDITURE		
Insurance	2005	1948
Gas& Electricity	606	823
Boiler replacement	3457	0
Fees	345	433
Wine/wafers/candles	261	127
Stationery	70	189
Charities	400	100
Church Yard	496	430
Repairs & Maintenance	3211	482
Parish Share	26331	24995
Administration expenses	110	1212
Clergy expenses	1121	1255
Organ tuning and repair	0	0
Organist	1040	1440
Examiner	37	47
Cleaner	560	630
Video system	232	0
Support to St Marks for St Marks parish share	4500	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**44782**	**34111**
NET SURPLUS/DEFICIT	**(17901)**	**2298**
Increase in Miss Lee fund	1496	2825
General Fund with Virgin Money	31084	31084
Miss Lee fund	16109	18934
Restricted- Young Church Fund	-2005	-1684
Restricted -Hedsor hardship fund	-1350	-1050
Deposits received in advance	-8600	-9000
Less DBF and Wontner qtr to 31 dec	0	-1694
Add owed by St Marks		75
Cash in hand	160	460
Cash at bank	7959	11355
NET ASSETS	**43357**	**48480**

I certify that the income, expenditure and balance sheet are a true and correct record of the financial position of St Nicholas Church, Hedsor

H.W Hulme

Treasurer

21 Jan 2022

The Wycombe Deanery

The Wycombe Deanery is a family of 35 Anglican churches who - together with our ecumenical friends - serve the 150,000 people living in and around High Wycombe. Together the Deanery Churches comprise over 3,000 Christians living, working and playing our part in the growth of God's Kingdom here.

Our 4 core values are:

1. Serving our fellowships

By which we mean:

- Always seeking the good of each parish
- Focusing on people and right relationships, not buildings or structures
- Acting in a collaborative and mutually supportive way

2. Shaping our future

By which we mean:

- Taking responsibility for the future of the Deanery, which is in our own hands under God
- Proactive long-term planning for growth
- Bold and realistic plans for short / medium-term sustainability

3. Spurring on our friends

By which we mean:

- Exploring new ways to grow in love and in our calling
- Enabling parishes to work better together
- Learning from each other and identifying partnerships
- Supporting, encouraging, unifying and inspiring

4. Sharing the fire.

By which we mean:

- Exercise discernment to identify where the Holy Spirit is burning
- Drawing attention to where the Spirit is at work
- Going with the flow of what God is doing
- Becoming more outward focused in mission

The Wycombe Deanery

To enable this, our key groups are the:

Deanery Chapter-a bimonthly gathering of clergy, modelled on the Upper Room of the book of Acts, where we gather together to pray, to encourage each other and to seek the leading of the Holy Spirit together.

Deanery Synod- a quarterly gathering of elected leaders from our 35 churches, where we devote at least 50% of our time to focusing on what is inspirational or missional, or both.

Deanery Leadership Teams- our Mission & Pastoral Committee and Standing Committee provide a lead on strategic, operational and financial aspects of Deanery life and consists of gifted lay and clergy representatives from the churches. We focus on achieving and growing a sustainable pattern of stipendiary ministry, and the wellbeing of our clergy and lay members.

This feels like a time of new beginnings in the Wycombe Deanery. In October 2019 we held 'Sharing the Fire', a Deanery-wide worship celebration attended by 475 people who left with a renewed sense that the fire of God's Spirit is spreading across our churches.

Our new Deanery Plan for 2021-25includes key elements including: training young leaders for children's ministry, a new resource church at St Andrews Church in High Wycombe, a strategy for rural churches and continuing to connect with our local charity partners.

Lay Chair: Caroline Sants, Area Dean: Dave Bull, Assistant Area Dean: Keith Johnson.

DIOCESE of OXFORD
A Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world

The Diocese of Oxford serves the mission of the Church in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire.

The Diocese comprises more than 600 parishes, with over 800 churches, serving a diverse population of more than 2 million people located in all types of settings.

Due to the size and complexity of the Diocese, we have three Area Bishops who exercise considerable strategic and pastoral oversight for their Areas. The Bishop of Buckingham is the Rt Rev'd Alan Wilson who has been the Area Bishop since 2003. The Archdeacon of Buckingham is Ven Guy Elsmore who has been in post since 2016. In September 2020, Rev'd Canon Chris Bull was appointed Associate Archdeacon of Buckingham.

Through prayer, listening and discernment a common vision has emerged for the Diocese of Oxford. The vision is based on the qualities described in The Beatitudes and addresses what kind of church we are called to be:

a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world:

contemplative, compassionate, courageous.

Our Common Vision continues to emerge as we identify together areas of our common life where we believe God is calling to focus. The diocesan focal areas are not a description of everything we do, but these priorities are being supported centrally by resources, training, conferences, workshops, and much more. The diocese is inviting benefices and their clergy to share a vision rather than demanding a response, motivated by hope not driven by anxiety, and thereby to flourish in their ministry. It is hoped that clergy appointed into the Archdeaconry of Buckingham will want to commit to this vision and encourage their benefice to share in becoming a more Christ-like church for the sake of God's world.

Appendix A

Provisional Role Description

The following provisional role description will apply from the date of licensing. It will be reviewed by the postholder and the Archdeacon of Buckingham approximately six months after the date of licensing. Amendments will be made where necessary, by agreement.

SECTION ONE: DETAILS OF POST

Role title: Associate Priest (Initially for a three-year period)

Type of Role: Part time (0.5) stipendiary Name of benefice: Hedsor and Bourne End Episcopal area: Buckingham

Deanery: Wycombe

Archdeaconry: Buckingham

Conditions of service: Please refer to Statements of Particulars document issued in conjunction of Service with this role description

Key contact for Clergy Terms of service: Archdeacon of Buckingham This role falls within the Clergy Terms of Service formally known as Service Common Tenure. The Archdeacon of Buckingham is the designated person by the Bishop of Oxford to issue the Statement of Particulars for the post holder.

Accountability: Priests share with the Bishop in the oversight of the Church.

Whilst, as an office holder, the individual is expected to lead and prioritise work in line with the purpose of the role, they are encouraged to inform the Archdeacon and Churchwardens about any issues exceptional or otherwise that have the potential to affect ongoing delivery of ministry

Additional Responsibility: N/A

SECTION TWO: CONTEXT

Wider Context

The Diocese of Oxford serves the mission of the Church in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. The Diocese comprises more than 600 parishes, with over 800 churches, serving a diverse population of more than 2 million people located in all types of settings.

Our Common Vision is based on the qualities described in The Beatitudes and addresses what kind of church we are called to be:

a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world:

contemplative, compassionate, courageous.

It is hoped that all clergy appointed into the Archdeaconry of Buckingham will want to commit to the Diocesan Common Vision, to encouraging their benefices to share in becoming a more Christ- like church for the sake of God's world and to enabling all to flourish in ministry.

Local Context

During the vacancy discussions began between with the deanery and the Area Team about the future shape of ministry across the benefice. The discernment thus far is that that the future of the two parishes of Hedsor and Bourne End probably lays in different directions in the future. The Deanery and Area Team are, consequently, continuing to explore the possibilities for the future while continuing the work of mission and ministry within each church and its community. To enable this, the Archdeacon of Buckingham has been appointed Priest-in-Charge of the benefice until the necessary pastoral reorganization is complete.

A half-time Associate Priest is now being sought for Hedsor parish and church to lead worship, undertake pastoral work and occasional offices at Hedsor church. Part of the role will be to lead the significant weddings ministry at the church.

For more information, see the parish profile.

SECTION THREE: ROLE PURPOSE AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

General:

A. To exercise the cure of souls shared with the bishop in this benefice in collaboration with colleagues, including the praying of the Daily Office, the administration of the sacraments and preaching

B. To have regard to the calling and responsibilities of the clergy (as described in the Canons, the Ordinal, the Code of Professional Conduct for the Clergy) and other relevant legislation including

- bringing the grace and truth of Christ to this generation and making him known to those in your care
- instructing the parishioners in the Christian faith
- preparing candidates for baptism and confirmation
- diligently visiting the parishioners of the benefice, particularly those who are sick and infirm
- providing spiritual counsel and advice
- consulting with the Parochial Church Council on matters of general concern and importance to the benefice
- bringing the needs of the world before God in intercession
- calling your hearers to repentance and declaring in Christ's name the absolution and forgiveness of their sins
- blessing people in God's name
- preparing people for their death
- discerning and fostering the gifts of all God's people
- being faithful in prayer, expectant and watchful for the signs of God's presence, as he reveals his kingdom among us

A. To share in the wider work of the deanery and diocese as appropriate, for the building up of the whole Body of Christ

Key responsibilities specific to the local situation

- To lead the church in further growth and faith development.
- To lead worship, occasional offices (especially 25+ weddings per annum) and pastoral work in the church
- To value traditional ways and embrace a new way forward.
- To identify, enable and work with lay volunteers

Other responsibilities

- Participate in the Bishop's Ministerial Development Review scheme and engage in

Continuing Ministerial Development

- Carry out any other duties and responsibilities as required in line with the parish needs.
- Take care for their wellbeing including health and safety and building a good repertoire of spiritual and psychological strategies

SECTION FOUR: KEY CONTACTS FOR THE ROLE

Generic and specific to the role Groups & committees

- The PCC(s)
- Deanery Chapter
- Deanery Synod
- Deanery Pastoral Committee

In the benefice

- Churchwardens
- Ministerial Colleagues

Support structures

- Area Dean
- Area Bishop
- Area Archdeacon
- Spiritual director, work consultant, etc.
- Staff at The Diocesan Office with key responsibilities for various aspects of supporting

SECTION SIX: OTHER

This role description is issued alongside and should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

The Ordinal

The Canons of the Church of England

Guidance for the Professional Conduct of Clergy

Bishop's Licence

Statement of Particulars issued to the office holder on successful appointment

Diocesan Clergy Handbook Parish Profile

Ministry Action Plans (MAPs)

Any objectives discussed and agreed between the post holder and the supervising minister