



## ASSOCIATE MINISTER (House for Duty) for St Leonard's, Sherfield on Loddon

within the Benefice of Sherfield on Loddon and Stratfield Saye  
with Hartley Wespall with Stratfield Turgis and Bramley.



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# WELCOME

Welcome to this Benefice Profile and role description ... and welcome to the Diocese of Winchester!

At the heart of our life here is a desire to be always *Living the Mission of Jesus*. We are engaged in a strategic process to deliver a mission-shaped Diocese, in which parochial, pastoral and new forms of pioneering and radical ministry all flourish. Infused with God's missionary Spirit, we want three character traits to be clearly visible in how we live:

- ◆ Passionate personal spirituality
- ◆ Pioneering faith communities
- ◆ Prophetic global citizens

We pray that, if God is calling you to join us in his mission in this part of the world, he will make his will abundantly clear to you.

*'As the Father sent me so I send you ... Receive the Spirit.'* John 20:21

Read more about [Winchester Mission Action Planning](#) here.





## ODIHAM DEANERY

Odiham Deanery is set in the most north-eastern corner of Winchester Diocese, with five town centres surrounded by beautiful rural villages: in all 6 Benefices, with 19 parishes and 29 churches. Our Deanery team of lay and clergy collaborated to support the visit of Archbishop Stephen from Myanmar in 2020 before the pandemic; planned a 2020 Deanery-wide mission which was shelved because of Covid, and this summer, a few communities offered a New Wine gathered weekend for all ages locally. We enjoy close fellowship as a clergy team and connect through WhatsApp. Chapter now meets again monthly for tea; we support a monthly Myanmar prayer group, offer a small weekly theological reflection group on Zoom and are good friends. Parishes are passionate about Eco-Church, foodbanks, visionary children and family ministry projects, and have collaborated with national Church to enable the flourishing of vocation, ministry and discipleship of the whole people of God ("Setting God's People Free").

The Revd Canon Dr  
Marion de Quidt  
Area Dean



The Revd Lerys Campbell  
Assistant Area Dean



Richard Elphick  
Lay Chair





# INTRODUCTION

We are a community of Christians who want to engage with and serve our local communities, sharing the love of God and the good news of Jesus Christ in creative and accessible ways.

Following the recent appointment of our Rector, we are seeking an Associate Minister (House for Duty) to help us through the next stage of our Benefice's life and mission.

The role is part of our response to the changes in our parish. Most significant are the new housing developments, Sherfield Park and the under construction Longfield Place. These are bringing exciting opportunities for God's work in our church and community. Our previous Associate Minister retired in 2021, having made a significant and fruitful contribution to the life of the Benefice.

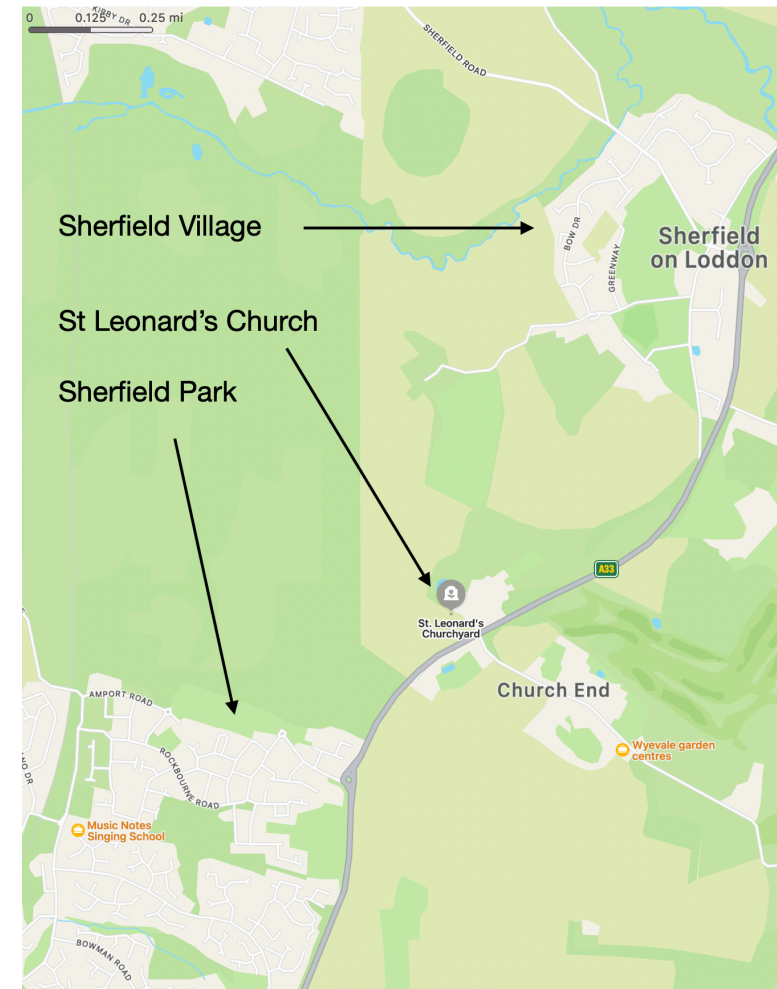
Our vision is to appoint someone with complementary qualities and skills to our new Rector who can help us come together as a Benefice, to share the gospel and the love of Christ in our growing communities.

The Associate Minister will be based in the Rectory in Sherfield on Loddon, and with the Rector (based in Bramley) will be supported by an experienced and enthusiastic ministry team. We have made a good start in working together across the Benefice and have plans to develop this. The Associate Minister will have a focus on Sherfield, with responsibility for one church, and will be part of the Benefice Leadership Team.

The Benefice is located in rural northeast Hampshire with strong road and rail links to nearby Reading and Basingstoke, making it easy to commute to London, the Midlands, the South coast and South West. The area continues to see a huge expansion in housing, bringing many new families to the area.

In the following pages we will introduce you to our benefice, churches, and communities; our vision for their future; the wonderful team of people supporting that vision and the qualities we are looking for in our new Associate Minister.

**Be assured that we are already praying for you. We hope you will be as excited as we are about the opportunities here as you prayerfully consider if God is calling you to lead us.**



## OUR VISION

Our Benefice is growing with lots of new housing in both Bramley and Sherfield. We are seeking God for the next steps to grow as a church and welcome people of all ages and backgrounds into our church family. Our hope is for the new Associate Minister to lead the growth of the church in the parish of Sherfield, with a heart to reach those in the village and the new housing development of Sherfield Park and the currently being built housing development of Longfield Place.



We are becoming more engaged with the wider parish, holding services in Sherfield Park Community Centre in addition to our monthly Messy Church there. Our Jubilee service in Sherfield Village hall attracted 100 people, many of whom were not regular church goers. Our village green songs of praise service has become a regular part of the village fete and we had a church stall at Sherfest, the Sherfield Park Fete. We have a growing number of weddings and baptisms from families living in Sherfield Park. We want to build on these in a big way and will be looking to the new Associate Minister to take a lead in taking us forward with these and other initiatives to enable the church to become a significant presence in both Sherfield Village and Sherfield Park.

We have a well-established and effective pastoral team: people within the church feel well cared for. We seek someone for this role who can nurture others in following Christ in their everyday lives, deepen their prayer life, grow in their knowledge of the Bible and experience of the Holy Spirit. We want God to empower us to use our gifts to serve one another and spread the gospel to those who don't yet know Jesus.

We have a desire to engage meaningfully with our parish community demonstrating the relevance of Christ's message for today's world. We seek to follow Jesus' lead by not just waiting for people to come to church, but going out to meet them, as a very visible and relevant presence, communicating God's love and providing support and comfort for those in need.

There is a strong heritage of fruitful church mission and ministry and we are discerning God's will and direction for the next chapter in the life of our church. In partnership with the Rector, Ministry Team and the whole people of God, we seek a new Associate Minister who will lead us to become the church God is calling us to be - a church with a future bigger than the past. We value our benefice's history, but we are looking for new ways of being church and sharing Jesus with people.

A significant part of our vision is building up and empowering our lay leaders to help grow the church. We have much talent and enthusiasm amongst us and we are keen to reach out to the 'missing generations'. We are building on our existing partnerships with local schools, developing a community wide youth engagement strategy that deepens and fosters our work with children and teenagers. We are committed to resourcing this provision, perhaps with a Benefice youth worker.

We aspire to be a parish within a Benefice which grows not just in numbers, but in spirituality, love and all God has for us. Our vision is to become the churches God is forming us to be; to pray and follow God's direction so the Kingdom of God is more present to all within our Benefice.

## LIFE IN OUR BENEFICE

Our Benefice has four parishes and four churches, made up of people from very different backgrounds and in different stages of life. The ministry team works across all four parishes, but we expect the new Associate Minister to work primarily in Sherfield, with the Rector looking after Bramley, Stratfield Saye and Hartley Wespall. In the past year or two we have grown closer and now do more as a Benefice, and this is something we want to continue to grow.

Bramley and Sherfield are the largest parishes, with a core of around 100 members at Bramley and 40 in Sherfield and three services between them every Sunday.

Stratfield Saye and Hartley Wespall have smaller congregations (around 30 in total), meeting once or twice a month. Hartley Wespall have recently launched a monthly Family Service which attracts 20-30 adults and 5-10 children.

Services in all our churches are usually full at Easter, Christmas, Remembrance and other festivals.

St Leonard's has two Order 1 Holy Communion services every month, one Morning Prayer and one 'Together in Worship' service which we are developing as a service to invite non-churched people to join us. Services have traditional hymns and modern songs, accompanied by organ and piano.

Across the Benefice we value traditional services (BCP Evensong and Matins) and Common Worship Order 1 services. We also enjoy contemporary worship, such as Bramley's informal 'Sunday@9' service, with a band, coffee and pastries.

As our communities change and grow, so does the way we take the Gospel to them. We have 'Messy Church' in Sherfield Park Community Centre, one of our biggest housing developments. Before the pandemic, this was growing rapidly, with up to 15 children and their families attending monthly. Post pandemic we have relaunched Messy Church with a small, but regular attendance which we are seeking to grow again.

Thanks to the vision, enthusiasm and skills of people in our congregations, we were able to hold interactive Zoom services throughout lockdown, which have been an incredible blessing. We are continuing to live stream services on Zoom and YouTube in Bramley and Sherfield respectively. Those with young children, however, have not found this easy and one of our ongoing challenges is supporting and encouraging these families to come back to church life. Working with children and young people is a key part of our Benefice vision.





We are blessed to have strong relationships with some of our schools, in particular Bramley CE Primary School, where 'Open the Book' is very popular and where the Rector leads collective worship, festival services and participates in many other aspects of school life. Our interactive Christingle and Christmas Eve nativity services are always packed!

Our church ministry and leadership teams are enthusiastic and creative, seeking new ways to welcome and engage people who have moved into the new developments, for example, by delivering 'welcome' packs. Both Sherfield and Bramley churches produce popular, high-quality magazines (see 'Our Team' section for links) which are delivered to every home and business in the catchment area.

We hold regular 'Open Air Songs of Praise' services on our village greens and members of all our church families lead or actively participate in many community events such as fetes, visiting the local care homes, volunteering at Basingstoke Foodbank, operating a community lift-share scheme ... and much more.

The mix of old and new is clearly visible as you travel through our beautiful countryside; you will find ancient dwellings and modern housing estates, quaint village pubs and high-speed internet, people shopping in Sherfield at the family-run butcher and greengrocer, and Bramley bakery. This mix is one of the great strengths of the area - as well as being one of the challenges for church ministry!

We hope you share our view that our Benefice, churches and communities are going through some exciting changes and have a lot to offer. We have only been able to share a taste of this here, given the number of parishes, so we have added further links, practical information about the area, churches, communities, schools, facilities and shops, as well as a typical month in the benefice diary, in the appendices.



## MEET THE TEAM

We have a strong, capable, committed and enthusiastic team. They are already praying for you as they live out our benefice vision and mission.



**Benefice Ministry Team (L-R):** Mark Anderson, Sammie Armstrong, Karen West, John Morley, Ken Batt, Andrew Doggart, Richard Elphick, Elaine Steere  
We are blessed to have a curate, 3 retired clergy with PTO, and 3 lay ministers, who are currently leading and preaching at services across the Benefice.

**The Revd Mark Anderson** joined us as Rector in January 2022, having had various roles in parishes in the dioceses of Oxford and Southwark.

**The Revd Sammie Armstrong** was Lay Chair of Winchester Diocesan Synod for six years, is a gifted communicator with a long and distinguished teaching career. Sammie and his wife, Carol, have been at St. Leonard's for some twelve years and until recently were both active in Messy Church.

**The Revd Karen West** was ordained priest in July 2022 and is serving her curacy (part-time) here in the benefice. Karen was the first lay and female Archbishops' Adviser on Bishops' Ministry, with long experience in leadership development and learning with her passion for Jesus.

**The Very Revd John Morley** was ordained in 1968 and spent 16 years in military (RAF) and hospital chaplaincy. He has a long association with the Anglican Cursillo movement, offering spiritual direction and encouraging church members to deepen their faith and enlarge their vision of God.

**The Revd Kenneth Batt** recently celebrated 50 years of active ordained ministry and has the Bishop of Winchester's Permission to Officiate. Ken is a Canon Emeritus of Winchester Cathedral and an experienced voluntary sports chaplain (football and cricket). He's been married to Linda for 53 years.

**Andrew Doggart, LLM** works in the Berkshire Cancer Centre as a Medical Physicist in Radiotherapy. He was licensed as a Reader in 2013. He has a deep love of scripture and a fondness for the Book of Common Prayer and Evensong. Andrew is married to Liz, a retired dentist and he is one of our organists.

**Richard Elphick, LLM** was licensed as a Reader 20 years ago, is Lay Chair of Odiham Deanery Synod and part of Winchester Diocesan Synod, as well as being a commercial property consultant, a fundraiser for Mercy Ships and an expert gardener. He and Tessa have three children and two grandchildren.

**Elaine Steere, LLM** has recently joined St Leonard's, helps lead Messy Church and regularly leads and preaches at services.

## Our churchwardens and administrators



**(L-R):** Pip and Ilene Iles, Rachel Barclay-Smith, Malcolm Knowles, Mick Cooper, Steve Day, Lisa Goodall

**Pip Iles BEM** is a churchwarden at St Mary's and lay chair/secretary of the joint Hartley Wespall and Stratfield Saye PCC. Pip is part of the Sherfield Ministry Team and leads Evensong services at St Mary's, as well as helping to run the popular parish magazine, [The Loddon Valley Link](#).

**Rachel Barclay Smith** is a churchwarden at St James, Bramley. She is a solicitor and edits the [Bramley Magazine](#). She and her husband, Jonathan, are bellringers and run the Bramley and Little London Music Festival. Their daughter is in JAM (Jesus and Me), a group for older children.

**Malcolm Knowles** is a churchwarden at St James, Bramley and recently retired from banking. He does an excellent job caring for the church buildings and grounds. He's married to Lucy and loves going to Reading FC games with their son and his two daughters.

**Mick Cooper** is a churchwarden at St Leonard's, Sherfield. He and his wife, Angela, moved to Sherfield Park in 2017 to be closer to family, after 11 years working in the engineering and construction business in Canada and the Middle East. He was previously a churchwarden at St Christopher's, Bahrain.

**Steve Day** is the Bramley Parish Administrator. He manages Cross House and the church rotas, as well as being a Foundation Governor at Bramley C of E Primary School and a Parish Councillor. He is married to Olga and their 16 year old daughter attends JAM and volunteers at church.

**Lisa Goodall** is the Sherfield Parish Administrator. She manages rotas, wedding and funeral arrangements, bookings for church rooms, the website, noticeboards and church articles for the Parish magazine. Lisa has been part of the St Leonard's family for 22 years and has two grown children.

**Ian Goodall** (not pictured) is married to Lisa, helps to lead services and provides support with our technology and website.

<http://www.stleonardschurch.co.uk>

<http://stjamesbramley.com>

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/18311/>

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/18324/>



# OUR ORGANISATION

Our Benefice consists of four churches, with three PCCs: Sherfield-on Loddon (St Leonard's Church), Bramley with Little London (St James) and Stratfield Saye (St Mary the Virgin) with Hartley Wespall (St Mary the Blessed Virgin).

Our PCCs oversee the work of our churches, with a focus on vision, finance, fabric and safeguarding. We are currently looking to update our Parish Mission Action Plans, which will be based on the mission of Christ and our heart for the gospel, the good news for everyone. We are keen to preserve the historic (and listed) church buildings and ensure they are used well for helping people to experience the nearness of the Kingdom of God and the presence of Christ, through the Holy Spirit.

## **St Leonard's, Sherfield on Loddon**

The PCC consists of the Rector, the Curate, the churchwarden, three readers, together with other elected members. We also have two representatives who serve on Deanery Synod. Our PCC meets every two months and has a standing committee with delegated authority to take certain decisions between PCC meetings either by formal meeting or by email.

## **St James, Bramley**

The PCC consists of the Rector, the two churchwardens and eleven elected members. We have three Deanery Synod representatives. There are six full PCC meetings a year and a standing committee with delegated authority to make decisions between meetings.

## **St Mary The Blessed Virgin, Hartley Wespall and St Mary The Virgin, Stratfield Saye**

This combined PCC consists of the Rector, the church warden (who covers both churches), seven elected members, including two treasurers, one for each of the two parishes, as they operate separate finances.



# FINANCES

Throughout the Benefice, as across much of the country, the Coronavirus pandemic has led to a reduction in income for 2020 and 2021. This is largely due to the reduction in Sunday collections, weddings and other bookings of church buildings. Nonetheless, the current overall financial position of the benefice is regarded as reasonably secure, thanks to the active participation across all churches in the Parish Giving Scheme, the encouragement of planned regular giving and the use of Gift Aid, as well as fundraising opportunities.

## **Sherfield on Loddon – St Leonard’s**

The recent reduction in income was countered to some degree by additional donations made throughout the years. We also received some legacies which are restricted for specific purposes. Meeting our contribution to the Church Mission Fund (Parish Share) was challenging in 2020 and 2021; we contributed 77% of what was requested. At the end of 2021 we carried forward reserves of £20,300.00 which exceeds the reserve policy.

## **Bramley – St James**

Thanks to the generosity of the present church family - as well as previous bequests - finances are healthy. The PCC was able to sell the building and land of the former St Stephen’s in Little London contributing to total reserves at the end of 2021 of £440,000, much of which is dedicated to upkeep of the church fabric and the church hall (Cross House). The parish was able to contribute £48,000 to the Common Mission Fund in 2021, with an additional payment made in 2022 to meet its 2021 contribution in full.

## **Hartley Wespall - St Mary the Blessed Virgin**

The church paid its full Parish Share of £7,800 thanks to a number of very generous donors who support the church financially throughout the year. A quinquennial inspection in 2020 led to major refurbishment of the bell tower, chamber and the spire, paid for by a community fundraising campaign.

## **Strafield Saye – St Mary the Virgin**

The Church paid its full Parish Share of £7,500 thanks to some very generous donors who support the church financially throughout the year.

## **Looking ahead....**

St Leonard’s had a quinquennial inspection this year. As part of our regular inspection and maintenance, our surveyor identified the need to re-tile the roof and undertake some internal repairs within the next five years. Fundraising activities have already begun and, as we now emerge from lockdown, our efforts and ideas are beginning to grow. We are encouraged by the success at Hartley Wespall and by individuals and organisations who have already offered their support.

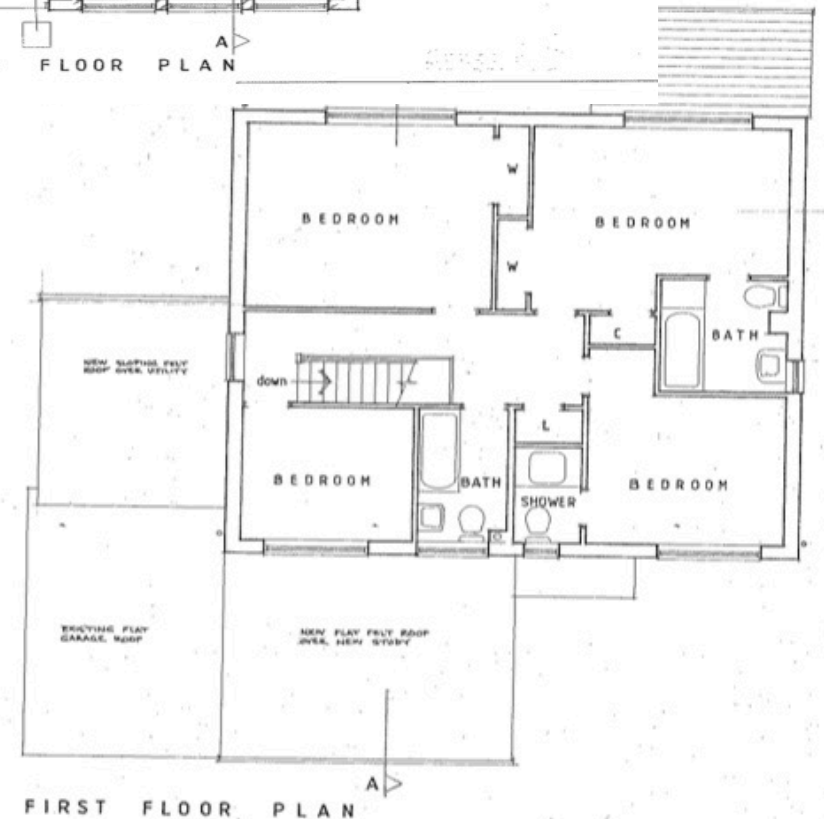
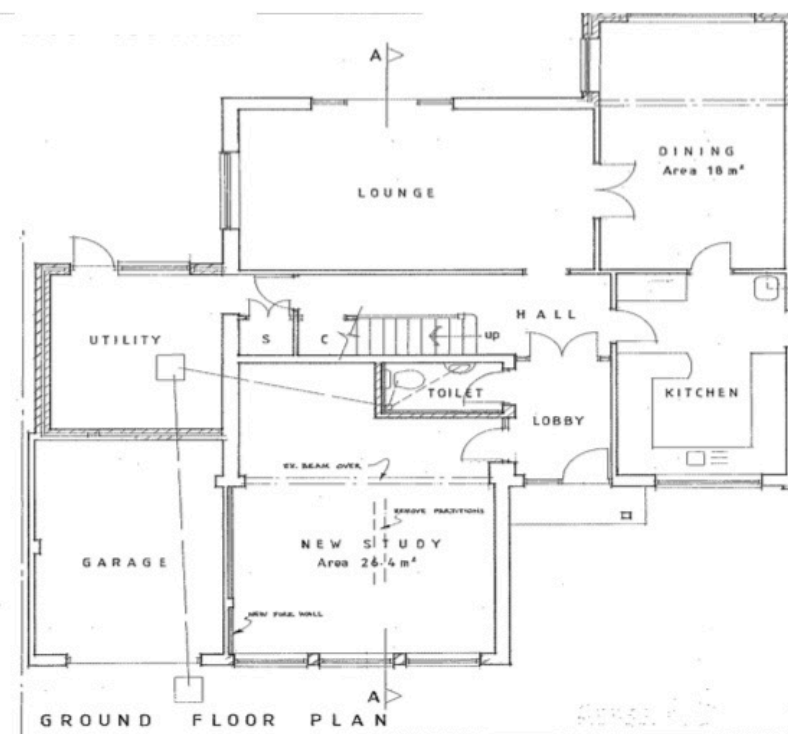


# THE HOUSE

The Rectory (where the Associate Minister will live) is situated in Northfield Road which is in the heart of the village of Sherfield on Loddon. It was purchased by the Diocese and extended in the early 1990s to include a large study, which is not the parish office.

The house was originally constructed about forty years ago and comprises a well-maintained detached family house with a garden at the front and the rear with views over the Loddon water meadows.

It is brick built under a pitched tiled roof and has two (2) reception rooms, kitchen, parish office and utility room with four (4) large bedrooms and a bathroom on the first-floor level. The Rectory has been well maintained and is in good decorative order.





## ROLE DESCRIPTION

The Associate Minister will be based in Sherfield on Loddon where the greater part of their time and effort will be spent. As part of the Benefice Team, gifts and experience will be shared in contributing to furthering God's mission in all our parishes.

We are looking for someone to disciple, empower and grow the existing congregation at St Leonard's, both numerically and spiritually, but also to take up the challenge of finding new ways of ministering to the residents of the village (a mile or so to the north of the church), Sherfield Park (half a mile to the south of the church) and the expanding residential developments within the parish. We hope the new Associate Minister will work closely with the Rector to help the church to discern a new chapter in its life and how to take the next steps in fulfilling that new vision.

We expect the new Associate Minister to be released to use their gifts to the fullest possible extent, working with the Rector and others to ensure they are not distracted by activity which is not central to their core passions and mission.

We seek someone who

- is rooted in the Bible and prayer; will communicate the Gospel in traditional and innovative ways and is open to the Holy Spirit in order to lead us in sensitively reviving our regular worship.
- will have primary responsibility for one church (St Leonard's); will connect creatively with people of all ages, and who will be active in, and a significant part of our diverse communities within Sherfield on Loddon.
- will collaborate with the wider Benefice Ministry team, to help everyone contribute where their gifts and experience will be most fruitful.
- has energy, drive and well established rhythms to ensure their own well-being in a dynamic role; is not fearful of trying new things, knowing there is grace when a different way needs to be found.
- will lead with enthusiasm and vision; intentionally nurturing and discipling people through the stages of life and faith.
- will delegate with discernment, enabling and empowering volunteers to develop their gifts and skills.
- can skilfully lead services ranging from the formal liturgical to more contemporary forms of worship in church buildings, community venues and other places, meeting the needs of our diverse communities.
- will be proactive in caring for God's creation and will respond to human need (both locally and internationally) by loving service, with generosity.

*The role description should always be read in conjunction with the [Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy](#)*

## HOW TO APPLY

A full application pack, along with Terms & Conditions is available from the Diocesan website, [here](#).

For an informal conversation about the role, please contact:

The Reverend Mark Anderson  
Rector  
[revmarkanderson4@gmail.com](mailto:revmarkanderson4@gmail.com)  
07480 067756

or

The Right Reverend David Williams  
Bishop of Basingstoke  
[bishop.david@winchester.anglican.org](mailto:bishop.david@winchester.anglican.org)  
01962 737330

For an informal conversation about vacancies in the Winchester Archdeaconry or for more information about the application process, please contact:

The Right Reverend David Williams  
Bishop of Basingstoke  
[bishop.david@winchester.anglican.org](mailto:bishop.david@winchester.anglican.org)  
01962 737330

or

Jane Hammond  
Clergy Appointments Assistant  
[clergy.appointments@winchester.anglican.org](mailto:clergy.appointments@winchester.anglican.org)  
01962 737310

## Appendix 1 – Pattern of Sunday Services

Sunday	Services Times and Location
First	0900 Sunday@9 - SJB 1000 Holy Communion - SoL 1000 Family Service - SS 1000 Family Service - HW 1030 BCP Matins - SJB
Second	0900 Sunday@9 - SJB 1000 Morning Worship - SoL 1030 Holy Communion - SJB
Third	0900 Sunday@9 - SJB 1000 Holy Communion - SoL 1030 Morning Worship - SJB 1830 BCP Evensong - HW
Fourth	0900 Sunday@9 - SJB 1000 All-age Worship - SoL 1030 Holy Communion - SJB
Fifth	All Benefice joint Holy Communion service - various locations

### KEY:

SJB = St James Bramley  
SoL = St Leonard Sherfield on Loddon  
SS = St Mary Stratfield Saye  
HW = St Mary Hartley Wespall

We also have festival services in other locations, e.g., Sherfield Village Green, Bramley Clift Meadow, Sherfield Park Community Centre, Sherfield Village Hall and a monthly Messy Church in Sherfield Park Community Centre.

One of Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer or Benefice prayers is said every weekday over Zoom.



## Appendix 2: A quick tour of our parishes

We all love where we live and are very much looking forward to showing you around, should you be selected for an interview. To help you decide if life in our Benefice is for you, let us take you on a quick tour of our parishes, to give you more of a flavour of what living here is like. We've also included various links that will help you explore further.

### Sherfield on Loddon

**Sherfield on Loddon** includes both the original Sherfield village and the modern development of Sherfield Park - as well as the smaller communities of Wildmoor and Church End. Sherfield Village and Sherfield Park while both part of St Leonard's Parish are separate secular administrative parishes. You will find it in north Hampshire on the A33, about 6 miles north of Basingstoke and 11 miles south of Reading. It has very good transport links, being close to the M3, M4 and three train stations (Bramley, Basingstoke and Reading). A new housing development: 'Longfield Place', is being built to the east of the A33.

For young families moving in, we have two local primary schools: Bramley Church of England Primary School and Four Lanes in Chineham. Secondary schools are further afield in Basingstoke and there are also two private schools: Sherfield School, just the other side of the A33 from the village, and Daneshill, a couple of miles north.



A monthly magazine 'The Loddon Valley Link' is distributed free to every house in both the village and Park, giving details of church and village activities.

**Sherfield Village** has at its centre a very large green, surrounded by a coffee shop and Post Office, a village greengrocer and butcher (which attracts people from miles around), a mechanic, a hair and beauty salon - and three good pubs!

The green's cricket and football pitches support thriving clubs and there are also tennis courts and an 18-hole golf course nearby.

The annual village fete brings around 4,000 visitors and raises money for local charities. On the Sunday after the fete, we have a 'Songs of Praise on the Green', accompanied by a local brass band. On Remembrance Sunday a service is held at the War Memorial.

The village hall is a hive of activity with a playgroup, Brownies, Evergreens, gardening club and many others meeting on a regular basis. Also Loddon Players produce two plays per year, there are barn dances, Sherfield Show, plant sales, a monthly market, quizzes and everything else you'd expect in a thriving community.

**Sherfield Park** is a modern and growing development, with a mix of houses, flats and some social housing, just south of St Leonard's church. It has brought in many families, as well as younger people and retirees, and has large, open spaces for walking or socialising. You'll find football teams on the playing fields at the weekend, several play areas for younger children and a local Nisa shop.

There is a very popular, purpose-built community centre run by volunteer trustees, which is home to Willowdene Nursery, an after-school club, a Scouts group and youth club, as well as a beautician and numerous exercise classes. The centre hosts an over-55s club and craft groups as well as fundraising events like 'Sherfest', a Winter Wonderland and a Community Cafe, which is well supported by local mums.



We hold 'Messy Church' once a month in the Community Centre, we have held Christingle and Mother's Day services there and there's scope for more involvement between the Community Centre and our church.

**Our Church - St Leonard's.** If you ask locals what they think of our church they'd probably say, "a beautiful church in the wrong place". A reasonable observation, as it's a mile from the centre of Sherfield village. However, as Sherfield Park continues to expand, and with the construction of the new 'Longfield Place' development it could be argued that our church is now in a perfect place!

Prior to the pandemic we had a core, regular congregation of around 60 and, during the pandemic we ran Zoom services which attracted some new participants. As we emerged from the pandemic the zoom services evolved into a YouTube video of our normal services for those who were not comfortable or able to return to the church itself. Our regular attendance has been somewhat reduced by the COVID period but sustained by a faithful core. We are a welcoming and supportive Church ready to evolve into the next phase of God's plan for us.

Pre-pandemic, church family members were encouraged to become members of a local Home Group. The church also runs an 'In-Touch' scheme. This is designed to assist the church family to keep in touch with each other and complements the pastoral work of the ministry team. The email Prayer Chain helps us to pray for the needs of people.



A number of years ago the church built a new extension to add kitchen and toilet facilities, which has enabled us to run a successful Coffee Club each fortnight. Since the onset of the pandemic however Coffee Club has continued to operate via Zoom. Our on-line services have attracted new participants. Within the PCC there is a huge ambition to renew the church fabric by raising the money largely through grant aid.

[Click here to take a virtual tour of our church!](#)

St Leonard's supports Helen Kissaye, a Church Mission Society mission worker in Uganda and a former church family member who has established the Honeycomb Hub in Botswana, as well as other Christian charities.

One of our main prayers is to find ways to encourage more of the families and younger people moving into the area to join us. Pre-Covid, baptisms and thanksgivings for the birth of babies were often part of morning services, usually (but not always) at a family or all-age service. In 2019, eight baptisms were celebrated at St Leonard's. So far this year, 2022, we have celebrated six. There will be six weddings in the parish this year.

## Bramley & Little London

**Bramley** is a village in north Hampshire, which dates back to pre-Roman times. It's popular for many reasons, including excellent travel links; it has a station with trains to Reading and Basingstoke (5 miles north of Basingstoke and 10 miles south of Reading).

The population of Bramley is growing rapidly, with the addition of new housing developments, and currently has around 2,300 homes. There is a **Church of England primary school** in the village (more on that in appendix 3).

The surrounding area is lovely for walking, with plenty of paths and bridleways. The Frith woods, the Roman ruins of Calleva, The Vyne (National Trust) and Pamber Forest are all close by and have been greatly appreciated during the recent lockdowns.

Most of the **shops and services** centre around the station and [Clift Meadow Park](#), land left to the village for the provision of community and youth facilities. Here you'll find the village shop and Post Office, a GP surgery, dispensary and a friendly, reliable car mechanic. There's an excellent bakery



and the [Bramley Inn pub](#), which has an Indian and Chinese restaurant and takeaway. The evenings the fish & chip or gourmet pizza vans are in town are a good time to meet some of your neighbours in the queue!

The annual Bramley Fete is a great collaboration between the Clift Meadow Trust and St James church, with around 2,000 people coming for the stalls, music, displays and dog show. There is also a busy village hall (which hosts the [Parish Council](#) meetings) a football field (with an active football club) and several play areas.

Bramley has long-standing military connections. Bramley Camp, a large munitions centre during both World Wars, is still owned and managed by the Ministry of Defence, though it's main use now is for military training - and occasionally as a film set (Tom Hanks was filming here this summer!). You will occasionally hear distant training fire, or see Chinooks flying over from nearby RAF Odiham. As access is so restricted, it's also a real haven for wildlife.

**Little London**, a village of a few hundred souls, lies a couple of miles north-west of Bramley, and residents are active and committed members of the St James church family. It has a homely and much-loved pub, The Plough.

[St James' Church, Bramley](#), is a grade I listed building, built around 1160 on the site of an earlier Saxon building. Some of the interior dates back to the 13th century and it is known for its 16<sup>th</sup> century wall paintings.

The church is about a mile away from the 'hub' of the village but makes itself known, thanks in part to our enthusiastic bell-ringing team! During the lockdowns many locals mourned the absence of the Tuesday bells on the community Facebook page.

A dedicated group of volunteers from the church family also write and deliver the high quality [Bramley Magazine](#) to every home and business, sharing news of church and community activities and services. Throughout the pandemic, members of the church family checked on vulnerable people, helped with shopping or prescription deliveries and volunteered at Basingstoke and Bramley School food banks.

The building may be ancient, but it has modern facilities, including heating, lighting, sound and even a broadband link for streaming services. [Cross House](#) hall is opposite the church, bequeathed by a parishioner to help the church reach out to the community, and has great facilities, including a kitchen and meeting room. It's home to our lively, informal 'Sunday@9' service, which was growing fast before the Coronavirus lockdown, when we switched to online services, and is just restarting and beginning to grow again (typically 30-40 adults and 10-15 children). It's a great place for church family meals and celebrations and is regularly booked for exercise classes and meetings.



We have a core, committed congregation of around 100, diverse in age and in other ways, but who seem to enjoy opportunities to be together. We try to have a regular rotation of service styles, from Matins and BCP 1662 to modern worship, so that as many as possible feel welcome.

Praise, music and creativity are a key part of life at St James. We are blessed to have several talented organists who bring the instrument to life on a Sunday. We host a [Bramley Music Festival](#) every other year, when the ancient walls (which provide excellent acoustics) resound with beautiful music from professional artists. In the alternate years, we hold a popular flower festival, with a Biblical theme and wonderful cream teas.

## Hartley Wespall



Our church of St Mary the Blessed Virgin serves a community of about 250 residents. It is a Grade 1 Listed building with a wide range of history dating back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Services at present are a morning Family Service on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month and a BCP 1662 Evensong on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month. The Family Service has a congregation of 25-35 people and Evensong has 12-15 people. Festival services at Easter, Harvest Festival, Remembrance and Christmas attract about 50 at each service.

In the past there have been family services held, but as children grew up and moved away, these sadly ceased. With new families with children now moving into the area, we are starting monthly family services again and this will form a major part of our future church life. As the congregations at our Evensong services are fairly elderly, it is vital we bring new life into our church.

As the only public building in the village, the church has a great opportunity to be the focal point for community activities such as Parish Council and 'Friends' meetings.

St Mary's is well supported by many local residents who care deeply for their church, even though they may not attend often. They contribute by cleaning, flower arranging, and maintaining the church and grounds. This was demonstrated recently when nearly £100,000 was raised through donations and grants for the restoration of the bell tower and spire. Without this generous, planned, regular giving, St Mary's would struggle to meet the financial demands upon it, most notably the Common Mission Fund. One challenge for our church leadership is how to encourage this community to engage with the spiritual life of the church, as well as the building.

In summary, St Mary's Hartley Wespall offers a small, but very committed community; willing to support not only the church building but also the ministry of our parish and rector, especially in engaging the younger people in our village.

## Stratfield Saye

Stratfield Saye is a charming village in the north of the Benefice, home to 230 adults and 60 young people, centred around a residential street, with three hamlets and individual properties on the outskirts. Stratfield Saye House, home of the Duke of Wellington, is in the parish. The Duke is a generous supporter of repairs to the church, of which he is Patron. The Wellington Estate is a major employer and landlord, owning the [Iron Duke pub](#) and the Village Hall, where classes and activities are organised. The popular [Wellington Country Park](#) and [Wellington Farm Shop](#) are close by. Generally, residents tend to look south to Sherfield and Basingstoke, rather than north to Reading. Sherfield's church and community magazine, [Loddon Valley Link](#), is distributed by church volunteers to houses here.

St Mary the Virgin church is Georgian, grade 1 listed, dating from 1758. The church, and its churchyard, are beautifully situated in Stratfield Saye Park, with a road and right of way leading to it. The church has historic connections to the Dukes and previous owners of the Stratfield Saye Estate with ancient memorials dating back to the 16th century, brought over from Stratfield Saye's previous church. The church is a gem, and is well looked after by local people (for a tour, please call 07799 711365).

Congregations are currently small, but there is scope for them to be increased. With the much-appreciated help of the Ministry Team, we have (pre-pandemic) a family service on the first Sunday of each month, with refreshments afterwards. These services seem to encourage families to come with their children. We hold services at Easter, Christmas and Remembrance Sunday, and there is some affection for 1662 Prayer Book services.





## Appendix 3: Bramley Church of England Primary School

Most of the young children in our benefice attend Bramley Church of England Primary School. It's a Church of England foundation (Voluntary Controlled) school, with a very strong Christian ethos which pervades all aspects of school life - underpinned by core Christian values of love, respect and courage.

Bramley School welcomes all children - from Christian families, as well as families of other or no faiths. The school seeks to give all pupils an opportunity to reflect on Christianity and other world faiths and to know what it is like to live in a faith community.

There is a strong, established link between the school and St James' Church. Thanks to a supportive senior leadership team, members of clergy from both Sherfield-on-Loddon and Bramley have been regular visitors and are heavily involved in leading collective worship in addition to supporting the school spiritually. Two PCC members from St James' church are foundation governors.

Bramley now hosts regular 'Open the Book' sessions, run by Christians from the local church communities. These are extremely well received by students and staff alike. Traditionally, St James' church holds services for the whole school at Christmas and Easter, as well as a leavers' service for children and parents at the end of the summer term. Through the pandemic, the relationship has been further strengthened by the church family's support of the school's 'food bank' to help local families in need.

The school has had a very positive transformation since Ofsted placed it in 'Special Measures' in 2014. Just two years later, the school was graded as 'Good', and this was reconfirmed in the latest inspection (February 2020), where inspectors further commented: "Pupils enjoy coming to this school; leaders have high expectations for every child; pupils achieve well and parents are positive about the school, they value the happy community created." The school will be inspected under the SIAMs framework within the next two years.

The school is part of a collaboration with the Bishopwood Schools federation, in nearby Tadley. An Executive Headteacher oversees all three participating schools, supported by a Head of School in Bramley.

The school has 424 students on roll (as of July 2022).

For more information: [www.bramley.hants.sch.uk](http://www.bramley.hants.sch.uk)

## Appendix 4: Common Mission Fund contributions

### Common Mission Fund Request vs Contributions Benefice Level Analysis

Parish	Affluence Band	Community of Worshippers	2021 CMF Request	2021 CMF Request (previous budget)	2020 CMF request	2020 CMF Contribution	2019 CMF request	2019 CMF Contribution	2018 CMF request	2018 CMF Contribution
Bramley	E	113.4	£54,517.00	£61,442	£57,675	54'517	£55,431	£50,000	£52,619	£52,619
Sherfield on Loddon	F	83.6	£46,888.00	£52,845	£52,912.00	46'888	£52,716	£40,800	£53,809	£40,800
Hartley Wespall	F	13.2	£7'403	£8,344	£7,035.00	£7'403	£6'467	£6'467	£6,253	£7'500
Stratfield Saye	F	13.2	£7'403	£8,344	£8'105	£7'403	£7,839	£7,800	£7,958	£7,500

#### NOTES:

- Affluence Bands: Every parish is assigned an affluence band from A (low) to G (high) based on external data from Parish Spotlights and Experian. Changes to affluence bands can only be agreed following a detailed review of postcodes.
- Worshipping Community: The Worshipping Community figure is based on a 5 year rolling average. Where a PCC has not submitted an updated worshipping community figure by the deadline the Diocese have utilised the data from the previous year.

'I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.'

Ephesians 3.16-18

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