

# The Penhill Benefice Brochure



## The Diocese of Leeds

In this new diocese, less than three years old, we are working with three core objectives:

- **Confident Christians:** Encouraging personal spiritual renewal with the aim of producing clergy and laity who are confident in God and in the Gospel.
- **Growing Churches:** Numerically, spiritually and in their mission to the wider world.
- **Changing communities:** For the better, through our partnership with other churches and faith communities, as well as government and third sector agencies.

The Anglican Diocese of Leeds comprises five Episcopal Areas, each coterminous with an Archdeaconry. This is now one of the largest dioceses in the country, and its creation is unprecedented in the history of the Church of England. It covers an area of around 2,425 square miles, and a population of around 2,642,400 people.

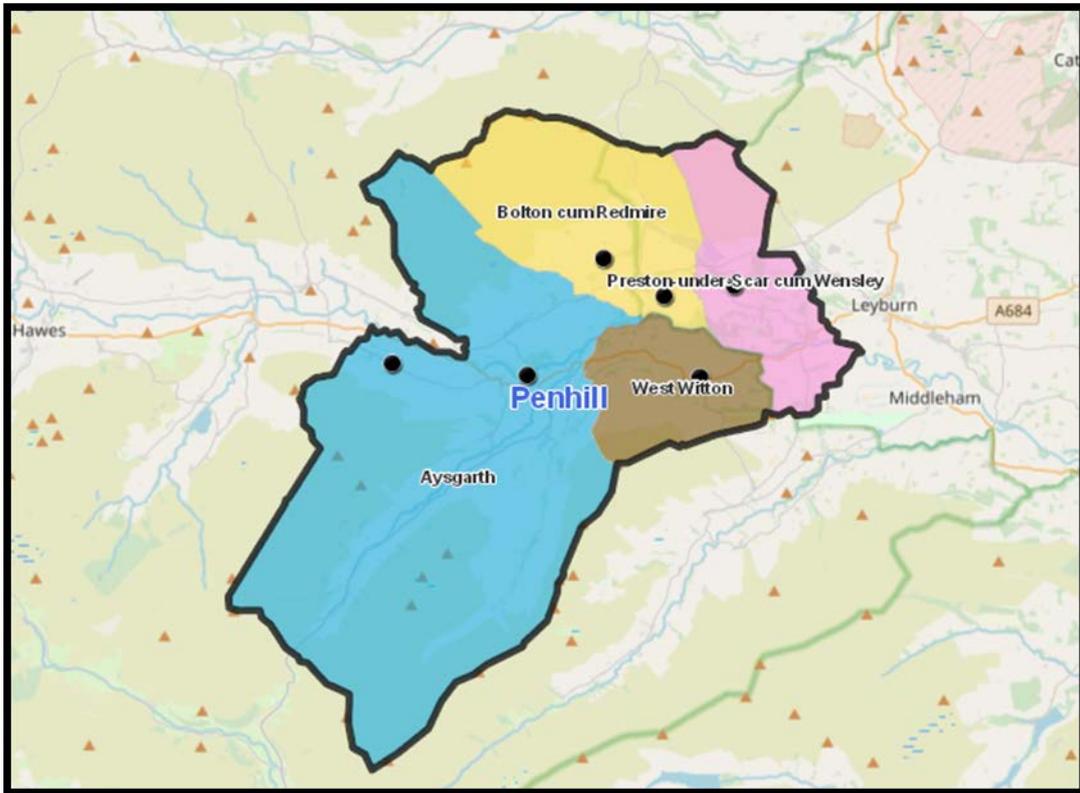
The three former dioceses were created in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to cater for massive population changes brought about by industrialisation and, later, mass immigration. The diocese comprises major cities (Bradford, Leeds, Wakefield), large industrial and post-industrial towns (Halifax, Huddersfield, Dewsbury), market towns (Harrogate, Skipton, Ripon, Richmond and Wetherby), and deeply rural areas (the Dales). The whole of life is here, along with all the richness, diversity and complexities of a changing world.

The Diocesan Bishop (The Rt Rev'd Nick Baines) is assisted by five Area Bishops (Bradford, Huddersfield, Kirkstall, Wakefield and Ripon), and five archdeacons (Bradford, Halifax, Leeds, Pontefract, Richmond & Craven). The Bishop of Ripon is the Rt Rev'd Dr. Helen-Ann Hartley.

Our vision as the Diocese is about confident clergy equipping confident Christians to live and tell the good news of Jesus Christ. For all of our appointments we are seeking clergy who have a joyful and confident faith which has inspired a track record of church growth, both numerically and spiritually.

## The Penhill Benefice

### In the heart of the Yorkshire Dales



***Our Mission Statement: The Penhill Benefice is committed to show the love of God and the saving grace of Jesus. We share together as the body of Christ, in prayer, worship, ministry and fellowship. In the power of the Holy Spirit we are called to mission and outreach and to be a support and comfort in the community.***

Do you have a calling to serve God in a rural benefice? And a desire to meet the challenges and responsibilities of rural ministry? We hope and pray that you do because we need you.

We are the Penhill Benefice, a family of four parishes covering 64 square miles of central Wensleydale. The scenery is stunning, the people are famously friendly and the local food is second to none. It's no surprise that our tourist board is called 'Welcome to Yorkshire' or that Richmondshire has just been voted the best place to live in the country.

You may think all this sounds idyllic – and just the place to wind down to retirement – but you'd be mistaken. Our problems may not be as obvious as those of urban society but they run equally deep and are just as challenging: hidden poverty, unaffordable homes, low wages, a lack of local public transport and public services. Our greatest challenge, as a church, is to maintain a living, active Christian witness in our community but our congregations are declining. Like the wider Dales community, we have an unusually high proportion of elderly people, with increasing social and healthcare needs, while the number

of children and young people living here is declining rapidly. How do we attract a new generation to Christ's service and grow our churches? – and how do we do so without neglecting or seeming to ignore the needs of those who have already served Him long and faithfully?

We don't expect you to have all the answers but this is an opportunity for you to make a real difference to our community. We pray that you will have the energy, enthusiasm and commitment to lead us forward in faith and hope, so that we may truly show the love of God and the saving grace of Jesus to all who live in our benefice and beyond.

### **1. What we would like from you**

We would like you to feel that you really want to be here with us and that you have a sense of calling to serve God in this lovely rural area.

You will need to have an understanding of, and sensitivity to, the challenges and opportunities of rural ministry – some previous experience of it would be even better-

You will also need a heart – and the stamina - for pastoral ministry, especially to the elderly, across scattered and often isolated communities. A vehicle and a full driving licence are absolutely essential.

We would love you to be a team leader and a team builder, willing to listen and understand different points of view, but also able to harness the wide range of human resources available in the Benefice to complement your own skills so that we can engage more effectively with people inside and outside the church.

We would like you to be a visible presence in our church and community, engaging with local people spiritually, socially and at work. We would particularly like you to take an active role in our local Church of England Primary School, leading Collective Worship for children there and perhaps also becoming a Foundation Governor. (These roles are currently delegated to lay representatives of the Benefice).

We would like you to value and develop lay ministry but as a supplement to your own clerical ministry, rather than an alternative to it.

We would welcome your openness to suggesting and trying innovative ways of reaching our community with the Gospel message using the limited human resources and challenging buildings available: IT skills and a familiarity with social media would be really useful.

Above all else we look to you for spiritual leadership, guidance and inspiration, so that we may become better disciples of our Risen Lord and draw others to Him. We know that you will rely on the Holy Spirit to lead you, and that you will continually seek spiritual renewal through prayer, worship and the Scriptures. We look to you, therefore, to encourage and

nurture our faith throughout our Benefice and in the wider community by your example, teaching and preaching.

## 2. What we can offer you

**Clergy support** – we have a non-stipendiary Associate Vicar who has lived in the Benefice for many years. Although she has a full-time job, she has a wealth of local and church knowledge and provides invaluable support for our incumbents and our worshipping community. We also have two retired parish priests resident in the Benefice, one of whom is now chaplain to St Michael’s Hospice in Harrogate. Both are willing and able to assist in taking services if asked to do so. We have one Lay Reader and two more currently in training. We also have an established and active team of eleven Lay Worship Leaders who work well together and with the clergy to serve all the parishes in the Benefice. Fifteen chalice assistants are licenced in the Benefice until 2022.

**Administrative support** – we employ a highly experienced Benefice Administrator who works eighteen hours a week from a centrally located and dedicated Benefice Office at Swinithwaite. Her office is provided rent-free, with a small service charge for electricity usage, and her salary is paid by contributions from all four parishes and one of our Patrons, Trinity College, Cambridge. She keeps us up to scratch with all the form-filling and training requirements, co-ordinates and distributes information from the deanery and diocese, produces a weekly pew sheet for our churches and our bi-monthly magazine *The Penhill Beacon* (which is delivered to 845 homes across the Benefice) and feeds information to our Benefice website. All our relevant church members have up-to-date DBS and safeguarding training, our PCCs are all safeguarding-compliant and we also have a volunteer Safeguarding Officer. We also have a non-stipendiary Benefice Treasurer.

Our four parishes each have churchwardens and a PCC with a secretary, treasurer and Deanery Representative. The PCCs all actively take responsibility for their parish’s financial affairs as well as their individual church buildings’ care and maintenance. All our parishes are up-to-date with their parish share payments which have been made in full. All the churches have rotas in place for readers, intercessors and sidesmen and we are blessed to be able to draw on a wealth of talent and professional skills from our congregations when needed.



The Vicarage

**Our vicarage** – we have a modern family home next to the village green in Carperby to offer you as our vicarage. Purpose-built in 1984 and extensively refurbished five years ago, it has three double bedrooms (one ensuite) and a single bedroom, a dedicated study and separate kitchen, dining room, lounge and garage. It has a large but easily maintained and

private rear garden which, like the house itself, enjoys wonderful views of the dale. Carperby has lots to offer socially through its village institute, sports pavilion and pub (famous as the place where 'James Herriot' spent his honeymoon) and is just two and a half miles and nine miles respectively from the nearest primary and secondary schools.

**Our commitment to you** – we will do everything we can to help and support you in what we know to be a demanding and challenging role as vicar of a multiple-parish rural benefice. You will have our prayers, encouragement and friendship. You will be urged to take time off for holidays, time out during the week for R&R and time away for retreat and training. We will pay all your reasonable clergy expenses promptly and in full. We think this is a wonderful place to live and work and we would love to welcome you here so that we can go forward together in faith and discipleship.

### 3. Our Benefice

**Where and what we are:** We are a family of four parishes, consisting of six churches and a Mission Room, which are spread across central Wensleydale and lie on either side of the River Ure. We take our name from Penhill which, at a height of just over 1800 feet (553 metres), dominates our Benefice and is a distinctive landmark visible for miles around.

Our Benefice is in Richmondshire, North Yorkshire, which has just been voted the best place to live in England in the 2019 Halifax Quality of Life survey, thanks to its picturesque countryside, strong sense of community and low levels of crime and traffic. Most of our villages are in the Yorkshire Dales National Park but Redmire, Preston-under-Scar and Wensley lie just outside its eastern border, near the market town of Leyburn.



The Benefice covers some 64 square miles (165.5 square kilometres) of deeply rural countryside and there are definitely more sheep than people! We have 997 households but a resident population of only 2086 – though around ten times that number of tourists visit us annually to enjoy the beautiful scenery, prolific wildlife, pretty villages and historic buildings which include medieval castles and abbeys – and our own churches.

**Who we are:** Local families of many generations standing still form the backbone of the Benefice but, in common with the rest of the Dales, we have a very high number of residents who have retired here, giving us a disproportionately elderly demographic. Residents are, almost without exception, white. Most people coming here to live are retired professionals and owner-occupiers. We also have an unusually high number of resident

military families due to the proximity of Catterick Garrison. A significant proportion of local people live in rented accommodation, some of it tied to local estates. A large number of houses are holiday rentals or second homes – rising to 50% of the property in some of our most popular villages. The lack of affordable homes for children of residents is just one of the more obvious social problems affecting our region but low wages and farm incomes contribute to hidden poverty, as does longevity without adequate pension provision. Many of our elderly people, in particular, are too proud to admit their financial difficulties and are also struggling with deteriorating health.

Our increasingly elderly demographic has been exacerbated by the number of young people who have left the Dales, partly because they want well-paid skilled jobs which are in short supply locally, and partly because they cannot afford housing which is both expensive and in high demand as second homes. As a consequence school rolls have dropped dramatically: West Burton Church of England Primary, the only school in our Benefice, is typical of the wider picture in having seen its numbers drop from 40 to 22 in just five years. This rapid decline is reflected in our congregations where not one of our churches has a regular attender under the age of 18.

**Employment:** Tourism is a vital part of the local economy and we have a wealth of fantastic pubs, hotels, cafes, restaurants and B&Bs catering for our visitors but also well-used throughout the year by our residents. Farming and agriculture are still the main employers, however, and there are numerous game-shooting enterprises based on local estates. High speed broadband is available throughout the Benefice though, in practice, there are pockets where signal is poor. (The same is true of mobile phones.) In common with the rest of Richmondshire, we have a very high proportion of small and medium sized businesses, and many people are self-employed. Local traders – builders, plumbers, electricians – all flourish. Local government and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority are also employers of some significance. The YDNPA is pro-actively attempting to encourage younger people to live and work in the Dales by offering grants of up to £5,000, available from a Sustainable Development Fund, for help in setting up new businesses. (For examples see <https://www.dalesdiscoveries.com/> and <http://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/living-and-working/sdf>)

**Facilities:** Though the number of shops within the Benefice is small we have two flourishing market towns which are only eight miles from the vicarage. Hawes, to the west, and Leyburn to the east, both have excellent weekly markets, auction marts, banks, post offices, clothing shops, bakeries, small supermarkets, dental surgeries, hairdressers, pharmacies and professional services: Hawes also has its famous Wensleydale Cheese Factory and Leyburn is home to Tennants, an internationally renowned auction house and events centre. Further afield, Richmond and Catterick Garrison have a wide range of retail, commercial, professional and entertainment services and are less than 25 minutes' drive away. A forty-five minute drive takes you to the railway stations at Northallerton and Darlington where

you can take the fast trains along the East Coast Main Line and be in London or Edinburgh in under two and a half hours.

**Transport:** Access to a car and the ability to drive are essential as public transport within our Benefice and the Dale is very limited. There are few buses, even fewer taxis and no Uber. Many residents are dependent on their neighbours to take them shopping and for appointments.

**Medical Care:** We have an excellent GP surgery, The Central Dales Practice, with community nurses and a dispensing pharmacy, at Aysgarth, and, in an emergency, we can be airlifted to hospital by helicopters belonging to local Air Ambulance services. There is also a comprehensive Medical Centre in Leyburn. We have a wonderful small hospital 27 miles away at Northallerton (The Friarage), which has just opened a major cancer treatment centre, but has lost its acute A&E, paediatric, and most major surgery departments, other than orthopaedics, to the James Cook University Hospital at Middlesbrough. This involves a round trip of 98 miles and a total travelling time of between three and four hours. Together with waiting times, a trip to James Cook can take up most of the day. In-patient services, and some out-patient treatments, particularly for the elderly, are increasingly being outsourced to Darlington Memorial Hospital 32 miles away and to Bishop Auckland Hospital (40 miles). In-patient mental health services are also located in Middlesbrough and Darlington. These distances are debilitating for patients and make regular visiting difficult for friends and relatives – and, indeed, for our vicar. We are fortunate to have an 18 bed palliative care and rehabilitation ward at The Friary Community Hospital in Richmond (15 miles), as well as two excellent supported housing facilities for the elderly just outside the benefice at Bainbridge and Leyburn (6 and 8 miles) but for full nursing care and dementia care we have to look to residential homes in Richmond and Catterick Garrison (both 15 miles) or Bedale (19 miles). Herriot Hospice Homecare provides free palliative care in the home for the terminally ill throughout North Yorkshire.

**Education:** Falling pupil numbers affect most of our Dales schools but West Burton Primary



**Festival of Remembrance**

School has other problems which would benefit from your active engagement and need prayerful and sensitive handling. It was rated outstanding by SIAMS in 2017 and good by Ofsted (2013 and 2018 inspections). It is currently part of a three-school federation of primary schools (BAWB) with Bainbridge and Askrigg which are both seven miles from West Burton. During the last year there have been concerns about the necessity of moving young children between schools during the school day but these are now being addressed.

**Education beyond primary level:** All other educational facilities lie outside our Benefice. Most secondary school

children go to The Wensleydale School and 6<sup>th</sup> Form College at Leyburn but some travel to Richmond, where there are two schools (St Francis Xavier RC and C of E School (11-16 only) and Richmond School and 6<sup>th</sup> Form College), or even Darlington where the Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College offers a wider range of subjects and skills. There is no university nearer than Teesside (45 miles) or Durham (47 miles). Scout and Girl Guide groups, with their junior divisions, meet in Leyburn and Hawes. Leyburn has a term-time youth club, based at Wensleydale School, and there are hopes to revive the one in Hawes which folded recently through lack of support.

**Becoming part of the community – and enjoying yourself:** The Benefice is a beautiful place to live with excellent opportunities for every type of physical activity from walking, cycling and horse-riding to Zumba and bowls in the village halls. We have lots of opportunities to become involved in learning and creative crafts in the Benefice through groups such as WI, Penhill Ladies and Wensleydale Ladies Luncheon Club; Rotary, Probus and U3A meet in Leyburn and there are many artists’, writers’ and history groups which flourish in the Benefice and wider community. Local people are genuinely friendly and welcoming and there is a huge range of social activities, based primarily on the village halls, to suit every taste and interest. All you will lack is the time to do everything you would like to do!



**Palm Sunday**

#### 4. Our Churches

Our Benefice was established in 2006. It consists of six churches and a Mission Room serving eleven villages and a number of hamlets and outlying farms in and around central Wensleydale.

Interregnum Pattern of Worship					
	Aysgarth	Bolton cum Redmire	Preston with Wensley	West Witton	Thornton Rust
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday</b>		11am HC		9.30am HC	
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday</b>	10.30am HC Penhill Together Benefice Service				
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday</b>	11am HC		9.30am HC		
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b>	11am MS	9.30am MS	9.30am MS	9.30am MS	3/6pm EP
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b>	10.30am Family Praise Benefice Service with Children’s Church				
<b>Every Monday</b>				9am MP	
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Wed in month</b>		8.30am MP Redmire			
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Thursday</b>				9.30am MW	
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday</b>				9.30am HC	

HC – Holy Communion  
MP – Morning Prayer

MS – Morning Service EP – Evening Prayer  
MW – Morning Worship

2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays – the services are rotated around the churches in the benefice.

As a Benefice we generally follow a low church tradition with officiating clergy choosing to wear a cassock and surplice, or alb, and stole. None of our churches has a regular choir. Aysgarth, Preston-under-Scar and Wensley have their own regular organists: the other churches rely on occasional organists, electric keyboards and taped music.

**Children and young people:** We have no young people under the age of 18 regularly attending any of our churches. Our congregations are all fairly evenly divided between those aged 18-69 and those aged 70+ (except for Redmire-cum-Bolton where 80% of those worshipping are over 70), but it would probably be more accurate to say that all our congregations are aged over 50 – and mostly over 60. As a Benefice we have tried hard to attract young people and children but have only been successful in certain dedicated services such as Christingle, the Crib Services at West Witton and Redmire, and Easter Sunday (with egg-rolling) at Aysgarth. We established a Children’s Church around three years ago which was held every fourth Sunday at 9.30am in Wensley Village Hall. Initially it attracted around ten children but numbers have fallen due to competing attractions, such as football league. During the interregnum we are incorporating dedicated children’s activities into some of our Benefice services but this is an interim measure and the issue needs to be addressed, perhaps in conjunction with our neighbouring Benefices. Confirmation classes are offered and held as needed, usually every couple of years when up to six candidates will be put forward.

**Our mission and outreach:** Our Benefice has a long and healthy tradition of meetings to



share Bible study and outreach. In addition to individual parish initiatives, such as the ecumenical Thoraby Village Worship, we have monthly Prayer Fellowship meetings and bi-monthly ecumenical Men’s Breakfasts addressed by invited speakers. During Lent we have two Food For Thought evenings, again with invited speakers, weekly Lent Lunches in village halls in Aysgarth and Redmire parishes and a Good Friday

Witness of the Cross series of short services on the village greens. In the lead up to Christmas we have held Advent courses in the past and continue to lead carol services in the churches but also out in the villages too. We enjoy good relations with our Methodist friends and share some services with them, though there will be only one active chapel remaining in our Benefice after the closure of Aysgarth Chapel in April 2019. There are no places of worship for other faiths in the Benefice.

**Our parishes:** We pride ourselves on being a family of churches but, as in every family, we are made up of individuals who are not all the same. For most of us, our parishes remain our main focus, rather than the Benefice or the wider church.

West Witton is the smallest parish, only 6 miles square (16 sq. kms), with a single church, St Bartholomew's, and a population of 347. Proportionate to the size of its population, however, it has the highest number of regular worshippers in the Benefice.

Preston with Wensley is slightly larger in area (7sq miles/19 sq. kms) but it has the smallest population (319 people) and worshipping community. It has two churches, Holy Trinity at Wensley, which is now maintained by the Churches Conservation Trust and can therefore hold a maximum of only six services a year, and St Margaret's at Preston-under-Scar.

Bolton-cum-Redmire parish also has two churches, St Oswald's, under the castle walls at Castle Bolton, and St Mary's, down a country lane just outside Redmire: it has a population of 384 spread over 11 sq miles (29 sq. kms).

St Andrew's church at Aysgarth, however, serves a parish which extends over more than half the Benefice, covering 39 sq. miles (101 sq kms), six villages (Aysgarth, Carperby, Newbiggin, Thoraby, Thornton Rust and West Burton) and three dales (Wensleydale, Bishopdale and Walden). With a population of 1045 scattered throughout this



most rural and western part of the Benefice, parishioners already have further to travel to attend their own church than congregations in the rest of the Benefice. Even though we offer lifts, some of the regular worshippers at St Andrew's, particularly the most elderly and infirm, are reluctant to travel beyond their own parish, especially in winter time, and only attend Benefice services when these are held at St Andrew's. The Mission Room (a small upper room in a former barn) hosts a moving Benefice service on Maundy Thursday and meetings such as Prayer Fellowship and Clergy Quiet Days, but otherwise attracts only a handful of loyal, mostly very elderly, villagers from Thornton Rust to its monthly services: its congregation tends to come to St Andrew's only for major church festivals.

**Our church buildings:** All our church buildings, except Thornton Rust Mission Room, are listed and of historical importance. Despite this, they are all well-maintained and in reasonably good condition, with no major outstanding issues.

We have no dedicated church halls in the Benefice but all the villages have halls or institutes whose facilities are made available to us. Only Aysgarth has a mains water supply, basic kitchen facilities and toilets within the church building.

All our churchyards, except for Redmire, are closed and maintained by Richmondshire District Council: Aysgarth can still hold interments where places have been reserved. Burials and interment of ashes can still take place in civic cemeteries at Wensley, Aysgarth and Preston, which are maintained by local district and parish councils. The nearest crematoria are both thirty miles away at Skipton and Darlington but most funeral services take place in our local parish churches.

For greater detail on the distinctive character of our individual churches and their buildings please see our attached Parish Profiles, Sections iii-ix, our website [www.penhillbenefice.co.uk](http://www.penhillbenefice.co.uk) and the Penhill Benefice section of [www.pipspatch.com](http://www.pipspatch.com).

The Photograph of Aysgarth Festival of Remembrance is copyright of Pip Pointon.

## 5. Finances – Benefice and Parish Summary of Accounts

PENHILL BENEFICE						
SUMMARY OF PARISH AND BENEFICE ACCOUNTS YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2018						
		Aysgarth	Bolton c.	West	Preston w.	Benefice
		Redmire	Witton	Wensley		
		£	£	£	£	£
<b>RECEIPTS</b>						
	Planned giving	12690	10529	9673	8343	0
	Collections	2655	2330	3395	3991	352
	Donations	12523	2447	147	664	1500
	Fund raising	2369	2743	2489	0	70
	Investment income	2300	307	1399	148	0
	Income tax recovered	5533	3723	3284	3990	0
	Fees	3768	3525	117	805	0
	Parish contributions	0	0	0	0	15217
	Grant	0	0	0	0	1665
	Magazine advertising	0	0	0	0	420
		<b>41838</b>	<b>25604</b>	<b>20504</b>	<b>17941</b>	<b>19224</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>						
	Charitable donations	2511	3454	1348	1574	0
	Diocesan share	16908	13957	13094	8213	0
	Benefice contribution	4751	4013	4092	2361	0
	Staff and related costs	0	0	0	0	9738
	Staff expenses	0	0	0	0	419
	Clergy/lay readers expenses	0	0	0	0	1710
	Stationery and printer supplies	0	0	0	0	1876
	Benefice magazine	0	0	0	0	1282
	Office telephone/internet/website	0	0	0	0	882
	Office rent and services	0	0	0	0	977
	Upkeep of services/childrens church	0	0	0	0	538
	Insurance	4016	1936	1585	620	0
	Church running expenses	8373	2334	408	618	0
	Repairs and decorations	6508	2523	125	1512	0
	Organist and verger fees	0	0	0	1160	0
	Sundries	243	501	8	80	270
		<b>43310</b>	<b>28718</b>	<b>20660</b>	<b>16138</b>	<b>17692</b>
<b>DEFICIT/SURPLUS</b>		<b>-1472</b>	<b>-3114</b>	<b>-156</b>	<b>1803</b>	<b>1532</b>
<b>OTHER RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS/ADJUSTMENTS</b>						
	Legacies	17462	0	0	0	0
	Quinquennial survey	0	0	-1327	0	0
	Friends of Holy Trinity Wensley	0	0	0	-1574	0
	Roof repairs-net	-4000	0	0	0	0
	Loan repayment	-15500	0	0	0	0
	Change in value of investments	0	0	236	-96	0
<b>MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>		<b>-3510</b>	<b>-3114</b>	<b>-1247</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>1532</b>
<b>OPENING FUNDS</b>		<b>86486</b>	<b>64886</b>	<b>52008</b>	<b>23965</b>	<b>2063</b>
<b>CLOSING FUNDS</b>		<b>82976</b>	<b>61772</b>	<b>50761</b>	<b>24098</b>	<b>3595</b>
	Restricted	38012	23341	0	0	0
	Unrestricted/designated	44964	38431	50761	24098	3595