

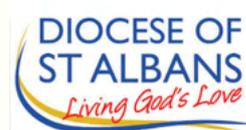


# CHRIST CHURCH BEDFORD

## PARISH PROFILE



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND





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# MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHDEACON

I trust you will enjoy reading this profile setting out the mission and ministry of Christ Church, Bedford.

As you will discern this vibrant, active, open evangelical, church, with its excellent resources (both people, finance, and hall complex), offers a wide range of services, activities, and programmes for those of all ages. At the same time Christ Church does not want to rest on its laurels and has a desire to reach out into the community with the love of Christ.

Christ Church is set in the rich, diverse, county town of Bedfordshire, with a co-operative and closely knit Anglican deanery and excellent ecumenical and inter-faith groups. Christ Church has been heavily involved in the deanery, and wider networks, over the years and it would be wonderful to see Christ Church further resource and support mission and ministry, in partnership with others, across the town.



The next incumbent will need the gifts of leadership to enable others within the congregation to fulfil their God given calling, to help the church focus further on young people and young adults, and also continue to use the church's excellent resources to connect with the community, building even stronger links with those using their premises.

I commend to you this exciting opportunity to serve in Bedford with this lively, outward focused, and Christ-centred congregation.

God bless,  
Venerable Dave Middlebrook  
Archdeacon of Bedford



We are excited to discover what God has in store for us and need a leader's wisdom, energy, encouragement and challenge to help us unlock His vision. We have been blessed by our generous Father and we now want to build upon these foundations to transform more lives.

Christ Church strives to be an outward-looking community of faith, exploring together God's transforming love in our lives. We meet together for worship, prayer and teaching to grow personally, to encourage each other and to be challenged how to live practically in partnership with the local community.

We seek to be a church that understands the authority of the Bible in encouraging Christian character and being applied to the key social and ethical issues that affect our daily lives.

**"To enable everyone to be maturing followers of Christ, who experience and live out God's love in every part of their lives."**

# WHO ARE WE?

We are a family passionate about enabling new disciples and growing our Christian character. A lively family of faith of all ages, varied backgrounds and many nationalities – energised by wonderful groups of volunteers who are active across church life.

We have a vibrant children's work and an enthusiastic but small young people's ministry. We also wish to develop our welcome of younger adults and families.

Christ Church is an evangelical church committed to living and sharing the good news of the gospel and open to the challenge of remaining relevant in today's world.

We have 200 adults and 25 children attending a diverse range of services on a Sunday:

- 9am is a robed and liturgical service using Common Worship.
- 10.30am is a contemporary service, supported by a gifted music team, with children's and young people's activities.
- 4pm Wild Church for children and their families is held monthly at a rural outdoor location.
- 7pm is the most open-ended service which encourages encountering God through free worship and challenging teaching.

Communion alternates between the two Sunday morning services. There is also a robed communion service on a Wednesday morning.



# WHO ARE WE?



A number of people are involved in preaching and leading services including the vicar, curate, reader, children's minister and members of the congregation. We are passionate about enabling and equipping people in God's ministry. Christ Church has sent a number of its members into ordained and lay ministry in recent years.

We seek to nurture and develop our Christian experience by running both Alpha courses and a post Alpha "Grow" group on a regular basis. We also have 17 home groups running across the age range of the church family and seek to develop these as core to our interconnectedness in the body of Christ.

Recent efforts to improve our digital presence has been realised with an updated website and regular posts on social media platforms.

Using digital platforms to engage the local community, including live streaming services, is an avenue Christ Church will develop.

We publish a monthly prayer diary with daily sections on church family, mission and events further afield. A weekday prayer meeting is attended by staff. Prayer meetings are also held on Saturday mornings and Sunday evenings along with the offer of prayer after morning and evening services. Members of the congregation are also involved in small prayer groups. Periodically, we have 24-hour prayer days.

In Autumn 2018, we opened an extensively re-developed halls complex which has transformed our facilities and provided significant opportunities for both the church and wider community.



# WELCOME TO BEDFORD



Christ Church is a single church parish situated in an attractive and diverse area on the east side of the market town of Bedford. Situated 55 miles north of London, Bedford has good road and rail links and enjoys a cosmopolitan culture with particular historical links to John Bunyan.

The Parish is compact in size (see Annex for further detail), with a good community feel; it includes a traditional parade of shops, a local park, sports clubs and an active theatre. It is bordered to the south by the Great Ouse River and is within a 15-minute walk of the town centre.

The parish is almost exclusively residential and suburban in feel with properties ranging in age and size from the Victorian and

Edwardian eras up to the 1990s. There is minimal amount of social housing. The incidence of single occupancy stands at 40%, of which 15% are elderly. There is a spread of ages and family size within the predominantly white population of around 5,000 with one primary and one all-through school in the parish. People are employed mostly outside the parish and principally within the finance, business, education and health sectors. Many commute into London, Cambridge and the surrounding area.

We have good relations with local churches particularly the nearest, a charismatic Baptist church. 70% of our congregation live outside the parish, both within Bedford and the local villages.



# THE VICARAGE

Our spacious vicarage, situated right next door to the Church, is a two-storey detached house with brick elevations under a plain tiled roof together with a detached garage.

The accommodation comprises:

- ground floor: hall (staircase to first floor), study, cloakroom, sitting room, dining room, kitchen (with a larder off) and a utility room (pantry);
- first floor: a landing to four double bedrooms, bathroom and a separate WC; and
- outside: a single garage (not accessible for cars following church hall extension). Off road parking for 2 vehicles. An attractive well stocked garden and ample space for children or entertaining.

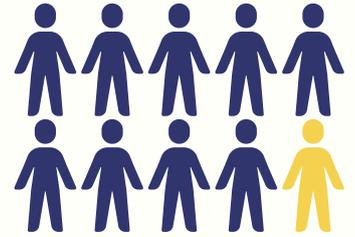
The vicarage is currently undergoing renovations which include updating the bathroom, toilet and repainting a number of rooms.

The Quinquennial Church Inspection (QI) reports cover the church buildings and grounds and the curate's house (part owned with the diocese). The reports set out that all of the assets are in a state of good repair, well maintained with no major concerns. All tasks needing attention are being monitored and work has been or planned to be carried out within the five-year period.



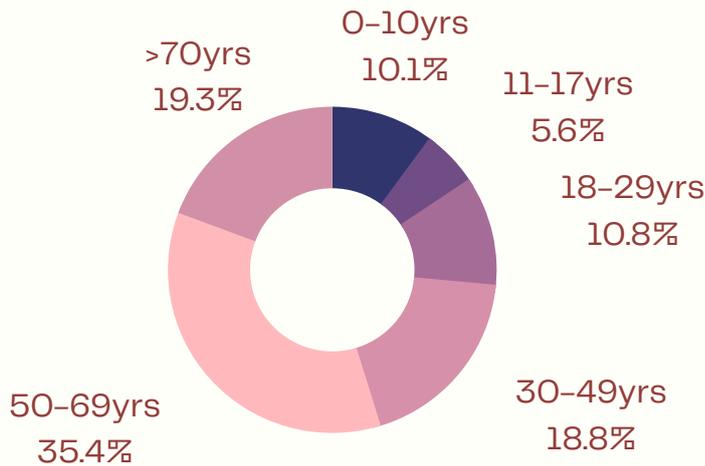
# RESTARTING AFTER C-19

Attendance has recovered to 90% since restarting services but we continue to stream services.



## AGE DISTRIBUTION

The age of church attenders is skewed.



## HOMEGROUPS

75% of the congregation attend one of 17 groups.



## MISSION PARTNERS

Supporting the world church prayerfully and financially with 5 partners.



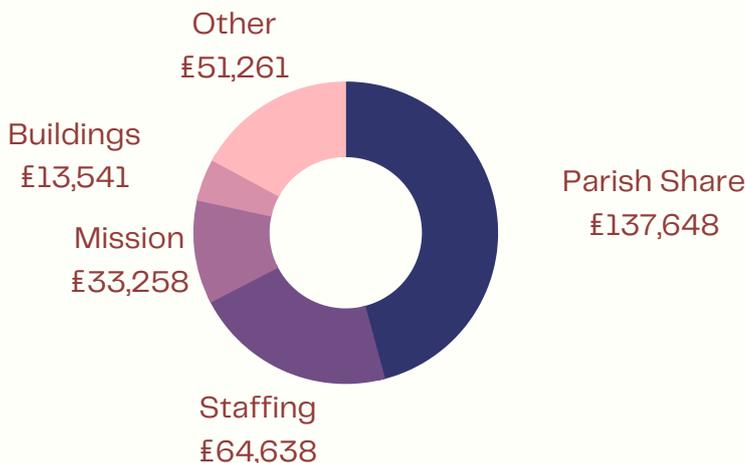
## PARISHIONERS

Attenders who live in the Parish.



## BUDGET

The 2021 accounts (£300k) supported the full parish share, mission giving and staff employment.



## MINISTRY GROUPS

30+ action groups serving the church and community.



## ALPHA

3 courses run per year



# NOW AND THE FUTURE

We have conducted a feedback exercise within our church family which helps us understand our current strengths and weaknesses.

The aspects that the church most values are:

- the quality and relevance of our teaching;
- the variety of our worship ably led by a talented group of musicians;
- the encouragement and care experienced within our home groups;
- our focus on the opposite ends of the age range is a wonderful aspect of our family life together; and
- our heart for mission illustrates our continuing desire to share the Gospel.

Our feedback identified concern:

- that our individual and corporate sharing of God's good news can be more effective;
- that there is a need to grow our youth and young adults' ministry;
- that everyone feels included in our church family and wants to strengthen the reality of that experience; and
- that although progress has been made in using our premises, we feel there is a lot more we can do to it make it a genuine "hub".

Our vision sees us maturing as followers of Jesus by building on the reality of what God has achieved in and through us at Christ Church. We are praying to better understand the Word of God to convict us, to establish us and to liberate us into Spirit-filled service.

We look to experience more of God's presence with us as we develop the variety of our worship including fresh expressions. We look for all people, irrespective of who they are or where they're from, to experience God's inclusive love among us, as we care deeply for each other through the experiences of life.

We aspire to be a family of action; building bridges to reach more people in creative and innovative ways. We aim, in particular, for that love to draw many more of the youth and young adults from our community into a personal encounter with Jesus.

We also have a real desire to make the halls complex, not only a community resource, but also a place where people can make connections between what is important to them and what goes on in the church.



# CHILDREN AND YOUTH

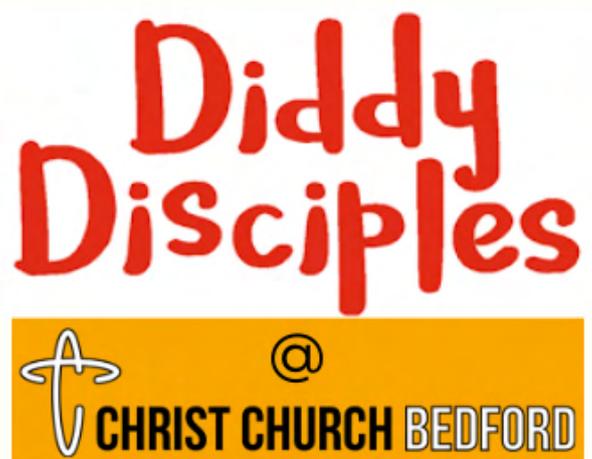
Our children's ministry actively focuses on reaching families in our community. We do this through our baby and toddler groups: Little Fishes and Morning Out, and our after school club, Forge.

We connect with around 40 families in our area through these 3 outreach groups. The groups are Christian in nature, but we welcome those with all beliefs to engage with us.

We also put energy into our online children's ministry, connecting with those children who are not attending church in person. Families also engage with special events during holidays as well as charity events for Home of Hope, a mission charity supported by the church.

Our Sunday children's groups (Daring Disciples and Passports) aim to be inclusive and are a place for nurturing children's faith. On Sundays we have around 25 children regularly attending:

- Daring Disciples follows the Diddy Disciples book by Sharon Moughtin-Mumby, which is movement based, child-led worship.
- Passports enables the children to find and cultivate a faith in Jesus. The aim is to prepare them as they continue their relationship with Jesus here and beyond.



# CHILDREN AND YOUTH



We have a small but committed group of young people involved in Bible study on a Sunday morning for ages 11-14, Tuesday evenings for ages 14-18 and in social activity and worship on a Friday evening.

This group of fun loving people are actively involved and participate in youth weekends and other national events.

The church has refreshed the Sunday evening service which the youth and young adults are encouraged to participate and facilitate. Currently, a number of talented young people are in the music group and producing the sound and vision.

Prior to the pandemic, the youth minister was welcomed at local community schools for lunch clubs and participated in RE teaching at festivals. These are relationships we are looking to reignite along with identifying other avenues to minister.

We work with local churches around Bedfordshire to create local events for the youth to gather as a single community group.

We are seeking to extend our youth ministry and bring more young people to know Jesus. The PCC has recently agreed to recruit a new and full time youth and young adults' minister to focus on this ministry.



# CHURCH AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

## SENIORS' MINISTRY

There is an active and much valued seniors' ministry. The older members of our congregation and wider local community enjoy the fortnightly lunch club and monthly 'Go For Gold' meetings with visiting speakers and opportunities for fellowship.

A three day 'Holiday @ Home' offers a range of activities and speakers. A coach holiday is enjoyed by a number who take part each year.

## LADIES AND MEN'S MINISTRY

Regular ladies' events are very well supported. The monthly men's breakfast is supported by a smaller but committed group.

## FELLOWSHIP EVENTS

A series of activities for the parish including carol concerts, quizzes and summer events are held with open invitations to the community.



We organise tea parties and BBQs in the church grounds so that we make time to have fun as a family.

## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

The halls complex enables a range of activities to operate including a pre-school which provides 6 sessions a week and a separate activity offering tailored tuition for older pupils and adults.

Another project offers support for young people with special needs and learning disabilities.

For those in need we operate a foodbank, host a counselling service and provide space for Barnardo's to enable positive family time for children and their carers.

Culturally, we have Brownies, and an arts group offering younger people tuition in the performing arts. Choirs, instrumental and physical activity groups are also using the premises to provide for the community.



# MISSION SUPPORT

## Impact

helping Bedford teachers, schoolchildren and young people learn more about the Christian faith

## YP and Jude

working in Belgium in teaching, church leadership and youth work

## Beth and Jordan

supporting the church in North Africa

## Home of Hope

supporting work amongst orphans with residential care, schooling and family support

## Hilary Deneufchatel

translation consultant supporting Bible translation projects in Africa

## John and Jenny Miller

teaching, training and administration at Johannesburg Bible College

12% of unrestricted budget income for mission

## Local mission support

CCB and it's members support local mission groups and schemes



Kings Arms Project



Hope for Justice



Bedford Street Angels



Bedford Prison Chaplains



Just Love



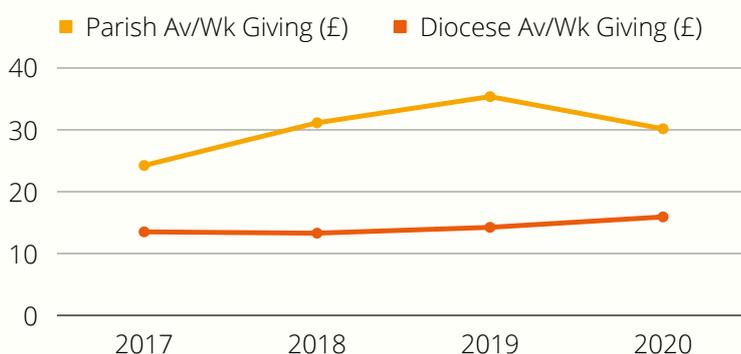
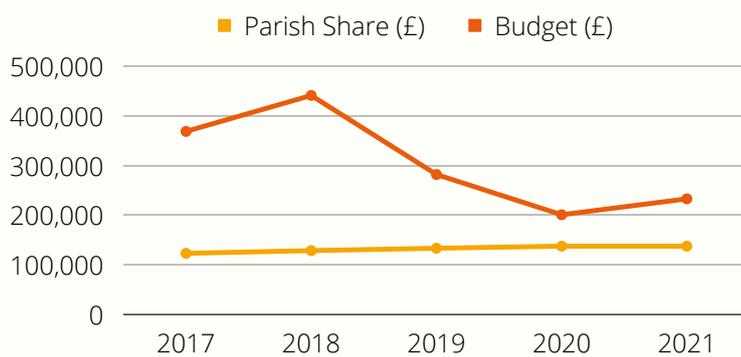
Friends for Life

# STAFFING AND FINANCE

## BUDGET

Each annual budget supports the mission and administration of the church. This includes a commitment to pay the parish share in full and providing a staff team for roles identified as core to the mission of Christ Church.

Over a period of time the church family was able to raise £2m to redevelop the hall complex in 2018 where the levels of giving increased.

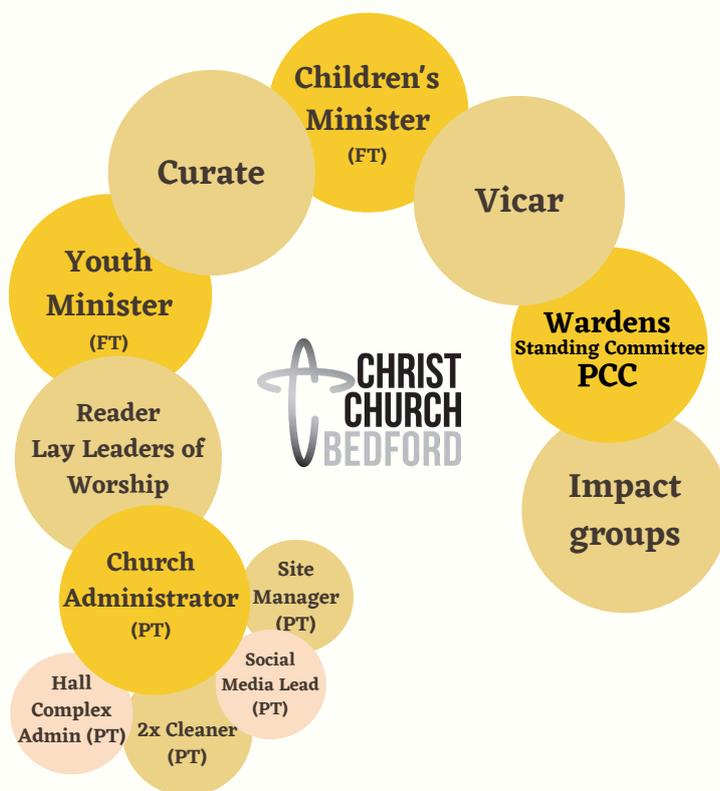


## ORGANISATION

The vicar provides vision and management of the staff team and also the army of volunteers facilitating the PCC and mission action groups.

The PCC convene 6 times a year, whilst delegating the practical and general running of the parish to Impact Groups (PCC sub-committees) and the staff team. The Standing Committee, with delegated authority, make decisions in between meetings.

Lay members are integral to our Impact Groups which facilitate children’s and young people’s work, buildings, communications, fellowship, mission, outreach, resourcing and worship. The Impact groups report to the PCC setting out how our endeavours are supporting the delivery of the Mission Action Plan.



**The church is supported by full-time (FT) and part-time (PT) paid staff and a large volunteer team**

# GOD'S CHOSEN PERSON

Our next vicar will bring new vision and new ideas that can enrich and drive these 3 priorities.

This will require someone who is open to change and challenge including questioning how we "do church"? This will enable us to connect with and be relevant to a wider cross-section of the local community and be at home with different worship styles.

We need someone who has:

- leadership gifts to manage a large team;
- spiritual gifts of prayer and openness to the Spirit; and
- an enabler who is capable of unlocking our gifts of affirmation, care and hospitality and providing opportunity to minister.

Thank you for reading through our profile. We hope you prayerfully consider an application to Christ Church Bedford.

We are excited to discern God's chosen vicar for the Parish and trust the information provided here shows our willingness to learn and reach out into our community.



[www.ccbedford.org](http://www.ccbedford.org)

## 1 ENABLE AND EQUIP

A servant-hearted person with humility and a sure hope to help us navigate how to share the unchanging Good News of Jesus with the rapidly changing contemporary world. Someone who will enable us to tell out the Gospel and live it out in our daily lives.

A clear biblical thinker inspiring us to think intelligently and openly, as we seek to respond to the spiritual, ethical and ecological challenges of the modern world.

## 2 FOCUS ON YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

Someone who is culturally aware and able to communicate truth in a world with no firm foundations and help us to inspire the younger generations to engage with us.

Using experience and understanding, help us to improve how we reach out to this demographic in the community.

## 3 DEVELOP A HUB

A pastoral person who is able to reimagine how we use our halls complex, underpinning our desire to get out and become a hub for our community.



[facebook.com/christchurchbedford/](https://facebook.com/christchurchbedford/)



[instagram.com/ccbedford/](https://instagram.com/ccbedford/)



[@CC\\_bedford](https://twitter.com/@CC_bedford)



[youtube.com/c/ChristChurchBedford/](https://youtube.com/c/ChristChurchBedford/)



[ccbedford.org](https://ccbedford.org)

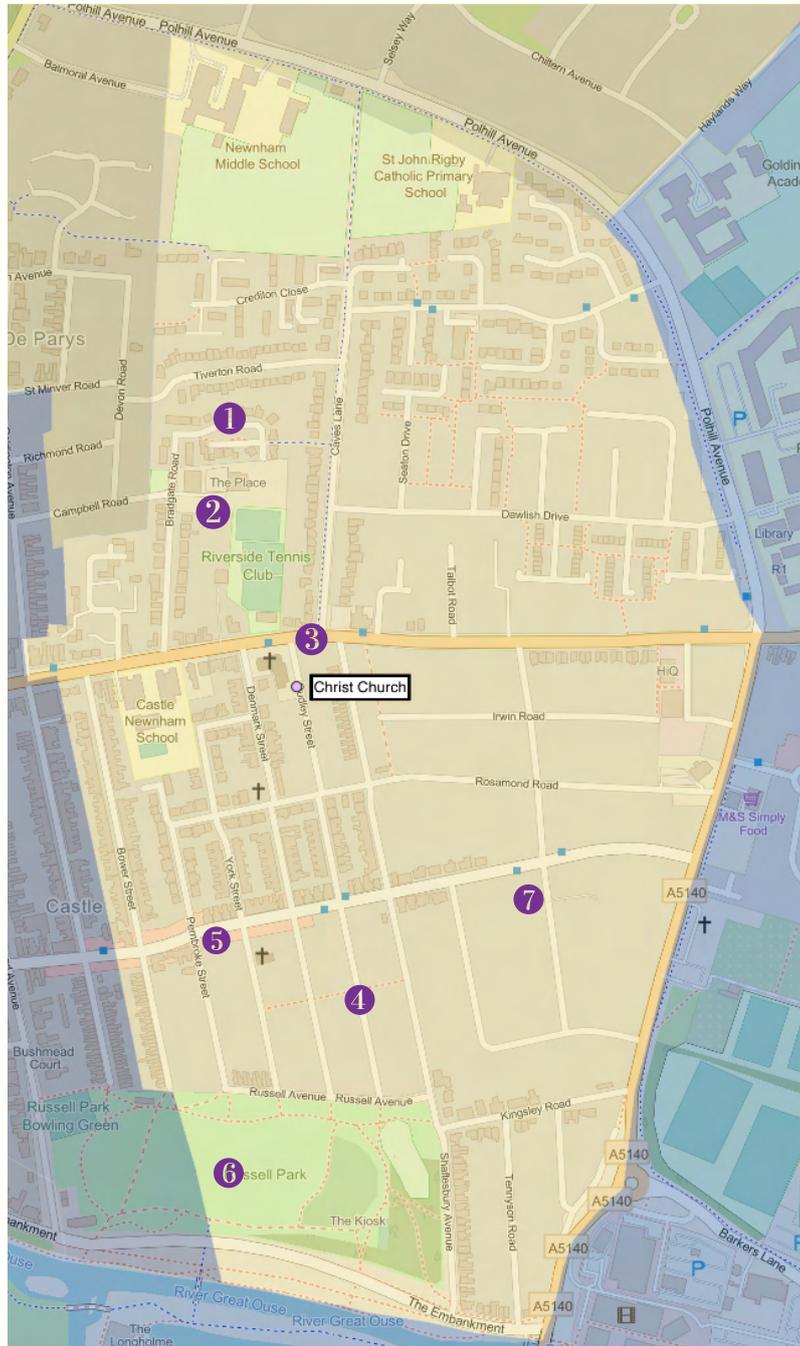


⊕ THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND



# ANNEX

## PARISH INFORMATION



Additional parish statistics can be found [here](#).

The adjacent map sets out the parish boundaries and some local referenced photos.

1



2



3



4



5



7



6



# ANNEX

## HALLS COMPLEX

The halls complex has been designed with regard for community access and availability. We are able to support and develop opportunities with the local community.

The halls provide up to 8 separate spaces and kitchen facilities most of which are available for hire. Whilst the church activities take precedence, we see both church and community activities developing here as the halls becomes a true hub of the locality.

